

# CONCERNING THE WAY

January 17, 2008

## LESSON 9: GENESIS 2



### Introduction - Spotlight on Day 6

This week we continue our study of Genesis with an in-depth look at Genesis chapter 2. This chapter has been used by some critics to try to prove that the Bible has contradictions. They say that the account in chapter 2 is different than the one in chapter one. In this lesson we'll show that there are no contradictions, that chapter 2 is just a more detailed description of what happened on day 6.

This chapter has some great themes to unpack, such as the creation of man and woman, the Garden of Eden, and the first marriage. We'll see what God's plan for marriage is, as well as the roles of man and woman.

In this lesson I am including some excerpts from Pastor Ray Stedman's excellent book on Genesis. He has some very insightful things to say about Chapter 2. But first a short note about why animals were created that I meant to put in last week's lesson. Enjoy!

- *Dusty Rhodes*

#### WHY WERE ANIMALS CREATED?

The Bible gives many reasons, among the following:

1. For limited but inadequate companionship (Genesis 2:18-22 and see **2 Samuel 12:3**). A dog may provide enjoyment and may walk at a man's side, but the dog was never intended to be "man's best friend." God intended a much better helper for man (Genesis 2:20-22). Indeed, man's greatest and best Companion is the Lord Himself.
2. For food (Genesis 9:2-3).
3. For clothing (Matthew 3:4).
4. For transportation (Genesis 22:3).
5. For sacrifice, in order to point to the one great Sacrifice and to illustrate that salvation is only possible by way of the shedding of blood (Gen. 4:4; Lev.1:3).
6. For judgment of sinful men (Exodus chapter 8; 2 Kings 2:23-24).
7. To serve man in a multitude of ways (Gen. 8:7-8; and compare some amazing uses of animals today, such as "seeing eye dogs" for the blind, animals used in experimentation so as to develop new drugs and medical procedures, etc.).
8. To teach men spiritual lessons (Proverbs 6:6).
9. To teach men of God's care (Matthew 6:26).
10. To give enjoyment to children (Isaiah 11:6,8).
11. To carry out orders from their Creator (1 Kings 17:6; Matthew 17:27).
12. To illustrate that "the Hand that made us is Divine" (every creature demonstrates that it was remarkably designed by the Creator and could never have evolved by chance). Every animal made by God is indisputable proof against the theory of evolution.

## Genesis 2:4-25

- Genesis 1 focuses on the creation of everything, the heavens and the earth, is an overview
  - Emphasis on creator-God
  - Name of God emphasized is Elohim
  - Powerful God
  - God of Universe
  - Climaxes with the creation of man
  - Covers the six days of creation
- Genesis 2 focuses specifically on man in the garden, gives more detailed description
  - Emphasis on covenant-God
  - Name of God emphasized is Yahweh
  - Personal God
  - God of man
  - Climaxes with the institution of marriage
  - Covers the 6<sup>th</sup> day of creation
- Many have thought the Genesis 1 and 2 conflict with each other
  - Has led to the documentary hypothesis (several later authors, not Moses)
  - Chapters do not conflict, but only have a different emphasis, they are actually complimentary
  - Three supposed contradictions:
    - Beasts created before in 1:24-25, but in Genesis 2 it says they were created between Adam and Eve on the 6<sup>th</sup> day
      - Genesis 2:19 better translation shows “had formed”, showing that they had been created before
    - Plants and herbs created on day 3, but Gen. 2:5 says they had not been created yet on day 6
      - Gen. 2:5 seems to only be speaking of cultivated plants in the garden of Eden, not plants in general
    - Trees created on day 3, but Gen. 3:9 indicates trees had not yet been created on day 6
      - Gen 2:9 does not say no trees had been created yet, but these were obviously trees in the garden of Eden, and created for a purpose
  - Matt. 19:3-6 - Jesus refers to the creation story, quotes Gen. 1:27 and Gen. 2:24. He quotes from both chapters, so He obviously did not see any contradictions.

