

# Exegetical Notes on Genesis 2: God Is Glorified in Creating Mankind in His Own Image

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## Abstract

This article provides an in-depth analysis of Genesis, Chapter 2, asserting its nature as chronology-sensitive, historical narrative rather than poetry, allegory, or myth. It explains that Genesis 2 summarizes God's completed creation work and then recapitulates Day 6 of Creation Week, focusing specifically on the creation of humanity. The text details how God created Adam from dust and later Eve from Adam's rib to be his "fitting helper," establishing the original pattern for marriage. It describes the Garden of Eden as a real, geographical location planted by God, watered by a unique mist system, and featuring four rivers. A key point is God's commandment to Adam not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which served as a crucial moral test of his loyalty with serious consequences for disobedience. Through detailed examination of Hebrew grammar and word meanings, the author reinforces the historical reliability of these events, emphasizing God's glory as the Creator.

## Simple Summary

This article offers a detailed study of Genesis, Chapter 2, emphasizing that it is historical narrative rather than poetry, allegory, or myth. It explains that this chapter summarizes God's creation work, specifically recapitulating Day 6 of Creation Week when God created Adam and then Eve, both in His own image, giving them purpose and instructions. The article highlights God's completion of Creation and His rest on Day 7. It describes the Garden of Eden as a real, God-planted place, detailing its unique, mist-based watering system and the four rivers that flowed from it. A central point is the commandment given to Adam not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, which served as a crucial moral test of his loyalty, with disobedience leading to death. The study also covers God's creation of Eve from Adam's rib to be his fitting helper, thereby establishing the original pattern for marriage. The author uses a deep analysis of Hebrew grammar and word meanings to reinforce the idea that Genesis 2 reports genuine, chronology-sensitive, historical events that glorify God as the Creator.

## Introduction

Genesis 2 continues the first segment of Genesis, which introduces readers to God, with special attention to His role as the Creator of all creation. Chapter 1 of Genesis provides a big-picture panorama of Days 1 through 6 of the Creation Week, reporting the sequence

of God's creative acts during those six (literal) days. Chapter 2 of Genesis, resuming at Day 7 of the Creation Week, summarizes the Creation Week as God's work in the heavens and Earth, with a recapitulation of the part of Day 6 when God made humanity, first creating Adam (the first man)

and thereafter creating woman (the first woman, who is later re-named "Eve"). God created mankind in His own image, providing mankind with purpose and instructions on how to live life on Earth.

Genesis, Chapter 2, is narrative prose—as is virtually all of the book

of Genesis. The small exception, where Hebrew poetry occurs, is Genesis 4:23–24, where the polygamist Lamech composes a poetic boast of his killings (Johnson, 2011, pp. 8–9). Accordingly, Genesis should not be confused with “Hebrew poetry” (which has a different literary structure). As historical narrative, Genesis 2 reports historical highlights of God’s creative works that are important to understanding the “generations” of the heavens and the Earth, as well as the origins of life-forms that God made for the Earth, climaxing with how God created mankind, as male and female, on Day 6. Thus, after mentioning God’s rest on Day 7, Genesis, Chapter 2, returns to God’s work on Day 6, regarding how He made mankind.

Genesis 2 is like an enormous gold mine (or, because it’s so powerful, maybe “uranium mine” is a better simile) for studying God’s truth about beginnings—starting with observations of Chapter 2’s text, including grammar (noun forms, prepositional prefixes, verb forms—especially *waw* consecutives—etc.), syntax (nota accusativi-signaled direct objects, preposition-facilitated objects, contextualizing and intensifying adverbs, etc.), literary structure (narrative prose, as well as theme introduction, development, and conclusion), literary devices (repetition, metonymy, etc.), and lexical components (concordance-facilitated word studies, root verb-based etymology insights), etc. (Baughman, 1965, pp. 75–88; Johnson, 2011, 2012).

Because Genesis 2 is chronology-sensitive, narrative prose, its literary structure frequently includes serial sentences, featuring *waw* consecutive-prefixed verbs. The *waw* consecutive is also called the *waw* conversive (Pratico and Van Pelt, 2001, pp. 192–205). It is important to recognize that Genesis is historical narrative—including Chapters 1 through 11—not some kind of allegorical, literary “framework” or

cosmogonical, etiology “myth” (Johnson, 2019b, p. 21).

The historical information reported in Genesis, Chapter 2, bridges the Genesis 1’s history (of Creation Week’s first six days) to the Edenic temptation and failure of Adam (reported in Genesis 3, which is later interpreted in Romans, Chapter 5). The original condition of mankind, before Adam’s sin, is presented in Genesis, Chapter 2, in conjunction with the original mandate that God gave to mankind, as stewards entrusted with care of the Earth (see also Psalm 8).

