

What We Believe

Article 3 of 13: Creation of Humanity

Creation of Humanity: We believe that God created human beings, male and female, in His own image. Adam and Eve belonged to the created order that God Himself declared to be very good, serving as God's agents to care for, manage, and govern creation, living in holy and devoted fellowship with their Maker. Men and women, equally made in the image of God, enjoy equal access to God by faith in Christ Jesus and are both called to move beyond passive self-indulgence to significant private and public engagement in family, church, and civic life. Adam and Eve were made to complement each other in a one-flesh union that establishes the only normative pattern of sexual relations for men and women, such that marriage ultimately serves as a type of the union between Christ and His church. In God's wise purposes, men and women are not simply interchangeable, but rather they complement each other in mutually enriching ways. God ordains that they assume distinctive roles which reflect the loving relationship between Christ and the church, the husband exercising headship in a way that displays the caring, sacrificial love of Christ, and the wife submitting to her husband in a way that models the love of the church for her Lord. In the ministry of the church, both men and women are encouraged to serve Christ and to be developed to their full potential in the manifold ministries of the people of God. The distinctive leadership role within the church given to qualified men is grounded in creation, fall, and redemption and must not be sidelined by appeals to cultural developments.

Humanity the Special Creation of God

If you recall in our first article under the topic of God as Creator, we stated that God created the universe by speaking it into being "ex-nihilo" that is, out of nothing. God created the universe and humanity for His own good pleasure, Col. 1:16. As we consider the special creation of humanity we see that the first man Adam was created by God from the elements of the earth as the material source Gen 2:7. The word *adam* in Hebrew is associated with the Hebrew verb to be "red" and the noun "ground". Adam can refer to "the first man" and is used as his proper name. It can also mean "man" or "mankind."

The first woman, Eve was created by God from Adam as the material source. The Bible says she was called Eve, because she was the mother of all living, Gen 3:20. The Hebrew word for Eve, *hawwa* is similar to the Hebrew word for "living", *hay* or *hayya*. She was referred to a "woman" because she was created out of man, the Hebrew *Ish-shah*, i.e., "out of man."

Humans are God's Special Creation!

Louis Berkhof described the creation of man and woman as "immediate acts of God." Humanity was not brought into being through a process of "ameba to man" evolution, nor even some intermediate process of "theistic evolution", both of these theories contradict the historical narrative of Genesis.



God created humanity by immediate and direct acts of special creation, the man from the elements of the earth and the woman from the body of the first man. This does not mean that humanity has not experienced biological change and variation. But the types of changes that would be necessary for "macro-evolution" to have occurred, that humans have

evolved from lower forms would be monumental and could not have occurred by mere natural process or chance. Human biology is much too complex for this to have occurred. The history of supposed human evolution is polluted with fraud and clouded with false philosophical views. The age old unanswered question for the naturalist/materialist is how can non-living matter spring to life on its own? This defies the most foundational laws of biology. It could be said that the Achilles heel of Darwinian evolution is the irreducible complexity of the cell. Darwinianism depended on the concept of a very simple cell. Modern research shows that plant, animal and human cells are too complex to have evolved. Theistic evolution portrays God as using random chance, mutations, suffering and death to produce humanity, when the Bible calls death the last enemy. This portrays God's character wrongly, diminishing His holiness and goodness. The theory of "Theistic Evolution" does not glorify God!

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." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. Genesis 1:26,27 also Genesis 5:2

Genesis ch.1–11 are very important to Christian doctrine. Enemies of the faith are always trying to undermine the real historicity of these chapters. In our first article on the Triune God we noted that the Genesis account is an inspired, truthful, ancient Hebrew historical narrative of creation. So many important foundational truths are revealed in these chapters such as the origins of the universe and all life, human origins, the foundations of human nature and government, the Fall, Redemption, the subsequent differences that arose in human ethnicities and cultures, etc.



If these foundational chapters are undermined, the necessity of redemption in Christ would also be undermined! The argument by the Apostle Paul for the resurrection of Christ in 1 Cor. 15 comes in view,

"But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." 1 Cor. 15:20-22

For believers, it is ultimately Jesus' acts and teachings that validate the Old Testament in general and these very important first chapters of Genesis in view. Jesus referred to the first chapters as true history during His ministry. His words are authoritative for us as His disciples. He is God who became flesh. Jesus is truth incarnate. He has validated His own message and teaching by rising from the dead.

Jesus referring to Genesis 1:27 and 5:2 says,

"But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female.' Mark 10:6 See also Matt. 19:4

Adam and Eve were real-live flesh and blood people!

