

genesis

God's Book of Beginnings

Chapter 2

^{2,1} Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. ² By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. ³ And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

⁴ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens – ⁵ and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground – ⁷ the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸ Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

⁹ And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground – trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters.

¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold.

¹² (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) ¹³ The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. ¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." ¹⁸ The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

¹⁹ Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air & all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. ²³ The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." ²⁴ For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. ²⁵ The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Creation of the Universe: *The Seventh Day and The Garden of Eden*

Creation Day 7 ^{Genesis 2:1-3}

2:1-3 Jesus affirmed the completion of His Creation ^{Colossians 1:16}. And, while he did “rest” on the seventh day from His “work” of creating, He continues to “hold together” everything in His Creation ^{Colossians 1:17}, “sustaining all things by His powerful Word” ^{Hebrews 1:3}.

Being omnipotent, God never experiences weariness. The Hebrew word translated “rested” (*šābat*) simply means “to come to an end”. In this, God set an example of the pattern (a model) for humans in their work and rest (Sabbath) cycles ^{Exodus 20: 8-11}, which is reemphasized in the NT ^{Mark 2:27-28}.

Jesus Christ brought an end to the Mosaic “Sabbath” ^{Colossians 2:16-17}. Furthermore, the author of Hebrews (Paul?) described the difference between the physical rest God desired for His human creations on Earth and the redemptive rest for His spiritual offspring that will never end ^{Hebrews 4:1-11}.

Genesis 2:1-3 refers to God’s rest following His last act of Creation: mankind. His blessing on Day 7 had a characteristic not included in the blessings of the first 6 Days of Creation: He “made [the seventh day] holy”.

The rest of this chapter ^{v.4-25} presents details of man’s creation on Day 6 not previously included.

A Creation Overview

4-7 Moses briefly summarized God’s creation of “the heavens and the earth” ^{Genesis 1:1-2}.

Prior to God’s creation of the water cycle on Creation Day 2 ^{Genesis 1:6-8}, water came up in springs from the ground to cover the surface of the earth. At the end of the creation cycle, God produced the crown of His Creation: man ^{Psalms 8:3-8, 139:13-16}. To begin with, man was “made” (*āśā*) ^{Genesis 1:26}, alluding to God forming man’s body from pre-existing materials: the “dust of the ground” (indicating that every element in man also exists in earth materials), followed by God creating (*bārā*) man ^{Genesis 1:27}, referring to His creation “out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) of man’s spirit by “[breathing] into [Adam’s] nostrils the breath of life” ^{v.7b}.

Man’s worth is not in his body’s material contents, but in the immaterial aspects of his being.

The Man and the Woman in Eden

8 God made it instantly clear that He has a definitive plan for man, by placing him in Eden.

9 Fruit-bearing trees were the most important plants in the garden. The *tree of life* and the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* were centrally located in Eden, where both were easily visible and accessible. The fruit of the *tree of life* was likely created in order to sustain life. This tree was undoubtedly a primordial glimpse of the *tree of life* which will eternally exist in the New Jerusalem ^{Revelation 22:1-2}, and will sustain life forever. The fruit from the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil* represented a test of obedience placed in Eden by God ^{see v.17}.