## Exegetical Observations and Lexical Analysis

### Verse 1.

This verse announces that God’s Creation Week works “were completed”—that completed work is indicated by *wayekūllūa* (*waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Pual imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine plural form of *kālāh* “to complete,” “to finish”), indicating intensive passive action. Specifically, the heavens and the Earth, “and all their hosts” (*wekāl šeb’âām*) were completed within the initial six days of Creation Week. This description of God’s completed work clashes with the contrary notion promoted by OECs (“old-Earth creationists”), e.g., Vern Poythress, John C. Collins, Hugh Ross, Norm Geisler, etc.—and this author thanks Dr. Jeff Tomkins for that insight.

### Verse 2.

Verse 2 reports two major facts, highlighted by verbs (*wayekal* & *wayyišbōt*), that occurred on Day 7 of Creation Week:

1. “and He finished” (*wayekal* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *kālāh*, “to complete” or “to finish”), denoting that God completely “finished” His creative

workings [of Days 1 through Day 6], on Day 7; and

2. “and He rested” (*wayyišbōt* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *šābat*, “to complete” or “to finish”), denoting that God completely “rested” on Day 7, from “from all His work” that God had done on Days 1 through Day 6 [of Creation Week].

The other verb (in Verse 2) is *’âšâh* (“He had done”), used twice (both times in the Qal perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form, indicating completed action), refers back to God’s work that He “had done” (*’âšâh*) during Day 1 through Day 6 of Creation Week.

### Verse 3.

Day 7 is sanctified by God—God declares it special, holy, different—by blessing it (*wayebârek* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *bârak*, “to bless”) and hallowing it (*wayeqarōš* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *qâdaš*, “to sanctify”). This is the Bible’s first usage of the verb *qâdaš*, demonstrating the importance of God’s role as Creator of the heavens and Earth, plus all that is therein (see, accord, Exodus 20:8–11).

The end of Verse 3 uses a combination of verbs that highlights two major categories of action that God accomplished during Creation Week: God “created” (i.e., He called into being something new *from nothing* preëxisting) and God “made” (i.e., He worked pre-existing material into a new form, according to a purposeful design). Notice that these same verbs, used by Moses in Genesis 2:2–3, are recalled in Exodus 20:11 (“made,” “rested,” “blessed,” “hallowed,” and “created”). In summarizing God’s creation work, Exodus 20:11 includes usage of the verb *bârâ’* (“He created”) that Moses used in Genesis 1:1 (physical

matter-energy created from nothing), 1:21 (non-physical animal *nepheš*-life created from nothing, inserted into physical animal bodies), and 1:27 (non-physical, human-bearing, God's-image life created from nothing, inserted into physical human bodies). For more discussion of how *bârâ'* is used in the Old Testament, see 'New from Nothing': Is God Still Creating Today? (Johnson, 2013b, pp. 10–11). Specifically, those two aspects of God's activities, i.e., "creating" and "making" (during Days 1 through 6 of Creation Week) are teleologically linked in the phrase *bârâ' 'elôhîm la'asôt* ("God created to make"), combining God's completed action of creating (Qal perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular of *bârâ'*) with the purposed action of God making His creation to fulfill His ultimate designs therefore (*'asôt* = preposition-prefixed, Qal infinitive construct form of *'âšâh*).

#### Verse 4.

This verse first announces a record of "beginnings" (*tôledôt*), a noun derived from the root verb *yâlad* ("to beget," "to generate"). Some opine that this announcement *concludes* a just-reported (chapter-like) record of "generations" (i.e., summarizing Genesis 1:1–2:3 as a unit of "generations"); others think it summarily *introduces* such a record (i.e., introducing Genesis 2:4–4:26, after which another *tôledôt* follows (in Genesis 5:1). (Thankfully, the analysis of that interpretive question is beyond the scope of this present work.) Verse 4 refers back to God's Creation Week deeds that included creating and making the heavens and the Earth, plus all that is therein. The heavens and the Earth did *not* evolve themselves into existence, so the verb *bârâ'* ("to create") does not appear in a Hithpaal or Hithpoel form; rather, Verse 4 uses a preposition-prefixed, Niphal infinitive construct form of *bârâ'* (indicating that the heavens and the Earth were *passive* recipients of God's creative actions).

Specifically, the Creator of the heavens and Earth was (and is) "the LORD God," i.e., YHWH *'elôhîm*.

