

Genesis 2:18

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

Analysis

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him. This divine assessment introduces the only "not good" element in creation before the fall. Human aloneness contradicts God's design for relationship and community, reflecting God's own Trinitarian nature of love and communion.

The phrase "help meet" (ezer kenegdo, אֶזֶר קְנֶגְדוֹ) means "helper corresponding to him"—an equal partner, not subordinate assistant. The term ezer frequently describes God as Israel's helper (Exodus 18:4, Psalm 121:1-2), indicating strength and capability rather than inferiority. Kenegdo means "opposite" or "corresponding to," suggesting both similarity and complementarity.

This verse establishes the theological foundation for marriage as divinely ordained, complementarian partnership between male and female. It affirms that humans are created for relationship, that marriage addresses fundamental human needs for companionship and completion, and that gender distinctions serve divine purposes. The creation of woman from man's side (verse 22) emphasizes equality, intimacy, and organic unity, providing the basis for Christ's relationship with the Church as His bride.

Historical Context

Genesis 2 provides a detailed account of human creation and Eden's establishment, using different literary style than chapter 1. Ancient Near Eastern parallels include the Sumerian Paradise myth and the Gilgamesh Epic's plant of life, but Genesis transforms these motifs within strict monotheism. The garden sanctuary with its rivers, trees, and divine presence parallels ancient temple theology where gods dwelt in sacred spaces.

The geographical references (Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel/Tigris, Euphrates) ground the narrative in historical space-time rather than mythological timelessness. While the exact location of Eden remains debated, the inclusion of identifiable rivers presents this as real geography, not allegory. The Mesopotamian setting connects to humanity's ancient origins in that region, confirmed by archaeology.

Ancient audiences would have recognized marriage's divine institution as countercultural, elevating women beyond their typical status as property. The intimate account of woman's creation from man's side presented revolutionary equality and partnership. The garden-temple imagery established patterns for Israel's tabernacle and temple, where God would again dwell with His people in sacred space requiring holiness and obedience.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?

2. What specific changes in thinking or behavior does this verse call us to make?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

Interlinear Text

רֹאשׁ	וְאָמַר	יְהוָה	יְמִינָה	אֱלֹהִים	לֹא	וְבָרֵךְ	טֹב	וְתַתִּין	חַי	וְתַתִּין	פָּאָד
said	And the LORD	God			H3808	It is not good		should be	that the man		
H559	H3068	H430					H2896		H1961		H120
לְבָדָק	אֲשֶׁר	לְ	לְ	עַזְרָה	כְּתַלְלָה:	לְ	לְ	עַזְרָה	כְּתַלְלָה:	לְ	לְ
H905	H6213	H0		H5828				H5048			
alone I will make				him an help meet							

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 3:7 (Parallel theme): Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Proverbs 18:22 (Good): Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.

1 Corinthians 7:36 (Parallel theme): But if any man think that he behaveth himself uncomely toward his virgin, if she pass the flower of her age, and need so require, let him do what he will, he sinneth not: let them marry.

Genesis 3:12 (Parallel theme): And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.

Ruth 3:1 (Parallel theme): Then Naomi her mother in law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?

Genesis 1:31 (Good): And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.