

THE STORY OF MAN'S DESTINY #6

HOW ARE WE MADE?

GEN. 2:7

GEN. 2:7. 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 SOUL.

1. INTRODUCTION.

We now enter into a phase of “The Story of Man’s Destiny”, that is more complex and more misunderstood than most any other area of our study. It does not need to be “mysterious” and it surely does not need to be made difficult. It is, however, a very important phase of our story. In fact, if we can get a good understanding of this phase of the story, it will be of invaluable help in many other areas of the story yet to come. The difficulty, if there is one, will not be in gaining an accurate interpretation of what the scriptures say about “How Are We Made”? Instead, it will be in dealing with the deeply embedded thoughts, theology and even imaginations, that centuries of teaching and tradition has ingrained into virtually every strata of mans thoughts about himself. Thoughts that unfortunately, as we shall see, are not the way the Bible teaches it.

I think it is also important that we observe up front in this lesson, that a correct understanding of what we are made of, will magnify the creative power and mind of God; it will confirm the words of Ps. 139:14, that we are fearfully and wonderfully made; it will bring the greatest clarity to scripture; and will meet the test of history, reason and logic. On the other hand, we are going to see that the truth of what we are made of will completely discredit a veritable maize of religious concepts that have enjoyed the favor and support of a majority of religious thinkers, theologians and students of the centuries. But that will not deter our efforts or our outcome. The religious hierarchy didn’t agree with the apostles, prophets, Paul, Martin Luther and others. They didn’t even agree with Christ and his teachings. So our only standard will be a search for the truth, no matter what the tradition might be.

As we have with other lessons so far in this series, we will draw our initial scripture foundation for this lesson from the story of man’s creation in Genesis, 2:7. “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 soul. This verse gives us a very straight forward description of both the process and substance of which we are made. The dust of the ground, infused with the breath of life, and a fearfully and wonderfully made creation of God became a “living soul”. Only God could do this. With a little dirt, God formed man with all of his being, organs, faculties, senses and every intricate part and detail. The marvelous wisdom and power of God is so unfathomable when you consider this creation he has just made. It was beautiful, mysterious, unbelievably complex and yet without life, animation or function at first. And God simply breathed the breath of life into his nostrils; i. e., he breathed air, oxygen into his nostrils, and man became alive. Don’t add anything to this; don’t take anything from it. Just dirt and air, and man became a “living soul”; a living being, creature, creation. Our objective now will be to understand this creation of man in the light of scripture.

2. TAKE A LOOK AT YOURSELF.

Take a look at the process of blood flowing through approximately 100,000 miles of vessels, carrying vital oxygen throughout your body. Take a look at the heart that beats faithfully 60 to 70 times a minute, day and night, for a lifetime, 70 to 80 years. Think about the millions of messages your nervous system carries to your brain of every single event occurring in and to your body. Then contemplate the brain analyzing and interpreting these signals and telling you what is happening,

instantly. Think about the marvel of the senses of feeling, sight, taste, hearing and smell, and what they mean to your daily existence. Just think of the skin in the palms of your hands and how many times it is replaced with new skin in a life time. Think of the powerful acids in your stomach that causes the digestion of the foods that you regularly put in it, and then realize that the stomach would digest itself if it did not replace it's lining every 2 weeks. Then consider the multitude of bones, sinews and muscles in the hand alone allowing such dexterity and range of usefulness. Consider the fluids and chemistry of your body and the meticulous balance it must maintain for a healthy function. Then consider the digestive system and the daily tests we put it through. Even the waste disposal system of the body is a miraculous marvel of its own. I have often said that an ordinary, daily bowel movement is one of the most marvelous things that God created.

Now think about this fact of our creation once again: God simply took the dust of the ground and created all of the above, and more, with all of it's unbelievable sophistication, function, coordination and purpose. Then, after creating the whole man with clay from the earth, he added breath. The only thing that God added to this man which was made of dirt was air or oxygen. Dust and air, and the man that God had thus made became a living soul. That is, he was a living being. The dirt alone was a soul (being, person), but he was not alive. Then God added breath, air, oxygen. When he did this, air entered our nostrils; the heart started its rhythmic beating; the blood absorbed the oxygen; the blood started flowing, and as it passed throughout the entire body, man was alive. The organs began functioning; the nervous system and the brain engaged; the eyes opened; the ears heard; the muscles flexed; the bones stabilized, and Adam was in motion.

