

## “Party in Paradise” (Genesis 2:4-25)

What is the most beautiful place you’ve ever seen? What makes that place so beautiful? There are some beautiful places in this world, in spite of our pollution and environment. But often a so-called natural disaster, such as an earthquake, tornado, or hurricane, will turn a potential paradise into a disaster area.

Before earthquakes, tornados, hurricanes, and human desecration could ever begin, there was a beautiful place on planet earth, unlike anything our eyes have ever seen. It was indeed a paradise. It was called “a garden” and was located in a place called “Eden.” Genesis 2:4-25 describes this beautiful place, the original home of humanity on planet earth. This is where it all began.<sup>1</sup>

Many people have suggested that Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 contradict each other.<sup>2</sup> But this is not the case. Genesis 1:1-2:3 gives the *chronological* account of what God made on each day, with man being created on the sixth day. Genesis 2:4-25 gives a *descriptive* account, with man being the central theme, and is not meant to be chronological.<sup>3</sup> The two accounts look at a similar series of events from two distinct points of view.<sup>4</sup> The one is concerned with the big picture, the other with a few tantalizing details; the one sees the entire forest, the other a few trees.<sup>5</sup> Another way of explaining it is: Genesis 1 is the wide-angle lens; Genesis 2 is the close-up zoom. So let’s zoom in and study Moses’ account.

In 2:4, Moses writes, **“This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.”** This is the first of ten units in Genesis introduced with **“the account of.”**<sup>6</sup> As we learned in 1:1, the phrase **“the heavens and the earth”** (2:4a) is a figure of speech (merism) that refers to the entire universe. In 2:4b, Moses then reverses the order of this phrase and refers to **“earth and heaven.”** When this happens, we no longer have a merism. The word translated **“earth”** refers to the land and the word **“heaven”** refers to the sky. These are the topics of discussion in 1:2ff. God is taking a close-up of the land, specifically the garden in Eden.

In 1:1f, Moses identified God as *Elohim*, the general title for the Supreme Being. Now, in Genesis 2:4f, he adds the word **“Lord”** (*Yahweh*) to **“God.”**<sup>7</sup> This stresses God’s covenant relationship with His people.<sup>8</sup> This suggests that Moses wanted to reveal the majestic, sovereign Creator is the same personal, loving God who speaks directly to Adam and Eve and seeks to have an intimate relationship with them.<sup>9</sup>

In 2:5-6, **“Now 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. But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.”** Verse 5 shows that the land had to be specially prepared for mankind. The land was unsuitable for the human race because there was no vegetation, no rain, and no cultivation. Verse 6 shows how God prepared the land for men and women. These verses are a flashback to conditions before 1:26. In these two verses, Moses draws a comparison between life before and after the fall.<sup>10</sup> There are no shrubs or wild plants because these would come as a result of Adam and Eve’s disobedience. These are the “thorns and thistles” and “plants of the field” that Adam is told he must work to cultivate in 3:18-19. The land hadn’t experienced rain but it was going to be flooded (6:8f). There was no man to cultivate the ground but that too would come about as a result of the fall (3:23). So the text prepares us for what the results of man’s disobedience will be, even as the garden is being made. This is the setting of the stage. The land is set up and poised for man to enter the scene.

In 2:7, man arrives on the scene. Moses writes, **“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.”** The term **“formed”** (*yasar*) describes the activity of a potter (Isa 45:9; Jer 18:2-4).<sup>11</sup> God is pictured as a potter that shapes and molds man from the dust.<sup>12</sup> This word implies that God deliberately did this with tender loving care and attention to detail.

Using language that humans can understand (anthropomorphic), this verse states that God created us with His hands, not just His words. God Himself handcrafts every person He creates (Ps 139). Man is a work of art! We don't come off of a conveyor belt. We are formed. God is intimately involved in the creation of human life. This is just one of the many reasons you have dignity, value, and worth.

The fact that God forms man out of “**dust**” (*aphar*) reflects man's lowly origin (cf. 3:19).<sup>13</sup> Even though man was created in God's image, he was a creature like other creatures God had created. From a strictly financial standpoint and without God's energizing power, the chemicals in the average human body are worth less than ten dollars.<sup>14</sup> John Calvin wrote, “He must be excessively stupid who does not here learn humility.”<sup>15</sup> Yet, while we are “but dust” (Ps 103:14) we are priceless to God!

