GENESIS
A DEEP DIVE

ADAM TO NOAH

THE EDEN STORY AS THE INTRODUCTION TO THE HEBREW BIBLE

CONCLUDING SUMMARY OF GENESIS 1:1-2:3

- Genesis 1:1-2:3 paints a large-scale picture…
- 1 of God's establishment of cosmic order,
- 2 so that the world becomes sacred space for his presence to dwell…
- 3 with his divine images who represent his rule. This is the ideal cosmic setup that precedes Genesis 2:4, which focuses on God's establishment of a sacred center within the cosmos he has prepared in Genesis 1.

QUESTION

- How is the Hebrew Bible like a family quilt?
- What might the patches, or the whole quilt, represent?

QUOTE

- “The Adam and Eve story has been crafted, intentionally, as part of the introduction to the storyline of the Hebrew Bible. As an entire work, it is doing exactly what Jesus said it’s doing. It is pointing to the need of Israel and all humanity for some kind of deliverer figure who can do for Israel and for every human what we can’t do for ourselves.”

THE HEBREW BIBLE AS A FAMILY QUILT

- A quilt is made of many pre-existing materials, consisting of individual pieces (like the Eden story or the Abraham stories) or sub-collections of pieces (the laws at Mount Sinai, the David stories, or the Psalms), or entire books (like Ruth or Esther). These earlier materials could be incorporated into the collection as they stand or editorially reshaped to fit the new context.

THE HEBREW BIBLE AS A FAMILY QUILT

- But, and this is the key point, it is this new overall context of the “final quilt” that gives each individual piece its meaning when viewed in light of the whole. Regardless of the meaning of any individual piece outside of or before its incorporation into the quilt, the entire context of the quilt is now the proper frame of reference for understanding every smaller piece.

THE HEBREW BIBLE AS A FAMILY QUILT

- In the case of Genesis 2-5 (the focus of this class), we must force ourselves to ask this at every step of our reading:
- What is the meaning of Genesis 2-5 that is intended by the authors who framed the final shape of the Tanak, as far as we can discern it?
- For the authors, Genesis 1-11 formed an introduction to the entire Tanak, placing the basic themes, vocabulary, and plot elements that would be developed throughout the rest of the collection.

THE MANY POTENTIAL CONTEXTS OF THE ADAM AND EVE STORY

- In our modern cultural setting, the Adam and Eve story has been made to speak to many topics that the biblical authors did not mean to address.
- We must be vigilant to make a distinction between asking what Genesis 2-5 means within the context of the Tanak, versus what it means for other areas of interest. The difference is one of intention.

THE MANY POTENTIAL CONTEXTS OF THE ADAM AND EVE STORY

- The biblical authors actually intended the stories to address the main issues of concern at work in the Tanak, not our modern concerns.
- However, Genesis 2-5 may have significance for how we think about other topics in light of the biblical perspective, but we should not mistake this for the “meaning” of Genesis 2-5 in its native context.

