

Genesis Paradigm

SIX DAYS

DAY ONE



DAY TWO



DAY THREE



DAY FOUR



DAY FIVE



DAY SIX



Genesis 2:4-17

The 1st Account of:
What Became of God's Creation?
Part I of II



State of Creation as of 2024

Questions To Ponder: Considering God's Purposes for Creation and Mankind

Have any of you pondered, perhaps earlier in your life,
the age old question -

What is life all about?

Would any of you like to share "briefly"
your thoughts on that topic?

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

In November of 1647 an assembly of Scottish and English theologians and laymen finished writing the answers to 107 theological questions with the intent of bringing the Church of England into conformity with the Church of Scotland.

The answer to the first of those 107 questions seems to me to be a succinct statement describing God's intent in creation and man's purpose.

Q. 1. "What is the chief end of man?"

A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

Thoughts and Comments?

Considering God's Purposes for Creation and Mankind

William Beveridge, a theologian from the 19th century, said these words near the end of his life:

"The older I grow - and I now stand upon the brink of eternity - the more comes back to me the first sentence in the Catechism which I learned when a child, and the fuller and deeper its meaning becomes: What is the chief end of man? To glorify God, and to enjoy him forever."

In Genesis 2, Moses begins his first account of what became of God's Creation

Genesis 2:4-9

Eugene H. Peterson, [*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*](#)
(Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Ge 2:3-17.

This is the story of how it all started,
of Heaven and Earth when they were created.

Adam and Eve

⁵⁻⁷ At the time God made Earth and Heaven, before any grasses or shrubs had sprouted from the ground—God hadn't yet sent rain on Earth, nor was there anyone around to work the ground (the whole Earth was watered by underground springs)—God formed Man out of dirt from the ground and blew into his nostrils the breath of life. The Man came alive—a living soul!

⁸⁻⁹ Then God planted a garden in Eden, in the east. He put the Man he had just made in it. God made all kinds of trees grow from the ground, trees beautiful to look at and good to eat. The Tree-of-Life was in the middle of the garden, also the Tree-of-Knowledge-of-Good-and-Evil.

Moses begins his first account of what became of God's Creation

Eugene H. Peterson, [*The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language*](#)
(Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2005), Ge 2:3-17.

Genesis 2:10-17

10-14 A river flows out of Eden to water the garden and from there divides into four rivers. The first is named Pishon; it flows through Havilah where there is gold. The gold of this land is good. The land is also known for a sweet-scented resin and the onyx stone. The second river is named Gihon; it flows through the land of Cush. The third river is named Hiddekel and flows east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

15 God took the Man and set him down in the Garden of Eden to work the ground and keep it in order.

16-17 God commanded the Man, "You can eat from any tree in the garden, except from the Tree-of-Knowledge-of-Good-and-Evil. Don't eat from it. The moment you eat from that tree, you're dead."

Observations from these passages

Genesis 2:4 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.*

- God created the heavens and earth in which mankind was to live
- In Chapter 1, Moses gave an overview of creation. In Chapter 2 he begins to give more details in the form of a narrative account of Adam & Eve
- In v.4, the word 'generations' is translated literally from the Hebrew '*toledot*' - it is also rendered as 'account' in other translations
- '*toledot*' is used a total of 10 times in Genesis: (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2)¹
- Each '*toledot*' passage is used as the title for each generation or account
- In this first account, notice that God is the sole actor- Gen. 2:4-17

¹Michael A. Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, eds., "[Genesis](#)," in *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 40.

Observations from these passages

Genesis 2:5-6 ESV

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—

- Many scholars believe that v.5 alludes to the state of creation early in Day 6 where God is setting up creation for the benefit of mankind later in Day 6. Still, some others believe, it can also allude to the state of creation after the fall. (i.e. 'bush' refers to thorns and thistles and toil in cultivating the ground.- chapter 3:17-18)
- But notice that Moses has referred to God in a more complex way than how he did in chapter 1.
- Moses used 'Lord God' here - translated - Yahweh Elohim
Yahweh - the immanently present personal God of Israel Moses knew
Elohim - the transcendent creator God - used in Chapter 1

Observations from these passages

Genesis 2:7-9 ESV

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.

- Notice that God did not just speak man into existence but personally formed man (as if by hand) from dust from the ground and then He breathed life into man - and continued by personally planting a garden and thereby making good provision to sustain man's life by means of a pleasant garden and good food.

What do you think is the significance of Moses using the new term the 'Lord God' in these verses?

Describe what else you think is significant in these verses?

The Significance of God Breathing Life into Mankind

Michael A. Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, eds.,

"Genesis," in *The Moody Bible Commentary* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014), 41.

