

17-18 Bible Study #18

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Genesis 2

Genesis 2

- **Genesis 2:1-3**

- As mentioned, this is one of the worst chapter divisions in the Bible!
- Clearly, these first verses are a part of the information in **Genesis 1**
- “Hallowed” means to make something “holy” (*Kadosh*)
- To be “holy” means to be “set apart”, “distinct” **not “pious”**
- If one is holy it is because he was set apart by virtue of Baptism
- Here God has set **Day 7** apart and therefore we are not supposed to do the things on that day that we have been doing on the other days of the week
- This sets **Day 7** “apart” and “sanctifies” it *₁

Day 1: Light/Darkness, Day/Night	Day 4: Sun, Moon, and Stars
Day 2: Sky Above and Waters Below	Day 5: Birds and Animals of the Sea
Day 3: Land and Plants	Day 6: Land Animals and Man
Day 7: Sabbath Rest	

Genesis 2 (Cont)*

- It was created within the bounds of a covenant in which God is binding Himself to His creation by an oath
- He is not just creating another animal, He is making man in His own image and likeness
- He is raising them up as His own children
- Man was destined for the seventh day and that is to live forever as a son of God, resting in the household of his Heavenly Father
- The seventh day was intended to be eternal with no reference to an *evening*
- This became the foundation for the theology for many of the “Fathers of the Church”*

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:4b-7**

- This is the beginning of the **Second Creation Story**
- The **First Creation Story** in many ways is an anti-polytheistic catechesis on creation
- This will become more apparent when we read the story of the crossing the Red Sea in **Exodus 14**
- **Genesis 1** contains a different way of telling the creation story with different emphasis*
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Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:4f** flows as one story directly into **Genesis 3**, then **Genesis 4** and the rest of the book
- Some believe that **Genesis 1** was introduced as a secondary addition to the fuller **Genesis** text, that is as a sort of “introduction” added at a later date in a different era and nature
- It may be a meditation on the larger story that begins in **Genesis 2:4**
- Scholars see **Genesis 2:4f** through the rest of the book as being handed down from the Oral Tradition
- It is very rich in parallelisms and themes*

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:7-9**

- Again we hear about **the land**, (not the world, or cosmos) which was without form or life
- There were no plants because God had not as yet caused it to “rain”
- Then we hear that God created “man” (*Adam*) and put him in a garden in the middle of which there were two important trees
- The basic component of this passage is the same as **Genesis 1** – there is a purpose for what God is doing
- The purpose of the garden, plants, and trees was to provide a place where man could dwell

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- In the midst of the beautiful garden full of trees and fruit are two very important trees
 - The tree of life
 - The tree of the knowledge of good and evil
- Many commentaries see this as a *Hebrew* device to present a stark contrast between two opposing views meaning everything in between good and evil (knowledge)
- *St. Ephraim* spoke of this simply as the “tree of knowledge”^{*}₂
- Many modern commentators see it this way as we will see in **Genesis 3** where the woman saw it as desirable because it made one wise *

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:10-14**

- Here we learn that there was water flowing from the garden
- This would imply that the garden was on a hill or a mountain with the water flowing down to water the rest of the earth
- We are presented with the names of several rivers
 - Pishon, Gihon, Tigris and Euphrates - indicating that it was within what we call the Fertile Crescent *

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:15**

- Notice that *Adam* had a job
- He was to till, work, serve (*Abad*) and guard (*Shamar*) the garden*

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:16-17**

- Many read this passage as a warning as though God was somehow going to punish man with death if he disobeyed
- Much confused theology and soteriology (study of salvation and what happens when one is saved) has come from misreading this text
- Many see the idea that “*in the day you eat of it you shall die*” as a warning from God

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- Instead we see God, like a good father speaking to his children, warning them to avoid doing this (eating of this tree) until they were old enough not to get hurt by it (Father gave many examples of this in his relationship with his children as he warned them of the dangers of:
 - Fire
 - The street
 - The lawnmower

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- God was warning his children that there were certain things in the garden that were extremely dangerous
- He was saying to Adam, “not now”
- Again, according to the “Fathers of the Church” and especially *St. Ephraim*, Adam and Eve understood this as a temporary warning
- When man is ready to deal with this information God will allow him to eat of the tree of knowledge, but not yet *

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:18-23**

- When we hear of a “helper fit for Adam” we often think of a “servant”
- But in *Hebrew* this meant to be in perfect correspondence to him
- Another human being that would be a perfect match for him
- But before God did this, he brought all of the animals to Adam so he could “name” them

