

## Genesis 2

Made in the Image of God

A Wednesday night class for First Pres

September 26, 2018

Text: Genesis 1:26-2:25

### Notes:

1:26-27 "in our image and after our likeness"

This does not mean that people look like God. But like him we see and hear and make with our hands. Further we are given a role of ruling over the creation, the land, sea, animal and plant kingdoms. We are intended to exercise wise stewardship of the creation.

The word "likeness" reminds us that despite our role we are not gods ourselves. We are patterned after him.

1:28 "be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth"

Adam was intended to extend the reach of the garden over the whole world. Even after the Fall these instructions indicate that we are not to live unengaged lives focusing on only "spiritual" concerns. We are to engage with creation, learn to make tools and develop culture, till the ground and build.

1:29 "I have given you every plant yielding seed...and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food."

It seems likely that Adam and Eve were vegetarians.

2:4 "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth..."

The first of the *elleh toledoth* statements introduces the account of the first family and bridges the poetic account of the creation week and the more detailed account of the creation of man on the 6th day.

### "Lord God"

Properly translated "Yahweh God", this term is used throughout chapters 2 and 3. It combines the covenant name of God with the term Elohim used throughout the first chapter. Some have used the change in God's name to suggest that these are two different creation accounts. It makes better sense to notice that the term Elohim is more appropriate to the more general account of the first days of creation and the covenant name more appropriate to the specific and personal account of the first human creatures who were made to live in covenant with Yahweh. Using both terms together links the sections.

2:5 "when no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up..."

This section is detailing the events of day 6 after plants have been made. This line may refer to a specific place on the earth where the seasonal rains have not yet begun. In the middle east it is quite normal for all green things to die in the dry season and to return when the rains begin. If that is the meaning here, it stands to reason that several years have passed since the creation of the plants so that seasonal weather patterns have been established.

2:8 "a garden in Eden, in the east"

Eden is a region and the garden is in the eastern part of that region.

2:9 "the tree of life"

The apparent meaning is that eating of the tree's fruit (which was not forbidden) would grant immunity from death. It seems likely that it is not a once for all immunity, but that regular eating would sustain life and health. The inference is that there was death already present on the earth (among animals) and that without the fruit of the tree of life Adam would also suffer death.

"the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"

Adam must know already that obedience to God is good and disobedience is evil, so this cannot refer to simple intellectual knowledge of the differences between good and evil. What makes the most sense is that by eating of the forbidden fruit of this tree, Adam and Eve would experience ("know" in Hebrew thinking) evil. Further they would make themselves the standard of good and evil and put aside simple dependence on God for guidance in favor of being their own moral arbiters. They would not be following the counsel of Prov. 3:5:

Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.

2:10 "A river flowed out of Eden..."

It seems that the writer intends to locate Eden geographically. It was a real place in the ancient world even if we cannot locate it now. Two of the four rivers mentioned are unknown. Havilah, bdellium and onyx stone (vv. 11-12) are all unhelpful as we are not sure to what they refer. Cush (v. 13) usually refers in the Bible to the area of Ethiopia which is nowhere near the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

2:15 "to work it and keep it"

The term for work is the same used for the service of priests in the tabernacle and the term for keep is used for keeping the feasts commanded of Israel. In short, the service that Adam is to render is like the priestly service of tending God's sanctuary and is a form of worship. Adam is to be a priest in a garden that is a reflection of God's dwelling in heaven.

2:18 "It is not good..."

As opposed to the frequent refrains that God saw that his creation was good, here he sees what is not good. Man is not intended to live in isolation but, like God, in community.

"a helper fit for him"

"Ezer" is the Hebrew word for helper and it is used of God as the helper of Israel. (Ps. 33:20)  
"Fit for him" means corresponding to him.

2:19 "whatever the man called every living creature..."

God exercised his creative power in naming the day and night, the heaven and the earth and the sea. Here the creature made in his image exercises his dominion in naming the animals.

2:22 "And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman..."

We see that she is of the same substance as Adam, of the same dignity and value. She is to be by his side and close to his heart, a friend and companion.

2:23 "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh..."

Adam's first words are a poem of delight in his wife.

2:24 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother..."

The writer takes a time out from the story to explain the significance of the passage for the people of Israel.

2:25 "naked and not ashamed."

References their sexual relationship before the Fall. They have no need of clothes as they have nothing to hide from each other or from God.

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