

Genesis 2-3

Bible Study

“Sometimes called the 2nd account of creation” (Halley’s)...

Genesis 2:4-6

⁴This *is* the [£]history of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens,

⁵before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown.

For the **Lord God** had not caused it to rain on the earth,

and *there was* no man to till the ground;

⁶but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground

“in the day”—idiom for “when”

Lord God (Yahweh Elohim)—Divine title:
Repeated 20 times in chapter 2-3

Expresses God as creator **and** Israel’s covenant partner

“had not caused it to rain” (NSB) “Here is an element of creation that was still in process”

(Expositors) “points to the time when the man and woman would be cast from the garden, to work the ground”

Genesis 2:7

And the Lord God **formed** man *of* the dust of the ground, and **breathed** into his nostrils **the breath of life**; and man became a living being.

“formed” (shaped)=term of a potter who shapes pots

“breathed” (blew)—a force of air into the man...like the force of mouth to mouth resuscitation

The shaping a potter does requires skill and planning

God showed tender care and personal hands-on involvement in creating man

“Breath of life”—the gift of life **given by God**...makes humans different from other creatures

“breath” (Heb. Ruach)— “spirit”
God breathed into man a spirit in man/human spirit—that enables man to make moral choices and to have a relationship with God

Genesis 2:8

The Lord God **planted a garden** eastward in **Eden**, and there He put the man whom **He had formed**

Another element of God's personal care for man

"Eden"= delight...a place of ideal delight and rest

In Genesis "eastward"/ "east" is associated with judgment and separation from God

Eden—a specific place and the garden was on its **eastern side**

Genesis 2:9

And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The **tree of life** was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the **knowledge** of good and evil.

"tree of life"
(Companion) "the tree supporting and continuing the life which had been imparted, hence the 'bread of life'"

"Knowledge" (Companion)= sense or perception
"Obedience proving what was good; disobedience what was evil"

Genesis 2:10-14

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

¹¹The name of the first *is* Pishon; *it is* the one which skirts the whole land of **Havilah**, where *there is* gold.

¹²And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there.

¹³The name of the second river *is* Gihon; *it is* the one which goes around the whole **land of Cush**.

¹⁴The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel;[£] *it is* the one which goes toward the east of **Assyria**. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates.

(NSB) “The names Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates relate to later rivers that were known to the first readers of the text.

But these later rivers likely would only approximate the location of the original ones. The flood obliterated earlier river courses”

Havilah, Cush, Assyria

(AID) “Moses’ reference to these lands are evidently to places so named in post-flood times and serve as geographical points commonly known in his day”

Garden of Eden?



Gihon

Hiddeke
|
(Tigris)

Pishon

Euphrates

Our curiosity: where is the garden of Eden?

But this section inserted not to answer that question necessarily but because of the **symbolism** found here:

Genesis 2:10-12

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

¹¹The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is gold*.

¹²And the **gold** of that land *is* good. **Bdellium and the onyx stone** *are* there.

Psalms 46:4-5

⁴ *“There is a **river** whose streams shall make glad the city of God, The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the Most High.*

⁵ God *is* in the midst of her, she shall not be moved...”

River being symbolic of **God’s presence**

The description of gold, bdellium and onyx in Eden parallel descriptions of the tabernacle...

Both descriptions symbolic of the **presence** of God

Ties in with
verse 15

Genesis 2:15

Then the **Lord God** took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **to tend and keep it**.

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

v. 15 (Heb.)=rest and dedication of something in the **presence** of the Lord

v. 8 (Heb.)= literally 'put'

(Expositors) "Man was 'put' into the garden where he could 'rest'...and was 'put' into the garden where he could have fellowship with God"

v. 15 (last part)
"to tend and keep it" (English)

(Expositors) "a more suitable translation of the Hebrew would be 'to worship and obey'

In the next verse is **the first** (recorded) **command** given to the man he had created:

Genesis 2:16-17

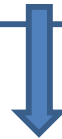
¹⁶And the **Lord God commanded** the man, saying, “Of **every** tree of the garden you may freely eat;

¹⁷but 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 surely die.”

God *commands* because **he only knows** what is **good** for man and what is **not good**

“To enjoy the ‘good’ man must trust God and obey him”
(Expositors)

The remainder of the chapter now turns to a specific of God’s knowledge of the ‘**good**’ for man: the creation of the woman



Genesis 2:18

¹⁸And the **Lord God** said, “*It is not good* that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him.”

The creation had been ‘good’...now the divine observation that it is ‘not good’ for man to be alone

➤ Shows the importance of a companion for man

God had provided for man all of his physical needs in a beautiful environment...now he provides companionship—so that he could experience life in a family

A type of the God-plane family relationship

The naming of the animals ...is going to make man aware of his need for a companion...



Genesis 2:19-20

¹⁹Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought *them* to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that *was* its name.

²⁰So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a **helper** comparable to him.

