

GENESIS

Chapter 2

The Seventh Day, God Rests

Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2 And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3 So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.

2:1-3 In the conclusion of the creation account, God rested on the seventh day and then set the seventh day aside to commemorate His work of creation. (TLSB)

2:1 *finished and all the host of them* – Creation is complete. Yet the triune God continues to preserve and govern all that he has created. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 3)

The things with which God had filled the earth, sea, and sky. (TLSB)

God had also completed that segment of creation which is invisible to the naked eye – the world of the atom and the molecule, for example. God “thought up” energy – solar, electrical, atomic. I am told there is enough energy in this sheet of paper that if it could be released it could power an ocean liner across the Atlantic. The forces of nature – gravity for example – which God initiated during creation week are still operative. Highest of God’s invisible creation are the angels, God’s secret agents. Moses’ summary term “a vast array,” has to be an understatement. (PBC)

Hebrews 1:2-3: “²but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. ³The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.”

2:2 *finished ... rested.* God rested on the seventh day, not because he was weary, but because nothing formless or empty remained. His creative work was completed—and it was totally effective, absolutely perfect, “very good” (1:31). It did not have to be repeated, repaired or revised, and the Creator rested to commemorate it. (CSB)

Hbr verb *yishboth* is related to the noun *shabbath*. Ancient Near Eastern creation accounts to which Gn is sometimes compared lack any parallel to the account of God resting after His creative activity. Here God rests because His creative work is complete, not because He is weary. (TLSB)

It’s important to emphasize, however, that God did not stop working. The universe would have collapsed, the sun would have stopped shining, two human hearts would have stopped beating if God had not been ceaselessly active, preserving what He had created. (PBC)

2:3 *God blessed the seventh day and made it holy ... rested.* Although the word “Sabbath” is not used here, the Hebrew verb translated “rested” (see v. 2) is the origin of the noun “Sabbath.” Ex 20:11 quotes the first half of v. 3, but substitutes “Sabbath” for “seventh,” clearly equating the two. The first record of obligatory Sabbath observance is of Israel on her way from Egypt to Sinai

(Ex 16), and according to Ne 9:13–14 the Sabbath was not an official covenant obligation until the giving of the law at Mount Sinai. (CSB)

The creation of the world is the first basis for the Sabbath worship of God, as also in Ex. 20:8-11. Interestingly, the parallel passage Deut 5:12-15 bases the Sabbath on the redemption of God's people. While we make proper distinctions between the three articles of the Creed and between the three persons whose works are described therein, we are reminded that it is the one God who both creates and redeems, that redemption is a form of re-creation, and that the heavenly goal is not unlike a return to Eden, though the final state will surpass the first. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 3)

Sabbath day means rest day. For the Jews God appointed the seventh day of the week as a day of rest (Ex 20:9-11), on which they were not permitted to do any labor except works of charity and of necessity (Mt 12:10-12). While the fact that God rested from His work on the seventh day was not the reason why just this day was appointed, the day was not properly observed by merely resting, for we read that God “sanctified” and “hallowed” this day, thereby setting it aside for sacred use. No day is holy in itself, but it is the use we make of it that either sanctifies or desecrates it. The Jews kept the Sabbath day holy by hearing, studying, and pondering the Word of God in their Synagogues (Num 28:9; Lev 23:3; Luke 4:16). Thus the chief thing in this Commandment is the “sanctifying,” and not “day” nor the “resting.” In order that no one for the sake of material profit might either work himself or have his servants work for him, and thus be kept from “sanctifying,” God fixed a certain day and forbade the Jews to do any work in it.” Besides the weekly Sabbath God appointed monthly festivals (Num 28:11) and annual feasts (Ex 23:15, 16; Lev 16:29). In all of them not the day as such, nor the resting as such, but the “sanctifying” was the real moral obligation, and where this was lacking, the feasts were an abomination to the Lord. (Is. 1:10-14). [Mercy not sacrifice – Hos 6:6]. The stipulations concerning time and labor were auxiliary measures binding upon the Jew “throughout their generation” (Ex 31:12-17), but no longer binding upon us under the new covenant. (Small Catechism Annotated – Koehler p. 62)