## Genesis 2 has four parts

## • Creation of man - verses 5-7

*Genesis 2:5-6: Now no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. Springs would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.*

- Again, not a contradiction, it is saying no plants had been grown (cultivated) by man yet. It appears that the fields were ready, and they were being watered, but there was no farmer yet!

*Genesis 2:7 The LORD God formed the man from the soil of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.*

- We're made in God's image, but we shouldn't get too carried away with

- ourselves, because we are made from the dirt! And, we return to the dust
- Man is the only creation that God actually breathed life into - we're unique from the animals - this is why God goes to the trouble of redeeming us, something valuable in us that God sees.

### **Man Out of Dust**

Here is a condensed account of some tremendously significant things. We do not need to quibble over just how God formed the body of man. Did he pile dirt together, wet it with water to make a mud-statue, and then breathe life into it? No one knows. Certainly when we consider the miracle of conception and birth, when two tiny, almost invisible, cells meet together and begin to grow and divide under a rigid interlock of controls, developing at last into a human being such as we see ourselves to be, we need not ask about the ability of God to make man in his own remarkable way. Perhaps the event occurred along the line of the development of birth. We need not be concerned about the questions which people in the past have beat each other over the head with. Whether Adam had a navel or not is of little significance to me. What we are told here is that there are three divisions in man.

God first made the body of man, forming it from the dust of the earth. It is true that the same elements that are found in the dust of the ground are found also in the body of man. It is to dust that we return. You may recall the story of the little boy who came in to his mother and said excitedly, "Mother, is it true that we are made from the dust and that after we die we go back to the dust?" She said, "Yes, it is." "Well," he said, "I looked under my bed this morning, and there's someone either coming or going!"

We may not fully understand all that is involved in these pregnant sentences of Genesis 2:7, but it is important to notice that though the body of man was evidently formed first, yet the text itself does not say, "the body" but it says God formed man of dust from the earth. That has significance. Man is more than a body. He is not merely an animated piece of beefsteak, a hunk of meat with a nervous system. He is more than body; he is soul as well. The functions of the soul are wonderfully linked to those of the body in ways that we have not even begun to fathom. For instance, the functions of the soul (reason, emotion, and will) are also, in a remarkable way, functions of our physical life. Reason is related to the brain, for it is only as the brain operates that reason occurs. Glands have great power over our emotional life. The hormones which they secrete directly affect us emotionally. Thus the functions of the soul are tied most remarkably to the body, and no one fully understands the mystery of it. In forming man, God made body and soul together, with the capacities for the function of the soul lying dormant within the body of man.

### **Breath of Life**

Then, into this body with an inactive soul, the account says God breathed, through the nostrils, a living spirit. The phrase, breath of life, in the Hebrew, means a spirit of life. The words for breath and spirit are the same, both in Hebrew and in Greek, so that this is more than simply a picture of God breathing into man's nostrils. This is not face-to-face resuscitation; it is the impartation of a spirit into man. As we know from other Scripture passages, the spirit is our essential nature. It is this that distinguished man so remarkably from the animal creation. Thus as man comes into being, he comes full-orbed, as a threefold being, existing in body, soul, and spirit.

It is the joining together of spirit and body which activates and galvanizes the soul, so that it begins to function. Perhaps you can see something of the same principle in the operation of an electric light bulb. By itself a bulb is simply some wire and glass, rather commonplace, but with a remarkable potential. Add an invisible substance, electricity, and pass it through that visible wire, and a third function is born: light. Light is different from the wire, and different from the electricity, but comes streaming forth from that bulb. It is very much the same way with man. God made a body, with its possibilities of function as a soul, and breathed into it a spirit, and the union of body and spirit produced the activity of soul, as light is produced from the wire and electricity.