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- The ancient *Egyptians* saw many animals as gods to be worshipped
- St Paul says in **Romans 1** that man worshipped the creatures instead of the creator
- Just as God created the sun, moon and stars for a purpose and not as gods, he created the animals for a purpose as well
- The naming of a thing gave the person who assigned the name (Adam) power and control over what he named

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- This means that God created the animals with a purpose to serve man and not as gods
- This is very anti-polytheistic
- It is clear that **none** of the animals **were equal to man**
- But what happens next is very different
- He created woman as one drawn out of man
- There is a play on the Hebrew construction here
 - *Ish* means man, and *Ishah* means the woman from man
 - There is a similar understanding in English with “man” and “woman”

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- *There* are two major points that are being presented in this text
- As we saw earlier, the man has named all the animals
- But **he does not name the woman** at this point (he will do that in **Genesis 3** where he will call her *Eve*)
- The reason for this is to emphasize that he is not superior to her as he was to the animals
- She is his equal
- He simply enumerates what she is, “you are woman drawn from man”

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- To avoid any confusion from his naming the animals, he does not name her
- When he does give her a name in **Genesis 3:20** it will be in stark contrast to how he named the animals
- The point God is making here is that the woman was drawn from man, and created as his counterpart, his equal

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- Adam can only be seen as superior by way of the hierarchy of age which offers honor to the eldest
- But they were created as equal beings
- We must understand this equality issue as it will be disrupted in the next section *

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- **Genesis 2:24-25**

- The presentation that they were naked and not ashamed meant that there was a perfectly harmonious relation between them
- Because we don't know the people who might see us if we walked around naked, we would be ashamed for them to see us
- Today, a husband and wife in a harmonious relationship have no shame in their nakedness
- There is also no shame in parents seeing their young children's nakedness

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- The author is showing us that the man and woman were in perfect harmony with no disruption between them
- This also meant that they were in a perfectly harmonious relationship with God
- This is all going to fall apart in **Genesis 3** where they are going to hide from each other and from God
- Moses was telling his audience that man and women were in a perfect harmonious relationship with each other and with God

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- Father Sebastian sees this as a model with God as the hub of a wheel and man and woman as the spokes
- The closer we are as the spokes, the closer we are drawn toward the hub (God) and the closer we are drawn to each other
- The further we are from the hub, the further we are from each other
- The relationship between man and his fellow men can only be in relationship we have with God because man is made in the image and likeness of God

Genesis 2 (Cont)

- St John says this in his first epistle

St John says this in his first epistle
He asks, "how can you say that you love God and hate your brother?"

How can you say that you love Him whom you cannot see, but you hate the very image and likeness of Him who you say you love?

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Transition

- Next we will look at the fall of Adam and Eve in **Genesis 3**

Genesis 3

Transition

- The setting in **Genesis 2** indicates that everything was in perfect harmony between man and woman and God
- That is why it says that they were naked and unashamed

Genesis 3

- **Genesis 3:1-3**

- Did God really say that that they should not eat of **any** tree of the garden?
- The “Fathers of the Church” believed that this indicated that something had gone wrong
- The “Fathers” tried to preserve the story’s integrity and purity
- Someone (Adam or Eve) had messed up the story
- The “Word of God” had therefore been corrupted and immediately following the corruption, the serpent moved in *

Genesis 3 (Cont)

- **Genesis 3:4-7**

- The serpent's temptation can be seen in the statement that the eyes Adam and Eve would be opened meant and that they would receive greater knowledge than they had before
- These temptations always came with a little truth mixed within the lies
- God did not say anything about not eating from **any** of the trees, just the **one** tree
- When they focused on the truth and accepted the lies they ended up with nothing

Genesis 3 (Cont)

- Their eyes were opened and they realized that they were naked
- This meant that something had been lost, not gained
- They had lost their harmonious relationship with each other and with God
- When we move away from God, we move away from each other and our fellow man (remember the image of God as the hub)
- The commandment to “love God as you love yourself” can be seen in *St John's* first epistle where we hear about the image of God (which we cannot see) being in the image of our neighbor (which we can see)

Genesis 3 (Cont)

- Father Sebastian sees some humor in the fact that Adam and Eve made clothing from fig leaves
- He believes that fig leaves were the worst choice of all the leaves in world
 - They look big, floppy and soft, but were like sandpaper and quickly fell apart
 - Again, Adam and Eve reached out for this fruit and again, they gained nothing
 - All was temporary
 - They had lost the glory of God and gained nothing
 - This was why they realized that they were naked *