Matthew 12:8 shows that Christ has the right to abolish the Sabbath day. Col 2:16-17 shows that in the NT the Sabbath is abolished. We can judge a person only in such matters as are covered by a specific law; where there is no law, there can be no transgression, and it is impossible to judge a man's actions. As long as the laws concerning “meat and drink,” with respect to holy day, new moons, and “Sabbath days” were in force, people were judged whether or not they observed these laws. And since God had given these laws, it was a sin to transgress them. But in our text we are told, “let no man judge you” in any of these things; hence it necessarily follows that these laws are no longer binding upon us. And since it is God Himself, who speaks by the mouth of Paul, it follows that God Himself has abolished the laws with respect to Sabbath days. Furthermore, these days were “shadows of things to come.” Shadows lose their meaning when “the body,” which they foreshadowed, appears. Christ is this body, therefore with the coming of Christ the laws concerning meat and drink and Sabbath days have lost their force. (Small Catechism Annotated – Koehler pp. 62-63)

In the early Christian congregations were converted Jews, who still regarded one day, perhaps the Sabbath, above other days; there were also converted Gentiles, who esteemed all days alike. If the Sabbath or any other days was regarded as especially holy, then Paul would certainly have told these people. But Paul does not decide this question in favor of the Jewish Christians, but allows each one to follow his own opinion. This plainly shows that he does not reaffirm the Sabbath laws of the OT, nor does he appoint any other day that must for conscience' sake be observed. He leaves the matter open, there is no divine command respecting the observance of

any particular day – From Gal 4:10, 11 we learn that, if anyone believes that still he must observe certain days, etc., it is to be feared that he does not yet understand the liberty with which Christ has made us free from “the weak and beggarly elements” of the OT ceremonial laws, to which Paul refers to in Col. In the NT God has not specified any day or time when we should worship Him, every day is for us a day of worship and service dedicated to the Lord. (Practice Presence of God) We Christians may, therefore, set aside any day we choose for public worship, and it need not even be one out of seven, but we must never say that it is God who wants us to observe just that day. (Small Catechism Annotated – Koehler pp. 63-64)

Probably in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ did the early Christians assemble for worship on the first day of the week, thus it became customary in the church to meet for public worship on Sunday. Of itself Sunday is not holier than any other day, nor is it kept holy by merely resting from work, by reading the paper and seeking amusements. “The force and power of this Commandment,” says Luther, “lies not in the resting but in the sanctifying.” Any day, and hour we spend in prayer, in hearing or pondering God’s Word is a real Sabbath day and Sabbath hour. But in order that we may assemble with our fellow Christian for public worship (Heb 10:25; 1 Cor 16:2), we must indeed agree on the time, day and hour, for such worship, and such “assembling of ourselves together” we should not neglect. Work on Sunday: evil and sinful work desecrates any day of the week; honest work does, in itself, not profane the Sunday, but it should not keep us from attending public worship. Some people must work on Sunday; physicians and nurses, railroad and policemen, and others; for them some other convenient time for public worship should be arranged. (Small Catechism Annotated – Koehler pp. 64-65)

Hbr *qadash*, verb used in its basic sense of setting something aside for special use, in this case the commemoration of the completion of God’s creative work. See p 7. God anticipates His later commandment (Ex 20:8–11) both here by His own actions and also when His people are on the way to Mount Sinai (Ex 16:22–30). Unlike the other cycles of time mentioned in the creation account, the cycle of a week (bounded by the day of rest) is determined not by the movement of the heavenly bodies but is established only by God’s special command. Given this, it is not surprising that there is no equivalent to the OT Sabbath in any other ancient Near Eastern religion. There is also no evidence that Israel’s neighbors observed a calendar period equivalent to the week. (TLSB)

2:1–3 God creates (sets aside) the Sabbath. In the OT, Saturday is the Rest (Sabbath) Day. When Christ fulfilled the whole Law (Mt 5:17), He liberated God’s people from the obligation to observe the Sabbath given to the people of Israel in the OT (Col 2:16–17). All days belong equally to God (Rm 14:5–6). Nevertheless, faith in Christ moves God’s people to respond to His grace in worship: to hear His Word, to receive His gifts in the Sacraments, to praise Him and give thanks to Him for His mighty works, and to call on Him in prayer. Such worship is the constant response of faith to God’s grace. Because God has called Christians together into one Body, the Church, through which He gives His gifts of Word and Sacrament, it is proper for Christians to gather together to worship Him. Sunday, then, symbolically represents the first day of the new rest into which God’s people have been called in Christ. (As the first day of this “new creation,” Sunday is sometimes referred to as “the eighth day.”) • We praise You, O Lord, for the day of rest that our bodies need. We exalt You, O Christ, for the eternal rest that You have won for us! Amen. (TLSB)

