

THE BEGINNING OF HISTORY, PART 2

TEXT: GENESIS 2:1-25

INTRODUCTION:

1. We saw last week that the book of Genesis is a book of beginnings, and that the word "genesis" means "beginning" (from the Greek).
2. Genesis gives us the beginning of everything, except God who has no beginning. The Bible does not attempt to prove the existence of God (1:1). It takes this fact as self-evident.
3. Psalm 14:1 says, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."
4. I received such a good response to last week's message that I thought I would continue. Genesis 2 is a sequel to Genesis 1, and this morning's message is my sequel to last Sunday morning's message.
5. Genesis 1 explains the creation of the heaven and earth, and the fulness thereof. Genesis 2 now focuses on man, the crown of God's creation.
6. Genesis 2 deals with man -- his formation, his relation to God, his new wife, and his life here on earth.
7. In Genesis chapter 1, man comes at the end of the chapter as the crown of creation; here in Genesis 2:7, the formation of man is presented as the starting point of human history.

I. THE SABBATH FOR MAN (2:1-3)

II. THE FORMATION OF MAN (2:7)

III. THE GARDEN FOR MAN (2:8-15)

IV. THE PROBATION OF MAN (2:16, 17)

V. THE COMPANION FOR MAN (2:18-25)

I. THE SABBATH FOR MAN (2:1-3)

1. Our Lord said in Mark 2:27, "The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath." The sabbath is for our benefit.
2. "And God blessed the seventh day" (2:3). The Sabbath day is a divine institution. Later on the LORD incorporated the sabbath rest into the law, but the sabbath goes all the way back to the beginning of God's creation (2:1-3).
3. The Sabbath day is a divine institution. Just like marriage is a divine institution (2:24).
4. Man has no right to force employees to work on the Lord's Day because God set this day apart from the rest of the week.

5. And no man has the right to redefine marriage because marriage was ordained by God as the sacred union of a man and a woman (2:24). I will say more about this later.
6. "The law of first mention" -- The word "sanctify" occurs first here (2:3). Its root idea is "separation" or "consecration." In other words, God set this day apart from the other six days. God separated, i.e. He set apart, the Sabbath to be consecrated to a special purpose.
7. "The Law of First Mention" is the principle in the interpretation of Scripture which states that the first mention or occurrence of a subject in Scripture establishes an unchangeable pattern, with that subject remaining unchanged in the mind of God throughout Scripture.
8. W.H. Griffith Thomas said, "In the light of God's creative work the fundamental and primary idea of the Sabbath is twofold: cessation from work, and satisfaction after work" (*Genesis, A Devotional Commentary*).
9. The lawyers and Pharisees criticized our Lord for healing on the sabbath day. They asked Him, "Is it lawful to heal on the sabbath day?"
10. Our Lord answered them by saying, "Which of you shall have an ass or an ox fallen into a pit, and will not straightway pull him out on the sabbath day?"
11. "And they could not answer him again to these things" (Luke 14:1-6).
12. A pastor said to one of his members: "We missed you this Sunday, brother." The man replied, "I had to work, Pastor. You know our Lord said that if your ox falls into the pit on the sabbath, you have to pull him out!"
13. The following Sunday, the pastor noticed that once again the man was not in church. And so once again the pastor asked him about it, and once again the man gave the same answer about his ox falling into the pit. The preacher then said: "Brother, you should either fill up the pit or get yourself a new ox!" That is good advice!
14. This is the first reference to the sabbath, and therefore very important. The word "sabbath" is not found until Exodus 16:23, but the principle is found here in Genesis 2.
15. This sabbath principle applies today to the Lord's Day. The first day of the week is set apart for God.
16. Some Christians mistakenly believe that keeping the Lord's Day holy is legalistic and only for Jews. But the Sabbath principle goes all the way back to Genesis 2, to the creation week, a thousand years before Moses. There were no Jews around on the first week of creation!
17. The institution of the Sabbath is evidently grounded in creation, and is therefore pre-Mosaic, and not to be limited to the Jews.

18. The fourth Commandment calls attention to the Sabbath as an already existing fact. Exodus 20:8 says, "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy."

II. THE FORMATION OF MAN (2:7)

1. Genesis 2:4-6 is a summary of the creation work recorded in Genesis chapter 1. Some have argued that the differences are contradictory.
2. The differences are not contradictory; they are complementary. They are explained from a different perspective.
3. Referring to Genesis 2:7, John Phillips wrote, "The human body, marvelous and intricate as it is, eloquently testifies to the wisdom and power of God" (*Exploring Genesis*).
4. David said, "I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14a).
5. The word "generation" (2:4) occurs often in the book of Genesis (cf. 5:1; 6:9; 9:12; etc.). The pattern in Scripture is generation, degeneration, and regeneration.
6. Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." Genesis 2:4b says, "The LORD God made the earth and the heavens." Notice the difference.
7. In Genesis 1 the emphasis is on heaven; here in Genesis 2 it is on earth, particularly Adam, the first man on earth.
8. The first mention of "rain" is in Genesis 2:5 (cf. 7:4).
9. In Adam's day, there was no rain and the earth was watered by a mist (2:6). There is a theory that the entire earth was covered by a canopy of ice. People were healthier and lived very long lives (cf. 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, etc.).
10. After the flood, man's life span was shortened. Abraham -- 175; Isaac -- 180; Jacob -- 147; and Moses -- 120.
11. Moses said, "The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away" (Psalm 90:10).
12. This could be because later on the ice canopy collapsed. Dr. Theodore Schwarze, a professor at New York University, taught that a great explosion tore the canopy apart.
13. Genesis 7:11 says, "The same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." This is understood as a great outpouring of water flooding the earth, but it could also include this ice canopy collapsing.

