

“The Nature of Man”

a study of Genesis 2

part two:
Genesis
2:8 – 25

WELCOME! We are grateful you are here,
and we are excited to share God's word with you!

Saturday, February 22, 2020 – 3:00 pm

← The Nature of Man →

Genesis 2:8-14

“The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden...” [v8]

- ◆ After making a perfect universe, God yet makes a place that is specially “set apart” (i.e., ‘sanctified’) from the rest of creation; this place is called “Eden” (‘Paradise’) and is where God will come for personal fellowship with man!
 - This garden is, in effect, a “Holy of holies”; its aspect will be reflected in the tabernacle and in the “New Jerusalem” described in John’s Revelation [cp Ex 26; Rev 21-22]



Genesis 2

← The Nature of Man →

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“...out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow...” [v9]

- ◆ Two aspects are emphasized: “...pleasant *to the sight* and good *for food*”
 - “good for food” is simple enough; but what purpose does a pleasant-*looking* tree serve?



It is a question of *beauty*, a sign of God’s goodness:

“...worship the Lord in the *beauty* of holiness.”
[1 Chronicles 16:29]

“One thing I have desired of the Lord... That I may dwell in the house of the Lord... To behold the *beauty* of the Lord...”
[Psalm 27:4]

Genesis 2

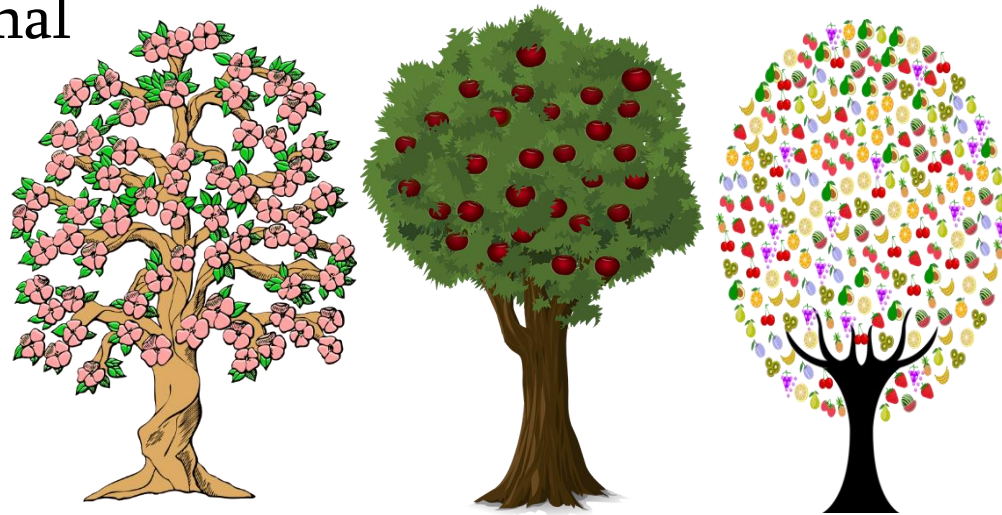
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 - “pleasant”, “good for food”, “tree of life”; God prepared for **all** of man’s earthly needs, physical and emotional