They were special creations of God!

Genesis is true history recorded in ancient Hebrew narrative!

These truths are validated by our Lord Jesus Christ.



Created in God's image and likeness

Humanity is a higher created order than animals and plants. Humans were created in the image of God, possessing not only a body with biological life, but more importantly a soul or spirit in the likeness of God. The words for soul and spirit are used synonymously throughout Scripture as representative of the inner being or spiritual essence of a person. Scripture does not refer to animals as having this spiritual dimension.



What is the image of God in man? It is in the fact that humans are created in God's image that human dignity has its foundation. It is for this reason that murder; abortion and sexual immorality are forbidden. This is why we should honor others above ourselves, that children should honor their parents, that we should care for the infirm and the mentally ill.

Louis Berkhof commented,

"According to Scripture man was created in the image of God, and is therefore God-related." "The words 'image' and 'likeness' are synonymous and used interchangeably." "The image of God in which man was created certainly includes what is generally called 'original righteousness,' or ... true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. ... These three elements constitute the original righteousness, which was lost by sin ... It may be called the moral image of God. ... one of positive holiness, and a state of innocence or moral neutrality." "But the image of God is not to be restricted to the original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness which was lost by sin, but also includes elements which belong to the natural constitution of man. They are elements which belong to man as man, such as intellectual power, natural affections, and moral freedom. ... man has a rational and moral nature, which he did not lose by sin and which he could not lose without ceasing to be man ..." "another element usually included in the image of God is that of spirituality, God is Spirit, and it is but natural to expect that this element of spirituality also finds expression in man as the image of God." "According to Scripture the essence of man consists in this, that he is the image of God..."
Louis Berkhof, Systematic Theology, p. 204, 205

Wayne Grudem comments:

"Out of all the creatures God made, only one creature, man, is said to be made 'in the image of God.' What does that mean? We may use the following definition: The fact that man is made in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God. When God says, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness' (Gen. 1:26), the meaning is that God plans to make a creature similar to himself. Both the Hebrew word for 'image' (tselem) and the word for 'likeness' (demut) refer to something that is similar but not identical to the thing it represents or is an 'image' of.

The image can also be used of something that represents something else.” ... When Scripture reports that God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness’ ..., it simply would have meant to the original readers, ‘Let us make man to be like us and to represent us.’

Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology p. 442, 443

We will discuss the effects of the Fall more fully in our next article, however here we will just briefly state that in the Fall, God’s image in mankind was severely distorted, but was not lost. Since man sinned, he is not like God fully as he had been before and his original moral purity was lost so that man in his current state of depravity does not reflect God’s holiness as he had before.

When God had created our first parents, He proclaimed them “very good.” Adam and Eve in their original created condition were in innocence and human perfection. They had spiritual life, but they did not possess eternal life. The concept of “life” is grander than mere biological life. Spiritual life is a quality of life that we could say is “alive in relation to God.” In redemption through Christ, this spiritual life has an eternal and irreversible character to it. It is eternal life in Christ. As we will see in our next article, after the Fall, humanity, although born biologically alive, is born into a state of spiritual death. This is called the Doctrine of Original Sin.

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” Genesis 2: 15 – 17

“Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned ...” “ ... one trespass led to condemnation for all men.” Romans 5:12, 18

Our original parents were humanly perfect and possessed what is called “free-will”. In other words, they were able to freely choose spiritual good over evil and they were prone to righteousness. However, they were not immutable or unchangeable in their original created state, and they were not impeccable, that is to say, it was not impossible for them to sin. Although they were not at that time prone to sin, they were very capable of choosing sin and rebellion as we now know all too well. We will examine the ramifications of the Fall on the spiritual ability of humanity and the consequences to his faculty of the will in our next article.

Administrators Over Creation

In this original state, God appointed Adam and Eve as administrators over the earth. They had dominion over the earth and other created things. Adam named the animals and maintained order under God as His agents in this “managerial” arrangement. In effect, Adam and Eve governed the creation.

“And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” Genesis 1:28 also Genesis 2:19-20

Worshipful Fellowship and Communion with God

In this original upright and innocent state, Adam and Eve lived in a holy and devoted fellowship with God their maker. We are not given the details of how often or exactly how they would meet with the LORD in order to worship Him. Directly after the fall however, we are told that they heard the sound of the LORD walking in the garden in the cool of the day and they hid from Him, knowing that they had sinned. So we know that at times the LORD would manifest Himself to them in a special presence, likely a theophany, which is an appearance of God in a temporary assumed physical form. This worship and fellowship may have been carried out in the LORD’s direct presence at times and at other times through spiritual communion and prayer.

