

The Book of Genesis

Genesis 2:18-25

“God and Man in Genesis”

16th Message in The Book of Genesis

Sunday 1 March 2020

Glenvista Baptist Church

Part 2

Genesis 2:18-25 (ESV) ¹⁸ Then the Lord God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ 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. ²¹ 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. ²² And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. ²³ 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.”

²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

Introduction

- a) God, the **Prime-Mover**, God the **Man-Maker**, God the **Great-Positioner**, and God the **Responsibility-Giver** is now further revealed in **Genesis 2** as the **God of the Covenant** who shows Himself forth in great compassion and love towards the man whom He created. Even though the term ‘covenant’ is not used at all in **Genesis 1-3**, the relationship between God and the first man, Adam, is best understood as a covenantal relationship. For instance the term ‘covenant’ is not used in **2 Samuel 7** for the relationship God established with David, but **Psalms 89** refers to it as a ‘covenant’. The exact same is true for **Genesis 1-3**; the term ‘covenant’ is not used but **Hosea 6:7** refers to God’s relationship with Adam as a ‘covenant’.
- b) As with all covenants, beloved, we need to be reminded that God always takes the initiative as the authoritative member of the relationship. And in this relationship with Adam, like in all other covenants, there are stipulations that guide the relationship

between God and man. And the stipulations of this covenant are laid out in the prohibition that God gives to Adam. And the prohibitions here also have the death penalty attached to it.

- c) It also needs to be understood that covenants work on the representative principle and include descendants, which certainly is true of Adam's role in Genesis. Adam represents all of his descendants and what Adam does radically impacts all who follow after him. And in Adam's case his sin is charged against his descendants. It is imputed to them, a point the Apostle Paul makes clear in **Romans 5**. Now, we will see more of this once we come to **chapter 3** and consider the Fall of man.
- d) The covenant arrangement with Adam has traditionally been referred to as the Covenant of Works, and it is significantly important to stress that it is absolutely necessary for a proper view of justification by faith because the theological concept of imputation is at the heart of the Covenant of Works. Like Adam's sin was imputed to his descendants, so the righteousness of Christ is imputed to those who believe in Him. Many who deny the Covenant of Works land up denying also the imputation of Christ's active obedience in fulfilling the law. And such a denial will affect how one understands justification by faith, which in turn will affect how one understand the gospel in itself. Therefore as has been said before, the Book of Genesis, affects how we understand all of Scripture.
- e) **Genesis 2** contains extra info pertaining the creation period that is not initially given in **Genesis 1**; it fills the blanks, so to speak and gives greater clarity as to the initial acts of our Sovereign God during the first six days in which He made all things.
- f) We saw in the previous hour that the first part of this new section (**2:4-25**) concerns Adam's relationship to His Maker (**2:4-7**), to his natural surroundings (**2:8-17**), to the animal kingdom (**2:18-20**) and to someone like himself (**2:21-25**). It provides the introduction to, and the setting for, the great tragedy recorded in **chapter 3**. Today our primary concern then is with Adam in the Garden, and God making for Him a helper suitable for Him, as per God's sovereign design.

Point 1 – “The Introduction of a Seemingly Contradictory Statement and the Awareness of a Need” (Gen 2:18-20)

Genesis 2:18 (ESV) ¹⁸Then the Lord God said, **“It is not good** that the man should be alone...”

- a) **V18** Throughout **chapter 1** we have had the refrain: **“And God saw that it was good...”**, and at the end of the creation period we see God saying that **“it was very good” (1:31)**. What we have now in **verse 18** is that extra information is presented to us pertaining the events of day 6 when God created man. It comes as a surprise when we are told, **“Then the LORD**

God said, “It is not good...”. At first glance this comes across as a seemingly contradictory statement, possible going against all that has already been made known. Combining the events of day 6 and the extra information we are now given, we can now see that between the creation of Adam and his female counterpart some time elapses on day 6. It is in that time lapse that it is clearly seen that something is wrong. Until the woman is formed God cannot pronounce the creation of humans as good. This work is still incomplete, and as we saw clearly in [chapter 1](#), God only views His work as good once complete.

