
THE CREATION OF MAN: THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT

Doctrine of Man
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We have two accounts of the creation of man: Gen 1:26–27 and Gen 2:7, 21–23.

Genesis 1:26–27—²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:7—⁷ then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. . . . ²¹ So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”

As we look at these key texts, let us break down several elements in the creation of man.

THE SUBJECT: _____

- The grammar here indicates that God is especially interested in the creation of man.
- This makes sense, because it is the reproduction of his image.

THE OBJECT: _____

- The structuring of the Genesis account portrays a particular order that elevates the importance of man as compared to the rest of creation.
 - Days 1–3 describe the creation of kingdoms or realms.
 - Days 4–6 describe the creation of rulers to rule over those kingdoms.
- Man, however, seems to transcend the rest of creation.

THE FORM/PATTERN: _____

- Man is created in the image and likeness of God.
- Some interpreters see “likeness” as further explaining “image.”
- Others see this as saying something additional about the nature of man and how he was created. That is, some traditions have distinguished between the image and the likeness.

THE MODE: _____

- A fiat is “a formal authorization or decree”¹ or “a command or act of will that creates something without or as if without further effort.”²
- In a similar fashion, Genesis 1:27 is very matter of fact even though it bears poetic form.
- Theistic evolution is one position that seeks to fill in the supposed gaps of the biblical record.
 - The advocate of theistic evolution views that God created the world—even *ex nihilo* (from nothing). But after that, the creation of much life has come about by a providentially-guided process of evolution.
 - God set the pieces in motion, but the creation of man is not directly of divine fiat. Rather, some advocates see man as a series in a chain of species that have evolved.
 - For a good summary of such views, read Richard Belcher’s review of C. John Collins, *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?* online at Reformation21.³
 - The first major problem is that theistic evolution is contrary to the explicit teaching of Scripture.
 - Genesis 2:7 says God created man of the dust of the ground, not from animals.
 - 1 Corinthians 15:39 corroborates this basic point: “For not all flesh is the same, but there is one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish.”

THE MEANS: _____

- Genesis 2:7—then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.
 - There is a play on words between the object of creation and from where he came, his origin.
 - The apostle Paul draws an important lesson from this statement of origin by developing it in 1 Corinthians 15:47–49: ⁴⁷ The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. ⁴⁸ As was the man of dust, so also are those who are of the dust, and as is the man of heaven, so also are those who are of heaven. ⁴⁹ Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the man of heaven.
- God created man’s body of the dust and his souls of nothing—a new substance.
 - He breathed life into the body and it became a “living soul.” Christ, however, became “life-giving Spirit.”
 - In a future lesson, we’ll explore Paul’s comparison of the “man of dust” to the “man of heaven.”

¹ <https://www.google.com/webhp?sourceid=chrome-instant&ion=1&respv=2&ie=UTF-8#q=define%20fiat>

² <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fiat>

³ <http://www.reformation21.org/articles/did-adam-and-eve-really-exist-a-review.php>