

DOCTRINE POSITION OF MANY EARLY CHRISTIANS AND SOME CONTEMPORARY NOTES

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Two separate narratives of the Genesis Creation :

Basil the Great – (1) pg xlvi, and 3 – The birth of this world was preceded by a condition of things suitable for the exercise of supernatural powers....to this world, at last, it was necessary to add a new world.

Athanasius – (1) pg xlviii – “But as we proceed in our exposition of this (the incarnation of the Word), we must first speak about the creation of the universe, and its creator, God, so that in this way we may consider as fitting that its renewal was effected by the Word who created it in the beginning.

Jewish Talmud – Moses was the narrator, and telling a story on different levels – thus what appears is two separate narratives.

Francisco (2) pg 55-56, 62-63 – two narratives – two accounts.

Loren Fisher (3) Professor of Hebrew and Semitic languages at Claremont Theology Graduate University –

The context of the Hebrew shows two separate accounts – two separate narratives.

Jewish Torah - Moses was the narrator, and telling a story on different levels – thus what appears is two separate narratives.

Our existence before the foundation of the earth :

Basil the Great – (1) pg 9 – All beings created before the foundation of the earth.

Origen – (4) pg 91 – God showed Himself to us in the past....when we knew God – Rom. 1:19-32.

Chrysostom – (1) pg 37 – “Man” led life like the angels until the fall.

Gregory of Nyssa – (1) pg 73 – Man needs to be restored to his ancient state with the angels before the fall.

Basil the Great – (1) pg 3 – This age is a different age from the age of the past.

Augustine – (5) pg 226 – All souls pre-existed this age.

Origen – (6) pg 489 – All souls pre-existed this age.

Tertullian – (6) pg 415, & (10) pg 27 – Souls today know of good from pre-existence – God created all souls when He created Adam.

St. John Chrysostom – (6) pg 411 – Souls know of good from pre-existence.

Clement of Alexandria – (5) pg 471 – The soul which becomes angelic (after being saved), will not again become flesh (as it once did).

Jewish Talmud – Eden / Paradise existed before even Genesis 1:1.

Origen – (1) pg 11 – God previously made heaven – then He made the firmament, that is, the corporeal heaven.

St. Ambrose – (5) pg 474 – The resurrection, as the very form of the word shows, is this, that what has fallen should rise again. (the word is not erect, but resurrect – to a supernatural state as in the previous age – Eden).

St. Clement – (5) pg 474 – In what state were you saved ? In what did you recover your sight, except in the flesh ? (we saw before, and in the new birth we see again).

Basil the Great – (1) pg 2 & 9 – I am unsure how we existed previously in another age.

Gregory of Nyssa – (1) pg 12 – I am unsure how we existed previously in another age.

Augustine – (1) pg 51 – I am unsure how we existed previously in another age.

John of Damascus – (1) pg 53 – I am unsure how we existed previously in another age.

Ephrem the Syrian – (1) pg 53 – I am unsure how we existed previously in another age.

Our spirit / Breath of Life / is Immortal :

Tertullian – (6) pg 288 – Our spirit from God is immortal, including the evil spirits (Josh. 11:14).

We existed in Eden / Paradise :

Origen – (4) pg 91 – God showed Himself to us in the past....when we knew God (Rom 1:19-32).

Basil the Great – (1) pg 54 - Eden called our ancient fatherland, our homeland.

Gospel of Thomas – (7) #49 – Jesus said, “Blessed are the solitary and elect, for you will find the kingdom, for you are from it, and to it you will return”.

We existed as “trees” in Eden :

Jerome – (1) pg 55 – We are all planted in the Garden of Eden as trees – together with Christ, the Tree of Life.

