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A MESSIANIC BIBLE STUDY FROM ARIEL MINISTRIES



THE CREATION OF ADAM AND EVE: GEN 2:4-25



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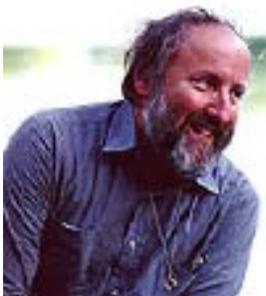
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These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven.
Genesis 2:4

NOTES

INTRODUCTION: GENESIS 2:4

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven.

This is the first biblical usage of the compound name, *YHVH Elohim* or *Jehovah God*, with God's personal name Jehovah and the word for *God, Elohim*, used together. This form appears a total of nineteen times throughout chapters 2-3; it then appears only once again in the Torah or the Law in Exodus 9:30. Outside the five Books of Moses, it appears about twenty times, primarily in I and II Samuel, I and II Kings, and I and II Chronicles.

Notice that the phrase reads: *in the day*. The Hebrew word for *day* is *yom*. When used by itself in this way, *yom* can refer to a period longer than twenty-four hours. It is only when *yom* is used with a numeral that it must always refer to a twenty-four hour period. In this verse, in fact, *in the day that they were created* refers to the previous six days of Creation. However, this is not evidence for any “day age” theory because, in Genesis 1, the word *day* was used with a numeral and, therefore, had to be twenty-four hour periods.

Verse 4 serves as the introduction to an entire section stretching through Genesis 4:26. This section contains the Tablet of Adam, which tells us what became of the heavens and the earth that God had created. Ultimately, they were cursed for disobedience, causing decay to spread rapidly among the human race. The Creation account says that God blessed three times, then, in chapters 3-4, He will curse three times. While verse 4 is an introduction to an entire section going all the way to Genesis 4:26, this study concerns man in the Garden of Eden in verses 5-25.

The theology of this section teaches us six points. First, that man has the capacity to serve God. Secondly, that man is responsible to obey the Word of the Lord, which was used to create the universe. Thirdly, that the institution of marriage is established. Fourthly, that man is emphasized over Creation in general, thus, we are given the details of the creation of man as well as man's nature as God's image. Fifth, we are told about God's special care and provision for mankind. From the hand of God, there came a garden to live in. With respect to Adam, there was a special work in naming the animals. There was the provision of Eve. And finally, the theology teaches that God will not forsake His Creation.

There is a frequently found principle in the Bible called the Law of Recurrence. The Law of Recurrence refers to a pattern in which there is one block of Scripture that gives the chronological order of events from beginning to end. This is followed by a second block of Scripture that goes back to earlier parts of the first block to add details. This section, verses 5-25, follows the Law of Recurrence. It goes back to an earlier segment of the first block in Genesis 1:1-2:3, particularly to the sixth day of Creation, and gives us more details as to exactly how Adam and Eve were created and the order of that creation.

II. THE CREATION OF MAN: GENESIS 2:5-7

A. The Setting: Genesis 2:5-6

The passage begins by dealing specifically with the creation of man, setting the stage with a description of the primeval condition of the earth in verse 5: *And no plant of the field was yet in the earth, and no herb of the field had yet sprung up; for Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth: and there was not a man to till the ground.*

The condition was that there was something lacking, something missing. What was lacking was that *no plant of the field was yet in the earth*. The Hebrew word for *yet* means “not yet,” and the word *plant* refers to wild desert shrubs, using a word that is found only three more times in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 21:15; Job 30:4, 7). The point is that *no herb of the field had yet sprung up*. This would appear to contradict Genesis 1:9-13, which clearly states that plants were already growing. This is not a contradiction, because Genesis 1:9-13 is speaking about the world in general, where by then the shrubs of the field had indeed sprung up. Verse 5, however, is specifically describing the Garden of Eden. There have not yet been any plants within the garden, because God is only now developing this garden as the place in which Adam and Eve will live. The first reason there were no plants or herbs is that *Jehovah God had not caused it to rain upon the earth*. In fact, the first time it would ever rain upon the earth would be the Noahic Flood. Secondly: *there was not a man to till the ground*, the Garden of Eden. Adam was not told to till the whole earth, only to till the Garden of Eden. Again, these are facts that concern the Garden of Eden; thus, there is no contradiction with Genesis 1:9-13. This is the setting for the creation of human life.

