

Lesson 12
The Creation Of Man
Genesis 1:26-31

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The four great questions of life are: Who am I? Where did I come from? What is my purpose? Where am I going? Genesis 1:26-31 certainly gives a positive answer to the first three questions. NOTE: Actually these questions can only be answered through God's inspired revelation of His creation of man on the sixth day.

B. The answer to man's mannishness, the discovery of himself, is found in his relationship to God. Until man finds God, existence is a dilemma and life is meaningless.

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF MAN 1:26a

A. "And God said" Man is the produce of a sovereign God. His creation was immediate and complete (Gen. 2:7). The answer for man is found in his relationship to God.

B. "Let us make man" - The plural "us" undoubtedly refers to the Trinity. This is the first major revelation in the Old Testament of the fact that God is not a single unit but that there are other Persons within the Godhead, and He is talking to the other Persons involved. NOTE. Man is clearly distinct from the animal world, for he appears on the scene of history only after God has held a divine consultation about him. It is interesting that the idea of a Trinity only appears in connection with the emergence of man upon the earth. It is only man, among the creatures of God, who can understand and enter into an experience with a triune God. Animals cannot worship God, but humans have been given the capacity for God.

C. "In our image, after our likeness;" - The big question is what does it mean to be made in the image and likeness of God? Notice that this was not said of any other creatures. To be made in the image and glory of God shows the dignity and glory of man. NOTE. Is the image of God material or immaterial? The Mormons teach that the image of God in man is the body of man. They base this upon certain anthropomorphic expressions in the Bible, those expressions, which seem to impute human features to God (eyes of God, fingers of God, hand of God, etc). The Mormons say that God has a body like man, but this contradicts the teaching of the Bible, which says God is spirit (John 4:24). NOTE. It is very difficult to distinguish image and likeness and for all practical purposes they are one in the same.

1. The Image is Will, Intellect and Emotion. Man was made in the likeness of God and God, being a person, is made up of will, mind and emotion. God made man in his image with a mind to know God, an emotion to love God and a will to choose for God, Man's personality reflected the personality of the Creator. Adam was not a programmed creature; he had unlimited freedom. He was as free as any man could be under the sovereignty of God. NOTE. The ability to will, feel and think are found in all animals to some degree, for all animals have a soul. But the human Soul was unique for it was created in the direct image of God. His soul capacity clearly marks him off from the animal world.

2. The Image is Creativity, Communication and Morality. Some feel that image is not the soul *per se* but the spirit in man. It is the spiritual capacity in man that distinguishes him from the animal world. God is spirit (John 4:24), and He can only be known through the spirit in man Rom. 8:16). It is the Spirit in man that enables him to worship.

a. Creativity. In Genesis 1 we read, "God created (made)." This activity involves imagination and the ability to think in conceptual terms. Man, being in the image of God, can also make things, not to the same degree that God does, for man cannot make things out of nothing. Yet man can compose a symphony, design a computer, paint a picture, etc. An animal cannot do this. Man was originally designed to use his creativity for God.

b. Communication. Genesis 1 said that God speaks and so does man. Man is the only creature that can talk. Animals make sounds but they do not convey ideas through verbalizing. NOTE: Man was originally created to communicate with God and man.

c. Morality. In Genesis 1, God pronounces many things good. God is a moral being, and man shares that character as well. Man has the faculty of distinguishing between good and evil. All men in every society have some sense of right and wrong, which is not found in the animal kingdom. NOTE: Man was originally created as a moral creature.

3. Conclusion: When God created man in His image, the glory, dignity and value of man was set forth (Psa. 8:5 "For thou hast made him but a little lower than God"). If man came from slime through chance, as the evolutionist says, then man is faced with a horrifying dilemma: he has no planned beginning, no purpose, no future. Only the Bible makes man valuable because he is a creature of God. Men are not high forms of animals but are the creation of God.

III. THE AUTHORITY OF MAN (1:26b): Man was given the task of ruling and governing the earth by exercising dominion over everything within the earth. He was to subdue its forces, to master them and bring them all under his control and direction. The whole course of history is simply the record of man's attempt to fulfill these divine injunctions. NOTE: The final fulfillment of this command will be in the Millennium.

IV. THE DUTY OF MAN (1:27-28)

A. Genesis 1:27 speaks of male and female, which shows that man is a sexual creature. This strong capacity for sex is to be used to reproduce the human race. Man was commanded to be "fruitful and multiply, and replenish (fill) the earth" (1:28). NOTE: Man as a sexual creature is given divine authority for the act of sex. However, sex is more than physical; it is emotional, psychological and above all spiritual. God intended sex within the marriage union.

B. Genesis 1:28 says that God commanded man to "subdue" the earth; that is, man was to have dominion over it.

V. THE SUSTENANCE FOR MAN (1:29-30)

A. Originally all animals were herbivorous (plant eaters). NOTE: Apparently animals did not become meat eaters until after the Fall. Before the Fall, there was abundant plant life.

B. Man, in the beginning, was also a vegetarian. God did not give man the permission to eat meat until after the Flood (Gen. 9:3).

VI. THE APPROVAL OF MAN (1:31): God saw his creation of man and he said, "It was very good." God was pleased with his creature man

VII. CONCLUSION

A. Man was created with glory, dignity and value with the capacity to worship God and the authority to rule the earth. Why is it that man has not lived up to his potential? It is because of SIN: Whatever else is true of man, it is certainly true that man is not what he was meant to be. NOTE: Sinned marred man's image but it did not eradicate it. (Gen. 9:6; James 3:9) and salvation is all about restoring to man in Christ what he lost in Adam (Col. 3:9-10; Eph. 4:24).

B. The Fall resulted in the corruption of man's will, mind and emotion. Sin is why man can create, but everything he creates has a twist towards evil. Sin is why man can communicate, but not only does he communicate truth and beauty, but also lust and hate and filth and bigotry and death. Sin is why, though he still knows moral values, he denies them and rationalizes them to exalt evil. Sin has de-valued and shamed man, so that the image with which he was created by God has been marred by sin.