

Genesis 2C (2011)

- Last week we spent an entire teaching on two verses (a new low for me)
 - But those two verses (vs.16-17) were important enough to warrant the extra attention
 - Together they explained God's purpose for the creation and the reason why faith in God's word is now the means to our salvation
 - I hope you agreed it was worth a week to examine them in detail
 - But today we are moving forward to finish the chapter
- Notice we are still learning the details of Day 6 and the creation of man and woman
 - Over the past two lessons, we've watched God create Adam from the ground and breathe life into him
 - Then God prepared a unique home for Adam, a garden
 - And God placed Adam in the garden and commanded him to serve God by keeping the garden
 - God didn't need a gardener, but He desired a servant who obeyed God
 - And then last week, God extended His covenant with Adam by giving a commandment and a promise
 - The commandment was not to eat the fruit of a certain tree; the tree of the knowledge of good and evil
 - With that commandment came a promise that should Adam decide to eat, he will experience spiritual death
- Now this week, we move forward into the events of that day

Gen. 2:18 Then the LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him."

Gen. 2:19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

Gen. 2:20 The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.

- God says man should not be alone
 - It's not "good" for him
 - We notice back in Genesis 1 that the conclusion of Day 6 was occasion for God to declare that His work was "very good"
 - But now we learn that midway through that day, God decided that His creation on that day was "not good"
 - God decides it's not good for Adam to be alone
 - This is a strange statement, since Adam isn't alone
 - He is walking with God in the Garden
 - God Himself is the perfect companion
 - It suggests that God is thinking ahead to a future need, when Adam will need a helper other than God
 - The words for "suitable helper" form a unique Hebrew phrase in the Bible
 - It occurs only here
 - It literally means "servant in front"
 - The sense of the phrase is to describe a perfect compliment to Adam
 - Think of a sphere that has been sliced in half using a jagged cut
 - Each piece of the sphere is perfectly matched to its missing half
 - The two pieces can only fit to each other...no other part can match perfectly
 - And only after the two sections are reunited will the sphere become whole again
 - This is the sense of God's decree
 - He's looking for the other half of Adam
 - Something perfectly matched, a helper who makes Adam complete

- And the match is perfect physically, spiritually and intellectually
- God begins the search with the animals, but we know He ultimately arrives at Woman
 - And so we have to understand the phrase “suitable helper” in the context of a wife
 - And we’re not talking about a girlfriend, a domestic partner, a live-in lover
 - Nor are we talking about a slave or second-class member of a marriage
 - We’re talking about a life-long, committed marriage partner
- So, what does the phrase “suitable helper” mean when talking about a wife?
 - First, it’s not a demeaning phrase or term at all
 - In fact, God often calls Himself a servant using the same Hebrew word
 - It is used to describe someone committed as a willing partner in an honorable and important life work
 - It means a servant who values the opportunity to serve
 - The word is important because it implies several expectations that God has for a marriage relationship
 - First God is implying that Adam’s helper is to be engaged in a work of service with Adam
 - She is a committed helper with Adam in the work God gave Adam
 - This is why she is called a “helper”
 - Adam received the command to serve God before the Woman appeared
 - And so when God determined that Adam needed help in accomplishing that work, He offered Adam a “helper” in that work

- Secondly, it implies that the ultimate purpose of marriage is to make Adam more effective in serving God
 - It is not an arrangement designed to enhance our social life or financial standing
 - It is an arrangement that should result in a more successful life of service to the Lord, both for Adam and Woman
 - If a marriage isn't making both partners more effective servants for the Lord, then something needs to change
 - Finally, this description teaches that the work begins with the husband
 - The wife is the helper for a life of service that was first given to the man
 - While the woman's work stands on its own and has equal value and importance to God, it can't be a replacement for the spiritual service every man must pursue to the glory of God
 - A wife will find it difficult to help a husband who isn't himself already engaged in a work
 - You can sum up the relationship by a comparison
 - Woman helps Adam in the way the Holy Spirit is the Helper sent by Christ to every believer
 - A life-long companion
 - A counselor for the sake of righteousness
 - A source of love and comfort and encouragement
 - And at times a source of conviction
- But before we get to the moment when God creates this perfect helper, we see He begins by creating the animals for Adam
 - And interestingly He creates them from the dirt of the ground, just as He created Adam
 - Here we learn that the animal kingdom comes from the same substance as Adam himself

