

Audience 6

In the last audience the Pope told us about man's original solitude both as the male human, and as a species. He also tells us that Geneses portrays man as a person with all the qualities that describe him, or make up his being.. God gave man the order not to touch the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This gave man the features of self-determination and choice. He gave us free will. This by itself gives man qualities that belong only to him.

Original solitude includes self –consciousness and self-determination, meaning an awareness of who and what he is, and the ability to make his own decisions. The fact that man is “alone” allows him to understand his role within the realm of his existence, and the first meaning of original solitude. This allows us to understand the words “I will make him a helper”, and the second meaning of original solitude.

We are told that man is made in the image of God, and later that he is shown to be a “subject of the covenant”. This means that he was created with the dignity and function of being a person, and that he was created with the dignity and function of being “a partner of the Absolute”. In other words not only was he human, but he was created in a covenant or holy, binding agreement and partnership with God. He is allowed by both of these states to know and choose between good and evil. Through his humanity then, he is a partner with God, and that he has a unique, never to be repeated relationship with God Himself.

Man is of the visible world. A body among bodies”. Through the body, he knows he is alone.

The Yahwist text of the bible tells us that “there was no one to till the land” which can be read in context with the Elohist text “Fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion...” This refers to man's work of tilling the earth. To have “dominion” means that he alone in all of creation can dominate it because he is alone, has that capability, and was told he could change it to meet his own needs “irrigate the whole land”. We can say then, that this activity belongs only to man, and is further meaning of original solitude.