

Gender and Creation
©E.Jett 2021

The study of gender and the man-woman relationship must begin with a study of Genesis. It is in Genesis that we first see God's plan for man and woman. In this part of the study we will look at the creation of man, the creation of woman, the fall of Adam and Eve and the punishment of Adam and Eve.

The Creation

In Genesis, there are two accounts of the creation of man. The first account is found in Genesis 1:26-28. The second account is a more definitive account and is found in Genesis 2:4-7. We will look at both accounts.

Genesis 1:26-28 is a more cosmic account and includes the creation of man and women together in the image of God. Men and women are blessed by God and told to be fruitful and multiply. They are created in the image of God and given dominion over creation. Below is Genesis 1: 26-28:

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.

In the above passage, there is not mentioned a separate creation of woman and both man and woman are referred to being created in the same verse.

In the Hebrew the term man is Adam which is derived from the Hebrew word *adamah* meaning "earth".

It is important to note that man is created in the image of God. This means that man has some of the characteristics of God. These characteristics will be important as we study men and women in Scripture.

The second account is more specific and is found in Genesis 2:4-7. The description of the creation of man is found in Genesis 2: 7 and states: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living being." He puts man in the garden of Eden and instructs him that he is free to eat of any of the trees except the tree of knowledge of good and evil and says at Genesis 2:17 that he is not to eat that fruit "for in the day that eat of it, you shall surely die."

In Genesis 2:18 God's intent in fashioning woman is made clear when it says "It is not good that Man should be alone; I will make a helper comparable to him. " In that verse, woman is described as being both a helper to man and "comparable to man." She is different but individual, unique and equal.

The specifics of the creation are described as surgery performed on Adam while he is under a deep sleep. Genesis 2:21-23 describes the process as follows:

And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept.
And He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman and he brought her to the man. And Adam 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."

Martin Luther pointed out that by taking creating woman from a rib, God was emphasizing that woman was equal to man as opposed to creating her from a toe or foot which might have represented man's dominance over woman.

The Hebrew word for man is "Ish". The Hebrew name for woman is "Ishshah". The use of the similar words is another indicator that there is a close and equal relationship between man and woman. I find it fascinating that God realized that man alone even with God was not good enough. Man needed a woman. Somehow the two need each other. Likewise, the Jewish sages concluded that celibacy was not the natural state of man. Man and woman required a covenant relationship. There is a sense that man is not complete without woman and woman is not complete without man. Together, there is a completeness.

The Fall

The fall of man is described in the first six verses of Genesis 3.

Here is the description given in Scripture:

Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, "You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but the fruit of tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it lest you die." Then the serpent said to the woman," You shall not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you shall become like God, knowing good and evil". So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her and he ate.

Some have commented that there is no mention of Satan in the account of the man's temptation and fall. Nonetheless I believe that Satan played an active role in the temptation of man. Verses in the New Testament show how Satan and the demonic often play a role in human affairs. In fact Jesus on one occasion even spoke to Peter when Peter tried to discourage Jesus for dying to save mankind and Jesus said to Peter, "Get behind me Satan" (Matt. 16:23; Mk. 8:33) Further Satan entered in Judas and caused him to betray Christ. (Luke 22:3). Other verses in the New Testament also encourage the belief that Satan was working through the serpent. Rev. 12:9 says, "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth,

and his angels were cast out with him.” A similar reference is found in Revelation 20:2 Satan is referred to as “the dragon, that serpent of old.” In short, the New Testament views the serpent in Genesis as being utilized by Satan in some sort or fashion.

God’s command to Adam had been a simple one. Man had some rudimentary moral understanding that obedience to God was expected. The serpent questioned God’s words and even blatantly said that God was wrong that man would not die if the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil were eaten. Satan in effect attacked the man and the woman through deception, trickery and lies which would result in the introduction of death into their lives and into the Garden of God.

Adam and Eve realize now that they are naked and know that there will be trouble because of their disobedience. They make for themselves coverings of leaves which like all of man’s efforts turn out to be impracticable. God will later fashion for them clothing from the skins of animals which may be a picture of the eventual sacrifice for the sins of man through the death of innocent animals such as the lamb and the goat and this in turn looks forward to a more profound sacrifice, the very Lamb of God..

The Penalty for the Fall

God confronts the serpent, woman and man and sets forth the penalties for their actions. Just as the action originated with the serpent, moved to the woman and spread to the man; the penalty likewise begins at the serpent, moves to the woman and spreads to the man.

God’s punishment to the Serpent is found at Genesis 3:14-15 and is the following:

Because you have done this,
You are cursed more than all cattle,
And more than every beast of the field;
On your belly you shall go,
And you shall eat dust
All the days of your life.
And I will put enmity between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her Seed;
He shall bruise your head,
And you shall bruise His heel.

God’s punishment of the Serpent sets the stage for the redemption of man and woman. The promise to the serpent and to the woman is that the Seed of Woman will war against the Serpent. The Serpent will bruise the heel of the Seed of the Woman but the Seed of Woman will bruise the head of the Serpent.

As Christians we believe that this word of God or prophecy sets forth the course of human history. The Seed of woman will be the children of Eve and specifically one Seed or child who will be the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The Serpent we believe is not just the serpent of Eden but is Satan who is described in the Book of Revelation as that Serpent of old. Satan will bruise the heel of Jesus by persecuting him and causing him to be crucified. However the resurrected Christ shall administer a serious and fatal blow to Satan by being resurrected from the dead and causing many sons and daughters of Adam and Eve to follow Jesus in his resurrection.

