

INTRODUCTION:

The name “Genesis” comes from a Greek word meaning “beginning.” This title was taken from the Septuagint, the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament. The original Hebrew title, *Bereshith* was derived from the first word of the Hebrew text, “in beginning” and literally means “the head.” The Book of Genesis is an appropriate introduction to the entire Bible, and the kernels of all truth are found in it. Genesis answers our questions regarding the “beginnings” of the universe, humankind and all life forms, sin and evil, families and nations. While Genesis was never intended to be either a scientific document, only divine inspiration can account for its modern accuracy in a pre-scientific age. Genesis is very clear that all things were created and had a definite beginning point in and through God. Genesis also informs us that everything has been designed by a Supreme Intellect for an intended purpose, not chance. Genesis teaches us that God has created all things and the centerpiece of His creation is mankind. And while Genesis was never intended as a world history, it provides the story of man’s early faith history. It is important to note that Genesis does not attempt to deal with all history, but only on those individuals, families and people that God chose to advance His promise and plan for all mankind. Based on our theme of “Beginnings” we will break down the Book of Genesis into nine sections as listed in the following outline:

Part 1	Genesis 1:1—2:24	The Beginning of the Created World and Mankind
Part 2	Genesis 2:25—3:24	The Beginning of Sin and the Promise of Redemption
Part 3	Genesis 4:1—5:32	The Beginning of Families and Relationships
Part 4	Genesis 6:1—9:29	The Beginning of Covenants
Part 5	Genesis 10:1—11:26	The Beginning of Nations (The Beginning of God’s Chosen People)
Part 6	Genesis 11:27—23:20	The Story of Abraham
Part 7	Genesis 24:1—28:9	The Story of Isaac
Part 8	Genesis 28:10—36:43	The Story of Jacob
Part 9	Genesis 37:1—50:26	The Story of Joseph

PART 1: The Beginning of the Created World and Mankind

Our study begins with the creation account and extreme controversy. Not only does the biblical six days of creation account seem to contradict scientific evidence that concludes that the universe and world were created over billions of years, but the Bible itself seems to provide two contradicting creation accounts. Genesis 1:1—2:4 describes a six day event in which God creates everything with plant life being created on the third day and animals and humans on the sixth day. But then in Genesis 2:5-24, we are told that “*no shrub of the field was yet in the earth*” (2:5) when “*God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*” (2:7). And then after creating man, that the Lord said: “***It is not good for the man to be alone***” (2:18), so “*out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them*” (2:19).

For many people these contradictions in the opening chapter of Genesis make the entire Bible difficult to believe. They reason that if the very foundation of creation is flawed then none of what the Bible teaches can be trusted to be accurate. They surmise that the biblical writers were not guided by the Divine but were creating stories to support their own views and moral perspectives. If we take the Divine away from the Word of God then it has no power over our lives because we no longer trust in it as the Truth.

So how do we interpret the creation accounts found in Genesis? Do we discount the Bible’s validity because we cannot reconcile God’s Word with modern scientific understandings? Does the apparent contradiction of facts within the Bible itself mean that it is only a compilation of stories from different authors with different viewpoints, and therefore not to be taken literally? It is due to these very questions that God has moved me to conduct this Genesis Bible study. We will not only attempt to put all of these questions to rest, but also see beyond our own human limitations, seeking to glimpse God’s Divine Truth.

Before we take even our first step on this journey we need to remind ourselves that God is infinite and all-knowing, and we are finite and limited both in our knowledge and perspectives of what Truth really is. When we limit what God has done or can do to our own limitations, we place God in a box and elevate ourselves above Him. We must remember that He is the Creator and we are the created. We the finite will never fully

comprehend the infinite. But rather than closing our minds and rejecting His Word because we don't fully understand it, let us open our hearts and minds, trusting in His Word and humbly seeking that He reveal His Truth to us. Let us listen so we can hear!

CHAPTER-1:

Chapter-1 describes the six days in which God created the earth and all that is within it. While we are told that God created the "heavens" and the earth, emphasis and focus is on the earth because this is the story of our creation, and of the world on which we live.

Genesis Day-1: (Creation of Matter and Light)

Verse-1: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* The Hebrew word translated as "beginning" infers an initial or first act or starting place. The word "creation" does not mean to make something out of something else as we do, but infers an "initiation" of something new rather than a "manipulation" of something that already exists. The word "earth" refers to the physical place, the planet earth on which we live, and the word "heavens" infers that which is high, lofty and above the earth. The same word we translate as "heaven" is used in scripture in reference to everything from the sky, to the space and universe beyond, to the realm of God and His angels. This verse should be interpreted as saying that God created everything out of nothing, both that which we can see and understand and that which we cannot see or understand. Creation is beginning!

Verse-2: *"And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters."* In this verse we see God "beginning" to bring "order" into a "formless" and "void" creation. The Hebrew meaning of the words infers "waste" and "emptiness" which is also emphasized by the "darkness" that covers everything. The Hebrew word translated as "darkness" does not simply mean an absence of physical light, but can also infer obscurity, misery, falsehood and ignorance. But the promise and hope of God's presence is there even in this dark beginning because the Spirit of God is "moving," is acting and active in the midst of creation.