When the spirit passes from the body, the life of the body ends. James tell us, "the body apart from the spirit is dead" (James 2:26). We bury the body, and the spirit returns to God who made it, the Scriptures say. Whatever portion of the soul (or *the life of man*--that part of us that has functioned within this time and space continuum) which has been saved, also returns with the spirit to God. I think it is significant to note that in the Scriptures, the spirit is regenerated but the soul is saved. There is only one place to my recollection, in which Scripture ever mentions a spirit being saved. It is the soul, the life that we are living now, that needs to be saved. That part of it which is lived in the power of the Spirit of God, functioning in relationship to the

Lord Jesus Christ as God intended man to live, is saved. Our souls are thus *being* saved as we live day by day in relationship to the Son of God. That "saved" soul is what we have left after this life, and only that. All else is wood, hay, and stubble, to disappear in the judging flame of God.

Now in fallen man, the spirit that is given to man is dead. This is what the Scripture means when it says man is dead in trespasses and sin. His spirit does not function as it should. Therefore the soul, which reflects like a mirror the activities of the spirit, reflects a lifeless nature. This is what creates the intense, worldwide restlessness of our race, the inability to be satisfied, the unending search for answers that are never found. It is all an expression of a wasted spirit, lying ruined within us because of the fall of man. But in the beginning as Adam came perfect from the hand of God, he was a lamp and a lamp that was lit; alive in ways beyond anything that we can conjecture. *Ray Stedman*

### • Man placed in the garden of Eden - verses 8-14

*The LORD God planted an orchard in the east, in Eden; and there he placed the man he had formed. The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow from the soil, every tree that was pleasing to look at and good for food. (Now the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil were in the middle of the orchard.) Now a river flows from Eden to water the orchard, and from there it divides into four headstreams. The name of the first is Pishon; it runs through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. (The gold of that land is pure; pearls and lapis lazuli are also there). The name of the second river is Gihon; it runs through the entire land of Cush. The name of the third river is Tigris; it runs along the east side of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.*

- Geographical info about the garden
- Tree of Life and Tree of Knowledge placed in the Garden
- Some people think these rivers mentioned here are the same as rivers we have today, but the geography is very different (since the Flood)
  - Today two of those rivers are nowhere to be found
  - Says all four rivers came from a common source, we don't see that today
  - Tigris and Euphrates rivers we know today are probably not the same rivers mentioned here, they were just named using familiar names at the time, just as we've named cities in U.S. after familiar cities in Europe

Here is the account of man placed in a garden. In passing I might point out that the name of the garden is never given to us. The name of it was not Eden; it was a garden placed in the land of Eden. The region in which the garden was found is called Eden, but the name of the garden itself is not given. There is no suggestion here that the whole earth was a garden, as we sometimes mistakenly conjecture. God marked off a certain division of it which he turned into a garden, and there he placed man. The task of man in that garden was to learn there the secrets that would enable him to turn the rest of the earth into a garden. But because man failed in the garden, he was unable to discover those secrets and, instead of turning the world into a garden, he is turning it into a garbage dump. *Ray Stedman*

### • Man's responsibilities in the garden - verses 15-17

*The LORD God took the man and placed him in the orchard in Eden to care for it and to maintain it. Then the LORD God commanded the man, "You may freely eat fruit from every tree of the orchard, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die.*

- Man is given duties - a job! - physical and mental work
- God's intention was that man and woman would rule creation on God's behalf - this was lost in Gen. 3, and will be restored in the end times - Rev. 22:5
- Notice that labor is not a result of the fall, work was part of God's plan, but after the fall it became more difficult. Man was created to be productive.

- When man is restored to their original state, we will be more productive than we can currently imagine. Writers will write the best books ever, musicians will create the best music ever, inventors will create the best innovations, scientists will learn more than ever before, etc.
- Note here that man is not created as a robot, but with a certain amount of free will, he has a choice. He can choose to obey God, or rebel against God. Accept or reject God
- "You shall surely die" is not talking about spiritual death, but physical death.
- Recalls Deut. 30:15,19 - God entered into a covenant with Israel - Obey me and you will be blessed, disobey and you will be cursed. Adam is given the same choice here in Gen. 2.
- Some translations say "in the Day you eat", a better translation is "when you eat"