Verse 6 then deals with the watering of the earth: *but there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.*

The Hebrew word for *mist* here is *eid*; this is found only once elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, Job 36:27. The point is that a mist came up out of the ground and watered the earth to produce plant life, and that is the way it was until the Noahic Flood.

B. The Formation of Man: Genesis 2:7

1. The Material Part of Man: Genesis 2:7a

And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground.

The actual formation of man begins with the creation of the material part of man in verse 7a: *And Jehovah God formed man.* The Hebrew word here for *formed* is *yatzar* and means “to mold” or “to shape by design.” Genesis 1:26-27 uses the Hebrew word *bara*, meaning “He created.” This refers to a work only God can do: creation out of nothing. In the case of Adam's creation, the word *yatzar* is not emphasizing a work out of nothing, but a work out of something. Although it is a work out of something, it is also a work that only God can do. The Hebrew word means “to form” or “to shape out of a particular substance.” It is used, for example, of a potter shaping pottery in II Samuel 17:28; Isaiah 29:16; and Jeremiah 18:1-17. It is also used of a goldsmith making idols in Isaiah 44:9 and Habakkuk 2:18. In Isaiah 49:5, it is used of the shaping of the Messiah's body in the womb. Indeed, we are told that God does fashion things: Psalm 33:15 speaks of God's fashioning the hearts; in Psalm 94:9, God formed the eye; in Psalm 119:73, God formed man. Thus, God fashioned the human body.

Furthermore, man was formed out of *the dust of the ground*. The Hebrew word used is not *aphar*, which means *dust*, but *adamah*, which means *ground*. Man was created from the *ground* itself. The picture is that of something made out of clay, and this is reaffirmed elsewhere: in Job 4:19, humanity *dwells in works of clay whose foundation is the dust*; in Job 10:8-9, God's hands *formed man out of clay* and can return him to dust; in Job 33:6, man was *formed out of clay*; in Isaiah 45:9, man was made of clay. This emphasizes the humble origin of man, and, in fact, the name of the first man, Adam, is related to the Hebrew word for ground. In Hebrew, his name is *Adam* and the ground is *adamah*. The best way to translate this figure of speech is, “God formed the earthling from the earth,” which reflects beautifully that God created *Adam* from the *adamah*.

The fact that this emphasizes the humble origins of man is seen in three ways the words are used elsewhere. Sometimes the word is used as a symbol of little worth: Genesis 18:27: *who am I but dust*; Joshua 7:6: *they put dust upon their heads*; I Samuel 2:8: *He raises up the poor out of the dust*; I Kings 16:2: *I exalted them out of the dust*; II Kings 13:7: *made them like the dust in threshing*; Job 2:12: *sprinkled dust upon their heads toward heaven*; Job 16:15: *have laid my horn [head] in the dust*; Job 42:6: *and repent in dust*; Psalm 18:42: *I beat them small as the dust...as the mire [dirt] of the streets*;

Psalm 72:9: *his enemies shall lick the dust*; Psalm 103:14: *He remembers that we are dust*; Psalm 119:25: *my soul cleaves unto the dust*; Lamentations 2:10: *they have cast up dust upon their heads*; Lamentations 3:29: *let him put his mouth in the dust*; Ezekiel 27:30: *cast up dust upon their heads*; Micah 1:10: *rolled myself in the dust*; Revelation 18:19: *they cast dust on their heads*. A second way it is used is as a symbol of judgment: for the serpent in Genesis 3:14: *dust shall you eat all the days of your life*; Isaiah 65:25: *dust shall be the serpent's food*. The third way it is used is as a symbol of death: Genesis 3:19: *dust you are, and unto dust shall you return*; Job 7:21: *For now will I lie down in the dust;...but I shall not be*; Job 17:16: *It shall go down to the bars of Sheol, when once there is rest in the dust*; Job 20:11: *His bones are full of his youth, but it shall lie down with him in the dust*; Job 21:26: *They lie down alike in the dust, and the worm covers them*; Psalm 22:15: *And you have brought me into the dust of death*; Psalm 22:29: *All they that go down to the dust...even he that cannot keep his soul alive*; Isaiah 26:19: *you that dwell in the dust*; and Daniel 12:2: *them that sleep in the dust*.