Angels as supernatural material beings, and not spirit :

Justin Martyr – (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Irenaeus – (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Commodianus - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Julius Adricuhus - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Lactantius - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Archelaus - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Maves - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Tatian - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Origen - (6) pg 18 & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women – Gen. 6.
Gregory of Nazianzus – (1) pg 33 & 34 – “man” was created as a new angel
St. Clement of Alexandria – (5) pg 471 – the soul which becomes angelic (after being saved), will not again become flesh (as it once did).
St. Gregory of Nazianzus – (5) pg 471 – Unsure of the angels state as being spirit, as we become angelic.
Origen – (5) – pg 472 – Unsure of the angels state as being spirit, as our original nature is supernatural.

View of Original Sin in Eden / Paradise :

Augustine – (1) pg 39 – “man” not called a child of this world until he sinned.
Constantius – (4) pg 137 – Letter of St. Paul to Romans : All men followed the example of Adam, and sinned (Rom. 5:12 – all sinned – past tense – before this age).
Origen – (4) pg 136 – For all have sinned, including Adam – Rom. 5:12. Past tense – Greek Aorist – a single past action by each individual.
Justin Martyr – (6) pg 271 - For all have sinned, including Adam – Rom. 5:12. Past tense – Greek Aorist – a single past action by each individual.
Jerome – (1) pg 142 – We fell from paradise - by Christ we will be restored to paradise.
Chrysostom – (1) pg 37 – “man” led life like the angels until the fall.
Gregory of Nyssa – (1) pg 73 – “man” needs to be restored to his ancient state with the angels before the fall.
Basil the Great – (1) pg 54 – Eden called our ancient fatherland – our homeland.
Augustine – (1) pg 10 – Firmament divides heavenly matter – angels / souls, from perishable matter – flesh / man.
Tertullian – (6) pg415 – Souls know of good from the pre-existence.
St. John Chrysostom - (6) pg415 – Souls know of good from the pre-existence
Augustine – (5) pg 226 – Babies who die without the sacraments are doomed to hell, because of their sin before birth.
St. Clement of Alexandria – (5) pg 471 – The soul which becomes angelic (after being saved), will not again become flesh (as it once did).
Charles Ryrie (8) For all have sinned – past tense – Greek Aorist – a single past action by each individual.
Millard Erickson (9) For all have sinned – past tense – Greek Aorist – a single past action by each individual.
Ancient Commentary Romans (4) pg 135 – Most are unsure as to exactly how each person sinned in the past, unless we existed in Eden.
St. John Chrysostom – (5) pg 524-525 - Unsure as to exactly how each person sinned in the past, unless we existed in Eden.
St. Augustine (5) pg 534-535 - Unsure as to exactly how each person sinned in the past, unless we existed in Eden.

Waters Above and Below are Beings, Souls, Host :

Hexaemeron (1) pg 10 – These waters are beings, souls, and host of heaven – the waters below have fallen.
Augustine - (1) pg 10 – Firmament divides the heavenly matter – angles / souls, from the perishable matter – flesh / man.
Origen – (1) pg 11 – God previously made heaven – then He made the firmament, that is, the corporeal heaven.

We are Fallen from the Angels:

Gregory of Nyssa – (1) pg 73 – “The resurrection promises us nothing else than the restoration of the fallen to their ancient state; for the grace we look for is a certain return to the first life, a bringing back again to paradise those who were cast out from it. If then the life of those restored is closely related to that of the angels, it is clear that the life before the transgression was a kind of angelic life, and hence also our return to the ancient condition of life is compared to the angels.”
Gregory of Nazianzus – (1) pg 33 – Redeemed man is a new angel.
Chrysostom – (1) pg 37 – “man” led a life like the angels until he sinned.
Origen – (6) pg 489 – He speculated that souls existed in another world prior to their birth in humans. “It appears to me that this will be seen more clearly at last if each being – whether heavenly, earthly, or infernal – is said to have the causes of

his diversity in himself, prior to his bodily birth... There is no doubt that at the Day of Judgment, the good will be separated from the bad (and the just from the unjust) and all will be distributed according to their past.” “And in consequence of this prior existence, our souls contracted a certain amount of guilt in their sensitive nature, before their birth in the body.” “I say that God did not begin to work for the first time when he made this visible world. Just as there will be another world after its destruction, so also I believe that other worlds existed before the present one came into being, and both of these positions are confirmed by the authority of the Holy Scriptures – Eccl 1:9-10.”