- This becomes important in Chapter 3
- And then Adam is given the right to name the animals
 - Up to this point God has named every part of His creation (other than the sun and moon)
 - But here He grants Adam the right to name the animals
 - And in that way God is implicitly assigning Adam dominion over these creatures
- In fact, this is the true purpose of this exercise
 - God knows that the animals are not suitable companions for Adam even before He begins the creation process
 - There is no discovery for God during this process
 - He is not surprised that Adam finds the animals insufficient companions
 - God has already stated that Adam needs a perfectly matched helpmate
 - Nevertheless God asks Adam to watch while He makes all the animals in the creation, and then asks Adam to name them
 - Clearly, God's intent is not for Adam to arrive at a successful helper
 - He is engaged in teaching Adam something more important
- First, God is demonstrating that Adam is to rule over the animal kingdom
 - And the animals are under Adam's dominion, made clear by the fact that God grants Adam the right to name the animals
- Secondly, Adam was to understand that the animal kingdom will serve man but in an incomplete way
 - They will be useful to man
 - They give useful work
 - They are companions

- But they are not substitutes as THE helper for the purpose of serving God
 - Through this exercise, Adam is exposed firsthand to both these truths
 - Unfortunately, we'll see in Chapter 3 that Adam missed the significance of this lesson
- Looking at the naming process for a moment, Adam watches a parade of animals and names each one in turn
 - This suggests that Adam was able to speak a language from the beginning
 - And we can even make a reasonable assumption concerning what language Adam spoke
 - If we look at the Biblical record prior to the Tower of Babel and the confusing of human language, we will notice that all the names have meanings
 - For example, Adam means earth
 - Abel means vanity
 - Lamech means warrior
 - Methuselah means when he dies, it shall be sent
 - But these meanings are only true in a specific language
 - Only in Hebrew does *adam* mean earth
 - Only in Hebrew does *abel* mean vanity, etc.
 - After the confusing of language at the Tower of Babel, names in the Bible no longer have meaning except the Hebrew names
 - With the arrival of new languages, the meaning of names is lost except for Hebrew names
 - Therefore, we can safely assume that the first language given to man was Hebrew, and all men from Adam onward spoke Hebrew until the scattering of language at the tower
- At this point, you might ask how it was possible for Adam to name the entire animal kingdom in one day?

- The answer is two-fold
 - First, remember that Adam is naming “kinds” as they were created
 - The full spectrum of animal diversity had yet to emerge from the various kinds God created
 - So the total number of animal types would have been far fewer than we know today
 - For example, Adam was likely asked to name one kind of animal a “bird” without necessarily naming each distinct subtype of bird individually
 - Distinctions like canary, nuthatch, sparrow, etc. were made later
 - Secondly, Adam was probably not asked to name every animal God had created
 - For example, God never asked Adam to name fish, yet fish have names today and men have dominion over fish
 - Therefore, we can conclude that God gave Adam a representative cross section of animals to name without necessarily presenting Adam with every animal
- This all makes sense when we remember the ultimate purpose in the naming process
 - The point of the process was to show Adam he had dominion over animals
 - And to demonstrate that Adam needed a helper that was fundamentally different from any other creature in the world
 - These points were made clear enough without necessitating that God present Adam with every single animal
 - A suitably large sample would be enough
 - Even then, Dr. Henry Morris estimates that Adam could have easily inspected and named 3,000 kinds in only five hours...more than enough to get the point

- So God sets about to make a suitable helper for Adam
 - What follows is a fascinating process that reflects God's ultimate purpose
 - Before we read how God creates woman, let's compare what we see happening on Day 6 from earlier in Chapter 1

Gen. 1:24 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind"; and it was so.

Gen. 1:25 God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.

Gen. 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

Gen. 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

Gen. 1:28 God blessed them; and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

- Notice the order of events in Chapter 1 compared to Chapter 2
 - In Genesis 1 the events on Day 6 are:
 - God fills the land by creating the animals
 - Then He makes man, both male and female
 - Then He instructs man and woman to have dominion over the animals
 - But in Genesis 2 the order is:
 - God creates Man
 - God creates the animals
 - Adam is shown he has dominion over the animals
 - God creates Woman
 - There would appear to be a different order for Day 6 events
 - Which is another reason critics claim that Chapters 1 & 2 represent two different creation accounts

- To answer this question, remember first that Chapter 2 was written to clarify and explain Day 6 in detail
 - If God had believed that the explanation of Chapter 1 had been sufficient, He would never have given us Chapter 2
 - Chapter 1 was a summary of the day, while Chapter 2 gives us the detailed, specific events in detail (zoom out vs. zoom in)
 - Therefore, we should view Chapter 2 as the definitive timeline since it was written for that purpose
 - Secondly, the purpose of Chapter 1 was to highlight the importance of mankind in God's plan of creation
 - So naturally, the creation of Man is left for the end of Day 6, thus communicating that Man was the crowning achievement of creation
 - But the purpose of Chapter 2 is to explain God's care and attention in creating Man, and in particular, to explain the existence of Woman
 - So, the order of events become more important to the story
 - And Moses sets them in precise order to explain God's purposes and intent in the creation process
- Now we turn to God's creation of Woman

[Gen. 2:21](#) So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place.

[Gen. 2:22](#) The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.