We must now take a look at these trees in the midst of the garden and their fruit. Once it was the fashion to deride this whole account as being ridiculous. The idea of Adam and Eve partaking of an actual fruit that had an evil effect upon them has been ridiculed and derided for many years. Yet, in these days of increased drug abuse we should hardly expect such disdain to be exhibited any longer. Now we well know that there are drugs and chemical agents present in fruits and other plants that can have this effect upon man. We know that many of these drugs have a most powerful effect, not only upon the human mind, stimulating it in strange, mysterious, and even dangerous ways, but we know also that they can affect even the chromosome structure of the body and pass along defects to children yet unborn. This is exactly the story of the garden of Eden.

Just as today we see young people drawn by the lure and attractiveness of psychedelic experiences, so Eve was drawn to this strange and mysterious fruit that hung before her, luring her powerfully with promises of strange and wonderful things that would satisfy and fulfill her, but which, in the actual partaking, would injure and damage and destroy the whole race that would follow. We need struggle no longer with the literalness of this account.

It is interesting that after this brief appearance in Genesis, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil disappears from Scripture, primarily because its effects have become commonplace. But the tree of life does convey immortality to man, and as such is used in Scripture as a symbol of the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Book of Revelation the tree of life appears as a symbol of the person of Christ. Paul wrote to Timothy and said of Christ that he "abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel" (2 Timothy 1:10). As we come to the Lord Jesus Christ and are related to him, we experience that which was the capability of this tree of life in the garden of Eden, from which man was ultimately excluded.

### What is This Tree?

But what is this tree of the knowledge of good and evil? After all, what is wrong with knowing good and evil? Surely it is a good thing to know the difference between good and evil. Many Scripture passages encourage us to become mature enough to be able to distinguish between good and evil, and one mark of immaturity in a Christian is that he cannot tell the difference; he does not know how to distinguish between good and evil.

But if it is a good thing to know the difference between good and evil why did God forbid Adam to partake of this fruit? We get a little more light if we look ahead to chapter three where, in the story of the fall of man, we have the words of the serpent to the woman. He said to her, "**For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil**" (Genesis 3:5).

Now everything the Devil says is not a lie. He uses truth, or rather, misuses truth in order to draw us on until we become the victims, ultimately, of his lie. But he baits his trap with truth, and here is the truth from the lips of the Devil. "You will," he says, "have your eyes opened when you eat of this fruit, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." That suggests a clue as to what this fruit was and what it did.

How does God know good and evil? Think about it for a moment and you will see that God knows evil, not by experience because he cannot experience evil, but by relating it to himself. That which is consistent with his character and his nature is good; that which is inconsistent with it is evil. That which is out of line, out of character with himself is evil, destructive, and dangerous; but all that is in line with his own nature is good. That is how God

"knows" good and evil. He relates it to himself.

### **It Was All a Lie**

But God is the only one who can properly do that. God is the only Being in all the universe who has the right to relate all things to himself. When a creature tries it he gets into trouble. The creatures of God's universe are made to discover the difference between good and evil by relating all to the Being of God, not to themselves. When man ate of the fruit he began to do what God does--to relate everything to himself. Yet, as a creature, he has no real ability to maintain this kind of relationship and thus he is constantly interjecting an unbalanced element into life. When man began to think of himself as the center of the universe, he became like God. But it was all a lie. Man is not the center of the universe, and he cannot be.

But as you trace the course of human history you can see that this is the seductive lie that the serpent has whispered into the ears of men ever since: "You are the center of life. This is your world, everything relates to you. What you like is right; what you don't like is wrong. What you want to do is right; don't let anyone make you do what you don't want to do. You are the center of things." You can find this idea throbbing and pulsating throughout the philosophies of men, that man stands at the center of things.

That is the curse that fell upon man when he ate of the fruit in the garden of Eden. In a psychedelic way his mind was twisted and he thought of himself as God, and related all things to himself. But when man does this he introduces an eccentric element into life, into creation. The problem with our unbalanced world today is that we have an earth filled with several billion eccentrics! That is why everything is always going off in wrong directions.