The Creation of Man and Woman

4 These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens. 5 When no bush of the field was yet in the land and no small plant of the field had yet sprung up—for

the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land, and there was no man to work the ground, 6 and a mist was going up from the land and was watering the whole face of the ground— 7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. 8 And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.” 18 Then the LORD God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.” 19 Now out of the ground the LORD God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. 20 The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. 21 So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. 22 And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. 23 Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” 24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. 25 And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

2:4-4:26 In chapter 1, Moses presents an eloquent overview of creation that stands as an introduction to all his books. The next section begins the stories (narratives of Genesis, and of the Books of Moses and the Bible as a whole. This section offers a more detailed narrative account in three parts, focusing on the creation of man (Chapter 2), the fall (Chapter 3), and the fall’s aftermath (Chapter 4). Luther: “These, then, are all historical facts. This is something to which I carefully call attention, lest the unwary reader be led astray by the authority of the fathers, who give up the idea that this is history and look for allegories” (AE 1:93). (TLSB)

2:4 account. The word occurs ten times in Genesis—at the beginning of each main section. (CSB)

The first of Moses’ ten “account” begins by drawing a lovely picture of the relationship that existed between the Creator and His children. It shows us a God intent on making them happy. (PBC)

Literary device used throughout Genesis to introduce the next stage in the unfolding of the story. (TLSB)

the heavens and the earth.† The phrase “the account of the heavens and the earth” introduces the record of what happened to God’s creation. The blight of sin and rebellion brought a threefold

curse that darkens the story of Adam and Eve in God's good and beautiful garden: (1) on Satan (3:14); (2) on the ground, because of man (3:17); and (3) on Cain (4:11). 1:1–2:3 is a general account of creation, while 2:4–4:26 focuses on the beginning of human history. Ch. 2 sets the stage for the fall (ch. 3). It tells of the scene and circumstances of the fall, supplementing the terse account of man's creation in ch. 1 with only such data as comes into play in the ensuing tragic drama. (CSB)

Here the heavens and the earth are treated, for literary purposes, as the first generation of God's creation; humankind is presented as the descendants of this couple. (TLSB)

When they were created – Not a specific day in the creation account, but meaning “when” (in accordance with its common use in Hbr). (TLSB)

LORD God. “LORD” (Hebrew *YHWH*, “Yahweh”) is the personal and covenant name of God, emphasizing his role as Israel's Redeemer and covenant Lord, while “God” (Hebrew *Elohim*) is a general term. Both names occur thousands of times in the OT, and often, as here, they appear together—clearly indicating that they refer to the same one and only God. (CSB)

In verses 4 and 5 Moses introduces us to a new name for God. The Hebrew name consists of the four consonants YHWH, originally pronounced “Yahweh.” Throughout the OT this was the name that distinguished the God of Israel from the idols of surrounding nations. The Greek translation of the OT translates Yahweh as *kyrios*, meaning “Lord.” (PBC)

Lord is the special name of Israel's covenant God. When used it means that God is the promise keeper. (PBC)

2:5 *no bush* – Not a reference to the plants of the third day of creation (1:11-12), but to those that would arise subsequently from the normal process of growth and tillage. (TLSB)

Small plant of the field – Refers to grass and other flora that do not have a woody stalk. (TLSB)

God had not caused it to rain – Throughout Scripture, processes of nature, and especially rain, are under God's control. Power to give and withhold rain symbolizes God's ability to control nature according to His will (e.g., Dt. 11:13-17; 1 Sam. 12:17-18). Ultimately, the biblical teaching of God's omnipotence is intended for our comfort, assuring us that God has power to accomplish His will, especially to save those whom He has called to faith in Himself. Before the flood, plants were sustained by water in the soil itself (cf. 2:6, probably including what we would think of as dew, which appears to the eye to rise from the ground, though technically it condenses from the air), and by the river that flowed through and out of Eden (2:10). The Bible first mentions rain falling at the time of the flood (7:12). (TLSB)

2:6 *mist* – Some regard this to be a unique subterranean watering method that was a special feature of the world before the fall; others regard this as simply dew. Regardless of the specific form, the point is that the garden (v. 10) had sufficient water to sustain the plants God had made on the third day (cf. 1:29-30, sustenance for living beings). Some cultures could count on sufficient water, but drought became a lasting concern for the people in the ancient Near East. (TLSB)

2:7 *formed*. The Hebrew for this verb commonly referred to the work of a potter (see Isa 45:9; Jer 18:6), who fashions vessels from clay (see Job 33:6). “Make” (1:26), “create” (1:27) and “form” are used to describe God’s creation of both man and animals (v. 19; 1:21, 25). (CSB)

