**May 20, 2020 | A Study on Chapter 2 of the Book of Genesis**

**Adam & Eve**

Last week we read about how God created an environment that man could live in 5 days then created man and animals on the 6th day.  Now we read that God rested on the 7th day.  The 7 day week was established by God and it is still in effect today.  I wonder if people who deny God’s existence ever think about that.  God rested on the 7th day not because he was tired but because he wanted to set an example for man to follow.  I once saw a sign in front of a store that said “Open 24/7, ***5*** days a week”.   I think God is at work 24/7, ***7***days a week always ready to hear our prayers.  In John 5:17 Jesus says that He and the Father are always at work.   Unlike us, God has no need for rest.  He set aside the 7th day not just as a day of rest but a holy day, the Sabbath day as set forth in the 4th commandment.

Next we are provided some additional details about the first 6 days.  The NIV says this is the account of the heavens and earth while the KJV says these are the generations of the heavens and earth.   The term generations is normally used to identify periods of time or family history but it’s use here is in the context of heavens and earth so it’s meaning is uncertain.  We have a picture of the earth before God brought about the miraculous changes described in chapter 1.  We are specifically told that there was no rainfall so the streams mentioned in verse 6 may have been fed by a vapor of mist surrounding the earth.  Some speculate that there was no rain on earth prior to the flood, however there is no definitive statement in the Bible regarding that (see Heb. 11:7).  In verse 7 God breaths into the nostrils of Adam, something he did not do to the animals of the earth.  As discussed in chapter 1, God set us apart from animals by giving us a soul.  God formed us from the dust of the earth so we are made up of elements found in soil.  Isaiah and Paul used a metaphor of a potter using clay to mold a vessel to show how God wants to shape us.  Several of those verses also reference our disobedience (Isa. 29:16, 45:9, Rom.9:19).

Verse 8 says that God planted a garden and placed man there to tend the garden so God intended for us to have an occupation.  Paul wrote that those who would not work would not eat (2nd Thess. 3:10).  Paul’s admonition also spoke of idleness leading to becoming busybodies.  When God breathed into Adam he gave us a purpose, something else animals do not possess beyond looking for their next meal.  It is this sense of purpose that drives us to succeed in our careers and avocations.  We must also be mindful of the commandment for a holy day of rest and not let our occupations become idols that we worship.  I have yet to hear of a death bed confession of regret for spending too little time at the office.

In the midst of the garden God created were many trees, two of which are specifically mentioned; the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.  Note that God’s instruction not to eat from the tree of knowledge preceded God’s creation of Eve (v 17).  As we will see in chapter 3, it appears that Adam never ate from the tree of life even though it was available to him (3:22).  The garden was watered by a river flowing through it and our study of Revelation chapter 22 noted the similarities with the river in the New Jerusalem.  The river in the Garden of Eden separated into 4 rivers, 2 of which are the Tigris and Euphrates which can be found on a modern map running parallel from Turkey to Iraq before merging and emptying into the Persian Gulf.  We normally think of this region as desert, however the Tigris and Euphrates valley is known as the Fertile Crescent because of the rich soil which support farming.  The Greeks referred to this region as Mesopotamia which means between the Rivers.  The other 2 rivers named are the Pishon and Gihon which do not appear on a map, perhaps an indication that they were erased by the flood.

In verse 19 God allows Adam to determine names for all the animals which brings to mind Adam’s language.  Much like fully formed plants and animal, it appears that Adam was a fully formed man ready to work in the garden.  I wonder if God created him with an inborn language or if God taught Adam how to speak.  However it came about, the naming of all the animals would have been an enormous task.  God had said in verse 18 that he would create a helper for Adam but verse 20 says none could be found.  What follows is the first marriage in human history officiated by God.  In reading commentaries about this verse, I found the following written by Ray Pritchard of Keep Believing Ministries.

*“When God says he will create “a helper,” many people picture someone who sweeps the floor, makes the beds, prepares the meals, and in general does the housework while the man of the house sits in his soft recliner with the remote control in his hand flipping from one channel to another. That’s not what the word means. In the Old Testament this particular Hebrew word was often used of God himself (see Psalm 46:1). A “helper” in this context means one who supplies what is lacking in another person. God created Eve to do what Adam cannot do by himself. And that points us to an amazing truth about marriage: The whole is greater than the sum of the parts. When a man and woman are united in marriage, the result is greater than 1 + 1 = 2. It’s more like 1 + 1 = 37! The result is all out of proportion to the talents and abilities of the two people involved.  Marriage, then, is meant to be a shared companionship between a husband and a wife. As they walk through life side by side, hand in hand, they share everything together. It’s not as if the husband can say, “This is my area. Woman, stay out of it.” Or the wife can say, “This is my realm. Keep your hands off.” While there will definitely be a division of labor depending on gifts and talents and desires and time available, in a good marriage everything is shared on a basis of honesty, openness and love. In that light we can say that marriage is God’s chief answer to human loneliness. It isn’t the only answer. There are others, such as family and friends and neighbors and co-workers and villages and towns and cities and nations. And the body of Christ stands as a supernatural expression of a universal brotherhood of believers in Christ. Here we find a family that in many ways transcends our earthly family. But marriage stands apart as God’s first answer to the need we all feel for friendship and intimacy.”*

In verse 21 God creates Eve not from the dust of the ground as Adam but by taking a rib from Adam.  His purpose is made clear in verse 24.  A man and his wife are to be united as one flesh and Eve sharing common flesh with Adam symbolizes this, another example of the difference between us and animals.  God intended marriage to be for life, some might joke that it is a life sentence.  If so, I am happy to be imprisoned.  The chapter closes with the statement that Adam and Eve were naked and felt no shame.  Where there is no sin, there is no guilt and their existence in the Garden of Eden prior to the fall was without sin.  That is not to say that guilt must always accompany sin.  I have used the expression “unconsciously incompetent” before.  What I mean by this is that people who have not accepted Jesus as their savoir are sometimes blissfully unaware of the sin in their life until they are brought under conviction.  This was not the case for Adam and Eve but would change as we will see in chapter 3.  I’ll close with an amusing yet profound anecdote from Dr. Pritchard.

*“A little boy sat through a Sunday School class and learned about the time Jesus went to a wedding and turned water into wine. “And what did you learn from that story?” asked his father. The boy thought for a moment and answered, “If you’re having a wedding, make sure Jesus is there.” That’s good advice. Put Jesus at the center of your marriage and no matter what else happens, you will truly live happily ever after.”*