But the glory of the gospel is that when men are redeemed through faith in Jesus Christ they resume a balanced life, and everything relates once again to God. God now becomes the center of things. Though we may struggle to learn this, eventually all the thrust and purpose of the gospel are here, to put God back into the center of his world and relate everything in our life and in the lives of others to him and not to us. It does not make any difference how things affect us. The important thing is, what do they do to God? What is his relationship to these things?

This is what the Scripture means when it says that all of life must be built around the person of the Lord Jesus in order to make sense. There is coming a day when every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Then the destruction, desolation, and heartache of the garden of Eden will be reversed, and men will once again acknowledge the centrality of God in life. Then the world will be filled with glory and righteousness from the river to the ends of the earth. Everything will be what God intended it to be.

But the glory of the gospel is that this can happen in human hearts right now. This is what the gospel message is all about. Have you ceased your rebellion against the will of God? Have you stopped trying to be a little god, trying to run things in your own home or office the way you want them to be? Have you crowned Jesus Christ Lord of his empire, where he belongs, and invited him with gladness to sit upon the throne of your heart and rule there? Have you stopped your grumbling and complaining about all the things that come into your life, that are his choice for you, and begun to rejoice as the Scriptures exhort us, to "give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"? (1 Thessalonian 5:18). Ray Stedman

### • **The first marriage - verses 18-25**

*The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a companion for him who corresponds to him." The LORD God formed out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam no companion who corresponded to him was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, and while he was asleep, he took part of the man's side and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one will be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." That is why a man leaves his father and mother and unites with his wife, and they become a new family. The man and his wife were both naked, but they were not ashamed.*

- For the first time something "is not good" - man was incomplete

- God sets Adam up for this by having him name the animals
  - Text only says that Adam named the “beasts of the field” as opposed to “beasts of the world”
    - He only named the animals God brought to him, not all of them
    - Also keep in mind there were far fewer animals to name then as there are now. Only one dog, not hundreds of breeds, for example
    - God was bringing the animals to Adam to show him that he was alone, probably showing him male and female animals, mates - getting him to see that he needed a mate
    - The context of the passage is marriage
      - Male headship is apparent here - first Adam is created, then Eve -I Tim. 2:11-13 - this order of creation is a big deal
      - Adam names Eve - that implies authority
      - Does not teach that the woman is of less value than the man
      - Woman created from Adam’s side (not foot) implying equality
      - Woman created to complete what was lacking in man
      - Woman is called a helper, not slave! Hebrew word for helper also used of God, so this word is not demeaning term
      - Eve created from the same essence as Adam, both created in the image of God
      - Both are co-rulers of creation
      - Can be compared to relationship between the Godhead - Father, Son, Holy Spirit is the hierarchy. Father and Son are both God, but the Son submits Himself to the Father. The Son, in a sense, is in a submissive role in comparison to the Father. The Father is the leader. Same in marriage, both are equal, but each has different roles
      - Ephesians 5 says how man is supposed to lead his wife. This only became a problem from the Fall.
      - The Bible does not promote feminism or chauvinism.
      - Matthew Henry puts it this way, *“Man being made last of the creatures, as the best and most excellent of all; Eve’s being made after Adam, and out of him, puts an honor upon that sex, as the glory of the man. If man is the head, she is the crown; a crown to her husband, the crown of the invisible creation. The man was dust refined but the woman was dust double-refined, one removed further from the earth... . The woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to top him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved.”*
  - Adam possibly could have named all the animals, we don’t know what Adam’s pre-fall intellectual capacities were, obviously had more intelligence than we can imagine
  - Notice that there were no pre-Adamic people, even outside the garden - no one around for Adam to mate with - all people are descended from Adam.
  - Now there is a new priority in vs 24-25. This does not mean that the man and woman neglect their parents, but that a new unit has been created, there is a new relational priority

- Verse 25 transition verse into Chapter 3, where they will become ashamed

## The Making of Woman

### Genesis 2:18-20).

The first thing that is clear from this passage is that woman was made to be man's *companion*. "It is not good that the man should be alone." We know today that one of the most shattering emotions human beings experience is loneliness. When God pronounced a sentence of "not good" upon man's condition it was the interjection of the first negative element in the story of creation. Until then, everything had been pronounced good, and on the sixth day of creation God said that everything he had done was "very good." But now we read that it was not good for man to be alone, indicating that it never was God's intention for man to be alone, that from the very beginning he intended to make two sexes.

