

## Lesson 2 – 7 February 2010

### The Creation of Man

**Lesson Scope:** [Genesis 1:26-2:25](#)

#### Lesson Focus

On the sixth day of creation, God made man. God blessed man, gave him authority on earth, and commanded him to be fruitful. Created with capacities shared only by God, man is uniquely different from any other creation. He is capable of language re. love. friendship. prudent judgment. and careful stewardship.

"Male and female created he them." Although man is the crowning work of creation, he is not self-sufficient. He has needs, both social and emotional, that can be filled only by the companionship of other people. Man and woman were created with special roles to fill throughout life. The institution of marriage in Genesis 2 helps to maintain social order and the purity of the human family.

God made man in His own image. After forming a body from the dust, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Man has capacities that can be categorized as moral, rational, or aesthetic. These categories might prove helpful when considering the "image of God"

**Lesson Aim:** To understand the significant place of man in God's creation.

**Theme Verse:** [Psalm 139:14](#). I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

#### Lesson Text.

##### Man's Creation

[Genesis 1:26-27](#)

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. <sup>27</sup>So God created man in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

## Man's Commission

### Genesis 1:28-31

And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

<sup>29</sup>And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which *is* upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which *is* the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. <sup>30</sup>And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein *there is* life, *I have given* every green herb for meat: and it was so. <sup>31</sup>And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, *it was* very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

### Genesis 2:7-8

And the LORD God formed man *of* the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

<sup>8</sup>And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

### Genesis 2:15-17

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: <sup>17</sup>But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

## Man's Companion

### Genesis 2:18-24

And the LORD God said, *It is* not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. <sup>19</sup>And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought *them* unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that *was* the name thereof. <sup>20</sup>And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him. <sup>21</sup>And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; <sup>22</sup>And the rib, which

the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. <sup>23</sup>And Adam said, This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. <sup>24</sup>Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

## Questions for Study

### Man's Creation

1. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?
2. Is man still made in the image of God? Explain.

### Man's Commission

3. How does man "have dominion" over the creatures of the earth?
4. What are some worldly philosophies that run counter to the command to "be fruitful, and multiply"?
5. Name activities of man that involve both his body and his spirit.

### Man's Companion

6. What is the role of man? of woman?
7. Describe a Biblical vision for the home.

## Analyzing the Passage

This account of Creation differs in interesting ways from the account in chapter 1. The first chapter describes the world as "very good" while the second chapter shows Adam alone and needy and the earth having yet the need for someone to dress and keep it. The first tells us that man was made in the image of God while the second tells us that man was formed of dust. The second chapter contains two very different trees and the grave possibility of death. But the crowning element of chapter 2 is the glory of an immortal soul clothed in an earthly body.

The name for God in chapter 1 is *Elohim*. In chapter two, the Scriptures call LORD God *Yehovah Elohim*, which means "the self-existing one" In chapter 1 *Elohim* was speaking the world into existence. In chapter 2, He who exists of Himself was bringing mankind into existence.

*Replenish* (Genesis 1:28) means "to fill" *Subdue* is synonymous with "conquer"

## **Principles and Applications**

### **Man's Creation**

1. *Man is created in the image of God* (Gen.1:26-27). The term "image of God" can be understood as just a little lower than God. Sometimes the illustration is given of a shadow. The shadow bears some resemblance to the object that casts the shadow. From the first two chapters of Genesis we see that God exercises speech and reason, freedom in choosing His actions, and powers of contemplation, judgment, and care. Man resembles God in these ways. Man also shares with God the faculties of memory, emotion and moral understanding. Perhaps the most Godlike characteristic of man is his ability to love. Whereas reason and freedom have the potential for good or evil, true love can only be good. Because "God is love," it is fitting that man, the image of God, expresses love.

2. *God has given man authority over His creation* (Gen.1:26). Man exists at the expense of the animals. Worldly thinking would have us live as though thinking animals have rights. Because animals have life, they should be spared cruel tortures. But man's authority over the creation means that man can use animals for work, to sustain life, or for enjoyment.

### **Man's Commission**

3. *Man is responsible to propagate the human race* (Gen.1:28). This is one of the very few commands given to man at the creation. God's plan includes a populated earth. As Bible-believing people, we should not gauge our family size by the standards of the surrounding society. The heart of faith responds as Mary did: "Be it unto me according to thy word. We must always see children as a blessing and a gift of God (Psalm 127).

4. *God created life on the earth for man's physical sustenance..* (Gen.1:29-31). Man is uniquely a unity of body, soul, and spirit. Jesus said, "Man shall not live by bread alone," but food is certainly a vital part of life. To meet these needs, God gave to man the vegetable kingdom to use for food. Later, God Himself clothed Adam and Eve with the skins of animals and required animal sacrifice. After the Flood, God gave explicit permission to man to use the animals for food (Genesis 9:3)).

