

Lesson 15**The First Man**

Genesis 2:5-25

I. MAN'S ENVIRONMENT (2:5-5)

A. Vs. 5: It is obvious that different conditions prevailed on earth in those early days than prevail now. There was no rain; yet there was lush vegetation. Man was created to till the ground.

B. Vs. 6: There was no rain upon the earth, but a mist watered the ground (a water canopy). This condition probably remained until the days of the Flood when it rained for the first time on the earth.

II. MAN'S CREATION (2:7): God created Adam's body first from the dust of the ground and it is not stated as to how He did it. It is interesting to note that the same elements that are found in the dust of the ground are also found in the human body. The Bible also tells us that man returns to the dust. Man is more than body. Man is also a soul and spirit. It says that God created the immaterial part of man and he became a living soul. Even animals have souls but this verse also states that God "breathed into his nostrils the spirit of life. Man also received a spirit from God, which distinguishes him from the animal world, for it is the spirit in man that gives him his religious nature and the ability to communicate with God (Rom. 6:16). NOTE. Man is no animal. He is a special creation of God designed for the purpose of glorifying God. NOTE. Because of sin, man's spirit became marred. Now man's spirit is dead to God. God intended man's spirit to communicate with Him. The natural man will always be restless, unsatisfied and have an unending search for answers until he gets re-created through Christ.

III. MAN'S ORIGINAL HOME (2:8-14)

A. Vs. 8: God created a garden (sheltered, protected spot) in the area of Eden (delight). The name of the garden is not given to us. The name of it was not Eden; it was a garden placed in the land of Eden. Some have suggested that this garden was in (1) the Persian Gulf; (2) Armenia; or (3) Babylonia. We just cannot be sure.

B. Vs. 9: There was in the garden two trees: the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The literalness of this account has been questioned but it should not be difficult to understand how partaking of fruit could affect mankind. In the modern drug culture, we now know that there are drugs and chemical agents, such as are present in fruits and other plants, that can have an effect upon man. Perhaps these trees were terribly potent for immortality and for good and evil.

C. Vs. 10-14: While no one can be absolutely certain it appears that the garden of Eden was probably somewhere in Armenia. Two of the rivers can still be identified. The Hiddekel River is the Tigris, and the Euphrates still bears that name. The other two rivers are perhaps identical with certain streams, which still flow, one into the Black Sea and the other into the Caspian Sea; both arise out of the mountain of Ararat in Armenia, where the ark rested after the Flood. This account describes something that existed before the Flood changed the geography of the earth. NOTE. Greek mythology, in the story of Jason and the Golden Fleece, has the setting in the same area. Perhaps this was an area where there was much gold.

IV. MAN'S WORK (2:15): From the very beginning man was intended to work and work is one of the fundamental principles of man's existence. Man was created to dress and keep the garden to the glory of God. A man who does not work at something soon dies. NOTE. Perhaps the task of man in that garden was to learn there the secrets that would enable him to turn the rest of the earth into a garden. But because man failed in the garden, he was unable to discover those secrets and, instead of turning the world into a garden, he is turning it into a garbage dump.

V. MAN'S RESPONSIBILITY (2:16-17)

A. Vs. 16: God gave man much freedom within the garden and he could eat of every tree except one.

B. Vs. 17: Adam was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil or he would die (spiritually and one day physically). God placed this prohibition in the garden to remind Adam that he was a creature and had a responsibility to a Supreme Being. Man's life was to be limited by obedience, God's law being the standard of his life. The future of the human race centered upon Adam's choice. NOTE. The consequences of eating of this tree can be seen in Genesis 3:5 when Satan said to Eve, "and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Satan told a truth but perverted it for when man ate of the tree he did become like God in one sense -- he now knew good from evil. God cannot experience evil but knows of evil as it relates to His perfect holiness. He relates evil to himself. God is the only one that can properly do this. God is the only Being in all the universe that has the right to relate all things to Himself. When a creature tries this he gets into trouble, for man, because of sin, thinks he is God and begins to relate all things to himself. He becomes eccentric and thinks the world revolves around him. Now the good that he knows is perverted and the evil he practices is rationalized. The knowledge of good and evil made man think he was the center of the universe; he became like God. But it was really all a lie. Man is not the center of the universe, and he cannot be. God is the center and only then man is rightly related to God can he understand that God is at the center of the universe, NOTE. The problem with our unbalanced society and world today is that we have an earth filled with 6 billion eccentrics all doing "their own thing." NOTE. But the gospel teaches that Christ redeems man through faith, and once again, a balanced life is maintained and everything once again relates to God. God now becomes the center of things, even though it may take much time for the Christian to enter into this experientially.