- b) God's statement that “it is not good” is now defined. Though man was made for fellowship with God, and ought to derive his greatest good from such fellowship with God, we also see that man is meant to have relationships with other fellow human beings. This is derived from God and who God is; for the God in whose image we are made is not a lonely God. There indeed is only one true God, but God is not a unitary, solitary person. We saw in [chapter 1:26](#) that God deliberated within the Godhead, as Father, Son and Spirit together met in Holy Counsel even before the foundations of the earth. The most perfect unity and fellowship of love exists within the very being of God. Now admittedly humans are not like God by being tri-personal, but we are like God in being created to have deep, meaningful interpersonal interaction and communion with other people. So, what we see here is that it is not good that Adam had no companion who is like him; something is amiss and God is about to address this.
- c) Now this text recounts the divine provision of a helper for Adam and of the two becoming “one-flesh”, and from this account is drawn all biblical teaching on the covenant of marriage. Thus far in Genesis the pre-eminence of God is stressed and this continues here in [chapter 2](#). Genesis makes clear that all is from God. Divine initiative no doubt is at the root of everything, and we see that clearly in some of the God initiated verbs found in [chapter 2](#): “The LORD God **said...**” (v18); “the LORD God **formed...**” (v19); “the LORD God **caused...**” (v21); and “the LORD God **made...**” (v22). So Moses stresses here that the LORD God, *Yahweh-Elohim*, the Creator, the Covenant-making God, takes the initiative to shape the man and the woman in their God-given relationship, and that everything they have is directly from this loving, covenant keeping God.
- d) [V19-20](#) Intriguingly [verses 19-20](#) gives the occasion that gives rise to the fact that it can be seen that man is lonely and that such a state is not for his good. The LORD God puts

man in a relationship with and to the animal kingdom, both as its superior and as its keeper and tender. After “the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens”, God “brought them to the man to see what he would call them”. Yet after all the animals were placed before Adam, and he demonstrated his superiority to them by giving unto each one of them a name, it was found that none of them could meet Adam’s needs and become a suitable partner for him. So God uses the very act of Adam’s interaction with the animal kingdom and his naming of all the animals, as the occasion that gives rise to the fact that something is dearly amiss in Adam’s existence, and Adam is made to tangibly feel this void. There is now an awareness of Adam’s need, and God supernaturally orchestrates and directs the events in the Garden to such an extent that Adam would clearly recognize something is not quite as it is intended to be. In both **verse 19 and 20** we see Adam’s superiority over the animal kingdom and the sovereignty God assigned Adam over all that God had made, as God’s subject. Adam was to rule and to keep; and he does this well, for “whatever Adam called every living creature, that was its name” (v19). And yet after the man had given names to “all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field” (v20), we see that amongst all this variety there was none suitable for Adam, for “there was not a helper fit for him” (v20).

- e) And this, God says, “is not good” (v18). This comment of God is not contradictory, it simply confirms God’s intention to make all things complete and therefore perfect, and the creation of man could not be viewed as perfect till God made for man a suitable helpmeet. And God proceeds to bring about such a helpmeet, for after the negative declaration, He positively states, “I will make a helper fit for him”. This is now the detail that fills the blanks of the statement made in **Genesis 1:27**, “²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

Point 2 – “The First Proclamation of an Everlasting Gospel” (Gen 2:21-23)

Genesis 2:21 (ESV) “²¹ 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...”

- a) Now I realize that may sound like somewhat of a strange heading to use. But I soon trust you will see what I mean. Before I proceed with this allow me to use this as an opportunity to tell you that Lord willing on Saturday 23 May we are planning on having Creation Ministries International with us and Marc Ambler will address us on the vital topic of **“The Gospel in Genesis.”** A not to be missed teaching opportunity.