Hbr *yatsar*, related to the word for a potter, emphasizes the fact that God did not make man out of nothing, but shaped him from the existing material of the created world. (Cf Is 29:15–16; 45:4–12; 64:8; Jer 18:1–11.) (TLSB)

Dust from the ground – Man is called ’adam (Hebrew) because he comes from the ’adamah (earth). Both terms refer to the reddish brown color of clay soil. (TLSB)

breath of life.† Humans and animals alike have the breath of life in them (see 1:30; Job 33:4). But humans have a superior status because they received the Creator’s own “breath of life” as a constitutive element of their being. (CSB)

man became a living creature. The Hebrew phrase here translated “living being” is translated “living creatures” in 1:20, 24. The words of 2:7 therefore imply that people, at least physically, have affinity with the animals. The great difference is that man is made “in the image of God” (1:27) and has an absolutely unique relation both to God as his servant and to the other creatures as their divinely appointed steward (Ps 8:5–8). (CSB)

He formed their bodies, gave them a rational soul, made them rulers over the earth, and created them in His image. (Annotated Small Catechism by Edward Koehler)

Despite the fact that humans and animals share this characteristic, they are not the same. Unlike animals, God shaped man in His image and breathed into him the breath of His own life. Tertullian: “First comes a prefatory statement [1:27], then follow the details in full [2:7–25]; first the subject is named, then it is described” (ANF 3:492). (TLSB)

2:8 *planted* – Summarizes the creative, filling activity of God described in ch 1. (TLSB)

in the east. From the standpoint of the author of Genesis. The garden was perhaps near where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers (see v. 14) meet, in what is today southern Iraq. (CSB)

Presumably refers to an area east of the Israelites at the time of Moses (i.e., east of Sinai and Canaan). (TLSB)

Eden. A name synonymous with “paradise” and related to either (1) a Hebrew word meaning “bliss” or “delight” or (2) a Mesopotamian word meaning “a plain.” Perhaps the author subtly suggests both.(CSB)

The garden was only a part of the region called Eden. (TLSB)

2:9 *tree of life*. Signifying and giving life, without death, to those who eat its fruit (see 3:22; Rev 2:7; 22:2, 14). (CSB)

Mentioned also in 3:22, 24; Rev. 2:7, 14, 19. Also used in Pr. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4 as a metaphor for a source of life. In Genesis, the tree of life is the means by which the life that God gave to man would become sealed as a permanent characteristic (cf. 3:22). That God did not forbid Adam and Eve to eat of this tree (vv. 16-17) suggests that God intended immortality for them from the beginning. (TLSB)

tree of the knowledge of good and evil. † Signifying and giving knowledge of good and evil, leading ultimately to death, to those who eat its fruit (v. 17; 3:3). “Knowledge of good and evil” refers to moral knowledge or ethical discernment (see Dt 1:39; Isa 7:15–16). Adam and Eve possessed both life and moral discernment as they came from the hand of God. Their access to the fruit of the tree of life showed that God’s will and intention for them was life. Ancient pagans believed that the gods intended for man always to be mortal. In eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve sought a creaturely source of discernment in order to be morally independent of God, making themselves judges of what is evil and good, a prerogative God has reserved for himself. (CSB)

Could be a shortened expression for “everything” (i.e., that it would bestow omniscience. More literally, it is a precise statement referring to the acquisition of moral knowledge and judgment. Hus: “In the tree...the law was placed by God... To eat, therefore, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil after the prohibitive command was given, was an absolute evil” (The Church, pp 243-44). Luther: “There is now created a new tree for the distinguishing of good and evil, so that Adam might have a definite way to express his worship and reverence toward God. After everything had been entrusted to him to make use of it according to his will, whether he wished to do so for necessary pleasure, God finally demands from Adam that at this tree of the knowledge of good and evil he demonstrate his reverence and obedience toward God that he maintain this practice, as it were, of worshiping God by not eating anything from it” (AE 1:94). (TLSB)

2:10-14 There has been much speculation on the location of Eden, including (1) marshlands around the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in southeastern Iraq (the name Eden may be related to an ancient Sumerian word used for this region); (2) headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates in the mountainous area of eastern Turkey, in the region of Lake Van (location of a kingdom known as Beth-eden in northwest Syria in the eighth and ninth centuries BC; also, the association of Noah with Mount Ararat in the same area); (3) Jerusalem, due to the mention of the Gihon Spring (2:13; cf. Ezek 47; Rev. 21:1-2). The lack of clear candidates for two of the rivers (v. 11) suggests that the topography of Eden was so altered by the great flood that any attempt to locate Eden based on current topography can never be more than futile speculation. Life in God’s presence is not limited to an earthly place it comes by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone (John 18:36). (TLSB)

