

## Genesis Chapter 2 Notes (Defenders Study Bible by Henry Morris)

**2:1 *finished*.** The strong emphasis in these verses on the completion of all of God's creating and making activity is a clear refutation of both ancient evolutionary pantheism and modern evolutionary materialism, which seek to explain the origin and development of all things in terms of natural processes and laws innate to the universe. Creation is complete, not continuing (except in miracles, of course; if evolution takes place at all, it would require continuing miraculous intervention in the present laws of nature).

**2:2 *ended His work*.** This statement of completed creation anticipates the modern scientific laws of thermodynamics. The First Law states essentially the same truth: the universe is not now being created but is being conserved, with neither matter nor energy being created or destroyed. On the Second Law (the universal law of increasing disorder) see notes on Genesis 3:17 and Genesis 1:1.

**2:3 *sanctified it*.** God's "rest" on the seventh day is not continuing; the verb is in the past tense—"rested," not "is resting." His blessing and hallowing of the seventh day could not apply to this present age of sin and death, but only to the "very good" world He had just completed.

Nevertheless, this "hallowing" of every seventh day was for man's benefit (Mark 2:27), and was obviously intended as a permanent human institution, not controlled by the heavenly bodies which mark days, months, seasons and years, but by the physical and spiritual need of all men for a weekly day of rest and worship, in thankfulness for God's great gift of creation and (later) for His even greater gift of salvation. The Sabbath (literally "rest") day was incorporated in the Mosaic covenant with Israel in a special way, but its use preceded Israel and will continue eternally (Isaiah 66:23). However, the emphasis is on a "seventh" day, not necessarily Saturday. Since Christ's resurrection, in fact, most Christians have identified their weekly cycle as centering on the first day of the week. The age-long, worldwide observance of the "week" is not contingent on the movements of the sun and moon (like the day, the month and the year) but rather is mute testimony to its primeval establishment as a memorial of God's literal seven-day creation week.

**2:4 *generations*.** "Generations" (Hebrew *toledoth*) is the word from which the book of Genesis gets its name. In the Septuagint it is rendered by the Greek *genesis*, which in Matthew 1:1 is translated "generation." This is the first occurrence of the formula which marks the key subdivisions of the book: "These are the generations of..." The others are at Genesis 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10; 11:27; 25:19; 36:1,9; 37:2.

In all except this first one, the name of a specific patriarch is attached. Parallels with the terminology of the ancient Babylonian tablets indicate that these names are actually the signatures of the original writers of the particular tablets. That is, each of these primeval patriarchs kept the narrative records of his own generations, inscribing them on stone or clay tablets, then appending his name at the end, when he was ready to turn over the tablets and the task of writing the *toledoth* to the next in line. They eventually came down into Moses' possession, who wrote the last section of Genesis (37:3ff), obtaining the information from "the sons of Jacob" (Exodus 1:1), as well as organizing and editing all the rest under divine inspiration, so that the entire collection finally became, in effect, the first of the five books of Moses. Since the first tablet (Genesis 1:1-2:4a) tells of events prior to the existence of any witness to record them, God Himself either wrote this section directly or specifically revealed it to Adam. It describes the generations of no person, therefore, but rather those of the cosmos itself.

**2:4 in the day.** As per the ancient Babylonian practice, the next tablet, beginning at 2:4b, keys in to the previous one by a phrase which both associates with the preceding histories and initiates the new narrative. The “day” of this verse does not necessarily refer to the entire creation week, as day-age theory advocates allege. It more likely refers to the first day of that week, when God created the earth and the heavens, as just stated in Genesis 2:4a, then proceeded also to “make” them through the rest of the six days.

**2:5 before it grew.** This statement clearly teaches the fact of a mature creation, or creation of apparent age. The first plants did not grow from seeds, but were created full grown.

**2:5 rain upon the earth.** The primeval hydrological cycle was subterranean rather than atmospheric (see note on Genesis 1:7), the absence of rain being a consequence of the water vapor above the firmament and the uniform temperature which it maintained over the earth. Rain today is dependent on the global circulation of the atmosphere, transporting water evaporated from the ocean inland to condense and precipitate on the lands. This circulation is driven by worldwide temperature differences in the atmosphere and would be impossible with the global warmth sustained by the canopy.

