

TEACHING GOAL

Study the basic difference between mankind and all other animals and the nature of his dominion.

DOCTRINAL STANDARDS

Q. How did God create man?

A. God created man male and female, after His own image, in knowledge, righteousness and holiness, with dominion over the creatures.

S.C. 10; L.C. 16-17; W.C. of F. IV; Savoy 4; Young 18

SCRIPTURAL BASIS

Study Passage: Genesis 1:26-2:25

Support Passages: Ecclesiastes 3:17-22, 12:7; Luke 23:43; Matthew 10:28; Isaiah 10:18; Daniel 7:15; I Corinthians 15:45-54; II Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:23-24; Colossians 3:10; Ephesians 4:24

BIBLE STORY

Genesis 1:26-30, 2:15-25; Adam in the Garden of Eden and the making of Eve. Mankind was made perfectly according to God's sovereign intentions.

MEMORY ASSIGNMENT

"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them." (Genesis 1:27, ESV)

APPLICATION

Let us be renewed in spirit and body after the likeness of the image of God; holy and righteous, with true knowledge.

SUMMARY

Human beings did not derive from or originate in other forms of life. The Bible clearly states that, "the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground..."¹, and that he, "created man in His own image."² There is no room at all for any form of evolution in the case of mankind nor in the creation that took place on the other days. Now we observe change does occur within the classes of animals or other living things, but all such changes are limited genetically. Cats, for example, are observed to vary in size and color but they are always members of the cat family. Many believing scientists have presented cogent and biblical refutations of the theories of Lamark, Darwin and others, and I might add that many unbelieving scientists have done likewise. Modern technology has led a great many scientists and researchers to the persuasion that living things are so complex they could not have evolved. It is obvious to them that an intelligent designer must have originated living things. Most of the scientific data in existence fully supports the claim of Scripture that God created all things and mankind in particular. It supports the obvious fact that the classes of living things appeared suddenly and discretely. There is a complete absence of any transitional forms of life among the data before us.

Genesis records the words of God; *"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."*² But God is a Spirit³ and since mankind exhibits a physical or material body, it follows that man's likeness of God is a spiritual likeness. Paul corroborates this in speaking of the new birth, for he tells us that the converted sinner has put on a *"and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator"*,⁴ thus God's image includes true knowledge. Speaking again of this new self⁵ Paul equates righteousness and holiness of truth with the likeness of God. Now these are all spiritual qualities. It is obvious, therefore, that mankind has a dual nature. Mankind is both body and soul. His body was formed of the dust of the earth and his soul bears the image of God. This, of course, is the difference between mankind and all other animals. Only man has a soul that bears God's image.

Genesis 2:7 makes the interesting statement, "man became a living being." The words "living being" translate two Hebrew words that, in Genesis 1:20,21 and 24, are translated "living creatures". Therefore, contends the Jehovah's Witness, animals have souls. That animals and mankind both are living beings or living creatures we do not dispute, but animals do not have immortal souls, nor are they immortal beings. The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us that animals and

mankind have in common the fact that their bodies came from the dust and return to it but their spirits or breath⁶ are quite different. It is only the spirit of man that returns to God who gave it. The Bible never refers to the sins of animals or ascribes to them any spiritual characteristics. Therefore the newer Bible translations are reluctant to speak of animals as having spirits. That mankind have souls is not established in Genesis 2:7 and the newer translations are correct in translating "living being" or "living creature" to avoid the conclusion that animals have souls, especially in light of the rest of Scripture which opposes such a position.

The immortality of the human soul is clearly taught in 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 and Philippians 1:23-24, to name several of the many passages that bear on the subject. Paul, however, uses Genesis 2:7 in an interesting manner in I Corinthians 15:45 and following. *"Thus it is written, "The first man Adam became a living being"; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. But it is not the spiritual that is first but the natural, and then the spiritual. The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven. 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."*⁷

In comparing Adam with Christ, Adam is natural, from the earth, bearing the image of the earthy. Thus Adam is a living creature but Christ, on the other hand, is spiritual as opposed to natural, from heaven, bearing the image of the heavenly, thus he is a life-giving Spirit. Paul's point is that the bodies of saved mankind will be resurrected to glory and be changed like the body of Christ. In heaven there will be no flesh and blood⁸ but our body that died will be changed and resurrected. He writes that our souls are immortal and he tells us that our changed and resurrected bodies shall be also.

The Lord God has also given mankind dominion over all other creation. Ecology in the Garden of Eden demanded the presence of the man Adam and he did physical work there for God put Adam in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Dominion, yes, but not exploitation and greedy waste. One wonders how well mankind lives up to his image of God or how prudently he exercises his dominion. The answer is obvious, not very well at all.⁹ () We all need to turn away from our lack of zeal for the kingdom of Christ and be steadfast in the process of growth in grace.

¹ Genesis 2:7

² Genesis 1:26, ESV

³ John 4:24

⁴ Colossians 3:10, ESV

⁵ Ephesians 4:24

⁶ Ecclesiastes 3:20-21, 12:7

⁷ 1 Corinthians 15:45-48, ESV

⁸ I Corinthians 15:50

⁹ Romans 8:20-25