2:11 *Pishon*. Location unknown. The Hebrew word may be a common noun meaning “gusher.” (CSB)

Havilah. Location unknown; perhaps mentioned again in 10:29. It is probably to be distinguished from the Havilah of 10:7, which was in Egypt. (CSB)

Origin and identification of these names is uncertain. Pishon is related to Hebrew for “push,” meaning to “spring up.” Suggestions for these locations include the Indus, the Ganges, and a dry riverbed in east Arabia, the Kuwait River. Such identifications are no more than speculation. (TLSB)

2:12 Hebrew “bdellium.” Uncertain meaning. Cf. Num 11:7. Plant associated with this name in the Arabian Peninsula strengthens the association of Havilah with Arabia (cf. v. 11). Resin gum associated with bdellium is a yellowish color. Because the context implies a reference to a precious stone such as gold and onyx, some have suggested bdellium be translated “pearl.” (TLSB)

Onyx – Quartz-like stone striated with black and white bands, often used to make beads and cameos. Another closely related substance (sometimes called sardonyx) has red and white bands. The Hebrew term connotes redness. The LXX translates the phrase as “the green stone,” apparently referring to either emerald or perhaps the green and black striated stone known as malachite. (Cf. Ex. 28:9. (TLSB)

2:13 *Gihon*. Location unknown. The Hebrew word may be a common noun meaning “spurter.” Both the Pishon and the Gihon may have been streams in Lower Mesopotamia near the Persian Gulf. The names were those current when Moses wrote. (CSB)

From the Hebrew verb meaning to “bubbles up” or “burst forth.” Elsewhere, it refers to a spring in the Kidron Valley that provided the major water source for the city of Jerusalem. (TLSB)

Cush – Usually refers to the lands of Nubia that today make up southern Egypt, Sudan, and Ethiopia. This led some commentators to identify the Gihon with the Nile. (TLSB)

2:14 *Tigris* – Identification with Tigris River seems fairly certain. (TLSB)

Asshur. An ancient capital city of Assyria (“Assyria” and “Asshur” are related words). (CSB)

Assyria was a major kingdom in northern Mesopotamia (today, part of northern Iraq). Its major cities in biblical times were Asshur and Nineveh. (TLSB)

Euphrates. Often called simply “the River” (1Ki 4:21, 24) because of its size and importance. (CSB)

The Euphrates was the largest and most important waterway in western Asia, dominating trade and travel through the ancient Near East for more than 1700 miles. (TLSB)

2:15 *work . . . keep it*. Man is now charged to govern the earth responsibly under God’s sovereignty. (CSB)

In accordance with his role as God’s image (1:26), the man is placed in the garden to tend it as God’s Seward and manager of creation (cf. 1:28). This work is neither punishment nor toilsome. Work only becomes a source of hardship and suffering as a result of the fall (3:17--19). (TLSB)

2:16 *any tree*. Including the tree of life (v. 9). (CSB)

God did not prohibit Adam and Eve from eating from the tree of life (v. 9). (TLSB)

2:17 *surely die*. Despite the serpent’s denial (3:4), disobeying God ultimately results in death. (CSB)

He will die as a result of eating from the tree. Gregory of Nyssa: “By the fact of his alienation from the true life, the sentence of death was ratified against him that self-same day” NPNF2 5:127). (TLSB)

Die – The Bible views a person as a whole being - physical and spiritual together - and not as soul inhabiting a body, a concept borrowed from Greek philosophy. [For this reason, throughout the Bible spiritual and physical impairment may be interpreted as a sign of sin, and

healing as a sign of forgiveness (Mt. 9:5). For this reason also, St Paul speaks of the danger of taking the Lord's Supper without recognizing it as Christ's true body and blood in physical terms (1 Cor. 11:27).] There could be no death before sin entered the world. Thus, when God tells Adam that he shall surely die, He means both physically and spiritually. (TLSB)

2:18–25 The only full account of the creation of woman in ancient Near Eastern literature. (CSB)

In Matthew 19, Jesus was challenged by some Pharisees with the question, “Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?” The response of Jesus is significant. “Haven't you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

When marriage is debated today, we should follow Jesus' advice and first of all look at the way marriage should be. Our context is “at the beginning.” Here is the way God intended it to be. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

