

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

Pastor John Donovan, cell phone 508-380-0471

Pastor Terry Gerlarneau, cell phone 603-455-4399

Web site todbc.org email us at opendoorbiblechurch@todbc.org

October Memory Verse, 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive *and* remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

¹⁶ For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made ([Gen 2:1-3](#)).

So we find the creation of the earth in chapter one; the placing of man upon the earth, and then the declaration that on the seventh day God rested. Not that He was tired, because of all of the energy that had been expended in the creating of the earth because God is omnipotent-that means He can't get tired-but He had finished His work, and so He just rested from His work.

In other words, there's nothing more to create. It's all been created. If God really took the day off and just kicked back and did nothing, the earth would go to pieces, because the Bible says not only, were all things created by Him, but by Him all things are held together. And so God rested from His creative works, all that have been created. All that is to be created was created in that span. Nothing new is now being created. We're now in sort of a closed-in system. Nothing new is being created.

So God having rested established, sanctified the seventh day and made it as a covenant with the nation Israel. But God also established a pattern. "Six days shall thou labor and do thy work and the seventh day you're to rest, a day unto the Lord" ([Exodus 35:2](#)). Now it would be extremely healthy for all of us if we would take one day a week off and just kick back and do nothing. The Sabbath was made for man because man needs one day off out of seven. The reason why we have so much mental strain, the reason why we have so many heart attacks and all, is because people haven't been following God's law of the seventh day. We keep going all the time. We don't stop to take a day off, and my wife says, "Yeah, you don't and I've been telling you to do it". But it would be healthy. It wouldn't make you any more spiritual, it'd just be good for you. You'll live longer if that's your goal.

So now as we enter into verse four, we are going to enter in now to a sort of a recapitulation of certain aspects of creation as we now amplify some of the aspects of

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

creation. As we enter into this next section beginning with verse four, we're going to find that God is not referred to as just "Elohim" as in chapter one; but now He is "Jehovah" or "Yahweh Elohim", because now we are going to see God relating to man. And whenever God begins to relate to man, He relates to man through this marvelous name of "Yahweh" or "Jehovah". As God seeks to become to man what man needs.

Now these are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens ([Gen 2:4](#)),

So now the LORD God, and whenever you find LORD in all capital letters as it is in this case, that means that it is that name for God that the Jews revered so highly, revered so highly, that they would not pronounce it. They would not write the vowels but only the consonants in the manuscripts. JHVH; try and pronounce that. You can't, you know, it's unpronounceable. So we don't know what vowels were there. So the general consensus of opinion is that the name was to be pronounced "Yahweh". But somewhere along the line the pronunciation of Jehovah came along and it has become more popular. But Yahweh is probably the correct pronunciation though we do not know for sure.

But it is the name by which God has sought to relate to man as it is the name that speaks of God's desire to become to you all that you may need. So whenever you find this all capitals LORD, it stands for that name of God. You will also find capital L, small - o-r-d, and that means that it's the translation of the Hebrew Adonai, which means Lord as a title. But the all capitals means that it's a translation of the Yahweh, Lord as a name, the name of God, the Yahweh.

So here is the first use of it in the Bible, "in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens."

And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground ([Gen 2:5-6](#)).

Now it would seem that there was not a rain until the time of Noah. Prior to that in the evening, a mist would arise out of the ground and the earth would be watered with this dew or with this mist. Now it is interesting that even though there was not rain, there were rivers, four rivers that proceeded out from the Garden of Eden. How could you have rivers without rain? Creates an interesting problem that you can speculate on.

But it is very possible that there were subterranean caverns of, with tremendous volcanic heat and forces and water coming in from the sea through the subterranean caverns into this steam generator, so to speak, the volcano. The steam going up, and of course, then condensing and flowing as water, and you could have a water supply that way. You could have had at that point a lot of subterranean water. And of course, with this tremendous moisture blanket around the atmosphere, it could have provided a

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

humidity, and of course, at night the mist going up, the earth was watered by this way prior to the flood.

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

And so we are told that God in chapter one said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness"([Gen 1:26](#)). "And God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and he breathed into man's nostrils; and man became a living soul", created in the likeness of God with the ability to worship God and the ability to fellowship with God.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden ([Gen 2:8](#));

So eastward would have been east of where He had created Adam. There is no way to really know directions. We don't know where the Garden of Eden was. There is no way of finding out where the Garden of Eden was because since that time, there have been several cataclysmic changes of the earth's geography which have changed the courses of rivers and mountains and the whole thing.

So "the LORD planted a garden eastward in Eden;"

and there he put the man whom he had formed ([Gen 2:8](#)).

And so God made really a special place for Adam. He formed this garden or He planted this garden. And then He placed man in it.

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil ([Gen 2:9](#)).

So here was a beautiful garden, blossoming trees and fruit bearing trees. All there for man to just enjoy. It must have been absolutely, fabulously beautiful. God planted a garden, put in it all these beautiful flowering trees and fruit bearing trees. And in the middle of the garden, there were two trees: one, the tree of life; and the other, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it was parted, and became into four rivers. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold ([Gen 2:10-11](#));

Now if you can only figure out where that is, you could go prospecting. Havilah, where is it? I don't know. But as I say, the whole structure of the earth has been so changed that there's no way of knowing really.

