

Genesis 2:4-25 — Man

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Good morning CrossWinds family. If you are new, my name is Kurt. I am one of the pastors. I would like to extend a hearty welcome. Thank you for joining us. We are in a study of the book of Genesis. Last week, we finished Genesis 1. We learned about God's incredible power. He created everything in the universe in only six days by just speaking. That is awesome power. Today, as we put our fingers in the text at Genesis 2, we will see how even more impressive than God's awesome power is the depth of his love for you and me.

Before we jump into the text of Genesis 2, we need to understand the relationship between the first and second chapters of Genesis. Genesis 1 is a huge flyover on creation. It is the big picture of the creation story. God doesn't give us all the details of what happened on each day. He simply gives us a summary of each day. In Genesis 2, we move from the big picture of creation and zoom in on the fine details of the creation of Adam and Eve on day six.

Some critical scholars, that are educated beyond their intelligence, will tell you Genesis 2 is in conflict with Genesis 1. They will tell you Genesis 2 is an alternative creation account. As we will see in a few moments, Genesis 1 and 2 are not conflicting creation stories. They are complementary creation stories. When we see things that don't appear to agree between these chapters, don't assume the Bible is wrong. Just dig a little deeper to find the reason why things look a little odd.

Let's pick up where we left off with Genesis 2:4, which tells us the end of the creation story on day one.

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. Genesis 2:4 (ESV)

In our first week in Genesis, I told you Genesis has 10 chapter markers. Ten times in the book it says *these are the generations of*. When Moses closed a chapter he wrote *these are the generations of* and then tells us what chapter he was closing. Later in the book we will see him close a chapter by telling us *these are the generations of Adam, and* that closes the story of Adam. Later Moses closes the chapter on Noah by saying *and these are the generations of Noah*. Moses told us he just finished telling the story of the creation of the heavens and earth.

From this point forward we are looking at the creation of man, not an alternative creation story of the earth.

Something else we need to talk about is the phrase *in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens*. When we see the phrase *in the day*, it can leave us feeling uneasy. In this verse the word *day* obviously does not mean a literal 24-hour day. It is speaking in a more general sense about the creation week as a period of time. Your mind immediately drifts back to the creation story which also talks about days. You begin wondering if we should think of the days in the creation story as long periods of time, like we have in this verse, instead of literal 24-hour days. What should we do about this apparent conflict? Does the Hebrew word for day mean a long indefinite period of time or a literal 24-hour day? Here is what you need to know.

1. In Hebrew, whenever the word *day* has a number, it is always referring to a literal 24-hour day, not a period of time. One day or two days means exactly that, one or two 24-hour days. Day one and day two refer to literal days.
2. The days of creation had evenings and mornings. Only literal 24-hour days have evenings and mornings.
3. According to Exodus 20:11, which was Moses commenting on his own writing in Genesis 1, he said,

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. Exodus 20:11 (ESV)

Moses said the creation days were six literal work days followed by one literal rest day. God created the universe in six literal days to give us a pattern. God also wants us to work six literal days and have one literal day of rest and worship.

Those are some of the ways we know the days of creation are literal days, not indefinite periods of time.

What was on our planet like before we messed it up?

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, and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground.— Genesis 2:5–6 (ESV)

Immediately we face a huge issue. If you were here last week, you remember God created all the plants on day three. According to these verses no plant had sprung up from the ground and God is about to create man. Something looks majorly out of sync between Genesis 2 and Genesis 1.

When you run across these kinds of problems, where the Bible looks like it is saying something contradictory, you need to think about how you will approach this problem. Some people look at the Bible with pride. They think Moses wrote down a bunch of mistakes. They place themselves over the Bible to correct it. That is foolishness of the highest degree.

The other way to look at this problem is to approach it with humility. Maybe there is something we don't comprehend. The Old Testament was translated out of Hebrew into English. Maybe there is something in the Hebrew we don't see clearly in the English.

