

Made in His Image
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Genesis Chapter 2

Opening: **Think about a time as a young person when your parents gave you an important job or responsibility. Any stories to share? What did it feel like?**

The big idea: God created every person with a purpose. We're not here to "coast." We're here to fulfill that purpose. That only comes with obedience to His will for our lives. Disobedience brings disaster!

As we continue our study in Genesis, chapter two focuses on day six giving more detail about the creation of human beings. It's our first glimpse at the intimate relationship between God and mankind...a relationship that would soon be tested.

Genesis 2:4–9 (ESV)

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 field was yet in the land 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 mist 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.

- “These are the generations...” That phrase appears several times in Genesis. Each time it signified a new chapter in the story of God and mankind.

- Chapter one last week took us all the way to day seven. In chapter two we rewind to day six. It's almost like Moses rewound the video and put it in slow motion so we could see this important part.
- First, let's focus on the Creator. In Bible study we should notice patterns of repetition. Just in verses five through nine how many times do we see the words: "the Lord God?" Notice the combination of Lord and God.
- The primary meaning of the name Lord (Jehovah) is "the self-existent One." Literally (as in Ex. 3:14), "He that is who He is, therefore the eternal I AM." But *Havah*, from which Jehovah, or *Yahwe*, is formed, signifies also "to become," that is, to become known, thus pointing to a continuous and increasing self-revelation. Combining these meanings of *Havah*, we arrive at the meaning of the name Jehovah. He is "the self-existent One who reveals Himself."¹
- We're told: The repeated emphasis on **the Lord God** is significant (2:4–5, 7–9, 15–16, 18–19, 21–22). The sovereign Creator ("God") of chapter 1 is also the covenant-making Yahweh (**Lord**). Thus Israel would know that her **Lord** had created everything, and that *He* had formed mankind by special design.²
- The point for you and me is that the eternal Creator of EVERYTHING wants to reveal Himself to you and me. What a thought!
- Verses five and six tell us no vegetation is growing yet. **How does verse seven give us a possible clue as to why nothing is growing yet?**
- Verse fifteen says God put man in the garden to work it and keep it. We can speculate God didn't create the vegetation until he created the farmer.
- Verse seven: God "formed man" from the "dust of the ground."
- The verb "formed" (*yatsar*) describes the artistic genius of a potter. Man's body is of divine origin.³ God carefully crafted you and me! As Psalm 139:14 says: "...fearfully and wonderfully made." **How does it make you feel that God crafted our bodies like an artist?**
- One of the marks of a great artist is they can work in any medium. They can create beauty from common substances... like dirt.

- Here's something interesting. The Hebrew word for "man" there is **adam** [meaning] *man, mankind*.⁴ The word in verse seven for "ground" is **adamah**. If you ever wondered about our connection to the dust, the name for man and the proper name for Adam says it all: we are straight from the DUST!
- But not just dust. Verse seven also says God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature." Can you think of a more intimate act than breathing life into man?
- This wasn't just oxygen! **What did the breath of life do for man?**
- The body of man was animated by the breath of God (2:7). The phrase "breath of life" (*nishmah chayyim*) is never used of animals. This breath of God in man is that which Christian theology designates as soul or spirit.⁵
- Another commentator: God's breathing **the breath of life** into man transformed his form into **a living being** (lit., "a living soul"). This made man a spiritual being, with a capacity for serving and fellowshiping with God.⁶
- **Reflect on how we're only dust, yet we have the "breath of life" directly from God. How does that contrast speak to you?**
- This picture of "in-breathing" doesn't end there. **Can you think of another significant way God "breathes life" into people?**
- Since the Fall, regeneration by the "inbreathing" of the Holy Spirit is essential in order for people to enjoy fellowship with God.⁷
- The breath of life gives mankind the opportunity to relate to God. However, only by receiving the "breath" of the Holy Spirit when we accept Christ as Savior and Lord can we live forever with our Creator.
- **Here's a big question. This is just an opinion or speculation question: Why do you think God created man to begin with? He didn't need us!**
- **Attention - Here's an article with some thoughts:** <http://www.christianitytoday.com/iyf/advice/faithdoubt/why-did-god-create-man.html>⁸
- Verse eight: God made a garden for the man. This reminds us of a great truth about our great God: The Garden of Eden was specially designed with Adam in mind. It was a home perfectly

suited to Adam's needs and capabilities—a reminder that [He] is a kind and loving God.⁹

- Verse nine tells us the garden begins to grow. And it gives one very important fact, there were two special trees: “The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Those two trees sets up the first and ultimate test of the nature of this new creation called “adam.”

