

The Book of Genesis

Chapter 2

2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed. (REB)

Spiritual Revelation

All of the physical creating was now accomplished, but one more thing needed to be created in order for God's plan to be clearly revealed.

2:2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. (KJV)

God never tires (ISA 40:28), so it was by resting that He put His presence into the seventh day of the week.

2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and [REB "made it holy"] because that in it He had rested [Hebrew: "shawbath" = "to put away"] from all His work which God created and made. (KJV)

Sabbath Fulfillment

The word "Sabbath" is translated from the Hebrew "shawbawth," meaning "an intermission," while the Greek "sabbaton" means "complete cessation."

There is to be complete cessation of physical labor and mental toiling regarding physical needs on the seventh day. This day requires thoughts to focus on God and reflect on His accomplishments.

The Sabbath pictures the time when God's plan for man is completed. A time when the need for the physical dimension ceases and all physical things revert to the spirit, which is pictured by the time of the New Heaven and New Earth (REV 21:1; HEB 1:10-12).

2:4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. (NIV)

Supplemental Account of the Creation of Man

The KJV begins this verse: "*These are the generations of the heavens...*" Much of the material from here through 4:26, contains a secondary account used by Moses to fill in details that were not addressed in the main account of the Creation of man.

2:5 When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up (NIV)

This verse contains the first use of "LORD God" [YHWH Elohim]. Until this point, the reference was simply to "God" [Elohim], showing that Moses probably relied on a different document at this time.

The time setting of this passage is prior to the third day because plant life was not yet visible. This is additional material not found in 1:6-10.

2:6 For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.

Weather Patterns

Until this point in recreating life, God had not reset the weather patterns established prior to Satan's rebellion. The "mist that went up" could refer to the "water above" the expanse, or the formation of clouds on the second day. On day three, the weather patterns were now established and the rain arrived, which was needed for the continued development of plant life.

2:7 And the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being [Hebrew: "nephesh" = KJV: "soul"; REB: "creature"]. (NIV)

"A Living Being"

God emphasizes that man is made in His image (1:26-27). The Bible goes on to stress that even though the image is that of God, man is still mortal. The breath of life is necessary for physical life, as brought out in 7:21-22, and man cannot live without it (ISA 2:22). The Hebrew word "nephesh" refers only to a physical body. In fact it is translated "dead body" in NUM 19:11.

2:8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

Garden of Eden

The Hebrew "eden" means "delight." God's desire for man's environment was that of a place of great beauty—a place where man could be positively influenced.

Studies have shown that the most likely location of the Garden of Eden was just north of the Persian Gulf.

2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. (NIV)

The Two Trees

All of the trees were well shaped and adorned with edible fruits and nuts. While the trees were good for food, we must understand that the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was edible—it was not physically poisonous. The fruit was not evil, it was the taking the fruit against God's orders that was evil.

The placement of the two trees suggests that they were the focal point of the garden. In the same way, they were the focal point of humanity. Each represented a way of life. The way revealed by the Tree of Life represented the way of Jesus Christ (JOH 1:4). On the contrary, the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represented the way of trial and error, exemplified by the statement, "*There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*" (PRO 14:12).

2:10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.

Main River and Tributaries

This river was symbolic of the river that will flow from the temple of God during the Millennial reign of Christ (EZE 47), and from the throne of God through and out of New Jerusalem during the period of the New Heaven and New Earth (REV 22:1-2; ZEC 14:8).

The riverheads were actually streams—not major rivers. The names of the four streams were taken by Adam's children and were then given to the four major rivers of the areas where civilization was concentrated in early history. Moses goes on at this point with the names of the streams and pointing out the great rivers that were anciently known by the same names.

2:11 The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (NIV)

The Pishon was the name given to the Ganges River in the east; Havilah is specified as the Havilah where there is gold, as distinct from the Havilah in Africa where there was no gold.

2:12-13 (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. (NIV)

The Gihon refers to the Nile in the west, located in the land of Cush.

2:14 The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. (NIV)

The Tigris and Euphrates were the major rivers in the central area of early civilization.

2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. (NIV)

Mankind's Responsibility

God employed the man to keep the garden in its beautiful state, showing that a life of ease and lack of responsibility is not God's way—man must be productive.

2:16-17 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." (NIV)

"You Will Surely Die"

God decreed that at the time man disobeyed and sinned, he would make physical death necessary (HEB 9:27).

2:18 Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I shall make a partner suited to him.' (REB)

Creation of Woman

This account parallels 1:26-27 when God "*created them male and female.*" The NIV says "helper suitable for," and TAN states "fitting helper for."

2:19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. (NIV)

Adam would certainly not have enough time in the day to name all of the many species and sub-species in existence—probably naming only the major kinds of animals. The point of this exercise was for the man to understand he lacked a female counterpart—something the animals had—and comprehend that he was not complete in his present state.

2:20-23 So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper [REB: "partner"] was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, He took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man [Hebrew: "ish"] said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman' [Hebrew: "ishshah" = "female man"], ' for she was taken out of man.' (NIV)

God could have created the woman from dust just like the man, but He chose to make her out of a part of the man that was close to his heart. She would be his partner, and stand by his side.

2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh. (NIV)

The REB states: "*and the two become one,*" which is ultimately what occurs between the second Adam (1CO 15:47) and His wife (JOH 17:21).

2:25 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame. (NIV)

State of Humanity

At this point, Adam and Eve were in harmony with God. Their consciences were clean and they had encountered no disruptions to the peace they enjoyed with God and each other. The stage is now set for the next chapter which deals with the foundation of the present world.