

## Genesis Chapter 2

Verses 1-3: These words affirm that God had completed His work. Four times it is said that He finished His work, and 3 times it is said that this included all His work. Present processes in the universe reflect God sustaining that completed creation, not more creation (Heb. 1:3).

### **Genesis 2:1 "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them."**

The process of "filling" and "forming" is now "finished" (1:1).

"Host of them" refers to all the things that God created, as opposed to stars in Nehemiah 9:6 and angels in 1 Kings 22:19.

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished": Perfected and completed in the space of six days, gradually, successively, in the manner before related; by the word and power of God they were on the first day created out of nothing, but they were not perfected, beautified, and adorned, and filled, until all the creatures in them were made.

"And all the host of them", (of the heavens and the earth), the host of heavens are the sun, moon, and stars, often so called in Scripture. And the host of the earth are the plants, herbs, and trees, the fowls, fishes, animals, and man, were finished, brought to completion.

No permanent change has ever since been made in the course of the world. No new species of animals been formed, no law of nature repealed or added to. They could have been finished in a moment as well as in six days, but the work of creation was gradual for the instruction of man, as well, perhaps, as of higher creatures (Job 38:7).

And these are like hosts or armies, very numerous, and at the command of God, and are marshaled and kept in order by him; even some of the smallest of creatures are his army, which are at his beck and call, and he can make use of to the annoyance of others, as particularly the locusts are called, Joel 2:11.

Verse 1 of chapter 2 tells us a lot. Heavens is plural meaning more than one. There are three:

- (1) Earth's Atmosphere, which is the immediate sky (Genesis 2:19; 7:3, 23; Psalms 8:8, etc.);
- (2) Outer Space, the starry heavens (Deuteronomy 17:3; Jeremiah 8:2; Matthew 24:29);
- (3) Where God and the holy angels (and creatures), and spirits of just men dwell. It's called "The heaven of heavens, or the third heaven" (Deut. 10:14; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 115:16; 148:4).

Finished means nothing else remains to be done. Just as Jesus said on the cross "It is finished" the work was and is completed.

**Genesis 2:2 "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."**

"He rested" employs the root for "sabbath" that later relates to Israel (in Exodus 16:29; 20:10-11; and Deut. 5:15). It implies He stopped or desisted from His creating work. No weariness is suggested. John 5:17 indicates the Father is always at work.

"Ended ... rested": God certainly did not rest due to weariness; rather, establishing the pattern for man's work cycle, He only modeled the need for rest. Later, the Sabbath ordinance of Moses found its basis in the creation week (Exodus 20:8-11).

The Sabbath was God's sacred ordained day in the weekly cycle. Jesus said, "The Sabbath was made for man" (Mark 2:27), and Genesis 2:3 stated that God "sanctified" or set apart the Sabbath day because He rested in it. Later, it was set aside for a day of worship in the Mosaic Law (see note on Exodus 20:8).

Hebrews 4:4 distinguishes between physical rest and the redemptive rest to which it pointed. Colossians 2:16 makes it clear that the Mosaic "Sabbath" has no symbolic or ritual place in the New Covenant. The church began worshiping on the first day of the week to commemorate the resurrection of Christ (Acts 20:7).

In verses 1 and 2, God is Elohim. Remember Elohim is a plural word.

This is also the rest that God speaks of for the Christian. Total cessation from the struggles of life.

**Genesis 2:3 "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."**

"Sanctified": that is, He set it apart from the other days (Exodus 20:11).

God blessed that seventh day for mankind, to give mankind rest. Jesus said "The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath" (in Mark 2:27). You see, even in the day of rest that God set up; He still had the needs of mankind at heart. He knew our bodies would wear out, if we did not have 1 day in 7 for rest.

"Seven", as we have mentioned over and over again, means spiritually complete.

Sanctified means that God Himself made it holy. He set the seventh day aside and declared it holy. When we are sanctified, it means we have been set aside by God and made holy by Him. We are not made holy by what we have done, but by what He has done.