In rabbinic tradition, the rabbis taught that the dust was gathered from all parts of the world to make Adam, and dust was also collected from the future site of the Altar to symbolize that the Altar would make atonement for man's sins. This, therefore, deals with the creation of the material part of man.

2. The Immaterial Part of Man: Genesis 2:7b

and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

The creation of the immaterial part of man is in the first part of verse 7b: *and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*. The Hebrew word for *breath* is *neshamah*, and is used twenty-five times in the Old Testament. Here it brings animation, causing man to become *a living soul*. It is used to bring spiritual understanding in Job 32:8: *the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding*. The result of this *neshamah Elohim*, this *neshamah* of God, is that it gives man a moral capacity.

Verse 7 goes on to say: *and man became a living soul* [or spirit]. The Hebrew word for *soul* or *spirit* is *ruach*. This word is used of God, of man, of animals, even of false gods. The word *neshamah* is used only of God and of man with one exception, Genesis 7:22, when it is used vaguely of animals. It is this *neshamah* that produces life in man. If God were to take back His spirit, His *ruach*, and His breath, His *neshamah*, Job 34:14-15 states: *all flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust*; Psalm 104:29: *You take away their breath [neshamah], they die, and return to their dust*; Isaiah 2:22: *whose breath [neshamah] is in his nostrils; for wherein is he to be accounted of?* It is this principle that produces the life in man.

But what about man in relationship to animals? The word *neshamah* is used of life just once in connection with animals (Gen. 7:22), but only to man is this *neshamah* given directly. The point is that, while both man and animals have the spirit of life in them, only man is eternal because it is uniquely given to man. Animals, when they die, have no

further existence, but the immaterial part of man continues to exist after death, even though the material part of man has died. All of this means that the man is spirit. The result is that *man became a living soul*. There are two Hebrew words for *living soul*: first, *nephesh*, meaning “soul”; and secondly, *chayah*, meaning “life” or “living.” Although *nephesh chayah* is found in man, it is also found in animals. The mention of *nephesh chayah* in relationship to animals is found in Genesis 1:24, 30; and 2:19. Again, the difference is that the living soul of animals is connected with the temporary life of the body; so that when the body dies, there is no continuation of the principle of life or the spirit of life. Not so with man. His soul is an eternal soul, an ongoing living spirit. When the physical or material part of man finally dies, the immaterial part of man continues to exist. Like the body, the soul spirit of man is far more complex. It is eternal, which would not be true of the animal principle of life, the animal soul or animal spirit. This point is reaffirmed in I Corinthians 15:45: *The first man Adam became a living soul*.

Again, you have these terms or combination of terms that are used for both man and animal. The difference is that it is temporary with the animal and dies with the body. With man, it is eternal; the body will die but the immaterial part of man will continue to exist. As both have this principle of soul spirit, what then is the real difference? The chief difference that makes man eternal and animals non eternal is that man's uniqueness lies in the fact that he has the image of God. Animals were not created in God's image. This key distinction, therefore, renders man eternal. Furthermore, both man and animal have material substances, both of which die. Another fundamental difference, however, is that the bodies of animals will never be resurrected because they have no eternal souls. Because they lack eternal souls, it is permissible to have animals slaughtered and to be eaten as meat for man, something that will come up later in the Noahic Covenant of Genesis 9. Both believers and unbelievers of humanity will some day undergo resurrection, to two different destinies, to be sure, but both will experience resurrection from the dead. Again, whatever similarities there are in the material and immaterial parts of man and animal, there is the distinction of man existing eternally, because man alone was made in the image of God.