Verse 4 concludes with the summary statement, matching Genesis 1:1, that "in [the] day" that "YHWH God made earth and heavens," omitting definite articles for the nouns "earth" and "heavens." Due to how the noun "day" (*yôm*) is previously used in Genesis, it seems Genesis 2:4 is alluding to the action of Genesis 1:1 as occurring on Day 1 of Creation Week, i.e., the physical matter-energy "stuff" (that God created on Day 1) is the topic of the first *tôledôt*; God generated all derivative material entities (including animal and human bodies) from that Day 1 "stuff."

#### Verse 5.

Verse 5 continues to describe the condition of the physical matter-energy "stuff" that God made on Day 1, with original Earth conditions lacking agriculture-friendly crop plants, due to a difference in the Earth's water cycle (i.e., different from what it would later involve)—Moses specifically notes that God had not yet (then) caused rainfall—"because" (*kî*) "not" (*lô*) yet He [YHWH *'elôhîm*] "had caused it to rain" (*himeṭîr* = Hiphil perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *mâtar*, "to rain"). Rainfall would later become a major recurring process in the world's global water cycle, but at this early stage of Earth history, God watered "the earth" (i.e., the ground of the Day-3 supercontinent) using "mist" (*'êd*) that arose from underground, enough to water all of the world's land surfaces (see Genesis 2:6).

#### Verse 6.

The pre-Flood "mist" (*'êd*), that continually rose (*ya'aleh* = Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *'âlâh* ["to arise," "to go up"], indicating continuing action) from underground, "watered" (*wehîšeqâh* = *waw*-consecu-

tive-prefixed, Hiphil perfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *šâqâh*, "to give drink," "to water," "to pour water/drink," etc.) the land, indicating that the original "mist"-provided watering was a continual activity, upon "all the surfaces of the ground" (*kâl penê hâ-'adâmâh*). This is the first usage of the verb *šâqâh* ("to water"), a verb that is later used to refer to Earth's post-Flood water cycle (e.g., in Psalm 104:11, 13). See also Ecclesiastes 2:6 and Ezekiel 17:7 for examples of artificial irrigation (Wigram, 1874, p. 1323).

#### Verse 7.

The LORD God (YHWH *'elôhîm*) made (*wayyîšer* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *yâšar*, "to form," "to shape," "to structure") Adam, by taking preëxisting physical matter—"dust from the ground" (*'âphâr min-hâ-'adâmâh*), i.e., the same "ground" (*'adâmâh*) that the prior verse notes as continually watered by mist—and God breathed (*wayyîpah* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *nâphaḥ*, "to blow [air]") into the human body's nostrils, so Adam became a "living soul" (*nepheš ḥayyîh*). Thus, from Day 6, the created nature of Adam—and from him, all mankind, including his own wife!—is a God-combined unity of the physical (body) and the non-physical (soul/spirit). This is the first usage of the noun *'âphâr*, translated "dust" (Wigram, 1874, p. 968). The root verb *'âphar* means "to dust" (e.g., see 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 16:13).

#### Verse 8.

Being a finite creature (of space and time), Adam (man) needed a geographical place to be—Eden is described as a botanical garden/park-like "garden in Eden" (*gan-be 'eden*), located "in [the] east" (*mi-qedem*), that the LORD God "planted" (*wayyîṭa'* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person,

masculine singular form of *nâta*, “to plant,” “to fasten,” “to affix”) for Adam’s occupation, so God promptly “put” (*šûm*) Adam there. “Eden” (*‘ēden*) is a masculine noun that means delight, pleasure, pleasantness, etc.—see 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 1:24; Psalm 36:8(9); Jeremiah 51:34. A similar feminine noun, *‘edenâh*, appears in Genesis 18:12 (meaning “pleasure” or “delight”). A related adjective, *‘âdîn*, means “given to pleasures,” appearing in Isaiah 47:8. The root verb (of these etymologically related words) is *‘âdîn*, meaning “to delight” or “to please,” appearing as a Hithpael imperfect, plural construct in Nehemiah 9:25 (“delighted themselves”).

God’s Creatorship is emphasized by noting Man (literally, “the Adam” = *hâ-‘âdâm*) as one whom God had formed (*yâšâr*). The nota accusativi (direct object signal) before *hâ-‘âdâm* (i.e., the man) emphasizes that it was God Who, as the subject noun, actively did the work of making Adam and of planting a delightful garden that Adam was “put” (inserted) into by God. Adam is the direct object of this divine action, passively receiving God’s caring handiwork.