Genesis 2

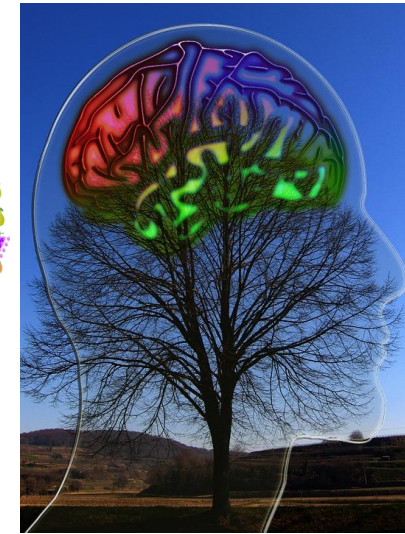
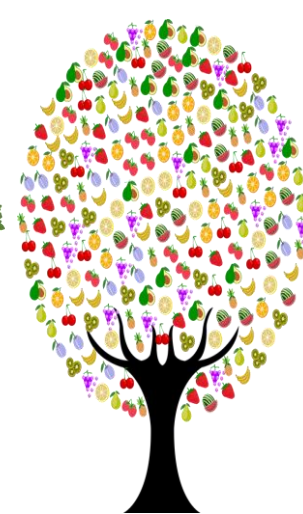
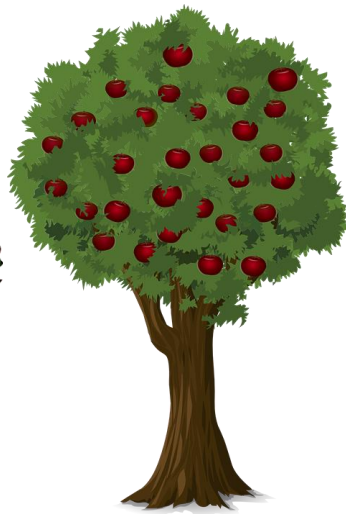
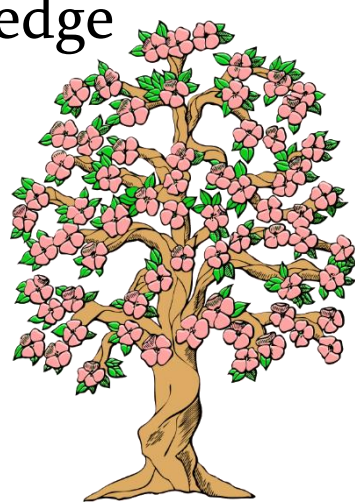
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 - “pleasant”, “good for food”, “tree of life”; God prepared for **all** of man’s earthly needs
 - “...tree of the knowledge of good and evil...”



This tree will soon serve as a means to test man’s love and obedience

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“...out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow...” [v9]

“Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden...” [v10]

◆ God continues to provide water for the plants – without rain!

◆ “...it parted and became four riverheads...” [vv10-14]

- “Pishon”(?) [vv11-12]

- “Gihon”(?) [v13]

- “Hiddekel” (“Tigris”) [v14]

- “Euphrates” [v14]

God gave verifiable geographical evidence; this is not some *myth*, but *historical fact*!



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• “Pishon”(?) [vv11-12]

- “...skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold...” [v11]

“Bdellium and the onyx stone are there” [v12]



“And the gold of that

land is **good**.” [v12] “Bdellium” [v12] “onyx stone” [v12]

The next time we see all of these together again? In the tabernacle [see Ex 25:10-40; 28:5-14; Rv 21:18]

Genesis 2

← The Nature of Man →

Genesis 2:15-17

“...the Lord God...put him in the garden...to *tend* and *keep* it” [v15]

- ♦ “Tend” and “keep” is a much lighter work than “till” [v5] and “plant”; God gave man a prepared paradise that only needs appropriate maintenance

The Garden of Eden is the **absolute standard** for the **rest** that awaits the faithful:
Notice how God uses this idea in other places...

The Promised Land: “...beautiful cities...houses full...hewn-out wells...vineyards...
olive trees...”; they received all of this from God, but *they did no work!* [Dt 6:10-12; cp also Joshua 24:13]

The Heavenly ‘Mansion’: “In My Father’s house...I go to **prepare a place** for you” [John 14:1-6]

The Heavenly Rest: “he who has entered His rest has himself also
ceased from his works...” [Hb 4:10; Rv 14:13]



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Genesis 2:15-17

“...the Lord God...put him in the garden...to *tend* and *keep* it” [v15]

“...God commanded...‘Of every tree...you may *freely* eat’” [v16]

♦ God begins by giving a very generic law – “freely eat!” [cp John 8:32 “free”]

- God tempers His generic law with a very specific one: “...of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil *you shall not eat...*” [v17]

- *Generic laws* may be fulfilled in any way that does not violate the law itself; however, *specific laws* must be obeyed *exactly* as revealed

– as such, specific laws often contain consequences or punishment in the case that they are not obeyed: “for in the day that you eat of it, *you shall surely die.*” [v17]



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Are God’s laws here *hard* to *understand*?

Was God testing Adam’s *intelligence*?

No! They’re quite simple !!!

Again, NO!!



