

God Creates Mankind as His Offspring

Lesson 2

When God created our universe, He had many purposes for creating mankind. After creating Earth for mankind, God provided a wonderful home for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, where He would come and have fellowship with them. God intended that, as His offspring, they would be part of His family, be known by His name, imitate Him, and do similar work.

One of the most significant purposes in God's creation of mankind is that His offspring would be part of His family. Being God's offspring, mankind is highly intelligent and has many diverse abilities, because God has created man in the _____ and _____ of God (Gen 1:26-27). Likewise, when the Bible describes Seth as the offspring of Adam, Seth has Adam's "likeness" and "image," because he is Adam's son (Gen 5:3).

Although man is a finite being, he was created to have many of the same types of abilities as his infinite Creator, but in a limited way. Obviously, man is a creature with a physical body; man is not infinite like God, but is limited by his nature. Thus, man's physical nature restricts his abilities, his exercise of authority, his presence, his knowledge, and his choices; even so, these human abilities are reflections of the abilities of God the Father.

An important way in which mankind is created in the image and likeness of God is that God designed man to have a mind similar to His mind. Man's mind has categories of thought like those in God's mind; man's ability to reason, to understand, and to communicate his thoughts is similar to God's ability. These similar abilities enable someone to enjoy fellowship with another.

God desires that man be part of His family so that man can enjoy having fellowship with Him. Fellowship of one sentient being with another is only possible if both are able to communicate. Among the most important capacities of an intelligent being are the abilities to reason and communicate. From a jellyfish to a chimpanzee, the more intelligent the animal, the more developed its ability to reason and communicate. (Reasoning is very different than a reflexive or learned response).

Fellowship with a rock is not really possible. One can, however, enjoy a basic level of fellowship with a pet, but this type of fellowship is not very sophisticated. While you might tell your most intimate thoughts to your pet, your pet cannot understand most of what you are trying to communicate nor share its own intimate thoughts with you.

On the other hand, God is able to communicate His thoughts and desires to man, and man can likewise communicate his thoughts and desires to God. Even constrained as man is by his creaturely nature, his design fully enables him to have genuine fellowship with his Creator.

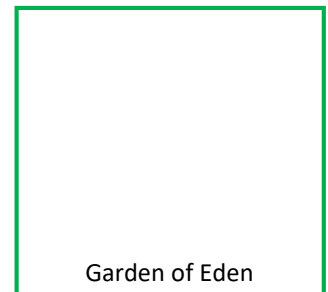
In the beginning, Adam and Eve enjoy the fellowship of their Creator. Every evening, God comes to walk and spend time with His family in the special house (the Garden of Eden) which He has prepared for them to live. God provides fruit trees to feed His family so that they will not go hungry. God is the best father a family could have.

Later, when God offers to make the Israelites his family, He says: "I will take you as My people, and I will be your God" (Ex 6:7; cf. Ex 19:5; Jer 31:32). God takes Israel, as a man takes a wife, and repeatedly calls them "My people," indicating that they are His family. As a good father caring for His family, God rescues the Israelites from the Egyptians, saying, "Israel is My son, My firstborn" (Lev 26:12). God directs them to build His dwelling place and promises to live and fellowship with His family in the Promised Land (Ex 15:17; 25:8; 29:45-46; Num 35:34).

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . . Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion . . . over all the earth. . . ." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. – Genesis 1:1-27

What is the name of your favorite pet?

Draw Adam in the center of the green box representing the Garden of Eden, then add fruit trees throughout the garden.



If you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you will be a special treasure to Me above all people for all the earth is Mine.

– Exodus 19:5

For we are also His offspring. Therefore, since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the divine nature is like gold or silver or stone.
– Acts 17:28-29

“After this I will return and will rebuild the dwelling place of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, and I will set it up; So that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord, even all the Gentiles who are called by My name,” says the Lord who does these things.
– Acts 15:16-17

*For You have made him a little lower than the angels,
And You have crowned him with glory and honor.
You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands;
You have put all things under his feet.*
– Psalm 8:5-6

On the previous page, in the box representing the Garden of Eden, draw a crown on Adam’s head.

Another purpose in God’s creation of mankind is that His offspring would be known by His name. In Luke’s genealogy, Adam is described as “the son of God” (Lk 3:38). Possibly, the descendants of Seth are described as the “sons of God” (Gen 6:2). The Israelites are often described as the “sons of God” (Deu 8:5; 14:1; 32:5; Isa 1:4; Jer 3:4, 14, 19; Hos 2:1; 11:1; Mal 2:10). When Paul is preaching on Mars’ Hill to the idolaters of Athens, he generally describes all of mankind as God’s _____ (Ac 17:28).

Even today, a man’s offspring is often known by the father’s name; names like Harrison and Johansson are names which originally indicated the name of a child’s father. The leaders of the church in Jerusalem understood that, even in this present age, God is still working to create a people (family) who will be known by His name (Ac 15:14). Paul writes: “I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named” (Eph 3:14). The New Covenant includes Gentile believers with Jewish believers in God’s covenant people: “I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty” (2Co 6:18).

Another purpose in God’s creation of mankind is that His offspring would learn to imitate His character. Under His guidance, God’s offspring learn by imitating Him; thus, they will grow in maturity and become more like God the Father. For example, when Adam names the animals which God created, Adam’s scientific knowledge of the universe increases along with his understanding of God and His mind. Such growth in maturity and godliness is possible because man is created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26).

Another purpose in God’s creation of mankind is that His offspring would do work similar to the Father’s work. Just as God is the King of kings in Heaven, He made Adam the King of Earth. God gave Adam dominion over the whole Earth and everything on it (Gen 1:28). According to King David, God has placed all things under man’s _____ (Ps 8:6). The expression of “having things/people under one’s feet” describes the dominion of a conquering king (cf. Ac 2:34-35; cf. Ps 110:1-2). Even though God originally made man to be the King of Earth, this is not currently the case; as the writer of Hebrews attests: “but now we do not yet see all things put under his feet” (Heb 2:8).

As mentioned above, Adam was unable to fulfill all the purposes for which God created mankind. God will still accomplish His purposes even though others might rebel against Him. Jesus taught His disciples to pray looking forward to the day when God will accomplish all His purposes for creating man:

Our Father who is in heaven,
May Your name be holy;
May Your kingdom come;
May Your will happen
As in heaven, so also upon the earth (Mt 6:9-10*).

List four of God’s purposes for creating mankind:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.