The ***Meaning*** of Genesis 2-5 As the Introduction to the Tanak



The ***Significance*** of Genesis 2-5 for Other Areas of Interest

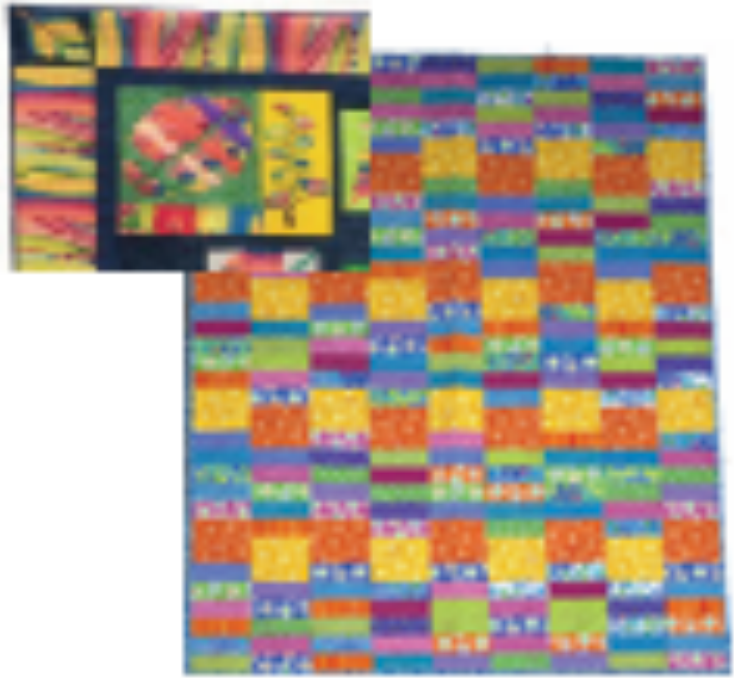
Introduction to Anthropology



A Primer on Gender Theory



A Theology of Original Sin



QUOTE

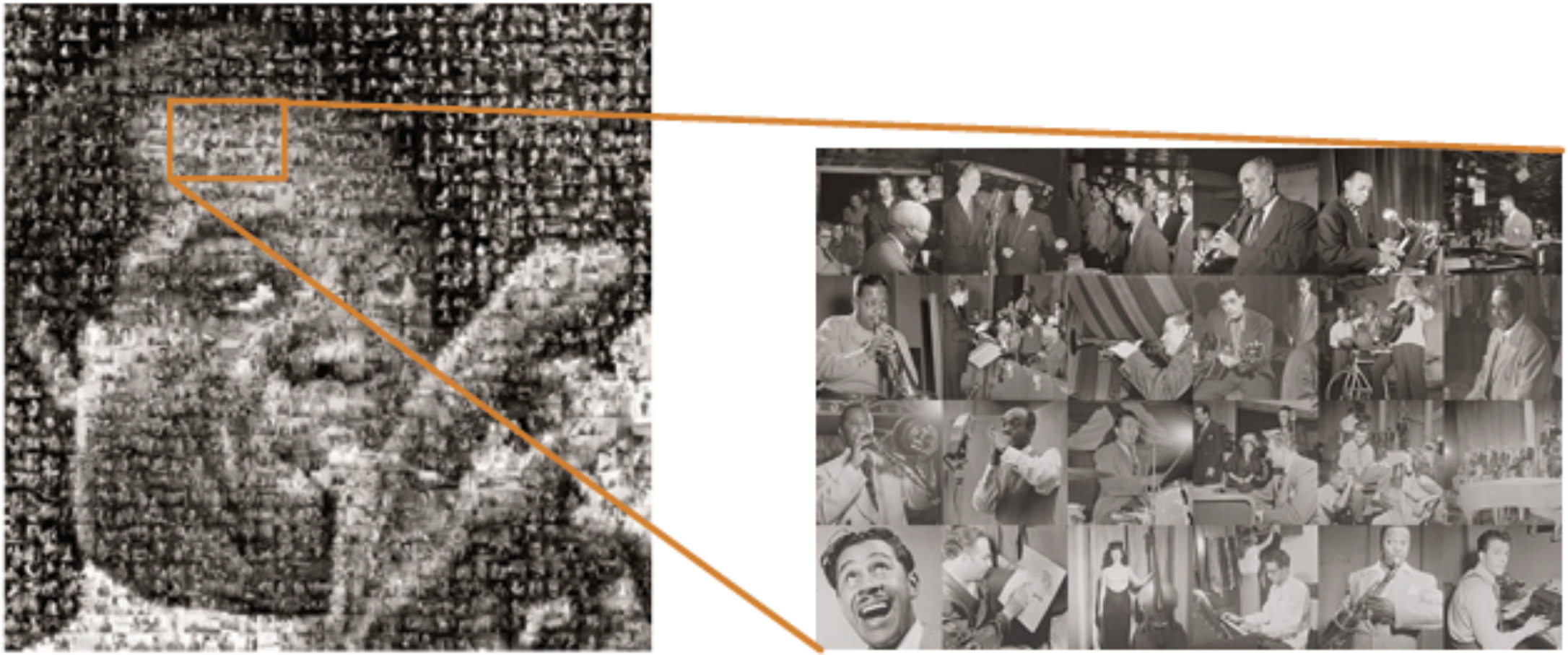
- “We are going to walk through these little scenes and identify each smaller photo. But what is significant isn’t just each smaller photo or quilt piece, it’s the pattern of how they are arranged.”