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God’s word is a test of man’s *love* and *obedience*

- As Creator, He creates and maintains order by means of His word
- Disorder in the world is the result of disobedience to God’s orders
- God’s word was not meant to be difficult for man to comprehend
- In obeying or disobeying we reveal whether we love God or not

“God is testing you to know whether you *love* the Lord” [Dt 13:3]

“If you *love* Me, keep My commandments” [John 14:15; 2 John 6]



Genesis 2

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Genesis 2:18-20

“...the Lord God said, ‘It is *not good* that man should be alone’” [v18]

◆ This “not good” is a shocking declaration in the context of a creation about which God has seen “indeed it was very good” [Gn 1:31]

- First: note that this declaration is not the reaction of God concerning some situation that was poorly resolved during creation; we are still in the context of the sixth day (the creation of man - Gn 1:26-28), after which He declared that all was “very good”

- Second: this is not a case of “loneliness”, but of “aloneness”: God, in His eternal wisdom, determines that it is not good for man to be “alone”, and so creates “a helper comparable to him” [v18]

- *not even God is alone*; cp “Us” in Gn 1:26-27 [cp Eph 5:31-32]
- the woman is God’s answer to this need (not another man, etc)
- the woman was made with a purpose: “a helper comparable”



Genesis 2

←———— The Nature of Man —————→

Genesis 2:18 Woman: the “*helper* comparable”

From the moment of her creation...

Woman was made, in God’s wisdom, to fulfill the role of *helper*

Unfortunately, man’s “wisdom” ridicules and despizes woman’s God-given role...

- some despize the woman’s role by treating her as a slave or in some way as inferior
- some despize her role by trying to make it “equal” or “superior” to the man’s role



Neither of these
two approaches
pleases God!!



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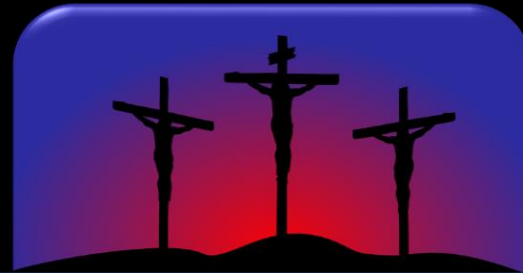
From the moment of her creation...

Woman was made, in God’s wisdom, to fulfill the role of *helper*

Woman was made, in God’s wisdom, as someone *comparable*

She was made perfectly to fit what the man is and what he needs to fulfill his role

- having a different role does not make someone “ridiculous” or “despicable”...



Who of these is despicable or worthless...?

God designed the universe...

Jesus died on a cross...

The Spirit revealed it all...

Genesis 2

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or se

We must revise how we think about “servants” or “helpers” and not think as the “Gentiles” do! A servant is defined by *service*; a helper is defined by *helping*!

Was Jesus’
role as servant
despicable?
He didn’t
think so!

You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great one exercises authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but *whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant*. And *whoever of you desires to be first shall be last of all*. For even *The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve*, and to give His life a ransom for many.” [Mark 10:42-45]

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Genesis 2:18-20

“...the Lord God said, ‘It is *not good* that man should be alone’” [v18]

God brought the animals to see what Adam “would *call* them” [v19]

- ◆ Note that God is not *creating* the animals in response to Adam’s aloneness; they had already been created on the 5th and 6th days [Gn 1:20-25]
 - God bringing the animals before Adam allows him to exercise a part of his God-given role of “dominion” [Gn 1:26-28; note that “naming” is also another “likeness” to God!]
 - God bringing the animals to Adam impresses upon him the fact that *they* cannot fulfill his need: “there was not found a helper comparable to him” [v20]

- *animals* cannot reason and plan together with Adam to the end of fulfilling God’s will in his life...

- armed with this information, Adam is now ready for a helper



Genesis 2

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Genesis 2:21-25

“...the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam...” [v21]

- ♦ God performs the first ‘surgery’: removing one of Adam’s ribs, closing up “the flesh in its place” [v21], and making that rib “into a woman” [v22]

Why would God have made the woman from **a rib**?

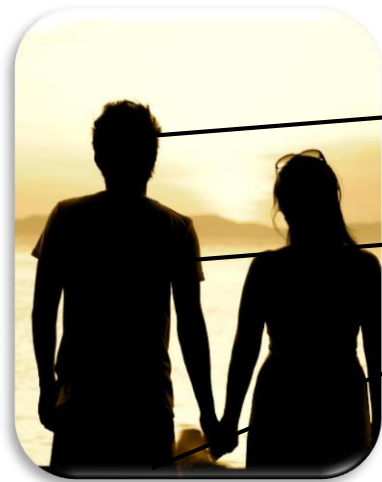
Popular thinking:

Not from the head, so she won’t feel **superior** to the man...