Not only is God a potter, He is an animator as well. Verse 7 says that God breathes the breath of life into man.<sup>16</sup> “**Breathed**” is warmly personal, with the face-to-face intimacy of a kiss.<sup>17</sup> The “**breath of life**” (*nesama*) was God's breath that gave Adam life, spiritual understanding (Job 32:8), and a functioning conscience (Prov 20:27).<sup>18</sup> Since Adam's life came from God's breath, man, therefore, is a combination of dust and divinity.<sup>19</sup> To the Lord, and to Him alone, we owe our very life and breath, for in Him we “live and move and have our being” (17:25-26, ESV).

In 2:8-9, “**The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 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.**” In these two verses, God's care is made evident by His provision of a “paradise.” Two trees are specifically mentioned that will come to bear later in our story: “**the tree of life**”<sup>20</sup> and “**the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.**” The Tree of Life is in heaven. When Jesus says to the thief on the cross, “Today, you shall be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43) we can infer that paradise is no longer on earth. This is further confirmed in Revelation 22 where we learn that the Tree of Life will come down from heaven to the new earth (Rev 22:2).

In 2:10-14, Moses spends an unusual amount of time laying out the boundaries of this garden in Eden. “**Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.**” The modern equivalent of the Pishon River is unknown for certain.<sup>21</sup> The Gihon may be the pre-flood Nile since Cush, in the Old Testament, usually describes modern Ethiopia.<sup>22</sup> The Tigris and Euphrates are now in Babylonia. Eden (meaning delight, pleasure, or perhaps place of abundant waters) therefore appears to have lain in the general area of the Promised Land.<sup>23</sup> The garden in Eden seems to have been in the eastern part of Eden. This rather extensive description sets the stage for Adam and Eve's expulsion from the garden in 3:24. It probably also encouraged the Israelites to anticipate the Promised Land.<sup>24</sup> It can hardly be a coincidence that two of these rivers are exactly the ones that God uses to explain to Abraham where the Promised Land will be (15:18).<sup>25</sup>

Think of the parallels. In the same way that God prepares a special place for Adam and Eve, a place they will be driven out of if they are disobedient, so too, He promises first Abraham, and then the whole nation of Israel, a special place that they will be driven out of if they are disobedient. In fact both are sent the same direction, to the east, when they do disobey. And then, where will the Messiah come to? Exactly the same area as the first Adam lived! And where is the New Jerusalem of Revelation 21 located? Just where God placed the first Jerusalem, which was in the same place that He created for Adam and Eve: Eden!<sup>26</sup>

In 2:15, **“Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.”** After God made the beautiful garden, fully stocked with its full-grown vegetation, He placed Adam in it. The Hebrew word translated **“put,”** in 2:15, is not the same one rendered “put” in 2:8. The latter term is the normal one for putting something somewhere. However, the former one connotes rest and safety<sup>27</sup> as well as dedication in God’s presence.<sup>28</sup> God put man in the garden where he could be safe and rest and where he could have fellowship with God (cf. 3:8). He then gave Adam three mandates. The first two were mandates of responsibility and the third one was the mandate of access to garden privileges. The first area of responsibility is indicated by the word **“cultivate”** (*abhad*), which means “to serve.” It means, then, to do whatever is necessary to keep the garden esthetically attractive. The details of this service are not provided but we do know that, before Adam was created, there was no one to do it (2:5). We also know that the nature of the service did not involve the kind of activity that Adam had to do after the fall, when he was kicked out of the garden (3:23). There, he must serve the ground from which he was taken, cursed with the “thorns and thistles” of agricultural disharmony (3:17-19). God placed man in Paradise for the purpose of serving Him. Interestingly, this word is also translated “worship” elsewhere in the Old Testament. This indicates that Adam served and thereby worshipped God by tending the garden.