Equal Access to God by faith in Christ

Men and women are equal as image bearers of God. As God’s creations, men were not created intrinsically better than women. Man is first in created order and was designed by God to be responsible to take the lead in co-equality to have dominion of the earth, to oversee the welfare of the family unit, in civil society and in God’s kingdom. This has not always been the case in human history and in many places in the world it is still not. We don’t have space to go into details here, but in many cultures of the past and present, women are regarded as second class citizens, as property and at times abused by men. Even in Judaism before the time of Christ, women although protected by the Law of Moses and respected more than pagan cultures were not necessarily treated as equals with men and were not considered reliable witnesses. Similar scenarios occurred in Greek and Roman culture.



Man = Woman

It is with Christ and the rise of the Gospel and under the influence of the Christian Faith that women began to enjoy a more equal standing in society. Not perfectly but progressively better. In Christ, believing men and women share equal standing in Christ-righteousness and access to God. Both have equal standing as co-heirs of adoption by God and are fellow heirs in His kingdom.

“... there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” Galatians 3:28, 29

“Likewise, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”
1 Peter 3:7

Egalitarianism vs. Complementarianism

In our times there are two main camps concerning the roles of men and women in marriage and in service in the church, Egalitarianism (from equality) and Complementarianism (from complementary).

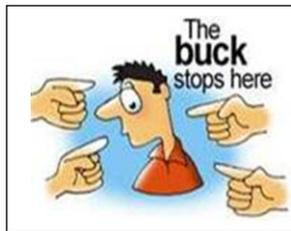
Egalitarianism is the view that there should be no gender-based role distinctions or limitations placed on women in the home, church, or society. According to this view, women can serve as pastors/elders in the church. They argue from verses like Galatians 3:28. It can be said that this view has likely been influenced by the rise of feminism in the western world. (Summarized from Theopedia article – Egalitarianism)

Complementarianism on the other hand is the view that although men and women are created equal, they are created to complement each other in differing God given roles and responsibilities as in marriage, family life, religious leadership, and other areas. Men and women were designed by their Creator to complement and complete one another through their gender and in fact need one another. Certain leadership roles and responsibilities uniquely fall to the male in the home, the church, and the society. This gender-based view is based on their interpretation of Scriptures such as Eph. 5:21-33, Col 3:18-19, Tit 2:3-5, 1 Pet 3:1-7 (Summarized from Theopedia article – Complementarianism)

The Various Categories of Life

It is God's will that both men and women carry out their privilege of service to God by living out their roles in family, church and societal life. In these various areas of life God has ordained the complementary relationship of men and women with the man as the responsible head. The buck stops here with the men. In Private and in Family, the man and wife complement each other but the buck stops with the man.

In civil life, men and women complement each other being God honoring citizen servants in society. When having the right to vote, Christian men and women



Should vote in accordance with the teachings and will of their Lord Jesus Christ.

In the church, men and women complement each other in their service to God, again, with the men held ultimately responsible by God.

“Man bears the primary responsibility to lead the partnership in a God-glorifying direction. The model of headship is our Lord, the Head of the church, who gave Himself for us. The antithesis to male headship is male domination. By male domination I mean the assertion of the man's will over the woman's will, heedless of her spiritual equality, her rights, and her value. My essay will be completely misunderstood if the distinction between male headship and male domination is not kept in mind throughout. Evangelical feminism argues that God created man and woman as equals in a sense that excludes male headship. Male headship/domination (feminism acknowledges no distinction) was imposed upon Eve as a penalty for her part in the fall. It follows, in this view, that a woman's redemption in Christ releases her from the punishment of male headship. What, then, did God intend for our manhood and womanhood at the creation? And what did God decree as our punishment at the fall? The first two chapters of Genesis answer the first question and the third chapter answers the second.” Ray Ortlund, Jr, *Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, P 86

Men, Women and the Marriage Covenant and Complementarianism

The creation ordinance of the marriage covenant is the foundation for the family and the family is a foundational unit of human civilization. Men and women were meant to complement one another in this marriage covenant to the glory of God. The man and the woman, two individuals, become one-flesh.



“This is the priority above all other human relationships; expressed in the depth of union (“one flesh”), in its exclusivity (“his wife”) and its permanence (“be united”). This last verb is the strongest adhesive word in the whole of the Old Testament.” David Jackman, *Men of God* p. 51

By God's design it is only within this bond that sexual intimacy is to be experienced. As we have shown God made men and women as complimentary image bearers. We have similarities and differences. We are not "interchangeable." God created us equal but males were intended to fulfill certain roles and females intended to fulfill other distinct roles. As we walk in these roles we complement each other. By God's design, this complementary life is ideally exemplified ultimately in marriage.