III. THE GARDEN IN EDEN: GENESIS 2:8-14

A. The Planting of the Garden: Genesis 2:8-9

And Jehovah God planted a garden eastward, in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

From this perspective, *eastward* would mean Mesopotamia, the eastern part of Eden. Adam was created west of Eden and now God makes *a garden eastward, in Eden* in verse 8a. *Jehovah God planted a garden*, which rectified the previous state in which there was no vegetation in the garden of verse 5. By His act, vegetation is now in full bloom. Although we call it the “Garden of Eden,” it is actually a garden *in*

Eden, referring to a specific place. The root meaning of *Eden* is “watering.” You can see the implication of the root in Psalm 36:9. In its singular form, it is found thirteen times in the Old Testament; in its plural form, it is found three times. The etymological meaning is “a place that is well watered” as is seen in Genesis 13:10. Three times, we are clearly told that the garden itself is distinguished from Eden (Gen. 2:8, 10; 4:16). Again, it is not the Garden of Eden, but the garden *in Eden*.

The text continues in verse 8b: *and there he put the man whom he had formed*. Man was placed there as his abode; this was to be his abode during his state of innocence. Some other names for Eden and the garden include: the Garden of Jehovah (Gen. 13:10; Is. 51:3) and the Garden of God (Ezek. 28:13; 31:9). Keep in mind that it is never called the Garden of Eden, but it is a garden *in Eden*.

Adam is then told about the trees of the garden in verse 9: *And out of the ground made Jehovah God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*.

Every tree had two requirements. First, every tree was to be *pleasant to the sight*, having aesthetic value; and, secondly, *every tree* was to be *good for food*, having nutritional value.

The first tree, called *the tree of life*, was also *in the midst of the garden*. This tree would be the means of preserving and promoting life in a blissful state. It would confirm man in his physical life for all eternity. Eating from this tree would render physical death impossible. It was placed in the center of the garden in Eden. Other references to the same tree are found in Genesis 3:22, 24; Proverbs 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4; Revelation 2:7; 22:2, 14, and 19.

A second tree is then mentioned: *the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*. The only place this tree is mentioned is here and again in Genesis 2:17. It carries the concept of having the power to decide for oneself what is in one's best interests and what is not, such as whether to be like God. Deuteronomy 1:39 uses this concept in regard to young ones, but those who are old enough to make responsible decisions; I Kings 3:9 applies it in regard to making responsible decisions. The concept of *good and evil* emphasizes the power of making decisions for one's welfare, one way or the other. In Christian tradition, it is often portrayed as an apple tree, but the text does not say that the fruit is an apple.

What are the rabbinic views of the tree? Among the rabbis, there were different views. Some felt this was the vine, because no other fruit causes so much misery and distress. Other rabbis thought it was wheat, because it was thought at that time that wheat grew on trees. Since wheat represents knowledge, a child begins to learn only when he is old enough to eat wheat. A third rabbinic view was that it was a

fig tree because the leaves were used to cover their nakedness. Another view was that it was the citron or, in Hebrew, the *etrog*, because Eve saw that it was *good for food* (Gen. 3:6); this refers to the part that has taste which, in rabbinic tradition, is the *etrog*.

B. The Rivers of the Garden: Genesis 2:10-14

This section contains details of the specific rivers of the garden. First, we read about the source of the four rivers in verse 10: *And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became four heads.*

From the land of Eden, a single river entered into the garden. Upon entering the garden, it split into four rivers, and the text then describes each river.

