

THE THEOLOGY OF SEXUALITY IN THE BEGINNING: GENESIS 3

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The creation accounts (Gen 1-2) coupled with the portrayal of disruption and divine judgment presented in Gen 3 have been described as of seminal character and determinative for a biblical theology of human sexuality. In a previous article we focused upon the theology of sexuality in the creation accounts.¹ Now we will explore the theological insights on sexuality emerging from Gen 3.

Two basic issues related to sexuality call for our attention in Gen 3. The first concerns the contention by some scholars that Adam and Eve's "knowledge of good and evil" and their knowledge "that they were naked" (3:5, 7) both refer to the awakening of their sexual consciousness. The second issue involves the debate over the correct interpretation of the divine judgment on Eve (3:16).

1. *Sexuality in Genesis 3:5*

We cannot be long detained by those who contend that the knowledge of good and evil gained by Adam and Eve as a result of eating the forbidden fruit was actually a consciousness of sex.² Stephen Sapp rightly points out that "such a position assumes that sexuality itself occasions shame by its very nature (once one is aware of it)" and thus "suggests that sexuality was *not* part of God's intention for humans in creation," whereas both Gen 1 and 2, to the contrary, "consider sexuality to be a purposeful part of God's good creation, with no indication whatsoever that sexual experience was jealously withheld from Adam and Eve."³

¹Richard M. Davidson, "The Theology of Sexuality in the Beginning: Genesis 1-2," *AUSS* 26 (1988):5-24.

²See, e.g., Cuthbert A. Simpson, "The Book of Genesis: Introduction and Exegesis," *IB* (New York, 1952), 1:485-486. For a full discussion, cf. Robert Gordis, "The Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Old Testament and Qumran Scrolls," *JBL* 76 (1957):123-138.

³Stephen Sapp, *Sexuality, the Bible, and Science* (Philadelphia, 1977), p. 18; cf. pp. 17-19 for further arguments advanced by Sapp against this option.

The Nakedness of Adam and Eve

The idea that a consciousness of sex came only after the Fall seems to be largely based on a misunderstanding of the meaning of Gen 3:7 and its relationship to Gen 2:25. It has been argued that since, according to Gen 3:7, Adam and Eve knew that they were naked only after the Fall, then Gen 2:25 must mean that they were not aware of their nakedness (or sexuality) in the beginning. But this line of argument fails to recognize that Gen 2 and 3 utilize two different Hebrew words for “naked.”

In Gen 2:25 the word for “naked” is *‘ārûm*, which elsewhere in Scripture frequently refers to someone not *fully* clothed or not clothed in the *normal* manner.⁴ Gen 2:25 does not explicitly indicate in what way Adam and Eve were without clothes in the normal sense (“normal” from the post-Fall perspective), but the semantic range of *‘ārûm* is consonant with the conclusion toward which parallel creation/Paradise passages point, namely, that Adam and Eve were originally “clothed” with “garments” of light and glory.⁵ If such is the case in Gen 2:25, then the contrast with Gen 3 becomes clear. In Gen 3:7, 10, 11, the Hebrew word for “naked” is *‘êrôm*, which elsewhere in Scripture always appears in a context of total (and usually shameful) exposure, describing someone “utterly

⁴In 1 Sam 19:24, for instance, the term is “used of one who, having taken off his mantle, goes only clad in his tunic” (William Gesenius, *Hebrew and Chaldean Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures* [Grand Rapids, MI, 1949], p. 653). Again, in Isa 20:2 the reference is to one “dressed with *saq* only” (Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner, *Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros*, 2d ed. [Leiden, 1958], p. 735); cf. Jn 21:7. Other passages employ the term in the sense of “ragged, badly clad” (Job 22:6; 24:7, 10; Isa 58:7; Gesenius, p. 653).

