

## ● Genesis 1, Genesis 2–5, and the True Man

This study shows that *Genesis* 1 does not describe the earthly man, but proclaims the heavenly Man—Christ—while *Genesis* 2–5 describes the beginning of the historical unfolding of the old creation in Adam.

## ● INTRODUCTION

This text presents a **reading based exclusively on the inspired text and on the way Scripture interprets itself**, without importing theological sources external to Scripture.

The purpose is to show that ***Genesis* 1 is the table of contents of Scripture**, and that the days of creation express, in a revelatory way, the unfolding of God’s plan in the history of salvation. God declares from the beginning where He intends to arrive, while ***Genesis* 2–5 shows the beginning of the historical unfolding of the old creation**. The key to the analysis is the order “**image**” and “**likeness**,” and the way Scripture speaks first about God, and only then about Adam.

God says explicitly:

*“I declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times what has not yet been accomplished.”*  
(*Isaiah* 46:10)

This is the key for reading *Genesis* 1. **The end revealed in Revelation is already declared in *Genesis* 1.**

## ● I. GENESIS 1:1 – CREATION FROM THE BEGINNING

The text says: *“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”*  
(*Genesis* 1:1)

This verse encompasses, at minimum, the entire old creation as a complete divine act. Everything belonging to the initial creation is found here, including Adam (the earthly one), but without narrative development. ***Genesis* 1:1 is the declaration of the beginning**. The historical narrative begins later, but its direction and finality are revealed from the start in *Genesis* 1.

## ● II. GENESIS 1:26–27 – THE REVEALED MAN

*“Let Us make **man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the heavens, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over every creeping thing.**”*

(Genesis 1:26)

The order is clear and intentional:

- first the **IMAGE**
- then the **LIKENESS**.

In this text:

- Adam does not appear as a proper name,
- dust does not appear,
- the breath of life does not appear,
- the Garden of Eden does not appear.

We are given the revelation of the true Man, as shown by God, not the historical man — the first Adam.

Scripture clearly states who the **IMAGE** is:

*“**Christ, who is the image of God.**”* (2 Corinthians 4:4)

*“**He is the image of the invisible God.**”* (Colossians 1:15)

👉 The **IMAGE** is God revealed in the Son.

👉 The **LIKENESS** is the human being created to live oriented toward this Image, in dependence and communion with God.

## ● III. GENESIS 2:4 – THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY

The text marks a clear transition: *“**These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.**”*

(Genesis 2:4)

From here begins the historical unfolding of creation:

- man is formed from dust (Genesis 2:7),
- he receives the breath of life from God,
- he is placed in a concrete spatial and temporal setting: the Garden of Eden.

From Genesis 2:4 onward, creation is not repeated, but its unfolding in history is presented.

## ● IV. GENESIS 5:1 – ADAM AND THE LIKENESS

The text says:

*“In the day that **God created Adam**, He made him **in the likeness of God.**”*  
(Genesis 5:1)

The essential observation:

- only **LIKENESS** appears
- the **IMAGE** does not appear.

**Adam** is created in the likeness of God, but **Scripture does not explicitly state that he is the IMAGE of God**, as it explicitly states about Christ. *Paul* says in 1 *Corinthians* 15 that the **first Adam was earthly** — not that he became earthly through sin — but that he was earthly from the moment of his creation. Adam was naked, that is, unclothed, and **this nakedness can be understood** as the absence of being clothed with the glory of God from the day he was made. Therefore, Adam did not possess eternal life. That life was at the Tree of Life.

Genesis 5:2:

*“**Male and female He created them**, and He blessed them and named them Man when they were created.”*

When this passage is contrasted with *Genesis* 1:27, it becomes clear that it is not the same man who is male and female:

**Genesis 1:27** → speaks of **male and female: according to the image of God**

**Genesis 5:2** → speaks of **male and female: according to the likeness of God**

If we assign both passages to the same earthly man, then the contradiction between

**IMAGE ↔ LIKENESS**

becomes evident, and image and likeness cannot represent the same thing. It follows that *Genesis* 1:27 refers to one man, while *Genesis* 2:7 and *Genesis* 5:1–2 refer to another man.

## ● V. GENESIS 5:3 – THE ACQUIRED IMAGE

The text says:

*“When Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered **a son in his own likeness, according to his image**, and named him Seth.”*  
(Genesis 5:3)

The order is clear:

- first **likeness**
- then **image**.

Why is the order from *Genesis* 1:26 — “**image**” then “**likeness**” — not preserved?

Because two different persons are in view.

