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## Chapter 1

# The Nature of Man

**S**ome data for the study of mankind have long been available in the Bible although anthropology is a modern science. Since the study of anthropology includes the history of developing cultures, we may say that:

Old Testament history has much to tell us on the subject of African origins. Moreover, the Old Testament provides not only history of the Edenic creation and development of early cultures but also divine - commentary on the nature of man and his relationships. Further explication is given in the New Testament. It is of fundamental importance to Christian thinking to learn what the Word of God says concerning man and his relationships both to God and his fellow man.

Alexander Pope, in deistic fashion, recommended anthropology above theology: *“Know then thyself, presume not God to scan, The proper study of mankind is man.”* But if man is what the Bible says he is, he cannot know himself meaningfully apart from God. A limited secular anthropology may be possible, for man has a physical body, a mind with mental laws, and common cultural relations. But a more discerning knowledge even of these limited areas demands a theological perspective.

In the secular sense, it is highly recommended that we study **many books** and subjects of various genres to acquire a balanced understanding of the world in which we live and to appreciate, more particularly, an understanding of – *African Deep Thought*. I have always adopted the slogan – *“Never Without a Book.”* African Deep Thought implies true

intelligence that allows one to transcend superficial labels and media hype to a deeper level of realization of truth which allows tolerance for concepts heretofore unknown in the search for truth.

Hence a display of this type of intelligence is nothing other than to abstain from all harm by cultivating godly faith and love of our neighbors. It is clear from this that **we demonstrate our fear of God when we live justly with our brothers and sisters because godliness is the root of brotherly love.** Although many corrupt persons seem blameless in their life, and may show a rare integrity, yet no one ever loves his neighbor from his heart, unless he fears and reverences God. Agape love flows from the fear of God. This moves one beyond elemental bantering concerning dates, times, cultures, languages, and the proper name for the Creator God. For these and other reasons, the study of Christianity in an African context should be of considerable value. It follows that we should address the origin of the sacred text of the Bible that will be used as our anchor of intelligence and understanding.

*Forward excerpt from Chapter 1*

- Regarding the question of cultural/"genetic" identity linguistically linking Egypt and the rest of Africa, Cheikh Anta Diop's work "*The Cultural Unity of Black Africa*" demonstrates the extensive influence of ancient Egypt on classical Greece in terms of literature, science and philosophy. Nevertheless, there is continued agreement that *Homo sapiens*, modern man, appeared about 40,000 years ago, during the Upper Paleolithic. This first humanity, belonging to the lower layers of the Aurignacian, was probably related morphologically to the current Black type of humanity.

(Diop, Cheikh Anta. *The African Origin Of Civilization, Myth or Reality*)



- Before one attempts to present the current racial diversity in Africa, it is imperative to underscore the fact that Africa was the home of Black people long before there were any so-called racial categories.
- Africa is the mother continent of all humanity where God's presence was first made known. Judaism was shaped in the Nile Valley civilizations before the call of Abraham. Christianity also received significant influences from ancient African religions practiced in Kemet (Egypt) and their progenitors to the south, Nubia and Ethiopia. This signifies that God revealed Himself to our ancestors beginning with Adam. Christianity was shaped by the ancient culture and religions of Africa.

- Thus we see the African Church Father, St. Augustine asserting:  
**“That which is known as the Christian religion existed among the ancients, and never did not exist; from the beginning of the human race until the time when Christ came in the flesh, at which time the true religion, which already existed began to be called Christianity.”**

Before the Old Kingdom, known as the First Golden Age of Kemet (ca. 3340), both administrative structure and technological knowledge enabled the building of the great pyramids at Giza. Note that the Pyramid builders were primarily Black architects and engineers more so than slaves. Furthermore, Egypt and Mesopotamia were already engaged in significant cultural interchange. This took place some 1500 years before Israel was to appear.