God ordained work. All kinds of work—paid and unpaid—are necessary in the world for us “to subdue it” according to God’s will (1:28). Even if your daily responsibilities may seem dull and unimportant, or cause you to associate with and support worldly, God-hating people, remember, “the Lord takes pleasure in His people” (Ps 149:4). And He takes pleasure in us not just at church, but at work too.<sup>29</sup> He’s as attentive to us in our work routines as He was to Joseph in his service as Potiphar’s slave, to Jesus in the carpentry shop, and to the apostle Paul when he was making tents.<sup>30</sup> Enlarge your vision of your spiritual life to include your daily work. “Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve” (Col 3:23-24). Present your work to God. You are working for Him.

In 2:16-17, **“The LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but 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.’”** It is interesting that seemingly God tells Adam, alone, that the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil must not be eaten. One can only conjecture as to how effectively God’s command to Adam was communicated to Eve. Could this explain Eve’s inaccurate appraisal in 3:2-3?<sup>31</sup>

It is important to note that there is a positive aspect to this command: **“From any tree of the garden you may eat freely.”** God gave man the enjoyment of all of the luscious trees in the garden. It was an all-you-can-eat buffet smorgasbord. He says, “Go for it! Enjoy My creation!” The Lord says the same thing today. You are free to do anything but sin. God is a fun God; He is a good God. We have freedom in Christ. The prohibition just puts one tree off limits. Unfortunately, this one tree becomes the greatest temptation for mankind. As humans, we seem to naturally desire and gravitate to that which God forbids. We don’t seem to realize that what God forbids is for our good. Yet, God is a good God and provides for our needs where He places us, if we will only trust Him. We must depend upon His provision as sufficient.

It is important to note that **“the tree of the knowledge of good and evil”** is not a sinister tree. All of God’s creation was pronounced “good.” The name **“good and evil”** does not brand the tree as partially evil. As in English when we say, we “search high and low,” two opposites are chosen to include everything in between (cf. Gen 1:1; Ps 139:2). The knowledge of good and evil then involves the whole moral spectrum, just as the Tree of Life is related to living forever.<sup>32</sup> This unique tree grants the ability and power to determine what is good and what is evil. Of course, this is God’s prerogative alone. He has never delegated moral autonomy to any of His creatures.<sup>33</sup>

So the temptation to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was to seek wisdom without reference to the word of God. It was an act of moral autonomy—deciding what is right without reference to God’s revealed will.<sup>34</sup> Adam and Eve desired wisdom, but they sought it outside of the word and will of God. They usurped God’s role in determining what is right and wrong. So here we get to the very heart of original sin. It was to sidestep God’s word in order to become wise. Moral autonomy brings death.<sup>35</sup>

Why did Adam and Eve not die immediately?<sup>36</sup> Although the statement may refer to physical death,<sup>37</sup> primarily in view is spiritual death, which entails a loss of fellowship with God and with one another. When the man and woman eat from the tree, they immediately change their relationship with God and with one another (see 3:7-13). Physical death, an additional judgment, is an indirect blessing, ending life’s pain and opening the prospect for life apart from sin and death.<sup>38</sup>

In 2:18-25, Moses enters the apex of the first two chapters. In 2:18, he records, **“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”** Before we consider this verse, it is important to underline or circle the word **“not”** as in **“It is not good for the man to be alone.”** Interestingly, it is God who determines that it is not good for man to be alone (see Prov 18:22). Everything up until this point was called “good” but now the Lord says, “It is not good.” There is no indication that Adam himself was dissatisfied with his circumstances. He is likely oblivious of his need. After making His evaluation (2:18a), God proposes a solution (2:18b). God will provide a helper for Adam. God already is Adam’s Helper (but a superior Helper). The animals are also Adam’s helpers (but inferior helpers). This helper, then, must be one that will be equal to him. The term **“helper”** (*ezer*) does not mean a servant.<sup>39</sup> Jesus Christ used the same word (the Greek equivalent) to describe the Holy Spirit who would help believers, following the Lord’s ascension (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7). It means one who supports us in our task of doing the will of God.<sup>40</sup> It is not a demeaning term since Scripture often uses it to describe God Himself (e.g., Ps 33:20; 70:5; 115:9).<sup>41</sup>

Husband, your wife is your helper. And let’s face it...we need help. Not just with laundry and cooking but in every arena of life (e.g., investments, purchases, family decisions, etc.). Any husband that doesn’t consult his wife is a foolish man. I run everything by my wife. She is discerning and wise. She is mature. Think about this. When the time came for a strategic decision during His ministry, Jesus made an interesting choice. He gathered 70 workers, like regional representatives, and sent them to various towns to prepare people for His visits (see Luke 10:1). He could have sent each disciple separately and reached more towns. Instead, He chose to send 35 teams of two. An efficiency expert might criticize that decision for duplicating effort and cutting productivity in half, but Jesus knew that some ministries are performed best by two not one. When two people work together, one can protect the other. One can encourage the other. Two can split the work, offset each other’s weaknesses, and draw on each other’s strengths. Companionship makes two more effective, not less, than one.

