

Creation Story
Version 2
Genesis 2:4-25

I. Basics

- A. A second account of creation - quite different from the first
- B. Called the “J” account due to the reference to God as “Jehovah Elohiym”
- C. The Emphasis in this story is that man is most important, everything else is made for him and on account of him.
- D. His supremacy is also shown by the fact that he names everything.

II. Barrenness - *Gen 2:4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, 5 when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up -- for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; 6 but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground--*

- A. Notice seven days are not mentioned here. Only a day.
- B. There is a barren misty earth only. The first account spoke of a formless void and an abyss

III. Breath of Life - *7 then 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.*

- A. The word for man is Adam and is probably related to the word “adamah” meaning reddish soil.
- B. As far as his body is concerned, man belongs to the earth.
- C. But his spirit is from God. God breathes his own breath, his own spirit into man. This is similar to the “image of God” attestation in the first account and makes man higher than the animals

IV. **Boundaries I. - 8** *And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made 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. 10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; 12 and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.*

- A. Paradise is described as a green, leafy oasis. Two trees are singled out:
 - 1. The tree of life - after sin this tree will be taken away and death will take its place. It will not return until the cross.
 - 2. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil - see below.
- B. Rivers - which symbolize God's life giving grace:
 - 1. Pishon - cannot be identified with any known river today. Neither is the location of Havilah known. Perhaps they are mythical names.
 - 2. Gihon - Again, there is no modern equivalent. The Land of Cush is the area of Egypt today. Could it be the Nile? Most scholars say there's not enough evidence.
 - 3. Tigris - a river today which flows through Iraq
 - 4. Euphrates - a 1700 mile river which flows through modern Syria, Turkey and Iraq.

V. **Boundaries II . - 15** *The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die."*

- A. Notice that work was given to man before the fall. He is to till and keep the garden.
- B. But note the Hebrew word is *shamar*, - meaning to hedge about (as with thorns), i.e. guard; to protect, attend to, etc.--beware, be circumspect, take heed (to self), keep mark, look narrowly, observe, preserve, regard, reserve, save, sure, wait (for), watch (-man). The later presence of the serpent in the garden is thus something of an indictment. Was the serpent there because Adam fail to keep watch and guard the garden? It is difficult to say but suggested here.
- C. The presence also of a forbidden tree also presents a choice and a possible path to evil. Why did God permit this? To allow a greater good: namely that the human person could freely choose to love and obey. Without choice there is no freedom. Without freedom there can be no real love. The yes of love requires the possibility of a no for it to be truly yes.
- D. In setting limits and boundaries God also sets forth the truth that we do not have absolute moral autonomy. There are limits to what we may do and consequences if we fail consistently to heed

VI. **Beasts - 18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." 19 So out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper fit for him.**

- A. God's creation of Adam is not yet perfect. Something is lacking (Eve). Man without woman is incomplete. Woman without man is incomplete. Though God shows him the animals he also shows him that they cannot be true companions for him.
- B. Note the animals too are created out of the ground. But God does not breathe his breath into them as with man. Thus man is essentially different from the animals though sharing some similarities with them.

VII. **Bone of My Bone - 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh; 22 and the rib which the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." 24 Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.**

- A. In forming Eve from a rib two things are said:
 - 1. Eve and Adam are from the same clay and have received the same divine breath of God. They share the one nature we call human nature. They are not separate creations. Rather they are from one origin.
 - 2. They have an equality. She is taken from his side; not from his head as if she were above him or his foot as if she were below him. Rather as from his side she stands beside him as an equal helpmate.
- B. Adam's acclamation attests to the fact that he sees Eve as one with him. They possess a unity. Though two, they are really one. They share a common nature and origin. He sees the mystery of their communion.
- C. He calls her "Woman" according to the text because she was taken out of man. But the etymology in Hebrew is not clear. In English the word woman contains man. Its origin is from the Old English *wifman* from wife + man. Although there is a marital overtone in the whole passage it is not clear that the Hebrew word captures her wifely status per se. The clear emphasis of the word in the text is that she was taken out of man and thus they have a unity. Hence the word man is contained in the the word woman.
- D. Verse 24 sees this act of God as the origin and meaning of marriage. Marriage involves a type of return for a man and woman. Two individuals through a work of God become one flesh. It is a mysterious but real union for them which is powerfully symbolized in the marital act in which their bodies unite
- E. Their nakedness is not embarrassing. Nakedness symbolizes complete trust, openness, communication, nothing is hidden or covered up, there is no fear of misunderstanding, ridicule, exploitation or any such thing. Here too their unity and openness to each other is emphasized.