The first river is named in verses 11-12: *The name of the first is Pishon: that is it which compasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.*

Today this river is unknown, though rabbinic tradition believed it to be the Nile River. The *land of Havilah*, mentioned in Genesis 25:18, is now Central Arabia, east of Israel. We know where *the land of Havilah* is, but we do not know the location of the river in the land. Verses 11b-12 state that this is a place *where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good*. In that place is *bdellium*, a sweet smelling aromatic gum from the camphor plants. It also mentions the existence of *onyx stone*, thereby emphasizing the wealth of the land in both water and gems. These gems are the remains of the pre-Satanic fall. Prior to Satan's fall, this earth was covered by various precious stones, as mentioned in Ezekiel 28:13.

The second river is named in verse 13: *And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasses the whole land of Cush.*

This river is also unknown to us today. *It compasses the whole land of Cush*. The word *Cush* is often used of the land of Ethiopia, but this would create a geographical problem in this context. Another place that also goes by the name of *Cush* is the land of the Cassites, sometimes spelled Kassites, and also known as the Cosseans. This is located east of Mesopotamia and east of the Tigris River. This particular *Cush* is the one intended, as it fits the geography rather well.

The third river is named in verse 14: *And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth in front of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.*

This river is known today as the Tigris River. It is that *which goes in front of Assyria*; the Tigris River is in Assyria, which is modern-day northern Iraq.

And the fourth river is the Euphrates in verse 14b. This river is well known today; it is located in ancient Babylonia or what is modern-day southern Iraq. These are the four rivers, two of which are known to

us and two of which are not. The geographical differences, in all likelihood, are due to the effects of the Noahic Flood, which changed the geography at that time.

To summarize the description of the garden in Eden, it was a very well watered garden. Because Adam would till the ground, he would not need to go very far to find water. Furthermore, trees were already planted there, which were pleasant to the eyes and good for food. What is learned of the trees of the garden is that God deliberately created a place for both sustenance and for beauty to be enjoyed.

IV. THE EDENIC COVENANT: GENESIS 2:15-17

There are two parts to the Edenic Covenant. The first part is found in Genesis 1:28-30 and covers the first four provisions: first, to populate the earth; secondly, to have authority over the material world; thirdly, to have authority over the animal kingdom; and fourthly, to have a vegetarian diet. This manuscript covers the second part of the Edenic Covenant and the remaining three provisions: the physical labor in the garden; the permitted foods and forbidden foods in the garden; and the penalty for disobedience.

A. Physical Labor in the Garden: Genesis 2:15

And Jehovah God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

The fifth provision of the Edenic Covenant concerns physical labor in the garden: *to dress it and to keep it*. The action was: *And Jehovah God took the man* from the actual place where his creation occurred, *and put him into the Garden of Eden*; Adam was created outside the garden and then placed inside. The Hebrew word for put literally means “to rest.” God “rested” him in the garden in Eden, for the garden was a rest just as the Promised Land is a rest in Psalm 95:11.

The purpose was twofold: *to dress it*, meaning “to work” and “to serve.” Notice that physical activity was part of the original creation. Work did not come only after the Fall of man, it was already there before the Fall. Physical activity was spiritual service to God. Man is there, not to be served, but to be a servant. Then the verse states: *to keep it*. This is a Hebrew word that means “to guard” as it is used in Genesis 3:24. It means, “to keep obedience,” “to exercise great care over to the point of guarding.” Keeping the garden would be an act of obedience to God.

Again, labor was very much a part of the perfect state. At this point, however, the labor was easy, and the land produced easily. It was not toilsome labor, not sweat producing labor. This would come only after the Fall.

B. Permitted Food and Forbidden Food in the Garden -

Genesis 2:16-17a

And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat.

The sixth provision contained in the Edenic Covenant is the food that was permitted and forbidden. The first actual command is in Scripture in verse 16a: *And Jehovah God commanded the man, saying*. First, He deals with that which is permitted in verse 16b: *Of every tree of the garden you mayest freely eat*. Man was still to be strictly vegetarian; he could eat of any of the vegetables.

Then, there is the one prohibition in verse 17a: *but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, you shall not eat of it*.

