

The Attackers: Choplogic Illustrated: Cothran’s “A Whale of a Distinction”: The Porphyrian Tree & Classical Logic Refute Darwinian Evolution, Support Biblical Revelation; The Origin of Man: The Ex-Nihilo Creation of the Human Soul & the Yatsar Creation of Adam’s Body: the True Origin of the Species, Gen 1:26–27; 2:7

Choplogic is involved, superficial, and illogical argumentation. Formally it also meant a person who argues persistently but illogically. As an adjective *choplogic* means inclined to argue in an absurd fashion.¹

93. An illustration of choplogic versus logic is the subject of an article that appears in the Winter–2011 issue of *The Classical Teacher* magazine:²

Several years ago, a killer whale at the Orlando Marine Park drowned his trainer. Tilikum, the whale, made national headlines by dragging Dawn Brancheau, his young female caretaker, by her ponytail underwater to her death. And it wasn’t the first time. It was, in fact, Tilikum’s third such indiscretion.

A public debate about what to do with Tilikum ensued. Some called for the creature to be euthanized. Others argue that the whale, being an animal, did not understand what it was doing and could not, therefore, be held responsible for his actions.

“What,” asked one observer, “made Tilikum snap?” According to Bernd Wursig, a professor of marine biology at Texas A&M University, “Even though whales are bright and very well trained, they can show aggressivity if they feel threatened or if they’re in a bad mood. It can also be displacement if they haven’t had a good time with their pod members”

There you have it. “Aggressivity.” Should Tilikum have been killed? This was a question that everyone was asking. But it was a question that could not be answered until another question was settled.

What really was at issue was whether there was a fundamental difference between human beings and animals. If Tilikum were human, then fine—kill the fish. But if he was an animal, how could he be held responsible for what his animal nature drove him to do?

The classical conception of man considers him to be different, not just in degree, but in kind, from the beast. To the Greeks, man was a “rational animal.” This was not a judgment about his biological nature or origin: it was a metaphysical statement about what he essentially is.

¹ J. N. Hook, *The Grand Panjandrum: And 2,699 Other Rare, Useful, and Delightful Words and Expressions*, rev. ed. (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1991), 71.

² See visual: “Porphyrian Tree-Logic.” Developed by Porphyry \por'-fa-rē\ (A.D. 234–305), Greek scholar.

The Christian view of man—which, as in so many other things, was larger and more comprehensive than the worldviews that preceded it—incorporated the Greek view into its own idea that man was animal with a rational soul, an endowment he enjoyed by virtue of bearing the image of God.

One of the first things students who study traditional logic encounter is something called the “Porphyrian Tree,”³ ... a medieval flowchart showing the divisions of anything that objectively exists. In short, the Porphyrian Tree is an outline of the complexity of being of all things, from the simplest things on top, to the most metaphysically complicated thing (Man) on the bottom.

The fate of Tilikum is an easy decision once the distinction between man and beast is taken into account. Men differ essentially from animals, in the same way that animals differ essentially from plants, and plants from rocks, and rocks from angels. They differ not just in degree or biological complexity, but in their very metaphysical nature.

So here we have a creature that was designed by its Creator for roving the world’s oceans, eating everything in its path. Think about it: If you were a killer whale and someone captured you and put you in a tank (which to you is the equivalent of a moderate-sized bathtub), and forced you to perform tricks, among which is having humans stick their heads in your mouth, what would you do?

If I’m the whale, I’m biting the head off—and no court of rational animals in the land should convict me.

The trouble is that there are otherwise intelligent people, unhampered by a knowledge of the Porphyrian Tree, who think that there is no fundamental difference between animals and humans. The understanding of this difference is, in fact, the basis for human right—and the confusion about it is the basis for the animal rights movement.⁴

94. This system of logic was developed by a professed pagan whose opposition to Christianity was expressed in one of his many writings, *Against the Christians*. Porphyry’s work was so controversial that only fragments remained when in A.D. 448 they were ordered to be burned.