5. *God set man apart from the rest of creation by imparting to him a living soul* (Gen.2:7). The "dust of the ground" was inspired with the "breath of life." This is what man is, a unity of earth and heaven, of soil and air. No other creature is so unique. By giving man a living soul, God has provided, the truly human features of emotion and desire. Singing, praying, and do-

ing good to others are physical functions that involve the spirit and doing good.

Man will never be like an animal, satisfied with just the things of earth, because his soul yearns for heavenly realities. Because this is true, the world's efforts to improve the condition of man whether by government reforms, psychiatry, or other means, will never fully succeed. They treat man as if he were just the "dust of the ground" and do not meet the needs of the living soul.

6. *God gave to man a choice to obey or to disobey His commands with eternal consequences* (Gen.2:16-17). The will of man is the instrument by which man determines his eternal life or death. The ability to choose is a primary component of love. To love without a choice is not love. God is not playing a game with man to see what his eternal destiny might become. Rather, He commands man to obey Him. He sets a knowledge of good and evil in our hearts (see Romans 2:14-15). He has sent teachers and prophets to persuade man to obey God. He sent His own Son to help us choose to love Him. Providence also works for us, shaping our circumstances. Eternal death is the result of not choosing to love God.

#### **Man's Companion**

7. *God gave man the responsibility of naming the animal kingdom.* (Gen.2:19). This activity of naming is typical of mankind generally. Man's rational capacities are utilized by giving, naming, sorting out in priority, and giving his own order to God's already-ordered world. God was the first to name things when He called the light day and the darkness night. Man's ability to name the animals further highlights that man is made after God's own image.

8. *Man's social needs were met through the creation of woman* (Gen.2:21-23). Man is not self-sufficient. God saw Adam's need for someone to provide for him physically and emotionally. But the woman was brought forth from Adam's side for more than this. She is as much a living soul as the man. Together, they complement each other and provide endless opportunity to discover what humanity is in its fullness.

9. *From Creation, the institution of marriage between a man and a woman was for the purity and stability of the human family* (Gen.2:24). God sanctioned only one kind of union between two people. When individuals and nations disregard God's design, chaos and confusion result. In this day of moral decay and low esteem for marriage, it is imperative that we continue to build strong, scripturally founded homes.

## **Important Teachings**

1. Man is created in the image of God (1:26-27).
2. God has given man authority over His creation (1:26).
3. Man is responsible to propagate the human race (1:28).
4. God created life on the earth for man's physical sustenance (1:29-31).
5. God set man apart from the rest of creation by imparting to him a living soul (2:7).
6. God gave to man a choice to obey or to disobey His commands with eternal consequences (2:16-17).
7. God gave man the responsibility of naming the animal kingdom (2:19).
8. Man's social needs were met through the creation of woman (2:21-23).
9. From creation, the institution of marriage between a man and a woman was for the purity and stability of the human family (2:24).

## **Summarizing the Lesson**

"When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and the son of man, that thou visitest him"? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: all sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field, the fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!" (Psalm 8:3-9).

## **Answers to Questions**

1. What does it mean to be created in the image of God?

This question might yield a variety of answers. These broad areas should be touched on: reason (including language, contemplation, and analyzing), emotion (primarily love, but also joy, desire, and so forth), free will and morality (consider the term free moral agent). Man is also an eternal being.

2. Is man still made in the image of God? Explain.

Man is still in the image of God, but he now carries a sinful nature in addition to the blessings bestowed at Creation. What God once called good is still good. Sin and the fallen nature dispose us to misuse our God-given nature.

3. How does man "have dominion" over the creatures of the earth?

Man is able to tame and harness animals. He may use them for work, to sustain his own life with food, clothing, and other items, and for his pleasure.

4. What are some worldly philosophies that run counter to the command to "be fruitful, and multiply"?

The birth of children is always addressed positively in the Scriptures. Psalm 127; Luke 18:16; and Exodus 1:7, among others, express this. The world says that children are a financial and personal burden, that natural resources will not meet the demands of a large population, and that it is good to avoid bearing children.

5. Name activities of man that involve both his body and his spirit. include could include the practice of the seven ordinances, singing, prayer, and works of charity. This question highlights the fact that our body is not merely a shell for the spiritual, but it is an integral part of our spiritual life. Of course, sinning also can involve both body and spirit.

6. What is the role of man? of woman?

Mankind's role, either as man or woman, is outlined in Genesis 1:26-30. They are to have dominion over creation and bring forth new life. As for the gender roles, the man takes a role of leadership while the woman is a "help meet for him." The fact that the woman came from the side of the man suggests an equality with him.

7. Describe a Biblical vision for the home.

Husband and wife are faithful to each other. They have children, as God blesses. Within the family, there is obedience, respect, and reverence toward God, toward parents, and between marriage partners. The family daily communes with God. They order their lives with wisdom. Each member has work to fulfill.

### **Research Guide**

Study Doctrines of the Bible, Part 11, pages 83-88 on the doctrine of man. (Daniel Kauffman Editor).