

Made in the Image of God

GG Leader's Guide
Genesis 1:26-28

1) Verse 26 says "Let us make man." We see plurality in this statement. Who does the "us" refer to? a) Could it be the angels? Why or why not? (Look at John 1 & Colos. 1:15)

And God said, let us make man in our image, after our likeness...

These words are directed not to the earth, out of which man was made, as consulting with it, and to be assisting in the formation of man, as Moses Gerundensis, and other Jewish writers ^{E6}, ; nor to the angels, as the Targum of Jonathan, Jarchi, and others, who are not of God's privy council, nor were concerned in any part of the creation, and much less in the more noble part of it: nor are the words spoken after the manner of kings, as Saadiah, using the plural number as expressive of honour and majesty; since such a way of speaking did not obtain very early, not even till the close of the Old Testament: but they are spoken by God the Father to the Son and Holy Ghost, who were each of them concerned in the creation of all things, and particularly of man: hence we read of divine Creators and Makers in the plural number, (Job 35:10) (Psalms 149:2) (Ecclesiastes 12:1) and Philo the Jew acknowledges that these words declare a plurality, and are expressive of others, being co-workers with God in creation ^{E7}: and man being the principal part of the creation, and for the sake of whom the world, and all things in it were made. (Commentary from John Gill)

The Word Became Flesh (John 1: 1-14)

1*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2***He was with God in the beginning.**

3*Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.*

4*In him was life, and that life was the light of men. 5***The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood**^[a] *it.*

6*There came a man who was sent from God; his name was John. 7***He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all men might believe. 8***He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9***The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.**^[b]

10He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. **11**He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. **12**Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— **13**children born not of natural descent,[c] nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.

14The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only,[d] who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

2) What does it mean to be made in the image of God?

a) How are we different from the animals? b) What does this mean to you that You are in the image of God. c) How is Christ in the image of God? (Col. 1:15). d) Note the image of God in us (Ephes. 4:24, Colos. 3:10)

Word Study of Image:

tselem

tseh'·lem (Key)

masculine noun

from an unused root meaning to shade

1) *image*

a) *images (heathen gods)*

b) *image, likeness (of resemblance)*

We can try to understand where Moses was coming from as he penned these words. He was raised in Egyptian Culture where there were all kinds of images to false gods. There were images made for royalty. **Richard Hess** points out, “ Image is best illustrated in the practice of ancient Near East kings of erecting or carving out images in order to represent their power and rulership over far-reaching areas of their empire. These images represented the dominion of the ruler when the sovereign was not present in the region.”

(See Daniel 3:1)

So in a wonderful way we are a **representation** and a reminder to those who encounter us that there is one who is sovereign over all. There is one who has dominion over all and He is Yahweh. “ I Am”.

Being made in the image of God does not mean that we look like God in some physical way, for God is spirit (John 4: 24)

Being made in the image of God means that we have **personality**. Knowledge, feelings, and a will. We might call this our soul.

We possess **morality**: We are able to make God-given moral judgments and have a conscience.

We possess **spirituality**: man is made for communion with God. It is on the level of the spirit that we communicate with God.

So God created man in his own image...

Which consisted both in the form of his body, and the erect stature of it, different from all other creatures; in agreement with the idea of that body, **prepared in covenant for the Son of God**, and which it was therein agreed he should assume in the fulness of time; and in the immortality of his soul, and in his intellectual powers, and in that purity, holiness, and righteousness in which he was created; as well as in his dominion, power, and authority over the creatures, in which he was as **God's viceregent**, and resembled him. The Jerusalem Targum is,

``the Word of the Lord created man in his likeness;''

even that Word that was in the beginning with God, and was God, and in time became incarnate, by whom all things were made, (John 1:1-3,14)

in the image of God created he him;

which is repeated for the certainty of it, and that it might be taken notice of, as showing man's superior glory and dignity to the rest of the creatures, (1 Corinthians 11:7)- **John Gill Commentary**

Our Value Which Comes From Being Made In The Image of God

The pattern of creation is broken as man is created. We see a switch to the first person plural “ Let us” which indicates that the human in the special creation of God. Created out of the beautiful relationship of the Trinity. Created out of God’s deliberate intention.

The human is not made according to “ its kind” as the animals are or the vegetation , but in the image of God. Humans are made in the image of God, that we are created after God’s kind.

Of all that God created, God speaks to the human. Not once, but twice. God spoke the blessing over the animals, but He did not speak to them.

We are made to live out life in relationship with the Creator. To enjoy Him, and to become more like him.

24*and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness. (Eph. 4: 24)*

*since you have taken off your old self with its practices **10**and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator. (Col. 3:10)*

How is Christ in the image of God?

15*He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. **16**For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. **17**He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. **18**And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. **19**For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, **20**and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.*

3) Verse 26 says “ let them rule.” What is our responsibility? What does it mean to rule over?

The idea of ruling over is one that places responsibility into lap of man. We have purpose. Let us not forget that we are to rule in the image of God.

To rule over, **is to use for the benefit of man. To have authority over.** This also separates mankind out from the animals. The animals do not rule over man. We are to harvest. To Fish. The earth and it's resources are there for our purposes. Again, not to destroy, but to use as the Creator would have us use his precious gift.

4) Verse 27 says “ made male and female he created them.” Both sexes are in the image of God. What does this say about the characteristics of God? b) Are we equal? (Matthew 19:4)

This is one of the great verses that remind us of God's value for both man and woman. Both are made in His image. Both are reflective of God. The beautiful feminine qualities of woman reflect the Creator.

7"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.(Matt. 23:37)

The strong attributes of man reflect the Creator. One is not better than the other. One is not positioned higher than the other. They truly are equal in the sight of God.

We will come to find that there are different roles for man and woman in relationship with one another in the covenant of marriage. But, we will not see one given more value than the other.

5) What is our responsibility to the earth? What does it mean to “Subdue it” (verse 28)

b) Is it sinful if I don't recycle?

Again, our responsibility is to rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle and the creatures of the earth.

We are to fill the earth: To have children. These children will also reflect the image of God. God's hand of blessing is upon procreation. We see the union of man and wife in Genesis 2:21-25. More child birth also means more human relationship which allows us to reflect His love to others. We see this blessing to Sarai in Genesis 17:16.

Subdue it: To harness all that has been given to you. Find the potential. Cultivate the land. Domesticate the animals for your use.