

The Creation Of Woman Gen 2:18, 20b-23

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I. God's Design

In v21 creation of the woman is presented as a divine response to the situation described in v18&20. "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him". Not a defect in God's creation. Nor was it an oversight or correction. It was the completion of God's design. The context is 1:26-28. It was not good for man to be alone for two reasons.

1) Man is made in the image of God 1:26-27 'Let us make man in our image'. 'Us/our'. God exists in plurality, in perfect relationship, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God is relational in his very essence. Mankind is made to reflect that. Man & woman are equally made in the image of God.

2) Man is called to reflect the rule of God. 1:26-28 Part of bearing God's image is to share in his rule, representing him on earth. But that rule is not solitary: v26 'let them (plural) rule'. Adam is not going to multiply or do the job by himself. The task requires man & woman together.

The woman is God's person. He made her and before she is ever Adam's, she is God's. Therefore, men, be very careful how you treat women. The LORD God is the woman's creator, protector and vindicator. Yet in a most profound way the woman is bound up with man.

1. For: Woman was made a 'helper suitable for man'. Word **helper** comes x2, 18&20. This is not a demeaning word, it is used of God. The woman's purpose is not just to meet man's personal needs, her role all to do with him. But the term 'helper' indicates rather someone who stands alongside man to help in the immense task God has called them both to. Yet the language implies **distinction** as well as commonality. She is not just the same as man and she doesn't stand in exactly the same role as the man. She has a role as helper for man v18. So in 1 Corinthians 11:9 we read about the concept of headship which is applied into the life of the NT church. 11:3 'The head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is man and the head of Christ is God'. Headship is to with role not superiority, taking responsibility for another. Derived from the nature of God himself. God the Father is the head of Christ. Christ is not less divine: but he stands in a different role. In explanation in 1 Cor 11:8-9 Paul refers to Genesis 2, before the Fall. 'For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; neither was man created for woman but woman for man'. We will find our joy as men & women in yielding to and rejoicing in God's perfect wisdom.

2. From: 'the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of man.. she shall be called woman for she was taken out of man'. Adam and the creatures were made by God out of the dust of the ground. 2:7 & 19.

But God made the woman from a part of the man, a rib v21-22.

Again this indicates a **distinction** between man and woman in the very design of God from the beginning of time, before the Fall. In 1 Corinthians 11 Paul writes v.8 'The woman is the glory of man. The man did not come from the woman but woman from the man'. In 1 Tim 2:13 Paul writes 'I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man. She must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve'. This arises from creation, not culture. The silence here commanded is in context of teaching the mixed congregation,. The French commentator Henri Blocher puts it very fairly: 'The apostle Paul drew from the narrative (of Gen 2) the lesson that the man is the head of the woman (1 Cor 11:3) and the woman must not be entrusted with the authority of the teaching office in the churches where Timothy is working (1 Tim 2:12). We must not give in, through sheer pressure, to the temptation to conceal the fact: this is the teaching of Holy Scripture, whether our age likes it or not'.

3. Like: 'This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh'. In v22 the LORD God 'brought her to the man'. When Adam sees the woman he speaks the words of delight we find in v23. This verse is the first poetic couplet in the Bible. She is not another creature to be categorised among the others. What overwhelms Adam, is that here is One like him. She blows him completely away. 'This is now' (at last, in contrast to all that came before) 'bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh' (she is of the same substance as me) 'this shall be called woman for from man was taken this'.

Huge sense of **kinship**: 'bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh. Adam could say "She doesn't just look like me, isn't just similar to me, she is truly made from me, out of me". This kinship is not tied to marriage. It is part of the reality of being made men & women. That is why the abuse of any sort of women by men, or the other way round, in any sphere of society, is utterly abhorrent. In heaven, there will no longer be any marriage as Jesus tells us in Matt 22:30. But the kinship between man and woman will remain. Christ has permanently taken on human flesh like ours so that the One on the throne shares our kinship now and eternally (see Heb 2:14-17).

Also **distinction** here: in v22 it is not the man who is brought to the woman by God, nor are they just brought together by God. God brings the woman to the man. Seen also v23 Adam says 'She shall be called woman for she was taken out of man'. To name is an act of authority, of care, of responsibility. So here it is Adam who gives the woman her generic name, 'she shall be called woman' v23 and in 3:20 gives her her personal name, 'Adam named his wife Eve'. There is both the deepest connection between the man and the woman and yet at the same time they are distinct in their roles, complementary in their functioning.

We look at these things across the huge chasm that Genesis 3 created. Yet there is nothing here in Genesis 2 that is not a delight, excellent and without flaw. The design of God is perfect for us and in all these things we can rejoice & praise His holy name.