

## THE CREATION OF MAN

Genesis 1:26 – 2:4a

Key verse 1:31

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

We thank God for Junior Leadership Camp 2021. God blessed the faith of His servant M. Dr. Peter Chang according to Mark 10:45 and used the next generation coworkers and sheep as messengers of His Word. We learned Jesus' spiritual authority with the hope of God, the compassionate shepherd heart, servanthood and life dedication, faith in God and obedience to the death on the cross, and may serve the work of disciple making and world mission with Jesus' spiritual authority.

Prior to Junior Leadership Camp and the Graduation Worship Service, we began Genesis Bible Study. God teaches us through the Genesis Bible study who He is and how He works in history: He is the Almighty Creator God who created all things out of nothing through His Word. He is the God of promise who determines history and sovereignly guides his redemptive work through the patriarchs of faith.

After creating heaven and earth, God completed His creation by creating man. God created man on the sixth day and then judged his work, "It was very good." On the seventh day He rested and blessed and sanctified that day. Today we learn the order of creation: God - man - all things, and the goal of creation: to glorify God. We also learn to labor and do all our work in six days and to sanctify the seventh day and enjoy true rest.

### 1. God created man in his image (1:26 - 30)

By the sixth day, God had created the heavens and the earth and all things and living creatures: Each part of creation had a specific function: God created light to displace darkness. God created the firmament to separate the waters above and below. God created the gathering of the waters under the firmament so that the dry land might appear. The plants grew, bringing

seed and serving as food. God created the sun, moon and stars, so that they shine on the earth and indicate the times. Then God created the animals, so that they multiply and fill water, air and land. Thus, the best environment was prepared. But the creation was not yet completed. In the oratorio "The Creation" by Joseph Haydn, it says at this point: "But all the work was not complete; there wanted yet that wondrous being, that God's design might thankful see and grant his goodness joyful praise." So far, only the surroundings had been prepared. The main character was still missing. Let us read verses 26 and 27: "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." These two verses help us to understand how and in what order man was created: namely, in the image of God and as ruler over creation.

First, God created man in His image. God created man on the sixth day, on which He also created the beasts of the field, the cattle, and the worms of the ground (25). Indeed, man has similarities with animals such as breathing, physique, nutrition, reproduction. Nevertheless, we are not animals. We find the most important difference in these verses. Three times it says: God created man in His image. This means that man has God's characteristics in him. What characteristics do we know of God?

God is spirit (John 4:24). Therefore, man is also a being with spirit. We have a body, but at the same time we have the spirit of God in us. Therefore, as God's creatures, human beings do not live only according to their animal desires. Apostle Paul exhorts Christians in

Corinth not to commit fornication, reminding them that they are created in the image of God (1 Corinthians 6:19): "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own." Human beings are bearers of the Spirit of God who is in them and who, through them, reveals God to the whole world. God's servants, God's children, God's people are people of the Spirit of God.

God is love (1 John 4:8). "Love" here means "God's love" (Greek: agape). Man is not satisfied when his greed, desire or feeling is satisfied. Without God's love, a person is not a person. God's love is pure, selfless and devoted (John 3:16). With this love, God loved us, His creatures, when we fell into sin, and gave His only begotten Son for us, so that all who believe might not perish but have eternal life. With this love, God's people love even the most unlovable sinners, such as Jim Elliott and his friends loved the Huaorani Indians, revealing God who is love.

God's attribute is also holiness (Isaiah 6:3; Revelation 4:8). God calls believers "the holy people" in Exodus 19:5,6. God's created people are set apart from everything unholy by God's holiness. We can name other characteristics of God, such as faithfulness, truthfulness, the sense of beauty and creativity. God created man in His image. The image of God makes man special in creation. The image of God makes man infinitely precious. How precious God can use people who are created in the image of God. Apostle Peter thought of the image of God when he wrote to the afflicted and scattered Christians (1 Peter 2:9): "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light."

Second, God created man in a specific order. Verse 26 says that God created man, and he rules over everything else. The order of creation has three levels. God is the Creator, He is on the highest level. Man is below, on the second level. All other things are on the third level. God rules over man, and man rules over this world. This order of creation is firm and absolute, even though it is constantly under attack in this fallen world. We do not need to listen to lies that tell us, "You will be like God." No creature can be like the Creator. God works in this world through

every person who lives in the absolute order of creation.

