

Genesis 1:27

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God
created he him; male and female created he them.

Analysis

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he ... This verse is part of the creation account that establishes God's sovereign power and purposeful design. The structured pattern of the seven days reveals divine order, intentionality, and progressive development from formless void to a world prepared for human habitation.

The recurring phrases "And God said," "and it was so," "And God saw that it was good" create a liturgical rhythm emphasizing:

1. creation by divine decree
2. immediate fulfillment of God's word,
3. divine evaluation of creation's goodness.

This pattern refutes both polytheistic chaos-and-conflict creation myths and modern materialistic chance-based origins.

Each stage builds toward the climax of human creation in God's image. The theological themes include divine transcendence and immanence, purposeful design, creation's inherent goodness, and humanity's unique role as God's image-bearers and stewards. The creation account provides the foundation for understanding work and rest (Sabbath), male and female relationships (marriage), human dominion (stewardship), and moral accountability to the Creator. These opening chapters establish the worldview framework for all subsequent biblical revelation.

Historical Context

Genesis 1 stands in stark contrast to ancient Near Eastern creation accounts like the Babylonian Enuma Elish, Egyptian creation myths, and Ugaritic texts. While these portrayed creation resulting from conflicts between deities or sexual generation of gods, Genesis presents a sovereign monotheistic God who creates effortlessly by divine decree. This would have been revolutionary to ancient readers accustomed to polytheistic cosmogonies.

The Hebrew text's literary structure (seven days, recurring formulas) suggests careful composition as theological proclamation rather than primitive mythology. Archaeological discoveries of creation tablets from Mesopotamia (2000-1500 BCE) reveal that Genesis addresses similar questions but provides radically different answers about the nature of God, humanity, and the cosmos. The absence of theogony (origin of gods) and theomachy (conflict between gods) distinguishes Genesis from its ancient Near Eastern context.

For Israelites emerging from Egyptian bondage or later facing Babylonian captivity, this truth that Yahweh created everything would have been profoundly liberating and countercultural. The gods of Egypt and Babylon were mere creations, not creators. Genesis 1 establishes that Israel's God alone is supreme, rendering pagan deities powerless and their worship futile.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does this verse deepen our understanding of God's character and His relationship with creation?
2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?

3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

Interlinear Text

בְּאֵת אֲלֹהִים בָּבָא אֱלֹהִים בָּבָא
created **So God** H853
 H1254 H430

בָּאֵת לִמְדָה בָּאָדָם
in his own image **in his own image**
 H6754 H6754

אֲתָּם: בָּבָא וָבָּתָּה אֲלֹהִים
So God **created** H853
 H430 H1254

בָּבָא אֲתָּה וְבָבָתָּה יְהִי רָאשָׁה
he him male **and female** **created**
 H2145 H5347 H1254

בָּבָא H853

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 19:4 (Creation): And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,

Ephesians 2:10 (Creation): For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Mark 10:6 (Creation): But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.

Ephesians 4:24 (Creation): And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Isaiah 43:7 (Creation): Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.

Psalms 139:14 (Creation): I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well.

Colossians 1:15 (References God): Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature:

Genesis 2:18 (References God): And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Malachi 2:15 (References God): And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth.

Colossians 1:26 (Creation): Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

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