



Part 9 – The Creation of Humanity (2)

Genesis 1:24-31

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

The Bible tells a unified story which begins with the creation account. We cannot slough off the Bible's account of the creation of the man and woman and expect to be left with a coherent story. Indeed, the biblical writers connect the most important themes in the Scriptures with an understanding of Adam and Eve as the first humans.

In the preface to his book *Genesis in Space and Time* Francis Schaeffer warns against reading the opening chapters of Genesis as nothing more than a religious “upper-story.” That is, Schaeffer was warning against the trend in contemporary theology to read the creation account as merely a religious tale meant to teach certain truths while allowing “any sense of truth in regard to history and the cosmos to be lost.” He states that, “without a proper understanding of [the Genesis account of creation] we have no answer to the problems of metaphysics, morals or epistemology, and furthermore, the work of Christ becomes one more upper-story ‘religious’ answer.” If the Genesis account of creation is regarded as too supernatural to take as actual history then what is keeping us from making the same judgment about what the Bible teaches about our Lord?

The Significance of the Bible's account of human origins

1) It is the basis for recognizing the dignity of all humans.

Genesis 1:26

Then 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 birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

- The question mankind has been asking for generations is “Who am I?” What is it that sets apart humanity from the rest of the living creatures? Is it only time, mutation, and chance? Are those factors the only substantive difference between mankind and horseshoe crabs? A chance beginning in the primordial muck cannot explain consciousness, personality, and relationships. It cannot explain the religious impulse, societal organization, and culture building. Humans via natural selection cannot explain the works of Homer, Mozart's *Requiem*, or Caravaggio's portrait of David. Humanity, like the rest of creation stands as constant witness to the works of “God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.”
- Only the Genesis account of creation can explain the uniqueness of the human creature. Only by God's sovereign act of bringing forth the man and woman in the way described in God's Word can we uphold the inherent dignity and worth of humanity from conception until natural death. And only by way of the Genesis account can men and women understand themselves to be worshipping beings designed by God, for God (Acts 17:22ff).

2) It is the basis for the unity of all humans.

Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

- The Genesis account does not allow for the notion that God “adopted” one human couple from a race of existing *homo sapiens*. Such attempts to accommodate the Bible to fit currently favored scientific presuppositions are unnecessary. Not only that, those attempts undermine any objective basis for human solidarity and dignity.
- Acts 17:22-31

And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, (Vs. 26).

- Well known racists like Adolph Hitler and Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood, were thoroughgoing atheists. Human ascent via natural selection offers no objective basis to reject racism. The biblical creation account teaches us that every human being can trace his or her lineage back to two common ancestors. Whatever differences there are in ethnicity and nationality, every human being is ultimately related and members of the same race.

3) It is the basis for the marriage relationship.

Genesis 2:18-25

Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Vs. 24).

- The very first organized institution God created was the family via marriage between a man and woman. It has remained the pattern for all those who marry ever since. Marriage is a holy thing because God created it. Therefore, even unbelievers are accountable to God to follow his pattern of marriage.
- In responding to a question about the lawfulness of divorce Jesus answered by quoting Genesis 2:24 (Matthew 19:5; Mark 10:7). Jesus understood the events described in the creation account as historical and therefore morally binding. The marriage of Adam and Eve is paradigmatic for all human marriage.

4) It is the basis for understanding gender and sexuality.

Genesis 1:27-28

*So God created man in his own image,
in the image of God he created him;
male and female he created them.*

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it..."

- The pattern of creation confirmed in biology is that sex and gender correspond (Sadly, in our fallen world, there are rare exceptions to this). Every cell in our body along with our physical architecture testify to this unity of gender and sex. What is more, gender is unavoidably binary. So serious was God about this binary construct of gender that he created only "male and female" in his image (Genesis 1:27). Reproduction depends upon this binary construct for gender. All of the living creatures on earth reproduce according to their own kind, male and female. Any rejection of this pattern is tantamount to self-deification and a vandalizing of God's created order. Nature itself reacts against the rejection of this God-given pattern of gender and sexuality.
- Paul's use of marriage as a living illustration of Christ's love for his church functions only if we accept the biblical categories of gender, sexuality, and marriage (Ephesians 5:22ff).

5) It is the basis for understanding God's redemptive work through Jesus.

Genesis 3:15

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

- The Genesis account tells us why things are not the way they are supposed to be. Decay and death were not part of God's original "very good" creation (Genesis 1:31). Even those who deny God's Word know that things are not in order. The Bible's account of Adam and Eve explains what went wrong in creation.
- Romans 8:18-23 – All creation "groans" under the weight of the fall. This groaning will last until Christ's work of redemption is completed in the age to come.
- As the Apostle Paul makes clear in Romans chapter 5, Jesus' work of atoning for the sins of God's people through his life, death, and resurrection was in direct contrast with Adam's sin. We understand the saving work of Christ in part through the biblical account of the creation and fall of humankind.
- Romans 5:12-21

Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. (Vv. 18-19)