

Ezer in the Context of Men Creation in Genesis 2:4b-25

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ABSTRACT

In the story of human creation written in the book of Genesis 2:4b-25, it is stated that the Lord God saw that it was not good for humans to be alone, so God made a suitable helper (*ezer*) for Adam. He created the woman from Adam's rib. Women were created by God as helpers equal to men. This states that women are not inferior to men, but to state that women are men's partners in carrying out the tasks and responsibilities that God has given to humans.

Keywords: *ezer*, creation, Genesis 2:4b-25; male; female

Published by LPPM IAKN Tarutung
Vol. 3 No. 1 December 2023

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I. INTRODUCTION

The story of creation in Genesis chapter I and chapter 2 is a different story. Genesis 1:1-2:4a is considered a younger story while Genesis 2:4b-25 is an older story. Genesis 1: 1-2:4a originates from the Priest source theory (P) of the 5th century, while Gen. 2: 4b-25 originated from the Theory of the Jahwist Source (J) of ninth century. But these two stories have something in common: to convey the truth that man is the most glorious creature before God.

The story of creation in Genesis 2:4b-25 tells us that after giving life to man and placing him in the garden of Eden, God thought, "It is not good for man to be alone." I will make him a helper who is equal to him." The Lord God made the man

sleep; and when he slept, the Lord God took one of his ribs, and covered it with flesh: and from the rib which God had taken from him, he raised up a woman, and brought her to him. He said, "This is bone from my bones, and flesh from my flesh." She will be called a woman, for she is taken from the man." (Kejadian 2:18, 21-23).

Ezer Kenegdo is a word used to describe women as men's helpers. Women as "helpers" need not be understood as assistants, aides, a lower position and an impression of lower women's dignity. The meaning of the word "ezer" in the Arabic language means a helper who in the understanding of women in such capacity is not inferior to a man. A wife is equal as an

initiative companion and a lifelong partner of her husband.¹

Understanding the meaning of the word "ezer" is crucial to obtaining the theological truth contained therein. The term "ezer" is often used in the Old Testament to indicate a help in a very broad sense. Walter Lempp meant "ezer" as the help or support of mankind, and that pardon was confined only to his likeness, his equivalent, his subordinate, his brother-in-law. Help is similar and balanced, but not the same.² Gerhard von Rad explains that "ezer" is directed at a woman as an image of herself, in which a man can recognize himself. While F. Delitzsch argued that "ezer" means a helper not only in the sense of work, but in the very broad sense, where men and women can cooperate.

Based on all theological representations contained in the story of creation of man, it can be reflected that men and women have equal dignity before the Lord God as a perfect human being. This equality of dignity leads to the male and female being able to cooperate in carrying out their duty and responsibility as the most glorious of God's creations on this earth.

II. METHODS

The creation of man in Genesis chapters 1 and 2 by God are two different stories that can complement each other.

¹ Yonky Karman, *Bunga rampai Teologi Perjanjian Lama*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004), p. 52.

² Walter Lempp, *Tafsiran Alkitab Kejadian 1:1-4:26*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1974), p. 74.

Both stories have something in common, which is to convey the truth that humans are the noblest creatures before God. Genesis 2:4b-25 tells us that after giving life to man and placing him in the Garden of Eden, God gave man (Adam) a helper who was worthy of him. The phrase equal helper (ezer kenegdo) is a word used to describe *women* as *equal* helpers for men. Woman as *helper* need not be interpreted as assistants, maids, a position that is lower and gives the impression of women's lower dignity. Through descriptive qualitative methods, the author explores the meaning of the word *ezer* in the Hebrew language meaning *helper*, which in the understanding of women in this capacity is not lower than men. The term 'wife' is then understood as a male helper in parallel as a companion who takes the initiative and becomes her husband's partner for life. The method used in this research is a descriptive method which is a method to provide a description of the state of an object at the present time but based on existing facts then provide analysis and interpretation.³ This research also involves a logical theology and history of every event that has taken place.

III. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The term of *Ezer*

Ezer in the Old Testament. The word "ezer" (עֶזֶר) in the Old Testament means

³ Nuria Reny Hariyati, *Metodologi Penelitian Karya Ilmiah* (Kota Baru Driyorejo: IKAPI, 2020), 6.

helper. The word "ezer" is a masculine noun. In the Old Testament the word "ezer" is most often used of God as "helper" (Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7, 26; Psalm 33:20; 146:5) or the "help" of Israel (Deuteronomy 33:29; Psalm 115:9-11; 121:2; 124:8), but also of military help (Isaiah 30:5; Ezekiel 12:14; Hosea 13:9). Thus, the word "ezer" describes power. And when God helps Israel, it certainly does not mean that He is inferior to Israel, but rather the opposite.⁴ However, this understanding does not mean that women as helpers are stronger than men; such an understanding would only lead to useless debates.

Ezer in Genesis. Yonky Karman explains that the word "ezer" (עֶזֶר) with the phrasal form "kenegdo" (כְּנֶגְדּוֹ); literally meaning like his opposite, side by side with him, equal to him ('helpmate') in the Old Testament is only found in two places namely Genesis 2:18, 20.⁵ After giving life to Adam and placing him in the Garden of Eden, man was lonely. Then the gracious God saw that it was not good for man to be alone. God saw that man needed to be given a "counterpart", a "helper who was like him" (kenegdo).

The loneliness experienced by man illustrates the fact that man needs help. This idea reveals that the Old Testament never abandoned the idea of the highest praise for the wife as also expressed in Proverbs

31:10. The word "kenegdo" (counterpart to him) contains the idea of 'complement', but in this verse it is not stated who is the helper equivalent ("ezer") to Adam, which in the next verse "ezer" refers to the woman as the helper equivalent to Adam. God created animals to help man, but. The Lord God saw that man could not find a helper worthy of him, as an image of himself, in whom man could know himself.⁶ Understanding the word "ezer" in Genesis 2:4b-25 gives deep theological meaning to explain the relationship between men and women and also their relationship with God. Gerhard von Rad explains the relationship of male and female dignity as a miracle and secret of creation. Walter Lempp sees the relationship between men and women as a partnership ordained by God. Lasor emphasizes human mortality and dependence on God. Merrill considered the relationship between men and women to fulfill God's commandments. C. Barth sees the perfection of man as a soul with a body, a human being of the male and female sex, a human being as a servant of God and a master on earth, and a human being as the image of God.

It is an addition and complement to man's shortcomings and negates his loneliness. With this man is confronted and confronted, perhaps even confronted, with a character with whom he is matched, adapted, matched. With this man is

⁴Yonky Karman, *Bunga rampai Teologi Perjanjian Lama*, p. 53.

⁵ Ibid.,

⁶ Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary*, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), p. 80.

delivered from his loneliness and is made to meet, to meet, to befriend, to be friends, to be brothers, to associate, to fellowship, to be together, and to take part in conversation, in acquaintance, in giving answers and receiving answers.⁷

Derek Kidner's view is that the ezer presents women as equal partners and companions: women are not equated with their ability to procreate. Men can recognize themselves through the presence of women. The relationship between men and women is explained by Kidner in two forms: First, man was created before woman (1 Corinthians 11:8,9; 1 Timothy 2:13). This relationship is like the relationship between parents and children, wife and husband (Ephesians 5:22) and there is no distinction between men and women (Galatians 3:28). Secondly, the difference in gender is complementary; this can be seen in the term "helper in proportion", which is appropriate because of all God's creations, only Eve was a match for Adam.⁸

The word "ezer" means supporter or helper. It is also used in Isaiah 30:5 to describe a person, in Hosea 13:9 and Psalm 121:1 which are the words of God. God is "ezer" in Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7; Psalm 20:3. Usually the word used to refer to "helper" is *הרזע* from its neutral form "*רזע*" which has a masculine form usually

used. Famous commentators such as F. Delitzsch, A. Dillmann, Th. C. Vriezen interpret this word not only to mean help in the sense of work, or the ability to procreate, but help in a very broad sense.

Furthermore, F. Delitzsch explained that humans cannot carry out their duties and responsibilities in all fields without cooperation. F. Delitzsch's point was clarified by Ecclesiastes, meaning that if man is alone when he falls, there is no one to help, but with cooperation, when one falls, the other can lift his fallen friend. God created man with the intention that man needs friends, therefore mutual help is the most important part of man's existence as His creature.⁹

The explanation states that help is an addition and complement to human shortcomings to explain the help in the scope of togetherness between men and women to help each other in a broad sense. It can thus be understood that the ezer in Genesis 2:18, 20 is addressed to women as equal helpers for men, and their presence is as a complement in human life.