DESIGN PATTERNS AND LITERARY ANALYSIS

Analogy #1: The Photomosaic

Portrait of Louis Armstrong, created by Robert Silvers (www.photomosaic.com).

It consists of hundreds of smaller photos taken from actual recording sessions with Louis Armstrong.



ANALOGY #2: REPEATED MOTIFS AND THEMES IN FILM

- Movie directors often create a cohesive unity to the themes and plot line of a story by repetition and variation. By building up viewer expectations through repetition, the artist can introduce variation and surprise.
- In the Lord of the Rings trilogy, consider the motif of the ring temptation scene.

ANALOGY #2: REPEATED MOTIFS AND THEMES IN FILM

- Some characters are tempted by the ring's power, and they succumb to it (Smeagol, Boromir, Frodo).
- Other characters resist its power, but in different ways: Bilbo (just barely), Gandalf and Galadriel (through fear and trembling), and Aragorn (like it's no problem!).
- This diverse set of responses to the ring's power creates a rich palette of characters and a complex portrait of power in the story.

BIBLICAL ANALOGIES

- The biblical authors were masters of this technique. In fact, this basic principle of patterned repetition and analogy is the most fundamental tool in their repertoire. And it's accomplished through the simplest of means: strategic repetition of key words.
- These two analogies illustrate different features of the TaNaK col lection that create the need for two related reading strategies:

BIBLICAL ANALOGIES

- 1. Identifying literary units [segmentation]
- Just as a photomosaic consists of hundreds of smaller photos, so the epic biblical narrative consists of hundreds of smaller episodes.
- Learn to identify the beginning and ending of literary units that make up the larger mosaic of a biblical book

BIBLICAL ANALOGIES

- 2. Identifying repeated words and themes that weave the literary units together [coordination]
- Just as the smaller photos in a photomosaic are organized according to patterns of color, light, and tone, so the literary units of the biblical narrative are woven together through patterns of repeated words, themes, and images. These repetitions invite the reader to see continuity and an ongoing argument that develops throughout the course of the story.

IDENTIFYING LITERARY UNITS [SEGMENTATION]

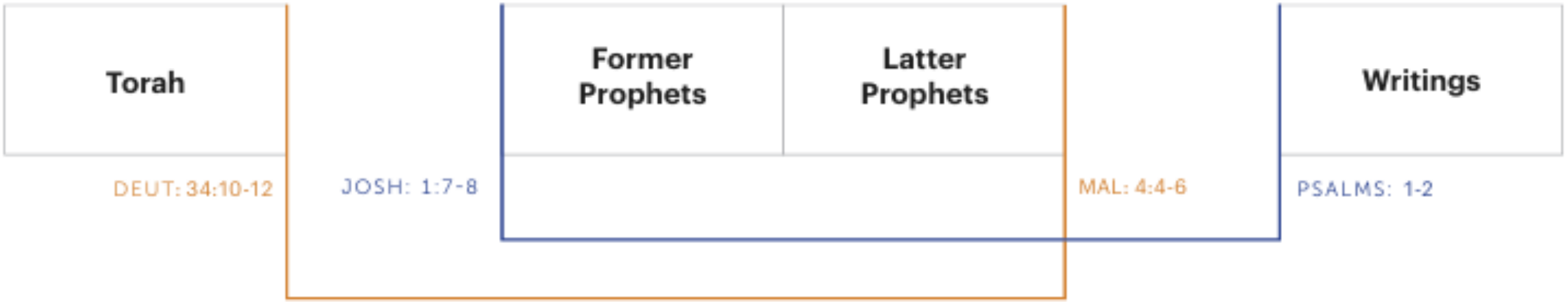
- If we imagine the individual images in a photomosaic or the smallest pieces of a quilt, then “segmentation” means paying attention to the boundaries of the smallest literary unit. The biblical authors have a wide variety of techniques to indicate the opening and conclusion of literary units, depending on literary genre and context.