³ “The ‘tree’ is frequently used as an example of dichotomy. Its origin is to be found in Porphyry’s \pɒr-ˈfɑːrē\ *Isagoge in Aristotelis Categorias*. In the diagram, the names of the genera (‘substances’) occupy the middle column; the positive differences are on the left hand, the negative differences on the right” (*Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v.: “Porphyrian”).

⁴ Martin Cothran, “A Whale of a Distinction,” *The Classical Teacher*, Winter 2011, 28–29.

95. Yet even in the mind of a pagan, logic demanded that man be distinguished from the faunas and the floras. Logic concludes that man is rational and has the capacity to arrive at truth through logical reasoning.
96. Animals and plants are each a living organism but incapable of either rational or logical thought.
97. Darwinians, evolutionists, naturalists, and uniformitarians all agree that man evolved from non-living material into a living organism and over long spans of time traversed the categories of flora and fauna to the level of rational human being.
98. But what does Scripture have to say about this notion? The next increment in our search for truth takes up the subject of man's arrival on the planet.
99. This brings us back to Genesis where we observe the Lord's creative acts that produced the first two Homo sapiens, Adam and Ishah.
100. Analysis will show that were evolution a reality the salvation of mankind would not have been possible.

The Origin of Rational Man

1. In Genesis 1:26-28, the Trinity decreed to create the souls of mankind in Their image, both male and female.
2. Immediately we find the divine arrangement: the Lord knew that the man would be alone and therefore provided a solution to the problem ahead of time. He decreed to supply Adam with a counterpart who would complement him.
3. This counterpart was the female who is designed specifically for Adam. She was a perfect woman provided to a perfect man each having perfect life in a perfect environment.
4. Since they were perfect, then salvation was not an issue. Thus the first blessing to be given to Adam was the woman.
5. The first item on the divine agenda was the creation of our original parents' souls. This is recorded in:

Genesis 1:26 - Then God said, “Let Us make [עָשָׂה] (*‘asah*): to create from a preexisting pattern] man [אָדָם] (*‘atham*): the human race] in Our image [similar soul essence but with individual personalities], according to Our likeness ...

v. 27 - And God created [בָּרָא] (*bara’*): *ex-nihilo* creation of the soul] the man [הָאָדָם] (*ha-‘atham*): *the man Adam*] in His own image, in the image of God He created [*bara’*] him; male [זָכָר] (*zecher*): the male gender of the species] and female [נְקֵבָה] (*neqevah*): the female gender of the species] He created [*bara’*] them.

6. Note that the word for “man” in verse 26 is the masculine singular of אָדָם (*‘atham*), but when used without the definite article it always refers to the human race: mankind, Homo sapiens.
7. This same noun is used in Genesis 1:27 and 2:7 but *with* the definite article and makes reference to a specific personality, “the man” we call Adam.
8. Verse 26 is the divine decree to create אָדָם (*‘atham*), the “human race,” with souls that reflect the essence of divine personality.
9. Verse 27 is the divine decree to first create the man—הָאָדָם (*ha-‘atham*)—with the female to be provided later.
10. Therefore, the physical creation of our original parents occurred in sequence. First, Adam, then the woman. The account of the former is recorded in:

Genesis 2:7 - Then the Lord God [יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים] (*Yehovah Elohiym*), Jesus Christ] formed [יָצַר] (*yatsar*): to create by molding preexisting materials] the man [הָאָדָם] (*ha-‘atham*): *the man Adam*] of dust from the ground, and breathed [נָפַח] (*naphach*): to blow] into his nostrils the breath [נְשָׁמָה] (*neshamah*): indicates selection] of lives [plural of חַי] (*chay*): lives: physical and spiritual]; and man became a living being [נֶפֶשׁ] (*nephesh*): trichotomous human life: body, soul, spirit].

11. This is the true origin of the species! Darwin was correct when he asserted that man originated from the earth, however it was not by means of natural processes over billions of years culminating through natural selection into Homo sapiens.
12. Jesus Christ, used the existing materials which He created in Genesis 1:1 and molded them (יָצַר [yatsar]) to form the first member of the human race, הָאָדָם (ha-'atham): Adam. He then selected him to physical life and spiritual life.