⁵We note in particular the parallel creation account in Ps 104. Jacques Doukhan, *The Genesis Creation Story: Its Literary Structure*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series, Vol. 5 (Berrien Springs, MI, 1978), pp. 81-88. has analyzed the point-by-point parallels between Ps 104 and the Genesis creation story. What is significant for our discussion at this point is that in Ps 104, along with the poetic description of God’s creative *work*, there appears to be at least one indication of his *appearance*, or rather, his “clothing” (vss. 1-2): “Thou art clothed with honor and majesty, who coverest thyself with light as with a garment.” If God is portrayed as clothed with “garments” of light and majesty, it is not unreasonable to deduce that man, created in the image and likeness of God, is similarly clothed. Ps 8:5 (6 Heb) may also point in this direction. According to this verse describing man in Paradise, God “crowns” or “surrounds” (the latter if *‘ātar* is taken as *Qal*) him with glory and honor.

naked” or “bare.”⁶ As a result of sin, the human pair find themselves “utterly naked,” bereft of the garments of light and glory, and they seek to clothe themselves with fig leaves.

Even this post-Fall “nakedness” should not, however, be interpreted as causing Adam and Eve to be ashamed of their own bodies before each other. There is no mention of mutual embarrassment or shame *before each other*. The context is rather one of fear and dread *before God*. Adam says to God (3:10), “I heard the sound of thee in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”

Adam’s nakedness described here is also obviously more than physical nudity, for Adam depicts himself as still naked even though already covered with fig leaves. The nakedness of Gen 3 seems also to include a sense of “being unmasked,”⁷ a consciousness of guilt, a nakedness of soul. Likewise, God’s clothing of Adam and Eve with skins appears to represent more than a concern for physical covering, more than a demonstration of the modesty appropriate in a sinful world, though these are no doubt included. The skins from slain animals seem to intimate the beginning of the sacrificial system and the awareness of a substitutionary atonement, because of which “man need no longer feel unmasked or ashamed.”⁸

2. *The Divine Judgment on Eve*

When God comes to the Garden after Adam and Eve sinned, he initiates an encounter that constitutes nothing less than “a legal process,” a “trial and punishment by God.”⁹ God begins the legal proceedings with an interrogation of the “defendants,” and the defensive and accusatory responses by Adam and Eve (vss. 9-14) indicate the rupture in interhuman (husband-wife) and divine-human relationships that has occurred as a result of sin. Following the legal interrogation and establishment of guilt, God pronounces

⁶See Ezek 16:7, 22, 39; 18:7, 16; 23:29; Deut 28:48. Cf. Gesenius, p. 625; Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and C. A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Oxford, 1953) pp. 735-736 (hereinafter cited as BDB); Koehler and Baumgartner, p. 702.

⁷Claus Westermann, *Creation* (London, Eng., 1974), p. 95.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 104.

⁹*Ibid.*, p. 96.

the sentence in the form of curses (over the serpent and the ground, vss. 14, 17) and judgments (for the man and the woman, vss. 16-19).

What is of particular concern to us is the judgment pronounced upon the woman (vs. 16):

- (a) I will greatly multiply your pain [labor] in childbearing;
- (b) in pain [labor] you shall bring forth children,
- (c) yet your desire shall be for your husband,
- (d) and he shall rule over you.

The first two lines of poetic parallelism in this verse (*a* and *b*) indicate that as a result of sin, childbearing will involve much *ʿiṣṣābôn* (RSV, "pain") for the woman. The word *ʿiṣṣābôn* occurs only three times in Scripture: here, vs. 17, and 5:29. The context of vs. 17 demands that *ʿiṣṣābôn* in that verse be translated as "toil" or "labor" (as in RSV) and not "pain": "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil/labor [*ʿiṣṣābôn*] you shall eat of it all the days of your life." The same translation of *ʿiṣṣābôn* is required by the context in Gen 5:29, and seems to be also more appropriate in Gen 3:16, with an emphasis upon the hard work and not the pain.¹⁰ Such an emphasis is accurately captured by the English term "labor" used to describe the birthing experience of woman.

But what is the meaning of the last two enigmatic lines (vs. 16 *c* and *d*) of the divine sentence upon the woman? The answer to this question is crucial for a proper understanding of the nature of God's design for sexual relationships after the Fall.

Interpretations of the Divine Judgment on Eve

Five major views have been advanced in the history of biblical interpretation. A first, and perhaps the most common, position maintains that the subordination of woman is a creation ordinance, God's ideal from the beginning, but as a result of sin this original form of hierarchy between the sexes is distorted and corrupted and must be restored by the Gospel.¹¹

¹⁰See BDB, pp. 780-781.

