

## **GENESIS 1:26–2:3**

05 January 2023

New International Version, 2011

### **Learning objectives**

- We shall explain the plural “our image.”
- We shall understand “the image of God.”
- We shall defend the sanctify of human life.

### **1:26-31 Sixth creative day: humankind**

#### **1:26 Elohim proposes to make (‘sh) humans**

26 Then God said, “Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

### **Who are these ‘us ... our’?**

#### Historical theories

- Mythology: Plural elohim gods (borrowed text).
- Trinity: Father, Son and Spirit (from 3rd cent. CE).
- Duality: Judaism’s two Yahwehs (God and Word).
- Royalty: Majestic ‘we’ (God talks to himself).
- Creation: God inviting earth, sun and moon.
- Heavenly host: God mobilizing angelic beings.
- Divine beings: Sons of God present at creation.

#### **Divine Beings** (created earlier)

“I saw the Lord sitting on his throne with all the multitudes of heaven standing around him on his right and on his left.” 1 Kings 22:19

“The morning stars sang together, all the angels [sons of God/gods] shouted for joy.” Job 38:7

“The man has become like one of us.” Genesis 3:22

“I said, ‘You are “gods”’; you are all sons of the Most High.” Psalm 82:6

### **Five Views of The Image of God**

- Theology: God shares his attributes with humans.
- Religion: God is a glorified human who begets human children who may become gods.
- Society: Humans are made by God, so should be respected, despite their race or background .
- Mythology: A Some humans were begotten by gods, so have special powers and privileges.
- Genesis: God created human beings to subdue and to rule the earthly realm as his ‘imagers’.

### The Image of God

- תצלם tselem: used frequently of statues, models, images, idols, replicas.
- דמויות d'mût: abstract noun; its verbal root means 'to be like; to resemble'.
- God's imagers: God originally created humans to commune with divine beings, and to rule over the new earth.
- God's idols: God's Holy Spirit comes and dwells within and among human beings, his 'temple'.

### 1:26-31 Sixth creative day: humankind

#### 1:27 Elohim creates (bara') humans

27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

### Noun 'adam:

- Literally 'the man(kind)', referencing 'man(kind)' in verse 26.
- Usage: 1 humankind, 2 proper name Adam, 3 male human.

### Three Sets of Divine Imagers

- Divine council members in the supernatural realm.  
"In our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule." Gen 1:26
- Male & female human beings in the natural realm.  
"God created mankind in his own image." Gen 1:27
- The incarnate Son of God.  
"He is the image of the invisible God." Col 1:15

### Pagan usage of 'image of god'

*History:* In both Egyptian and Mesopotamian society the king, or some high-ranking official, might be called 'the image of God.' Such a designation, however, was not applied to canal diggers or to masons who worked on a ziggurat.

*Query:* How does this fact help to understand what the Bible is saying about humankind? (In biblical theology, all human beings remain equal before God, regardless of their social status.)

### How did an intelligent God create human beings?

- Poof! Out of nothing?
- Poof! Out of something?
- Time + matter + chance?
- Time + matter + design?
- Speciation from earlier primates?
- Genetic modification by extra-terrestrial beings?
- Spiritual beings adopting animal bodies?
- Degeneration from superior beings now gone?
- Degeneration from superior beings now invisible?

**1:26-31 Sixth creative day: humankind**

**1:28 Elohim blesses and commands humans**

28 God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.”

**Redundant human beings?**

“[In] the early 21st century when we just don’t need the vast majority of the population, because the future is about developing more and more sophisticated technology, like artificial intelligence [and] bioengineering, Most people don’t contribute anything to that, except perhaps for their data, and whatever people are still doing which is useful, these technologies increasingly will make redundant and will make it possible to replace the people.” — Yuval Noah Harari in 2022

**How pressing is it to reduce global population?**

- Vaccines: Bill Gates has publicly revealed a role for vaccines to reduce populations by 10 to 15%.
- Terraforming: Reduce global agriculture by spraying sun blockers into the atmosphere.
- Sequester carbon: Culling forest trees and burying them in underground ‘carbon banks’.
- Gender identity: Transist children and youth, so that they cannot or will not reproduce.

**1:26-31 Sixth creative day: humankind**

**1:29-30 Elohim gives plants as food**

29 Then God said, “I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds in the sky and all the creatures that move along the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food.” And it was so.

**Breath of Life**

Genesis 1:30 = אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה = ‘which in it (is) live nefesh’.

Compare 2:7 = וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה = ‘and mankind became for a live nefesh’.

- That which humans became, is also in the beasts, which thereby partake of common nature.
- The preposition ‘for’ seems to indicate that mankind became a living being without ceasing to be that which he was formed from.

**1:26-31 Sixth creative day: humankind**

**1:31 All very good.**

31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning — the sixth day.

- Yahweh wanted a big loving family of divine beings and of human beings—just what you and I always wanted.
- And He will have it, at the cost of his beloved Son, and we shall have it, too—if we remain loyal.

### **2:1-3 Seventh creative day: Summary**

#### **2:1 Sky and earth are finished**

1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

- The heavens and the earth, undertaken in 1:1, are now complete, along with all their hosts (tsaba', plural: tsaba'ot).
- Usual Hebrew masculine plural suffix: -im
- Usual Hebrew feminine plural suffix: -ot

### **2:1-3 Seventh creative day: Summary**

#### **2:2 Elohim ceases from creative work**

2 By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

Query: Was God tired? Did he need a rest?

Query: What further purpose was to be fulfilled by instituting a Sabbath day?

Jesus: "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath." Mark 2:27

### **2:1-3 Seventh creative day: Summary**

#### **2:3a Elohim rests, consecrates the Sabbath**

3a Then God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, ...

#### **Holy (qdš)**

- Of Yahweh: Wholly other, having no peer, unique.
- Of humans: Loyal to Yahweh alone.
- Of things and places: Dedicated to Yahweh.

### **2:1-3 Seventh creative day: Summary**

#### **2:3a Elohim rests, consecrates the Sabbath**

#### **2:3b Because he finished creation (bara').**

23b because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

Query: What further creative work would Yahweh perform on behalf of Israel?

Query: What further creative work would Jesus perform during his ministry on earth?

Query: What further creative work does God perform on our behalf?