Verse-3: *"Then God said, 'Let there be light,' and there was light."* The reason we say God "spoke" everything into existence is because of the Hebrew verb we translate

as ***“Let there be.”*** It literally means “to breathe” as in take the first breath or “to speak” the first word. It also can be translated as “to be” or “to become” or “to come to pass.” The Hebrew word translated as “light” also has more meaning than simply physical light. It can also mean brightness, enlightenment, illumination, happiness and cheerfulness. The deeper and associated meanings of the word “light” stand in direct contrast to the meaning of the word “darkness.” God turned on more than a light!

Verses 4: ***“And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.”*** In this verse take special note that God declares that the “light” is “good.” Again the Hebrew word translated as “good” can have many additional meanings including, “beautiful, joyful, fruitful, precious and righteous.” Also note that God does not say that the darkness is good. On the contrary, He separates the light from the darkness. Just as in the end the Lord will separate those who walk in darkness from those who walk in His marvelous light, from the very beginning God has not intended for light and darkness to reside together. It should be obvious that we must not interpret the light and darkness in these opening verses as physical light and darkness. Jesus has taught us that evil resides in darkness, but that those who walk in the Light of the Lord are not to hide but come out into the light that their good deeds may be seen. (Mat. 5:16)

Verse-5: ***“And God called the light day, and the darkness He called night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day.”*** Now God labels the light and the darkness which He has separated. He calls the light “day” and the darkness “night.” It is interesting that the Hebrew word used here translated as “day” has a wide number of meanings based on context, but it most generally is used as a reference to time. It can mean a day, year, or life. It can also mean a period of time, a particular moment in time, or of course, the “time” in which the light shines. Therefore, in this context, the most likely meaning for “day” would be “the time of Light.” Regarding the “darkness” being called “night” we find in the Hebrew an opposite meaning. We have already learned that “night” can mean obscurity, misery, falsehood and ignorance. It should be no surprise that the Hebrew word translated as “night” literally means a “twisting away from the light” and also infers an ominous sense. The Bible will continue to teach us that evil “twists” the truth (the light) into something false (dark) in its attempt to deceive us.

We learn that we cannot live in shades of gray (compromise), but must chose light over darkness. This basic principle is being clearly stated from the beginning in God's Word.

Our verse concludes informing us that with the separation of light and darkness into day and night that there was "evening" and there was "morning," one "day." We already know that the word "day" can imply a "period of time." Therefore, we can assume that a first period of time has transpired. This period is not necessarily a twenty-four hour day as we think of it today. God could be measuring time in a completely different way. We need to remember the Apostle Peter's words from 2 Peter 3:8 when he says: ***"But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."***

Regarding the reference to "evening" and "morning," this may seem confusing if we are not talking about a normal day. It may also seem odd that the evening should proceed the morning in reference to a "day" because we think of a day beginning with morning and ending at evening. The listing of "evening" before "morning" may be because in the Jewish understanding, the period of time we define as a day begins at sunset and continues until the next sunset. Also, morning is seen as the folding back of darkness, so in this order we see darkness giving way to light—a movement from darkness toward light with the day beginning in darkness and then becoming light.

Scientific Period-1:

It is interesting that there seems to be a correlation between what is described in the first "day" or period of time in Genesis, with what scientist allege happened in the first period of the development of our world. If one is Christian and believes in the "Big Bang Theory" as the beginning of our universe, then perhaps you could say that God pulled the trigger, and BANG, all energy and matter and everything that would God would fashion into everything suddenly came into existence. Scientists don't know what the universe was like before the Big Bang, but one might assume it was "formless, empty and dark." After the Big Bang scientists believe the stars and planets were formed. They say as the earth formed it was first shrouded in darkness, covered with thick clouds of nitrogen, carbon dioxide and water vapor which blocked out the sun enough to allow the earth's surface to cool and harden. The cooler temperatures then allowed the water vapor to condense, which formed the oceans. As the water vapor in the atmosphere condensed,

the sun began to dimly shine through to the surface for the first time since there was a surface to shine on, and there would have been a first distinction between night and day. But the atmosphere would likely still been too thick with heavy overcast for any heavenly bodies to be seen. There would have been only light and darkness.

Genesis Day-2: (Creation of Expanse—Heaven)

Verses-6, 7 & 8: *“Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” And God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse; and it was so. And God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day.”* In verse 2, the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the “waters.” This may not be water as we think of it, but a liquid or formless substance which has not be fashioned into its final form. God now will “separate” the “waters from the waters” by means of an “expanse” (or “firmament” in some translations). The literal meaning of the Hebrew word translated as “expanse” is “an expanse of plate” such as when a piece of metal is hammered out into a large thin plate. The Hebrew meaning of the word we translate as “separate” literally means to divide, disjoin, discern or distinguish. The separated waters are placed above and below the expanse which separates them and perhaps is intended to act as barrier between them. God calls the “expanse” heaven. We have already said that “heaven” is understood to be a high and lofty place above. It can mean the sky or atmosphere, the space and universe beyond, and/or the heavenly realm of God and His angels. Many believe that the waters “below” are that which God fashioned the physical earth and perhaps the entire universe, and that the waters “above” were fashioned into the invisible realm including the angels. From a physical understanding the “expanse” could simply be the atmosphere or sky that separates our physical world from the vacuum of space. From a spiritual understanding the “expanse” could be the “veil” or barrier which separates the visible physical world from the invisible spiritual realm.