Have you ever asked the Lord, “Lord, what do You want our lives to accomplish for You?” Almost every organization or company or church has a mission statement or statement of purpose. Why can’t a marriage? Today, if you are married, it would be a great thing for you to talk to your spouse about your mission as a couple. God brought you together as husband and wife to multiply His kingdom impact.

Furthermore, Adam’s wife is to be suitable for him. The Hebrew word for **“suitable”** suggests something that completes a polarity, as the North Pole is “suitable” to the South Pole. One without the other is incomplete.<sup>42</sup> Find a woman that fits and complements you. This not only means a woman that shares your interests, but a woman that is different. If both of you are the same, one of you is unnecessary.

God made us all individuals. Then He made half of us male and the other half female. Then He created marriage. Unless you think this was a cosmic practical joke, He must have had a reason. One explanation is that God wanted to challenge us to change and grow to our fullest potential as human beings.

And there's no better laboratory than marriage to help each other do that.<sup>43</sup> Marriage teaches you loyalty, forbearance, self-restraint, meekness, and a great many other things you wouldn't need if you were single.<sup>44</sup> Incompatibility is one of the purposes of marriage! Socrates said it well, "By all means marry; if you get a good wife, you'll become happy. If you get a bad one, you'll become a philosopher."<sup>45</sup>

In 2:19-20, Moses writes, **"Out 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. The 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."** In 2:19, God invites Adam to study the animals. Adam giving names to the animals means that he is studying their nature. Names in the ancient world were descriptions. It is as if Adam is looking to see whether any animal can be an adequate companion for him.<sup>46</sup> The text does not mean that Adam named every individual animal. He apparently gave names to the different kinds God brought before him. This exercise demonstrated Adam's authority over the animals and the dissimilarity between humans and animals. He became aware of his own need for a companion as he named these creatures.

In 2:21-22, the Lord meets Adam's need: **"So 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. The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man."** It has been said, "God created man and said, 'I can do better than that,' and then created the woman." This brings new meaning to the expression "our better half." More than once, when God initiated a new relationship for someone, He first put that person to sleep (cf. 15:12; 28:11). He evidently did so to assure the recipient that his own works had no part in his receiving it. It was totally a gift of God's grace. What a great reminder that God can accomplish His best work when we are asleep.

God **"fashioned"** (lit. "built") woman from one of man's ribs.<sup>47</sup> I like what Matthew Henry (1662-1714) said, "...the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved."<sup>48</sup> This brings a whole new meaning to the term "prime rib."

How did Adam respond to all this? **"This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.' For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh"** (2:22-23). I like the way the RSV renders Adam's initial response, "At last." In this expression there is a mixture of relief, ecstasy, and delighted surprise. When Adam discovered that God had provided him with a partner like himself, not like one of the other animals, he rejoiced greatly. Adam was now beside himself! (Pardon the pun.) He received his mate as God's good gift to him because he trusted in God's wisdom, goodness, and integrity.

Likewise, it is essential for every husband and wife to thankfully receive the mate God has given us as His best provision for us. To do so we must know and trust God's goodness. Our mate's differences are good things God brings to us that He will use as tools to shape us into the people He wants us to be. Failure to accept one's mate as a good gift from a loving God leads to many problems in marriage and frustrates God's purpose and plan for marriage. It expresses rejection of God and His provision for one's life. It also demonstrates unbelief, disobedience, and displeasure with God's character. Your mate needs your unconditional acceptance.

The first preserved words of human history are not the primeval grunt of a narrow-browed Neanderthal but poetry.<sup>49</sup> When Adam says that the woman is **"bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"** (2:23) he is giving the ancient equivalent of our "in weakness and in strength." One of the meanings of the verb behind the noun **"bone"** is "to be strong." **"Flesh,"** on the other hand, represents weakness in a person.