Creation of Man in Genesis 2:4b-25.

Alan Richardson explains that the authors of the Pentateuch used different sources with different intentions. The two creation stories are independent, Genesis 1:1-2.4a comes from the Priestly source (P) and

⁷ Walter Lempp, *Tafsiran Alkitab Kejadian 1:1-4:26*, p. 74.

⁸ Derek Kidner, *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*, (Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1967), p. 65.

⁹ Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1-11 A Commentary*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1987), p. 227.

Genesis 2:4b-25 comes from the Jahwist source (J). In the Priest source creation account, male and female are created at the same time after God created fish, birds and animals; whereas in the Jahwist source creation account, male is created first, then animals and only then is female created. The differences between the Priestly and Jahwist creation stories are obvious because these stories have different characters in terms of language, style and theological intent contained in Jahwist.¹⁰

Walter Lempp similarly explains that the creation account of Genesis 2:4b-25 (J) stands alone, approximately 400 years older than the creation account in Genesis 1:1-2:4a (P). The compiler of this creation account kept it out of respect for the written testimony of the earlier church. These two creation accounts have different theological emphases.¹¹ According to Lempp, the second creation account is a cause story (aitiologia) according to its literary style. A cause story serves to explain a situation or custom prevalent in the author's time with an event that occurred in antiquity. Sometimes the conclusion comes at the end of the story. God made woman from the rib of man, meaning that woman is a part of man. As long as that part of the man does not return to the man to be united in marriage, then both the man and the woman

are halves and fragments, imperfect. Only one man and one woman together constitute a human being.¹² Based on this style of story, it can be understood that the creation story in Genesis 2 emphasizes the fellowship between man and woman which is God's decree.

The relationship between man and woman in Genesis 2, according to Walter Lempp, written from the Jahwist source, seeks to give a theological account of the mystery of God's creation, which cannot be explained in human words, because it is a mystery that transcends human understanding. The author (J) tries to explain with figures of speech and parables so that people can understand. God took a rib from Adam and made a woman out of it. That means man and woman are actually one. Woman is a part of man that cannot be divorced from man. If God Himself took (divorced) the woman from the man, it is certain that the woman must return to the man in order to unite in marriage to become a human being. Only in the union of these two characters is there a perfect human being, who is in the image of God. The union, the joining, the communion of the two sexes in marriage is the original principle and talent of humanity.¹³

Christoph Barth saw the perfection of man as God's creation in four ways,

¹⁰ Alan Richardson, *Genesis 1-11 Introduction and Commentary*, (London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 16.

¹¹ Walter Lempp, *Tafsiran Alkitab Kejadian 1:1-4:26*, p. 74.

¹² *Ibid.*, 55-56

¹³ *Ibid.*

namely:¹⁴ *First, Man as a bodily soul.* According to C. Barth, God brings together, connects and even unites two things that are contradictory in nature, the dust of the earth, the deadly material and the invisible spirit of life that comes from God and will later return to its origin. Man was created by God to be a soul with a body". The "body" (basar, flesh) and the "soul" (nefesy), both of which are essential properties, properties that must be distinguished, but which cannot be separated.

Second, God created human beings as male and female. The togetherness of male and female is the very nature of the human beings God created. If the Priest's creation story depicts the togetherness of men and women as an institution of fellowship created by God in accordance with the blessings He bestowed on mankind, the primary instrument in His plan for all time. So in the Jahwist creation story, although woman was created after man, it does not mean that man is superior to woman. God created men and women as equal human beings, sitting equally low, standing equally high. Allah does not discriminate between men and women. With the differences that exist men and women complement each other, helping each other to become real human beings.

Third, man as a servant of God and the ruling master of this earth. Ruling and

commanding is one of human nature. Working and fulfilling one's obligations are also human nature. Man rules while working and working while ruling, which is the secret of his perfection as God's creature. Man was created by God as a free servant in his work, and at the same time as a responsible master in his power.

Fourth, Man is created in the image of God (Imago Dei). A term that has a very deep meaning about the existence of humans as noble creatures before Him. According to Christoph Barth, man is created in the image of God, meaning that man 'resembles' His own nature. Although there are two understandings of Imago Dei that exist today. The first understanding defines likeness in a physical and spiritual sense. Whereas the second understanding means in the way of life and action on the part of both God and man. If the first understanding is accepted, then God is envisioned as a 'giant man' and man as a 'small copy of God'.