Scientific Period-2:

Again, there seems to be a correlation between the Genesis account of the second “day” and the second period in earth’s development. Scientists believe that after the oceans formed and light began to penetrate the thick atmosphere that oxygen-producing bacteria

(blue-green algae) began to form and multiply. This could not happen until there was both seawater and light present to support photosynthesis. Scientists believe this was the beginning of the formation of the oxygen in our atmosphere that surrounds our planet and supports our life to this day. In other words, this was the creation of the atmosphere relevant to human life. Scientists call this the “Great Oxidation Event.”

Genesis Day-3: (Creation of Land and Plants)

Verse-9 & 10: *“Then God said, “Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear”; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the waters He called seas; and God saw that it was good.”* The process of separating continues as God divides the dry land from the waters. The Hebrew word for “dry land” is literally “dry ground” or ground providing “solid footing” which can be built upon. The Hebrew word translated as “gathering” literally means “something that is waited for” or “a collection.” The Hebrew word translated as “seas” does not simply refer to oceans but also includes “inland waters and rivers” and refers to a “totality of waters.” The fact that God gathers the waters into “one place” is not necessarily a contradiction to the many oceans, lakes and rivers we have today. The Hebrew phrase translated as “one place” can also be translated as “another place.” The understanding is that the water will separate from the land which will “appear” or become seen, experienced and understood separated from the waters.

Verse-11, 12 & 13: *“Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth”; and it was so. And the earth brought forth vegetation, plants yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, with seed in them, after their kind; and God saw that it was good. And there was evening and there was morning, a third day.”* Now that God has created dry ground He creates plants, again separating them into various kinds of plants, each with their own seed. It is interesting that God seems to initially create three classes of plants. The Hebrew word translated as “vegetation” literally means “grass.” The word translated as “plants” literally means “herbs.” And the words translated as “fruit trees” or “trees bearing fruit” are precisely that—“trees of wood that bear fruit containing seeds.” Again, it is significant that we see a “separation” of types of plants and that each has a “separate” seed so that its type can continue

distinctively different from the rest. Each evidently serves its purpose according to God's plan for creation. And God proclaims the separation of the land from the waters, and all the various kinds of plants that He has created as "good."

Scientific Period-3:

Scientists believe that the core of our continents arose from the earth's crust and were originally gathered or bunched together to form a single supercontinent. But then over a long time period the movement of the many plates that make up the earth's crust caused the one continent to be torn apart and become the many we have today. Scientists further believe that as the continents were forming and moving that complex organisms began to form in the seas during what is called the "Cambrian Explosion." They also believe that plant life was the first form of life that migrated from the seas to the land. Once plant life emerged on land, now being in direct contact with the atmosphere and sunlight, the process of developing life sped up greatly.

Genesis Day-4: (Creation of Lights)

Verse-14 & 15: *"Then God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for season, and for days and years; and let them be for lights in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth"; and it was so."* The process of separating continues as God provides separate lights for the day and for the night, and these lights through their ordered movement provide signs for separating time. This time separation will be night from day, months, years and seasons. These separate lights with their separate timings create order for the timing and measurement of life cycles on earth. Note that these lights are placed in the "expanse" which God called "heaven" in verse 8. We previously discussed the fact that the "heavens" could include our atmosphere, space and universe beyond, and even the heavenly realm of God, sometimes in Scripture referred to as the "Third Heaven." Here it seems clear that the "expanse" God called "heaven" includes both our atmosphere and the space we call the universe beyond.

Verse-16: *"And God made the two great lights, the greater light to govern the day, and lesser light to govern the night; He made the stars also."* Please note that emphasis and focus in creation continues to be oriented toward the earth and to the provision of light. The sun is given highest priority, followed by the moon, and the stars

are given almost no significance at all, not having any governance. The Hebrew word translated as “lights” literally means “luminaries, light bearers, luminous body, or lump.” While we know today that there are billions of stars in billions of galaxies in our universe, only two lights are given governance. God seems to only put importance on what He is creating for the world in which man will be created and live. The Hebrew word translated as “govern” literally means “for dominion of” or “to rule, reign and have power over.” The sun and the moon will govern our days, months, seasons and years. They will ultimately provide signs for growing crops to sustain life, and the measurement of time to bring order to life. The stars and their constellations will provide guidance for direction not only for sailors at sea, but also wise men looking to the heavens for signs from God. I am reminded of Psalm 19:1-3, which begins declaring:

*“The heavens are telling of the glory of God;
and their expanse is declaring the work of His hands.
Day to day pours forth speech, and night to night reveals knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard.”*

In the creation account God’s concern is not for the vast universe in which we are such an insignificant speck, but the world which will become home for the centerpiece of His creation—mankind.

Verse-17 & 18: *“And God placed them in the expanse of the heavens to give light on the earth, and to govern the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness; and God saw that it was good.”* As already stated God’s emphasis is on the earth and providing light for the separation of light from darkness and day from night. Again, God looks upon what He has created and calls it good.