**2:6 mist.** The “mist” was not a river, as some writers think. The Hebrew word simply means water vapor (compare Job 36:27); it refers merely to the local daily cycle of evaporation and condensation occasioned by the day/night temperature cycle.

**2:7 dust of the ground.** Man’s body was formed out of the “elements of the earth,” the same materials (carbon, hydrogen, oxygen, etc.) from which both plants and the bodies of the animals had been formed (Genesis 1:12,24). This unity of physical composition is a fact of modern science thus long anticipated by Scripture.

**2:7 breath of life.** Though animals also possess the “breath” (Hebrew *neshama*—Genesis 7:22) and the “soul” (Hebrew *nephesh*—Genesis 1:24), man’s breath (same word as “spirit”) and soul were imparted to him by God *directly*, rather than indirectly, as imparted to the animals.

**2:7 living soul.** Evolution is again refuted at this point. If man’s body had been derived from an animal’s body by any kind of evolutionary process, he would already have possessed the *nephesh*, rather than “becoming a living soul” when God gave him the breath of life.

**2:8 Eden.** Eden was evidently a region somewhere east of where Adam first received consciousness, so that he could watch as God “planted” a beautiful garden there for his home. Though this was to be his base, he was actually instructed to “subdue” and “rule” the whole earth (Genesis 1:26-28). This verse is a summary, with Genesis 2:9-14 going back to give more details concerning Adam’s home.

**2:9 tree of life.** The “tree of life” was an actual tree, with real fruit (note Genesis 3:22; Revelation 22:2) whose properties would have enabled even mortal men to live indefinitely. Though modern scientists may have difficulty in determining the nature of such a remarkable food, they also have been unable so far even to determine the basic physiological cause of aging and death. Thus it is impossible to say scientifically that no chemical substance could exist which might stabilize all metabolic processes and thereby prevent aging.

**2:9 tree of knowledge.** The same cautions apply to any discussions of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, which likewise was genuinely physical. It is conceivable that the fruit contained substances capable of catalyzing physiological decay processes in the body, perhaps affecting even the

genetic system. Whether or not this was the case, a “knowledge” of evil would necessarily follow its eating, since evil is fundamentally merely rejection of God’s Word. Man had abundant knowledge of good already, since everything God had made was “very good” (Genesis 1:31), but disobedience would itself constitute an experimental knowledge of evil.

**2:10 out of Eden.** The geography described in these verses obviously corresponds to nothing in the present world, although some of the names sound familiar. The Noahic Flood was so cataclysmic in its effects (note II Peter 3:6) that the primeval geography was obliterated, with the post-Flood continents and oceans completely different.

The similarity of certain names (e.g., Ethiopia, Euphrates) is best explained in terms of the ascription by Noah or his sons of these names to postdiluvian features which reminded them of antediluvian geographic features, just as the explorers of America often gave European names to American sites.

**2:10 four heads.** The rivers described in this section could not have derived their waters from rainfall (Genesis 2:5), and so must have been fed by artesian springs, or controlled fountains from the great deep. This implies a network of subterranean pressurized reservoirs and channels fed from the primeval seas and energized by the earth’s internal heat (see notes on Genesis 1:9,10).

**2:12 is good.** The present tense in which this description is written indicates it to be an eyewitness account, and thus most likely a record originally from Adam himself. However, the past tense in Genesis 2:10 “went”) may suggest that, at the time when Adam actually wrote it, the garden of Eden was no longer there.

**2:12 bdellium.** The “bdellium” was evidently a precious gum, likened to the bread from heaven sent to the Israelites in the wilderness (Numbers 11:7).

**2:15 keep it.** The ideal world, both before the entrance of sin and after the removal of sin (see Revelation 22:3), is not one of idleness and frolic, but one of serious activity and service. Adam was placed in an ideal environment and circumstances, so he had no excuse for rejecting God’s love and authority.

**2:17 not eat of it.** For true fellowship with God (having been created in His image), man must be free to reject that fellowship. The restriction imposed here by God is the simplest, most straightforward test that could be devised for determining man’s volitional response to God’s love. There was only one minor restraint placed on Adam’s freedom and, with an abundance of delicious fruit of all types available, there was no justification for his desiring the one forbidden fruit. Nevertheless, he did have a choice, and so was a free moral agent, capable of accepting or rejecting God’s will.