Even if you don't have original language skills, a careful reading of this verse clues you in that this verse is not talking about every plant. This verse talks about a time when no bush of the field or small plant of the field had sprung up. This is not talking about all plants. It is only talking about specific field plants.

Add in a little work in your Hebrew dictionary and this verse unlocks itself. The Hebrew word for *bush of the field* literally means thorns, thistles, or weeds. When God created Adam there were no weeds in the fields because it hadn't rained.

When it says *small plants of the field*, the Hebrew for small field plants are small field plants that require cultivation. Cassuto, the Hebrew commentator, explained that small field plants are field plants that require cultivation, such as wheat, barley and other plants that farmers put in the ground for a harvest.

Another interesting part to this verse is the word *ground* is a technical Hebrew term for a specific kind of land. It is talking about arable land or the kind of land on which you grow crop and get a harvest.

Genesis 1 and 2 are not in conflict. All this verse says is that when God created Adam there were no weeds in the fields and there were no crops in the fields because it hadn't rained and man was not yet created to work the ground.

In Genesis 3 we find this exact same thing but in reverse. As a consequence of Adam's sin they had to farm for food and fight the weeds for food. The need for the hard work of farming and fighting weeds is a consequence of sin.

...thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.
Genesis 3:18–19 (ESV)

Every time you spray Round Up on the weeds, thank Adam for sinning. If he hadn't sinned we wouldn't have weeds.

In a moment we will see that the Garden of Eden was a place that didn't require farming. It was filled with fruit trees that were watered by a river. All Adam and Eve had to do was take their shopping cart and walk down the street picking the fresh fruit from the trees. God provided everything they needed and everything they wanted. After the fall, free fruit trees were out. The hard work of farming was in. As a consequence of sin the earth was no longer a free pick-it and eat-it paradise.

...therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. Genesis 3:23 (ESV)

In addition, when Adam was formed, there was no rain on the earth. The text says a mist was going up from the land and watering the ground. If you look at the footnote in your ESV Bible on the word *mist*, you see it can also be translated as the word *spring*. In a moment I will show you why I think the word *spring* is a better translation. When Adam was created there was no hydrological cycle as we know it now. It was not evaporation by the sun followed by cooling in the clouds forming rain to water the land. Apparently, the entire planet was covered in a thick vapor canopy and a mist or a spring watered the earth before rain. Just like Adam was forced to pull weeds and plant a garden as a consequence of his sin, 1,600 years later, as a consequence of sin in the days of Noah, God collapsed the vapor canopy and changed the climate of the earth to what we know today. The earth is now watered by rain. Before Noah, it was watered either by a mist upon the ground or a spring that created water in the ground.

Where does life come from?

...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. Genesis 2:7 (ESV)

God created Adam by forming him out of the dust of the ground. The Hebrews word for *forming* is interesting. it means *carefully crafted* by design. The picture is God sculpting Adam out of the earth like a master sculptor crafts a masterpiece out of marble. God crafted Adam with detail and precision. He crafted Adam with care and beauty. Adam wasn't slapped together like a mud pie. Adam was the master work of God, a sculptor. In the same way, each of us is hand-crafted by God, the master artist.

This is really important to understand because it is easy to get depressed and begin to question our value and worth. We can think we are pieces of garbage. We can think we are mistakes. Sometimes we don't like who we are. We feel we are just social security numbers on a page.

To God, you are not another number. Each of us was handcrafted by God, just like Adam. We are each one of his masterpieces. We have deep value and worth. Psalm 139 talks about how God carefully created each one of us, just like he carefully crafted Adam.

For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. Psalm 139:13–14 (ESV)

The Psalmist tells us each one of us was knit together in our mother's womb. We are handmade by God. We are not mass produced on a conveyor belt.

Did you ever have a grandmother knit you a blanket or a cap? When your grandmother knits a blanket, that blanket will never go to Goodwill. It was handmade. You keep it because it was made with love. My friends, that is not just the way your grandmother makes a blanket. It is the way God made Adam, and it is the way God formed you. He knit you together in your mother's womb, designing you like a master craftsman to be just the way he wanted you to be. It gets better.