Scientific Period-4:

Scientists believe that with the addition of plant life on the land, photosynthesis greatly increased resulting in the production of more oxygen and the atmosphere changing from translucent to transparent as it is today. As the atmosphere cleared first the sun, then the moon and eventually even the stars became visible from the surface of the earth. Now the cycles of life and time would be for the first time visible. About this same time in earth’s development, the continents would have moved to positions very close to where they are today.

Genesis Day-5: (Creation of Sea Life and Birds)

Verse-20: *“Then God said, ‘Let the waters teem with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open expanse of the heavens.’”* God now creates living moving life. In the waters He creates “swarms” of “living creatures.” The Hebrew word translated “swarms” literally means “to be innumerable” indicating a vast uncountable number. They are “living” which means they are “alive.” One old meaning of the word is to say the creatures have a throat, something common to fish, birds and animals, distinguishing them from plants. The Hebrew word translated as “bird” literally means “flying creature” and cannot be limited to birds alone but may also apply to flying insects. Regarding these flying creatures, the Hebrew phrase translated “above the earth” literally means “above the face or surface of the ground or earth.” This may be an indication of limited range of movement only, confining them to the lowest heaven or the atmosphere.

Verse-21: *“And God created the great sea monsters, and every living creature that moves, with which the waters swarmed after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind; and God saw that it was good.”* It is clear that God didn’t just create small fish but great sea creatures as well. The Hebrew word translated as “sea monster” can also mean “huge fish, sea serpent, dragon, snake, whale” and “marine or land monster.” While many dismiss this as a “whale” or “huge fish,” the story of Job speaks of a great sea creature called Leviathan being created by God. Leviathan’s description is that of a huge dragon that has scale armor and breathes fire (Job 41). In Job 40:15-24 a second dinosaur like creature called Behemoth is also mentioned. These references would support that great creatures that we may see as mythical once lived in the sea.

We should take special note of the phrase “living creature that moves.” The Hebrew word here translated as “creature” means “breathing” or “with breath or respiration.” Prior to this point God had created only plants that consume carbon-dioxide and make oxygen. Now we have creatures that consume oxygen and “move.” Also note that all of the creatures from the sea along with the flying creatures have been created after their own “kind.” God has created a large variety of different creatures from the beginning, and not just one or a few life forms that mutated or evolved into many.

Verse-22-23: *“And God blessed them, saying, ‘Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let birds multiply on the earth.’ And there was evening and there was morning, a fifth day.”* These living creatures in the sea and of the air are the first in the order of God’s created things to receive a blessing. The Hebrew word “blessed” literally means “to bend the knee” or “to kneel down” or “to cause to kneel.” The word is also used as “to bless, to be blessed, to pray, and to praise.” Kneeling is the attitude or position for receiving a blessing and/or for prayer, praise and humility. This may be our first glimpse of “relationship” between the Creator and the created. Perhaps God is showing us that living, breathing creatures are capable of being “aware” they are blessed by God and of responding to that blessing. God tells them to “be fruitful and multiply.” This literally means they are instructed to “bear fruit,” which could be interpreted as saying, “make more of yourselves,” or perhaps even, “advance yourself into something more.” But we must not lose sight that God consistently instructs that which He has created to be oriented “outward” and not “inward.” God is not promoting self-advancement but outward growth.

Scientific Period-5:

Scientists believe that all life originated in the sea. This life became increasingly complex, developing from simple organisms to more complex life forms. The first life utilized the plentiful supply of carbon-dioxide, creating oxygen. When oxygen became plentiful, life was able to advance and use oxygen to sustain life. Scientists believe that in a period when forest and plant life, including primitive trees were already flourishing, that creatures crept out of the sea and began to make their home on land. The earliest of these creatures were dinosaurs which share many similar characteristics to birds. Many scientists believe that all but certain birds evolved directly from dinosaurs.

Genesis Day-6: (Creation of Animals and Humans)

Verse-24: *“Then God said, ‘Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind’; and it was so.”* God now calls into existence land creatures. The Hebrew word translated as “bring forth” can mean “come out” or “come forward” or “be brought out.” Implication is that the land creatures “come out” of the earth, but some speculate it could mean “come forward” onto the earth perhaps out of the sea. In either case, three different

Hebrew words indicate three different classes or types of animals. The first word literally means “beast or cattle,” which seems to infer domestic or herding animals. The second means “creeping things” which might be a reference to reptiles. The third word literally means “animal of earth.” While this could imply animals that live in the ground, most scholars interpret this to mean “beasts” or “wild animals” as opposed to “domestic” animals. Again, all of these animals will be of their own kinds, or of specific kinds.

Verse-25: *“And God made the beasts of the earth after their kind, and the cattle after their kind, and everything that creeps on the ground after its kind; and God saw that it was good.”* The same three types of animals are listed again only in a different order with the “wild beasts” mentioned first, followed by “cattle” or herding animals, and then the “creeping things.” All are viewed by God as good.