In *Genesis* 5:3, the reference is no longer God, but Adam. Adam transmits an image that was acquired through the choice at the forbidden tree — a fallen, human image, transmitted genealogically.

## ● VI. THE TEXTUAL ORDER COMPARED

- *Genesis* 1:26 – **IMAGE** then **LIKENESS** (reference: God)
- *Genesis* 5:1 – **LIKENESS** (reference: God)
- *Genesis* 5:3 – **LIKENESS** then **IMAGE** (reference: Adam) → transmitted to Seth

This order in *Genesis* 1:26 (**IMAGE** → **LIKENESS**) finds its full meaning in the light of the New Testament. **Christ is the Image of God from eternity**, not by becoming, but by His divine nature (cf. *Colossians* 1:15; *2 Corinthians* 4:4). **Likeness**, on the other hand, does not describe what Christ is eternally, but what **He chose to assume in time**: incarnation as man, “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (*Romans* 8:3). Therefore Scripture says that **He “took the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men”** (*Philippians* 2:7). Thus, in *Genesis* 1:26, the **IMAGE** refers to the divinity of the Son, and the **LIKENESS** to His assumption of the human condition.

In *Genesis* 5, the order is reversed compared to *Genesis* 1: **first likeness, then image**. Adam is made “*according to the likeness of God,*” but the image appears later and is transmitted genealogically: “*he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image.*” This change of order is not accidental. It shows that the image is no longer given by God, but acquired through choice.

**Adam** begins as a man created according to likeness, but comes **to bear an image** that does **not** come **from God**, but from a decision: the choice of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, the tree of death. The resulting image is not an image of life, but of autonomy, self-judgment, and defining good and evil apart from God. This is the image Adam transmits onward: a human image belonging to a fallen world.

Therefore, in *Genesis* 5, likeness precedes image: man exists as God’s creature, but the image he comes to bear is the result of a wrong choice. The image is not created, but assumed — freely chosen.

### **The Call of Jesus: the renunciation of the image inherited from Adam**

In this context, the words of Jesus gain particular depth:

*“If anyone would come after Me, let him deny himself and follow Me.”*

The “self” that man is called to deny is **the image Adam assumed after the serpent’s deception**: the autonomous, judging image, separated from God. Self-denial is, in essence, **the renunciation of the image received from the tree of death**.

Only after this renunciation can true renewal take place: receiving the image of Christ. This is not a moral improvement of the old image, but a radical change: man abandons the wrongly chosen image in order to be clothed with the image of the One who has life in Himself — Christ.

### **A conclusion of the LIKENESS → IMAGE order**

In *Genesis 1*, the image belongs to God and precedes likeness.

In *Genesis 5*, the likeness of God precedes the image, but the image is wrongly chosen.

Thus, the order in *Genesis 5* describes **the drama of man**:

- created according to the likeness of God, yet initially “naked”
- but clothed with an image acquired by choice.

And the call of the Gospel is clear:

- **the old image must be put off,**
- so that man may receive **the true image, the image of Christ**.

In Christ, man is brought to life through receiving **the Image of God** (*Genesis 1:27*), that is, receiving the Image of Christ, the One raised from the dead.

### **Image and Likeness: the Spiritual and the Visible**

The fact that in *Genesis 1:26* **the image precedes the likeness** is not accidental. This order speaks first and foremost about **Christ**. He is **the Image of God from eternity**, not by becoming, but by His eternal existence. Before the incarnation, Christ existed as **eternal Spirit**, truly present throughout the Old Testament Scriptures (through revelation and spiritual activity), even though not yet incarnate. Likeness appears later, when He “was made like men,” that is, at the moment of incarnation.

**In Christ**, therefore, **Spirit takes precedence**: the Image exists eternally, and the likeness is assumed at “*the fullness of time*,” “*for a little while made lower than the angels*,” through incarnation.

**In the case of Adam**, the order is reversed. Man is first made **in likeness**, that is, in the visible world: a living soul in a physical body, part of natural creation. Man begins his existence in the visible, temporal, earthly realm. Only later is he called **to receive the spiritual image of Christ**, to be clothed with the life and glory of the One who is the Image of God.

Thus, **likeness is linked to the visible world**, natural creation, and biological existence, while **image is spiritual, belonging to the unseen world** and to the nature of God, who is Spirit. The image is not the product of earthly nature, but the gift of life from God.