“**helper**”—is not a demeaning term, it is often used in scripture to describe God

Psalms 33:20

²⁰ Our soul waits for **the Lord**; He *is* our **help** and our shield.

As Adam named the animals it impressed upon him his need for a companion like himself

Genesis 2:21-22

²¹And the **Lord God** caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

“Deep sleep”—a divinely induced sleep

God using the rib of Adam to make the woman emphasized that she was made of the very same essence as man

²²Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man **He made** into a woman, and **He brought her to the man.**

“made”=built (Heb.)—verb used to describe God’s creative activity

“He brought her to the man”

(Word) “The God-created partner is introduced to man by the creator himself”

Genesis 2:23

²³And Adam 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.”

(Word) “In ecstasy man bursts into poetry on meeting his perfect help meet”

Genesis 2:24

²⁴**Therefore** a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.



The establishment of the marriage relationship by God

Genesis 2:25

²⁵And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

(NSB) “Because the man and the woman knew only good, they were not ashamed even though they were both naked”

Chapter 3

(BKC) “The word of the Lord brought life and order;
the word of the serpent brought chaos and death

Genesis 3:1

¹Now the serpent was more **cunning** than any beast of the field which the **Lord God** had made. And he said to the woman, “Has **God** indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’?”

Revelation 12:9

⁹So the great dragon was cast out, that **serpent of old**, called the Devil and Satan, who **deceives** the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

(v. 1) last part

“Did God really say, ‘You shall not eat from every tree in the garden?’”

This is not what God had said—he had only placed one restriction upon them

“cunning”... “deceives”—Adam and Eve did not see any danger

➤ He enticed them to sin

The pagans worshipped the serpent—a symbol of life to them, but it

➤ Caused death

The question from the serpent was meant to distort Eve’s perception of right...

and make her feel like she had been wronged

Genesis 3:2-3

²And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden;

³but of the fruit of the tree which *is* in the midst of the garden, **God** has said, ‘You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

Alterations of Eve:

- She leaves out “**every**”
- She did not use the term: “**Lord God**”—she used only “**God**”
- Eve said only one tree was forbidden...but she added “nor shall you touch it”

(Word) “These alterations to God’s remarks suggest that the woman has already moved slightly away from God toward the serpent’s attitudes....the creator...is being painted as harsh and repressive...not to even touch the tree”

Genesis 3:4-5

⁴Then the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

⁵For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”

First lie

(John 8: 44) “You are of your father the devil...he is a liar and the father of it”

A mixture of lie and deception

The theme of chapter 1-2 is that God provides and knows what is ‘good’ for man—Satan directly challenges this

Forbidden by God

Genesis 3:6

⁶So when the woman saw that the tree *was* good for food, that it *was* pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make *one* wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate.

Assumed God's role of knowing what is good before eating....man now determining what is right and wrong

“pleasant” and “desirable”—from roots meaning “to covet”

Proverbs 14:12

¹² There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.

(NSB) “The issue was one of obedience and disobedience to the word of God. Once she disobeyed God, all the world changedAdam sinned with his eyes wide open, he did not even ask a question”

It appears that Adam chose to join his wife in transgression

Romans 5:12

¹²Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men...”

Genesis 3:7

⁷Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they *were* naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

Their new ‘knowledge’ was that they were naked...and they were not like each other

Not ashamed before...now they are and cover themselves

Genesis 3:8

⁸And they heard the **sound** of the Lord God **walking** in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

“sound=**voice** of the Lord God”—common in the Pentateuch—used along with “to hear and obey”

“walking” —term used of God’s **presence** in the sanctuary

Leviticus 26:12

¹² I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people

v. 8 (last part)

“hid from the presence of the Lord God”—because of shame and guilt

Genesis 3:9

⁹Then the **Lord God** called to Adam and said to him, “Where *are* you?”

(NSB) “God, in his mercy, did not destroy both of them immediately. He even called out to them and interacted with them. (v. 10-12)

God’s mercy reaches even further than we usually believe—or else we all would be destroyed”

(First quote in the O.T)

“**Where are you?**”—God asking them to come out and explain what they had done...begins a series of questions God asks of them

Genesis 3:10

¹⁰So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was **naked**; and I **hid myself.**”

Used often with the phrase: ‘to hear and obey’

Convicts himself with his own words

Genesis 3:11

¹¹And He said, “Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?”

Although God knew what he had done...he asks questions to prod him to confess

Genesis 3:12

¹²Then the man said, “The woman whom **You** gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.”

Shifts the blame to woman...but also implies it is God’s fault as well

Genesis 3:13

¹³And the Lord God said to the woman, “**What is this you have done?**” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”

Shifts the blame to the snake

Genesis 3:14

¹⁴So the **Lord God** said **to the serpent**: “Because you have done this, You *are* **cursed** more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; **On your belly you shall go**, And you shall **eat dust** All the days of your life.