King David was the second king of Israel. He was very capable, talented, handsome and popular. After defeating his enemies, he ruled unchallenged. The crowns of the defeated kings were laid at his feet. Yet he lived in the order of creation. In Psalm 139:13-14 he says, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well." And in Psalm 8 he marvels, "When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet." David acknowledged that he was a creature, lower than God. He accepted that by the grace of God alone he was allowed to rule over all things. When he lived in the order of creation, he not only became a good king and shepherd for his people. He also became a happy man and a man after God's heart, reflecting the characteristics of God. David even became an image of the Messiah.

In contrast, we read the story of Nebuchadnezzar in the Book of Daniel. He, too, had been created by God. He also had an excellent Bible teacher, the prophet Daniel. Daniel admonished the king not to be proud. But Nebuchadnezzar quickly forgot the admonition. When he saw the magnificent Babel from the roof of his palace, he praised himself for his glorious work. At the same moment, he was cast out of the fellowship of men and became a being lower than the animals. He lay outside in the rain in the field and ate grass like the cattle. A proud man who thinks himself God is dumber than an animal. He does not become glorious, but lower than pigs and cows. Nor does he reflect the attributes of God, but only the distorted image of sin. Nebuchadnezzar finally remembered Daniel's words. He repented and acknowledged God as his Creator (Daniel 4:31-34). He praised God and was restored to God's created order, also regained his dominion and received even greater glory.

We see some people who live not as rulers but as beggars. Because God created human

beings as rulers, this is not a normal life. The reason is never because of their circumstances, but because of their sin. They do not live in God's order of creation. Because of their pride, at some point they tried to push the Creator God off His throne and be God themselves. The result of their sin is that they fall deep and become slaves to things.

God created human beings as rulers. In order to live again as rulers in the order of creation, we must repent and take our position: Under God and above this world. In my college days, I lived in the best external conditions, but I elevated myself above God in my fantasies. My concern was not that God had not created me as a ruler, but that I was rebelling against God's rule to justify my life of lust. Through the help of my Bible teacher with Romans 13:14, I was allowed to repent and accept God's dominion. I was allowed step by step to regain my position in the creation order and was changed from a miserable beggar to a ruler through whom even others can now see God's image. As a ruler under God's dominion, I may now also begin to help others come out of their dependencies and become spiritual, loving, holy and creative in the order of creation, revealing the beautiful image of God.

Look at verse 28: "God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground." After God created man as male and female, He blessed them. He blessed them to be fruitful, to increase in number, to fill the earth, to subdue it and to rule over it. This blessing of God to man corresponds to Jesus' Great Commission. After Jesus died on the cross, he rose from the dead, ascended to heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. He also appointed his disciples, who were still afraid of a little mouse, as rulers and said to them (Matthew 28:18-20): "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Living in the creation order is a blessed life of mission, to be fruitful, to fill the earth, to subdue it, and to reign.

To live for mission is the blessing of God. August Hermann Francke had a crisis of faith at the age of 24 while searching for God. Then he converted to a life in the order of creation with 2 Corinthians 4:7: "But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us." He began teaching orphans, then adults, teachers and civil servants to live in the order of creation. Prussian King Frederick William I. recognized the blessing in Francke's life, waived his taxes and sent his officers to Francke's schools. Through Francke's life with the mission, countless leaders learned to rule in the fear of God, and God made Prussia a blessed country and the ruling power in Germany and Europe.

We are blessed to serve disciple-making through one-to-one Bible study and M-mission to fill the earth with God's children. Missionary Peter and Missionary Sarah's house church has been serving the world campus mission in the fear of God for over forty years, filling the earth with prayer warriors and Bible teachers. God served us through them and raised us for His missionary work in this generation. How can we serve God's mission in this perverse generation? We can be fruitful and rule over the earth by remaining in God's creation order. God created us to rule over the faculties of Bonn University, Bonn-Rhein-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Koblenz University, over the schools, 1,700 universities in Europe and even in the M countries. To rule here means to proclaim the benefits of God as Bible teachers and shepherds and thereby to fill these countries with spiritual descendants.

Let us read verses 29 and 30: "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. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground-everything that has the breath of life in it- I give every green plant for food." And it was so." These verses say that God provides for His children. God created us as rulers, which also means that we must not allow ourselves become slaves to material things. God provides for us. A laborer is worthy of his food. Matthew 6:31-33 says, "So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom

and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well."