MARKERS OF LITERARY UNITS IN NARRATIVE:

- **Shift in character, time, setting, or plot**: Abram, Sarai, Pharaoh go to Egypt in Genesis 12:10-20
- **Plot**: The action initiated in the unit's beginning comes to resolution: Joshua 2:1 (the spies are sent), Joshua 2:23-24 (the spies return).
- **Conclusion marked by the next unit's introduction**: Genesis chapters 14-15-16. The conclusion of the narrative is clearly marked by the beginning of the following unit (see 14:1, 15:1, 16:1, etc.)

THE EDITORIAL DESIGN OF THE TANAK

- The three-part shape of the Hebrew Bible isn't simply a matter of arrangement. Rather, the books themselves have been designed to fit into this particular shape. If you look at the editorial seams of the major sections (remember the technology was papyrus or leather scrolls), you'll find intentional design clues at the beginning and ending of these sections.


Torah
Former Prophets
Latter Prophets
Writings
DEUT: 34:10-12
JOSH: 1:7-8
MAL: 4:4-6
PSALMS: 1-2

SEAM #1: THE FINAL SENTENCES OF THE TORAH AND OPENING SENTENCES OF THE PROPHETS

- Deuteronomy 34:10-12: Anticipation of a coming Moses-like prophet who was promised but never came.
- Joshua 1:1-9: God's appointed leader, Joshua, who will lead the people into the promised land, must meditate on the Torah day and night to find success.

SEAM #2: THE FINAL SENTENCES OF THE PROPHETS AND THE OPENING SENTENCES OF THE KETUVIM:

- Malachi 4:4-6: Anticipation of a coming Elijah-like prophet who will call the people back to the Torah and restore the hearts of Israel before the Day of the Lord.
- Psalm 1-2: The righteous one who will be vindicated in the final judgment is one who meditates on the Torah day and night to find success (Psalm 1). This righteous one is the future messianic king from the line of David, who is appointed by God to rule the nations and overcome evil once and for all (Psalm 2).

Hierarchies of Literary Units in Biblical Narrative

When all of the above principles are applied to a literary analysis, it yields the following outline of the Eden narrative.

<table>
<tr><td>2:4-6 - No garden, humans, or rain</td><td rowspan="4">2:4-17
From wasteland to Eden</td><td rowspan="7">2:4-25
From isolated waste-land to communion in Eden</td><td rowspan="16">2:4-3:24
The Eden Narrative: From Garden to Exile</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:7-9 - God plants a garden and forms human</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:10-14 - The Eden river flows to become 4 rivers</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:15-17 - Human put in the garden + divine command</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:18-20 - Problem: a human alone</td><td rowspan="3">2:18-25
From isolation to communion</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:21-23 - Solution: two humans out of one</td></tr>
<tr><td>2:24-25 - Two humans married</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:1-5 - Dialogue between snake and woman</td><td colspan="2" rowspan="3">3:1-13
Folly and the Fall</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:6-7 - Woman and man eat from the tree</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:8-13 - Dialogue between God and humans</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:14-15 - Curse on the snake</td><td rowspan="4">3:14-24
The fallout</td><td rowspan="5">3:14-24
The fallout and exile from Eden</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:16 - Consequences for the woman</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:17-19 - Consequences for the man</td></tr>
<tr><td>3:20-21 - Provision of garments</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">3:22-24
Humans exiled from Eden</td></tr>
</table>

THE CYCLICAL PATTERN OF GENESIS 1-11

- Genesis 1-11 introduces important biblical themes through a cycle that repeats twice. What are some of these repeated themes?
- “Studying Genesis 1-11 is giving you everything you need to understand what the rest of the biblical story is going to be about.”
- The Adam and Eve story in Genesis chapters 2-5 fits within a larger pattern at work in Genesis 1-11, so that chapters 1-5 play out a cycle of themes and chapters 6-11 replay and develop the cycle.

