

"In the Beginning, God...."

A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Genesis

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Genesis Chapter 2 - Answers

When I garden, I sometimes wonder what in the world I think I am doing.

I bend, stoop, shovel, dig, rake, get down on my hands and knees, and then get back up again, lift, grunt, groan, and always get so worn out I know without a doubt I should not have tackled the project.

But when I finish the task at hand, I savor the moment when I and just stand back and look at what I have accomplished. A mass of flowers. A straight row or two. A border. A path. A plant moved to a sunnier location. Or a piece of something cut off and planted somewhere else in the garden, so that one plant becomes two. Ahhhh. So peaceful and relaxing and satisfying to see the results of my labor.

That feeling is what I think of as I begin reading in Genesis Chapter 2. The Lord God has worked to create this brand new world and universe. It took Him 6 days! I don't think He was tired when it was finished, but I do think He savored the standing back and looking. It was good, peaceful, and satisfying to enjoy the fruits of His labor...just to look at it and love it.

Genesis 2:1-3 "Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. ² And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. ³ Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made"

The heavens and the earth were completed on Day 6. On Day 7 the Lord enjoyed His creation by kicking back and looking at it. I think He could have smiled, taken a deep breath, and looked and looked and looked.

Genesis 2:4-6 "⁴This is the history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the

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heavens,⁵ before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground;⁶ but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground."

(verses 4-25 are a "supplement" to what we already have read in Chapter 1. In Chapter 2 we are going to get more details especially about the creation of man and woman.)

On Day 3 God created vegetation, but didn't create man until Day 6. Until He created man, there was no one to water or watch over the vegetation, so we get an extra little detail here about God's timing: the Lord God made sure the plants were cared for by creating a mist that rose up from the earth and watered everything.

Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."

Man was created from materials God had already made. Man was created from the dirt, the dust, of the earth. He wasn't created from the atmosphere, or from the planets or stars out in space. He wasn't created from vegetation, or from animals. When God made man, God took the dirt He had made and created him.

But man, with bones and heart and lungs and skin created from the dust of the earth, was not complete until God Himself blew His own breath into this piece of clay, and gave him life. Man would someday be able to pass that life on to his children, and they to theirs....but it had to start by a miracle....a miracle that man could not accomplish at all. Man could not start his own breathing. He could not bring himself to life. God did it. Simply by breathing.

Life was not an accident. It was an intentional act of Almighty God.

Genesis 2:8&9 "The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed."⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good

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for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil."

Where did God put the man He had made and brought to life? On the earth. In a garden. In a garden filled with every pleasant and beautiful and yummy thing you and I could ever imagine. It was perfectly sized and stocked to feed and satisfy the man. It was to be the peaceful home of a man greatly loved by God. And the Lord God made sure the garden contained 2 trees necessary for the eternal continuation of life and love:

- A tree of life. To eat of it meant life would go on forever and ever.
- A tree of the knowledge of good and evil. To eat of it was forbidden, but obedience to that directive was the love part of this paradise.
(More about this later)

Genesis 2:10-14 ^{d0} Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Hiddekel;^[b] it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates."

From this ultimate garden flowed 4 rivers:

- *Pishon*
- *Gihon*
- *Hiddekel*
- *Euphrates*

Their purpose was to water the garden, and, from there, the whole earth.

Genesis 2:15-17 ^{d15} Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the

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man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

The garden was the start. I'm just imagining here, but to me it looks like from there the Lord intended man to tend the creation of God as it grew and spread out throughout the planet, and then to keep it organized and trimmed and producing as it continued to spread.

So we can see that the Lord God had a full and satisfying never-ending life thought through and planned for the man He had made. That's what the garden and the tree of life were for.

But He didn't stop there. He also had love planned for this man. Not just a great, wonderful, healthy and prosperous life, but a life overflowing with love. That's what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was for.

The Lord God knew that the only way true love could live and grow and spread in the man's life was for that man to completely and utterly trust the One Who made him. The man needed to trust that His Maker knew what was best. That His Maker would decide what was good and what was evil. And that His Maker would keep him from any harm.

So the Lord God put a tree in the garden that was not to be eaten. And the man would be able to choose to trust the Lord God. To obey the Lord God. To know that the Lord God knew the difference between good and evil, and all man needed to do was follow the leading of the Lord God. The man would be able to choose to love the Lord God. Love cannot be forced. And love cannot be programmed. Love must be an "eyes-wide-open choice". The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was for love.

If the man would choose to disobey the One Who loved Him, then the man would be choosing to turn away from the Lord God, and turn away from love, and he would die.

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Genesis 2:18-25 “¹⁸ And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.” ¹⁹ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

²¹ And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place. ²² Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

²³ And Adam said:

*“This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh;
She shall be called Woman,
Because she was taken out of Man.”*

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

²⁵ And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Why did the Lord God make a helper for man? Because man was made to love. He could not be happy alone.

I think the Lord God first brought all the animals He had made (also made from the dust of the earth), and paraded them before man. There was a huge celebration – a party- as man named each of these animals and realized that each of them had a mate, a partner – an animal just like them, but different in the most fun way possible. Different sexes. Designed for procreation. The same, but different. With a grand lifelong purpose – fill the earth with others just like us.

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After naming all those diverse and stunning animals, the man felt a keen sense of loneliness. All the animals God had created had a partner. A counterpart. Man did not.

Adam fell asleep then, filled with a longing he probably couldn't even quite put his arms around. He felt happy, cared for, but incomplete. The Lord God knew, of course, that man felt this way. There were no secrets between the Maker and this man He loved.

So while Adam slept, the Lord God performed a surgery and a miracle. The last miracle of creation. The Lord God took a piece of Adam's body – his rib – and from it the Lord God fashioned a partner for Adam. God made a woman. The woman was not made from the dust of the earth. She was made from the man. She was made to be perfectly a part of him, and yet different. She was made to be carefully protected by him, as if he was protecting his own body.

When Adam awoke, there was the woman. And he knew immediately what the Lord God had done. His heart filled with love for the Lord God Who met this hungering need, And his heart filled with love for the woman, who would now be his partner for life. He named her "woman". Later, after the tragedy that would change their lives, Adam called this woman "Eve". But for now, she was woman, he was man, and they knew a purity of happiness none of us, their descendants, have ever experienced.

Discussion Questions:

1. (:1-3) *Was God tired?*
 2. (:5-9) *Why did God put the tree of the knowledge of good & evil in the garden?*
 3. (:10-14) *Why would it be important for us to know about these 4 rivers?*
 4. (:15-20) *Up to this point, what basic things do you think Adam knew about God? (see Romans 1:20&21)*
 5. (:21-25) *Why was woman made from man?*
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