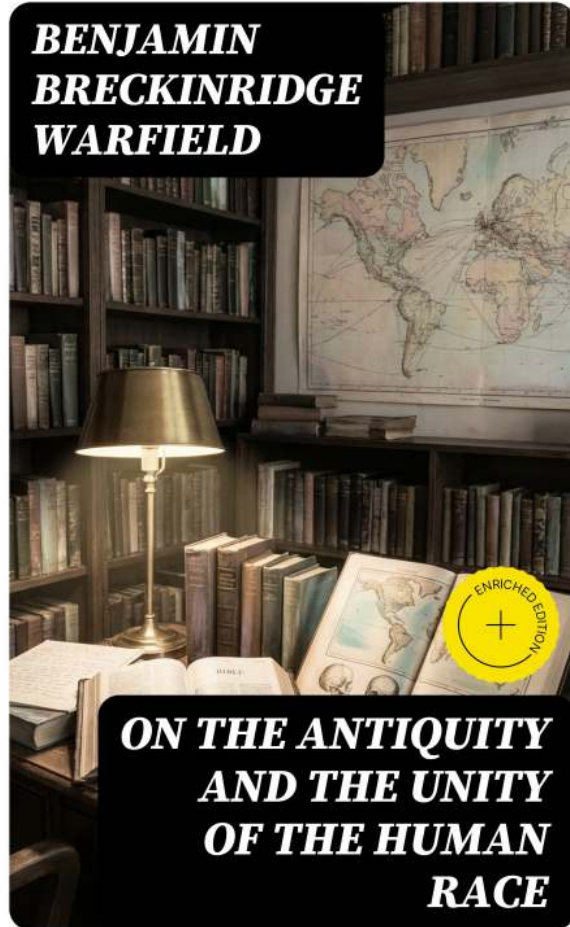


***BENJAMIN  
BRECKINRIDGE  
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***ON THE ANTIQUITY  
AND THE UNITY  
OF THE HUMAN  
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**Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield**

# **On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race**

**Enriched edition.**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Quinn Theodore*

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# Introduction

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Can a rigorous reading of Scripture sustain both the profound antiquity of humankind and the indivisible unity of the human family while engaging, rather than evading, the strongest scientific claims of its day, and what does such a synthesis demand of theological method, historical exegesis, and moral imagination when assertions about origins, chronology, and race contend in church and academy alike, requiring convictions about sin and salvation, creation and providence, to be articulated in a manner that neither collapses biblical testimony into skepticism nor quarantines faith from inquiry, but instead invites disciplined reasoning to hold together truth's breadth without surrendering its depth?

*On the Antiquity and the Unity of the Human Race* is a theological essay by Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, a leading Reformed scholar associated with Princeton Theological Seminary. Composed in the early twentieth century, it stands in the milieu of Anglo-American Protestant debates about biblical interpretation and the emerging disciplines of anthropology and historical criticism. The work operates within the study and lecture rooms of the seminary and the wider conversation of learned journals, where careful argument and documentation are expected. Its genre is analytic and doctrinal, aiming to test contested claims about human origins against the canons of Scripture, tradition, and reason.

Warfield's premise is straightforward yet demanding: take seriously the biblical witness to a single human family and examine how that witness relates to evidence suggesting humanity's great age. Readers encounter a voice that is scholarly without showmanship, marked by precise definitions, patient step-by-step reasoning, and a sober, courtroom-like tone. The style is exegetical and historical, moving from text to context and back again, with measured engagement of contemporary scientific literature. Rather than sensational claims, the essay offers carefully drawn distinctions and modest conclusions, inviting readers to weigh premises and inferences and to see how theological commitments can coexist with empirical inquiry.

Several themes emerge with clarity. The doctrine of creation anchors the unity of the race, orienting discussions of sin, redemption, and the shared vocation of humankind. The interpretation of early biblical narratives is treated with historical sensitivity, including how chronological reckonings have been approached across the Christian tradition. Warfield traces how theological anthropology resists attempts to divide humanity into unrelated stocks, not by minimizing data but by asking what counts as adequate evidence and how Scripture's scope should govern conclusions. Throughout, the essay models hermeneutical restraint, refusing to press texts beyond their intent or to read scientific hypotheses as settled dogma.

In our present moment, questions of human dignity and social solidarity remain urgent, and the essay's insistence on a single human family provides a principled platform for rejecting hierarchies that dehumanize. By grounding unity in