The creation account in Genesis 1 emphasizes that *ha'adam* (1:27)—man and woman—were created equal in their righteous standing before God, equal in their mission for God, and equal in his image and likeness. Genesis 2, a “close-up video” of chapter 1 that focuses specifically on the creation of Adam and Eve, emphasizes the distinct roles of man and woman. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

2:18 *not good ... to be alone.* Without female companionship and a partner in reproduction, the man could not fully realize his humanity. (CSB)

Being alone is the first thing that God describes as “not good.” Not moral fault (or evil) but incompleteness. At this point, God's work of creation was not complete with respect to man. He had no mate appropriate to him and no means of procreation. (TLSB)

In chapter 1, God saw that his creation was “good” on days 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6. The second good on day 6 was a superlative “very good” (1:31). But in 2:18 the Lord said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.” Good can be defined as that which fulfills God's will. The divine intention of one humanity comprised of two kinds of persons, introduced in 1:27, was unfulfilled until the creation of woman. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

My answer is that God is speaking of the common good or that of the species, not of personal good. The personal good is the fact that Adam had innocence. But he was not yet in possession of the common good which the rest of the living beings who propagated their kind through procreation had. For so far Adam was alone; he still had no partner for that magnificent work of begetting and preserving his kind. Therefore “good” in this passage denotes the increase of the human race. In this way, although Adam was innocent and righteous, he did not yet have that good for which he was created, namely, immortality, into which he would have been translated in due time if he had remained in innocence. Hence the meaning is that Adam as the most beautiful creature is well provided for so far as his own person is concerned but still lacks something, namely, the gift of the increase and the blessing—because he is alone. (Luther)

Make him a helper – “Helper” means “supporter, enabler.” The word does not imply inferiority, as if God made women to be slaves to men or solely to improve men's quality of life.

God himself is said to supply “help” for us in Ps 121:1–2 (using the same Hebrew root), and God certainly is not inferior to man! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Hebrew *’ezer*; elsewhere has sense of “assistant” or even “ally” and is applied to God. It implies no inferiority, but does reinforce the significance of the order of creation. Accordingly, Adam was the more responsible party (Gen. 3; Rm. 5). Some have seized on this passage to accuse the Bible of being hostile to women. However, the Bible is the only piece of religious literature from the ancient Near East that gives a full account of the creation of woman; also, the Bible has more significant women figures presented in a positive light than any other body of religious literature from the ancient world. (TLSB)

Robert Alter says this is a “notoriously difficult word to translate.” It means something far more powerful than just “helper”, it means “lifesaver.” The phrase is only used elsewhere of God, when you need Him to come through for you desperately. “There is no one like God of Jeshurun, who rides on the heavens to help you” (Deut 33:26). (Wild at Heart – Eldredge pp. 52-53)

Ezer – literally a help – If man is to achieve his objectives in life, he needs the help of his mate in every way, from the propagating of his kind down through the scale of his varied activities. (Leupold)

Fit for him – Literally, “like his opposite.” There was no appropriate mate for him. Cf. v. 20. (TLSB)

The man is the head, a servant of God, and the one who initiates love. She responds to his role by following his lead and joining him as a fellow servant of God in the order of creation, Christ-man-woman-children (see Eph 5:21–31; 1 Cor 11:3ff.) (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

It is worth pointing out that the only other occurrence of this Hebrew word for “desire” is in Song of Songs 7:10 (in Hebrews, 7:11). There, through the power of God’s love, the woman says, “I belong to my lover, and his desire is for [or over] me.” God’s love in Jesus Christ leads the woman to rejoice in the order of creation; she is glad that her husband is the one who is the head. The curse of sin is reversed by God’s grace so both sexes rejoice in the order of creation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Keneghdo – like him – literally as “agreeing to him,” or “his counterpart.” She is the kind of help man needs, agreeing with him mentally, physically, spiritually. She is not an inferior being. (Leupold)

2:19 *had formed* – Text could be misunderstood to imply a different sequence in creation than that suggested by 1:20-27, where man is created after the animals (E.g., some ancient versions have the phrase “formed again,” indicating that after creating man, God made additional animals.: “Formed” or “had form,” meaning that the animals God had already formed were now brought before Adam. (TLSB)

call them. His first act of dominion over the creatures around him. (CSB)

The writer is reminding us that each living creature was getting a name in conformity with the type of life it lived. (Leupold)