And God looked upon it all and said that it was very good. God uttered commands to this dirt and air creation and Adam understood them. Purpose and responsibility belonged to man. There was the garden to care for; the animal kingdom to rule; and all the trees of the garden to manage. This man that God has just created was not some babbling, ignorant moron, incapable of "tying his own shoes". He was the manager of God's earth. More important than this, he had the innate capacity to communicate with the eternal, omniscient God. (Which is something many a "Harvard" graduate doesn't know how to do). God had not only made man the CEO of the earth's far reaching domain, he made him his own representative on earth, with his own divine image (plan, purpose, character and future plans) stamped in his being. What a marvelous creation God had made.

3. MAN AND THE REST OF CREATION.

When God looked upon the creation he had made, he saw it (all) as very good. Indeed, it could not be summarized otherwise. The earth, sun, moon and stars; the trees, shrubs, flowers and herbs; the fish, birds, creeping things and beast of the fields were marvels of God's handiwork, very good. Then with man as the crowning work of his great creation, it was all "good and very good".

Let's just take our focus to the beast of the fields. No one questions the fact that God created an innate difference between man and beast. Without question, man is the superior or higher order of creation. Nevertheless, the differences between man and beast are enormous. Through such mediums as the abilities to learn, communicate, function, produce, have relationships, comprehension and much more, man far exceeds any species of the beast of the field.

At the same time there are also some things where there are great similarities. The wise man observed these similarities, when he said: "they have all one breath, all are of the dust and all turn to dust again". This means to us that both man and beast breathe oxygen into our systems that is then transported by our blood stream throughout our bodies, giving us life. Also, as the one dieth, so dieth the other, said Solomon. Again he said, Ecc. 3:18-19, that men might see that they themselves are beasts; and that a man hath no preeminence above a beast. His reference here is to the vanity of life, that both man and beast live and breathe the same air and both die and go back to the dust from whence they came.

We need to explore this further to determine just what it is that makes man so vastly different than beast. Even the animal kingdom is fearfully and wonderfully made, notwithstanding that, there is a

marked distinction between them. In some very distinct ways the lowly ox functions as a man does. They have the breath of life in their nostrils; they were made a living soul just as man was; their lungs and heart work to transport blood throughout their body. Their kidneys, liver, digestive system performs for them vital functions of life. In many respects the beast of the field receives their life giving element in much the same way as man. In fact, Ecc. 3:19 tells us that they all have the same breath, so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast. I am not trying to teach that man is a beast, or the same as a beast. However, there is no doubt that the life process of a beast comes about in much the same miraculous way as the life element of man does: by breath or oxygen circulating through the body of both. Beyond this, there remains a very great distinction between man and beast, in God's creation and purpose for them. I just want to point out that it is not the life element that is different. When God created man from the dust, he was complete in every detail, except the breath of life. Then God caused the breath of life to enter his nostrils, and "man became a living soul". He did exactly the same thing for the dumb ox, and he also became a living soul. It is interesting to note that the expression "living creature" in Gen. 1:24, referring to the beast of the field, comes from exactly the same original word as "living soul", in Gen. 2:7, referring to man. The translators simply used the word "creature" in one place and "soul" in the other. The original language makes no such distinction. It may help to interpret these both as: "living being". To put it another way, for either man or beast to completely stop every vital function of life for either one all that is necessary is to simply stop the supply of oxygen. Life is very fragile.

4. HOW ARE WE DIFFERENT FROM THE BEAST?

By this time in the lesson, you are probably wondering exactly what the point of all this comparison between man and beast is all about. As we shall see, it is the exact nature of this comparison as well as the nature of the difference that can reveal to us the most vital lesson about the nature and destiny of mankind. If we both breathe the same breath of life that serves the same essential function of inspiring or activating us; and if we all return to the dust alike, so that in these two instances at least man has no preeminence above a beast, just how are we different? How is it that man can process information, and then use it to his advantage? How is it that man can exercise dominion over the beasts of the field when in many cases the beast is physically stronger? How is it possible that mankind, from an infant child, can learn and amass knowledge throughout its life, and benefit from it? How is it possible that man has the ability to select and choose among the millions of options about life that he is regularly confronted with while the "ox" has no such ability? How is it possible that mankind can form communicable relationships and can do so in a manner of dignity, thoughtfulness, grace and mutual benefit? How is it possible for man to express deep emotions; glorious exhilaration; and boundless interest and love in the course of life? Finally, how is it that mankind knows there is an eternal God and can form a relationship with this God and the beast cannot? Through instinct and much repetitive training, a beast may be able to respond to some commands, but it does not come from cognitive interaction and thought processes that allows the beast to think out and make choices about his actions.

