Image: Creation (Gen 1:26-27; 5:1-3)

1. Then God said, "Let us make man in our image (Hebrew: **ṣelem**), according to our likeness (Hebrew: **dᵊmûṯ**). They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image (Hebrew: **ṣelem**); he created him in the image (Hebrew: **ṣelem**) of God; he created them male and female. (Gen 1:26-27, CSB)

When you make something "in your image (Hebrew: **ṣelem**) according to your likeness (Hebrew: **dᵊmûṯ**)," what does that mean? The Old Testament was originally written in Hebrew, and a reference, like BlueletterBible.org, can help you understand the meaning of Hebrew words.

a) Take your phone out and search "Blueletterbible.org." Type into the search box "Gen 1." Scroll down until you find "Genesis 1:26." Find the word "image" within that verse. Click "tools" and scroll down past "INTERLINEAR" until you come to a table with "English" and "Strong's." This is called a lexicon.

A lexicon is a language dictionary. In our case, this dictionary shows you what Hebrew word was translated into the English for "image." Notice that Hebrew looks very different from English.

b) Scroll down the verse until you find "image." Next to it you see the Hebrew word **ṣelem** and if you click the Strong's Number "H6754," the lexicon / dictionary will show you lots of things like how the Hebrew word is spelled in English and how its pronounced (click "LISTEN").

Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible was made by a group supervised by Dr. James Strong. Taking 35 years to complete, it was published in 1890! It is an index for every Hebrew and Greek word used in the Bible to help a person find a specific verse that the word is used in.

c) If you scroll down a little and click "Show Strong's Info," you'll see the definition of the Hebrew word.

What does **ṣelem** (image) mean? What does **dᵊmûṯ** (likeness) mean?

2. This is the document containing the family records of Adam. On the day that God created man, he made him in the likeness of God; he created them male and female. When they were created, he blessed them and called them mankind. Adam was 130 years old when he fathered a son in his likeness, according to his image, and named him Seth. (Gen 5:1-3, CSB)

Just as God created man and made him in the image of God, the sons of human beings were created in the image of their respective fathers. There is a parallel between the image of God and the image of Man. Was Seth the firstborn son of Adam and Eve?

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What does **ṣelem** (image) mean? What does **dᵊmûṯ** (likeness) mean?

Help the student derive an answer:

Ṣelem means "resemblance" or "a phantom of." **Dᵊmûṯ** means "in the likeness of" as having qualities of being similar.

Together, these two words give the meaning of "visual representation."

Remind the student of the context:

Let's review Genesis 1:26:

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the livestock, the whole earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in his own image; he created him in the image of God; he created them male and female. (Gen 1:26-27, CSB)

Ask the student: Do you see one purpose for creating man?

God appears to be making His image as a projection, a visual representation, of power and authority over earth. A human being looks physically similar to God with a mind, spirit, emotion, and character.

The image of God is a living being. When God says, "You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth" (Ex 20:3-4, CSB), He is saying that He is not a dead god.

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Did the student remember that Cain was the first son born? As evidence, the student can be directed to Genesis 4:1-2:

> The man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, "I have had a male child with the Lord's help." She also gave birth to his brother Abel. (Gen 4:1-2)

> Seth was the third child of Adam and Eve and he was made in the image of his father not Cain or Able!!

Ask the student: Can you think of what is different about the creation of Adam (image of God) and the creation of Seth (image of Adam)? Encourage their discussion.

> Adam was created from dust and the breath of God. Seth was created from the genetic material of Adam and Eve. The visual representation of Adam included a genetic physical resemblance.

If you want to challenge your student's thinking or have them leave the class ruminating, you can ask: Since Adam was created in the image of God and Seth created in the image of Adam, how does a Believer, who are offspring of their father ever become an image of God? Ask your dad or mom!

> This answer is not apparent until one studies the genealogy of Jesus Christ where He is traced back to Adam via Seth (Luke 3:38). The New Testament brings together the concepts of the image of God and the image of Man in the person of Jesus Christ. When Jesus identifies Himself as the Messiah, Son of God, and the Son of Man, the concept of image of God takes on a greater meaning that is more encompassing than simply a "visual representation" of God that one comes away with from Genesis 2.

> > Through Jesus Christ, the image of God is recovered from its corrupted state, and the image of Adam is restored with the rights and privileges of the firstborn:

> > So also it is written: "The first man, Adam, became a living person." The last Adam was a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy one, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly one, so also are those who are heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. (1 Cor 15:45-49)