

The Creation of Adam and Eve, part 1

Genesis 2:4-15

(preached Pine Grove 3/18/18; Sunday PM)

Introduction

Last Wednesday, Stephen Hawking passed away at the age of 76.

If your aren't familiar with Hawking, he was often seen on TV in his motorized wheelchair.

You see, Hawking was diagnosed Lou Gehrig's disease a the age of 21, which led to his paralysis...

However, Hawking remained mentally sharp even though he had suffered the effects of his disease for decades continued to excel in physical sciences...

However as the disease progressed, so did Hawking's unbelief in God.

Though much of his early work on the origin of the universe left a tiny bit of room for God's hadn't in it, Hawking eventually sets his sights on disproving the existence of God...

However in 2014, Hawking said this..

"Before we understand science, it is natural to believe that God created the universe. But now science offers a more convincing explanation."

Hawking once said that science was man's attempt to understand the mind of God, but in recent years, he offered this..

"What I meant by 'we would know the mind of God' is, we would know everything that God would know, if there were a God. Which there isn't. I'm an atheist. Religion believes in miracles, but these aren't compatible with science."

Hawking believed that man was the product of slow evolution over millions of years..

Recently, he even said that our inability to evolve more rapidly would be our death sentence when artificial intelligence overtakes the world and wipes us out in less than a 100 years..

In Hawking's worldview, man only came after 3.5 billion years of evolution...

That stands in such contrast to what we read in Genesis 2:7...

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 [f]being.

You see, as brilliant as Hawking was supposed to be, he couldn't understand the plain meaning of Genesis 2:7, which tells us that man was not created over billions of year..

Instead, God formed him from the ground, breathed life into him and set him in the world in a matter of moments..

Hawking nows knows that there is a God, and as quickly as God formed life, God just as quickly took life from him.

I hope and pray that Hawking repented of his sin and trusted in Christ before his death..

If not, he now knows the truth of God's existence through eternal death instead of eternal life..

Tonight, we are going to begin a more detailed look at the creation of man that occurred on day 6 of God forming the heavens and earth out of nothing...

This closer look at the creation of man begins in Genesis 2:4 and moves to the rest of the chapter 2....

In this chapter, we are to see God form man, God put man in the garden, give man a job and a command, and then we will see God give man the first woman...

So, let's look at chapter 2, verses 4 to 25 in that way..

I. The Creation of Adam (4-7)

II. The Location of Adam (8-14)

III. The Occupation of Adam (15)

IV. The Restriction on Adam (16-17)

V. The Completion of Adam (18-25)

We will begin in verse 4-7 with...

I. The Creation of Adam (4-7)

4 [b]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.

Verse 4 is simply put here to let the reader know that the details of chapter 2 are simply an account of how God created Adam and Eve..

If you look back up to chapter 1, you could stick the word of Genesis 2:4-25 in the space between Genesis 1:27 and 1:28...

You can think of it this way....

Genesis 1:27 is the headline...

And Genesis 2:4-25 is the story under that headline...

God created man in his own image; male and female he created them.

That is the headline and now, we get the read the story under that headline in chapter 2..

Verses 5-6..

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 [c]cultivate the ground. 6 But a [d]mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole [e]surface of the ground.

The simple way to explain these is that there was farming going on before the creation of man...

No, we know from day 3 that there was vegetation and trees upon the earth, but since there was no rain, and no man to work the ground, the vegetation wasn't sprouting and spreading...

In other words, the earth had green plants but no farms...

Verse 6 simply describes God's irrigation system...

And the word mist is not the best picture of how God watered the plants...

This was more than a fog or vapor or a mist..

The Hebrew word is "ede", which gives the idea of a flow of water..

A mist falls slowly, but a flow of water is more forceful...

It seems that the picture is of springs that rise to the surface of the earth and water the vegetation and trees made on day 3...

So before the creation of man, plants were living because springs of water were keeping them nourished...

But now as God prepares to make man, farming and gardening and cultivation of plant life will be possible...

So, how does God make his masterpiece of creation?

How does God create man?

Verse 7...

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 [f]being.

There are a number of things to take note of here in this very simple verse...

The primary is that this is written in a way to help man understand how he was created..

God is spirit and therefore, he doesn't have a mouth or lungs to breathe into the the nose of man...

However, the picture of God breathing into man is clear and vivid...

And remember, the first people to read this are Jews living in 1500 BC...

I am sure they had many questions about how man came to live on the earth...

And the picture now etched into the minds is the picture of God breathing life into man...

What a picture that is..

Picture of care and concern and love and compassion...

Reminds me of the Spirit of God hovering over the freshly formed watery earth on day 1 of creation...

God here is caring for the creation of man in the same way...

Breathing life into him...

This certainly is an aspect of how man is made in God's image..

God's breath gives man life...

His heart starts pumping, his lungs start working, his blood starts flowing, but even more than that...

Man is given a soul...

We are spiritual creatures because God as spirit breathed into us the breath of life...

Now let me be clear, this throws the theory of evolution out of the window..

Man is not the product of a higher form of an ape..

Man is the special creation of God set apart by the breath of life that God breathed into him on day 6...