Jesus will be the new man and the second Adam. The church will be the second woman, the New Eve. Like the first Eve, the church is born out of the side of the First Adam. It is a helper of the Second Adam. The Second Adam is the bridegroom. The Second Eve is the bride. The Second Eve will no longer be deceived or follow the temptations of the Serpent or Satan. Instead the Second Adam and the Second Eve will coexist in the new Eden which is the New Jerusalem.

History, at least according to a Christian perspective, can be viewed as the struggle between Satan to prevent first the birth of Christ and then to prevent the sacrifice of Christ to redeem the Sons and Daughters of Adam and Eve and the actions of God through Christ to redeem mankind. Once, Christ has achieved the fatal blow to Satan's head, the actions of Satan are to delay and to convince mankind not to accept the gift of eternal life and to willingly to continue in the deceit of the Serpent. Satan today works to cast doubt on the Word of God and works to cause man not to take up gift of eternal life. As the parable says, some of the seed is snatched up, other seeds fall on rocky ground and some spring up but are choked by the worries and cares of this world. Further, like Christ, the seed of Christ (believers) shall crush Satan under their heels (Rom. 16:20).

Through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, the blood of the innocent lamb of God, a new way is made into the Second Eden. Through Christ, man has an opportunity to see sin and death banished and to experience the Tree of Life through eternal life with Jesus Christ the Second Adam (2 Cor. 15:47).

The second part of the penalty for the fall fell upon Eve according to Genesis 3:16:

To the woman He said:

I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception;
In pain you shall bring forth children;
Your desire shall be for your husband,
And he shall rule over you.

Now that men and women were subject to death, the race would quickly die out if there were not procreation. Although individual men and women would die, their descendants would continue after them. Incentives for the continued procreation of men and women apparently include the pleasures of sex and the need for a child. The need to have children is apparently one of the strongest human instincts. Women desire to have children and to raise and protect their children. As part of the need to have and to raise children, the woman needs the help of man.

In particular, I believe that part of this instinctive need to continue the race through children not only goes to the children themselves but also to the Promise that there would be a Seed which would come someday through woman which would result in the Second Adam and salvation for the Sons and Daughters of Adam and Eve.

Illustrations in Scripture are many which show the great need of women to bring forth children including such instances as Samuel's mother needing to have a child, Ruth having a child, Tamar needing to have a child and the daughters of Lot needing to have children. Having the child and raising the child take precedence. Further, the need and desire of having a child of the male gender, in particular, echoes back to the promise of the Seed who would be the Second Adam. There was in one sense no such need for the female child because the Second Eve would ultimately not be born of woman but instead like the First Eve would appear without sex from the side of Adam. Similarly, the church, the Bride of Christ

would result not through natural procreation but through spiritual procreation. The Second Eve, the people of God and ultimately the church, would be brought forth by the Holy Spirit from the side of Christ, the Second Adam.

The third penalty for the transgression of God's command fell upon Adam. That penalty is found at Genesis 3:17-19 which says:

Cursed is the ground for your sake;
In toil you shall eat of it
all of the days of your life.
Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you,
and you shall eat the herbs of the field.
In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread
til you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.

The results of disobedience were death to mankind and a curse upon creation. No longer would the earth produce freely fruit for man and the livelihood of man, henceforth there would need to be toil to bring forth food for the sustenance of man. Disobedience not only brought forth bondage to man but bondage to the world which was created for man. Part of that bondage was the need to work and strive for supply. Things get tough because of sin. The earth now is also infected by sin as well and part of its lot is weeds and thorns just as the life of mankind is now full of weeds and thorns. Good now instead of coming easily and naturally, now must come from effort and work. Blood, sweat, toil and tears now become a part of the everyday existence of mankind and all of creation.

The final result of sin and man's disobedience is death. The endless cycle of life and death become a part of the existence of mankind and all of creation. Seeds must die and spring forth again. Mankind and creation are bound to death and man is enslaved by the fear of death.

In Romans 8:20-23, it says: "For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body."

In other words, creation groans as it waits for its own redemption. That redemption of creation occurs as man is redeemed and as God creates a new heaven and earth. We wait for the final redemption of ourselves and creation awaits for its final redemption when it is no longer a slave to the curse resulting from the disobedience of God.

However, God is not finished with mankind. He has given to woman the promise of the Seed. He also provides for man and woman as they leave the Garden. In Genesis 3:21 it says the following: "Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them." Man and woman had tried to clothe themselves by making a covering of leaves. Like all of man's efforts it was not good enough. Leaf clothing does not do much good in a world where there are thorns and brambles. Here in Texas when you ride through brambles and thorns you need what are called "chaps." God made clothing for Adam

and Eve out of tunics of skin. Interesting enough, apparently God was the first tailor. At any rate, although we cannot be certain, it is likely that the skins came from animals such as sheep or goats, which may account as to why they are used for sacrifice. Man's safety and comfort are bought through the death of innocent animals. Here we may have the genesis of the blood sacrifice and the importance of the sacrifice of innocent animals.

All sacrifices including the Passover, would come from the sacrifice of animals including sheep, goats and bulls. The sacrifice and the placement of blood on the doorposts protected mankind from death. Later blood would be used to make holy all of the sacred vessels used in the tabernacles, to make holy the clothing of the priests and to be placed upon the priests and the people themselves. Further each year there would be an atonement sacrifice to remove the sins of the people. Finally, there would be the death of the very Lamb of God, whose blood would bring cleansing to all of those who would be covered with the blood.

The Jews say the Torah begins with God's grace as shown by his provision of clothing for Adam and Eve. God would not only provide clothing for Adam and Eve but through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ He would provide a covering for all of the sins of mankind. Clothing covers the nakedness of man which was representative of their sin. Their eyes were opened through their disobedience (Gen 3:7). Their own efforts were puny attempts to cover their sins. God make the provision for covering our sin through the sacrifice of His only begotten son, Jesus Christ. (John 3:16)