Augustine – (1) pg 10 – The firmament divides the heavenly matter (angels / souls), from the perishable matter (man / flesh).

Clement of Alexandria – (5) pg 471 – The soul which becomes angelic (after being saved), will not again become flesh (as it once did).

St. Ambrose - (5) pg 472 – The resurrection, as the very form of the word shows, is this, that what has fallen should rise again. The word is not erect, but resurrect – to a supernatural state as in the previous age (Eden).

St Clement – (5) pg 474 – In what state were you saved ? In what did you recover your sight, except in this flesh – we saw before, and in the new birth we see again.

We are Predestined :

Ancient Commentary – Romans – (4) pg 233 – Most early Christians were unsure of how God justified predestination, unless God knew us in a previous existence.

Cyril of Alexandria – (4) pg 237 – God knew us before we were born, and predestined us.

The Earth Exists as a Real Planet in Genesis 1:2, Not a Formless Chaos of Gases :

Basil the Great – (1) pg 3 – This age is different from the age of the past – earth was a part of past age.

Gorman Gray – (8) The earth is not formless or in chaos (Gen. 1:2) – it existed already – it is here seen as barren and desolate.

David Eckman – Professor of Hebrew at Western Seminary. The context of the Hebrew is that the earth is fully formed in the beginning, and becomes barren and desolate, not formless.

J. Watts & Billy Smith – Baptist Theological Seminary – The better translation of the Hebrew in the context is not that God “moved” over the waters, but that He Brooded.

Basil the Great – (1) pg 2 & 9 – Most early Christians were unsure whether the earth was formless.

Gregory of Nyssa – (1) pg 12 – Early Christians were unsure whether the earth was formless, or not.

Two Separate Accounts or Narratives of The Genesis Creation – 7 Day and Eden :

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Athanasius – (1) pg xlvi – “But as we proceed in our exposition of this (the incarnation of the Word), we must first speak about the creation of the universe, and its creator, God, so that in this way we may consider as fitting that its renewal was effected by the Word who created it in the beginning.

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Men Profaned the Name of the Lord in Genesis 4:26 :

Jewish Mishnah – Man profaned God and began idolatry.

Jewish Targums - Man profaned God and began idolatry.

Jarome and Hermadadies - (9) pg 292 – With Enosh began idolatry.

Angels, not Humans, Took Wives in Genesis 6 :

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Origen - (6) pg 18, & 201 – Angels came to earth and had children with human women.

Everyone will be Called to Salvation :

Chrysotom – (4) pg 234 – Everyone will be called.
Cyril of Alexandria – (4) pg 237 – Everyone will be called.

The Two Witnesses in the End Times of Revelation 11 will be Enoch and Elijah :

Tertullian – (1) pg 121 – The two who did not die – Enoch and Elijah – will preach in the end.

- (1) **Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Genesis**, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, Chicago & London, 2001
- (2) **Introducing to the Old Testament**, Francisco, Southern Baptist Seminary, Broadman Press, Nashville, 1977.
- (3) **Genesis – A Royal Epic**, Fisher, Loren, 2001
- (4) **Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Romans**, Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, Chicago & London, 2001.
- (5) **The Teachings of the Church Fathers**, Willis, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2002.
- (6) **A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs**, Bercot, Hendrickson Publishers, Mass., 1998.
- (7) **Gospel of Thomas**, Nag Hammadi Library - discovered in 1945 in Egypt.
- (8) **The Age of the Universe**, Gorman Gray, Morningstar Publications, Washington, 2001.
- (9) **New American Commentary – Genesis 1-11**, Mathews, Broadman and Holman, 1996.
- (10) **In the Image of God**, Baker, Moody Press, Chicago, 1991.
- (11) **Target Truth Ministries.com**, Burney, Gerry, WND Press, 2017

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