In answering the question of this difference, we could simply say that it is how God created us. While this is essentially true, yet it does not really answer the question. When you look at the process of creation, it was the same for both of us: God said it and it was so. Further, in this act of creation, God used exactly the same materials: the dust of the earth and the breath of life breathed into the nostrils of each. In addition, both man and beast are the product of direct creation by God. Neither had any form of pre - existence prior to God forming them of the dust of the ground. God did not put a piece of himself in man. It is simply the creative power and genius of God, to be able to create man and beast from the same raw materials, both with a marvelous functioning ability and at the same time create in man a vast distinction from the beast.

I believe that this difference between man and beast is in two areas: (1) the vast power and function of the mind; (2) the purpose for which God created man as opposed to the purpose of a beast. Included in these two differences are two other major factors which God intended to function within the first two. They are: (1) the privilege and ability of choice; (2) desire or passion. It may be argued that a beast also has desire and that is true, but it is not guided by a thought process that causes him

to exercise it at will, but rather instinctively. Now that I have identified what I believe to be the difference in man and beast, the questions will begin to quickly arise.

No doubt the first question is: “didn’t God make man in his own image”? And the answer is that indeed he did. This in turn raises the question of exactly what is the “image” of God in which man is said to be created. The next question is: Job 32:8, says: “But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the almighty giveth them understanding”. What is this “spirit in man”? And another question comes from Gen. 2:7-8, where it says that the Lord God “formed” man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. From this word “formed”, theologians draw the idea that God made man into some kind of a “shell” and then placed a “soul” within this shell, thus making man a twofold (some say 3) being with a body of dirt and an immortal soul functioning within it. Theologians will also point out that this “indwelling (separate) entity” or soul, is what makes man distinct from beast. The first problem with that is the fact that Gen. 2:19, tells us that, in the exact same manner, God “formed” the beast of the field. Plato, the Greek heathen philosopher, taught that the “soul inhabits the body like a pilot inhabits the ship”. The only problem with this is that the Bible does not say that.

We are not through with any of these questions, but let us start with this process by returning to the differences we identified as being unique to man and setting him apart from beast. The first difference we mentioned was our minds. God created the mind of man to enable him to respond to the will and directives of God on a level of knowledge, desire and honor. A unique characteristic that God endowed man with was the privilege of choice. In spite of the fact that God knew beforehand that man could use this ability of choice in a bad way, yet it was a great factor in creating a living being like him. We call this choice being a “free moral agent”. That is, man was free to obey or disobey God by the choice of his own mind. This brought the characteristic of our lives we refer to as “desire”. It is a powerful force in all that we think and do. Sometimes we refer to it as our “heart”. In reality, our physical heart has no thinking, emotional, or choice capacity. The heart is the seat of life; that is, it is from the heart that blood is pumped to the body. The blood carries our life element, oxygen, and therefore our bodies are said to be alive. The heart is the seat of sensation or desire because it is the source from which life emanates to all the body. It is, in fact, the well spring of life itself, by being the power that sends life giving blood throughout the body. However, it is the mind that can transform this life energy into carrying out choices we daily make.

God did not create a robot but a living being with the capacity to know and desire and the privilege to make choices of life so as to fulfill those desires. It is in this capacity of desire, and subsequent choices, that God created in us the purpose of life itself. I believe that it is within this area of our mind, making our choices, based upon our desires or passions, that God made it possible for man to voluntarily have a dynamic, loving, obedient relationship with God. God’s “desire” for man was that man would “desire” God. God intended that man would use the power and process of the mind to control and guide the desires and passions available to him so as to bring himself voluntarily and lovingly into a divine relationship that would both praise and glorify God, while being to the good and benefit of man. As we painfully know, man used this power and process of the mind to follow the desires to partake of the forbidden fruit and thus God’s great purpose in man was thwarted.

God wanted man to be like him. It is said in Gen. 1:26-27, that God created man in his own likeness; in the image of God created he him. This is not said of the beast of the field; only of man. What did God mean by the expression that “he created man in his own image”. It obviously did not mean size and shape because that would reduce God down to the mere structure of man, limited to size and space. But what about other qualities of God such as power, eternity, perfection, glory, wisdom and knowledge? Can it be said that Adam was created perfect or all - powerful, like God? Hardly, and yet there is a sense in which these were all in the view of God in the creation of man in his image and likeness.