¹¹John Calvin, *Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids, MI, n.d.), 1:172, for instance, sees woman's position before the Fall as "liberal and gentle subjection," but after the Fall she is "cast into servitude." C. F. Keil, *The First Book of Moses* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1949), p. 103, similarly understands the original position of

A second major interpretation also views subordination as a creation ordinance but sees in Gen 3:16 not a distortion but a reaffirmation of subordination as a blessing and a comfort to the woman in her difficulties as a mother. The meaning of vs. 16c-d may be paraphrased: "You will have labor and difficulty in your motherhood, yet you will be eager for your husband and he will rule over you (in the sense of care for and help you, not in the sense of dominate and oppress you)."¹²

A third major view contends that the subordination of woman to man did not exist before the Fall, and the mention of such a subordination in Gen 3:16 is only a *description* of the evil consequences of sin (the usurpation of authority by the husband), to be removed by the Gospel, and not a permanent *prescription* of God's will for husband-wife relationships after sin.¹³ Proponents of this position underscore the culturally conditioned nature of this passage and vigorously deny that it represents a divinely ordained normative position for sexual relationships after the Fall.

A fourth major position concurs with the third view that the submission of wife to husband is part of the evil consequences of

man-woman as rule/subordination rooted in mutual esteem and love, but he argues that after sin the woman has a "desire bordering on disease" and the husband exercises "despotic rule" over his wife. James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1981), pp. 218-219, concurs with a pre-Fall hierarchy of the sexes and a post-Fall distortion, but argues that Gen 3:16 should be interpreted along the lines of the similarly worded statement of God to Cain in Gen 4:7. Just as God warned Cain that sin's *desire* would be to *control* him, but he must *master* it, so woman's desire would be to control/manipulate man and the husband must master her desire. Cf. a similar position in Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Study on the Role of Women in the Church* (Berrien Springs, MI, 1987), pp. 79-84.

¹²Stephen B. Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Men and Women in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences* (Ann Arbor, MI, 1980), p. 35. Clark does not rule out view 2 as a possibility, but he more strongly favors view 1. See also Ambrose, *De Paradiso*, p. 350 (quoted in Clark, p. 677): "Servitude, therefore, of this sort is a gift of God. Wherefore, compliance with this servitude is to be reckoned among blessings."

¹³See, e.g., Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Women* (Philadelphia, 1979), p. 80; Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study of Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1975), p. 114; Phyllis Trible, "Depatriarchalizing in Biblical Interpretation," *JAAR* 41(1974):41; cf. Raymond Collins, "The Bible and Sexuality," *BTB* 7(1977):149; Helmut Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex* (New York, 1964), p. 8; Patricia Gundry, *Woman Be Free!* (Grand Rapids, MI, 1977), pp. 60-63.

the Fall and did not exist as a creation ordinance. But in the fourth view Gen 3:16 is to be understood as *prescriptive* and not just *descriptive*—i.e., it presents God's normative pattern for the relationship of husband and wife after the Fall.¹⁴

A final view agrees with the second that vs. 16c-d is a blessing and not a curse, but differs in denying that subordination of woman to man is a creation ordinance. This position also argues, in effect, that even in Gen 3 no hierarchy or headship in the sexes is either prescribed or described.¹⁵ According to this view, the word for "rule" (vs. 16d) is translated "to be like," emphasizing the equality of husband and wife.

Assessment of the Divine Judgment on Eve

In our attempt to assess the true intent of this passage, we must immediately call into question those interpretations which proceed from the assumption that a hierarchy of the sexes existed before the Fall—i.e., views 1 and 2. The analysis of Gen 1-2 in my previous article has led to the conclusion that no such subordination or subjection of woman to man was present in the beginning.¹⁶

¹⁴See e.g. Francis Schaeffer, *Genesis in Space and Time* (Downers Grove, IL, 1975), pp. 93-94; cf. Theodorus C. Vriezen, *An Outline of Old Testament Theology*, rev. ed. (Oxford, 1970), p. 399.

¹⁵See, e.g., John H. Otwell, *And Sarah Laughed: The Status of Women in the Old Testament* (Philadelphia, 1977), p. 18.