The gold that is of that land is good: there is also bdellium and onyx stone. And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia ([Gen 2:12-13](#)).

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

But no doubt a different location than where it is today. Some believe that this perhaps is the reference to the Nile River but there is really very little relation between the Nile and the Tigris and Euphrates which are the next two rivers,

a third river the Hiddekel [is actually the Tigris river]: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates ([Gen 2:14](#)).

So two of the rivers, the Tigris and Euphrates and some believe that these other two rivers were actually sort of channels that connected the Tigris and the Euphrates there in the Babylonian plain. And they have, most of them, tried to locate the Garden of Eden somewhere there in the Babylonian plain between the Tigris and the Euphrates River. They say that that is the cradle of civilization.

And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it ([Gen 2:15](#)).

Now notice it wasn't that man didn't have anything to do. God put him there to dress the garden and to keep it. Some people picture heaven as, you know, sitting on a cloud and playing a harp and twiddling your thumbs in between numbers. Like you know, there's going to be nothing to do. Not so. God placed man in the garden to dress it and to keep it. Life would be awfully boring if there were nothing to do.

But the labor that man expended in the garden wasn't sweating kind of labor. That didn't come until after his sin that he was going to earn his bread by the sweat of his brow. Up to then it was just a matter of taking care of it, a caretaker and dressing it and keeping it. Far from the concept that the modern ecologists are trying to throw a guilt onto the Bible, saying that the man's raping of nature comes from the Bible because God said to have dominion over the earth, and thus man just feels that he can just do anything he wants and destroy it. And thus, the Bible is to blame for all of the ecological damage in the world. Oh how stupid can people get!

God didn't say to Adam, Just go and you know, mess it all up. Destroy it. Cut down the trees. He said, No, "dress it and keep it". Really I believe that only a child of God has a true appreciation of nature, a far greater appreciation of nature than a humanist. They are the ones who through greed have not cared for the world that God created and have so destroyed it by greed, but not by a Christian or Biblical principle at all.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die ([Gen 2:16-17](#)).

So here is man placed in an ideal environment, under ideal conditions. Couldn't ask for it any nicer, any better, placed in this beautiful garden that God had planted, all kinds of fruit trees, all kinds of luscious fruits to eat of. And man is given only one restriction, that tree that is in the midst of the garden, you're not to eat of it. And then as though God knew that he was going to, He said, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

surely die." Literally dying, "thou shalt surely die." In other words, death processes will begin the day you eat of that fruit.

Now it was really a twofold death; it was a spiritual death but it was the beginning of physical death for man. It doesn't really seem that God's requirements were too stringent. But why would God put that tree there anyhow? Of all the trees that God planted in the garden, why would He plant that tree? Just think. Had He not planted that tree we wouldn't have all of the problems that we have in the world today. And if God knew that man was going to eat of it, why would He put it there? And surely God did know if He indeed is omniscient, which I am confident that He is.

God created man after His image and God, being self-determinate, He created man also self-determinate, giving to man a free will. One of the most awesome things that you have is the power of choice. You can choose your own destiny. You can choose whether or not you want God to have a part in your life. You can choose to obey God or disobey God. You can choose to love God or hate God. You can choose to serve God or serve your own flesh. God has given to you the capacity of choice.

Now it is interesting to me wherever the Christian gospel has gone, there has been a very high respect for the power of choice, freedom, the freedom to choose. And whenever there is a waning of the gospel in any area, what is the consequence? A slavery of man. The loss of freedoms. Look at those nations ruled by Communism today. How they have taken away the freedoms of choice and made them very restricted and very restrictive. And as we see in this country, more and more governmental controls we realize that with each new law there comes a confining of the freedom of choice. But always where the Christian gospel has gone, it has taken with it a respect for the freedom of choice because God gave to us the freedom of choice. And we respect it as a God-given capacity.

But what value would it be to have a freedom of choice if there was nothing to choose. It would be totally meaningless that God gave to me the power to choose, but I don't have anything to choose. It's all there. It's all laid out. There is no law, there is no restriction, there is nothing; therefore, I have no choice to make, therefore my power of choice is really meaningless. So in order that the power of choice be meaningful, God had to give a choice. God had to make a restriction. In order that man's obedience to God might be meaningful, God had to give the opportunity to disobey and the choice to disobey.

The power of choice is the thing that makes man something other than a robot. God could have made us all robots with no choices, every decision coming from a superior mind that is controlling every action, every decision of my whole life and my body and everything else. But God didn't want a bunch of robots, because you could never receive meaningful love or meaningful fellowship from a robot. For love to be meaningful, the power of choice must be there. For obedience to be meaningful, the power of choice must be there. And so that my worship of God, my love for God might be fully meaningful to God, He gave to me the capacity of choice. I don't have to

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

worship Him. I don't have to love Him. I can choose to do it or not to do it; that's my choice.