The man is to leave his father and mother (neither of which Adam has!) and cleave to his wife. The man is responsible for the cleaving. This implies faithfulness, permanence, and loyalty is the responsibility on the part of the man. Elsewhere in the Old Testament these are covenant terms. When Israel forsakes God's covenant she "leaves" Him. And when Israel is obedient to God's covenant she "cleaves" to Him. Already 2:24 is saying that marriage is a covenant simply through the use of covenant terminology.

Leaving and cleaving probably means both psychological and physical separation and union under normal conditions. A newly married couple is wise to establish relative independence from both sets of parents—emotionally, physically, financially, and in other ways. The couple also needs to establish commitment to one another. Cleaving resembles weaving two threads into one new piece of cloth. The word suggests the ideas of passion and permanence. In marriage a man's priorities change. Before, they were primarily to his parents, but now they are primarily to his wife.<sup>50</sup> Husbands, your spiritual success will depend upon your ability to nurture your marriage.

Chapter 2 ends with the following: "**And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed**" (2:25). The climax of creation is this: the man and his wife were both naked. How appropriate! The naked condition of Adam and Eve does not just describe their unclothed, physical appearance. It also refers to the physical and psychological oneness and transparency that existed in their relationship. Physically they were naked; they shared their bodies with each other openly. Psychologically they were not ashamed; they hid nothing from each other. They were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation for evil. Transparency should increase with trust, commitment, and friendship. It involves communicating what we know, think, feel, and are with the person or persons we choose. We should not be transparent with everyone, however, only with people who commit themselves to us. A transparent person is an open and vulnerable person.<sup>51</sup>

Verses 18-25 teach us much about marriage.<sup>52</sup>

1. *God instituted marriage.* All marriages are important: my marriage, your marriage, and the marriages of friends, neighbors, and fellow church members.
2. *God intended marriage to be monogamous* (not monotonous). One woman completed Adam (cf. Matt 19:8).
3. *God intended marriage to be heterosexual.* Marriage is one man and one woman!
4. *Marriage involves a physical union* (cf. Matt 19:4-5). In the context of marriage, sex should be enjoyed to its fullest. Today the world wishes to believe that they have invented sex and that God only seeks to prevent it. But sex, apart from God, is not what it could or should be. It is unfortunate that we don't talk about sex much in the church, but everybody else does. The best reason for the church to talk about it is because the Bible does.
5. *The husband was to be the head of the wife.* God created Adam before Eve, and He created Eve for Adam (cf. 1 Cor 11:8-9; 1 Tim 2:13). God intends the husband to be the head of the home.
6. *A woman can be a complete person without bearing children.* Her basic function in marriage is to help and complement her husband, not to bear children.

If there's one thing that we learn from Genesis 1-2 it is this: God created and prepared the world for our good. God desires and expects us to enjoy all that He has created for us. Today, will you express your gratitude to God for the many good gifts that He has blessed you with? (Jas 1:17)

## Top Ten Pickup Lines Used By Adam<sup>53</sup>

10. "You know you're the only one for me!"
9. "Do you come here often?"
8. "Trust me, this was meant to be!"
7. "Look around, baby. All the other guys around here are animals!"
6. "I already feel like you're a part of me!"
5. "Honey, you were made for me!"
4. "Why don't you come over to my place and we can name some animals?"
3. "You're the girl of my dreams!" (Gen 2:21)
2. "I like a girl who doesn't mind being ribbed!"
1. "You're the apple of my eye!"

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## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> David Hocking, *The Rise and Fall of Civilization* (Portland, OR: Multnomah, 1989), 69.

<sup>2</sup> For example, why is man mentioned being created in 1:27 and then again in 2:7?

<sup>3</sup> Often in descriptive writing, facts are presented without being in sequential order. Since the chronology was already explained in 1:1-2:3, the focus then shifts specifically to the creation of man, giving the details about how he was created. Gen 2:7 is simply an elaboration of 1:27.