Verse-26 & 27: *“Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’ And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”* There are two new and startling revelations that should really get our attention as we begin our examination of the creation of mankind. First, and for the first time, God is referenced in the “plural” pronouns “Us” and “Our.” Is God speaking of Himself in the “plural” or is this a reference to angels participating in the creation of mankind? We have been translating the Hebrew word “Elohim” all along as “God,” but this is a “plural” word form. Deuteronomy 6:4 states: *“The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!”* But when the Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, He appears as three persons (Genesis 18:1-3), and Jesus will proclaim, *“I and the Father are one”* (John 10:30). Nowhere in all of Scripture is there any hint that angels shared in man’s creation, but there are a multitude of references to God as our Creator. Therefore, most scholars agree that this is the first reference in the Bible of the “plural” nature of God, which will ultimately be revealed and understood as the Holy Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

The second startling revelation is that mankind is created in the “image of God.” Nothing created prior to mankind was said to be made in God’s image, therefore, we are set apart from the rest of creation as uniquely special, and with special attributes. When

compared to the rest of God's creation we are similar to animals in our physical makeup, but we have three visible attributes which distinguish us from all other life. Only mankind has been given the capability to think, speak and create. Yes, many animals can make sounds and can obviously communicate with their like kind. Yes, some animals can even build things such as nest and dams, but there is no creature that can even remotely compare to humans in their ability to think, communicate and create.

Regarding mankind being created in the "image" or "likeness" of God, these Hebrew words literally mean "resemblance, model, pattern and/or shape." We are not created equal or a copy of God, but a resemblance in that we have similarities. The most important, although not revealed here but later, is that like God we possess a "spirit" which is eternal.

Regarding the Hebrew word used for "man" in this instance, this particular word can have different meaning based on its context. Here and in most uses in the Old Testament it simply means "man in a collective sense" such as "mankind." It is also used in regard to the "first man" and the phonic pronunciation of the Hebrew word is "Adam." What is really interesting is that this is the "root word" for the Hebrew words for "red, earth and blood."

Regarding human gender, while the word "man" is a "male-singular" word form, God makes it clear that "mankind" is a "plural" creation consisting of "males" and "females." We are given a sense of equality and distinction in that God has created us "male" and "female" together, both in the image of God but different from one another.

Verse-28: "And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'" On the fifth day of creation when God created "living creatures" in the sea and "living" flying creatures" (birds), He "blessed" them and told them to multiply. Now on the sixth day God has created all land animals and mankind, but His blessing is reserved for "man." This is clear because attached to His blessing is the instruction to "subdue" and "rule over," and He stipulates that those to be ruled over include the "fish, birds and every living thing that moves on the earth." The particular Hebrew word translated as "rule" carries heavy meaning because it literally means "to tread down as a winepress with the feet," or "to

subjugate” or “to oppress.” Clearly, God has set mankind above all other creatures that He has created as the centerpiece of His creation, and all living creatures are to be subjugated below mankind.

Verse-29 & 30: *“Then God said, ‘Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to every thing that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food’; and it was so.”* This may come as a surprise but please note that mankind and all living creatures on the “land” were originally created to eat only plant life. We were all created to be vegetarians. The implication is that we were not originally intended to kill and eat one another, were not intended to eat meat. There is a distinction in who eats what though. Humans are given every plant “yielding seed” and every tree which has “fruit yielding seed” for food. The animals are given the “green plants” to eat. Perhaps this distinction can be more clearly stated in that the seeds and fruits are given to humans to eat and the green leaves are given to the animals to eat.

Verse-31: *“And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.”* At the close of the sixth day God has completed the environment in which mankind is to live, placed us within that environment, provided the means to sustain mankind, and established order with mankind ruling over all that He has created. God looks upon all that He has done and declares it good.

Scientific Period-6:

Scientists believe that animal life evolved into various types of land animals. Two of the major types would be cold-blooded reptilians which depend on external heat and lay eggs, and warm-blooded mammals which generate their body heat internally and give birth to their young. Scientists believe that humans evolved from bipedal mammals that walked on two legs, simply stated, that man evolved from apes. But scientists acknowledge a “missing link” in the historical fossil record. They have never found any evidence directly connecting animals to modern humans who have the ability to think, speak and create. Animals continue to be subject to their environment while humans have the capacity to create changes in their environment.

CHAPTER-2:

The portion of chapter-2 we will address in Part-1 describes the seventh day in which God rests from His work of creation, and a second creation account which describes the creation of the Garden of Eden and of the first man and woman. The second creation account seems to contradict the six day creation account, but a deeper examination will prove this to be untrue. The first account is a wide-angle view while the second account zooms in on the sixth day, giving details which were not possible in the prior overview. Chapters 1 and 2 should not be seen as chronological.

Genesis Day-7: (The Day of Rest)

Verse-1: *“Thus the heavens and the earth were completed and all their hosts.”* This first verse of chapter 2 declares the actual work of creation “completed,” therefore the actual creation of all things has been conducted in the first six days. And creation is not a small thing. The Hebrew word translated as “hosts” literally means “a mass of people or things.” We typically see this word used in describing the “hosts of heaven” which is generally a reference to a vast number of angels or stars in heaven. The implication is that what God has created is enormous or massive.