"But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed." Genesis 2:20-25

"For man was not made from woman, but woman from man. Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man. ... Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man nor man of woman; for as woman was made from man, so man is now born of woman. And all things are from God." 1 Corinthians 11:8, 9, 11, 12
Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands. Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ..." Eph. 5:22-29

"For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. ..." 1 Cor. 7:4-6

Marriage by ancient and biblical definition is between one man and one woman. Polygamy, neither in human history nor in the lives of our ancient forefathers was ever ordained by God in His revealed will, but was tolerated for a time. Same-sex relationships, strictly forbidden by God are not marriage. To refer to them as such is a drastic redefinition of marriage. In general, our Lord intends for the majority of us to marry and bear children. Ideally, the husband/father as the loving servant leader, the wife/mother as the supportive respectful help-mate, equals in the sight of God, complement one another as they give their lives for one another in loving commitment and as they lovingly pour themselves into the rearing, nurture and evangelizing of their children for the glory of God. This is also a wonderful picture of the spiritual reality of the redemptive and covenantal relationship between Christ and His Bride the Church.

"In the home when a husband leads like Christ and a wife responds like the bride of Christ, there is a harmony and mutuality that is more beautiful and more satisfying than any pattern of marriage created by man. Biblical headship for the husband is the divine calling to take primary responsibility for Christlike, servant-leadership, protection and provision in the home. Biblical submission for the wife is the divine calling to honor and affirm her husband's leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts. This is the way of joy. For God loves his people and he loves his glory. And therefore when we follow his idea of marriage (sketched in texts like Genesis 2:18-24; Proverbs 5:15-19; 31:10-31; Mark 10:2-12; Ephesians 5:21-33; Colossians 3:18-19; 1 Peter 3:1-7) we are most satisfied and he is most glorified." Piper, Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood, p 43

This bond in the natural realm typifies Christ's relationship with the church His bride in the spiritual realm.

"Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church." Eph. 5:31, 32

Israel was described in Scripture as the wife of YHWH, Isaiah 54:4-6.

The church is described in Scripture as the bride of Christ, Rev. 19:7; 21:9

Singleness

Although we have shown that God's designed complementary male and female roles are exemplified in marriage and is typified by the relationship of Christ with His bride, the church, it in no way means that living a life of singleness before God is a second class calling. God calls some individuals to serve Him as singles in a life of obedient celibacy. In fact it could be argued that there have been times of persecution and struggle in church history where singleness among Christ's followers may have been the best choice. The Apostle Paul wrote:

"To the unmarried and widows I say that it is well for them to remain single as I do . . . the unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord and how to please the Lord . . . the unmarried woman is anxious about the affairs of the Lord and how to be holy in body and spirit . . . I say this . . . not to lay any restraint upon you, but to . . . secure your undivided devotion to the Lord" (1 Corinthians 7:8, 32-35).

John Piper comments,

"Do you see what this implies? It implies that the healing which Jesus brings to male and female created in



God's image is not dependent on marriage. In fact Paul's experience as a single man (and the model of Jesus as a single man) taught him that there is a kind of single-minded devotion to the Lord possible to the single man or woman that is not usually the portion of married saints. Another way to say it is this: marriage is a temporary institution for this age until the resurrection of the dead. The essence of its meaning and purpose is to represent Christ's relation to the church. But when the reality comes, the representation as we know it will be laid aside. And there will be neither marriage nor giving in marriage in the age to come. And those who have been single and devoted to the Lord will sit down at the marriage supper of the Lamb as full fellow-heirs of the grace of life. And according to their devotion to the Lord and their sacrifices they will be rewarded with affections and relationships and joys beyond all imagination." John Piper, [Online Article – Image of God](#)

Marriage is not the ultimate prize



Marriage in this life, although a very important institution, is not the ultimate prize, eternal life with Christ as a member of the Church the Bride of Christ is the ultimate prize.