For a man or woman to exist in loneliness is always a devastating threat to the happiness and welfare of that individual. Loneliness is now reckoned to be the single greatest cause of suicide in this country, and it is undoubtedly the most widespread source of human misery in the world today. Yet it is a perfectly human experience. Each of us has felt at times the need for human companionship. There is nothing wrong with that; God made us that way. We need one another. We were not made to exist in loneliness. Now God knows that we need one another, and he provides others for us. It is clear from this passage that the chief, although not the sole answer, to the loneliness of man is the making of woman; man and woman together in marriage. One of the primary purposes of marriage is to provide companionship, a sharing of life together.

### Designed to Help

The second intent of God was that woman should be a *helper* to man, someone to share not only his life as a companion but his work and responsibilities as well. Man and woman are to work together in the building of a home and a life. It is interesting that this has been true from the very beginning of man's existence: men and women designed to work together. Perhaps there is nothing more destructive to marriage than the commonly held attitude that the man has his area of responsibility, his realm of life, such as his work, and the woman has hers--the home, the children--and there is little or no sharing together in these areas. It is always a destructive element in any home or marriage for either mate to hold out for a private realm to the exclusion of the other. The man has nothing much to say around the home; the woman has nothing to do with her husband's work. This is terribly wrong.

Here we have what logicians call a *non sequitur*, something that apparently has no relationship to what has gone before; it does not seem to follow. We have just read that God intends to make "a helper fit for him," which of course must be a woman, and then we read: **So out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, 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 (Genesis 2:19).** What has that to do with making a woman? How does that follow God's declaration of intent to make a helper for man? Obviously there must be a connection here. God set Adam to the task of studying the animals. He gave him a project to work out before he was ready for marriage. Doubtless it was in order to show him that his wife was to be quite different from the animals. Many men have not learned that yet, but it is clear that this was the intent of God in setting man out upon this search.

Now what did he learn as he examined the animals? Adam could not possibly have given names to the animals without knowing the character of each, because a name always reflects a characteristic. In the giving of a name to each of the animals Adam had to understand, whether by a revelation from God or by searching and examining on his own, something of the character of each animal. There are several things immediately evident that Adam learned in his study.

### Pertaining to Animals

Perhaps first, he learned that woman was not to be a mere beast of burden as she has so often become in the history of the race since. There are societies where women are treated exactly like animals, where the price of a woman is approximately the price of a cow, and where women are sometimes traded for cows. But this is a violation of what Adam learned in the beginning, that woman is not like the animals. Adam did not find in the animals a helper fit for him. His wife, when she appeared, was quite different. Therefore woman is not to be treated as a slave whose function begins and ends with household work. For a man to treat his wife as though she were only a servant or

housekeeper, there only to keep everything in order, is devastating to her personality. Perhaps the most frequent cause of complaint from women in marriage is a variation on the theme: "He looks upon me just like another thing around the house. I'm like part of the furniture," This is terribly destructive to a woman's psychological make-up.

Second, Adam unquestionably learned in his search that woman is not to be merely a biological laboratory for the producing of children. Obviously it is women who bear children, but they are not to be like the animals who bear progeny as almost their sole reason for existence. Women are not to be like that. Sex has a much higher function in human life than the mere reproduction of children. One of the most destructive ideas that has been spread among mankind has been the teaching that the first and primary reason for marriage is the production of children. The Bible does not reflect that at all. There is in the Bible ample justification for birth control when circumstances warrant, and man has come to understand this under the terrible pressure of an exploding population that has made him face up squarely to the fact that woman was never intended to be merely a baby factory.