From **a rib**, so that they won’t forget they are equals before God and therefore should walk side by side...

Not from the foot, so the man won’t feel **superior** to her...

Perhaps... however:



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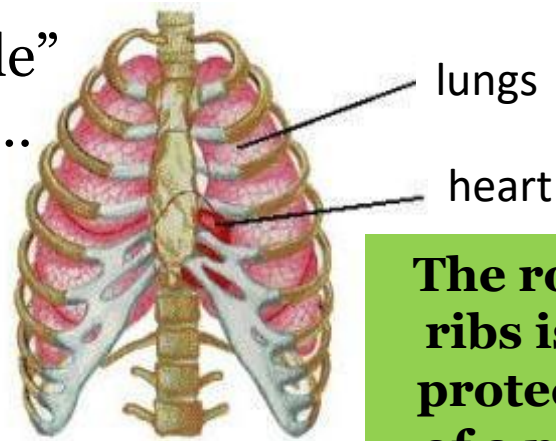
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Why would God have made the woman from **a rib**?

Consider the “role” that **ribs** perform...



The role of ribs is the protection of a man’s vital organs!

In this way, the woman who fulfills her role well protects the man’s *vitality*:

“The heart of her husband safely trusts her...”
[Proverb 31:11]

“Her husband is known in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land.” [Pv 31:23]

“Her husband...praises her: ‘Many daughters have done well, But you excel them all.’”
[Proverb 31:28-29]

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“He brought her to the man. And Adam said...” [vv22-23]

♦ God brings the woman before Adam just as He had done with the animals; this time, however, Adam’s reaction would be very different! [v23]

- Adam perceives that the woman is exactly what was lacking; **she** is what he needed!

- having named all the animals, he can now see her great superiority – she is like him!

So...he gives her a name – HIS OWN NAME! [he is “iysh”; he calls her “ishshah”]



Even today, this practice continues in our culture: when we get married, the wife takes *the name of her husband*!

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“Therefore, a man shall leave his father and mother...” [v24]



- Who said these words?

When first reading, it looks like **Adam** said this, which would be very strange seeing as he had no father or mother...

In the New Testament, when some Pharisees challenge Jesus regarding divorce, He says: “Have you not read that **He who made them at the beginning** ‘made them male and female,’ **and 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’?” [Mat 19:4-5]



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♦ “...and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” [v24]

These words are God’s commentary on marriage

- All marriages from this one forward should follow the same pattern
- God’s design for marriage as seen in this example follows this plan:
 - (1) **One** woman and **one** man (**any other** combination is **illicit**);
 - (2) **Leave** father and mother (a new primary family relationship);
 - (3) Become **one** flesh (they should be inseparable except by death)

The plan established in Gen 2 is cited by God in the whole Bible as the law of marriage [Mal 2:13-16; Eph 5:30-32; 1 Cor 6:16-18; etc]



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♦ “...and be joined to his wife, and *they shall become one flesh*.” [v24]

- “one flesh” describes a perfect union – she **is** just what the man needed!

There are two inherent aspects to this union: (1) **unity of purpose**, which is the real goal of any relationship, and (2) **physical union**, which, in the sinless paradise of Eden was not accompanied by any reason whatsoever for them to sense a shadow of shame. In fact, **shame** at their nudity and **division** are the first visible signs of the effects of sin on their lives in Genesis 3...



Genesis 2

← The Nature of Man →

“and they shall become *one flesh*”

In the perfection of Eden's paradise,
where God had provided for all of man's physical and emotional needs...

God created marriage to illustrate perfectly His intimate desire for us:

These words are God's commentary on marriage:

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, *as to the Lord*... Husbands, love your wives, *just as Christ also loved the church* and gave Himself for her... For no one ever hated *his own flesh*, but nourishes and cherishes it, *just as the Lord does* the church. For we are members of His body, *of His flesh and of His bones*. ‘*For this reason* a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning *Christ and the church*.”

[Ephesians 5:22-32]

