

## **Chaos vs. Order**

### **Adam and Eve in Eden**

#### **Genesis 2:4-25**

### **Introduction**

Chapter 2, verse 4 begins with a statement about the history of the heavens and the earth.

"This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, when the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. Now no shrub had yet appeared on the earth and no plant had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no one to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground. Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being." ([Genesis 2:4-7 NIV](#))

This is a history given directly by God to either Adam or Moses, who recorded the history of God's seven-day creation. Obviously, there were no humans present to witness the creation.

When God first created vegetation on the third day of creation (Genesis 1:11-13), Adam wasn't created yet to care for the earth's vegetation. The canopy in the outer atmosphere, created on the second day of creation (Genesis 1:6-8), provided a rich system of evaporation and condensation that resulted in a heavy dew or ground fog.

When God created man, He made him out of the most basic elements, the dust of the ground. The elements we're made of are nothing spectacular, only how those basic elements are organized. About 99% of the human body is made up of six elements: oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, calcium, and phosphorus. What's the going rate for a body's worth of these elements? Sorry to say, just \$1.

When the Bible uses the word *dust*, it means something of little worth. Dust isn't evil, and it isn't nothing, but it is *next* to nothing. We are really nothing until God breathes the breath of life into us. With this Divine breath, humans became living beings, different from all other life forms. Only humans are living beings made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

The word for breath in Hebrew is *ruach* – the word imitates the very sound of breath. It is the same as the word for *Spirit*; in the Greek (*pneuma*) and the Latin (*spiritus*). God created man by breathing His *breath* and putting His *Spirit* within the humans He created.

### **I. The Two Trees**

Verses 8-9 tell us about two trees God planted in the Garden of Eden. "The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had

formed. 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." (Genesis 2:8-9 NKJV)

Eden was a garden specifically planted by God; it was a place God made as a perfect habitation for Adam (and later, Eve). The details in Chapter 2 about the creation of Adam and Eve tell us that Adam and Eve were created at different times. Adam was created first, and then Eve was created from one of Adam's ribs.

We also learn that God made every tree grow out of the ground and that two especially significant trees are also in the garden. They are called the "Tree of Life" and "the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil." These two trees were among all the other trees God created and put in the Garden of Eden.

The purpose of the Tree of Life was to grant (or to sustain) eternal life (Genesis 3:22). According to Revelation 2:7, the "tree of life" is now in heaven and, following the Tribulation, will be available to the overcomers (Revelation 22:2).

The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was the "temptation" tree. Eating the fruit of this Tree would expose Adam to the knowledge of good *and* evil.

## **II. The Four Rivers**

In verse 10, we learn about the four rivers in the garden. "Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there, it parted and became four riverheads. The name of the first *is* Pishon; it *is* the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold. And the gold of that land *is* good. Bdellium and the onyx stone *are* there. The name of the second river *is* Gihon; it *is* the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river *is* Hiddekel; it *is* the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river *is* the Euphrates." (Genesis 2:10-14 NKJV)

The whole feel of this account gives the sense that it was written by an actual eyewitness of the rivers and their surroundings. This is why some think Adam may have written this himself. These rivers are given specific names known in the modern and ancient world. But, the names of these rivers can't be used to determine the place of the Garden of Eden because the flood dramatically changed the earth's landscape and "wiped out" these rivers.

Of course, we know the modern rivers today called the Tigris and Euphrates because Noah and his sons named some of the rivers in the post-flood world after familiar pre-flood rivers.

## **III. God of the Garden**

In verse 15, God instructs Adam about the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. "Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the

garden you may freely eat; 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 surely die." (Genesis 2:15-17 NKJV)

God put Adam in the most spectacular paradise imaginable. But God put Adam in the garden to do some work, specifically to tend and keep it. Work is good for us and was part of Adam's perfect existence before the fall. Work is not part of the curse! One writer says, "The ideal state of sinless man is not one of indolence without responsibility. Work and duty belong to the perfect state." (Leupold)

God told Adam, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat." The presence of this Tree in the garden is good because for Adam to be a creature of free will, there had to be a choice! God allowed Adam the opportunity to rebel against Him. Without God's command of something forbidden, there could never be a choice. This remains true today. God wants our love and obedience to Him to be the love and obedience of our choice. When you think about it, Adam's had more advantages than we do. He only had one way he could sin; we have many ways to sin. There are many trees of temptation in our lives; Adam only had one.

God originally made this command to Adam, not Eve; God had not yet created woman out of man. God also told Adam, "In the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die." God not only made His command clear to Adam, but He also clearly explained the consequences of disobedience.