<sup>4</sup> Genesis 1 says little about how God created humankind. It simply notes that God created male and female, adding a few remarks about their relationship to the rest of creation. Genesis 1 emphasizes man as one *created with* authority; Genesis 2 emphasizes man as one *under* authority.

<sup>5</sup> Ronald F. Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 34.

<sup>6</sup> See Gen 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 11:27; 25:12, 25:19; 36:1; 37:2. The person mentioned after “the account of” (*toledot*) is not usually the central figure in the section but the person who originated what follows.

<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that this name only occurs one other place in the Pentateuch (Exod 9:30).

<sup>8</sup> Waltke writes, “In Genesis 1 *’elohim* (God) refers to God’s transcendence over the world, while in Genesis 2-3 *yhwh* (LORD) speaks of God’s immanence with his elect. When the narrator combines the two names, he makes a bold assertion that the Creation God is the Lord of Israel’s history. Just as God ordered creation, he orders history. All is under God’s sovereign control, guaranteeing that Israel’s history will end in triumph, not in tragedy.” Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 34.

<sup>9</sup> Bill T. Arnold, *Encountering the Book of Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998), 32.

<sup>10</sup> Sailhamer, *Genesis EBC* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), Electronic ed.

<sup>11</sup> *Yasar* can also describe the work of an artist (cf. Job 10:8-9).

<sup>12</sup> The idea of God creating man from the earth is mentioned elsewhere in the OT (e.g., Job 4:19; 10:8; Pss 90:3; 103:14; 104:29; 146:4).

<sup>13</sup> Later in the book of Genesis, Abraham acknowledges that he is “but dust and ashes” (18:27).

<sup>14</sup> Youngblood, *The Book of Genesis*, 36.

<sup>15</sup> John Calvin, *Genesis*, trans. and ed. John King (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Trust, 1965), 111.

<sup>16</sup> God’s breath may be a synonym for His word (cf. Ps 33:6).

<sup>17</sup> Derek Kidner, *Genesis, Tyndale OT Commentaries* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 1967), 60.

<sup>18</sup> Allen P. Ross, *Creation & Blessing* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002 [1988]), 123.

<sup>19</sup> The phrase “living being” is the same term that is used of animal life in Gen 1:24. In this phrase, we see how humans and animal life are similar, but the breath of life makes humans distinct from all other creatures.

<sup>20</sup> There are only a few references to the Tree of Life in the OT (Prov 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4) and a few in the NT (Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14, 19).

<sup>21</sup> Commentators have suggested that it was the Indus, the Ganges, a river of Arabia, or a river of Mesopotamia. The land of Havilah seems to have been in southwestern Arabia (cf. Gen 25:18).

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Gen 10:6-8; Num 12:1; 2 Sam 18:19-33; 2 Kgs 19:9; 2 Chron 14:9-15; Isa 37:9; Jer 13:23; 38-39.

<sup>23</sup> Sailhamer writes, “Later biblical prophets also made an association between the Garden of Eden and the land promised to the fathers (cf. Ezek 36:35: ‘This land that was laid waste has become like the garden of Eden’; Joel 2:3: ‘Before them the land is like the garden of Eden, behind them, a desert waste’; Isa 51:3: ‘The LORD will surely comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; he will make her deserts like Eden, her wastelands like the garden of the LORD’; Zech 14:8: ‘On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem’; Rev 22:1-2: ‘Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month.’” Sailhamer, *Genesis*.

<sup>24</sup> Another important detail in the description of the garden in Eden in chapter 2 is the close similarity between the appearance and role of the garden and that of the tabernacle in Exodus 25-27. In describing the garden, the author’s primary interest lay in stressing the beauty of the gold and precious stones throughout the lands encompassed by the garden. If the purpose of such descriptions in the later literature is taken as a guide, the point of the description of the garden is to show the glory of God’s presence through the beauty of the physical surroundings.

<sup>25</sup> Sailhamer, *Genesis*.

<sup>26</sup> Sailhamer, *Genesis*.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Gen 19:16; Deut 3:20; 12:10; 25:19.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. Exod 16:33-34; Lev 16:23; Num 17:4; Deut 26:4, 10.