"... concerning the imparting of a soul to man—it is this that constitutes the "image" of God and that allows us, uniquely among God's living creations, to commune or "relate" to God at a level that transcends material creation. In other words, as far as the evidence of Scripture itself, it was only into humanity that God breathed what derives exclusively from Himself—not simply "breath," but in fact the soul. Of its 24 occurrences in the OT, this term is applied only to God and people. Hence it describes what humanity and the Creator uniquely share, namely, the capacity for spiritual relationship. That capacity is fulfilled when a person ceases from his or her own attempts to find spiritual "rest" and instead enters that permanent rest provided in Jesus Christ (*Heb 4:10*)."

(emphasis mine)

Observations from these passages

Genesis 2:10-14 ESV

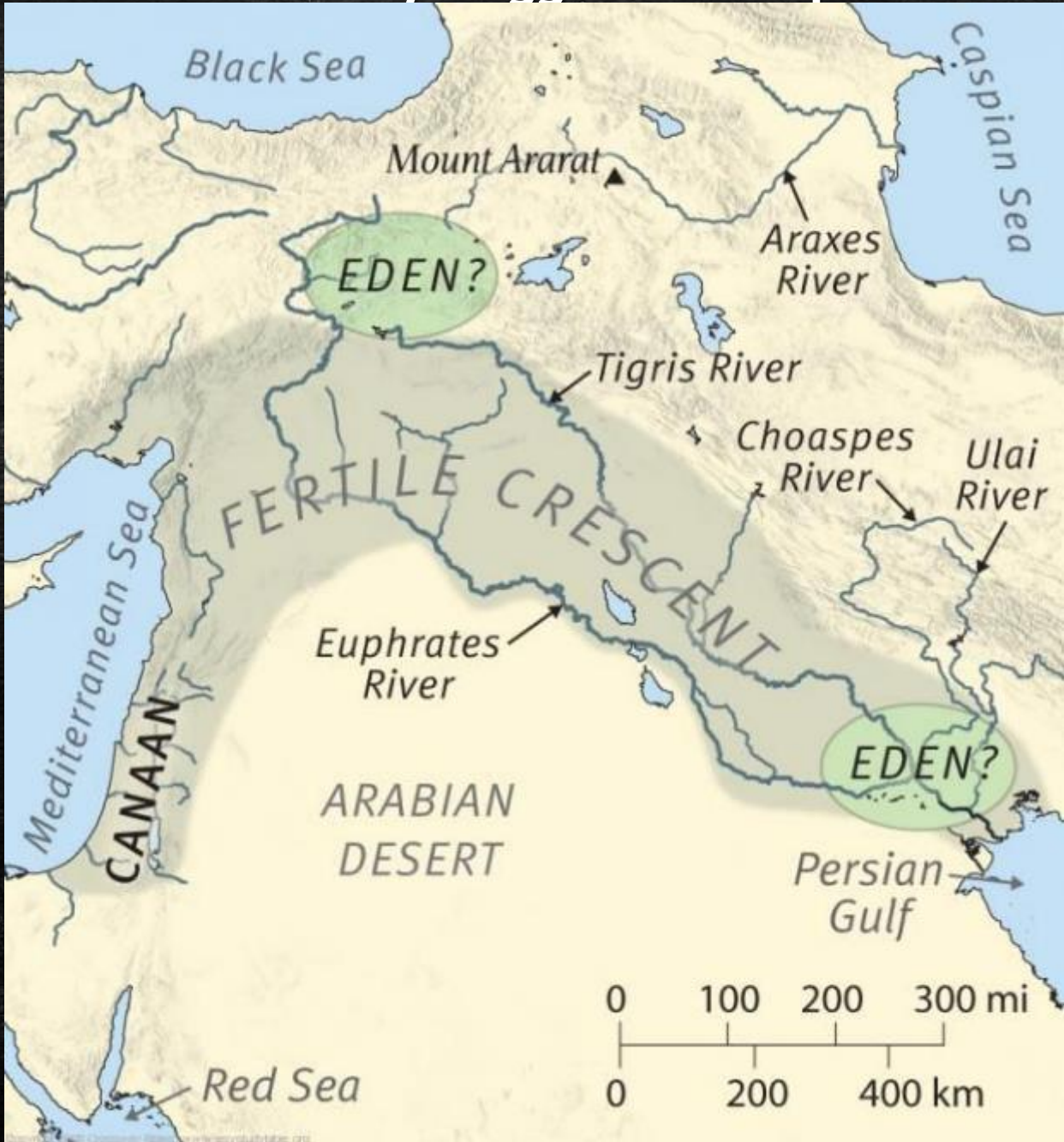
¹⁰ A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. ¹¹ The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name 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.

