

Genesis 2A (2011)

- Continuing in Chapter 2 with a “zoom in”, focused on Day 6 of Creation

[Gen. 2:4](#) This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.

[Gen. 2:5](#) Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

[Gen. 2:6](#) But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

- Moses is telling the story of Adam
 - In Chapter 1, the earth has been formed in perfection with a man and woman
 - But how did we get to our imperfect state with a decaying world?
 - To tell that story, Moses will begin to tell the point at which things begin to change
 - Which was immediately after man arrived
 - So Moses begins the next part of the story by going back to right before man arrived
 - The world is nearing completion
 - But the business of planting and harvesting had yet to begin
 - And man had yet to arrive to care for the garden
- In setting up the story of Chapter 2, Moses gives us an interesting detail worth noting
 - There has been no rain on the earth...only a mist to rise up and water the surface of the earth
 - Indicates that rain was not part of God’s original design
 - When did rain begin?

- We'll see in Chapter 9 that rain began with the flood event
- We'll look more at that when we get there, but there are two interesting details from the flood story to corroborate the theory of no rain
 - Gen 7:11 says the flood gates of the sky are opened
 - During the flood these gates were freed, loosed for the first time
 - Gen 9:12-14, God "set" (*nathan* = added) His bow to the sky
 - Which means a rainbow had never been there before
- God held back rain until the flood so that He could reserve the rainbow as a sign of His mercy to the earth in the generations following the flood

[Gen. 2:7](#) Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

- This description is more detail of the way God formed man in Chapter 1
 - Compare to 1:27
 - This corresponds to the first part of that verse
- Man was created from the material of the earth
 - Everything else was created *ex nihilo* or out of nothing
 - But Man was created out of dust
 - Formed – *yatsar*, means pottery
 - Why does God create man from the dirt?
 - If Man is God's greatest creation and the reason God made the rest of the world...
 - Then why make Man from the dirt? That seems lowly
 - We get the answer for why in Chapter 3

- For now just know that God was making decisions here, including how to create Man, with full knowledge of what the future holds
 - God breathed life into man
 - This is a completely different experience than was applied earlier
 - God gives a physical life and then a spiritual life

[Is. 42:5](#) Thus says God the LORD,
 Who created the heavens and stretched them out,
 Who spread out the earth and its offspring,
 Who gives breath to the people on it
 And spirit to those who walk in it,

[Job 34:14](#) "If He should determine to do so,
 If He should gather to Himself His spirit and His breath,
[Job 34:15](#) All flesh would perish together,
 And man would return to dust.

- The removal of the spirit God gave us results in the body dying
- Remember the parable Jesus told that ended this way:

[Luke 12:19](#) 'And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry."'

[Luke 12:20](#) "But God said to him, ' You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?'

- It was God's Spirit that gave man his own soul or spirit

[Job 33:4](#) "The Spirit of God has made me,
 And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

[Job 33:5](#) " Refute me if you can;
 Array yourselves before me, take your stand.

[Job 33:6](#) "Behold, I belong to God like you;
 I too have been formed out of the clay.

- God created Man as a perfect sinless body and an innocent spirit
 - And in this state, men lived eternally
 - The body never experienced decay

- But now we inherit a disobedient spirit in a corrupted, sinful body
- As God is at work to correct this problem, He begins by giving every believer a new spirit (we're born again by faith)
 - Later a new body (1 Cor 15:51)
- In summary, we have a different kind of life from any other creature
 - Plants are biologically alive, but don't have *chay nephesh* (life blood)
 - Animals have *chay nephesh*, but don't have the spirit that comes from God's breath
 - Animals can die – made them a suitable sacrifice
 - But they can't be murdered
 - Man has *chay nephesh* and a living spirit, and since they are created in God's image, they can be murdered
- God draws this very distinction when He institutes the eating of meat in Genesis 9

Gen. 9:5 "Surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man's brother I will require the life of man.

Gen. 9:6 "Whoever sheds man's blood,
By man his blood shall be shed,
For in the image of God
He made man.

- The penalty of taking a man's life is that a man lose his life
 - The stiffest penalty possible
 - Reflects an important principle of scripture virtually lost in modern culture
 - We have a spiritual obligation to treat other men with love and respect regardless of how they treat us because they are made in the image of God
- Given these injunctions, can we ever take the life of another man?

- God Himself says yes, and He even says we must under certain situations
 - The difference is lawful vs. unlawful taking of life
 - Death penalty is a legal remedy

Gen. 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.

Gen. 2:9 Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Gen. 2:10 Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers.