This is what shocks me about Christians who say that God used evolution to make man...

What foolishness...

God doesn't need billions of years.

He made man in one verse of Scripture and it is right here in Genesis 2:7..

One more note to make here..

Man was made from the dust of the earth...

Which is a great reminder that our bodies are not the most important aspect of who we are as people..

Your body, my body is essentially dirt of the ground...

The Hebrew word for ground is spelled ADAMAH...

It is pronounced Adamah...

In other words, the first human was named Adam because he came from the ground...

And guess what?

Our bodies at death go back to the ground.

There are bodies across the road now that have returned to dust and dirt...

Now God will once again raise some of those bodies across the road back to life but putting the dirt back together...

But ultimately, our bodies on this earth are perishable...

Essentially, you are looking at a pile of dirt preaching not you tonight...

But what makes this pile of dirt special is the spirit or soul that God breathed into this perishable outer covering...

You see, our spirits and souls are simply covered by a pile of dirt..

This is why we need to remind ourselves and remind others that we need to spend way more time trying to preserve our souls than trying to preserve our bodies...

God used the dust to make us, but into that dust, he put a soul...

And our command is give our souls back to Him and use our bodies to serve Him...

Now that we have seen the creation of Adam, let us see the location of Adam...

II. The Location of Adam (8-14)

In verse 8, God takes man and places in a special part of His creation..

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

Now what do we see here in terms of this garden of Eden?

Well, we know it is to the east?

But the question is what is it east of?

IT seems that the best explanation is that it is east of the Promised Land?

If the first readers of this book were Jews in Egypt, they would know that Abraham had originally settled in a land near the Mediterranean Sea...

This land was meant to be their home as a nation, and though they may have still been in captivity when they read this letter, their sense of direction was centered on this promised land...

So when Moses writes that Eden was to the east, the assumption of every Jew was that this original garden was east of the Promised Land...

Now I think we see this garden as a pretty small piece of land, but I don't think that was the case...

I think the next few verses help us to understand that this garden of Eden was fairly large...

In verse 9, we read that every tree pleasing to the sight and every tree producing food was put there..

And then we see in verse 10-14 that a massive river system flowed out of the land of Eden...

Let's read verses 10-14..

10 Now a river [g]flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four [h]rivers. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it [i]flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it [j]flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is [k]Tigris; it [l]flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the [m]Euphrates.

Since there was no rain at this point in human history, the springs that watered the garden of Eden produced such a massive flow of water that it produced a great river flowing out of Eden...

That river eventually split into 4 rivers named here..

The Pishon, the Gihon, the Tigris, and the Euphrates.

Now, many people take the names of these rivers and try to pinpoint the land of Eden, but guess what?

That is impossible because most likely the flood changed the course of all of these major rivers of that area...

There are two rivers named the Tigris and Euphrates today, but it is highly unlikely that they looked the same before and after the flood of Genesis...

Therefore, we can't be sure about the precise location of Eden...

We do know it was east of the Promised Land, but that is really as much as we can say about it...

Some people have said that Babylon is the location of the former garden of Eden...

The theory is that the devil began his work in the garden of Eden and when he succeeded in having Adam and Eve expelled from the garden of Eden, he set up operation there...

They contend that Babylon is almost exactly due east of Jerusalem in the Promised Land...

They speak of the fertility of Babylon that once was home to the hanging gardens of Babylon, which was this massive garden...

I think the theory is interesting, but the Bible doesn't give us an exact location so can't be sure...

However, we can see that it must have been a pretty huge area to contain all those trees and to produce such a large flow of water coming out of it to form 4 rivers...

But also notice all of the precious jewels found in and around the garden of Eden...

Verse 11 talks about gold...

Verse 12 talks about bdellium and onyx...

Does this remind you of anything?

Reminds me of the description of the new heavens and new earth of Revelation 21-22...

Streets of gold, jewels in the walls of the city...

The picture of Eden is a land of beauty and provision...

God did not put Adam in a wasteland to make his way..

God put him in a garden of incredible beauty...

A garden filled with food...

This is the nature of God...

He cares for his creation...

Even today, what is God's design for human life...

God's design is for childcare to be born in a home where they are to be cared for by both parents....

If people follow God's design for new life, babies are born into a home of provision and protection...

This is the goodness and compassion and love of our Creator..

He creates life and he provides ways for life to be sustained...

As Israel is reading about the creation of Adam and the creation of the garden of Eden, they are seeing the compassion and love and care of their God..

God is not like the gods of the nations around them.

He is powerful.

He is holy.

But He is also merciful and loving and kind...

Now before we leave this section of Adam's location, let's take note of the end of verse 9...

“the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”

We will talk more about this in a moment, but let me make a few comments here before we move to the next verse...

Take note, neither of these trees are evil...

God has created a perfect man and a perfect garden...

There is no sin in the world at this point...

So two things we can say about each of these trees is that they are the creation of God, and neither is a source of evil in the garden or even a source of temptation...

Now, what is the tree of life?

Seems best to see this as a tree that provides eternal life to anyone who eats its fruit..