14. The formation of man is taught in Genesis 2:7 and 8 -- "the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground...the man whom he had formed." It is impossible to believe the Bible and accept the theory of evolution. Both cannot be right.

III. THE GARDEN FOR MAN (2:8-15)

1. Man's first home was in a beautiful garden (2:8-10).
2. The exact locality of man's first home has been the subject of great discussion.
3. Based on the description given in Genesis 2:8-14, many Bible commentators teach that the location of the Garden of Eden was somewhere in the Middle East, situated near where the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers are today.
4. This would be modern day Iraq (ancient Babylon). However, verse 10 makes it clear that the Garden of Eden was located where there were four rivers coming from one head. But there is no location in Iraq or anywhere else in the Middle East today that fits that description.
5. Ken Ham wrote: "This a major consideration that needs to be taken into account. The worldwide, catastrophic Flood of Noah's day would have destroyed the surface of the earth. If most of the sedimentary strata over the earth's surface (many thousands of feet thick in places) is the result of this global catastrophe as creationists believe, then we would have no idea where the Garden of Eden was originally located—the earth's surface totally changed as a result of the Flood" (*Where Was the Garden of Eden Located?*)
6. One thing is certain -- man's first home was a paradise -- "pleasant to the sight, and good for food" (2:9).
7. The "tree of life" (2:9; 3:22, 24) is also referred to in the book of Revelation (2:7; 22:2, 14).
8. Genesis 2:15 teaches that God intended for man to work. Adam was told to tend the garden and keep it.
9. God intended for man to work. Second Thessalonians 3:10 says, "if any would not work, neither should he eat."
10. Second Thessalonians 3:12 says, "Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread."
11. Our Lord Jesus said, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" (Luke 2:49).

12. "There is nothing which is so full of genuine satisfaction as the performance of the work which God has given us to do" (Griffith Thomas, *Genesis*).
13. When I was a little boy I heard someone say, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop." As I got older I found that to be very true.
14. Genesis 2:15 says, "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (i.e., to work it, and to take care of it).

IV. THE PROBATION OF MAN (2:16, 17)

1. God placed Adam in this beautiful paradise, and there was only one restriction (2:16, 17).
2. "Die" in verse 17 does not mean annihilation. Death in Scripture usually means separation.
3. The Prodigal Son's father said, "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry" (Luke 15:24).
4. First Timothy 5:6 says, "But she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." Physical death is the separation of the soul and spirit from the body.
5. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul and spirit from God.
6. Revelation 21:8 says, "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death (eternal separation from God).
7. We see in Genesis 3 that Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This is referred to as "the fall of man."
8. Romans 5:12 says, "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

V. THE COMPANION FOR MAN (2:18-25)

1. Genesis 1:27, 28 says, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth..."
2. More information is given here in chapter 2 (2:18-25).
3. "Help meet" (2:18, 20) means, "a helper suitable for him."

4. The great expositor Matthew Henry said, "That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor 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."
5. Albert Barnes said Adam had met with his superior in his Creator, his inferiors in the animals; and his equal in the woman.
6. There are some strange people who identify themselves as "theistic evolutionists." By this they mean they believe the Bible is the Word of God, but they also accept the theory of evolution. But there can be no evolutionary explanation for the origin of Eve -- if we claim to believe the Bible (Genesis 2:21).
7. Jesus quoted Genesis 2:24 when He said, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh?" (Matt. 19:4, 5).
8. This puts evolutionists in an awkward position. Was our Lord mistaken when He said, "Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female..."? God forbid!
9. The apostle Paul quotes Genesis 2:24 in Ephesians 5:31, "For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh."
10. Was Paul mistaken? God forbid!
11. Second Timothy 3:16 says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."
12. "All Scripture" includes the book of Genesis; the Gospels; and the Epistles; etc.
13. Marriage was ordained by God (2:18-25). The whole idea originated with God. Verse 18 reminds us that marriage isn't only for procreation, but also for companionship.
14. Procreation is very important because God told Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful, and multiply" (1:28).
15. This command was repeated to Noah and his wife, and their sons and daughters-in-law after the flood (Genesis 8:17; 9:1), and to Jacob when God changed his name to "Israel" (Gen. 35:11).

CONCLUSION:

1. In 1997, Dr. Ben Carson was the first surgeon to successfully separate Siamese twins joined at the head. (This is not a political endorsement!)

2. Dr. Carson was the primary surgeon in the team of South African and Zambian surgeons that separated the twins (joined at the top of the head) in a 28-hour operation. It represents the first time such complexly joined Siamese twins have been separated with both remaining neurologically normal.
3. That was very impressive, but the greatest surgery ever performed took place six thousand years before that.
4. God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. This was undoubtedly the most amazing piece of surgery that was ever performed.
5. And God did not need any assistants or nurses or an anesthesiologist, etc.
6. After Adam came out of the surgery, he 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" (Genesis 2:23).
7. I heard a preacher say that those weren't exactly Adam's first words. Those are his first recorded words.