The second understanding says humans resemble God in the way they live and act. The way of life is one of togetherness, where God is envisioned as a 'man' with a head, legs and power. While the Israelites are the woman. Man was placed by God on earth to rule and reign, just as God rules and reigns. However, God's power is different from human power in that God's power is absolute while human power is limited. So what is meant by the

¹⁴ Christoph Barth, *Theologia Perjanjian Lama 1*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004), p. 51-64.

image of God is something close to the adjective "good", "perfect". As it is written in Matthew 5:48 "Be perfect, just as your Father in Heaven is perfect". The perfection in question is a perfection that cannot be practiced, it can only be created by God and man is the one who maintains it. God desires that with this perfection, man can fellowship directly with God.¹⁵

W. S. Lasor assesses the differences between the creation stories in Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 by looking at the purpose of the author. In Genesis 1 the purpose of the author is to declare that everything exists through God's creation. In Genesis I man is created in the image and likeness of God to express the closest relationship the author can use to place man in his special relationship with God, distinguishing him from the rest of creation. The word used is the word "tselem" (image) which is further and precisely explained by the word "demut" (likeness) and in the Hebrew text there is no word and' between the two words, meaning "according to a similar but not the same image". The intent is to emphasize man's function as God's representative on earth to rule over His creation.¹⁶

In Genesis 2, the story of the creation of man, God is portrayed as the Potter who formed man from the dust of the ground. This metaphor is used to emphasize the

close relationship between man and the ground, which is meant to show man's weakness and mortal nature. Man is made from the dust of the ground and must return to the ground. God breathes the "breath of life" so that man becomes a "living being". Man is dual in nature; he comes from the ground, but is also equipped with the life principle that comes from God. This emphasizes that the relationship between God and man is very personal and direct. But it also emphasizes man's fragility, mortality and dependence on God alone. By understanding this, it can be concluded that man was unworthy to live in the Garden of Eden and how evil his desire to be like God was.¹⁷

According to Gustave F. Oehler noted by Merrill that, before man fell into sin, man's relationship with God was like a ruler with a servant, God created man with the intention of conveying his status and function as the image of God, namely presenting God through his dominion over all His creation. Such is the privilege that man has, ruling over all His creation and also his obedience to God. The sinlessness of the world proves its ability to obey God, but after man fell into sin, there was no other choice. This explanation may suggest the existence of Satan, who rebelled or resisted God who tried man by giving him the option of power and self-

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ W. S. Lasor, *Pengantar Perjanjian Lama I*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004), hlm. 123.

¹⁷ Ibid.

determination.¹⁸ God's command to man 'of every tree of the garden you may freely eat its fruit, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat of it, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die' (Genesis 2:16b-17), shows man's limitation in the Garden of Eden.

The Lord's command according to Merrill is instead God's declaration of covenantal intent. The tree of knowledge was a test of man's faithfulness to his covenant with God. Sin resulted in the separation of the relationship between God and man as well as the rest of God's creation. This separation also extends to man's horizontal relationship. "Man created in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Genesis 1:27). Human beings are male and female and both genders are the image of God. The relationship between man and woman is further illustrated in Genesis 2, where God saw that it was not good that man should be alone. "I will make him a helper, a partner for him" (Genesis 2:18).¹⁹

Merrill and Oehler see that sin has corrupted human beings created in the image of God. Man created in the image of God is actually closely related to the creation of woman described in Genesis 2:18-25, where woman (issah) "for she was taken from man" (Genesis 2:23). God intended the

relationship of man and woman as God's representatives to carry out God's command as written in Genesis 1:28 "...be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth". But everything was corrupted by sin.

This view is different from the one expressed by Lasor earlier. Lasor sees the creation of man recounted in Genesis 2 to explain man's weakness and mortal nature. His emphasis is on man's dependence on God as his creator who breathed the "breath of life" into man created from the dust of the ground. The story of man's creation in Genesis 2 is closely related to Genesis 3 which tells of man's fall into sin. Sin radically changed not only the relationship between man and woman but God's relationship with His creation.

