

Sent: Wednesday, September 26, 2018 9:10 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Genesis 2:4-25

Genesis 2:4-25 fills in more details of the creation of Adam and Eve, which were summed up in last week's lesson in Genesis 1:26-31--the climatic event in the story of creation! Unlike what some people suggest, it is not a second account--a somewhat conflicting account--of what occurred on the sixth day of creation. The themes it introduces are probably included to prepare the reader (and that would be us!) for the "the Fall" in Chapter 3 (and I think you'll see that as we highlight some things in last nite's lesson)!

Interestingly, vs. 5-6 are talking about what was not present on the morning of the sixth day! (not taking a different tack on days two and three) The Hebrew word for "shrubs" is referring to "thorns and thistles" and the word for "plants" refers to grains like barley, oats, and wheat, that require rain from the sky and need to be cultivated and tilled by someone in order to grow! But God "had not yet sent the rain"! All these would, however, be featured after the Fall (and help prepare us for Genesis 3)!

What was present on the morning of the sixth day was a beautiful array of plants and vegetation and "every tree that is pleasing to the eyes and good for food"--with water, not from rain but, springing up from the ground to water the whole earth! It was a "paradise" unlike anything the fallen world has seen since!

It was into this environment of "rich indescribable perfections in bounty and beauty" (so said John MacArthur) that the Lord God "formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life"! And "man became a living being"! (Gen. 2:7)

Out of the dust of the ground--which has the same basic chemical elements of nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, and calcium, and "atoms" that compose our bodies and everything else that exists! (Looking ahead to Genesis 3:17-19, we see--after the Fall--that God said that man would "return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you were dust, and to dust you shall return!" Isn't it great to know that the same God who created us from dust is just as able--and has promised--to raise us from the dead and give us resurrected bodies to live forever in "Paradise" with God! Just as it was meant from the beginning!)

The word "formed" in vs. 7 depicts the work of an artist! And we think of the Biblical references to the "potter and the clay" But, as MacArthur notes, a man's value is "not in the physical components that form his body but in the quality of life which forms his soul"! Job 33:4 says: "The Spirit of God has made me, the breath of the Almighty gives me life!" And Job 32:8 adds: "But it is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding!"

The thing that sets man apart from the rest of God's creation is that he was created in the image of God"! (Gen. 1:27) And made to have a "relationship" with God! The kind of relationship experienced in the "Godhead"--and expressed in the very words of God in His plan to create man! (God said in Genesis 1:26: "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness!")

And so the real story of creation! Man didn't evolve from a pile of scum over billions of years--by chance! There was no mutating! No survival of the fittest! No transitional man! And man certainly did not evolve from a monkey! God created man intentionally, for a purpose! In the image of Himself! He was given self-consciousness, personality, rationality, intelligence, and creativity, among other things! What a climactic moment in the creation story!

Psalm 139:13-14 says: "I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made! Wonderful are Your works, and my soul knows it very well!"

But there's more! Verse 8 says God "planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there placed the man whom He had formed!" A magnificent garden paradise--a place for man to live in a way he was meant to live and delight in, where he could have a close and personal relationship with the Creator God!

But--"in the midst of the garden," two trees! The "tree of life" and "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil"! And God's command (the first one given in the Bible) not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil! Basically a "prohibition" against one deciding on his own what is best for him without a God-given frame of reference! (This is one of those scene-setting themes that will unfold in next week's lesson on Gen. 3)

Well, there's one more important thing in our lesson--and that concerns the creation of Eve! (vv. 18-25)!

The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone! I will make him a helper suitable for him!" And you know the rest of the story!

Verse 21-22 says God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man...then took a rib (could also be translated "sides, including surrounding flesh") ...and fashioned the woman! And brought her to Adam! Wow! Imagine! And when he was able to regain his emotions (that's not in the Bible!), he pronounced--poetically--that: "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh...She shall be called woman!"

Matthew Henry, in his commentary, wrote this many years ago: "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, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near to his heart to be beloved!"

Our lesson ends with a picture of "the man and his wife both naked and not ashamed"! Coming together in the purest and most blessed and wondrous relationship that God has ever given! They weren't ashamed because they didn't know evil, were totally innocent, and didn't realize that sexual desire could be perverted and twisted and used for all kinds of evil purposes! (We know that after the Fall, that Satan and his forces would go after the marital relationship with a vengeance! Polygamy and adultery, and homosexuality, and prostitution, and provision for divorce, even within the Nation of Israel--all this coming beginning with Genesis 3 and the Fall, and certainly in our day!)

Well, to end on a positive note, IBC's publication of "Roles of Men and Women" states: "We believe that God created both man and woman in His image with equal value yet with distinct roles...His design is for them to complement and support each other in harmony, fulfilling His will for human companionship, reproduction, social organization, and joy!"

Jesus, in Matthew 19:4-6, in answer to a question from the Pharisees about whether it was "lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason any reason," said: "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, "For this reason a man shall leave His father and his mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh"? So they are no longer two but one flesh! What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate!"

Well now, hopefully, we're better prepared to take on Genesis 3! The plot thickens!

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