## 2. It was very good (1:31 – 2:4a)

Let's read verse 31: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning- the sixth day." In the first chapter, God says six times, "It was good." Now after He had made man, God looked at all creation again. He saw all things and man, who was created in His image to rule over the world. God's judgment was, "Very good!" "Very good" is God's value judgment of man. Man was perfect in the eyes of God. God was very pleased and thrilled with what He had created. This verse teaches us the purpose of creation: every human being is God's masterpiece, created to glorify God. Ephesians 2:10 says it this way, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." This word freed a young man growing up in a poor country during the Civil War from his feelings of inferiority and fatalism and made him a general of faith for world missions who glorified God through his influential life. A young rural girl thought herself not good by comparing her appearance with that of others. Then she heard God's value judgment, "It was very good," repented and was liberated from her ungodly thoughts. She became a beautiful mother of faith and glorified God through her missionary life through which many people worldwide were blessed. God created us very good for His glory. Fanny Crosby went blind as a child. She could have considered herself "very bad." But her mother and grandmother helped her to listen to the Creator. Her grandmother taught her, "God sometimes takes something to give something better." Fanny was no longer preoccupied with herself. Although she remained blind all her life, she was full of joy about God, who had created her very well: "Oh, what a happy soul I am, Although I cannot see, I am resolved that in this world Contented I will be. How many blessings I enjoy That other people don't. To weep and sigh because I'm blind I cannot nor I won't." Through her songs she became a source of encouragement for generations of people who were sad and depressed for no reason.

Why are there so many young people who grow up in the best conditions and yet think their lives are miserable and hopeless? They have been deceived into excluding God from their lives.

God is very sad because they listen more to the ungodly voices of the world than to His absolute judgment. Often, behind their inferiority and lack of confidence, they give room to sinful desires and therefore do not want to take responsibility for their lives. But this makes them more and more miserable, because God did not create them to feed their desires, but to glorify Him. God is our creator. He says to us, "You are very good." Each and every one of us is created very good by God with the purpose of glorifying Him. God alone has the right to judge us. He alone can reveal to us what our purpose of creation is. God created us to glorify Him in all that we do. Let us read verse 31: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning- the sixth day."

The given examples teach us what it means practically to glorify God. A "very good" life for the glory of God is a life of faith in obedience to His Word, to the end. "Very good" does not mean "very easy." Rather, a "very good" life is a very exciting life full of spiritual struggles and afflictions. But it is the life that pleases God. And God is with those who live for His glory, bestowing His grace upon them. Paul writes (Romans 8:18), "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." Peter says (1 Peter 4:13), "But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed." The glory that is to be revealed is God's glory through those who have accepted by faith that they have been created very good by God.

This weekend we held the Junior Leadership Camp. God, through the faith of His servant, established the next generation coworkers and sheep as preachers and speakers. The world says to them, "You are very deficient. Give up." God's word says to each of them, "You are very good. You too may glorify God." God worked in them and revealed His glory. Because God created them very good, God will continue to work through Bible study and faith training, and will even use them as global spiritual leaders, as far away as Cambodia, China, North Korea.

Let's look at 2:1, 2: "Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work." God created the heavens and the earth in six days. On the seventh day he rested. What did God do with

the seventh day? Let's read 3: "And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done." The seventh day is an important part of creation. God blessed it and made it holy. To make it holy means to set it apart. The fourth commandment reads (Exodus 20:8-10), "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates." Here we learn how we may spend the seven days of a week. Six days we are to labor. The seventh day we are to keep holy. That is, six days of the week we glorify God by laboring hard and doing all our work. The seventh day we may set apart for God. We sanctify it by spending it with God.

Practically, this means coming together for worship, giving thanks to God, having fellowship with Him in the Word and prayer, and coming to God in our testimony with specific concerns and a clear plan for the new week. Communion with God gives true heavenly rest. Rest does not come from rest. Rest comes from repentance. By giving this day once a week to our Creator, we may receive true rest and be equipped for the spiritual battle for His work of campus mission to which we are called.

Today we learn that we are created very good by God. Our goal in life is to glorify God. We may glorify God by abiding and ruling in the order of creation. We also learn to set aside the seventh day of the week for God and receive true rest. May God restore the creation order in Germany and Europe that they glorify God as a shepherd nation and missionary sending continent. Let us read the key verse 31: "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day."