Verse-2: *“And by the seventh day God completed His work which He had done; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.”* We associate the seventh day with the “Sabbath, the “day of rest” but God doesn’t get tired and never needs to “rest” as we understand the word rest. The actual meaning of the Hebrew words provides greater insight into the importance and meaning of the seventh day. The Hebrew word translated as “work” literally means “ministry, service” or the “actual activity of working.” The Hebrew word translated as “done” refers to “labor, toil and work accomplished” or the “completion of work.” The Hebrew word translated as “rest” literally means “to respond, to desist, to cease” or “to come to an end.” The seventh day is not a time of fatigue and recovery, but a response of satisfaction for a good work accomplished. I would equate this with the feeling an artist or craftsman or inventor, or anyone might have when their work is complete and they gaze upon the finished fruit of their labor.

Verse-3: *“Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”* We have previously

discussed the meanings of the word “blessed,” “rested,” and “created.” Creation kneels before God having received life from Him. God has initiated, not manipulated all things through His work which now comes to an end, and His response is to cease His labors. The Hebrew word translated as “sanctified” His final act, literally meaning “to pronounce clean” all that He has made.

Second Creation Account:

Verse-4: *“This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made earth and heavens.”* Taken literally and out of context this verse seems to be the introduction to the account of the creation of heaven and earth in a “day.” We already understand that a “day” is not necessarily a 24-hour time period, but a particular period of time when something happens. In this case, “day” refers to the period time in which creation was accomplished, rather this be in six days or over trillions of years.

Verse-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 cultivate the ground.”* The verse may seem to describe a time prior to the creation of plants, but this is not necessarily the case. The Hebrew word for “shrub” literally means a “shoot” such as in the very beginning of new growth. But the word comes from a root word meaning “to ponder” or “to meditate,” inferring that this is that reflective moment just before something significant happens. This sense is reinforced by the meaning of the Hebrew word translated as “field,” which refers to a “cultivated, plowed and sowed piece of land” before the crop comes forth. God has not sent the rain because there is not yet a “man” to cultivate or “work” the ground. Creation waits its centerpiece and reason to exist—mankind.

Verse-6: *“But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.”* The English translation in this case is very misleading. The Hebrew word translated as “mist” actually means “fresh water” or “spring water.” The understanding being conveyed is that a source of water from the earth would regularly rise and water the surface of the land, providing moisture in the absence of rain. God is tending to the land even before He sends the rains.

Verse-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 being.”* It has been previously stated that the word for “man” is the root word for the word “ground” or “earth.” The Hebrew word translated “dust” literally means “fine particles of earth” or “dry earth” for dust could only be formed from dry earth. The Hebrew word translated as “nostrils” literally means “that part of the face used for breathing.” The Hebrew word for “breath” literally means “a puff of air.” Therefore, what we are being told is that God fashioned the first man from dry ground and then blew his first breath into him giving him life. God provides no such creation detail for anything else He has created. The clear intent is that we understand that we receive our life directly from God. The Hebrew for “living being” has been used previously for that which “breathes” and is “alive,” but here it takes on greater significance and additional meaning. Only in the word’s use in relationship to mankind, and especially in this context is it translated as “soul”—that eternal part of man that God gives mankind alone.

Beginning Place: (The Garden of Eden)

The Garden of Eden is often perceived as a “mythical” place that never actually existed. But the Bible informs us that it was not only a specific place with geographical references such as being the source of four great rivers, but also a special place God prepared in which to plant or place mankind. It was a place with boundaries and where God placed unique trees not found anywhere else on earth. It was a paradise created for us.

Verse-8: *“And the Lord God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed.”* The Hebrew word translated as “garden” literally means “an enclosure” or a specific area with boundaries. This would be the same as garden today which would contain only specific plants which were desired and omit those plants that were undesired such as weeds or plants that do not produce fruit. This is not the same as the plant life God has spread over the face of the dry land. This is a specific planting in a specific location for a specific purpose. The purpose, of course, is intended to be a place where God will “plant” or “place” mankind. The exact location of the Garden of Eden is a mystery. We are told that it was “toward the east” and in “Eden.” We will examine the location more closely in verses 10 through 14.