Now this is why it is so ridiculous to say, well, how can a God of love send a man to hell? He doesn't. He never did, He never will. Man goes there by his own choice, which God respects and honors. If you choose to go to hell, God will respect your choice; otherwise, giving you the power of choice would be meaningless. And then so it's very awesome to realize that capacity of God, that God-like capacity that I have of choosing, choosing my destiny. Now God calls upon us to make a choice and God does seek to influence our choices. But when you come to the bottom line, the choice is yours.

Satan is also seeking to influence your choice. But the bottom line is that neither God nor Satan makes the choice for you. You make the choice for yourself. Every man is responsible for his own destiny. God has created us that way. And so He placed the tree. He gave the warning. And then He left man for his own choice.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that man should be alone ([Gen 2:18](#));

Now that is God's recognition of man's basic incompleteness by himself. God when He looked at man said,

It is not good that man should be alone ([Gen 2:18](#));

Man is incomplete by himself. God said,

I will make a help meet for him. Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and he brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof ([Gen 2:18-19](#)).

Now imagine that. What a mind God must have given to Adam. As He brought to Adam all of the animals and everything and he said, "That's a cow, that's a horse, that's a dog, that's a cat".

And he named all of the animals, and all of the birds; but in all of the animal kingdom there wasn't found [a companion or] a help meet for Adam. And so the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and as he slept: he took one of his ribs ([Gen 2:20-21](#)),

and he closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man ([Gen 2:21-22](#)).

Now as I said, this has caused a lot of problems. People say, well, they don't believe the Bible can be the Word of God because man has the same number of ribs that a woman has. Well, that sure isn't very logical thinking by the person who presents that kind of an argument; is it? Because say if you lost your arm in an accident, it doesn't mean your child is going to be born without an arm; does it? Or you've chopped a finger off, it doesn't mean if you have a little boy he's going to be missing his index finger. So if God

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

took a rib out of Adam, it wouldn't mean that his child would be minus that rib. You'd have to go find Adam's skeleton someplace to see if there was a missing rib. You couldn't, you know, look at man today and say, well man has the same number and all because that would not follow. We know better than that.

But there is that deep intimate relationship between man and woman. So deep that, Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed ([Gen 2:23-25](#)).

So now we have God establishing the basic relationship between a man and a woman in marriage. "Therefore a man shall leave his mother and father, and cleave unto his wife: and the two become one flesh." That's God's basic establishment of marriage. The two become one. The deepest, the most intimate bond, the two becoming one in marriage. The man cleaving to his wife. This is basic, this is the beginning of things, this is how God started it, this is how God intended it to be.

Now man had difficulty living up to God's plan and to God's intentions. When Jesus came, He sought to bring man to God's basic design and purpose; and thus, Jesus was teaching the sacredness of the marriage vows and the endurance of the marriage vows. And the Pharisees, recognizing now a difference between what Jesus was saying and what the law of Moses said, were seeking to trap Jesus, showing that He was teaching other than the law of Moses.

And so they said to Him, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for any cause?" And Jesus said, "If a man puts away his wife and marries another, except it be for fornication, he causes her to commit adultery and whoso marries her commits adultery". Oh ho ho, trap is shut. "How is it then that Moses said, Let him give her a writing of a bill of divorcement". We caught You! You're saying something contrary to Moses' law. We know that God gave the law to Moses. There's no question about that. We've trapped You. We've caught You. You're contrary to Moses' law.

What did Jesus do? He went back and antedated Moses' law. Jesus said, "In the beginning it wasn't so. For in the beginning, God made them male and female, and for this cause shall a man leave his mother and father and shall cleave to his wife and they two become one flesh. And it was because of the hardness of your hearts that Moses said, Let him give her a writing of divorcement". Because man's heart was hard and would not come to God's divine ideal, the law of divorce was established but that was never God's original plan.

In the beginning it was not so. We've come back now to the beginning, that which Jesus came back to, the basic purposes of God in marriage. That once for life, a man leaving his mother and father cleaving to his wife and the two of them becoming one flesh. And because of the hardness of man's hearts, his inability to obtain or to obey God's best,

Commentary on Genesis Chapter 2 by Chuck Smith 10.9.24

we look at our society and our world today and we see the multitude of problems that have arisen out of the hardness of our hearts, leaving the basic beginning purposes of God in marriage.

There's something wrong today with our whole concept of love. I get so tired of hearing a husband or a wife say, "Well I never really loved them. I don't think I loved them. I don't think I ever loved them". Listen, if you don't love, don't get married. Where is your head? What are you thinking about? That's a terrible thing to say to your mate, "Well, I don't think I ever really loved you". It's tragic.

So there is-there's a basic problem in our whole dating system. And one of the basic problems of the whole dating system is the couples are getting deeply involved physically without even knowing each other emotionally. That is, in the true deep sense, the relationship is predicated too much upon the physical aspects and there's not enough just getting acquainted and knowing. You see, one of the characteristics of true love is that it is patient and it will wait for that God-ordained time.

Beautiful openness in marriage, there should be. They were both naked, they weren't ashamed. They shouldn't be. The two are one flesh.