¹⁶See Davidson, pp. 5-24. The views favoring a hierarchy of the sexes already in creation seem to be largely based on the Pauline passages that, at first sight, appear to ground the subordination of woman in creation. Two passages are especially in view: 1 Tim 2:13 and 1 Cor 11:8-9. This is not the place for an exposition of these Pauline statements. But it seems that most studies of these passages have made Paul say what in fact he does not say. Paul does indeed refer to creation in discussing the submission of wife to husband. But he does *not* say that the submissive role was in effect from creation. Rather, it seems more likely that Paul is arguing that after the Fall, when a subjection of one spouse to another was necessary in order to preserve union and harmony (see discussion below, pp. 127-130), God chose the man to "rule," because, among other reasons, he was created first and Eve was made *from* and *for* Adam. It should be noted that in 1 Tim 2:14, Paul specifically places the submission within the context of the Fall. Krister Stendahl seems to be correct when he points out that Gen 3:16 constitutes "the decisive Scriptural passage for the whole New Testament's instruction concerning the submission of women." (Krister Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women: A Case Study in Hermeneutics* [Philadelphia, 1966], p. 29.) In another Pauline passage describing subordination of women, 1 Cor 14:34-35, support for Paul's position is given as "the words of the

Furthermore, it appears that view 3 is unsatisfactory, for it fails to take seriously the judgment/punishment context of the passage. As we have already noted, Gen 3:16 comes in a legal "trial" setting. God's pronouncement is therefore not merely a culturally conditioned description. It is a divine sentence! It must be concluded that "the judgments of God, who is Lord of time *and* culture, are universally applicable to the fallen (sinful) world."¹⁷ Just as God destines the snake to crawl on its belly; just as God ordains that woman's childbirth is to involve her "going into labor"; just as God curses the ground so that it will not produce crops spontaneously but require man's cultivation and labor—so God pronounces the irrevocable sentence upon Eve with regard to her future relationship with Adam outside the Garden.

It seems clear that according to Gen 3:16*c-d* a change is instituted in the relationship between the sexes after the Fall, a change which involves the subjection/submission of the wife to the husband. The force of vs. 16*d* is difficult to avoid: "He [your husband] shall rule over you." The word *māšal* in this form in vs. 16*d* definitely means "to rule" (and not "to be like") and definitely implies subjection.¹⁸ Theodorus Vriezen correctly concludes that woman's position after the Fall is one of subjection to her husband: "This is considered as a just and permanent punishment in Gen iii."¹⁹ Umberto Cassuto aptly paraphrases and amplifies the divine

law." In this phrase, according to Stendahl, "it is still Gen 3:16 which is alluded to." Statements regarding creation are made only with reference to their applicability after the Fall. And significantly, only *after* the Fall is Adam representative (Gen 3:9; cf. Hurley, p. 216).

¹⁷Susan T. Foh, *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism* (Phillipsburg, NJ, 1979), p. 66.

¹⁸Recent attempts by some feminists to translate *māšal* as "to be like" instead of "to rule" face insurmountable lexical/grammatical/contextual obstacles. It is true that (following BDB nomenclature) the root *mšl*^I in the *Niph'al* does signify "to be like, similar," but in Gen 3:16 the root *mšl* is in the *Qal*. Both *mšl*^{II} "to use a proverb" and *mšl*^{III} "to rule" occur in the *Qal*, but the context of Gen 3:16 seems to clearly preclude the idea of "use a proverb" (*mšl*^{II}). That *mšl*^{III} "to rule" is intended in this passage is confirmed by the use of the accompanying preposition *bē*, the normal preposition following *mšl*^{III} (cf. BDB, p. 605), and other Hebrew words of ruling, governing, restraining (*mlk*, *rdh*, *šlt*, *ʿsr*, etc.), and never used with *mšl*^I or *mšl*^{II}. Arguments based largely on the meaning of ancient Near Eastern cognates should not be allowed to override the biblical context, grammar, and usage.