In this “image” or “likeness” of God, we will see the grand scheme and purpose of God in man that we would be like him. There is a very important consideration in this “likeness” in which man must participate in a very critical role and responsibility. Through the freedom of his own choice and the

capacity of his mind to select the right choice, and with it the opportunity to do so, this likeness of man to God can come into perspective. It is during this time and opportunity when Adam could order his life to be like God, that we say that Adam was on probation. The inherent intention of God in Adam was for him to conduct his life and be like him. God entrusted to Adam the freedom for him to trust in God. Thus “faith” in God was born. Adam failed in this trust and he believed the voice of the serpent and lost the image or likeness God intended. He had it by faith; that is by trusting and obeying God’s word”. I believe that this process would have ultimately, in God’s time, matured into the reality of all the attributes of God as intended.

The best way, and perhaps the only way, to understand how man was created in the image of God, is to look ahead to the day of Christ. Keep in mind, that before the foundation of the world, Christ was the Lamb of God, slain for the sins of the world, in God’s foreknowledge and forethought of things. Even here it does not refer to the physical stature of Christ; the length of his hair or the (un)comeliness of his features. Instead, look to his obedience (as a man), his righteousness, holiness, servitude, glorification of the Father and in every other way and manner reflecting in his very being, all the “likeness” of God. What we see in Christ is exactly what God intended to be seen in man. There is no other way that you can realistically describe man as being in God’s likeness, except in his characteristics and attributes. In all of these, Adam failed and lost all of this likeness.

Ph. 2:6, says of Christ, that he was in the form (likeness) of God. Heb. 1:3, says: “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person”. In II Cor. 4:6, Paul says: “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” Then in Col. 2:9: “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

The likeness and image in which God created Adam, he lost through his choice and sin. In Jesus (the 2nd Adam) that likeness now can be restored. Jesus is the fullness of the Godhead (in a body); the express image of God, and the expression of all the glory of God. God begat (in a man) (the man Christ Jesus) the image he intended that Adam would have possessed from the beginning. In Jesus, all things we lost in Adam have been restored to us. In everything Jesus shows forth the image and likeness of God. In all things he pleased the Father. He was the true expression of holiness of life and the righteousness of God. He was the express image of love and forgiveness and in all things an example for those who would believe on God through him.

There is another important point to make regarding Jesus and the image of God. It needs to be made so that we might clearly see what it means for us to be made in the image of God as he originally intended. In Heb. 10:5-7, it is said of Christ: “Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do thy will, O God. The point that needs to be made here is that it was the “body” of Christ, his flesh and blood, through and by which the image and likeness of God was to be manifest. Not through some imagined “immortal” spirit in him. But through his body: his flesh and blood. Thus it is said: Heb. 4:15, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feelings of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

Jesus was tempted by the lusts of his flesh, the lust of his eyes; and the pride of life, just as we are, Mt. 4:1-11. He did not submit to these temptations. In his body; i. e., his hands, feet, eyes, mouth, ears, heart and mind, Jesus resisted temptation and upheld righteousness. Then, finally, he was led to calvary and there he suffered, bled and died in his humanity. Thus he pleased God in his body. In his human likeness to sinful flesh, he resisted sin and overcame it in his body. Through his humanity he demonstrated the glorious image of God. In Jesus Christ, we have seen manifested all the likeness and image of God.

The sequel to this is that through Jesus Christ and our (restored) relationship with God through him, that we too are to become “like Jesus”, that the glory of God may also shine forth through our human fleshly being and members. The results of this is that we can be restored to the “likeness and

image of God” through Jesus Christ. This restoration is not accomplished through some invisible entity floating around some place inside our body, but it is accomplished through every member and faculty of our being.

Traditional theology has taught us that the saving grace and purposes of God are that he wants to save some immortal spirit inside of us. But the great objective of God in creating us in his likeness was that all the glory of God should shine forth in every member of our body. Our bodies are not some old rotten clay dwelling that God has no future use for. It is the very object of his redemption. Rom. 8:23. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies. In Rom. 6:12-19, Paul uses great lengths to emphasize the great truth that our bodies are the object of God’s redeeming work. Every member of our bodies is to become servants to God. In I Cor. 6:19-20, Paul says: “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s. Traditional theology refers to the body as a shackle; a prison house; something of no future value. No importance or value or beauty is put on our human vessel; our sanctified and redeemed flesh; our very being as becoming the dwelling place for God and the sacred temple of the Holy Ghost.