“While I believe all churches should prize marriage and family, I also believe we have to be careful about the unintentional messages potentially conveyed about marriage and family. Both are gifts for this life alone. The one relationship that survives eternally is the one we have as the Bride of Christ to our beloved Savior. The relationships that we all have as brothers and sisters in Christ are the ones that will not end—and these need to be cultivated as much as family life is cultivated. Additionally, single adults need to be reminded that God has not withheld his very best from them if they remain unmarried.” “As John Piper wrote in *This Momentary Marriage*, “The meaning of marriage is the display of the covenant-keeping love between Christ and his people.” Though it is not on display in exactly the same way in the lives of unmarried adults, we are part of the Bride of Christ and recipients of his faithful covenant love. Therefore, how we care for others who are also Christ's beloved speaks volumes to a watching world, to the praise of his glory.” Carolyn McCulley How to Serve “The Singles” [On-line article](#)

Men and Women in Christian Service and Complementarianism

Since the 20th Century, many churches have been challenged by the rise of liberalism, socialism and also egalitarianism. As believers in the Bible, we must persevere in sound doctrine and practice. We cannot allow changes in modern philosophies and cultural developments to determine the meaning and alter the application of God's Word and will. The church exists for His glory and the roles men and women are to fulfill in the church are His decision.



In Old Testament times, we see that ministerial service such as prophets, priests, scribes, the Sanhedrin, etc. was dominated by men. We find only a few examples of women in such service. Miriam, the sister of Moses was a prophetess, Ex. 15:20, Deborah as a prophetess and a judge (civil/religious) Judges 4:4, Huldah the prophetess, 2 Kings 22:14; 2 Chron. 34:22, Noadiah the prophetess, Nehemiah 6:14 and singers in the temple choir, Ezra 2:65.

“Although the Levite priesthood was closed to women, the other offices of royalty and prophecy seem on occasion to have fallen to unusual women. When the OT picture of women is presented in contrast to Israel's neighbors, ... Under the Hebrew system the position of woman was in marked contrast with her status in surrounding heathen nations. Her liberties were greater, ... her social standing more respectful and commanding.” Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia Vol 5 p. 953

In the New Testament Church, again we see men called to take the lead, John the Baptist preparing the way for our Lord. Our Lord calling men as Apostles and the Apostles after our Lord's ascension appointing men to the offices of Elder and Deacon, 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, Acts 6. We also see males functioning as prophets Acts 11:27; 13:1; 15:32; 21:10. That being said, women played very important roles of service and ministry to our Lord directly. Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, Mary the mother of the sons of Zebedee along with the sisters Mary and Martha all served the Lord faithfully. In the primitive church, women played a great role in the ongoing ministry. Mary, greatly honored for her role as the mother of our Lord, was present in some early church gatherings like at Pentecost, however, she did not play a role in its leadership, preaching or teaching of doctrine. In the early church, women ministered to the needs of believers, Acts 16:15, hosted church services, Col. 4:15, ministered in prayer and prophesied, Acts 21:9, 1 Cor 11:5. The Apostle Paul called Priscilla, Euodia and Syntyche co-workers, Rom 16:3; Phil 4:2. Women taught other women and taught children, Titus 2:3-5; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15.

Complementarian churches strictly follow the teaching of the Apostle Paul, that the office of Overseer/Pastor/Elder is limited to qualified men. Preaching and teaching doctrine in the adult mixed-gendered services of the church is limited to males, 1Tim. 3, Titus 1, 1Tim. 2:12. Complementarian churches are not agreed on female membership in the official office of Deacon. The original appointees to the

office were clearly men. The requirements for the office in 1 Timothy and Titus seem to support male membership in the office. References like Romans 16:1 where Phoebe is called “a servant of the church at Cenchreae”, the word servant, the Greek “diakonon”, a feminine form, seems to imply some women came to be known as deaconesses. Priscilla, Euodia and Syntyche may have also been considered such. With the details we have, we cannot know for sure that these “deaconesses” were members of the official church office of Deacon or if they were an auxiliary group of female “diakonon” servants, working alongside the deacons, ministering to the needs of other women and children that would not be appropriate for the men to perform.

There are various shades of complementarianism from very strict to mild. CrossLife holds to a biblically conservative version of complementarianism that encourages and appreciates women’s involvement in diverse areas of ministry, even leadership in some areas, but ultimately the leadership of the local church and the preaching and teaching in the adult mixed gendered assemblies and worship services is the God ordained responsibility of qualified men.

This particular topic is likely very difficult for many modern believers to wrestle with and reason through. However, we must approach it recognizing that the teachings and actions of our Lord and His Apostles as recorded in Scripture are authoritative for us. Like with so many issues, we must be like the noble Bereans and search the Scriptures, seek the enlightenment of the Spirit, test everything and hold fast to the truth, seek to be agreed and maintain the bond of peace in the Church, while striving to do all things for the Glory of God our Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. 10:31.

No one person and no one church’s understanding of Scripture is infallible. By God’s grace we are pressing more into the truth. In civil government, most would agree that if we would err we should err on the side of liberty, but in the Church, if we err we must err on the side of God’s glory.

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