¹⁹Vriezen, p. 399.

sentence: "Measure for measure; you influenced your husband and caused him to do what you wished; henceforth, you and your female descendants will be subservient to your husbands."²⁰

But we should immediately note that the word *māšal*, "rule," employed in vs. 16 is not the same word used to describe human-kind's rulership over the animals in Gen 1:26, 28. In the latter passages the verb is *raḏah*, "to tread down, have dominion over,"²¹ not *māšal*. A careful distinction is maintained between human-kind's dominion over the animals and the husband's "rule" over his wife. Furthermore, although the verb *māšal* does consistently indicate submission, subjection, or dominion in Scripture, "the idea of tyrannous exercise of power does not lie in the verb."²² In fact, there are many passages where *māšal* is used with the connotation of "rule" in the sense of "comfort, protect, care for, love."²³

The semantic range of the verb *māšal* thus makes it possible to understand the divine sentence in vs. 16 as involving not only punishment but blessing, just as the judgments pronounced upon the serpent and man included an implied blessing in the curse/judgment.²⁴ That the element of blessing is especially emphasized in this verse appears to be confirmed by recognizing the probable,

²⁰Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis* (Jerusalem, 1961), 1:165.

²¹BDB, pp. 921-922.

²²John Skinner, *Genesis*, ICC (Edinburgh, 1930), p. 53.

²³See e.g., 2 Sam 23:3; Prov 17:2; Isa 40:10; 63:19; Zech 6:13. Cf. Robert D. Culver, "משל (māshal) III," *TWOT*, 1:534: "māshal usually receives the translation 'to rule,' but the precise nature of the rule is as various as the real situations in which the action or state so designated occur." Specific examples follow to support this statement. Note, e.g., that the first usage of *māšal* in Scripture is in reference to the two great lights created by God (Gen 1:16)—they were to "dominate" (NJV) the day and night.

²⁴Hurley, pp. 216-219, has rightly pointed out how in each of the divine judgments in this chapter there is a blessing as well as a curse. In the curse upon the serpent appears a veiled blessing in the *Protoevangelion* (3:15): "The warfare between Satan and the woman's seed comes to its climax in the death of Christ." (Hurley, p. 217; cf. Walter Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology* [Grand Rapids, MI, 1978], pp. 35-37, for persuasive evidence in favor of this traditional interpretation in contrast to the modern critical tendency to see here only an aetiological reference.) Likewise, in the curse of the ground and the "toil" that is the punishment of Adam, there is at the same time a blessing in that God promises the ground will continue to yield its fruit and man will still be able to eat of it. Furthermore, the term *ba^{ca}ḥūr* employed in vs. 17 probably means "for the sake of"

synonymous parallelism between vs. 16c and vs. 16d.²⁵ God pronounces that even though the woman would have difficult “labor” in childbirth—an ordeal that would seem naturally to discourage her from continuing to have relations with her husband—“yet,” God assures her, “your desire shall be for your husband.” The meaning of the Hebrew word *tʿšûqāh*, “strong desire, yearning,”²⁶ which appears only three times in Scripture, is illuminated by its only other occurrence in a context of man-woman relationship, i.e., Cant 7:10 (11 Heb).²⁷ In this verse the Shulamite bride joyfully exclaims, “I am my beloved’s, and his *desire* [*tʿšûqāh*] is for me.” Along the lines of this usage of *tʿšûqāh* in the Song of Songs indicating a wholesome sexual desire, the term appears to be employed in Gen 3:16c to denote a positive blessing accompanying the divine judgment. A divinely ordained sexual yearning of wife for husband will serve to sustain the union that has been threatened in the ruptured relations resulting from sin.

If Gen 3:16d is seen to be in close parallelism with vs. 16c, then the emphasis upon blessing as well as judgment seems to accrue also to man’s relationship with his wife. The husband’s “rule”

(KJV) and not “because of” (RSV) inasmuch as the meaning of “because” is already expressed by *kî* earlier in the verse. The ground is cursed “for his [Adam’s] sake”—that is, the curse is for Adam’s benefit. Though it did result from Adam’s sin, it also is to be regarded as a needful discipline, part of the divine plan for man’s recovery from the results of sin.

²⁵Otwell, p. 18, cogently argues that the normal structure of Hebrew parallelism is followed here in that Gen 3:16a and b are in parallel and 3:16c and d are likewise in parallel. As the first two parallel members of this verse duplicate content with regard to childbearing, so “we may expect . . . that ‘he shall rule over you’ parallels ‘your desire shall be for your husband.’” Otwell’s argument is strengthened by the use of the conjunctive translated by “yet.”

²⁶See BDB, p. 1003.

