

## **Courtship & Marriage article 2**

Dear Young People,

First of all, I have a bit of news. If God wills, Mrs. Hanko and I will be coming to Singapore soon for a six-week stay. We purchased our tickets today and are scheduled to arrive in Singapore on April 24. We are eager to see you once again. We will continue the forum while we are in Singapore.

We are ready to begin our forum on courtship and marriage. Many of you have now had an opportunity to read Chapter 1 of *Leaving Father and Mother: Biblical Courtship and Marriage*. I am not going to repeat what my father wrote in his book, but will assume that you have read and studied that material.

I remind you once again that feedback, comments and questions are welcome. You may write me about something in the book or something that I write. I am going to try to keep the individual mailings rather short, so that you do not have to digest huge amounts of material every time I write.

In this mailing I am going to write about the institution of marriage as it is described in Genesis 2:18-25, a passage you should read in your Bibles.

We must remember that when God created Adam on the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the creation week, there were three things about Adam's creation that are important. And each of these three things in turn has three parts. These three things really correspond to each other in a unique and important way.

First, Adam was created with 1) a body, 2) a soul, and 3) a spirit. His body enabled him to live in this world and do the work in God's creation that he was called to do. His soul included his mind and will so that he could know and understand the creation, make choices in the creation and come to learn more about God's great work. His spirit was a spiritual side to his soul that enabled him to know God and know the difference between good and evil; he could live in friendship with God; he could, because of his spirit, know God through the creation itself. He could hear God's voice in the singing of the birds, the growls of the bears and lions, the rippling of the rivers that ran through Paradise, and the sighing of the breezes in the tree tops.

Second, Adam was also created as 1) prophet, 2) priest, and 3) king. As a prophet he could know the Word of God in the creation and speak it. As priest he could use the whole creation in the service of God by making it a sacrifice of praise to his Maker. And as king he could rule over the creation so that he could use it for himself and make it serve his purposes.

Third, Adam was also created as a man who possessed 1) knowledge, 2) righteousness, and 3) holiness. This was the image of God in man, for God has knowledge, God is righteous, and God is holy. In short, Adam had no sin, but knew God as his friend, was like the righteous being of God, and was holy as God is holy.

As the king in God's creation, Adam had to name the animals. That is, he had to give each animal a name that would express God's purpose in creating that animal. We do not know what language Adam used, but it was a language not in existence anywhere today. It was a sinless language that was lost after the fall. Our names for any creatures in this creation are completely arbitrary. We could just as well call a cow a pzel, or a palm tree a tukwicm. It is only what men in a certain country agree to call a particular creature. Everyone who speaks English agrees that we will call a tree that grows coconuts a coconut palm. Everyone who speaks English agrees that a four-legged animal with a mane and a long tail and which is used for pulling carriages and riding is to be called a "horse." But if you speak Dutch, you would have to call what we call a horse, "een paard." And if you lived in Greece you would have to learn to call a horse, "hippos". If we didn't agree together to do this, we would not understand each other. But Adam could see much more in the creation than we can see, He could see in each animal God's word by which the animal had been formed, and he could give to each animal a name that was the same name God gave it by His creative Word. That name expressed God's purpose in creating that animal; that is, how each individual creature in its own unique way revealed the glory of God.

We now have names given us by our parents, but these names were chosen probably because our parents liked the sound of it or what the word meant; or because some relative had that name and our parents wanted to honor that relative. I, e.g., was named after my paternal grandfather. But in heaven we shall all receive a name that fits, because it is given by God. We shall each receive a new name in heaven that expresses exactly God's grace in our salvation. Each shall have his own name, and no one else can have it, because, although we are all saved by grace, we are all individuals who are saved in different ways (Rev. 2:17, 3:12). In this life, our names do not particularly fit us; we could be called by any name and our parents probably choose for us a name they liked for some reason. If somebody is named Elizabeth, it is possible that there are 50,000 other people in the world with that name. But our new name in heaven will be ours only; no one else can have it.

Probably, if Adam had had time, he would have given names to all God's creatures and not only to the animals. But in naming the animals Adam noticed one thing about them that was strikingly different. Every animal and every bird was created male or female. He also noticed that males and females paired off with each other, and that there was a certain companionship between them so that they were not lonely. And he saw that being male and female made it possible for the animals and birds to have offspring. But Adam did not have anyone to be his companion and help. The animals and birds had something he did not have. And he envied them, for he was lonely. As perfect and without sin as he was, it was lonely in Paradise. No one like himself with whom to talk and laugh. No one to help him in his work. No one to whom he could express his concern, his interest, his love.

God purposely told Adam to name the animals so that Adam would become aware of the fact that they all had mates, while he did not. When Adam understood that his life was incomplete, then God was ready to give to Adam a mate as the other animals had. He would then appreciate her all the more and be thankful for the gift God gave him in her. She would be like him in almost every way, but she would also be very different.

God created Eve in a strange way. He put Adam to sleep and took one of his ribs. From this rib God made Eve. Now in making Eve from a rib of Adam, God did three things. One thing He did was show Adam that Eve was almost just like him. Eve was a human being just as Adam was. Eve was one who bore the image of God just as Adam did (See Gen. 1:27). God gave Eve a calling very much like the calling he gave Adam (See Gen. 1:26, 28). Eve held an office too just as Adam did as prophet, priest and king.

But God also made Eve slightly different. He made her a female and not a male. If he had made Eve another male, Eve would have been an exact copy of Adam; and who wants an exact copy of himself or herself. That would be very boring and intensely frightening. As a female she was created from Adam's rib, and not out of the dust of the ground and the breath of God (Gen. 2:7). She was, therefore, though like Adam, subordinate to him; not quite his equal; created to be below Adam in authority; and, therefore, a help suitable for Adam in his calling in Paradise. This is what Gen. 2:20 means when it says, But for Adam there was not found a help **meet** for him. A help "meet" for him is a help perfectly suited to help him and fill the void and emptiness in his life, which he had noticed when he named the animals.

She too was a person with body, soul and spirit, just as Adam. She was not a prophet, a priest or a king, but she was a prophetess, a priestess, a queen. She was not as strong as Adam, but she surpassed Adam in kindness, tenderness, and compassion. She could not do the work that Adam was called to do, but she could help Adam in such a way that Adam's work was easier with her to help. She had a female's view of things, and so they could talk together, discuss together their calling, speak of God to each other, learn from each other and revel in the beauties of the creation to enjoy together God's handiwork.

When our children were small, I had to do a lot of travelling alone. I often wished that my wife could have gone along, for what I saw and experienced was so much more enjoyable if I could talk about it with someone. Now she does travel with me, and we have great times together talking about what we see and hear, what we share together.

But above all, Eve was created in such a way that Adam and Eve could together bring forth children and in conceiving children, could once again become one flesh – as they had been before God took one of Adam's ribs and made Eve. This was their calling above all else (Gen. 1:28).

That is enough for this letter.

With warm regards and prayers for you all,

Prof Hanko