God’s aim through calvary was to redeem our whole being from the clutches of sin. Today we have tried to reduce the work of redemption to some mere function of a mental decision and not the transforming work of the Holy Ghost in our mortal flesh to redeem us back to God. It is not that in our flesh that we will have some visible feature and appearance and size that will equate to the image of God. Instead it is the cleansing by the blood of Jesus of all of the lusts and passions of the flesh and bringing them into servitude to Christ. In the body of Christ, all the glory of God was manifested before the world. So also with us, the image and likeness of God should be reflected in our minds, our hearts, our mouths, our feet, our hands and every member and dimension of our body. God’s plan in us through Christ is that we might be the righteousness of God through him; with holiness of life reflected in all we are and in all things we might glorify God. Then, we should voluntarily sacrifice our bodies to and for him. This is the meaning of being created (re-created) in the image and likeness of God. This is the difference between man and beast. This is God’s re-creation; fearfully and wonderfully made, in his likeness and image in all things.

THE STORY OF MAN

LESSON #7 SERMON NOTES
HOW ARE WE MADE. GEN. 2:7.

1. INTRODUCTION

- a. Now turning to a different part of our story.
- b. This is a very critical part of The Story Of Man.
- c. Our position is a minority one; seriously criticized.

2. ANALYZE THE SCRIPTURE TEXT. GEN. 2:7.

- a. The process and substance used in the creation of man.

3. TAKE A LOOK AT YOURSELF.

- a. Blood flowing through 100000 miles of vessels, carrying oxygen and digested food to your body.
- b. Consider the function of your heart and lungs.
- c. Think of your skin that is the largest organ of your body. Read information.
- d. The nervous system consists of nerves; spinal column; and brain. Describe it's purpose and action.

- e. How important are our ears. Read information.

- f. We give very little thought to our digestive system. What an absolute marvel.

- g. Ladies, I have some important information about your hair.

- h. God gave us toes and fingers instead of hoofs; a brain to learn instead of robotic action; he equipped us with the sensation of touch to transmit feelings of pain and love; and he gave us voices to talk and sing.

- j. Why is it that sheep baa's; a horse nay's; an eagle can soar; a pig oinks; a chicken clucks; a cow moo's; and we humans grumble and complain.

4. Emphasize the materials we are made of.

- a. Illustrate each of us with a jar of dirt and a balloon of air.

- b. In the jar we are just a dead soul.

- c. Add the air and you are a living soul.

5. Thus man was fearfully and wonderfully made.

- a. He was not some babbling moron who couldn't tie his own shoes.

- b. He was the CEO of all the earth.

- c. With the capacity to communicate with God. (A Harvad graduate can't).

6. **Man and beast.**
 - a. **Made of the same raw materials as an ox.**
 - b. **But intentionally made vastly different.**
7. **How is man different from beast.**
 - a. **How is man able to: process information; dominion; amass knowledge; exercise choice; relationships of dignity, thought, & grace; express emotions, exhilaration, love; know there is God; have a relationship with God.**
 - b. **The difference: (1) The power and function of a mind superior to beast; (2) The purpose for which man was made controlled how he was made.**
 - c. **These required 2 other factors: (1) The privilege of choice; (2) Desire and passion.**
8. **This raises the question of man being made in the “image and likeness of God”. Gen. 1:26-27.**
 - a. **Tradition teaches that God “formed” man and then put some “spiritual being” inside of a shell body. Gen. 2:7.**
 - b. **Gen. 2:19, Then he also put a spiritual being inside the beast.**
9. **God created man with the opportunity to be like God, of his own choice and desire.**
 - a. **To be holy, righteous, full of grace and to praise, honor, glorify and obey God.**
 - b. **All of this was to issue from this creature, fearfully and wonderfully made.**
 - c. **Every member, organ, faculty, sense, mind, energy and being was to be so engaged.**
 - d. **Man failed and lost this likeness.**
10. **Then Jesus came, in the likeness of God.**
 - a. **Express image; form; fulness; glory.**
 - b. **And Jesus in all things conformed to the image of his father.**
11. **Now we too can become a (new) creation; just like Jesus.**
 - a. **Through Jesus our likeness of God can be restored.**
12. **Now the material in the jar and balloon can glorify God in his likeness.**
 - a. **That is why it takes a new birth.**
 - b. **We are back before Adam fell in Christ, and every member of our being is to be employed in the likeness of God.**
13. **Our body (being) is not a shackle, prison, unnecessary bondage for an immortal soul.**
 - a. **It is the glorious temple of God.**