[Gen. 2:23](#) The man said,
 " This is now bone of my bones,
 And flesh of my flesh;
 She shall be called Woman,
 Because she was taken out of Man."

[Gen. 2:24](#) For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.

- God's last act of Creation is to make Woman
 - Only after God makes Woman will He finally rest from the work of Creation

- First, we notice that Woman is created in a very unique way
 - She is not made *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), nor is she made the way Adam was made (out of dirt)
 - Instead, she is made out of Adam
 - Ultimately, she is made of the same substance as Adam (dirt)
 - But there is tremendous significance in the fact that she is made from part of Adam and not from a new part of the Earth
 - The meaning of that significance is covered in Chapter 3
- To begin the surgery, God puts Adam into a deep sleep
 - We logically assume that the sleep was necessary to protect Adam from the pain of the surgery, but we shouldn't run to that conclusion too quickly
 - In a perfect world, it may not have been true that Adam would have felt pain under these circumstances
 - And even if pain would have been natural, God could certainly have eliminated the pain without putting Adam to sleep
 - Remember that Shadrach, Meshach and Abed-nego were protected from the heat and pain of a furnace by God in the book of Daniel
 - This suggests that the deep sleep means something much more than simply some type of anaesthetic
 - Instead, the deep sleep has important symbolic meaning
 - You may remember that when God enters into a covenant with Abraham, it begins with God putting Abraham into a deep sleep
 - We will study that scene more in Genesis 15, but I can tell you now that the sleep of Abraham was intended to convey a similar message
 - Abraham's deep sleep pictures Abraham dead (in his sin) while God alone performs the work of establishing a covenant to save Abraham and his descendants
 - Similarly, Adam is placed in a deep sleep so that God makes clear that He alone is performing a work to save Adam

- What is the work in this case?
- Well consider that Adam appears to be dead while in this deep sleep
- And from his flesh, a bride is made
- Does that sound familiar?
 - In the future, a new Adam will go to the grave for a time
 - But later this new Adam, Christ, will resurrect back to life, like coming back from a deep sleep
 - And as a result of this deep sleep, God will make for Himself a Bride for this new Adam, a Bride taken from the body of Christ
 - The Bride being the Church, of course
 - Even in this early point of the Bible we see God foreshadowing the church
- How was Woman actually made?
 - The Bible says she came from the rib of Adam
 - In fact, the word in Hebrew is *tse/a*, and is used 53 times in the Bible – but only here is it translated rib
 - It simply means “side,” and when we see Adam’s response, we notice he says Woman is made from both flesh and bone
 - This would suggest that the material God chose was more than simply a rib bone but probably a larger section of Adam’s side
 - This didn’t leave Adam deformed, because it says God closed up the flesh at that place, suggesting He repaired the damage
 - The importance of the word *tse/a* is that it suggests purpose
 - Woman wasn’t made from Adam’s head or foot
 - These extreme locations might indicate that she ruled over Adam or Adam over her
 - Instead, she was created from Adam’s side, indicating parity and partnership

- This was God’s original design for Woman – equality with Man
- As Adam sees Woman for the first time, it’s love at first sight
 - Good thing for Adam, since his options were very limited at this point
 - Interestingly, Adam names the new person
 - He names her Woman, which means “wife” in Hebrew
 - And Adam says this is her name because she was taken from Man
 - But Adam uses a new word for man
 - He doesn’t say *adam*, but husband
 - The word *adam* means earth and describes mankind
 - But now that Adam has a wife, he sees himself in a new way
 - She is a wife, so he is a husband
 - Adam defines himself as this woman’s husband
 - And he defines her as his wife
- This relationship is one God establishes for the benefit of both men and women
 - But God has established it because of something that is yet to come for Adam and Woman
 - Remember that in our resurrected bodies, men and women return to a state without need for marriage

[Luke 20:34](#) Jesus said to them, “The sons of this age marry and are given in marriage, [Luke 20:35](#) but those who are considered worthy to attain to that age and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage; [Luke 20:36](#) for they cannot even die anymore, because they are like angels, and are sons of God, being sons of the resurrection.

- So why is marriage needed now but not in our resurrected state?
 - As I have said on numerous occasions, we will see this answer in Chapter 3

- Based on Gen. 2:24, we can learn several things concerning the Biblical view of marriage
 - The marriage relationship is considered inviolate in God's view because of how the first marriage was ordained
 - Adam and Woman were literally made out of the same flesh
 - How could they ever consider themselves to be two distinct people again? How could they ever separate?
 - No more than you could consider your own arm to be foreign to the rest of your body
 - This verse is so important in the Bible because it also illustrates how we are joined to Christ
 - We are joined to Christ permanently, joining a single Body never to be separated
 - This is the second relationship established in the Bible after man's relationship with God Himself
 - It shows how important the marriage union is to God
 - It carries a picture of God's union to men in the New Covenant