

God's Truth About Women ¹

There are two creation versions at the beginning of Genesis. Chapter 1 gives a simple declaration of God's whole purpose in creating humanity. Chapter 2 tells how He did it. Chapter 2 is to be read with and in light of Chapter 1. In God's mind, both Adam and Eve were created simultaneously; however Adam was formed first and Eve was formed later to complete the creation of Ha'Adam (mankind).

Genesis 2:7, "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

Genesis 2:18-25, "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.' Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs (sides) and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib (side) which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. The man 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.' For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed."

Some would claim that because Adam was formed before Eve, he had authority over her. If this is true, it would be logical that the animals would have authority over Adam since they were created before him. This was clearly not God's plan. Actually, woman was God's ultimate achievement in creation.

The only time during creation that God said, 'It is not good' was when Adam was alone without Eve. God did not just realize this. He had planned for Eve from the beginning. The original idea for Eve was God's, not Adam's. Without woman, creation was 'not good.'

To be fully happy and complete mankind needs relationships and communication between equals. God knew this. Adam needed to recognize this need for himself.

"I will make a helper suitable for him." The word "helper" here is the Hebrew word "ezer". This word has no meaning or usage that indicates inferiority. Rather it refers to one who comes to be a strong support to another. It indicates one who surrounds, protects, aids, helps, and nurtures. Most other times this word is used in the Old Testament, it refers to God Himself, as in Psalm 121 when David cried out, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come? My help comes from the Lord Who made heaven and earth."

So the helper God made for Adam was to be a strong party supporting one in need. Adam had need of Eve to have someone like him to love and to share rule and authority. The partner God made for Adam was strong and powerful on his behalf. The idea of one ruling over the other is not expressed here.

¹ Truth About Women, Lesson 2 of 5, by Char Scott, © 2006 Char Scott

“I will make a helper suitable for him.” The word “suitable”, in Hebrew “kenegdo” can also be translated “corresponding”. It means parts opposite to or answering each other, equal parts, alongside. If you place your hands together and fold the fingers down, you have corresponding parts together.

This partner for Adam is a picture of Christ and the Church. In creating mankind, God’s purpose was to create a Bride for His Son.

“Then He took one of his ribs (sides) and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib (side) which He had taken from man.” The Hebrew word here is “tsela”. It is used 42 times in the Old Testament, and this is the only time it was translated “rib” and not “side”. There was a strong Jewish tradition that taught that a rib was used to form Eve. “Side” creates a more clear picture of two complementary parts.

Since Eve was taken from Adam’s side, she is all he is, nothing more, and nothing less. It is also a picture of the Church who was created as Christ was pierced in His side.

“The man 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.’ ” God did not make Eve separately from the dust. She would not have been exactly like or corresponding to him if He had. She would not have been ‘bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh.’ The Greeks and Romans both believed that woman was made from something other than man so she was inferior to him.

Adam immediately identified Eve as “like him.” He recognized the sameness rather than the differences. He understood that God was presenting him with a being like himself, the companion perfectly suitable to be his equal partner.

“For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.” The man was to attach himself to the woman, not the other way around. A woman is of such great value, a man would give up everything for her. Jesus did this for us. Oneness implies reciprocal dependence, mutuality in equality. The notion of hierarchy is absent here.

“And the man and his wife were both naked and not ashamed.” They shared true intimacy, unhindered freedom in relationship to one another and to God.

Genesis 1:31, “And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.” After God formed Eve, He declared that it was all good. There was no inherent flaw or weakness in Eve.

Genesis 2 reinforces two ideas:

Sameness of substance--Man and woman are created of the same substance. Oneness and unity--they are to identify with one another and be joined as one. The man and woman supplemented and complemented each other and fulfill each other’s need.

The teaching of hierarchy and male authority are not found in Genesis before the Fall except where an interpreter forces them into the context. Man and woman worked together as equals until sin disrupted the harmony. Before the Fall, Adam and Eve acted like God, loved like God, cared for one another like God, and accepted each other as God accepted them. Strife, aggression, and domination came with sin. I Cor. 13:5 says, “Love does not seek its own.” Where this love exists, no one asks, “Who is in charge?”

After the Fall, the patriarchal pattern of social organization became institutionalized. Women now left all to become the property of men. This was not God's original intent.

Genesis 5:1-2, "This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created mankind, He made him in the likeness of God. He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them both Adam (Ha'Adam mankind) in the day when they were created."

Genesis 5:3, "When Adam lived" This now refers to the man, Adam.

Lesson Two Summary—

Gen. 2:7 and Gen. 2:18-25.

"The Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone.'"

The only time during creation that God said the creation was not good was when Adam was alone without Eve. Without woman, creation was "not good."

"But for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him." God knew that Adam needed someone like him. He wanted Adam to recognize his need for himself.

"I will make a helper suitable for him." The word "helper" (ezer) means one who comes to be a strong support to another. It was used most often in the Old Testament to refer to the Lord Himself. It does not indicate inferiority or the idea of one ruling over the other.

The word "suitable" (kenegdo) can also be translated "corresponding ." It means opposite to or equal parts alongside. This partner for Adam is also a picture of Christ and the Church. In creating mankind, God's purpose was to create a Bride for His Son.

"Then he took one of his ribs (sides) and closed up the flesh at that place. The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib (side) which he had taken from man." The Hebrew word here is "tsela" which is used 42 times in the Old Testament and only here translated "rib" rather than "side." "Side" creates a more clear picture of two complementary parts.

"The man said, 'This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman because she was taken out of Man.'" God made Eve from Adam so there would be no question that they were made of the same substance. Adam immediately identified Eve as "like him." He recognized the sameness rather than the differences. He understood that God was presenting him with a being like himself, the companion suitable to be his equal partner.

"For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh." The man was to attach himself to the woman, not the other way around. A woman is of such great value that a man would give up everything for her, just as Jesus did for us.

Oneness implies reciprocal dependence, mutuality in equality. The idea of hierarchy is absent here. The word used here for "one" is the same Hebrew word (echad) used in the statement, "Hear, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is One!" This word refers to a compound unity, a united togetherness. The two are to become one as the Father, Son, and Spirit are One in the Trinity. Also, Jesus prayed in John 17:22-23 that we would be one as He and the Father are one. This concept of oneness implies an equality of the members, not a hierarchy.

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