Figure of speech—implying the utmost humiliation

Figurative of utter defeat

No questions to the serpent...no discussion...the sentence immediately pronounced

- Received judgment first-- and the harsher **judgment...from God**
- **“Cursed”**-- used only on the serpent and the ground (v. 17)

(Expositors) “The point is rather that for the rest of his life, as a result of the curse, when the snake crawls on his belly, as snakes do, he will ‘eat dust’...elsewhere meaning total defeat”

First great promise and prophecy...of a redeemer to come



Genesis 3:15

¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between **your seed** and **her Seed**; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.”

(NSB) “This is not just about snakes; it is about the enemy...Satan”

What Satan represents

Her descendents

“**seed**” is also used throughout the Bible as a messianic term...and refers here to the promised one, the messiah Jesus Christ

v.,15 (last part)

“**He** shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel”

The seed (Messiah) would be wounded (temporarily) in the struggle—bruised heel...

He ultimately will be victorious—bruise the head of Satan

Genesis 3:16

¹⁶**To the woman** He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In **pain** you shall bring forth children; Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you.”

(Expositors) “The judgment against the woman....what the woman once was to do as a blessing—be a marriage partner and have children—had become tainted by the curse”

“In those moments of life’s greatest blessing—marriage and children—the woman would sense most clearly the painful consequences of her rebellion from God”

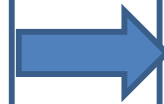
Genesis 3:17

¹⁷Then **to Adam** He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat of it’: “Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In **toil** you shall eat *of* it All the days of your life.

Before

(Ch. 2: 16) “Of every tree of the garden you may **freely** eat”

➤ There was a ready supply



After

“In **toil** you shall eat of it”

➤ Toil/pain to prepare his meals

(v.17 last part) “toil...All the days of your life”



(v. 19) “sweat...till you return to the ground”

Toil described further in verse 18

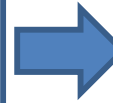


Genesis 3:18

¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field.

Before

(v. 9) ... “And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.”



After

“Both thorns and thistles it (land) shall bring forth for you”

“herb of the field” (plants of the plain)—in contrast to the fruit of the garden

(BKC) “Adam and Eve sinned **by eating**; they would **suffer** in order to eat”

(Expositors) “In drawing a contrast between the condition of the land before and after the fall, the author shows that the present condition of the land is not the way it was intended to be.

Rather the state of the land is the result of man’s rebellion”

The disobedience and fall away from God’s presence affected all creation, including the environment

Genesis 3:19

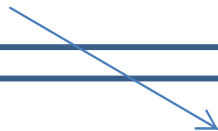
¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return.”



Death verdict

Genesis 3:20

²⁰And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.



Second time Adam named his wife:

1) (2:23)– “woman” –her **origin**, out of man

2) (v. 20): “Eve” —her **destiny**, mother of all living

Genesis 3:21

²¹Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God **made** tunics of skin, and **clothed them**.



God had more work to do regarding man

(Word) “God’s final kindness toward man in the garden”

“tunics” (Word) “The basic garment worn next to the skin, was a long shirt reaching the knees or ankles

(Expositors) “Later in the Pentateuch the Lord instructed the people to make tunics for the priests (clothed them) who were to enter into **the presence of God in the tabernacle**

(Word) “The terminology of the garden of Eden runs closely parallel to the vocabulary associated with worship in the tabernacle”

Genesis 3:22

²²Then the Lord God said, “**Behold**, the man has become **like one of Us**, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” —

“Like one of us” — ‘insofar as man now knows good and evil...in no other regard has man become like God and the angels’ (Word)

Acknowledges the promise of the snake

(v. 22 last part)
... “eat and live forever”— sentence ends

The Hebrew structure of the sentence is very unusual

(Companion) “Aposiopesis= sudden silence, emphasizing the result as being unspeakable”

V.24 “Therefore”

Genesis 3:23

²³**therefore** the Lord God **sent him out** of the garden of Eden **to till the ground from which he was taken.**

Man is sent out of the garden to work the ground that he was made out of

Genesis 3:24

²⁴So He **drove out** the man; and He **placed cherubim** at the **east** of the garden of Eden, and a *flaming sword* which turned every way, **to guard the way to the tree of life.**

“placed”= literally: ‘caused to camp’

“The tree of life stands guarded by the cherubim just as in the Sinai covenant the Torah lies in the ark of the covenant guarded by the cherubim” (Expositors)

(Companion) “So that man should not live forever in his fallen condition, but only in Christ”

I John 5:11

¹¹And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

Summary

The two trees story explains what we see in human civilization throughout history....

The two trees figuratively represent the choice we have—to choose God's way or the wrong way



Deuteronomy 30:19

¹⁹I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, *that* I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live

Unfortunately man has and continues to choose the wrong way

The results of mankind's wrong choice is the effect we see of pain and heartache

The good news is that when Jesus Christ returns he will set the world right knowledge will go from him to all the nations