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- 10a** There was a river “watering the garden” and flowing from Eden. This river is reminiscent of “the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city (the New Jerusalem)” Revelation 22:1-2.
- 10b-14** The river divided into four “headwaters”: (1) the Pishon, which was an unknown river in an uncertain land area known as Havilah, rich with “good” gold, resin (pearls?) and onyx; (2) the Gihon, another unknown river (Nile?) that flowed through Cush (Ethiopia? Ezekiel 29:10); (3) the Tigris (*ḥiddeqel*), to the east of Asshur (Assyria); (4) the Euphrates (one of the two most important Biblical rivers: the “great river Euphrates” Exodus 23:31, Revelation 16:12 and the Jordan River Jordan 3:1:17, Mark 1:4-5). Both the Tigris and the Euphrates flow NW to SE through Mesopotamia until they merge in SE Iraq, forming *Shaṭṭ Al-‘Arab* (the “stream of the Arabs”) (Persian: *Arvand-Rūd* : “swift river”), which then flows into the Persian Gulf.
- 15** The reason for Adam being placed in Eden by God ^{v.8} is revealed: to take care of the garden. Actions in service to God was/is an important part of God’s plan for man early in the Creation, throughout time ^{1 Corinthians 10:31, Colossians 3:17}, and even in the eternal Creation ^{Revelation 22:3}.
- 16-17** God then declared to the man His first “law”. Jesus told Adam (as a test of obedience): “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the *tree of the knowledge of good and evil...*”. God even defined the unambiguous consequence for any disobedience to this law: death (immediate spiritual ^{Genesis 3:8} and later physical ^{Genesis 3:19,5:5}).
- From the time of their creation, Adam & Eve had knowledge of “good”, but once they ate from the prohibited tree they immediately understood “evil”, because evil can be defined as disobeying God.**
- Death ⇔ separation: physical death separates man/man; spiritual death separates man/God.**
- 18** Up to this time, God called His Creation “good” ^{Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25,31}, but at this instant, He pronounced that man being alone was “not good”. God determined that man would be inadequate (incomplete) without a “suitable helper” ^{Proverbs 31:10-12,26-28, Ephesians 5:22-24}.
- 19-20a** First, God assigned man the responsibility of naming all the “creatures” (*nepeš*: soulish animals ^{Genesis 1:21,24, 2:19}), with the possibility of finding a “suitable helper” among them.
- Whoever creates (or discovers) something has the privilege of naming their creation (discovery). However, since man is made in the image of God, the Creator chose to delegate this honor to man. This was God’s way of assigning man leadership/authority (*rādā*: rule ^{Genesis 1:26,28}) over the animals. In order to be able to name the animals, Adam had to take some time to become familiar with the animals in order to discern their characteristics enabling him to decide on appropriate names.**
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20b-22 However, in his naming of all the “creatures”, “no suitable helper was found” for Adam. So, Jesus “caused the man to fall into a deep sleep”, “took one of [his] ribs” and healed him. He then made (literally *bānâ*: built) “a woman from the rib” and “brought her to the man”.

The phrase “took one of the man’s ribs” would be better translated “took part of the man’s side”, because God not only took a rib, but also some of the flesh around the rib. This is indicated by Adam’s later statement about Eve: “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” v.23.

Eve was not made from “dust of the ground” v.7, but with material taken from Adam.

Therefore, Eve’s genetic structure was derived from and in perfect harmony with Adam’s.

23 In a one sentence poem, the man (*ādām*: Adam) exclaimed his joy for God creating his perfect companion. Adam emphasized the oneness of their union by stating that they had the same bones and flesh. In an appropriate and descriptive play on words, Adam named her woman (*’iššâ*: woman or wife), because “she was taken out of man” (*’iš*: man or husband).

The same play on words appears both in English (*man/woman*) and Hebrew (*’iš/’iššâ*) ^{1 Corinthians 11:8}.

24 This verse established the first human institution defined by God in the Bible: Marriage.

“A man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.”

The unequivocal design for a Godly marriage was outlined in this one verse ^{Genesis 2:24} and supported in subsequent Biblical passages ^{Mark 10:2-12 and those listed below}.

Marriage is to be:

- † Between one man and one woman ^{Matthew 19:4-5, Ephesians 5:31},
- † Permanent: “united” (cleaved) into “one flesh” ^{Matthew 19:5-6, Ephesians 5:31},
- † A separate and more important relationship than any other human relationship:
“a man will leave his father and mother” ^{Matthew 19:5, Ephesians 5:31},
- † A partnership, with man as the spiritual head ^{1 Corinthians 11:7-16, Ephesians 5:22-33, 1 Timothy 2:11-13},
- † The result of intimate relations between a man and a woman ^{1 Corinthians 6:15-16}.

The word translated “united” implies marriage should be indivisible (complete) (i.e., no divorce).

In addition, the phrase “one flesh” suggests a complete unity of parts making a whole ^{Numbers 13:23}.

These concepts indicate: marriage between two people as defined by God is complete and whole.

The obligation for a man to honor his parents ^{Exodus 20:12} does not end when he ‘leaves’ his parents and ‘unites’ with his wife. However, his marriage does create a new and primary responsibility.

25 Shame is produced by a consciousness of an evil act (sin). This scene occurred prior to the fall ^{Genesis 3:6}, so the man and woman knew only “good” and were innocent and shameless.

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