Here again we are reminded of the superior knowledge and wisdom of Adam, who was created in innocence and righteousness. Without any new enlightenment, solely because of the excellence of his nature, he views all the animals and thus arrives at such a knowledge of their nature that he can give each one a suitable name that harmonizes with its nature. From this enlightenment there also followed, of course, the rule over all the animals, something which is also pointed out here, since they were named in accordance with Adam's will. Therefore by one single word he was able to compel lions, bears, boars, tigers, and whatever else there is among the more outstanding animals to carry out whatever suited their nature. This ability, too, we have lost through sin. (Luther)

2:20 *man call... its name* – What an ocean of knowledge and wisdom there was in this one human being! Moreover, although Adam lost much of this knowledge through sin, I nevertheless believe that everything still to be found in the books of all the wise men who have written for the many centuries since scientific pursuits had their first beginning could not equal that wisdom which still remained in Adam later on but gradually became fainter in his descendants and has almost been blotted out. (Luther)

Sign that Adam exercised authority over animals as God's steward of His creation (1:28; 2:15). (TLSB)

2:21 caused a deep sleep – The Lord God, says Moses, caused a *הַנְדִּימָה*, a “deep sleep,” to fall upon Adam. The verb *נָדַם* denotes to be overwhelmed by “sleep,” like those who fall asleep unawares and nod their heads. There are different kinds of sleep. Some are deep or heavy and are not disturbed by dreams. These are healthful, for they moisten the body well and are useful for digestion; they do not tire the head either. Others are lighter and, as it were, mixed with periods of waking. In the case of these, dreams are more frequent; they also bother the head and are evidence of a less healthy body. (Luther)

Hebrew implies something more than normal sleep. God sometimes brought a special sleep upon a person for a specific purpose (cf. Is. 29:10). (TLSB)

One of man's ribs – God made Eve with a rib from the side of Adam. Many have illustrated this by saying woman was not made from his head to rule him, nor from his feet to be trampled upon by him, nor of other dust to be independent of him, but out of his side to stand at his side equal with him, under his arm to be protected by him, and near his heart to be loved by him. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Hebrew word is commonly used for a structural component related to the side of something. When used of a building, it may mean a pillar, beam, or plank of wood. When used of a person, it generally means a rib bone. (TLSB)

The giving of the “rib” can also signify man's sacrifice of himself for his bride, whereby all that is his is hers. In response, all that is hers is his. An exchange takes place between bridegroom and bride, just as Christ made the great exchange with his bride, the church: He took her sins upon himself so that she might receive his righteousness. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

While Adam was sleeping this way, the Lord took one of his ribs. The Hebrew word *עֲצָבָה* denotes a rib and side. Therefore I hold that the Lord did not take a bare rib, but one covered with flesh, since Adam says below: “This is bone from my bones and flesh from my flesh.” Moreover, the

Lord does this also through His Word. We should not suppose that, like a surgeon, He did some cutting. He said: “From this bone thus covered with flesh let there be made a woman,” and it was done. This gap in the side He later on closed with flesh. (Luther)

2:22 *he made into a woman* – Literally, “built.” Only instance in creation account that this verb is used, underscoring its distinction in the story. God did not make Eve out of nothing or form directly out of the dust of the ground. By making her from something from Adam, God both establishes their relationship within the order of creation and ensures that she will be a helper appropriate to Adam. (TLSB)

Thus this expression is common in Scripture, that the wife is called a household building because she bears and brings up the offspring. The form which this building would have had in Paradise we have lost through sin so completely that we cannot even conceive of it in our thinking. But, as I said above, this present life of ours possesses some small and pitiable remnants of its culture and safeguards as well as of its dominion over the beasts. Sheep, oxen, geese, and hens we govern, although boars, bears, and lions pay no attention to our rule. Similarly, some faint image of this building remains; for he who marries a wife has her as a nest and home where he stays at a certain place, just as birds do with their young in their little nest. (Luther)

This living-together of husband and wife—that they occupy the same home, that they take care of the household, that together they produce and bring up children—is a kind of faint image and a remnant, as it were, of that blessed living-together because of which Moses calls the woman a building. If Adam had continued in his innocence, his descendants would have married and wandered away from their father Adam to some little garden of their own. There they would have lived with their wives, and together they would have filled the soil and brought up their children. There would have been no need for imposing buildings of hewn stone or for kitchens or for cellars, as we have now. Just as birds live in their little nests, so they would have dwelt here and there in God’s work and calling. And the wife would have been the main reason for the husbands’ dwelling in fixed habitations. Now in this disaster of sin, when we must have houses because of the severity of the climate, we cannot even conjure up a picture of this bliss; and yet these pitiable remains are excellent gifts of God, and it is truly wicked to use them ungratefully. (Luther)