This explains why **Scripture speaks of a birth from above**: man, first born in likeness, is called to be **born again in order to receive the true image**. In the case of Christ, the order is **reversed compared to Adam: not from body to spirit, but from Spirit to incarnation**, which through sacrifice brings life and glory. Therefore, **Genesis 1:26 does not describe the earthly man**, but proclaims from the beginning **the reality of the heavenly Man**, in whom the purpose of all creation is fulfilled, even though He appears last. Paul says: *“The spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual”* (1 Corinthians 15:46).

Through Pilate, God causes these words to be spoken: **“Behold the Man!”** (John 19:5) — the public identification of the Man of *Genesis 1:26*.

*“Then the King will say to those on His right hand, ‘Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’”* (Matthew 25:34)

The foundation of the world takes place in *Genesis 1*, and creation is fully completed on the sixth day. Therefore, **if the Kingdom is prepared from the foundation of the world**, its presence is already revealed in **Genesis 1**. And if the Kingdom is there, then **the King is there as well** (in *Genesis 1:26*) — not yet historically manifested, but known, appointed, and proclaimed from the beginning.

## ● VII. PAUL AND THE IMAGE OF GOD

Paul never says that Adam is the image of God.

He consistently affirms:

**“Christ is the image of God.”** (2 Corinthians 4:4)

**“He is the image of the invisible God.”** (Colossians 1:15)

About Adam he says:

*“The first man, Adam, became a living soul.”* (1 Corinthians 15:45)

*“The first man is from the earth, earthly.”* (even before sin)

(1 Corinthians 15:47)

## ● VIII. PSALM 8 AND HEBREWS 2 – THE MAN GIVEN DOMINION

*Psalms 8* says:

*“When I consider **Your heavens, the work of Your fingers...** what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You care for him? ... **You have put all things under***

**his feet."**

(Psalm 8:4–6)

This authority given to man includes **dominion over the heavens as well**, which are also the work of His fingers, not only over earthly things. **The first Adam and his descendants never ruled over the heavens.** This is evident and requires no demonstration. Therefore, another man is in view. Hebrews explains directly who this Man is:

"For it was not to angels that God subjected **the world to come**, of which we are speaking. It has been testified somewhere, "What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? **You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet. Now in putting everything in subjection to him, he left nothing outside his control. At present, we do not yet see everything in subjection to him. But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor ...**" (Hebrews 2:5–9)

👉 Scripture explicitly states: the Man of *Psalm 8* is Jesus (not generic humanity), and *Psalm 8* (Messianic) refers clearly to the subjection of the world to come (near future in the first century) given to the Man of *Genesis 1*. This Man is not Adam but Christ incarnate / sacrificed / risen / glorified (*Genesis 1:26*), to whom all authority in heaven (over the heavens, as *Psalm 8* says) and on earth has been given.

**"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me."**

(Matthew 28:18)

This passage fulfills what God foretold in the dominion given to the Man of *Genesis 1:26*.

In *Genesis 1:28* God blesses them and says:

**"Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion..."**

In *Matthew 28:19* we find the command of the Lord to His disciples, through which the command given to the Man made in God's image (male + female; Christ + the Church) in *Genesis 1:28* is fulfilled:

**"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."**

(Matthew 28:19)

**"And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."**

(Matthew 28:20)

**Genesis 1:26** → fulfilled in **Matthew 28:18**

**Genesis 1:28** → fulfilled in **Matthew 28:19**

(The multiplication of the Church and the subjection of the "Earth" through the proclamation of the Gospel)

## ● FINAL CONCLUSION

**Genesis 1 is the table of contents of Scripture:** God declares the end from the beginning.

From *Genesis 2:4* to the end of Revelation, the old creation unfolds in history, reaching its end through judgment and being replaced by the New Creation in Christ — **new heavens and new earth of a spiritual nature** — prophetically announced already on the sixth day of creation.

Man in Adam is transient, belonging to the old creation manifested in the visible world, from which, **in every generation, people are born into the New spiritual, invisible, eternal Creation.**

Christ is the true Man, the Image of God, in whom *Genesis 1* is fulfilled. **The end of creation, announced from the beginning, is accomplished through the bringing into existence of a New Creation,** into which all those born of God enter. This is the good news. **God eternally creates new people according to the Image of Christ,** on the basis of the eternal covenant made with Abraham in *Genesis 17*, fulfilled in the New Covenant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Scripture does not move from Adam toward Christ, but **from Christ toward Adam.** A proper reading of Scripture begins with the full revelation of the New Testament and then illumines the Old Testament retrospectively. The genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:23–38 supports this hermeneutical direction: **it is presented in such a way that it is traced from Jesus back to Adam.**

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