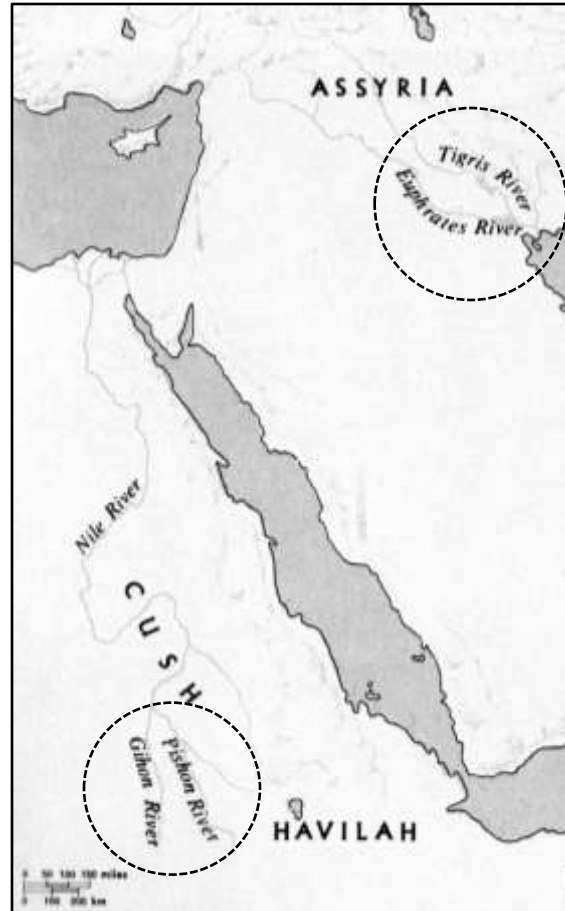
Verse-9: *“And out of the ground the Lord God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.”* The Hebrew word translated “pleasing” infers a limitation on the trees planted in the garden to only those that are “desirable, coveted and cause delight.” All of the trees in the garden must be both pleasing to look at and to eat from. Unique to the Garden of Eden alone God also places the “tree of life” and the “tree of knowledge of good and evil.” Regarding the “tree of life,” it is mentioned in Revelation 22:2 as a tree that bears twelve kinds of fruit and bears fruit every month. The implication is that the fruit of the tree sustains life eternally. The “tree of knowledge of good and evil” is mentioned only in Genesis, and only in the Garden of Eden. The fruit of this tree provides knowledge, insight and understanding, and literally provides knowledge of “good” and “evil.” What is interesting is that everything God has created He has called “good.” He has created nothing that is “evil.” As we will learn in Part-2, knowledge of evil comes only through disobedience to God.

Verse-10: *“Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four rivers.”* The Hebrew word translated “rivers” literally means “heads” as in headwaters or source waters. Because the four rivers flow “out of” Eden it seems clear that the Garden of Eden is the source or headwater of the four rivers. The “tree of life” is mentioned with another source river in Revelation 22:1-2, which is called the “river of the water of life.” In the Gospel of John we gain an understanding that Jesus is the source of water that brings eternal life. Jesus tells the Samaritan woman at the well, *“whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life”* (John 4:14). Jesus refers to Himself as both the food and the drink that gives life, saying, *“I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst”* (John 6:35).

Verse-11 & 12: *“The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good; the bdellium and onyx stone are there.”* The map on the following page indicates the location of the Pishon River which today is called the Blue Nile, and is one of the headwaters of the Nile River. The map indicates that its source was originally the land of Havilah, which today

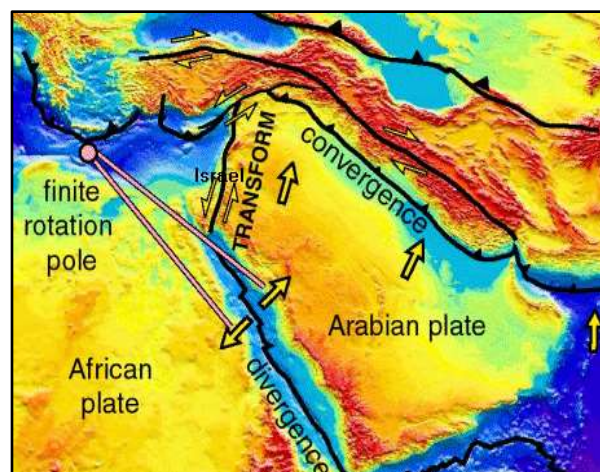
is the location of Ethiopia and Sudan. It is interesting that our verse states that there is gold in the land of this river. A modern minerals map of the world indicates the only significant gold deposits in the Middle East are found near this river. Regarding “bdellium,” while the exact history of the word is unknown, it is believed to be a fragrant, transparent, yellowish gum-resin of a south Arabian tree.

Verse-13: *“The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush.”* The map shows the second river also feeding the Nile. This river today is called the White Nile and flowed through the ancient land of Cush. While the Blue Nile (Pishon) has its source in the modern nation of Ethiopia and runs through the Sudan to the Nile, the White Nile (Gihon) has its source father south in Uganda.



Verse-14: *“And the name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.”* The final two rivers bear their same names today, both originating in modern Turkey and flowing through Syria and Iran on their way to the Persian Gulf. You will note that the four rivers said to flow from Eden have their sources in two different regions.

The Pishon and Gihon feed the Nile and flow from north east Africa, and the Tigris and Euphrates flow from Turkey. Only the shifting of continental plates could explain how they may have all originated in one area. (See Map Right)



The truth is that we cannot know the exact location of the Garden of Eden. This seems clearly God's intent, for as we will read later, God has banished mankind from this earthly Garden. Most scholars place its location north of the holy lands near the source of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, and dismiss the references to the Pishon and Gihon Rivers south of the holy lands as legend. But God has included all four rivers in Scripture as flowing from Eden. Perhaps their diverse locations today is intended to hide the Garden of Eden's true location. In faith we must trust that God's word is true, that Eden existed, and that only God can resolve this mystery if and when He chooses.

Beginning of Rules:

It is self-evident that the Garden of Eden was created as a place for mankind to be placed, but what was God's purpose and plan for placing man in the garden? Verses 15 through 18 provide some insight. The garden provided the perfect place for mankind to thrive, but it also became a place of testing. Mankind was placed there with the expectation that He would work and watch over the garden, caring for and protecting the paradise God had provided. And with the garden God gave man one simple rule—eat everything you want except for the fruit of one tree.