This prohibition was the one test to see how man would respond to the will of God. It was a test of the recognition of and submission to the will of God. Man was not to assume that, just because he was given authority over the earth, he was independent of God and exempt from God's law.

The question is, "Will man, like Satan, reject God's right to rule, by declaring himself to be independent of God?" This test was only for a probationary period of time. Man was created in a state of unconfirmed, creaturely holiness, meaning he was created holy but, at this point, that holiness was unconfirmed. Man was given the power of contrary choice: the ability to choose contrary to his nature. He was perfect and holy, but he had the ability to make an unholy and imperfect choice. On his own, man must choose to love God and to obey God. Had man passed this test, his holiness would have eventually been confirmed without the ability to commit sin.

A similar thing happened with the angels. At the rebellion of Satan, the angels were given a choice. They had the power of contrary choice, so those who followed Satan became confirmed in their wickedness and now cannot help but sin. The angels who did not choose Satan became confirmed in their holiness and now no longer have the ability to choose to sin. Their holiness is confirmed. After a period of probation, had man passed the test, he, too, would have been confirmed in his holiness. Instead, he became confirmed in his unholiness; he has a sin nature; he cannot help but sin. Man will remain in that condition until God initiates a change. Those of us who are believers will have our resurrection bodies; then, with our righteousness confirmed, we will no longer have the capacity to sin.

C. The Penalty for Disobedience - Genesis 2:17b

for in the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die.

The seventh provision of the Edenic Covenant is the penalty: spiritual death. Death was to come on the same day as the violation: *in the day that you eat thereof*. Obviously, this refers to spiritual death because Adam did not die physically the day he ate. He did die spiritually,

which means separation from God. The Hebrew phrase is *mot tamut*, using the same Hebrew root together twice to render it very emphatic; a literal translation would be, “dying you shall surely die.” This form is found fourteen times: Genesis 2:17; 3:4; 20:7; I Samuel 14:44; 22:16; I Kings 2:37, 42; II Kings 1:4, 6, 16; Jeremiah 26:8; Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8 and 14. It implies an announcement of a death sentence either by divine or royal decree. In the context of the Book of Genesis, it is a divine decree, thus, we have here the concept of original sin.

Judaism, of course, does not hold to original sin, so how is this verse explained? There are at least four different rabbinic views. First, some rabbis say that *in the day* Adam ate he did not die, he merely became mortal. Secondly, others believe that, out of pity, God let Adam live one of God's days or one thousand years. Of course, Adam only lived nine hundred thirty years, so the rabbis teach that the last seventy years of Adam's life were given to David, who, otherwise, would have been stillborn. The third rabbinic view is that the phrase *in the day* only referred to the day of the week on which Adam would eventually die. The fourth perspective is that Adam would die *in the day* only if he did not repent, but he did repent. These are the various gyrations the rabbis go through to avoid the concept of original sin.

V. THE CREATION OF THE WOMAN - GENESIS 2:18-25

A. The Situation in the Garden - Genesis 2:18

And Jehovah God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a help meet for him.

The last segment begins by spelling out the situation: *And Jehovah God said*. Again we have a divine declaration. His decree here is in verse 18a: *It is not good that the man should be alone*. This is the only thing that God said *is not good*, in contrast to all the good He points to in the six days of Creation such as: the heavens of Genesis 1:8 are incomplete without the luminaries of verse 18 and the birds of verse 20; the seas of verse 10 without fish of verse 21; the earth of verse 10 is incomplete without animals and man of verses 25 and 26; and, now, the male without the female is incomplete. The word good describes that which is appropriate or fitting within the purpose of God. It was not in God's purpose for the male to be alone.

God said in verse 18b: *I will make him a help meet for him*. This expresses the need for Adam to have a helper. Some in our modern day have assumed that this is a demeaning term. It is not. God Himself is referred to by the same Hebrew word, *eizer*, meaning “helper.” It is used to describe God in the following passages: Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7, 26, 29; I Samuel 7:12; Psalm 20:2; 33:20; 46:1; 70:5; 115:9-11; 124:8; and 146:5. It is used of God, showing it is not intended to be taken negatively.