When we see the example that God did not rest until His work was finished, we see what He expects from us, when He returns. He expects to find us working, trying to get one more saved before the trumpet blows.

In verses 2:4 – 4:26, we see the history of the heavens and the earth (verse 4).

“Verses 4-25”: This section fills in the details of man’s creation on day six. How did Moses obtain this account, so different from the absurd fictions of the pagans? Not from any human source, for man was not in existence to witness it. Not from the light of reason, for though intellect can know the eternal power of the Godhead (Rom. 1:18-20), and that God made all things, it cannot know how.

None but the Creator Himself could give this data and, therefore, it is through faith that one understands that the worlds were formed by the Word of God (Heb. 11:3). Genesis 5:1 indicates there may have been a “book” (or table) of the histories relating to Adam, to which Moses had access under inspiration.

Verses 4-7 “Generations” is the first of 10 section-headings in Genesis (5:2; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, 27; 25:12, 19; 36:1; 37:2), which may be better understood as narrating the “histories” or “stories” of various people or events. Nowhere in Genesis does the word include the birth of the individual of various people or events. Nowhere in Genesis does the word include the birth of the individual (except in 25:19, where Isaac is mentioned as the son of Abraham).

**Genesis 2:4 "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,"**

“In the day” is an expression conveying the idea “when the Lord God made.” “Made” is asah, used synonymously with bara (1:1).

“Lord” is likely pronounced “Yahweh.” It is the most significant name for God in the Old Testament, appearing 6,823 times. The name refers to God as the self-existent active One, as it is related to the verb “to be” (in Exodus 3:14).

It also indicates Israel’s Redeemer (in Exodus 6:6). This name is associated with God’s holiness (in Leviticus 11:44-45), His hatred of sin (in Genesis 6:3-7), and His graciousness in providing redemption for all (in Isaiah 53:1, 5-6, and 10).

“God” (Elohim), which is used to the exclusion of other names for God (in chapter 1), indicates His omnipotence (all powerful), whereas this name emphasizes His care and personal concern for His Creation and His intimate and close relationship to it. Beginning with verse 4, there is a change in the narrative’s flow as it centers on the garden just before the arrival of “man”.

Jehovah Elohim (Lord God), was first used here.

**Genesis 2:5 "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."**

“And every plant of the field, before it was in the earth”: That is, God made it, even he who made the heavens and the earth; for these words depend upon the preceding, and are in close connection with them; signifying that the plants of the field, which were made out of the earth on the third day.

These were made before any were planted in it, or any seed was sown therein from whence they could proceed, and therefore must be the immediate production of divine power: and every herb of the field before it grew: those at once sprung up in perfection out of the earth, before there were any that budded forth, and grew up by degrees to perfection, as herbs do now.

“For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth”: so that the production of plants and herbs in their first formation could not be owing to that, since on the third day when they were made; there was no sun to exhale and draw up the waters into the clouds, in order to be let down again in showers of rain.

“And there was not a man to till the ground”: Man was not created till the sixth day, and therefore could have no concern in the cultivation of the earth, and of the plants and herbs in it; but these were the produce of almighty power, without the use of any means.

Can't you see this is an unfolding of the short statement said about the creation in verse 1?

**Genesis 2:6 "But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."**

“A mist from the earth”: “Mist” should be translated “flow.” It indicates that water came up from beneath the ground as springs and spread over the whole earth in an uninterrupted cycle of water.

After the fall, rain became the primary means of watering the earth and allowed for floods and droughts that did not exist originally. Rains also allowed for God to judge through floods and droughts.

Some relate this word to an Akkadian root meaning “canals,” “subterranean waterways,” or “floodways,” and not “mist,” which is mere conjecture. The root verb of verse sixth, “watered” is used in verse 10 for a kind of irrigation relating to the four rivers.

The verb “rise up” is used of the Nile River in Amos 8:8 and 9:5. As described in verse 15, keeping the garden well-irrigated and watered for the special types of plants was part of Adam’s work.