Verse-15: *“Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.”* The Hebrew word translated as “cultivate” literally means “to work, labor or toil” and in this context “to plow.” Clearly, from the very beginning man was intended “to work” the land, but God intended to give mankind something useful to do and to enjoy. Work only became drudgery after our fall from grace. The garden in which we were placed was a perfect and beautiful paradise. God provided everything we would need to be happy and satisfied, but He also gave us responsibility over the garden. The Hebrew word translated as “keep” literally means “to hedge around, to guard, to keep safe, watch over or preserve.” Even today we build fences around gardens to keep rabbits or other animals out that might damage the garden. When God placed mankind in the garden He expected us to watch over it and keep bad things out. Therefore we can surmise from this verse that we were placed in the garden with the expectation that we would both work it and protect it.

Verse-16 & 17: *“And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, ‘From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and*

evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die.” The Hebrew word translated as “command” comes from a root word which means “to constitute, make firm and establish.” In this case it literally means God is “charging” man or “establishing” a fundamental rule. The one rule is simple—God has given man everything to eat except the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He has firmly warned that if we disobey this command we will die. The word “die” here can pertain both to our physical life and the life of our soul. The fundamental rule is that disobedience results in death.

Beginning of Relationships:

God never intended man to be alone, but to be in a relationship with others. God has already set man as dominate over all of creation—everything that He has already created. Just as God has stated that all plants and animals are to be of their “own kind” which can also be understood to produce their own kind in offspring, this He also desires for man. Verses 18 through 24 establish the right relationship between man and all other living creatures. As man begins to explore and define his domain, God makes it clear that man is different from all animals and bestiality is wrong. Man’s sexual partner must correspond to his own nature and be of his own kind—a woman.

Verse-18: *“Then the Lord said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.’”* The Hebrew word translated as “suitable” literally means “opposite to, corresponding to or counterpart.” It also means “in the face of” or “in front of.” The Hebrew word translated as “helper” also means “supporter.” Essentially, God wants us to have someone in our life that is “like” us, that “supports” us, is a “suitable counterpart” and is a physical partner—“in face of.”

Verse-19: *“And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.”* In response to man’s need for a “suitable helper” God has created all “breathing” animals and birds. God has given man dominion over them and allowed man to name them. All living, breathing creatures have been created for man to have dominion over, but God will make clear that none of them are a suitable helper for man because they are different from man.

Verse-20: *“And man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him.”* Remember that the Hebrew word for “man” and the word for the first man, “Adam,” are exactly the same. How the word is translated depends on context. This is the first verse in the Bible where the personal name “Adam” is used. Perhaps the reason that the word is normally translated as Adam here is because God is about to establish what a “personal” and right relationship for mankind is supposed to look like.

Verse-21: *“So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh at that place.”* The Hebrew word traditionally translated as “rib” literally means “side.” This is insightful because God could have created woman from the dust of the ground, as He did man, but chose instead to make her from the man’s bone and flesh. The Hebrew phrase we translate as the word “woman” literally means “out of man.” A woman is to be the suitable partner for a man, to be at his “side.”

Verse-22: *“And the Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man.”* The Hebrew translated as “fashioned” literally means “built.” In other words, God made or “built” a woman from a man. God intends them to be together so immediately He brings the woman to the man.

Verse-23: *“And the man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman.’”* Even the English word “woman” contains within it the word “man.” The first man, who has given all creatures their names, names his suitable partner as a part of himself. Clearly, God is declaring through the first man’s words that man and woman are intended to be together as suitable partners.

Verse-24: *“For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh.”* The Hebrew word translated as “cleave” literally means to “cling, join, stick, fasten or hold.” God is setting the relationship between man and woman as a tight adhesion, so tight that they are to be considered “one flesh.” This understanding of “one flesh” is derived from the fact woman comes out of man and was not created separately or to be separate from man. Men and women were created for one another.

Now, let us address the mystery regarding the traditional “rib” being taken from man to create woman. First, we must dispense with the wives tale that men have one less rib than do women because of the rib that God removed. Medical science will confirm that both men and women have exactly the exact same number of ribs—twelve pair. But in my research I did discover an amazing scientific fact—women have one less “carbon rib” than do men. What makes a man a man is “testosterone.” What makes a woman a woman is the family of hormones known as “estrogen.” Humans, as well as all other life forms, are made from carbon molecules. The field of Organic Chemistry is the study mainly of the carbon atom and how other atoms such as hydrogen, nitrogen and oxygen bind to it. The chemical formula of testosterone is $C_{19}H_{28}O_2$. The chemical formula for estrogens is $C_{18}H_{24}O_2$. Women have one less carbon rib than do men. Bones are composed from carbon. Isn't that interesting? Has science discovered something the writers of the Bible knew all along? In any case, though we have been created different, man and woman are intended to be together.

Let me end this first part with a little humor. Back in verse 2:18, I said that God wanted women to be man's suitable partner and that the Hebrew word translated as “suitable” actually meant “opposite, corresponding, counterpart, or in face of.” We can probably all testify from experience that the “opposite” sex is frequently “in our face.”

(This Concludes Part-1)