When He says: *meet for him*, the word *kenegdo* is used. Found only here

and in verse 20, *kenegdo* literally means “a helper as in front of him.” It emphasizes that which is conspicuous, that which is in full view, that which is in front of him. Putting all these concepts together, the basic meaning includes: a helper like him; a helper fitted to him; a helper worthy of him; a helper corresponding to him; a helper ascending to his opposite; a helper to his counterpart. Whatever man received at the time of his creation, woman would receive as well. She is one who will perfectly complete him, one who will provide what is lacking in the male, one who can do what the male cannot do alone. Man was created in such a way that he needs the help of a partner, and she corresponds physically, socially, and spiritually. There was headship before the fall, but it was complementary, not competitive.

B. The Discovery of Adam's Need - Genesis 2:19-20

God already knew Adam's need, but He wanted to make sure that Adam realized his own lack. God does this in a rather unique way by giving Adam the authority to name the animal kingdom: *And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field, and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them: and whatsoever the man called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And the man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the heavens, and to every beast of the field; but for man there was not found a help meet for him.*

The source of the animal kingdom is given in verse 19a: *And out of the ground Jehovah God formed every beast of the field.* These are the wild animals, because domesticated animals were already there in the garden according to verse 20. Also, God formed *every bird of the heavens*. The source of the animal kingdom and the source of man is the same: *out of the ground*.

The animal kingdom is sovereignly brought to man in verse 19b: *and brought them unto the man to see what he would call them*. This shows that man was created with the ability to speak the Hebrew language. This is known for two key reasons. First, all names before the Tower of Babel are Hebrew names and have meanings only in Hebrew even though the Jewish people did not exist as yet. That is not true of all names after the Tower of Babel when you have non Hebrew names. Secondly, prior to Babel all the wordplays in the Bible make sense only in Hebrew. Genesis 2:23; 3:20; 4:1, and 25, are all examples of Adam and Eve's use of wordplays that make sense only in Hebrew, proving that Adam's language was Hebrew.

Man begins exercising his dominion over the animal kingdom by naming the animals in verse 19c: *and whatsoever the man called every living creature*.

Naming is an exercise of authority. In Numbers 32:37-38, the Reubenites exercised authority by naming and renaming cities in captured territory. In II Kings 23:34, *Pharaoh necho* used his authority over Judah to change the name of *Eliakim* to *Jehoiakim*; in II Kings

24:17, the King of Babylon used his dominion over Judah to change the name of *Mattaniah* to *Zedekiah*. Naming something is an exercise of authority. The words: *that was the name thereof* confirmed man's authority over the animal kingdom. What he called them in Hebrew, in Hebrew so the name became.

Verse 20a states: *And the man gave names* to three categories of animals: first, *to all cattle*, the domesticated animals, showing they are already in the garden and did not need to be brought to man; secondly, *to the birds of the heavens*; and, thirdly, *to every beast of the field*, the wild animals. This was the fulfillment of man's dominion over the animal kingdom. The last part of verse 20b provides the reason God had Adam name all the animals: *but for man there was not found a help meet for him*. Adam, by his own experience, could now see that nothing in the animal kingdom would meet his need, that is, to complete him. This process, then, emphasizes his aloneness. As far as man was concerned, he did not find a creature worthy to be his helper, to be deemed his counterpart, and, hence, to be called by a name corresponding to Adam.

C. The Formation of the Woman - Genesis 2:21-22

And Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

The forming of the woman comes in verse 21a: *Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept*. The Hebrew word here is *tardeimah*, meaning a *deep sleep* that was imposed by God. The rabbis interpret this to mean that this was to teach a man that he should not constantly fight with his wife; if she does something displeasing, he should ignore it or “sleep on it”, a nice application, but not exactly the exegetical meaning of the verse!