Gerhard von Rad explains that the creation story in Genesis 2:4b-25, which comes from the Jahwist source theory, records very clearly and explicitly the creation of man and woman, portraying God as a builder who is building(ng) man. Man was formed by God from the dust of the ground, but man became a living being only because God breathed the breath of life into man's nostrils. Compare Genesis 1:26 where God created man seems to be done by more than one person and it is an act of God that is so intimate with man, while on the other hand when God created no one could know

¹⁸ Eugene H Merrill, *A Biblical Theology of The Old Testament*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1991), p. 18.

¹⁹ Ibid.

how God created him. Man became a living being by the breath of God, and "if He withdraws His Spirit, and returns His breath to Him" (Job 34:14) that means man is dead.²⁰

The creation of woman came after man, and woman was created last and most mysteriously of all the good that God revealed to man. God formed a helper for him, who is equal to him (ורגל)-the woman is equal to him, but not the same, but a partner and complement. God formed animals and brought them to help man, but he himself did not find a helper equal to him. And God saw that, in a mysterious way He built man. The woman became a partner and complement and the man recognized and welcomed her.

This explanation takes a very long time about the relationship between men and women in conjugal relationships once the crat is said to be "in the flesh" in their children; because women are taken from men, and consequently they must be reunited. The Jahwish story of creation becomes a practical issue in aetiology to be given an aetiological explanation of the strong "eros" as one of the most important things instilled in man by the creator himself (verse 24) and can finally give an explanation of the relationship of male and

female equality as the greatest miracle and mystery of creation.²¹

Coan Seng Song sees that the cooperation between women and men should result in a new image of Asian women. Even more than that, a new image of Asian women will surely produce a new image of Asian men. For all that men and women experience today is the suffering of a new creation, the suffering of the birth of a new image of woman and man in God. A most radical revolution is taking place here. The world that has treated women as the property of men is a world turned upside down. This upside-down world must be restored to its rightful position. The way to a rightly positioned world is revolution; it is creation. Feminist theology is a theological attempt to support this new creation.²²

The result of the notion of God in theology that transposes God as masculine from head to toe, is an embodiment of male power, authority and even brutality. In the name of this masculine God, theology has justified the degradation of women in church and society; the church has refused to ordain women to the priesthood and has maintained hierarchical structures centered on male power.²⁰ Denonn transposes the masculine God to the God experienced in women's love and feelings will inevitably result in a change in man's perception of God in society. To realize such an image of

²⁰ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology Vol.1* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers 1962), p. 149.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Coan Sen Song, *The Suffering God*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1990), pp 22-22.

God, men and women must work together. This cannot be realized without men participating in the expression of the God of love and feeling.

Theological Reflection

Equal Dignity of Men and Women.

Women as equal helpers for men does not mean that women are lower in position and dignity than men. As an equal helper, women have a function to complement human life. Equality of dignity can be seen in the function of women as wives in married life. The wife is equal as a companion who takes the initiative and becomes her husband's partner for life. As a wife, her role as a mother is very important in a household. Her loving presence and gentle feelings can build a harmonious family.

David Atkinson defines the term as indicating that this helper must be worthy to stand before man as his equal, his friend, his complement. There is no sense of inferiority, subordination or servitude here, but rather one who is similar to him but "the opposite of him" (the literal Hebrew meaning). Those who preach the superiority of man over woman will find no support from this verse. The taking of the man's rib to make the woman means that one sex is incomplete without the other. Men need women for their wholeness as men, women need men for their wholeness as women, the needs of

both are the same. They need each other's relationship. Thus there is no doubt that men and women are equal and complementary.²³

According to Cantore, quoted by Ignatius L. Madya Utama, he explained that in addition to creating humans as men and women with equal dignity, God also made them relate in equality, mutuality and reciprocity, and in a harmonious atmosphere (band, Genesis 2: 8-25), while Niditch said that humans as men and women were created as mirrors for themselves.

God makes no difference in dignity or degree between the two. In fact, according to Niditch, verses 23 and 24 give positive recognition to the marital bond, the husband-wife pair is the foundation for various forms of social and cultural relations. Although women were created after the creation of men, even taken from their ribs, there is no suggestion that women are second-class creatures and inferior to men.²⁴

Male and Female Partnerships

In the Family. In marriage, men take on the role of husband and women as wives. A man who takes on the role of husband is not perfect without the presence of a woman as a wife. In this

²³ David Atkinson, *Genesis 1-11*, (Jakarta: Yayasan Komunikasi Bina Kasih/OMF, 1996), pp. 83-86.

