

Robert Vannoy, Old Testament History, Lecture 10

Creation of Woman, Evolutionary Theory

4. Creation of Woman

a. The Need Demonstrated

We're discussing Genesis chapter 2 and we've come down to 4. "Creation of woman." You've noticed on your outline sheet there are several sub-points the first of which is, "the need is demonstrated." We find this in Genesis chapter 2 verses 18 and following: "and the Lord God says that it is not good that the man should be alone, I will make him a help fit for him."

Then the statement that the King James translates. "I will make him a help fit for him." The word translated there "fit for him" suggests that they corresponded through likeness. I won't give you the Hebrew term but if you looked at the Hebrew word in the German lexicon you will find that the definition there is "a help equal and adequate to himself." So the Lord says that it is not good that man be alone, he should have a help who corresponds to himself, who is equal and adequate to himself. We may think that the term "help" implies inferiority, if we go back to chapter 1, you find both man and woman were created in the image of God and they stand as equal before God both created in his image. But the woman is to be a help for man not his slave. She is one who complements the man, who corresponds to the man, but before God gave the woman to Adam, Adam is told that he is to name all the creatures, all the animals. So you read in verse 19 that, "the LORD brought all these beasts of the field and fowls of the air to see what he would call them." In verses 20 it says that Adam gave names to the cattle and beasts of the field but the last phrase of verse 20, "there was not found a help equal and adequate to himself, that corresponded to himself." I think that the point of this material is to emphasize and bring out that in all these living creatures, there were no creatures that corresponded to Adam, that was like Adam. There was a difference between the creatures and Adam and he became aware of that.

When it says that Adam was to name all these creatures, it means more than just

giving them a label. He probably characterized them in some way by their name which would involve understanding something about the differences between the animals and in that process he becomes acutely conscious of the difference between himself and the animals and his need for fellowship with a partner who has a likeness to himself.

b. Adam's "Rib" or is it "Side"

After God creates woman in verses 21 and 22, Adam says, "now at last" this is not in King James "this is the bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh." Now at last, now after having surveyed all these other creatures, and seeing that there was not one that corresponded to himself, now at last, the woman does. Woman is not a product of evolutionary development. Now you read in verse 21, God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. And he slept. And He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh. So the LORD brings this deep sleep, like an anesthesia you might say, on Adam.

While he sleeps, as the King James translates it, God took one of his ribs, and made a woman in verse 22. The Hebrew word for "rib," which is used here, so for those of you who have had Hebrew *salab*, in the singular but here it is in the plural form here because you know it says, "he took one of his ribs." My interest is that this word is difficult to translate in this context. The interesting thing is in its other occurrences, it generally has a meaning of "side," here is the only place where its translated "rib" in the entirety of the Old Testament. If you look up the usage of the term, you will find a wide variety of usages, but always with the idea of a side. Not always but usually the usage of a side, in Exodus 25:12, "thou shall cast four rings of gold, put them in the four corners and two rings shall be on the one 'side' of it and two rings on the other 'side' of it," referring to the ark of the covenant. So one side of the ark and the other side of the ark. And that's this term. Verse 14 is the same. By the sides of the ark, in Exodus 27:7, "the stave shall be put into the ring, the staves shall be put upon, to two sides of the altar." Exodus 26:20, and the second side of the tabernacle and the north side there should be 20 boards--side of the tabernacle. "As David and his men went by his way, Shimei went by his way by the hill side, the side of the hill" (2 Samuel 16:13).

Now the problem is, in the context of Genesis 2:21, you have a plural form, it's preceded by "one of" in Hebrew. As he slept he took "one of" and probably because of the use of this in the first place, 1 King 6, the idea of the rib has been chosen as an appropriate translation. 1 King 6:15's usage of the term where you read of Solomon building the temple, he built the walls of the house inside with the boards of cedar. Now boards is a plural form again. Boards of cedar, it's an unusual use of it but in the context it indicates boards. Both the floors of the house walls and the ceiling he covered the inside with wood and the inside with the planks of fur. Planks is in the plural form. So with that kind of use in 1 King 6, the combination of use of one of prior to the term here Genesis 2:21. Many have come to the conclusion, that the best translation for it in the context is "rib." Even though this is not a term elsewhere used as a rib. How does the NIV translate it? I have to check that. What about NRSV? Probably "ribs" too. I think to translate it as ribs is more explicit than the usage of the Hebrew term would suggest. But I cannot suggest a better translation, you could say "took from the side" and leave what he took from the side unexpressed as a possibility, but that doesn't do justice to the plural form. So you see that's where you are with the problem translation. You read some of the literature, this passage is often made fun of, "The woman took rib from the man." Women have one less rib than a man. The whole thing is sort of ridiculed. There is a certain obscurity on exactly what this term means in this context. Rib is a reasonable translation but perhaps a bit more explicit than you can get from a usage elsewhere.