Genesis 2:15–18 (ESV)

¹⁵ The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

- Verse fifteen: **What does this verse say God had planned for man?**
- **Speculate for a moment again...your opinion. Why do you think God created man to work and not just to lounge around in the Garden?**
- Work was NOT punishment. Work was mankind's task before the fall and not a result of sin. The term “cultivate” means “to serve”, while “keep” is “to protect”. This is part of the responsibility of human dominion. We are to be stewards, not exploiters, of the resources of this planet.¹⁰
- It's apparent that God designed us for work. And this was before the fall of man so everything was perfect. Adam didn't need a hoe or any Roundup to spray!
- Because of the fall (sin of Adam and Eve) work became toil... difficult and tiring.
- It's clear God didn't create man just because He needed a “hired hand.” Creating man to work was bigger than just physical labor.
- When we have something meaningful to do we call that having PURPOSE.
- God didn't create us for napping (except on Sunday afternoon!) He created us for a purpose. And though at times our paying job may be tough and even drudgery; our mission in life is to discover the purpose God has for us and fulfill it.

Colossians 3:23 (ESV) is one of my favorite verses on this subject:

²³ Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,

A devotional from Ligonier Ministries makes a great point about meaningful work:

Even if we find ourselves in jobs that would not be our first choice, we can find joy in our work as we seek to serve God in them. In all that we do, we are not serving merely ourselves or our employers; rather, we are also serving the Lord. In fact, we are serving Him first and foremost. No matter what we do, we should do it as unto God, for we will receive from Him a great reward ([Col. 3:22-25](#)).¹¹

- So, God had a job for Adam to do. And on his first day at orientation God hands him a simple “policy manual.” It’s just one page:

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 eat of it you shall surely die.”

- Only one policy to keep. We know how well Adam did with that. We won’t dig into that just yet, because we need to save something for next week!
- As God was telling Adam all he would be responsible for, we can imagine Adam might have looked overwhelmed or even lonely as he gazed at this new workplace. And for the first time in the creation process, God sees a problem.

¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”

- God knew what Adam needed and gave him a “helper” custom-made for him.
- Helper doesn’t imply inferiority. In fact, God’s creation of woman speaks more about Adam’s deficiencies and the need for that perfect person to compensate for where he came up short.
- God knew what all women know, and most men hate to admit. Without a good woman most of us men would be sunk!

- For one thing, there would have been a serious problem with that whole “be fruitful and multiply” command if there hadn’t been both man AND woman!
- One commentator notes: This should not be taken to mean that God intends for every person to marry. Other Scriptures indicate that there are times when it would be better for a man or a woman to remain single. God’s observation was that it was not good for Adam’s personality for him to remain alone. He needed companionship. Furthermore, God’s program demanded that Adam have a mate. From the beginning God looked forward to the propagation of the race, the generation of the chosen people, and the coming of the Promised Seed.¹²
- In other words, God had a plan for all mankind and it required the union of a man and a woman. Anyone who’s found the right partner understands the GENIUS of that plan!

So, What’s the Takeaway?

- God formed us like an artist, because He is the ULTIMATE artist!
- He took dirt and created man. Something “fearfully and wonderfully made.”
- Our bodies may be made of the substance of earth, but God had bigger plans.
- In an incredibly intimate act He literally breathed a “living soul” into us.
- He gave us the capacity to relate to Him and fellowship with Him on a personal, one to one basis.
- He promises to meet our every need including giving us other people to help us carry the load.
- God has given each of us a meaningful purpose in life. We’re not here to take up space. We’re here to advance His kingdom and share His love with others.
- To enjoy that relationship we simply need to accept His invitation for relationship made possible by the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. We have to turn from sin; be sorry for that sin; then, just trust Him and OBEY Him.
- For that we’ll have eternal life WITH Him.
- To do all that for you and me, he must think we’re something special!

- How does that make you feel about God? How does it make you feel about YOU? How will it make us live differently this week?

¹ Scofield, C. I. (Ed.). (1917). *The Scofield Reference Bible: The Holy Bible Containing the Old and New Testaments* (p. 6). New York; London; Toronto; Melbourne; Bombay: Oxford University Press.

² Ross, A. P. (1985). Genesis. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 30). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

³ Smith, J. E. (1993). *The Pentateuch* (2nd ed., Ge 2:4–7). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.

⁴ Thomas, R. L. (1998). *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : updated edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

⁵ Smith, J. E. (1993). *The Pentateuch* (2nd ed., Ge 2:4–7). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.

⁶ Ross, A. P. (1985). Genesis. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 30). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁷ Ross, A. P. (1985). Genesis. In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 30). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

⁸ Dawson McAlister in Christianity Today: <http://www.christianitytoday.com/iyf/advice/faithdoubt/why-did-god-create-man.html>

⁹ Strassner, K. (2009). *Opening up Genesis* (p. 23). Leominster: Day One Publications.

¹⁰ Utley, R. J. (2001). *How it All Began: Genesis 1–11* (Vol. Vol. 1A, p. 47). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

¹¹ <http://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/fitting-job-you/>

¹² Smith, J. E. (1993). *The Pentateuch* (2nd ed., Ge 2:18–20). Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co.