**Genesis 2:7 "And the LORD God formed man [of] the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."**

“Formed man”: Many of the words used in this account of the creation of man picture a master craftsman at work shaping a work of art to which he gives life (1 Cor. 15:45). This adds detail to the statement of fact in 1:27 (1 Tim. 2:13). Psalm 139:14. Made from dirt, a man’s value is not in

the physical components that form his body, but in the quality of life which forms his soul (see Job 33:4).

The verb is used on occasion for the “potter” (Jer. 18:2). It expresses the relation of a craftsman to his material, connoting skill (Psalm 94:9), and a sovereignty which man forgets at his peril (Isa. 29:16; Jer. 18:4). Here is the “potter” *par excellence*, setting the design and pattern.

The corporeal part (physical human body), was “the dust of the ground” (which is not a symbol of the animal kingdom from which Adam evolved; note its use in 3:19), and the non-corporeal part was “the breathe of life. The word “breath” (Hebrew ruach), is “spirit.” “Life” is a plural, but Hebrew frequently uses the plural without meaning a numerical plural.

“Living soul” (Hebrew nepesh chayah) should be translated “living creature” as the same phrase appears in 1:21-24 applied to animals. Here the reference stands for the entire person, and is not used in just the metaphysical, theological sense in which we tend to use the term “soul” today.

In the Old Testament, the word “soul”, among other uses, refers to the whole person. It identifies something that cannot be defined materially and that is therefore distinct from the body (Isaiah 10:18). The soul is that part of us that is life. It is incorporeal existence.

At the creation of Adam, man did not have a soul but he became a soul, and the life-principle was the breath or Spirit of God (verse 7). Death is described as the soul’s departing from the body (35:18). The fundamental desire of a Christian’s soul should be for a deeper fellowship and communion with God (Psalm 25:1) (Gen. 2:7; Gen. 1:26).

So many religious people of our day are confused about this one verse. Somehow they seem to overlook the break between the words "breath of life" and "man became a living soul". You see if that statement had ended at life, man would be alive.

Man, is in fact, that breath of life that God breathed into Him. This breath of life that God breathed into the body is what man is. It is the spirit. The body is the house that the spirit lives in.

Right now, you are probably thinking, "well, where does the sentence (man became a living soul), come in?" If the spirit of man lived in this house called a body and had no soul, there would be no conflict; but you see, there is a conflict. The spirit wants to be in control, and the body wants to be in control. Control of what? The soul which is the will of man.

The Bible says there is a war going on constantly between the flesh and the spirit. Why would that be, unless they were trying to take control of something? That something is the soul or will of mankind. We are a spirit, housed in a body and either the spirit or the flesh (body), controls the soul (will).

Mankind did not just slither into existence by evolution, but was rather created by a loving God in His own likeness. The difference between man and beast is the power to reason and have a will.

**Genesis 2:8 "And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed."**

“Garden eastward in Eden”: The Babylonians called the lush green land from which water flowed *edenu*; today, the term “oasis” describes such a place. This was a magnificent garden paradise, unlike any the world has seen since, where God fellowshiped with those He created in His image.

The exact location of Eden is unknown; if “toward the east” was used in relationship to where Moses was when he wrote, then it could have been in the area of Babylon, the Mesopotamian Valley.

The Septuagint has *paradeisos*, “parkland,” hence *paradise* for garden. It was only a part of Eden (verses 10-14). It was literally “off east,” most likely in Mesopotamia (modern Iraq), since two of the four rivers are the well-known Tigris and the Euphrates (verse 14).

The word for *Eden* means “delight enjoyment” and is associated with paradise (in Revelation 2:7). Eden is a symbol of great fertility (in Isaiah 51:3, Ezekiel 36:35; and Joel 2:3). So here it may indicate a state of unbroken fellowship between God and man. The expulsion from the garden was more than a physical move (3:24).