2:23 *she shall be called woman* – Adam called his wife *ishah* “woman,” the feminine form of *ish* “man.” She does not differ from him in essence or substance, but in gender, just as for example a male and female giraffe are “of the same kind” and distinct from all other creatures, differing from each other only in the matter of gender. (Of course, man is quite different from the animals). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

First name Adam gives to his wife. Like the name of the man (*'adam*), the name of his wife (*'ishshah*) is a classification. In his role as God’s steward, Adam gives a name to this category of created beings, just as he has given names to the rest of God’s creation. (TLSB)

He gives her a class name, which marks her as being far above all the other creatures upon whom names had been bestowed. (Leupold)

The manner in which, and the object for which woman was made show that the husband and wife should love each other with tender affection; cultivate union of views, interest, and effort; and mutually seek each other’s highest good. (Concordia Bible)

But it is most worthy of wonder that when Adam looks at Eve as a building made from himself, he immediately recognizes her and says: “This now is bone from my bones and flesh from my

flesh.” These are words, not of a stupid or a sinful human being who has no insight into the works and creatures of God, but of a righteous and wise being, one filled with the Holy Spirit. He reveals a wisdom hitherto unknown to the world: that the effecting cause of the wife and of marriage is God, but that the final cause is for the wife to be a mundane dwelling place to her husband. This knowledge is not simply the product of intelligence and reason; it is a revelation of the Holy Spirit. (Luther)

2:24 *leave his father and mother.* Instead of remaining under the protective custody of his parents a man leaves them and, with his wife, establishes a new family unit. (CSB)

Marriage, childbirth, and growth of the human community were part of God’s plan for humankind from before the fall (1:28). (TLSB)

“Leave,” “be united” or “cleave,” and “become one”: These process words describe the essence of marriage and tell when a couple is married. A man is to “leave” his father and mother. The word means to depart from his former relationship to his parents, to “untie the apron strings.” He still honors his father and mother but is no longer under their authority and headship. He forms a new family unit as its head. The word “be united” or “cleave” denotes an intimate clinging. The Hebrew word can also denote a deep, loyal friendship (Ruth 1:14), and is also used of believers who love God and cling to God in faith (Dent 11:22; 30:20; Josh 22:5; etc.). Love as a willful act of commitment is the glue which binds couples together in a monogamous, life long relationship. “Become one flesh” speaks of oneness in mind, will, emotions, spirit, and physical being. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 1, Part 4)

Christ (Matt. 19:5) and Paul (Eph. 5:31) apply this statement as a general rule also to our marriages after innocence has been lost. Accordingly, if Adam had continued in his innocence, the children that were born would have married. Then, after leaving the table and dwelling place of their parents, they would have had their own trees under which they would have lived separately from their parents. At times they would have come to their father Adam to sing a hymn and praise God, and then they would have returned to their own homes. Although sin has now brought about changes in other respects, there still remains this close bond between spouses, so that a man leaves father and mother rather than his wife. But where something different happens, as when married people mutually forsake each other, this is not only against this command; it is also an indication of the awful depravity which has come into human beings through sin and gets support from Satan, the father of all dissensions. (Luther)

come one flesh. The divine intention for husband and wife was monogamy. Together they were to form an inseparable union, of which “one flesh” is both a sign and an expression. (CSB)

The coming together of man and woman in marriage is pictured here as the reuniting of what was separated at the creation of woman. (TLSB)

2:25 *naked ... not ashamed.* Freedom from shame, signifying moral innocence, would soon be lost as a result of sin (see 3:7). (CSB)

Such was the union of man and woman with God and with each other before the fall that there was no awareness of separation that produces shame. Only after their eyes were opened and they became aware of their separateness from each other and from God did they feel the need to cover themselves and hide from God. (TLSB)

2:4–25 Ch 2 is a more detailed account of creation, focusing on the creation of humankind. It ends by emphasizing that Adam and Eve are not ashamed—they have nothing to be ashamed of. Too often, we are not ashamed because in our spiritual pride we refuse to acknowledge the shamefulfulness of our thoughts, words, and deeds. One of the reasons that God gave His Law was to teach us shame, to show us our sinfulness and need of forgiveness. There can be no true repentance without the experience of shame. However, in Jesus Christ, God heals our shame, not by allowing us to deny it but by taking our shamefulfulness upon Himself and declaring us to be without shame in Him (1Jn 2:28). • Jesus, cover my shame with the robe of Your righteousness, that I may serve my family with joy and confidence. Amen. (TLSB)