

²⁴ And God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds—livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds.” And it was so. ²⁵ And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the livestock according to their kinds, and everything that creeps on the ground according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make man¹ in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the heavens and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food.” And it was so. ³¹ And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

¹ The Hebrew word for *man* (*adam*) is the generic term for mankind and becomes the proper name *Adam*. ² Or *open country*. ³ Or *earth*; also verse 6. ⁴ Or *spring*.

1:24–25 livestock and creeping things and beasts of the earth. Three very general terms for land creatures.

1:26–27 Let us make. Whoever God is addressing here shares in this act of creation. In context, the Spirit of God is participating (see v. 1–2). Since God alone creates, many Christians believe God speaks to himself here. If so, this would begin the Bible’s revelation of the Trinity (see 2 Cor. 13:14; note on John 1:1). See Col. 1:15–16. **man.** The Hebrew word for “man” (*adam*) is often a generic term for both males and females (i.e., mankind). Sometimes it refers to man in distinction from woman (e.g., Gen. 2:22, 23; 3:8). It can also serve as the proper name “Adam” (see 2:20; 3:17; 4:1; 5:1). **in our image . . . in the image of God.** Of all that God created, only humans are described this way. Humans resemble God in their ability to think, plan, communicate, understand right and wrong, make things, and form relationships with God and one another. Men and women represent God as they exercise stewardship in creation (see 1:26 and note on 1:28).

1:28 Be fruitful and multiply. Compare v. 22. **subdue.** Indicates it will take work and understanding for humanity to live well on earth. This verb in no way allows for harsh treatment of creation. **have dominion.** As God’s stewards, humanity must rule according to God’s wise instructions. Humans may not abuse the earth or its creatures, since God does not.

1:31 behold, it was very good. Creation retains its goodness through God’s provision to this day (see 8:20–9:17; Psalm 104; 1 Tim. 4:4).

2:2 God . . . rested. Not because he was weary, but simply because he had finished his work.

2:3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy. He “set it apart” (holy) “for the good of” (blessed) people and creation. His resting sets an example for his people (see Ex. 20:8–11).

2:4 These are the generations of. This is the first of 11 times this phrase occurs in Genesis (5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:12; 25:19; 36:1; 36:9;

The Seventh Day, God Rests

2 Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. ² And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. ³ So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

The Creation of Man and Woman

⁴ These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

⁵ When no bush of the field² was yet in the land³ and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶ and a mist⁴ was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground—⁷ then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. ⁸ And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. ⁹ And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that

37:2). The phrase can either end or begin a section or subsection of the book. On genealogies, see Introduction. **LORD.** This verse introduces God’s personal name, “Yahweh.” Most English Bible versions render this name as “LORD,” using small capital letters. This practice comes from the Jewish tradition of showing reverence for God’s name by substituting “LORD” for “Yahweh” when reading the Bible aloud. See notes on Ex. 3:14; 3:15.

2:5–6:7 Adam and Eve and Their Descendants

2:5 bush . . . plant. General terms covering a wide variety of plants. Compare notes on 1:9–13; 1:20–21; 1:24–25.

2:6 mist. May refer to an overflowing underground freshwater stream like those that source the Nile River.

2:7 the LORD God. See note on v. 4. **formed the man.** Like a potter fashioning clay into a particular shape, **of dust from the ground.** The Hebrew words *adam* for “man” and *adamah* for “the ground” reflect the close relationship between humanity and the earth. **living creature.** The same Hebrew term occurs in 1:20, 24 for sea and land creatures (see 1 Cor. 15:45).

2:8–9 God planted . . . put. God prepares a home for the first people that they receive as a gift. **garden.** Flourishing place. This Hebrew word usually applies to parks and orchards. **Eden.** The name suggests a place with plenty of water and lush plants. **in the east.** Toward the rising sun; a very general statement. **every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food.** Signifies the abundance God prepared for the garden’s inhabitants. **The tree of life.** Source of long life. See note on 3:22–24; compare Prov. 3:16–18. **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** The Hebrew word translated “knowledge” includes experiencing the effects and having awareness of the implications of an action. See note on Gen. 2:16–17.

2:10–14 river. Otherwise unidentified. **four rivers.** Implies that Eden occupied a central location in the ancient world. However, Eden’s location remains a mystery. **Tigris . . . Euphrates.** Two rivers that surround

flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵ The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat¹ of it you shall surely die.”

¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for² him.” ¹⁹ Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed³ every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to

¹ Or *when you eat*. ² Or *corresponding to*; also verse 20. ³ Or *And out of the ground the LORD God formed*. ⁴ Or *the man*. ⁵ Hebrew *built*. ⁶ The Hebrew words for *woman* (*ishshah*) and *man* (*ish*) sound alike. ⁷ In Hebrew *you* is plural in verses 1–5.

Mesopotamia. See map below. The rivers **Pishon** and **Gihon** and the regions of **Havilah** and **Cush** have not been satisfactorily identified. The reference to **gold** and **onyx** indicates the land’s rich resources.

2:15 put. See note on vv. 8–9. **to work it.** See note on 1:28. **Work is a gift.** It did not come as a result of sin. **keep it.** According to God’s directions (see 1:26–31; 2:16–17). The Hebrew word here often describes obeying God and his commands (see 17:9–10; Ex. 31:16; Lev. 18:5).

2:16–17 commanded the man. Gave him the standards for continued life in the garden. God expects Adam to trust him and obey his word based on all he has done for him. The word “covenant” does not appear here. However, a relationship built on trust is the basis on which God makes covenants later (see 8:20–9:17; 17:1–14; Ex. 20:1–2). **tree of the knowledge of good and evil.** Compare note on Gen. 2:8–9. If Adam and Eve disobey God and eat the fruit of this tree, they will have gained *knowledge of evil by committing evil. in the day that you eat of it.* Indicates that eating the fruit begins a process that cannot be reversed. **you shall surely die.** An emphatic statement meant to stress the certainty, not the type (i.e., physical vs. spiritual), of death.

2:18 I will make him can also be translated “I will make *for* him,” which explains Paul’s statement in 1 Cor. 11:9. **helper.** One to work alongside him (see Gen. 2:15). **fit for him.** See ESV footnote. Appropriate for him and the responsibilities God has given him (see 1:26–31).

2:20 The man gave names. This demonstrates his authority over and responsibility for the other creatures (see 1:26–31). **Adam.** See notes on 1:26–27; 5:1–2.

2:23–24 This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. Expresses complete unity (compare 29:14). **Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother.** Marriage creates the closest of all human relationships. Heterosexual monogamy is the divine pattern for marriage that God established at creation. Marriage creates responsibilities that are more important than one’s duty to one’s parents. In the ancient world, sons lived near their parents and inherited their father’s land. But they “left” their parents in the sense of putting their wife’s welfare before that of their parents. **hold fast to his wife.** The term is used elsewhere for practicing covenant faithfulness (e.g., Deut. 10:20). Other texts call marriage a “covenant” (e.g., Prov. 2:17; Mal. 2:14). **they shall become one flesh.** A union of man and woman. This oneness is consummated sexually. Jesus appeals to this verse and to Gen. 1:27 when teaching about marriage in Matt. 19:4–5. Paul bases his teaching on marriage in Eph. 5:21–32 on this text.

2:25 naked and . . . not ashamed. Complete unity of flesh and purpose.

every beast of the field. But for Adam⁴ there was not found a helper fit for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. ²² And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made⁵ into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.”⁶

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

The Fall

3 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You⁷ shall not eat of any tree in the garden?’”

3:1 the serpent. Perhaps a symbolic name for the first supernatural creature the Bible describes. The cherubim in v. 24 will be the second. The Hebrew word *Satan* (Adversary) became the most-used name for this character in the Bible. See Rev. 12:9; 20:2. The name describes his character, as “the adversary” describes his role in Job 1–2; Zech. 3:1. Ancient cultures often portrayed serpents as crafty, elusive, and poisonous. Genesis 3 does not reveal the serpent’s origins, except to say he is a creature, not a deity. It does not reveal when he became a rebel against God, but 1:31 indicates that evil has not always existed. **more crafty than any.** Puts the serpent in a separate category than other creatures. Compare Num. 12:1–9, where a similar phrase occurs to separate Moses from his siblings. The Hebrew word usually translated “other” does not occur in Gen. 3:1. **beast of the field.** General term for the creatures God made. Compare 2:5 and note. **Did God actually say?** Invites doubt, not obedience.