Third, Adam probably learned in his search that woman is not a "thing" outside himself. Women are not beasts of burden, they are not simply for producing children, and they are not something to be used at the whim of man and then disposed of. They are to be a helper fit for him, corresponding to him. Much of the current philosophy of life reflects the idea that women are nothing more than playthings for man—disposable women—you use them as you would use a Kleenex and then toss them away. But this passage directly contradicts that. Woman is to be a helper and a companion, fit for man, corresponding exactly and continuously to his needs, constantly able to adjust to the changes that come in to his life.

#### **Genesis 2:21,22).**

##### **Close to the Heart**

The second revelation here is that woman was made from a rib. Skeptics laugh at this, but God knew what he was doing. It is most significant that a rib was chosen from which to make woman. The rib emphasizes the essentially emotional nature of women. Ribs are the bones nearest the heart, and are thus closely linked with the heart. Throughout Scripture it is always the heart which is pictured as the center of emotional life. This emotional character of woman is confirmed by modern psychology. Tears, fears, and cheers come more easily to women than they do to men. In this, woman is designed to complete man, to be a helper fit for him.

It is this very emotional nature which adds color and warmth to life. How drab life would be without it. The second significant aspect of the rib is that it emphasizes the protective instinct in women. It is the rib which protects the vital organs of the chest and notably the heart. In fact, the Hebrew word for "helper" is the word *azar*, which means "to surround." Just as the rib cage surrounds the heart and protects it, so there is in woman an instinctive reaction of protectiveness. Anyone who has tried to come between a man and his wife, or to abuse a man to his wife, knows what I mean. C. S. Lewis has pointed this out in asking the question, "if your dog has bitten a neighbor's child, would you rather face the mother or the father to discuss the issue?"

#### **Genesis 2:23-25).**

This is a very remarkable passage because it encompasses in brief all the great concepts of marriage that run throughout the rest of the Bible. They are all condensed and encapsulated in these few verses. When God had finished making woman and Adam had slept off the deep unconsciousness into which he had fallen, God brought the woman to Adam. What a scene that must have been! Here is the first of a long, long series of boy meets girl stories. Out of the highly condensed account of this encounter there emerge four factors essential to true marriage.

##### **One Flesh**

The first and most fundamental of all is that marriage is to involve a complete identity of the partners; two are to be one. Adam's first reaction when he saw his wife was, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," that is, she is one being with me. This is strengthened in the latter part of verse twenty-four where it adds, "and they become one flesh." It is not without reason that this has become part of the marriage service, this recognition of unity. As someone has well said, the one word above all that makes marriage successful is "ours." Things belong to "us." "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." Thus, as the New Testament so wisely points out, the man who hurts his wife is hurting himself. He may not feel it directly, but down the line the result of it will show in his life, because she is really, genuinely, and factually sharing one life with him. They become one flesh. This is not poetry; it is reality.

Two people become one when they are married, and as their life goes on together, there is a blending of psyches, a

merging of lives, and the creating of a single history. It is for this reason that divorce is such a terrible thing, specially after years of marriage. It is the severing of a person. It is butchery, the dividing up of a single life, much as you would take an axe and split a body in two. No wonder it is so terribly painful--much more deeply felt than those who experience it understand at the time.

The second thing that is brought out here is the biblical principle of headship, which is developed at much greater length in the New Testament. "She shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man." Paul enlarges on this in his letter to the Corinthians, to point out that man was not made for woman but woman was made for man (1 Corinthians 11:9). It is the man who is ultimately responsible before God for the nature and character of the home. It is the man who must exercise leadership in determining the direction in which the home should go, and must therefore answer for that leadership, or its lack, before God. The woman's responsibility is to acknowledge this leadership. One of the most serious threats to marriage and one of the primary causes of divorce in our day, is the fact that men are abdicating the role of leadership in the home, leaving it up to the wife to raise the children. They are refusing to be fathers to their children and husbands to their wives, wanting rather to be sons to another mother and to have their own needs ministered to.

