

Genesis 2:18-24^{iv} and Psalm 8^v

Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.” So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.” Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh.

^{iv} About Genesis 2:18-24

This account of the creation of woman is taken from the second (2:4-24) of the two stories in Genesis. Humankind is introduced as social by nature (2:18). The word used for “man,” Adam, is a collective, not individual, term and represents both maleness and femaleness. The phrase “a deep sleep” usually indicates a state in which God sends someone an unsought vision or message. Unlike the creation of all other beings, woman was not created from the ground but from the essence of man, showing equality and identity.

Although woman’s creation is subsequent to man’s, it is not thereby subordinate. While the word “helper” today has connotations of assistant or subordinate, the Hebrew word is also used of God’s Spirit. It depicts the woman as an enabler, one who completes and facilitates the smooth functioning of the human community and is a partner in all the work the community is called to do. The recognition of woman as “bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” affirms a relationship of kinship and equality.

^v Psalm 8^v

O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!
Out of the mouths of infants and children *
your majesty is praised above the heavens.
You have set up a stronghold against your adversaries, *
to quell the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, *
the moon and the stars you have set in their courses,
What is man that you should be mindful of him? *
the son of man that you should seek him out?
You have made him but little lower than the angels; *
you adorn him with glory and honor;
You give him mastery over the works of your hands; *
you put all things under his feet:
All sheep and oxen, *
even the wild beasts of the field,
The birds of the air, the fish of the sea, *
and whatsoever walks in the paths of the sea.
O LORD our Governor, *
how exalted is your Name in all the world!