It also says God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life. I want you to notice God didn't just blow at Adam from across the room. He didn't sneeze in Adam's general direction. The picture is God literally putting his lips on Adam's lips and breathing life into his body. The same God who made the entire

universe with just a word stooped down and gave Adam the kiss of life. In the same way, the only reason we are alive is because God gave us the kiss of life. Life does not just happen by accident.

Life comes from God. Life is a gift of God. It cannot be created by man. Some of you watched the latest Marvel action movie Age of Ultron. In the movie they create Ultron, which is an artificial intelligence that comes to life. That will never happen. Man cannot make something that will come to life. The only one who can give life is God. If you have any doubt about how God feels about you, know this. God gave you life. He kissed you into existence.

God is not just the source of all physical life but he is also the source of all spiritual life. Just as we cannot create physical life, we cannot create spiritual life. Both are a gift from God. If you are a Christian, it is only because God gave life to your dead spirit when you heard the good news of Jesus so you could respond to it. When someone becomes spiritually alive to God it is just as much of a supernatural act of God as when someone is bestowed physical life in the womb of his mother. God is the source of all life, both physical and spiritual.

Thus it is written, “The first man Adam became a living being”; the last Adam became a life-giving spirit. 1 Corinthians 15:45 (ESV)

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. John 5:21 (ESV)

So far we learned the earth was a great place. There were no weeds. Nobody needed Round Up. You didn't need tractors and combines to plant and harvest. You didn't need rain because the ground watered itself. We also learned Adam, and each one of us, was handmade by God and kissed to life out of love. Now we zoom in on Eden.

What did the Garden of Eden look like?

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. 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. A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. The name of the first is the Pison. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. Genesis 2:8–14 (ESV)

Everything on the earth was good but we learn all the goodness on earth was not equally distributed. In the east there was a land called Eden. Eden literally means luxurious, pleasurable or delightful. In the Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, Eden is translated as Paradise. Eden was paradise on earth. Eden was the neighborhood where everybody wanted to live. It was the best place on earth.

In Eden God planted a garden. The garden was not all of Eden. It was a place in Eden. In the garden God caused to spring up every kind of tree that was nice to look at and was good for food. No ugly trees were in God's garden. There were no nasty tasteless fruit like plum trees that make prunes. Nobody likes prunes. There were only good fruit trees in God's garden.

Incidentally, the Hebrew for *made to spring up* doesn't necessarily mean to grow from seed. This Hebrew word in this verb tense literally means to grow abundantly and thickly. The picture of God's garden is a paradise packed with luscious fruit trees. If you like fruit, this was the place to go.

Earlier we learned there was no rain on the earth. Everything was watered by a spring that came up from the ground. Here we find the details on this spring. There was a spring that came up in Eden and it flowed through Eden and into God's garden where it watered the tree of life and the other trees. The the water continued out of the garden. When it left the garden it broke into four rivers. Don't try to find these rivers. We can only identify two of them. After the flood, the topography of the earth changed making these rivers impossible to identify.

If I am understanding this right, the water came up in Eden, went through the garden and the tree of life. It then left Eden and broke into four rivers. Those rivers watered the four corners of the earth. All of life could have been sustained by a mighty river that began in Eden, ran through the garden and extended into the earth. I am not dogmatic on this. I am just speculating. We see the concept of life in the Garden of Eden sustain by river water in Genesis 13:10.

And Lot lifted up his eyes and saw that the Jordan Valley was well watered everywhere like the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, in the direction of Zoar. (This was before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) Genesis 13:10 (ESV)

When Lot saw the Jordan Valley was well watered like the Garden of Eden, he said it was well watered like Egypt? How is Egypt watered? By the Nile river. It is river-based irrigation.