The third factor indicated here which characterizes true marriage is permanence. "Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife." This is a strong word. In the Hebrew text it is the word, *dabag*, which means "to adhere firmly, as if with glue," to be lovingly devoted to a wife. In the days of Henry Ford and the Model T, someone asked him to what formula he attributed his successful marriage. He said, "The same formula as the making of a successful car: stick to one model." That is exactly what is said in this passage. A husband is to cleave to his wife. He forsakes all others and adheres to her. Whatever she may be like, he is to hold to her. He is to stay with her, and she with him, because marriage is a permanent bond.

#### **Nothing to Hide**

Finally, the fourth factor is set forth in this verse: "And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed." This speaks clearly of openness between a man and wife--literally, nothing to hide. They have no secrets, nothing that they do not share with each other. It is the failure to achieve this kind of openness that lies behind so much breakdown in marriage, the utter lack of communication, where two sit and look at one another and say nothing. They may talk about merely surface trivialities, but there is no discussion of their problems or what they are thinking on various issues. This is often why they are so judgmental with one another, each one trying to get the other to agree and not being willing to allow differences of viewpoint to exist.

But openness does not mean agreeing or feeling the same. It means a readiness to share with one another, completely, without insisting that the other reflect the same attitude. There is room here for ultimate decisions and the submitting of a wife to the leadership of the husband. Openness does not cancel that out. But there is to be a complete freedom of communication, one with the other. Marriages shrivel, wither, and die when this is not true.

What is the result of all this? In Eden these four principles were at work. Adam and Eve were united as one. There was the recognition of the principle of headship. Adam had the right to make ultimate decisions in all matters. They intended to be together permanently and Adam was responsible for this. There was an openness between them so that they hid nothing from one another. What was the result? The text says, "they were not ashamed." Well if they were not ashamed, what were they? What is the opposite of being ashamed? It is to be relaxed. We would use the term, well-adjusted. They felt at ease with each other. There was no strain in their marriage. They were fully at ease with one another. Is that not what we strive for in marriage? These are the principles that produce it.

There is God's design for marriage. As we hold it before us we can see by contrast the reasons why so many marriages are failing. What we need desperately is to return to this biblical pattern, for here are revealed the secrets of happy married life.

Some teach that the eternal state (eternal life on the new earth with God) will be just like Eden restored. Actually, it will be more than that, not just a restoration of the Garden of Eden, here are differences:

Garden of Eden	The Eternal State
Day and night	Eternal day, no night
Division of land and sea	No sea
Sun and moon	No sun or moon
A garden	A city
River flowing out of Eden	River flowing from the throne of God
Gold in the land	Gold in the city
Tree of life in the middle of the garden	Tree of life throughout the city
Some precious stones	All kinds of precious stones
God walking in the garden	God dwelling with His people

- Eden was a probationary environment, with man untested
- In the eternal state, sin has ended and the plan of redemption completed so God puts man in a different environment - permanent, not probationary
- This is why God will not just put man back in the garden

What do we learn from Chapter 2?

- God put man in a perfect environment
- Man is the pinnacle of creation - woman maybe even more so?
- Man is ruling creation on God's behalf
- Next we learn how all that gets lost, and how God puts the wheels in motion to restore what was lost

## Closing Comments

Well, God has created a beautiful, perfect world, created Adam & Eve, and placed them in a garden to care for, and given them everything they'll need to have a happy and rewarding life forever. According to psychologists, that's all we need, right? If everyone was brought up in a good environment and had all their needs satisfied, then there would be no evil, everyone would be good. **WRONG!**

In our next lesson we'll study Chapter 3, one of the most important chapters in the entire Bible, where the perfect world and the perfect people get messed up, and what God begins to do to correct the situation. In Chapter 3 you will learn why there is suffering in the world, why people are the way they are, and why we need God to bail us out. Don't miss it!

*In Christ,  
Dusty Rhodes*