

Peace be with you, listening friends. We greet you in the name of God, the Lord of peace, who wants everyone to understand and submit to the way of righteousness that He has established, and have true peace with Him forever. We are happy to be able to return today to present your program *The Way of Righteousness*.

In our last program, we read **how God created** the heavens, earth, oceans and all they contain. God the Lord made everything in six days using nothing but His Word. We also saw **why God created** the world. He made it for the people whom He planned to create for His own glory. How kind of God to create a beautiful and wonderful place where man could live in true prosperity!

Today we plan to examine the Scriptures and to learn exactly **how** God created the first man. With God's help, we will also seek to understand **why** He created man. In the Torah, in the book of Genesis, in the first chapter, in verse twenty-six, the Word of God says,

"The Lord said, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.' So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them."

We have before us a profound and awesome truth that everyone needs to understand:

God created the first man and woman in His own image! Think of it! God made man to be like Him! Truly, man is the most important creature among all the creatures that God made. Only man was created in the image of **God**.

Now then, what does the Word of God mean when it says: *"God created man in His own image"*? In chapter two, verse seven, the Scripture says: *"The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."* We notice in this verse that when God created the first man, He created him with two elements: **a body** and **a soul**. Man is not merely a physical being. He

has a body **and** a soul. God created man in two steps. Listen again to what the Scriptures say: **One:** *"The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground"* **Two:** *God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living [soul]."*

From this Scripture we learn that when God created man, He first formed a **body**. Why did God make the body first? He made the body first because it would be the dwelling place into which He would place man's **soul**. Do you know that your body is your house; the temporary "tent" in which "the real you" (your soul) lives? That is what the Scriptures teach, saying, *"The body we have on earth is like a tent."* God created the human body for the soul to dwell in.

With what did God create the first human body? The Scriptures say that the Lord formed it from **the dust of the ground**. In the modern age in which we live, we know that the dust of the earth is composed of about twenty chemicals. Scientists tell us that all twenty of those chemical substances are found in the human body. That is why God's Prophet David wrote in the Psalms, *"The Lord knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust!"*

Yes, the body is made of dust, but this does not mean that it is worthless! In the human body, there are more than seventy thousand-thousand-thousand-thousand (that's 70 trillion) parts we call *cells*. And all those parts are woven together and designed to function in perfect harmony. **The human body is a miracle!** In our bodies, God has placed the brain, heart, lungs, stomach, liver, intestines, bones, muscles, skin, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, and many, many other amazing parts. Every part "knows" its role. Only God could have created it! That is why the prophet David also wrote, *"Lord, I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well!"*

Yes, the human body is an incredible wonder! Yet was it the body that God created in His own image? No! This cannot be, because God is spirit. God did not create the physical form of man in His own image. What then does the Scripture mean when it tells us that *"God created man in His own image?"* It means that God created **the soul of man** in His

image.

We already observed that when God first created the body of man from the dust of the earth, it was without life. It was only a corpse. Why did God first create the body of man, before He put the soul in it? Why did God, who is all powerful, not create man in one simple step, as He had done with all the other creatures? Perhaps God did it in this way to teach us that man, in himself, has no power over life. Man cannot give himself life and man cannot create anything that lives. **God is the Lord of Life**, and in Him alone can life be found. **Life** does not come from man; it is **a gift from God!** The Scripture says, "*The Lord God...breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*" The body that God had created began to live. Why was it alive? Because God, the Lord of Life, gave it a soul! God breathed His life into the corpse. **The life that was in God, was now in man.** Thus, man became a living being.

So what was it that God created in His own image? **The soul.** God created the soul of man in His own image. Did you know that there are certain characteristics that are found in the Spirit of God which are also found in the spirit of man? Before we conclude today's lesson, we want to consider **three characteristics**, or attributes, found in God, which are also found in man. As we think about these three features that we share with God, we can understand better what the Scriptures mean when they say, "*God created man in His own image.*" These three features that God placed in the soul of man are as follows:

One: God gave man a **mind**, so that he could **know God**.

Two: God gave man a **heart**, so that he could **love God**.

Three: God gave man a **will**, so that he could **obey God**.

Just as God is the possessor of a mind, and a heart, and a will, so God placed in the soul of man a mind, a heart, and a will. Let us consider what this means.

