

GLEANINGS — June 26, A.D. 2016
Male and Female, Part Two

We paused our discussion about the two basic versions of the image of God after showing from Scripture that masculinity ("male-ness"), while not intrinsically superior to femininity ("female-ness") nevertheless represents divine authority in a particular way.

With Biblical women like motherly Deborah (Judges 4:4, 5:7) in mind, even some Christians might balk at this assertion which is so contrary to today's worldly wisdom. Scripture records that Deborah the wife of Lapidoth indeed judged. But unlike the other judges, we do not find it written that "God raised her up." Barak's role in the full account should not be ignored. Ever respecting the greater context of Scripture, we remember that the time of Barak and Deborah was a time "when every man did what was right in his own eyes." The case of Deborah and Barak is illustrative of the precept of Isaiah 3:12 –

"As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths."

Did Holy Spirit inspired Isaiah write this to teach that women are inferior to men? Not at all! As we see in Genesis 1:27 et. al., the same Holy Spirit has affirmed the equality of men and women as divine image bearers.

Consider this: the eternal Son of God is equal in power and glory to His Father, and to the Holy Spirit Who spoke by the prophets. (*Arians* and others who deny the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ hold to a damnable heresy; they are outside of Biblical orthodoxy.*) Yet, humbling himself by His incarnation, the Son was subordinated to the Father and filled with the Spirit to fulfill His Messianic calling. Thus He could say, "the Father is greater than I" (John 14:28). He did not say, "the Father is **better** than I."

America's Declaration of Independence proclaims that all men are created equal. In one sense, this is exactly correct, but in another sense it is obviously false. As to our essential nature we are all equally stamped with the divine image. But just as one artist might paint the same subject many times but with different facial expressions or bodily poses, so God creatively nuances His image by way of mankind's endless diversity of traits. Male and female are the most basic of those traits. Every human being, every individual rendering of the divine image, is either feminine or masculine.

So that mankind also would reflect the being of God triune by loving, orderly community life, womanhood and manhood were made complementary at creation (Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18). That foundational building block of human society remains in place to this day (1 Corinthians 11:11). Reproductive parenthood is its normative issue, for upon creating them God commanded the first human pair to "be fruitful and multiply." He repeated that command to the few survivors of the Noachic Flood, from whom the whole Earth was repopulated (Genesis 9:19). The "nuclear" family is God's institution.

Therefore as Bible believing people, we identify a cluster of ungodly errors that grow out of the denial of that...of God's created order. Among them are the concept of unisexuality, feminism, male tyranny, diverse redefinitions of marriage (for example, polygamy) and all the insidious ways in which parental authority is overthrown. We condemn these perversions. And we affirm that although sin corrupts all things human, societies are at their best when they best submit to our Creator's design. We also affirm that it is unlawful for any human government to overturn that divine plan.

* *Arians were so named after Arius, a third century proponent of this false teaching*