**‘A Helper Suitable for Man’**

***18Then the Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.”*** Genesis 2:18

This passage begins with a phrase that was completely absent from the creation account of Genesis 1 – something was not “good.”

In Genesis 1, we heard God say during the first five days of creation that what He had created was good. And, at the end of the sixth day of creation, God declared all that He had made to be “very good.”

But now God speaks and says ***“It is not good for the man to be alone…”*** When we read Genesis 1, it appears that the man and the woman were created at the same time. In Genesis 2 there is a time gap between the creation of the man and the creation of the woman. The difference between these two chapters allows us the opportunity to make important observations. If Genesis 1 was all we had, the easily reached conclusion regarding the creation of man and woman would be this: They were created to be EQUAL though DIFFERENT. In an age where the sexes battle one another, and women strive for equality with men, Genesis 1 would have easily shown that God’s original design for the man and the woman was that they be equals. This is a wonderful piece of revelation, but humans need more information – information helpful to the understanding of who we are and the roles we are to have in the world. Genesis 2 gives us additional insight.

God’s Word regarding man’s being “alone” is this one: ***“It is not good for the man to be alone…”*** Mankind was created to live in community with others, and the smallest unit of community living is the family. No one, not one man and not one woman, in and of themselves can be a family. Knowing this, God said, ***“…I will make him a helper suitable for him.”***

Are there women reading this who are beginning to wave their “red flags”? I wouldn’t be surprised. We live in a world of feminists and feminist activists. I have no doubt that some find the word ***“helper”*** offensive. It sounds, well, small. Ah but…the problem generated by this passage is not with the original text but with the translation of it.

The dictionary defines the word “helper” to mean, ***“a person or thing that helps or gives assistance, support, etc.”*** Is this what God meant when He said, ***“…I will make him a helper suitable for him.”*** Yes and No. Women are to give help, assistance and support, but there is more to it than this.

The Hebrew word translated for us as “helper” is the word ***ezer***. Our clue to understanding what God meant when He said, ***“…I will make him a helper suitable for him”*** is found by looking up other biblical passages where this same word is found. Let me share some of these:

**Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help *(ezer)* and our shield.**   Psalm 33:20

**But I am afflicted and needy; Hasten to me, O God! You are my help *(ezer)* and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay.** Psalm 70:5

**O Israel, trust in the Lord; He is their help *(ezer)* and their shield.
O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is their help *(ezer)* and their shield. You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help *(ezer)* and their shield.** Psalm 115:9-11

**Our help *(ezer)* is in the name of the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.** Psalm 124:8

We learn by going to the Hebrew text of the Bible is that the word ***ezer*** is often used to describe Israel’s God. Without question we know that there is NOTHING small about God. He is our Shield, our Fortress, our Defender, our Refuge, our Shelter, our Hiding Place, our Ally, and much more. From this we realize that when God said, ***“…I will make him a helper suitable for him,”*** He was saying that He would make an ally for the man, a support for him, someone to stand with him in the good, the bad, and the ugly of life. This was a very good thing that God had determined to do…a very good thing. When I learned the meaning of ***ezer*** and how it is used in the Bible, I was greatly helped by what I found. I pray you are as well.

*Kathleen*