

Seed: Genesis 2:4-7

Weeds and Grains

Genesis 2:4 marks the beginning of a new section in the book of Genesis. However, to many it doesn't just look like a new section, but it actually looks like a section that contradicts the previous section. Gen. 2:7 appears to put the creation of Adam as after the creation of plants, contradicting Gen. 1, where plants are created on the third day and man is created on the sixth day.

However, a closer read of the text shows that 2:5 is actually referring to a much more specific kind of plant. 1:11-12 refers to "grass" and "herbs yielding seed" (grain). But 2:5 refers to "plant of the field." The Hebrew for "plant" here is not a super common noun, but one that usually refers to the wild shrubs found out in the desert (Job 21:15). This would mean that 2:4-7 is telling us that Adam was created at a moment in time before there were weeds in the ground and before grain had begun to sprout.

Before the Curse

So why is there a need to specify this particular moment? We have to look at the curse in order to understand this. Look at 3:17-19. When the ground is cursed, the result is that man will now have to work to eat from it. In chapter 2, the author of Genesis focuses on the trees that God provides to Adam for food (2:9, 16 and 3:2). But after his sin, Adam is told that now he will toil to get his food from the ground (3:17). He will have to fight weeds and he will have to sweat (v. 18).

Dust to Dust

Adam having to till the ground for grain was a consequence of his fall (3:23). After the fall, our work for food requires that we work in the dirt. You will eat from the ground (3:18), eating grain (3:18), and eating bread (3:19). God cursed the ground and made us farmers.

Why farming? Adam was made from dust (2:7). And because Adam sinned, he was going to die and return to dust (3:19 and 23).

You are Seed

But when a farmer cuts open the earth to put the seed in, he doesn't do so in grim defeat. He actually does so with great hope. He looks to a harvest. And Scripture carries over this hope to us. Yes, we are all going into the ground, because we are all mortal. But we go into the ground as seed (1 Cor. 15:35-37, 48-49). Grain provides food, just like a fruit tree. But the grain must die first. It must go into the ground to die, before returning in glory. And that is what man, after the fall is. We are creatures that must die first, but will live eternally.

The Seed

But the hope in Genesis 3 is even stronger than that. We always are quick to point out that when God gave the curse, he also gave the promise of the coming Messiah to deliver us from the curse. But how was that Messiah described? The Messiah was the coming *seed* of the woman (3:15). In fact, all of Scripture points to this one true seed, the seed whose death and resurrection makes possible our eternal life.

No Going Back

Notice that God did not solve Adam's sin by giving him means by which he could undo the damage that he had done. Death has not been removed, but rather conquered. Our tendency, when we see the consequences of our sin, is want to find a way back to before our sin, to undo it. But that is never an option. The cross was not a time machine. Instead, God took Adam's sin and all its consequences and turned it into another path for walking into God's glory.