In the new heavens and new earth of eternity, we read about the tree of life that will be near the throne of God..

And though God is the one who grants eternal life, the tree simply sustains eternal life for all who eat from it...

Notice that it is in the middle of the garden in Genesis 2:9, this suggest that it was easy to access for anyone who wanted to eat from it...

And I think it is reasonable to assume that Adam and Eve would have eaten from it and lived eternally if they had never committed sin...

Now that leads to the this tree in the center of the garden called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil..

It seems that this tree was like any other tree in that it was a source of food and beauty..

However, what set this tree apart was God's command not to eat from it...

We will talk more about that next week in verse 17...

However, all I want us to understand is this...

The garden that God made was perfect..

The garden was well watered for Adam.

The garden was well stocked with food..

The garden was filled with beauty..

Even all the trees were good.

There was no evil in any of God's creation...

Adam wasn't evil...

The rivers weren't evil..

The trees and their fruit weren't evil...

It was all good...

In fact, it was all very good...

So, we see the creation of man and the location of man...

One more thing to take note of tonight...

III. The Occupation of Adam (15)

Verse 15..

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

Verse 15 is an important verse for us to see and understand for a number of reasons...

Couple things to take note of here...

#1 - Work is not a result of sin.

Many people see work as a result of Adam and Eve disobeying God, but work was part of a world before sin...

Sin only made the work harder...

Verse 15 is clear.

Adam worked before the fall by culturing and keeping the garden of Eden...

There is no doubt that this required work...

Now, here's the good part.

At this point, Adam had a perfect body that is eternal..

He doesn't get tired or exhausted in his work...

He can work for days on end, and that was probably required for such a large tract of land as the garden of Eden...

The second thing to see here is this..

#2 - Work will be around forever.

I think this verse helps us understand that work will also be a part of the perfect world of the new heavens and new earth...

The book of Revelations speaks of believers ruling and reigning and serving the Lord forever and ever...

God did not create man for laziness...

He did not create man to just take up space...

Adam wasn't lounging around in the garden.

He was cultivating and keeping the garden and believers won't be laid back on a white cloud in heaven...

We will be ruling and reigning with Christ and serving Him forever...

Now that leads to the third note to make here about verse 15..

#3 - Man is called to serve God.

God made the heavens and the earth.

God made man.

God made a garden.

God put man in the garden..

God called man to keep the garden..

Even in a perfect world, man is pictured serving the Lord by keeping his garden...

This is the highest calling of man.

To serve the Lord.

In other words, man is at his best when he is serving the Lord..

Now, this doesn't mean that everyone is called to preach or be a Sunday School teacher or deal in a church.

It simply means this...

We were created to serve our Creator...

And we should find way to do that in this world...

God put Adam in a garden and he saved God by keeping the garden...

God has put us in a fallen world and our challenge is to find ways to serve the Lord in it...

And what is amazing about that challenge is this...

When you find a way to serve the Lord here on this earth, it is fulfilling and even energizing...

I have watched people serve the Lord way past the point of what they were physically able to do at times...

All that stems from what we see here in Genesis 2, which affirms the fact that we were created to serve the Lord from the very beginning...

Therefore, I would encourage each of us to find ways to do that and to do it often...

Conclusion

So, what can we take from the first part of Genesis 2?

#1 - Man is the creation of God.

I know this goes without saying for most of us, but the fact that we are made by God changes our perspective of life...

Look, if the evolutionists are right and we are simply a result of random chance, then life has no meaning or purpose and we simply better get the most of this life.

However, if God made us and fashioned us, we better make sure to live in a way that pleases him..

#2 - God meets our needs.

I know this also goes without saying but God is not a distant unconcerned God when it comes to the needs of man.

Adam got food, beauty, water and everything else he needed in the garden of Eden.

God still provides our greatest needs today..

Yes, food and water and beauty are all a part of the present creation, but our greatest need today is that of salvation from sin.

And God has even provided that in sending his Son to the cross.

In chapter 2, Adam didn't need a Savior from sin.

There was no sin...

Therefore, there was no need of salvation..

In chapter 3, Adam will need a Savior and guess what, God will get to work providing a Savior...

This is the slow to anger, full of compassion God of creation...

Yes, He is holy.

Yes, He is just.

Yes, He will punish unrepentant sinners.

But only after they have rejected what God has provided for their salvation...

This is the goodness of God..

You need food? I will provide trees and fruit.

You need water? I will send springs of water out of the ground.

You need beauty? I will make the garden a place that looks and smells good.

You need something to do? I will put you in the garden to work it and tend to it.

You need a Savior? I will send my own sin to die in your place..

I had a grandmother like many of you had.

She tried to meet every need of my life.

You don't like roast beef? I'll cook you a hamburger.

You don't like butter beans? Ill fry you some homemade fries.

You don't like your shoes? Here's some money to go buy a new pair...

This is the nature of God.

You have a need? I will meet it.

You have a worry? I will take it away.

You have a concern? I will address it.

What an incredible God we have.

Not only has HE given us life, He works to sustain our life and provide a way for our life to continue with Him forever.

Let us pray.