

The Knitting Together of Life Genesis 1:26-31

Isaiah 40:13-14, 44:24 Who has directed the Spirit of the Lord, or who gave him counsel? **14** Who did he consult? Who gave him understanding and taught him the paths of justice? Who taught him knowledge and showed him the way of understanding? **24** This is what the Lord, your Redeemer who formed you from the womb, says: I am the Lord, who made everything; who stretched out the heavens by myself; who alone spread out the earth;

God deliberates with himself.
This decision comes with a cost (to him personally).

Elohim - a plural word / there is a fullness of being that cannot be adequately expressed using only the singular.

Genesis does not address the paradox.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5 "Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **5** Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

"It is not likely that the original readers of Genesis understood this in the light of the Trinity, but rather of God and his angelic servants, the divine council, the New Testament allows us a deeper understanding of the language as including intratrinitarian communication. We, and the whole cosmos, are the loving results of the creative work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit." ~ Tremper Longman III

Only the NT recognizes the foreshadowing that God himself is a Trinity, a communion of three divine Persons.

vs. 26, In our image, according to our likeness.

- Human beings are a visible reflection of God.
- Human beings have an exalted dignity and incomparable worth.
- Human beings have a unique relationship with God as sons and daughters.
 - **Isaiah 64:8** Yet Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we all are the work of your hands.
 - **Acts 17:28** For in him we live and move and have our being, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we are also his offspring.'
 - **John 1:12-13**

What will human beings do?

They will rule all living creatures of the sea, air, and land, and the whole earth.

Humanity represents to creation the rule of God.

What is the rule of God?

Humans are to care for the natural world and cultivate it to its fullest potential. Enjoying the inherited creativity of God (farming / animal husbandry).

"Creation is organically united, a wondrous whole, a living organism of interrelated beings. From this flow ethical consequences. We cannot survive if we do not live in harmony with the world around us. We cannot sustain our life without the thriving life of plants and animals, of soil and water, of sea and air. Our uniqueness in the cosmos results in responsibility for respect and stewardship." ~ Kathleen M. O'Connor

God cares for humanity by creating order and working towards human flourishing.

Psalm 72:11-14 Let all kings bow in homage to him, all nations serve him. **12** For he will rescue the poor who cry out and the afflicted who have no helper. **13** He will have pity on the poor and helpless and save the lives of the poor. **14** He will redeem them from oppression and violence, for their lives are precious in his sight.

vs. 27, He created them male and female.

Notice: This is the first time sexual differentiation is specifically mentioned.

What is the connection between being created male and female and being created in the image of God?

There is both plurality and singularity.

For God - "let us make...in our image" (plural)
"he created...in his image" (singular/unity)

For Humanity - "he created him" (singular)
"he created them" (plural)

What best represents God?

Humanity...but not just a series of individuals, God created a man and a woman who are to unite in marriage.

The divine image is reflected in every human person.

"On the one hand, humankind is a single entity. All human persons stand in solidarity before God. But on the other hand, humankind is a community, male and female. And none is the full image of God alone. Only in community of humankind is God reflected. God is, according to this bold affirmation, not mirrored as an individual but as a community." ~ Walter Brueggemann,

All of humanity is in the image of God.

But there is a distinction concerning spiritual likeness.

To fulfill our design we must "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" (Deuteronomy 6:5).

This is only possible if we are in fellowship (communion) with God.

- The fall destroyed this fellowship.
- Redemption recreates and perfects it through Jesus, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29).

vs. 28, Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it.

There is a significant and important difference between humans and all other living creatures.

Humans are different!

Humans procreate purposefully as a participation in God's creative work.

Human sexuality is entrusted by God as a sacred gift.

Subdue -> royal language

The imagery of the human couple is that of a king and queen.

Jesus gives insight into the narrow path of kingdom living / ruling.

Matthew 22:37-40 He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. **38** This is the greatest and most important command. **39** The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. **40** All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commands."

To rule as royals we practice lives filled with the Spirit acting in grace and kindness toward others. We follow in the footsteps of our creator.

Notice: There is a subtle but very important distinction between the the first use of "be fruitful and multiply" (**vs. 22**) and the second use (**vs. 28**).

- Humanity is addressed directly by God. God **said to them**.
- There is relationship between God and humankind.
- Humanity is able to respond to God, to know him, to love him, to be in personal communion with him.

Psalm 8:3-6 When I observe your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you set in place, **4** what is a human being that you remember him, a son of man that you look after him? **5** You made him little less than God and crowned him with glory and honor. **6** You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet:

vs. 29-30, Food

Humanity - is given seed (every seed bearing plant and every tree whose fruit contains seed).

For every other creature - every green plant for food.

vs. 31, It was very good indeed.

Reflect upon the wonder of humanity, made in the image and likeness of God.

Humans are the crescendo of God's creation. We truly benefit from everything that was made.

God made a world, designed as the ideal him for life and for the highest form of life, human beings.