We see again; Jehovah Elohim here planted a garden. He is always concerned about the needs of man. This garden was a protected place where God could fellowship with man, and where the needs of man would be met, (a heaven on earth).

Some believe this garden was in the Holy Land we know today. It really doesn't matter where it was. Just know it existed and was made by God for man. God has always prepared a special place for mankind so that He might fellowship with his people.

**Genesis 2:9 "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."**

“Pleasant” is the same root as *covet* in the Ten Commandments (in Exodus 20:17; compare 3:6), where it is “a tree to be desired to make one wise.” We tend to covet things that are pleasant to the sight (Joshua 7:21 and Achan’s sin).

“Tree of life”: A real tree, with special properties to sustain eternal life. It was placed in the center of the garden, where it must have been observed by Adam, and its fruit had it been eaten by him, thus would have sustained his life. Such a tree, symbolic of eternal life, will be in the new heavens and new earth (see note on Rev. 22:2).

“Tree of knowledge” (2:16-17; 3:1-6, 11, 22). It was perhaps given that title because it was a test of obedience by which our first parents were tried, whether they would be good or bad, obey God or disobey His command.

“Tree of life ... and the tree of knowledge of good and evil”: These were two literal trees to which God gave some special significance. The tree of life seems to symbolize the fixed moral state (3:22). Thus, partaking of this tree would be a blessing only for those already glorified (Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14).

There are 3 steps for a Christian to take. First when they are initially saved after turning their life over to Christ, they are justified (just as they had never sinned). Second, they are sanctified which means they are set apart by God for His use and; Third, the glorification takes place after a Christian dies as they become perfect like Christ was perfect as they enter God’s presence.

Good and evil sometimes serves as an idiom of universality (Num. 24:13; 2 Sam. 13:22), but in this context, it has a moral significance.

God, not only thought of physical needs of mankind, but wanted him to be happy as well. The trees were beautiful as well as functional. Nothing is more beautiful than a peach or apple tree in full bloom. The Garden of Eden became the highest form of heaven on earth. It was beautiful to the eye and took care of all man's needs.

Just as the center of our life must be God for us to have a fulfilling life, the central figure in the garden was the Tree of Life (symbolic of Jesus). The forbidden tree in the garden was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.

Even in this beautiful, wonderful garden, man's will was to be perfectly active. As we said before, the thing that separates mankind from the animals is the fact of his will. He can choose to do good, or choose to do evil.

We read in our Bible, that we cannot break the law until there is a law to break. It seems Adam was in a blissful state of no temptation at this point. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil perhaps had something to do with opening our eyes to the law of God, (it made us aware of Him).

It is interesting as we move on down in chapter 2, that Adam had never eaten of the Tree of Life, even though it was in the garden for him. It might be symbolic to make us see that we must partake of Jesus Christ's salvation and eternal life for ourselves. It can be available, but if we do not partake of it for ourselves, we will lose out, too, the same as Adam did.

He was partaking of the fruit on the outer edge, but never partook of the Tree in the center (Jesus), which would give him eternal life. We Christians must be careful not to just nibble around the edges of Christianity. We must get to the center and eat of this Tree of Life to be pleasing to God. Part time religion will not get us into heaven. We must have Jesus as the very center of our lives.

## **Genesis Chapter 2 Questions**

1. What did Jesus say about the Sabbath?
2. What does "sanctified" mean?
3. In what condition does God want to find us when He returns?
4. Where is Jehovah Elohim (Lord God) used first?
5. Where did the earth get the moisture it needed to grow plants?
6. What was man's body formed from?
7. Where did man get his breath of life?
8. And man became what?
9. What is the breath of life?
10. Why do we have a body?
11. What are the spirit and the body fighting for?
12. What is the difference between man and beast?
13. Where was the garden located?
14. The exact location of the garden is not important. What two things are?
15. Where was the Tree of Life located in the garden?
16. What must happen for us to have a fulfilling life?
17. Where do we see Jesus (symbolically) in the garden?
18. What tree had Adam not eaten from, besides the tree of knowledge of good and evil?