- Five Rivers, 1 original river with no name divided into 2 rivers- Pishon & Gihon, but no one knows much about them! Each one surrounded a land -Havilah & Cush
- Furthermore, the main river divided again into 2 more rivers that have the same names as two of our current rivers.- Tigris & Euphrates

However, no one knows exactly where Eden was actually located! (Gen. 3:23-24; 7:17-ff)

A couple of the many proposed maps of Eden follow:

One of the many suggested maps of Eden



One of the many suggested maps of Eden



Observations from these passages

Genesis 2:15 ESV

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

v.15

- The purpose statement of "cultivate/work (*'avad*) and keep (*shamar*)" is introduced
- Many have said that this is where "work" was invented; however, in v.15, due to the different verb usage than in v.8, consider my paraphrase statement of purpose this way:

"Spiritual Rest leads to Worshipful Service"

Let me explain why:

Commentary on this passage

Genesis 2:15 ESV

Michael A. Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, eds.,

["Genesis," in *The Moody Bible Commentary* \(Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014\), 41.](#)

"2:15. This verse includes the only purpose statement in chaps. 1-2. They set forth the answer to the most fundamental question of theology and philosophy, "Why do I exist?" That answer, however, is not to serve as a gardener, as the traditional reading "to cultivate it and keep it" (the "it" being the garden) suggests."

"Yet considering how the verb in v. 15 is used elsewhere with God as the subject, a different idea emerges. The verb in question is lit., "and He set him at rest" (vay-yannihehu, from nuh). When God is the subject, as He is here, this verb is typically intended to denote the rest God promised to give His people when they were in the land" ("I/He will give you rest"; cf. Dt 3:20; 12:10; 25:19; 2Sm 7:11)(also Heb.4:3-10)"
(emphasis mine)

Further Commentary on this passage

Genesis 2:15 ESV

Michael A. Rydelnik and Michael Vanlaningham, eds.,

["Genesis," in The Moody Bible Commentary \(Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014\), 42.](#)

"...this divine promise of "rest" refers not merely to physical rest and the cessation of warfare, but ultimately to the all-encompassing rest of faith, that is, the spiritual rest, or salvation, that comes from accepting by faith what God has provided (Heb 4:3-10).

"Therefore the point being made in the first half of this verse is that, after creating man and placing him in the garden (v. 8), God immediately placed him in that state for which man was originally intended, the state of being in full relationship with God, the state of being at spiritual rest in and with Him."

"These translations are preferable because whenever the two verbs here translated cultivate (avad) and keep (shamar) are used together elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible, they are always intended in the sense of worshiping/serving (God) and obeying Him (Nm 3:7-8; Dt 10:12-13, 28:45-47; Jos 22:5; Cassuto, Genesis, I:122-23)"

(see also Rom. 12:1-2) (emphasis mine)

Digging Deeper into this passage
Genesis 2:15 ESV

How does one describe the kind of work that does not feel like work?

In what ways can one's acts be a 'service of worship' and 'a restful
dependence' upon Christ?
(Rom.12:1-2)

Observations and commentary from these passages

Genesis 2:16-17 ESV

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."

"... the purpose for which man was fundamentally created, is to worship and to obey God. This obedience in worshiping and obeying God (v. 15) is expressed by keeping His command (v. 16)."

Notice that this passage contains a 2 part command:

- 1) a gracious and loving 1st part (since God desires only good for his children)
- 2) a 2nd lesser command as a warning.

Scholars point out that due to the grammatical structure, the "you may surely eat" is better translated as "you shall certainly eat" since it is grammatically parallel to the emphatic expression at the end of v. 17, "you will surely die"

(emphasis mine)

["Genesis," in The Moody Bible Commentary \(Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2014\), 42.](#)

A Final Commentary on this passage Genesis 2:16-17 ESV

Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Ge 2:16.

"God gave Adam great freedom of choice. Note that He graciously gave him broad permission before one narrow restriction. God only forbade one of all the trees. God's command also implies that He alone knows what is good and not good for man. Adam would die because of disobedience, not because of the fruit of the tree."

(emphasis mine)

Application Exercises

In Gen.2:4-17, in what ways have these passages affected your identity and purpose in life?

Scholars have said that God alone is able to discern the knowledge of good or evil. Describe why you think that is true?

Why is it important that God gave us 'choice'?

In what ways does choice influence relationships?

Describe some of the pros and cons of choice that impact relationships.

What does choice have to do with love (*agape*) in a relationship?