In any case, another thing that reinforces that idea of rib, is Adam's statement in verse 23. When he sees woman, he said, "this is now bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh." So the bone was taken. But the question is whether that is intended to be pushed to that extent, in the literal sense or whether it is more figurative in reference to the close relationship. In 2 Samuel 5:1 you read, "then came all the tribes of Israel to Hebron to speak to David and they spoke saying, we are your bone and your flesh." All of Israel was saying to David, we are your bone and your flesh. Obviously, the expression there is the closeness that he is one of them. Perhaps you would say the same thing in Genesis 2:23 when Adam's expression, "here is this one who corresponds to me who has been

built from that which has been taken away from me.” Yes. That was 2 Samuel 5:1.

Whether it was actually a rib that was taken I think that is the point. Clearly there is something that was taken from man, his flesh was opened, put in this deep sleep, and from what was taken, woman was made. That may have been a rib it may have been more than a rib. It’s taken from the side of a man obviously.

c. Adam and the Unity of Humankind

The point is that when Adam awakes and sees woman, he recognizes something of himself. Then an expression is given in a Hebrew poetic form. If you look at the NIV you can see that the way that the lines are set up, its not in prose but poetry. He says, “this is now the bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, for she was taken out of man.” Among animals he had not found such a partner, but he finds a helpmate that corresponds to himself, that is someone like himself. God had given to him a partner and he recognizes the unity between himself and the woman. See the meaning of the woman being created out of man. I think it’s clear that there is significance here, not only in respect to the origin of the woman coming from man as a special creative act of God, but there is also significance to the institution of marriage. I think that we find significance in verse 24 because immediately you read the statement, “therefore, shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh.”

In your bibliography I have referred to this Francis Schaffer page 45. Schaffer says “certainly the fact of the woman’s creation out of the man has a very definite philosophical significance because it means that man is really a unique man and did not come just out of nowhere, nor has he sprung up from numerous starts. There was a beginning and a real beginning in a unity of one man, one individual differentiated from all that preceded him, then differentiated in the terms of male and female. It is this picture of man that gives strength to the Christian concept of the unity of mankind. The world is trying to find a basis to prove that all men are one. But the Christian does not have this problem. For we understand why mankind is united. Furthermore, we can begin to

understand something about marriage because God himself ties the marriage bond into the reality of the unity of mankind. Hence, we can understand something about the particularity of the union of the male and the female constituting one whole. They become one flesh. “Man” with the capital M equals male and female. And the one man one female union, reunites that unity.”

d. Genesis 2:24 Narrator’s Comment: Explanation or Command

Now most interpreters agree that that statement in verse 24 is the words of the writer not a continuation of the words of Adam. See in verse 23, Adam says, “Now, this is the bone of my bones, flesh of my flesh, she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.” Now you get, not a continuation, but a comment by the narrator. That doesn’t make it not the word of God, in fact, that verse is quoted by Christ in Matthew 5. The question is in the respect of verse 24, is this to be taken as an explanation or a command? “Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave unto his wife and they shall be one in flesh.” Is that an explanation or something that happens all the time? Or is it an injunction, a command, of something man must do that. There are those who have taken it as a command. The Hebrew syntax would allow it to be understood either way, it is an imperfect verbal form. “man shall leave his father and his mother,” an imperfect tense in Hebrew can be an injunctive to express a command or it can be taken as a frequentative or habitual--something that always happens. Among those who took it in the first sense, as a command, was John Calvin. He says that “‘shall’ should not be taken as a future but in a sense of must.” Therefore a man must leave his father and his mother and cleave unto his wife. And his comment is in the basis of a creative process because of the way in which a woman was formed, man must do this. Grammatically it is possible to understand it this way, but it is also possible to take it as a fact, an explanation of a fact. And I think this is preferable. And in other words, in verse 24 an explanation of what it is for a man to leave his father and his mother and be united with his wife. Why does man do that? Why does that happen with regularity? Why is that the normal thing, you might say. The reason why is found in the creation. God created man and woman in

unity, and man and woman are created to seek that unity and fellowship with one another, as the two become one flesh. Now I think that the implication of all that is that monogamous marriage is rooted in creation.

That the second position spoke of the unity of mankind generally, but you also have the idea here that monogamous marriage is rooted in creation. You have that explanation for that inner unity, between the man and his wife. Why is that? It's because they were originally one, and now in the marriage relationship that unity is restored. Man knows then by divine revelation in this Genesis 2 account that woman was taken from his own body and that in the marriage relationship, you have something of a restoration of that original unity.

You should not restrict that expression, "become one flesh," to the physical sexual union." Certainly it involves that and includes that and the unity between man and woman, finds expression in that. There's a comment in that 1 Corinthians 6:16, which says, "What know you not, that he who was joined to a harlot is one body." Certainly that is speaking there of a physical union, but I think there is much more than that involved. In that statement, "man shall cleave unto his wife and they shall be one flesh," the unity, it seems to me, involves spiritual, emotional, and psychological union as well as the physical union. It is a very complex thing. They are all interrelated. Then again, I think that underlines and underscores the fact that for that kind of unity, monogamy is essential.

But I think the point of what is being addressed there is so significant. In the marriage bond, two people are no longer two. In other words, they become interdependent. They are drawn into a unity that involves not only a physical relationship but a spiritual, psychological and emotional union of two people.