²⁷The only other occurrence of this word in the Hebrew Bible is in Gen 4:7, which has no reference to a man-woman relationship. Despite the similarity of grammar and vocabulary, the latter verse must not be held up as a standard of interpretation for Gen 3:16, which involves a completely different context. Those who interpret Gen 3:16 by means of 4:7 generally hold to the hierarchy of the sexes as a creation ordinance, and therefore must find something *more* than subordination in 3:16. But it hardly seems justified to compare the experience of Eve with the picture of sin as a wild animal crouching in wait for his prey (Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary* [Downer’s Grove, IL, 1967], p. 75). For a discussion of the possible reasons for similar wording between the widely different contexts of Gen 3:16 and 4:7, see Cassuto, 1:212-213.

over his wife, even though it grows out of the results of sin, may be regarded as a blessing in preserving the harmony and union of the relationship. As is implied in the semantic range of *māšal*, and as becomes explicit in the Song of Songs, this is to be a "rule," not of tyrannical power, but of protection, care, and love.

3. Conclusion

We thus conclude that of the suggested interpretations for Gen 3:16 described above, view 4 is to be preferred, in that there is a normative divine sentence announcing a subjection/submission of wife to husband as a result of sin. This involves, however, not only a negative judgment but also (and especially) a positive blessing (as suggested in views 2 & 5).

Two final points must be underscored with regard to a theology of sexuality in Gen 3. First, it must be noted that the relationship of subjection/submission prescribed in vs. 16 is *not* presented as applicable to man-woman relationships in general. Gen 3 provides no basis for suggesting that the *basic equality* between male and female established in creation was altered as a result of the Fall. The context of Gen 3:16 is specifically that of marriage: a *wife's* desire for her husband and the *husband's* "rule" over his wife. The text indicates a submission of wife to husband, not a general *subordination* of woman to man. Any attempt to extend this prescription beyond the husband-wife relationship is not warranted by the text.²⁸

²⁸Some commentators argue that in such passages as 1 Cor 14:34-35 and 1 Tim 2:13-14, Paul has *widened* the original submission of wife to husband in Gen 3:16 to include the submission of all women to men in general, and based on this, he is thought to have excluded woman from teaching authority in the church, etc. But may I suggest this widening may be in the minds of the commentators and not in the mind of Paul! The possible ambiguity comes because in the original text the same Greek word (*gynē*) means both wife and woman, and another single Greek word (*anēr*) means both husband and man. In these crucial Pauline passages on the role of woman which allude to Gen 3:16, the translation can be either "woman-man" or "wife-husband." These passages that have usually been taken to refer to the role of woman in relation to man in general, may instead be referring to the relationship of wives to their husbands and may have nothing whatever to do with limiting woman's sphere of service and leadership in the church. As a case in point, 1 Tim 2:11-12 is translated in the RSV: "Let a woman learn in silence with all submissiveness. I permit no woman to teach or to have authority over man; she is to keep silent." But the Williams translation puts it this way: "A married woman must

Second, we must emphasize that although in Gen 3 the husband is assigned the role of “first among equals”²⁹ so as to preserve harmony and union in the marriage partnership, yet this does not contradict or nullify the summary statement of Gen 2:24 regarding the nature of the relationship between husband and wife. As we have already observed,³⁰ Gen 2:24 is written in such a way as to indicate its applicability to the post-Fall conditions. God’s ideal for the nature of sexual relationship after the Fall is still the same as it was for Adam and Eve in the beginning—to “become one flesh.” The divine judgment/blessing in Gen 3:16 was given, we may conclude, in order to facilitate the achievement of the original divine design within the context of a sinful world.

learn in quiet and perfect submission. I do not permit a married woman to practice teaching or domineering over a husband; she must keep quiet.” A world of difference in meaning! For evidence supporting this latter translation, see N. J. Hommes, “Let Women Be Silent in Church,” *Calvin Theological Journal* 4(1969):5-22. Note in particular how an almost exactly parallel passage in 1 Peter 3:5, 6 clearly demands the translation “*wife/husband*” and not “*woman/man*.” Likewise the passage in 1 Cor 14:34-35 is in close parallel with Eph 5:22-24, and in the latter the translation must be “*wives and husbands*” and not “*women and men*” in general.

²⁹Gerhard Hasel, “Equality From the Start,” *Spectrum* 17(1975):26. Note the parallel relationship of God and Christ (1 Cor 11:3).

³⁰See Davidson, pp. 12-24.