#### **IV. God Creates Eve**

In verse 18, God declares He will make a helper comparable to Adam. "The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." (Genesis 2:18 NIV)

For the first time, God saw something that was not good – man's aloneness. God never intended for man to be alone, either in the marital or social sense. Marriage, in particular, has a civilizing influence on a man. Statistically, the wildest, most violent, sociopathic men in history have always been single, never under God's plan to influence men for good.

God's "blueprint" for creating this companion to Adam was to make a helper comparable to Adam. In a marriage relationship, God created a woman as a perfectly suitable complement and helper to the man.

God gave the plan and agenda to Adam, and he and Eve were to work together to fulfill it. I use the phrase "in a marriage relationship" because God has not ordained women to be helpers to all men in authority, only to their husbands in marriage and to Christ in the church.

God gives the man the responsibility and will hold him accountable to be the leader of the home. God gives the woman the responsibility and holds her accountable to help her husband. This does not mean that the man can't help the woman. It

means when God looks down from heaven upon the family, He expects the man to be the leader. A husband can be a good leader or a bad one. He can be faithful or unfaithful to his calling of leadership. However, the best leaders will always assist and help those who are helping them. Too many only see "helping" the way the world does. They see it as a position of inferiority and subservience. God considers positions of service as the most important. (Matthew 20:25-28).

Not only was the woman to be a helper but she was also made comparable to the man. A woman can't be regarded as a mere tool or worker but as an equal partner in God's grace and an equal human being.

In verse 19, Adam examines and names the animals. "Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. 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. So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found." ([Genesis 2:19-20 NIV](#))

Adam could intelligently name all the animals, which shows he was a brilliant man. Adam's intellect had not yet suffered from the fall. He was probably the most brilliant man who ever lived. Adam was the first and greatest of all biologists and botanists. Adam did not name any other animal after himself, calling any other animal "man" or "human." Adam understood that he was essentially different from all the animals, and they were not made in the image of God. It was apparent to Adam that the animals came in pairs, and he had no mate. Since God deliberately had Adam name the animals after seeing his need for a partner (Genesis 2:18), God used this to prepare Adam to receive the gift of a woman.

In verse 21, God makes the first woman from Adam's side. "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 then 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." ([Genesis 2:21-22 NIV](#))

God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam and performed the first surgery recorded in history. God even used a proper anesthetic on Adam. God uses Adam's own rib to create Eve as a forever reminder of their essential oneness. Adam would see many ways that He and Eve were different, but he must never forget that they are essentially one and are made of the same substance making them more alike than different.

We don't know what God took from Adam's side to make Eve, and it doesn't matter. Modern research in genetic replication shows every cell in our body contains the body's entire genetic blueprint. God took some of Adam's cells and changed their genetic blueprint in the creation of Eve. The story that women have one more rib than men because of the way Eve was created is a myth.

There is a beautiful Jewish tradition that says, "God made woman, not out of man's foot to be under him, nor out of his head to be over him, but "She was taken from under his arm that he might protect her and from next to his heart that he might love her."

There are not two beginnings to the human race, one in Adam and one in Eve. There was one beginning of the human race in Adam. God brought Eve to Adam and created Eve out of Adam. He was first – the source and the head. Eve was created to be a helper perfectly suited to him.

## **V. Adam Celebrates Eve**

Finally, in verse 23, we see Adam's brilliant understanding of who Eve is and her connection to him. "The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man."

(Genesis 2:23 NIV)

Adam recognized that Eve was like him (bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh) and not like him (taken out of man). They were one, but they were not the same. Ephesians 5:28 says, "In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church." (Ephesians 5:28-29 NIV)

No one walks into a room and looks for the most uncomfortable seat. Our natural concern for ourselves causes us to take care of ourselves. In a healthy marriage, the husband realizes his essential union with his wife and that he cannot bless her without blessing himself, and he cannot mistreat or neglect her without mistreating or neglecting himself.

## **Conclusion**

Verse 24 describes God's intentions for the marriage of Adam and Eve. "That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh. Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame." (Genesis 2:24-25 NIV)

This passage forms the Bible's foundation for understanding marriage and family. Both Jesus (Matthew 19: 5) and Paul (Ephesians 5:31) quoted it about marriage. Many want to believe that the monogamous, two-parent family was invented in the 1950s by American television icons, but Adam and Eve are the original family. They are God's ideal family. A godly marriage rejects polygamy, keeping a mistress, and committing adultery. A godly marriage isn't homosexual cohabitation or same-sex marriage. God does not condone promiscuity, living together outside the marriage bond, or serial marriages. God's ideal for the family is one male and one female living together as one, and even when we don't live up to it, it is still important to see it as God's ideal.