<sup>29</sup> Of Jesus’ 132 public appearances in the New Testament, 122 were in the marketplace. Of 52 parables Jesus told, 45 had a workplace context. Of 40 divine interventions recorded in Acts, 39 were in the marketplace. Jesus spent his

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adult life as a carpenter, until age 30 when he went into a preaching ministry in the workplace. Jesus called 12 workplace individuals, not clergy, to build his church. Work is worship—The Hebrew word *avodah* is the root for the word from which we get the words *work* and *worship*. Work in its different forms is mentioned more than 800 times in the Bible, more than all the words used to express worship, music, praise, and singing combined. 54 percent of Jesus' reported teaching ministry arose out of issues posed by others in the scope of daily life. Preaching Today Citation: Lewis and Lewis, *London Institute of Contemporary Christianity*; submitted by David Bartlett, Rochester, Minnesota.

<sup>30</sup> Work is not a hindrance to spirituality; it is a part of it. Even slaves were instructed by Paul not to fear that their awful condition in any way diminished their spiritual standing with God (see 1 Cor 7:22). Our spirituality depends upon who we are in Christ, not the circumstances of our workplace. Coworkers or job descriptions do not limit God's presence and favor.

<sup>31</sup> Robert Deffinbaugh, *Genesis, Lesson 3: The Meaning of Man: His Duty and Delight (Genesis 1:26-31; 2:4-25)*, [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org).

<sup>32</sup> Albert H. Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 43.

<sup>33</sup> This suggestion is lent credibility by the fact that the phrase "good and evil" is most often used in the OT where some kind of a decision is demanded. Waltke, *Genesis*, 86. See also Walter A. Elwell, ed., *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989), Electronic Ed.

<sup>34</sup> This is confirmed by Ezekiel 28 (the closest parallel to Gen 2-3), which tells how the King of Tyre was expelled from Eden for his pride and for claiming that his heart was "like the heart of a god" (cf. 28:6, 15-17). Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1-15: WBC* (Waco, TX: Word, 1987), 64.

<sup>35</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Genesis: Beginning & Blessing* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004), 55.

<sup>36</sup> Adam lived to be 930 years old (Gen 5:5).

<sup>37</sup> In favor of the physical death view Walton writes, "The phrase 'in the day' in Hebrew is an idiom meaning 'for certain' (cf. Exod 10:28; 1 Kgs 2:37, 42). The NIV accurately reflects this understanding by translating the Hebrews phrase as 'when.' Moses is stating that the penalty was enacted when they were driven out of the garden and prevented access to the tree of life. Without such access they were doomed to die. When you eat of it, you will be sentenced to death and therefore doomed to die. Consequently, death will be a certainty." John H. Walton, *Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 175.

<sup>38</sup> Waltke, *Genesis*, 87-88.

<sup>39</sup> It was a word that Moses obviously liked, for in Exod 18:4 we are told that this was the name he gave to one of his sons.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Deut 33:7; Pss 33:20; 115:9-11; 146:5; Hos 13:9.

<sup>41</sup> The word "helper," used for God 16 of the 19 times it appears in the OT, signifies the woman's essential contribution, not inadequacy.

<sup>42</sup> Elwell, *Evangelical Commentary on the Bible*, Electronic Ed.

<sup>43</sup> Preaching Today Citation: Jay Kesler, *Marriage Partnership*, Vol. 7, no. 3.

<sup>44</sup> Preaching Today Citation: Jimmy Townsend, *Marriage Partnership*, Vol. 5, no. 1.

<sup>45</sup> Preaching Today Citation: Socrates. *Leadership*, Vol. 17, no. 4.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Eaton, *Genesis 1-11* (Kent, England: Sovereign World, 1997), 56.

<sup>47</sup> Everywhere else this word appears in the Old Testament it is translated "side."

<sup>48</sup> Matthew Henry, *Commentary on the Whole Bible* (London: Marshall Brother, n.d.), 7.

<sup>49</sup> Baylis, *From Creation to the Cross*, 42.

<sup>50</sup> Dr. Thomas L. Constable, *Notes on Genesis* (<http://www.soniclight.com/constable/notes/pdf/genesis.pdf>, 2004), 42.

<sup>51</sup> Constable, *Notes on Genesis*, 43.

<sup>52</sup> These have been revised and adapted from Constable, *Notes on Genesis*, 43.

<sup>53</sup> <http://graceland.gentle.org/topten/tp02200.html>