5. What about Evolution?

Okay. Let's go on to 5. "What about evolution?" Again, there are three sub-points. The first is the meaning of the term. When we talk about evolution we have to realize that the term is often used in different ways. Most frequently, it is used for the

theory that every living thing has come from natural causes and has gone from the simple to the complex by natural selection. That's the macro evolutionary theory. It is an amoeba develops to mankind of theory. Originally, in some very ancient past, things came together in such conditions. The principal was created, that life began to differentiate itself, and through the process of time and natural selection, eventually all the variety of the living things that we now know has come through that process. That is the common meaning and the use of the term, and I think we can say without any qualification that there is no way that the idea can be harmonized with the creation account of Genesis 1-3.

Now the interesting thing is, that check-in the last 10-15 years very serious questions about the evolutionary theory have been raised by competent scientists. Even, I'm not thinking here about the creation scientists who have raised these questions about the evolutionary theory, but by the competent scientists who are not committed to the Christian faith of origin. Even by such people, serious questions are being raised about the evolutionary theory. One illustration of that is listed in your bibliography. Top of page 9. The third entry, Sir Fred Hoyle. The title is *Evolution from Space*. I don't know if any of you have heard of that book when it was released 1981. I have a review here of it that gives, somewhat of an idea of the content of that book and I will read you some parts of the book. The review says, "an eminent British scientist has mounded a new assault from the Darwinian Evolutionary theory saying that the possibility of it being true is utterly miniscule as to be absurd." Of course, the author of it is Sir Fred Hoyle, internationally recognized astronomer and mathematician he is also associated with the Royal Astronomical Society, started leading universities in England and United States as well.

The review goes on to say, "he directly challenges both the Darwinian concept of gradual evolution of different life forms from common origins and also that the first living cells developed by random process of some primordial ooze, that chances of the that happening is not that far from zero," he says. Hoyle is 67 years old with numerous honors in his field, he's not a Christian and his study is not based on Scripture. Rather, it's based on his analysis of the situation, he says "bio-molecules are now known to be

enormously complex, that quite explicit instructions were necessary for their assembly, and that other means of natural selection were required for life's development. The requisite information came from an intelligence."

Now he is not willing to call the intelligence God, but he says that it has to have come from an intelligence, "the beckoning specter" he calls it. The new evidence point a clearly and decisively to a cosmic origin. His idea is that life didn't come from this planet but in space somewhere. But what he's saying is, you cannot explain the complexity of many different life forms on the basis of this evolutionary theory. He thinks it is non-sense. In making the case these two authors, Ray Fine cite microbiology, mathematics, computer technology and the fossil record against the Darwin Theory. The theory is undercut by a new knowledge.

They say that paleontologist for years have been recognizing the slow evolutionary connection required by the theory that had not happened, but it has not made much impression on general opinion. Chances of random chemical shufflings in some primordial soups producing the basic complex enzymes of life are one to the ten to the 40th power, or one followed by 40 thousand zeros, the two scientists calculate.

Difficulty in Progressing Beyond Darwinism in the Educational System: Intransigence

They say that the chances are so outrageously small that it would be incredible, even if the whole universe consisted of an organic soup. This situation is well known to geneticists and yet nobody seems to blow the whistle. If Darwinism was not socially desirable, it would of course be otherwise. So he is saying that the reason for the persistence to the theory is that it is not a scientific basis being a convincing theory, it is something that is desirable socially. "They note their own revolt". I should read the previous sentence, "once a whole society begins to commit to a particular set of concepts, educational continuity makes it exceedingly hard to change the pattern" the author says "you either have to believe the concepts or you will be branded a heretic." They note their own revolt has not been greeted with a furious attack as they had expected. But with the wall of silence in scientific journals, which tends to accept any hypothesis in order to

uphold Darwinism. Every competent space mathematician would assure you that such a Darwinian idea had no chance of working, and what they are talking about there is mutations being that which explains the progression of higher life forms. Every computer expert will surely inform you, throwing random mistakes into a computer is no way to improve it. Darwinism is inadequate to explain evolutionary changes that have occurred as the author says.

Carl Henry on Evolutionary Theory

Now, I read from the length of that review and illustration of one example of the kinds of questions that are being raised recently about evolutionary theory. Yet, as they say, in the scientific community at large, the theory is not really being dispensed with, it's very hard to move, accumulative investment of time and energy, theory and writing commitment and all the rest of it in supporting the evolutionary theory.

This review, I don't have a date on this review. Let me make a connection with Hoyle's book and some of these ideas generally written to Carl Henry's discussion in *God Revelation and Authority*. It is a second entry over there in page 9. There is a long section where he discusses the present situation with the respect to evolutionary theory. It's a chapter well worth reading, the whole chapter here. But on page 178, he discusses Hoyle's book. And he says that Hoyle projects the possibility discussed also by other people, that life arrived on earth from outer space.

Transcribed by Keziah Park
Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt
Final edit by Rachel Ashley
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