In our first week in Genesis we learned the creation story at the beginning of Genesis parallels the new creation story at the end of Revelation. I wondered if there were parallels between the watering of the Garden of Eden in Genesis and the New Jerusalem. Look what we find in Revelation 22.

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:1–2 (ESV)

The river of the water of life flows from the throne of God and passes through the middle of the city where it touches the tree of life. The river of the water of life then flows to the rest of the city. This appears to be very similar to what took place in the Garden of Eden.

When we turn to Ezekiel 28, we read about the fall of Satan. One interesting tidbit we learn is there might have been a mountain in Eden. This may have been the mountain from which a great spring of water flowed. It may have cascaded down the mountain, ran through Eden, then in mighty rivers, watered the rest of the earth.

You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. Ezekiel 28:13–14 (ESV)

Remember, I am just speculating at this point. Don't send me mail calling me a heretic. I am just wondering if the entire planet depended upon a mighty spring for water from the mountain of God like the New Jerusalem.

God and man met in the Garden of Eden. Man got kicked out of the Garden in Genesis 3. God and man were reunited in Revelation 22, which is the New Jerusalem. Between the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem we have the tabernacle and the temple. When we study them we find many of the same features of the Garden of Eden were in the tabernacle and temple. The

tabernacle and temple were the earthly places where God and man met once again.

For instance, the guardian cherubs that guarded Eden showed up woven into the fabric of the veils in God's house. The cherubim also guarded the cover of the mercy seat on the arch of the covenant. The lamp stand in the temple was created to represent the tree of life. The tabernacle and temple were temporary Gardens of Eden.

What was man's job in the garden?

The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. Genesis 2:15 (ESV)

Even though Adam was put in paradise and all he had to do was to pick-it and eat-it when it came to lunch, Adam's life was not to be about perpetual relaxation. Adam had a job. He had to work the garden and keep the garden.

We know working the garden didn't involve pulling weeds. It didn't involve the hard work of planting and harvesting. It didn't involve getting water to the plants because a river did that for Adam. All of Adam's energy was devoted to creativity in the garden, not maintenance of the garden.

There is an interesting parallel in this verse. The words *work it* and *keep it* are the same Hebrew words used to describe the job of the priests in the tabernacle. Remember the tabernacle and the temple were miniature Gardens of Eden. Adam's work was to be the first priest in God's house. Look how the book of Numbers describes the priests' job of working and keeping the temple.

They shall keep guard over him and over the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle. They shall guard all the furnishings of the tent of meeting, and keep guard over the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle. Numbers 3:7–8 (ESV)

Working can also be translated as ministering. Keeping means guarding. Adam was not just the gardener, he was also guardian of the garden. He was not just to make sure everything was running right but he was to stop anything from entering the garden and going wrong.

Men, let me talk with you. Today our jobs parallel Adams. First, we are to work in our homes. We are to be productive for the honor and glory of God, just like Adam was in his home.

The other part of our jobs that we often forget is we are to be the guardians of our home, just like Adam was to be the guardian of his home. Men, this means we are the protectors of our wives and the protectors of our children.

Today, this doesn't mean we need to prop a musket by the window. It means we are the ones that tells the kids to turn off the television when they are watching trash for their brains. We are the ones that put Internet filters on our families' computers and take away our children's cell phones to protect them if we need to limit or stop their Internet access. We are to protect our wives by making sure they are driving a safe car to work. We bring glory to God by guarding and protecting our families.

What was the temptation?

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 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." Genesis 2:16–17 (ESV)

I won't spend much time on this because we will talk about it in much greater depth next week. In the center of the garden were two trees. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Many people wonder what made the tree of the knowledge of good and evil so deadly. Was its fruit

poisonous? I don't think it was. God created everything good. Next week we will see the fruit looked good. What was it about this tree that made it bad? It was not the essence of the fruit that made it evil, it was the rebellion against God's words that made it evil.

God saved his best for last.