**2:17 die.** “Thou shalt surely die” could be rendered, “Dying, thou shalt die!” In the very day that he would experimentally come to “know evil,” through disobeying God’s Word, he would die spiritually, being separated from God’s direct fellowship. Adam would also begin to die physically, with the initiation of decay processes in his body which would ultimately cause his physical death.

**2:18 meet for him.** The events described here all took place on the sixth day of the creation week, after which God pronounced all things “very good.” All the animals had been created “male and female” (Genesis 6:19) and instructed to “multiply in the earth” (Genesis 1:22), but man still needed a “helper like him” (literal meaning).

**2:19 God formed.** A better, and quite legitimate, translation is “had formed.” Thus there is no contradiction with the order of creation in Genesis 1 (animals before man). The first chapter of Genesis gives a summary of the events on all six days of creation; the second chapter provides more details of certain events of the sixth day.

**2:19 the name thereof.** The animals named by Adam included only birds, domesticable animals, and the smaller wild animals that would live near him. It would be possible for him to name about three thousand of the basic kinds of these animals in about five hours (one every six seconds), and this would be adequate both to acquaint Adam with those animals and also to show clearly that there were none who were sufficiently like him to provide companionship for him. This is still further proof that man did not evolve from any of the animals, even those that were most directly associated with him.

**2:20 not found.** As far as fossil evidence is concerned, many fossils of true men have been found (Neanderthal, Cro-Magnon, etc.) as well as fossils of true apes. The so-called “hominids” (*Australopithecus*, *Homo erectus*, etc.) are fragmentary and controversial, even among evolutionists, and can all be interpreted either as extinct apes or degenerated men.

**2:21 deep sleep.** The “deep sleep” was not simply an anesthetized state to prevent pain, since there was as yet no pain in the world. It was most likely ordained as a primeval picture of the future death of the second Adam, whose sacrificial death would result in the formation of His bride (II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:30-32).

**2:21 ribs.** The “rib” was actually the “side” of Adam (the Hebrew *tsela* occurs thirty-five times in the Old Testament, and is nowhere else translated “rib”). The side contained both “bone” and “flesh” (Genesis 2:23), but it may be that both are implied in the blood that would necessarily flow from the opened side. The “life of the flesh is in the blood” (Genesis 9:4; Leviticus 17:11) and a primeval blood “transfusion” would more perfectly fit the event as a type of the opened side of Christ on the cross (John 19:34-36). Even if the operation did actually extract a rib from Adam, this would not suggest that men should have one less rib than women, since “acquired characteristics” are not hereditary.

**2:22 made he a woman.** This remarkable record of the formation of the first woman could hardly have been invented by human imagination. Neither can it be interpreted in the context of theistic evolution, even if one could interpret the formation of Adam’s body from the dust in evolutionary terms. Its historicity is confirmed in the New Testament (I Timothy 2:13; I Corinthians 11:8). All other men have been born of woman, but the first woman was made from man.

**2:24 one flesh.** The literal historicity of this event and its primary importance in human life are confirmed by both the Apostle Paul (Ephesians 5:30-31) and the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12). Although men and women through the ages have corrupted this divine institution in many ways (adultery, divorce, polygamy, homosexuality, etc.), “from the beginning it was not so” (Matthew 19:8). The institution of the home is the first and most basic human institution, and was intended to be monogamous and permanent until death. It is significant that cultures of all times and sorts have acknowledged the superiority of monogamy, even though they have not always practiced it. Such an awareness could not be a product of evolution, since it does not characterize most animals, and thus can only be explained in terms of this primeval creation and revelation. Furthermore, the fact that it took place at the very “beginning of creation,” rather than billions of years after the beginning, was confirmed by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Mark 10:6).

**2:25 not ashamed.** The lack of shame at nakedness was not because of a hardened conscience, as is true today, but because the physiological differences of Adam and Eve had been divinely created in accord with God's purpose and they had been brought together by God with the express commandment to "be fruitful and multiply" (Genesis 1:28). At this time they were still without sin and thus without consciousness of moral guilt. Later, however, their sin brought an awareness that the springs of human life had been poisoned, both in themselves and in their progeny. This discovery made them painfully aware of their reproductive organs and they were then "ashamed."