

God said (v.126), Let us make man in our image after our likeness and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle So God created man in his own image in the image of God created he him And God blessed them and said Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth . . . and have dominion over it . . .

How did God create man? Male and female created he them. It says it's a distinct act itself from what precedes. A distinct act on God's part creating man in the image of God.

In 2:4ff we have a more detailed description of the situation in which man is created. We will not have time tonight to examine the question, Does the story of creation in ch. 2 contradict that in ch. 1? You will find books that claim it does. If we had time it would be easy to show it's no contradiction. The only creation told of in ch. 2 is the creation of man. There's no creation of sun, moon, and stars there, no creation of the heavens, of the sea and dry land. No creation of vegetation. It simply says God planted a garden. It doesn't say he created vegetation.

It refers to God's having previously created the animals. And tells how he now brought them before Adam. The only creation in ch. 2 is the creation of man. But we have more detail in it. In ch. 1, it says God created man in his own image. Does that mean He said, Let there be a man there? Man and woman there? One act instantaneous? He makes the statement and it's done? That's reading into it, isn't it? It doesn't tell us how he created man. It says he created man in his own image.

But ch.2:7 says, And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul. That's briefer than the statement about it in ch.1, but much more detailed. God formed man of the dust of the ground. He didn't say, Let there be a man! He took the dust that's already here, that he'd already made. He took the chemicals that were already here and build them into a man. How?

Nobody thinks it means that He like a man took a piece of clay and moulded it, and formed it. He could do that if he wanted to. But we don't know what He did. It says he took matter already there, and he made that matter become formed into a man. Then he breathed into its nostrils the breath of life. This matter was not living till God breathed into it, and man became a living soul.

I regret that translation "living soul". I wish it had said an animate being. Because the very phrase used there--man became a nephesh chayah(Heb.) is used elsewhere of the animals(every nephesh chayah)--every living being; every animate being. What it's speaking of here is not man becoming different from the animals, but of man becoming what the animals already were. So ch. 2 clearly teaches that man is formed from pre-existing matter, but not from pre-existing life because he was not living till God breathed into him the breath of life!