Then the Lord God said, "It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him." Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens 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. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, "This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man." Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. Genesis 2:18–25 (ESV)

Up to this point God had blessed the socks right off Adam. Adam's accommodations were the best place on the planet. Adam had an all-you-can-eat fruit bar with the best fruits on the planet. Adam had a job, and everything was going well. Adam was a happy bachelor. The problem was that sometimes young men that have everything going for them don't realize they are missing God's best gift outside of Jesus.

God looked at Adam, who was fat and happy on fruit, and decided Adam needed a bachelor awareness program.

God had him be the master of ceremonies at the, "Name the animals pet parade." After naming all the animals, Adam realized none of them were quite his style. The dog was man's best friend but Adam didn't like the way he shed

around the house. Miss Monkey tried a dress but she was too hairy of a woman for Adam's style. The parrot could hold a conversation but it just kept repeating everything he said. Nothing fit Adam. Adam realized he was alone.

God put Adam to sleep. He took out a rib. Adam was made incomplete. God formed him a wife. A wife to complete him.

I love Adam's responded when he saw her. He burst out in a love poem. *This is bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh, she will be called woman because she was taken out of man.* The perfect house didn't make Adam sing. The free meal plan didn't make Adam sing. The great job didn't make Adam sing. The sight of his wife made him sing with joy. God saved his best gift for last! Men, can I get an "amen" on that one? Outside of Jesus, a good wife is the best gift God can give.

Notice she was a helper perfectly suited for him. She was identical to him but different than him. Guys, your wife is supposed to be different. She is literally the only thing on the planet that can complete you because she is what was taken out of you. Adam was given his equal and his opposite. She was not his clone. She was his complement.

At this point, God officiated the first wedding ceremony. He gave away the bride to the groom and officiated the wedding for the happiest day of Adam's life. Moses made three comments about God's first wedding that should be honored by all men, marriages and wedding. 1) Men are to leave their parents' home. 2) They are to make a commitment to their wife. That is called a marriage

ceremony. 3) Then, and only then, are they to become one flesh in physical intimacy.

Application

What can we learn from Genesis 2? Genesis 1 was about the awesome power of God to create the universe. Genesis 2 is about the even more amazing love God has toward each of us.

Look at God's goodness to Adam. In God's creation there were no weeds for Adam to pull. There were no plants he needed to cultivate for food. It was a free pick-it and eat-it party. There wasn't even a need to hope for water through rain. God watered everything by a mighty river.

When God created Adam, he fashioned him by hand and gave him life through a kiss of love.

As if the best of all creation wasn't enough, God saved his best gift for his last gift. God gave Adam a wife. When Adam saw his wife it made him burst into song.

Genesis 2 is incredibly clear about how God feels about us. He loves us and he is incredibly good, kind and gracious to us. We deserve none of it.

When life gets hard and we face sickness, heartache, death and pain, I often hear people say, "Why does God hate me?" He doesn't hate you. He loves you. All of the pain in life comes from sin done to you or sin done by you. God isn't trying to ruin your life. He loves you!

If you think the Garden of Eden shows the incredible love of God toward each of us, look at Jesus and we will see God's love with even greater clarity. After sin enters the world God set in motion a plan to send his own son to die in

our places for our sin. Jesus adopts us as his brothers and sister. We go from being a little below the angels to being the most highly exalted beings in the universe under Jesus. That is a loving gift we don't deserve.

My friends, the Garden of Eden was an amazing place, but it was lost. The tree of life is now in heaven and it is returning again in the New Jerusalem. In the New Jerusalem we will be more exalted and blessed than Adam and Eve ever were. We deserve none of it. That is the incredible love God has for us. Will you trust him? When God says he loves you, will you take him at his word?



Dr. Kurt Trucksess is ordained in the Evangelical Free Church of America. He enjoys reading, writing, time with his family and wrestling with his sons. His favorite topics are preaching and ancient rhetoric. Feel free to contact him at www.Christ2RCulture.com (www.c2rc.com)

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