VI. MAN'S MATE (2:18-25)

A. Vs. 18

1. In all of God's previous creation, He said it was good, but now He sees that Adam is in need of human fellowship and says, "it is not good." NOTE. God was satisfied with Adam but it was Adam who was incomplete because man is a social being.

2. Adam was lonely and God brought him a companion to fill that void in his life. NOTE. Loneliness is a perfectly natural human experience. Loneliness is shattering to happiness and is the single greatest factor in suicide. POINT: Loneliness is really an attitude for it is possible to have mate and still be lonely, for real satisfaction comes through knowing God as Adam found out. Yet, woman was made for man's companionship.

3. Woman was also to be a helper for man. She was to be someone to share not only his life as a companion but his work and responsibilities as well! Much of marriage is sharing and communicating.

4. Woman is also a complement to man for the words "meet for man" literally means "suited for him," speaking of the fact that woman was to be man's counterpart. NOTE. It is very humbling for a man to realize that he is not complete without a woman. Every man needs a woman, unless he has the God-given gift of celibacy.

B. Vs. 19-20: This section about Adam naming all the animals seems to be out of context, for what does this have to do with his helpmate? God gave Adam the project of naming the animals to show him that his wife was to be different than the animals. Adam could not have given names to the animals without knowing the character of each, because a name always reflects character. There are three things in naming the animals that Adam learned about his wife:

1. Woman is not a slave. God taught Adam that woman was not to be a beast of burden as she so often has been in the human race. Some societies treat animals better than women. NOTE. When a woman feels she is just a “thing,” a slave, she will rebel and not be good wife.

2. Woman is not just to reproduce children Animals basic reason for existence is to bear children, not so a woman. A woman is to be loved and cared for.

3. Woman is not to be used. Man has to learn that a woman is not a “thing” outside of him to be used as he sees fit and then disposed of, as man uses animals.

C. Vs. 21-22: God made woman from part of a man, teaching man that if he can love himself he can love a woman, for woman is part of him. Perhaps God took a rib to show woman’s equality with man; He did not take a foot to show inferiority or the head to show superiority.

D. Vs. 23

1. By being “bone of bone and flesh of flesh” shows that woman is one being with the man. NOTE. The man who hurts his wife is hurting himself.

2. “She shall be called woman because she was taken out of man,” seems to speak of the headship of man over woman, for woman was made for man. NOTE. It is the man who is ultimately responsible before God for the nature and character of the home. It is the man who must exercise leadership in

determining the direction in which the home should go, and must, therefore, be accountable to God for that leadership. The woman’s responsibility is to acknowledge this leadership.

E. Vs. 24: This verse shows the permanence of marriage. It is a parenthetical thought put in by the author to explain permanence of the marriage union. NOTE. The man must leave his father and mother and establish the basic union of life (husband and wife), setting up his own home. It is assumed that the woman will follow the man. The act of becoming one flesh refers to the sex act, which is the right and privilege of those who are married. By application, this may refer to oneness of soul, purpose and being.

F. Vs. 25: The statement that they “were both naked, and were not ashamed” shows the beauty and holiness of sex when there was no sin. Sex is God-ordained and only man perverts it. This may also refer to openness between man and wife with nothing to hide. It is failure to achieve this kind of openness that lies behind so many breakdowns in marriage today. It is a failure in communication.