Gen. 2:11 The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

Gen. 2:12 The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

Gen. 2:13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush.

Gen. 2:14 The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

Gen. 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

- Begin with a summary statement for verses 9-14
 - What are the rest of the verses covering?
 - This is a detailed description of the first half of v8 – the start of the garden
 - Perhaps God sets up this garden in a separate act apart from the earlier day
 - But it's meant in the sense of cultivating a new garden to grow from existing material rather than creating something all new
 - The garden was "East" – from man's perspective
 - If the garden is East of man, then Man already exists at this point
 - And the garden is created a distance away from the Man
 - All this implies that God intended Man to be an audience for this separate act

- Furthermore, Man is “placed” in the garden (*sum* = assigned, set)
- He must have been moved to the Garden...how we wonder?
- Why does God want man to witness this process in this way?
 - The process communicates God’s loving intention to provide for Man
 - He witnesses God’s care and preparation
 - Remember Man is less than a day old
 - Adam is the only human being who couldn’t say “I wasn’t born yesterday.”
 - This is part of how God trains Adam to understand who and what he is
- Then the garden was filled with trees (every tree that was pleasing to look at and good for food)
 - Remember, this is not the moment trees were created (that happened on Day 3)
 - This is a separate moment on Day 6 when God causes a garden to appear for Adam
 - There were already trees and plants on the Earth, just as today we might create a garden in our backyard
 - In the garden were two unique trees (also with fruit)
 - What do we know of the first tree, the Tree of Life?
 - It’s mentioned in Gen 3:22
 - It appears again in Rev 22

[Rev. 22:2](#) in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- Is this tree the source of man’s life?

- Can't be the source of life because Man's life came before the tree
- Furthermore, God is the source of all life
 - He doesn't need a tree to keep us alive
- Yet God may have chosen to make it the means by which He sustains life

Gen. 3:22 Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever"

- It might be the means to ensure immortality in physical terms
- A better question would be why create a tree to provide eternal life? Why not just do it without a tree?
 - The question is even more profound when you remember that it exists again in the eternal state in the New Heavens and Earth
 - The answer is likely the same for both the garden and the future state
 - A tree we must visit regularly to sustain life becomes a powerful reminder that our life has a sustainer
 - When you have an immortal body, it's important to have a physical reminder that life has been made possible by God
- That brings us to the other tree...the Tree of Knowledge
 - It's a real tree – Eve eats from it
 - It also had pleasing food
 - Therefore, it probably didn't look much different from any other tree
 - What does it mean that this is a tree of the knowledge of good and evil?
 - What does good and evil mean? (Address in a minute)
- Let's look at the remaining description of the garden
 - The rest of the description deals with rivers

- Interesting details, especially because the verb tense changes mid-description
 - In verse 10, the description from within the Garden is in past tense
 - In the following verses, the rivers are described in present tense
 - The other rivers are modern (to Moses' Day)
 - The place name references are post-flood
- Maybe the initial description was handed down to Moses from Adam (or God)
 - But only God, Adam and Woman knew what it looked like
 - Adam lived the rest of his life with that memory
 - The garden was destroyed in the flood, so no other man could have ever seen it
 - Interestingly, the garden stood for 700 years after Adam's death (aged 930)

Gen. 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

- The word for cultivate (*abad*) actually means to "serve"
 - Adam is told to serve God by keeping the garden, or securing it, preserving it
 - Basically, Adam gets his first job
 - Like most young men, his first job was taking care of the yard for Dad
 - Turns out the oldest profession is actually gardening
 - We were created to serve God – even from the beginning
 - Adam's work differed from ours
 - In a perfect setting, without difficulty
 - In fact, it's hard to imagine what tending a perfect garden really looked like

- Maybe the bushes were trimmed to look like Gabriel and Michael
- Scripture teaches that we will work in farming and building in the Millennial kingdom
 - And again we will serve God before His throne in the new heaven and earth
- In fact, you could make the argument that a retirement (in the way we see it) is not Biblical
 - No man of God is ever portrayed in the Bible as retiring, ceasing from working to serve God
 - We aren't supposed to cease work and serve only ourselves
 - We may cease a full time occupation, but then we just transition to serving God in a new way
- Paul warns about this kind of lifestyle:

[2Th. 3:10](#) For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

[2Th. 3:11](#) For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

[2Th. 3:12](#) Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.

- Paul says the testimony of a Christian life is not what God has done for us, but ultimately is the testimony that we are His.
 - The nature of our existence from here into eternity should be to serve God
 - And Adam wasn't exempt from that