- b) **V21** The narrative now continues by picturing how God set about to make a helper suitable for the man. The man was made from the dust; God breathes upon the dead lump of clay and life enters the clay and it becomes a human being in male form. God creates Adam from already existing matter. Adam as we saw is not created “*ex-nihilo*” – he is not made out of nothing. So also with Eve – she is also not created “*ex-nihilo*”.
- c) God causes a “**deep sleep to fall upon the man**”. The way in which God made the first woman is certainly not what one would expect. One would think that God would have simply used the same method to create Eve as He employed in creating Adam. But He does not make Eve from the dust; rather He “*builds*” her up out of the anatomy of the man. Adam’s life would become her life, in like manner as God’s life became Adam’s life when God breathed upon him. And so what we see here is that God puts Adam to sleep and performs a marvellous surgical operation on Adam. This sleep was not necessary to prevent pain; it was not like our modern day anaesthetic; for pain only entered after the Fall in **Genesis 3**. At this point God could perform a surgical procedure upon the man without him feeling any pain. Henry Morris helpfully states, “It seems almost as though Adam “died” when as yet there was no death in the world, in order that he might obtain a bride to share his life.”¹ Morris then continues, “On this side of Calvary, the Christian can hardly fail to see here God’s first proclamation of the everlasting gospel (Revelation 14:6), telling of one who was “slain before the foundation of the world” (Revelation 13:8). Though Adam himself may not have understood this, he would at least forever be impressed with the formation of new life and perfect fellowship out of what would have seemed, except for God, to be the very cessation of life.”²
- d) **V21-22** A beautiful picture is seen here of the Gospel, and in actual fact it’s the first proclamation of the Gospel, so very early in the beginning. God brings life from so-called “*death*”. Adam goes in such a deep sleep, so that he may not be aware of the deep workings of God, and from that state, God sovereignly and miraculously brings about life. Whilst Adam sleeps God “**took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh...**” and from the rib God forms a “**woman and brought her to the man**” (v22). The phrase “**one of his ribs**” is more correctly rendered “**from his side**” and may very well include the rib, but the intention here is that God used more than just a rib. Taking from one of Adam’s sides would have meant that God would have taken both flesh and bone, as well as blood

¹ Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Record, A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Book of Beginnings*, Baker Books (1976) page 99

² *Ibid*, page 100

released from the open side, to form the woman. That neatly fits Adam's response later on when he says, **"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh"** (v23).

- e) As per God's amazing design of the human body, it is significant that both bone and flesh are sustained by blood. In fact Scripture proclaims that **"the life of flesh is in the blood"** (Gen 9:4; Lev 17:11). God so designed the human body that our blood carries the necessary oxygen and other chemicals from the air and the food man needs to maintain the body in good health and strength.
- f) **V22-23** So from Adam's side God miraculously forms for Adam his helpmeet; one who would be other than the animals whom Adam has just named, one just like him, yet also different from him. A suitable and perfectly compatible helper, made by God from Adam's very side. And God presents her to Adam – God made her **"into a woman and brought her to the man"**. A beautiful picture which we see in the marriage covenant, as the bride is brought to the groom and the two become one flesh. In like manner God is now preparing a bride for the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 15:14), as each member of the bride is being **"built up into one body"** (Eph 4:11-16). And when His work is completely finished, God will present the bride unblemished unto the Lord Jesus, and He will go and meet her and she will be forevermore joined unto Him (John 14:2; 1 Thess 4:16-17; Rev 19:7-9, 21:1-4).
- g) And then something profound happens as God presents Adam with his bride. Adam stops and is stunned. He beholds something before his eyes no man has ever seen before. He looks this being up and down and is struck with awe. **He shouts out "Wo!! Man!!!" and he gets the privilege of calling her woman.** Just as he named all the other creatures, Adam also is given the privilege to name the woman. From his side, from his flesh and his bones, from his blood, God has created a replica of Adam for Adam, yet significantly physiologically so different that Adam shouts out in amazement.
- h) But this, more significantly, reminds us of the One whose side was pierced and from whose side flowed water and blood. It reminds us of the One who was pierced at Calvary for our transgressions. It tells us of the Son of God who fell into a "deep sleep" on Calvary's tree, of whose body not a single bone was broken, but from whose side **"forthwith came there out blood and water"** (John 19:34-36). From the very life of Adam, from his life giving blood, God both made and sustained Eve, a bride and suitable helpmeet for Adam. But there's a beautiful picture of Christ and the Church here: we who make up the **"bride of Christ"** (2 Cor 11:2) have received our life by His very blood (John 6:54-56). His

death brought us life; His suffering and captivity, brings our freedom and release from the bonds of sin and shame. Thereby as Paul writes to the Ephesians we become “members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones” (Eph 5:30). What an incredible thought. What a beautiful picture of the Gospel, right at the outset of Redemption History, as God presents Adam with his own bride.

Point 3 – “The Introduction of a First-Time Perpetual Bond” (Gen 2:24-25)

Genesis 2:24 (ESV) “²⁴ Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh...”