Firstly, God gave man **a mind** capable of knowing God and thinking as He thinks. God

created man with such a powerful mind, because He planned for man to have **close fellowship** with Himself. When we read about the life of the prophet of God, Abraham, we will see that he was called *the friend of God*. Abraham knew God personally and had a close relationship with Him. However, Abraham is not the only one who has been offered the privilege of being a friend of God. We too can be "**friends of God**." God wants us to have close fellowship with Him. That is why He placed in man's soul a mind that can harmonize with the mind of God.

Perhaps we can clarify what we are saying with a question. **What distinguishes a man from an animal? The mind.** The mind and spirit of man is very different from the mind of an animal. Why is it that animals cannot understand this radio program? Because they do not have the same kind of mind that we have. Listening friends, why are you able to understand our words? Because you share the same kind of mind—a human mind as we do. In a similar way, man's spirit is designed to fellowship with God's Spirit.

Of course, in saying this, we must not think that our minds and the mind of God are equal in wisdom and knowledge. Never! The wisdom of God is deep, and His knowledge far surpasses the wisdom of man. What we need to understand is this: God has given to man a spirit that has **the possibility of enjoying a meaningful relationship with the Living God**. God does not want you to be like the animals who cannot know Him! An animal has a brain, but cannot **think about God**. An animal has a mouth, but it cannot **thank God** for the food that He provides for it each day. It has eyes, but it cannot **study the Holy Scriptures**. It has ears, but it cannot **listen to the Word of God**. However, man, whom God created in His image, can come to know the Lord God. Yes, you who are listening today, **you can know God!** You can have a wonderful relationship with your Creator, if you believe and receive the righteous way of salvation that He has established. We will be explaining God's way of salvation clearly in the coming lessons, but what we must understand today is that God has given man a spirit capable of knowing Him.

Secondly, God placed something else in the soul of man when He created him in His image. **A heart.** God gave man a heart so that he could **love** God. We are not talking about the heart that pumps blood, but about **what you feel in your soul, your emotions, and your thoughts.** We are talking about the very intentions of your heart. God gave the first man the capacity to feel the emotions that God Himself feels. God can love, hate, rejoice, and feel sorrow and compassion. Therefore God placed within the soul of man a heart capable of feeling emotions such as love and hate. God wants man to love what God loves and hate what God hates. **God wants us to love Him with all our heart.** That is why He created man in His own image, and gave him a heart.

Thirdly, there is something else that God gave to man, whom He created in His own image. He placed in the soul of man **a will.** God permits every person **to choose his own path.** God Himself has authority to choose whether He will do something or not. Thus, God created man with the right and responsibility to make important choices for himself. God could have created man so that he would automatically do His will, and not have any choice in the matter. However, God gave to man a free will and the responsibility to choose for himself whether to obey God. God did not want to create a mere machine or robot. God did not create man in the image of the sun that rises every day, but has no choice in the matter. The sun fulfils the will of God every day "automatically." That is not how it is with man. **Man is a special creation.** God created us for Himself. God wants us to choose to love Him and worship Him. God has committed a great responsibility to man! Man must choose for himself whether to follow God or Satan, whether he will cherish the Word of God or despise it. God will not force anyone to believe His Word. He will never force us to love Him or obey Him. Love is not love if it is coerced. God allows each of us to choose for ourselves which path we will follow. But, in the end, God will judge everyone who rejects His kingdom, because God created man **for Himself.** That is what the Scriptures say.

We are here on earth **for God**. We are not here for ourselves or for money, or for anything or anyone else. **God created us for Himself; for His pleasure and for His glory**. God created us with the capacity to **know Him, love Him and obey Him** forever!

Yes...**forever!** The Eternal God has given each of us **an eternal soul**. It is God's will that we have **a deep and wonderful relationship** with Him today, tomorrow and throughout eternity. It is for this reason that God created man in His own image.

We bid you farewell with this verse from the Holy Scriptures which reminds us of God's intention for man: *"The Lord our God, the Lord is one. **Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength!**"*

Thank you for listening. God willing, in our next program we will learn about the first humans, Adam and Eve....

May God bless you and give you insight into the meaning and importance of the greatest commandment ever spoken:

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength!"