A^1	1:1-2:3: Creation of sacred cosmos from chaos waters / human image of God / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Creation and Blessing
	B^1	2:4-3:24: Mount-garden temple / sin, nakedness, curse, exile		Failure
	B^2	4:1-16: Next generation sins / brothers divide / firstborn not chosen / curse and exile		Failure of Next Generation
		C^1	4:17-26: Adam to Lemek: 7 generations + 3 sons / city of Cain / murder / 70 x 7	Non-Chosen
		C^2	5:1-32: Adam to Noah: 10 generations + 3 sons / promise of comfort	Chosen
	B^3	6:1-8: Cosmic rebellion in Heaven and Earth: sons of God invade the land, leading to the flood		Cosmic Rebellion
A^2	6:9 -9:19: De-creation by chaos waters and recreation / Noah as new humanity / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Re-Creation and Blessing
	B^1	9:20-21: Garden vineyard / sin / naked		Sin
	B^2	9:22-27: Next generation sins / brothers divide / firstborn not chosen / curse, scattering		Failure of Next Generation
		C^1	10:1-32: Noah + 3 sons / 7 generations to Peleg / city of Babylon and Assyria / 70 nations	Non-Chosen
	B^3	11:1-9: Cosmic rebellion in Babylon: sons of Adam invade the heavens, leading to the scattering		Cosmic Rebellion
		C^2	11:10-26: Shem to Abram: 10 generations / 3 sons	Chosen
A^3	12:1-9: Abram as new humanity / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Re-Creation and Blessing

KEY STEPS FOR READING ANCIENT BIBLICAL LITERATURE

- Step 1: Read and re-read, keeping track of two parallel sets of observations.
  - a. Study the text's cues to discern the design and boundaries of the literary unit.
  - b. Pay close attention to repeated words, images, and narrative elements (plot, character, setting) within each individual literary unit.

KEY STEPS FOR READING ANCIENT BIBLICAL LITERATURE

- Step 2: Let the literary design guide your attention to how repeated words connect multiple literary units together.
- Step 3: Repeat, repeat, repeat…
- Step 4: Find someone to help you learn about the ancient cultural context of the main themes of the literary units you're studying.



1:1 Summary Prologue

In the beginning, God **created** *the skies and the land* *[7 words]*

1:2 Exposition of Prologue in Three Lines

Now, the land was wild and waste (תהו ובהו tohu va-vohu)
and darkness was over the face of the deep abyss (תהום tehom) *[7 x 2 words]*
but the breath of Elohim was hovering over the face of the waters (המים hamayim)

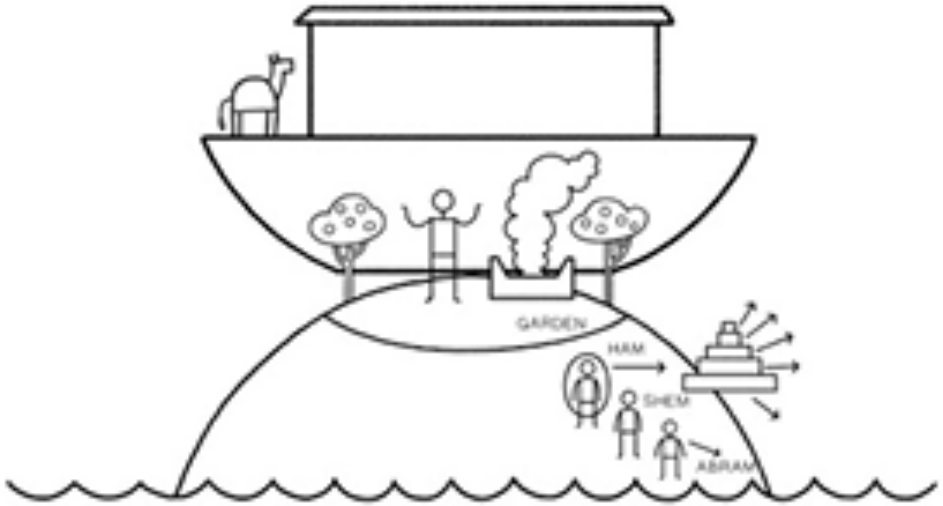
Day 1	**Day 4**
Day 2	**Day 5**
Day 3	**Day 6**

2:1 Summary Epilogue

"Thus were finished the skies and the land and all their host

2:2-3 Exposition of Epilogue in Three Lines

1. *And God completed on the seventh day his work which he had* **made** *[7 words]*
2. *And he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had* **made** *[7 words]*
3. *And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it* *[7 words]*
   because on it he rested from all his work which God **created to make** *[key word of 1:1]*


GARDEN
HAM
SHEM
ABRAM


GARDEN
EDEN
EXILE
2 LINES