The Sumerians created the civilization that already existed and was fully developed when history dawned in Mesopotamia. The Sumerians influenced the Akkadians and their successors who inhabited lower Mesopotamia in this period. While Sumer’s many cultural achievements are celebrated, the important question of her ethnic composition is frequently glossed over or left out of discussions all together. It is obvious that the bright light of Sumerian civilization must be attributed to the arrival of Black migrants from Africa’s Nile Valley. In their own literature the Sumerians called themselves “*the Black-Heads*,” and were only one of the numerous Nilotic Kushite colonies implanted in early Asia.

**(1) Mesopotamia.** The Sumerians were the creators of Mesopotamian civilization.<sup>1</sup> The Nile Valley origin of their civilization is possibly traced to the *Twa* people whose origin is south of the Nile Valley as inscribed in the Edfu text. Customs and religions of the historic Kemetu (Egyptians) of KMT suggest that the original home of their prehistoric Twa ancestors was to the south in a country in the neighborhood of

Uganda and Punt. (*The Biblical land of Punt is believed to be in the area now known as Somalia.*)

The famous inscription found in the Temple of Horus at Edfu and known as the "Edfu Text" at Kom Ombo is an important source document on the early



The Edfu Text at Kom Ombo

history of the Nile Valley.<sup>2</sup> This text gives an account of the origin of Egyptian civilization. According to this record, civilization was brought from the south by a band of wanderers under the leadership of King Horus, who was later deified. His followers were called "the blacksmiths" because they possessed iron implements. This early culture has been traced back to Somalia, although it may have originated in the

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9 LaSor, W., Hubbard, D., Bush, F., *Old Testament Survey*; Eerdmans Publishing 1996

10 GLOVIS Technologies, Inc., *Scientific and Technological Genius; The Contributions of Peoples of African Descent*, 1997

*Forward excerpt from Chapter 5*

## Chapter 5

**Community: Our Wilderness Experiences**

**T**he primary concern of Moses in the text of Deuteronomy (32:7-10) was to encourage us to begin the practice of reflecting that Life is God's precious treasure given to each of us. Your time, your physical well being, your love, your friendships, all are parts of God's gift of life to you. **Too often we lose those gifts before we begin to value them..** When you look there you find the words of Moses:

**Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. [8] When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. [9] For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. [10] He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. Deuteronomy 32:7-10**

We must understand that if life is to make sense, yesterday's wilderness experiences must provide guidance and confidence for today's living. In West Africa, the Adinkra symbols of the Akan people reflect the complexity of traditional Akan social and spiritual existence. Adinkra symbols also depict cultural mores, communal values and philosophical concepts. Moreover, they reflect common Akan wisdom relating to God and the spirituality of life and living. One such symbol is that of the "**Sankofa.**" The *Sankofa Bird* is used



to represent the symbol where a bird turning its head backward and its long beak is turned in the direction of its tail. This is a constant reminder that past experience must be a guide for the future. In other words, learn from or build on the past and move forward into the future. *Sankofa* is symbolic of the spiritual mind set and cultural awakening that people of African descent should be experiencing - the repossession of something that was forgotten and the initiation of a process to return to the place where the object was lost in order to *“fetch it”* and *“then move forward”* into the future. Thus the theme - *“Remembering our Faith, and Teaching the Future”*

**“History tells a people where they have been and what they have been, where they are and what they are. Most important, an understanding of history tells a people where they still must go and what they still must be.”**<sup>3</sup>  
This is the truth that lies behind the text of Deuteronomy 32.

*“Remember the days of old.”* This is an explanation of the preceding verse where Moses again shows how God had acquired this people, because he had chosen to separate them from other nations according to His own good pleasure. But, since the Israelites would become inflated by their present blessings and positions, they are reminded of their origin, and Moses commands them not to consider what they are now, but also the place where they had been found, and with **this view** he says, *Remember the old times; ask the elders*, etc.

We are the most recent recipients of this legacy that we must pass on also. For we know when people fail to remember that **whatever they have, proceeded from God,**

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37 John Henrik Clarke, *“African Peoples In World History”*