²⁴ Ignatius L. Madya Utama, "The Elimination of Domestic Violence in the Perspective of Christianity" in *Discourse, Journal of Philosophy* Vol. 4 No.1 (Jakarta: Driyarkara School of Philosophy, 2005), p. 61-62.

case, the woman as a wife functions as an equal helper for the husband.

The concept of partnership is realized in marriage. The presence of a wife in the household is equal to the husband. Allah made women from the ribs of men as an inseparable part or in other words, to complement each other. Thus the role of women as wives occupies a central position in the household. Women as wives in the household play a role in caring for and educating and fostering children.

In church, people need to rediscover the beauty and friendship between people of the opposite sex as well as friendship between people of the same sex. The Christian congregation should be a fellowship of friendship, resisting all kinds of tendencies in society to live in loneliness and isolation, due to modern patterns of life that push people in that direction. Human beings were created to enjoy fellowship, whether in marriage and family life, or in single life or congregational life. We must find ways to deal with the fact that it is not good for man to be alone.²⁵

The relationship of men and women as two distinct genders can be fully expressed only within the confines of marriage, which is based on love and faithfulness. This is in stark contrast to two modern views. The first, which

removes all mystery from sexuality, and treats intercourse as merely a technique of self-gratification. Secondly, which excessively lauds the "feeling" experience of falling in love and neglects to point out the role of the "will" that controls it.²⁴ The church must be able to bring people to the understanding that the relationship between two different genders is what God intended in the holy bond of marriage.

In the Church. Apart from the husband and wife bond, the cooperation between men and women to realize the new image of women and will also produce a new image of men can be seen in church life. For example, by involving women in leading the congregation, so that women can participate in church life. Men and women can work together to serve God, so that God is presented in the midst of the church environment, not only a masculine God, but also a feminine God full of love and compassion.

The church as a pioneer and role model for society in attitudes, understanding of women, is called to continue to play its role. That means if the church sees that there are still many women who are shackled by a traditional environment that undermines their dignity and potential, then the church is responsible for assisting, motivating and

²⁵ David Atkinson, *Genesis 1-11*.

fostering so that women can free themselves from the obstacles they face.²⁶

In Society. In the life of society and the state, women can also be male colleagues. Her presence as a leader in the life of the nation and state provides a new color that cannot be given by a male leader. This is where men and women must work together, because their presence is complementary. Balanced cooperation between men and women will bring God's kingdom in the midst of the world.

In society, there are many demands and voices that raise the issue of male-female partnership, such as demands for women's human rights, women's emancipation and gender issues. In society, women have the same rights as men. This also means that women also have the same obligations as men. The obligations of men and women as citizens have the same obligation to obey the government (Romans 13:1-2). Husbands and wives in living social life both perform duties and obligations as members of society.

Both husbands and wives have a role to play, either directly or indirectly, in social life in various aspects of life. Husbands provide opportunities for wives to be able to develop their personal abilities to work in the midst of society. Both in the economic, political, social and cultural fields. The opportunity to be able to play a role in this

field does not only belong to husbands, but wives also have the same opportunity to be able to work. The opportunity that husbands or wives have in working in the midst of society is not a competition that causes division between men and women. Instead, with these opportunities, husbands and wives can work together to create a harmonious life.

IV. CONCLUSION

God saw that it was not good for man to be alone, so the Lord God created a "helper comparable to him". An "ezer" helper is one who helps and encourages, who makes up for the shortcomings of the one he helps. The equal helper is the woman whom God created to complete man's life. Help is similar and equal, but not the same. Women are similar and equal to men, but they are different. This difference does not imply a sense of inferiority, that the helper is stronger than the helped or vice versa. The relationship between men and women is not one of superiority and inferiority.

Men and women have the same dignity before God. It is this dignity that allows humans to interact with each other in their relationship as humans to carry out their respective roles. Men and women can work together to build equality and eliminate hierarchical structures that cause the relationship between men and women to not function properly.

²⁶ Retnowati, *Women in the Bible*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2002), p.77.

The partnership of men and women can be well established, if there is good and balanced cooperation between men and women, both in family life, church and society, then human life will be full of peace. This is what God wants in the relationship between men and women, because the fellowship between them is God's decree. The togetherness of men and women is the nature of human beings as God's representatives on earth to carry out God's commands.

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