

Text: Genesis 2:4-25

Section 1

4This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven. 5Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. 6But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. 7Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being. (Genesis 2:4-7)

The King James Version begins verse 4 by saying “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth...” The Genesis account has several instances where something like this is written. For example:

1This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day when God created man, He made him in the likeness of God. (Genesis 5:1)

9These are the records of the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time; Noah walked with God. (Genesis 6:9)

Most of the commentators I have read agree that these statements mark the end of a particular section of Genesis, not the beginning. Assuming that Genesis was compiled by Moses (under Divine inspiration) from works of earlier men (also writing under Divine inspiration), we would say that Genesis 1:1-2:4 were directly dictated by God to Adam or someone else, since there were no eyewitnesses to these events. Genesis 2:5-5:1 would have been written by Adam, 5:1-6:9 by Noah, etc. This theory of Genesis’ writing (and it is only a theory—it could have all been written by Moses only under the direction of the Holy Spirit) does not take away from its Divine origin, but does seem plausible given the structures of historic writings of other ancient Near Eastern peoples, and as a “side benefit” also gives further credence to the assertion that Man was created by God as he is now, with his full faculties present and ready for use. While language (and, by extension, writing) has certainly developed and “evolved” since Man’s creation, there was not a time when he lacked these abilities.

Verses 5-7 should not be seen as contradicting the account of the creation of plants and of Man in chapter 1. The account in chapter 2 is simply a more focused discussion of certain events presented in chapter 1, further “fleshing out” the beginnings of Man and Woman than the more summary account of the first chapter does. What we do gather from both accounts is that there is no plant, animal, or human life apart from the will of God. Life began to exist when He spoke it into existence.

11Then God said, "Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them"; and it was so. 12The earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. 13There was evening and there was morning, a third day. (Genesis 1:11-13)

Furthermore, let us not forget that not only God the Father, but the entire Trinity has existed forever, and was present and active in the Creation event. John begins his Gospel by proclaiming Christ’s role in creation.

1In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2He was in the beginning with God. 3All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. 4In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men. 5The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. (John 1:1-5)

Next, the Word says that God “*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.*” This breath is apparently not any different than that possessed by animal life, since the same term is used to describe it in Genesis 7.

13On the very same day Noah and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them, entered the ark, 14they and every beast after its kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, all sorts of birds. 15So they went into the ark to Noah, by twos of all flesh in which was the breath of life. 16Those that entered, male and female of all flesh, entered as God had commanded him; and the LORD closed it behind him. (Genesis 7:13-16)

However, God's direct bestowment of that breath upon Man is unique, as is the declaration that through this "man became a living being" or "a living soul." Man differs from all animal life in his possession of an eternal soul, which will live on despite physical death.

16And He told them a parable, saying, "The land of a rich man was very productive. **17**"And he began reasoning to himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?'**18**"Then he said, 'This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. **19**'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry."**20**"But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?' **21**"So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God." (Luke 12:16-21)

This eternal spiritual nature, along with the abilities to think, reason, and relate to the Creator, is a part of "the image of God" in Man. No other creature was given this distinction.

27God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. (Genesis 1:27)

Yet, to use perhaps to flippant an expression, "with great power comes great responsibility." As morally responsible beings before God, we are accountable to Him for our lives and actions. We saw a hint of this in the above parable, and the following passages discuss this more explicitly.

27And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, **28**so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him. (Hebrews 9:27-28)

11Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **12**And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.**13**And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. **14**Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15**And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-15)

We are morally responsible, and since we have all sinned we have failed in this moral responsibility before God. Each one of us stands guilty before him, deserving to be "thrown into the lake of fire." God is perfect. He is holy. He cannot abide the presence of even one sin. The Good News is that the penalty of sin has been removed for everyone that will repent and believe, confessing Christ as the risen Lord and Savior.

38Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39**"For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." (Acts 2:38-39)

9that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; **10**for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. **11**For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED." **12**For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, abounding in riches for all who call on Him; **13**for "WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED." (Romans 10:9-13)

Section 2

8The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. **9**Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing 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.**10**Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. **11**The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. **12**The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. **13**The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. **14**The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria And the fourth river is the Euphrates.**15**Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. (Genesis 2:8-15)

God was so gracious to Man, providing him with a beautiful and abundantly provisioned place to live and work. While the description of the Garden's location and surroundings may seem to make it possible to pinpoint its location, I tend to think that such efforts are futile. The Flood so changed the antediluvian features of the earth that it is likely that the particular rivers, areas, etc. described no longer exist in the form they then had. True, we have places with some of these names today, but it is not inconceivable that the

descendants of Noah named places and features after the flood that reminded them of similar places and features that existed before the flood, much as the white settlers of America did (New York, New Jersey, etc.). Even if that is not necessarily the case, certainly the Garden itself was washed away with the waters of the Flood.

We will discuss "*the tree of the knowledge of good and evil*" in a moment. "*The tree of life*" was also present in the Garden, and evidently had the power to extend life indefinitely. The Book of Revelation tells us that such a tree will be present in the "New Jerusalem" that will come after Christ's return.

1Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2in the middle of its street On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. 3There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:1-5)

The next chapter of Genesis specifically ascribes such a power to this tree. Notice, though, that Man was not prohibited from eating of this tree until after he sinned.

22Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"-- 23therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. 24So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3:22-24)

Adam was given the responsibility of working the soil, cultivating the Garden. The Scriptures' consistent testimony regarding work is that it is a Divinely-ordained part of Man's life on earth, and all who are able to do so should work and provide for themselves.

10For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. 11For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.12Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12)

Returning to Revelation 22, we see that work will even be a part of our eternal lives, as we will be responsible for serving the risen Christ.

3There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him; 4they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads. 5And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illumine them; and they will reign forever and ever. (Revelation 22:3-5)

Work only became difficult and sometimes unproductive after Man sinned. With the removal of God's blessing and the placing of His curse because of sin, the always fruitful and rewarding nature of Man's work was replaced with toil, sweat, obstacles, and failure.

17Then to Adam He said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it';

Cursed is the ground because of you;

In toil you will eat of it

All the days of your life.

18"Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you;

And you will eat the plants of the field;

19By the sweat of your face

You will eat bread,

Till you return to the ground,

Because from it you were taken;

For you are dust,

And to dust you shall return." (Genesis 3:17-19)

Section 3

16The LORD God commanded the man, saying, "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die." (Genesis 2:16-17)

Man had one command when he was first created: "Don't eat from this one tree." Man broke that command, and both sin and death were introduced into the world. No, Adam did not instantly die physically when he sinned, but he did die spiritually, and the process of physical decay, disease, and eventually death did begin. Moreover, Adam passed the sinful nature on to his descendants, so that all of us now must look forward to physical death and, without Christ, eternal spiritual death.

23For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23)

12Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—(Romans 5:12)

Section 4

18Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him." 19Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name. 20The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. 21So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. 22The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. 23The 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."*

24For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. 25And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. (Genesis 2:18-25)

Seeing Man alone was the first instance in which God said that something about His Creation was "not good." So, He provided Man a helper "suitable for," or "corresponding to," or "meet for" him. (Note: "help meet" in the King James is not a noun. "Help" is a noun, "meet" is an adjective meaning "suitable" or "corresponding.") Woman was created second, having been fashioned out of Man's rib. The New Testament repeatedly confirms this as historical fact, and indeed as the grounds for its rules governing Christian order regarding relations between the sexes.

11A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. 12But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. 13For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. (1 Timothy 2:11-13)

8For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. 10Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of authority on her head, because of the angels. 11However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. (1 Corinthians 11:8-12)

God gave Man one wife, and she was to be his companion until separated by physical death. Divorce, adultery, prostitution (or the solicitation thereof), and polygamy were and are not a part of God's intentions for His created order, and are therefore sinful.

1When Jesus had finished these words, He departed from Galilee and came into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan; 2and large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. 3Some Pharisees came to Jesus, testing Him and asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all?" 4And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, 5and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? 6" So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." 7They said to Him, "Why then did Moses command to GIVE HER A CERTIFICATE OF DIVORCE AND SEND her AWAY?" 8He said to them, "Because of your hardness of heart Moses permitted you to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way. 9" And I say to you, whoever divorces his wife, except for immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery. (Matthew 13:1-9)

15Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take away the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? May it never be!16Or do you not know that the one who joins himself to a prostitute is one body with her? For He says, "THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH." (1 Corinthians 6:15-16)

Polygamy in particular is discussed as a sin prohibited for those that would lead God's people. He told the kings of Israel to avoid this sin (though they didn't), and made monogamy a condition for leadership in the New Testament Church.

14"When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, and you possess it and live in it, and you say, 'I will set a king over me like all the nations who are around me,' 15you shall surely set a king over you whom the LORD your God chooses, one from among your countrymen you shall set as king over yourselves; you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman. 16"Moreover, he shall not multiply horses for himself, nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses, since the LORD has said to you, 'You shall never again return that way.' 17"He shall not multiply wives for himself, or else his heart will turn away; nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself. (Deuteronomy 17:14-17)

5For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you, 6namely, if any man is above reproach, the husband of one wife, having children who believe, not accused of dissipation or rebellion. 7For the overseer must be above reproach as God's steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not addicted to wine, not pugnacious, not fond of sordid gain, 8but hospitable, loving what is good, sensible, just, devout, self-controlled, 9holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, so that he will be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict. (Titus 1:5-9)

Man was created first, and Woman was given as his "*helper*." While God gave headship over the family to the man, it is a responsibility to be exercised in a self-sacrificing, Christ-like manner. The woman is to be submissive, though when the man is faithful in fulfilling his responsibilities before God to her this should not be difficult. A godly marriage, with faithful male headship and female submission, is to give us a picture of how Jesus Christ relates to His Church, His Bride. We submit to His commands, and He in turn cares for us, providing all our needs more abundantly than we can imagine.

This relationship should not be construed to say that the man is more valuable than the woman. Both man and woman are of equal value to God, both bearers of His image, and both morally responsible before Him.

22Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body.24But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. 25Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, 26so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.28So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30because we are members of His body. 31FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH.32This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. 33Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

Finally, "*And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.*" There was no reason for them to be ashamed—there was no sin in the world! Only after the introduction of sin, and of the curse, did Man become ashamed of his nakedness, realizing that the organs of procreation were now also those by which a sinful race was to be introduced into the formerly "*good*" Creation.

12Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—(Romans 5:12)