- a) **V24** From this then flows the significant passage establishing the nature and permanence of the marriage covenant. We have here as it were the introduction of a first time perpetual bond between mankind. It's the introduction of the formula that will by God's design protect and guide the marriage bond between a man and a woman. God is so concerned about this bond that He makes very clear from the very beginning that it is a bond not to be entered upon lightly, and a bond that may not be broken until death do them part.
- b) **V25** Now we are told that the man and the woman were together and they both were naked and there was nothing to be ashamed over. This of course is due to the fact that sin had not entered and spoilt all that was beautiful and holy. Their physiological differences provided no grounds for shame or guilt at this point in time. They were perfectly comfortable with each other even though both were naked. At this stage man had no consciousness of sin or moral guilt. **And where there is no sin there is no shame.**
- c) Adam's joyous shout in the garden echoes down to the present day, showing forth the incredible joy and intimacy of the marriage covenant, as so designed by God. Now Adam's voice is drowned out and the LORD speaks through Moses. These words of Moses are divine revelation and in order to prove its veracity our Lord Jesus quotes these very words in **Matthew 19:5** as the very Word of God. So also does the apostle Paul in **Ephesians 5:31**. We see therefore from the very beginning that monogamous heterosexual marriages between a natural man and a natural woman to be the only way a marriage may be approached. It is upon such a union only that the blessing of God can be sanctioned. It is upon such a union in the marriage covenant only which the Lord smiles. In other words, we need to note dear friends that this is a creation mandate. This is what God intended for marriage in all ages, even till the age when Christ comes again on the clouds of glory, and man has no right to bring upon this his own sinful tendencies and patterns. Marriage has been ordained by God and human beings have no right to do with it what they like. If this ordinance was merely of human origin then quite frankly

we could do with it whatever we like. But it's not; it has divine origin and sanction, therefore only the Divine One who instituted marriage may give unto it clear and perpetual guidelines by which the covenant may be administered.

- d) Therefore a marriage centered upon Christ is the fulfillment of a creation mandate. It pleases the Lord and it brings Him great joy. The Apostle Paul calls the union between a husband and a wife, which then in turn reflects the relationship between Christ and His Church a “**great mystery**” in **Ephesians 5**. And that mystery is the special relationship between Christ and His Church as beautifully revealed in the Gospel.

Conclusion:

- a) In conclusion then we need to state affirmatively how lovely it is when God is at the centre of all things. And God is at the centre of this primeval instruction which is to be the rule and guide in all ages. Truly we can see and say that Adam and Eve were in paradise.
- b) How wonderful it must have been to be in such intimate fellowship with God and with each other! There truly existed a one-flesh harmony. He carried her on his heart and she carried him on hers. Human beings are not meant to live in solidarity. God has created us for communion. Therefore the true saint will always desire to be with God's people as often as possible. If there is no desire whatsoever we need to question the veracity of the claims the individual is making upon Christ. For he who has tasted the sweet fellowship that comes through saving faith will constantly desire that intimacy and fellowship with other brothers and sisters in Christ. And as we gather together not only is Christ glorified but we also are stimulated by the hearing of God's Word to grace and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- c) As Adam receives the kiss of life in the Garden and lives, so we cannot be awakened from spiritual death and apathy, unless we are awakened and born again from above. And once we are born again, we are given a new desire within a new heart to follow and honor the Lord in all that we do. Then our hearts yearn after the risen Lord, whereas before our hearts were at enmity with Christ. Now we are new creatures, born from above, given a new name, which was engraved on the palm of Christ's hand even before the foundations of the earth. And this is so big and so marvellous that we cannot but desire to please him and live for Him in all that we do. Therefore our desire ought to

be the desire of the Apostle Paul in **Philippians 1:27** – “²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ...”

- d) And those desires will then reflect in the everyday relationships we have with people around us, and it will particularly reflect within the marriage bond where a man and a woman realize the places God has assigned to each one in perfect equality in the marriage bond. What differs is our job descriptions, but our status is equal in God’s sight as man and as woman. Because Eve came from Adam, she perfectly shared the image of God, for God created both the male and the female in His image (**Gen 1:27**). And the woman’s creation out of Adam is the basis of her equality. Matthew Henry states this so well: “Not made out of his head to top him, not 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 beloved.”³ Eve was taken out of Adam so that he might embrace her with great love as part of himself.
- e) What a beautiful picture of an everlasting Gospel, portraying a God who changes not, for He is the same yesterday, today and forever. What a picture of grace and its transforming effect on everyday life and the marriage covenant in particular. And in so doing a seemingly contradictory statement on the sixth day, which first rang “it is not good” became “very good” – and then “there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day” (**Gen 1:31**).
- f) You see beloved when God rules your life and is at the centre of your existence – it is very good.

Amen

Soli Deo Gloria

Sunday 1 March 2020

Glenvista Baptist Church

³ Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15 Word Biblical Commentary*, Waco Tx Word (1987) page 69