Then the first surgical operation ever performed comes in verse 21b: *he took one of his ribs*. The Hebrew word here is *tzeila*; this does not literally mean “rib,” but “side,” referring to Adam's side. It is the same word used for the side or the shell of the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25:12, 14; 37:3, 5); it is also used for the side of a building (Ex. 26:20; 36:25); it was used of the side chambers of the Temple (Ezek. 41:5-8); it is used of the ridge or side of a hill (II Sam. 16:13). Only here has this word been translated as “rib,” but it is better to be consistent and maintain that it was Adam's side. This would mean that the woman was created from some undesignated part of man's body. It includes both flesh and bone, with God also using the flesh that was attached to the bone as can be seen in verse 23; it was taken from the side of Adam to show the woman's equality. Next, God *closed up the flesh instead thereof*, immediately healing Adam from the surgery.

The creation of Eve comes next in verse 22: *and the rib, which Jehovah God had taken from the man*; in other words, something was taken from

Adam's side that included both bone and flesh. The rabbis try to explain why God chose the side or rib as the source in the following ways: God did not use a part of Adam's head, so that she should not be proud; nor from the eye, lest she should have a roving eye; nor from the ear, lest she would want to hear everything; nor from the mouth, lest she should talk too much; nor from the heart, lest she should become envious; nor from the hand, lest she should grasp everything; nor from the feet, lest she be footloose; therefore, it was from the rib, which does not show even when a man is naked. Having said all this, the rabbis concluded that none of this really helped!

The last phrase of verse 22 states: *made he a woman*, means, "to build." Some New Testament teachings based on this Genesis passage are: I Corinthians 11:8: *For the man is not of the woman; but the woman of the man*; and I Timothy 2:13: *For Adam was first formed, then Eve*.

The text concludes: *and brought her unto the man*. So Eve was God's gift to Adam; this is the *help meet for him*.

D. The Response of Adam - Genesis 2:23

And the man 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.

Adam's response is: *And the man said*. This was Adam's immediate response which, by the way, marks the first recorded words of man. With these words, there was a recognition of the source of Eve. Adam's exclamation is: *This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh*. This is used as a covenantal formula in II Samuel 5:1, when the Ten Tribes pledged their loyalty to David. This phrase is a covenantal marriage statement of commitment, hence, she is his complement; he is incomplete without her.

Adam's statement was: *she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man*. Here is the naming of Eve, and it features another play upon words. In Hebrew, "She shall be called *ishah*, because she was taken out of *ish*." This, again, shows that Hebrew was the first language, as this wordplay works only in Hebrew. The woman was made from man, made for man, given to man, and named by man. According to rabbinic tradition, both were created at the age of twenty.

E. The Principle of Marriage - Genesis 2:24

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

This verse states the principle of marriage: *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother*. The Hebrew emphasizes that this provides the foundation for marriage. To *leave his father and his mother* requires a severance of ties by moving from subjection to honor, not so much a physical departure, as a mental and emotional departure. Leaving or forsaking does not mean forsaking in a negative sense, but in a positive sense; it is moving one's loyalty from one to another.

And then he must *cleave unto his wife*. He moves his loyalty from his parents to his wife. In this phrase, the Hebrew word for cleave means to “stick like glue.” It is often used to signify the maintaining of a covenant (Deut. 4:4; 10:20; 11:22; 13:4; 30:20). Now, there is a new loyalty; his destiny is now tied to her destiny, not to the destiny of his parents. The creation of humankind has reached its goal in the complementary partnership of man and woman.

He then states: *they shall be one flesh*. The oneness comes through sexual union. Adam was joined covenantally to Eve; they became *one flesh*, initiated by the first sexual union.

F. The Principle of Intimacy - Genesis 2:25

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

This section concludes with their innocence. This is the principle of intimacy. They could look on each other's nakedness without lust. They were at ease with each other. There was transparency, nothing to hide. There was no fear of exploitation for evil. There was total exposure, but no shame. They were naked before God and before each other without shame because they had done nothing wrong. At this point, there was no lust that warred against the soul. With this union, we find the conclusion of the account of the creation of Adam and Eve. ☆

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