### Verse 9.

The LORD God “made to grow” (*wayyašmah* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *šamah*, “to grow,” “to bud,” “to spring forth,” “to sprout”), from out of “the ground” (*hâ-‘adâmâh*), “every tree” (*kâl ‘ēš*), pleasant to look at (literally, “for sight” = *lemare’eh*) and “good for food” (*tôb lema’akâl*), as well as the “Tree of Life” (*‘ēš ha-ḥayyim*) in the garden’s midst—plus the “Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil” (*‘ēš ha-da’at tôb wara’*). God’s making of vegetation, including trees (with fruit and seeds), on Day 3, was already reported (Genesis 1:11–12), but this is the Bible’s first mention of “evil” (*ra’*)—specifically, here we first

read of the potential of “knowing” that which is “evil,” i.e., bad, wicked, wrong, anti-good, etc. (Wigram, 1874, pp. 1177–1181). The Hebrew word *ra’* is an adjective, denoting “evil” as a qualitative characteristic/trait of something morally or otherwise bad.

### Verse 10.

Eden’s geographic features are reported in this verse—from out of Eden a “river” (*nâhâr*) was “flowing” (*yōšē’* = qal active participle form of *yâšâ’*, “to issue forth,” “to flow from”).

This is the first mention of a “river” (*nâhâr*) in Scripture (Wigram, 1874, pp. 798–799). The Hebrew noun *nâhâr* (here translated “river”)—is usually translated as “river” (e.g., see also Genesis 2:13–14, 15:18, 24:10; Deuteronomy 1:7, 11:24; Joshua 1:4; 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 5:12; etc.), but also as “stream” (e.g., see Exodus 7:19)—derives from the root verb *nâhar*, meaning “to flow,” i.e., “to move in a flowing motion,” yet not being limited to waterflow—because traffic movements of humans can also “flow” (e.g., see Isaiah 2:2, 60:5; Jeremiah 31:12, 51:44; Micah 4:1). This noun can be compared to *peleg*, which appears to refer to major river-dividing, i.e., what might be called dendritic tributary-system “riverization” (Johnson, 2019a, pp. 4–16).

Two common Hebrew nouns, *nâhâr* and *naḥal*, are both translated “river”—this is illustrated in 2<sup>nd</sup> Kings 24:7, where Egypt’s “river” is a form of *naḥal*, whereas the “river” Euphrates is a form of *nâhâr*. The noun *naḥal* refers more to a river valley, i.e., the entire drainage basin or delta that may be seasonally full, shallow, or even dry.

The purpose of Eden’s river was “to water” (*lehašeqôt* = preposition-prefixed, Hiphil infinitive construct form of *šâqâh*, “to give drink,” “to water,” “to pour water/drink,” etc.) the garden there, and from there that river “was [continually] divided” (*yipârēd* = Niphal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, mascu-

line singular form of *pârad*, meaning “to divide,” “to separate”), such that it then was “unto four heads” (*wehâyâh le’arbâ’âh râ’šîm*).

### Verse 11.

Eden’s main-source river splits into four distributaries—Pîshôn, Gîhôn, Hiddekel (a/k/a Tigris), and Euphrates (Genesis 2:11–14). “Distributaries” are the geographical opposite of “tributaries.” When upstream freshwater streams merge together into a larger river, the component streams are called “tributaries.” However, when a stream splits off of the main river and continues downstream without rejoining the original river, the split-off stream is called a “distributary.”

The verb *pârad* (“divide”) is the same verb used to describe the divisions of Gentiles in their lands (Genesis 10:5), according to their language-divided, ethnic people-groups (Genesis 10:32), but a different verb (*pâlag*) is used to describe how “the earth was divided” during the days of Peleg (Genesis 10:25).

For further analysis of this verbal distinction, see the philological analysis in “Rightly ‘Dividing’ the Word About Peleg: Was Earth’s Unusual ‘Division’ During Peleg’s Lifetime a Linguistic Event or a Geological Event?” (Johnson, 2019a, pp. 4–16).

The river Pîshôn is “the one flowing around” (*ha-sôbēb* = article-prefixed, Qal-act part of *sâbab*) all of “the land of the Havilah” (*ereš ha-ḥawilâh*), where there is “the gold” (*ha-zâhâb*). The verb *sâbab* denotes the cyclic action of circling, arcing around, compassing, or rhythmic oscillating—e.g., see Joshua 6:3–4 (circling Jericho); 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 7:16 (travel circuit); Ecclesiastes 9:14 (surrounding for a siege); Job 40:22 (riparian willows bordering freshwater stream); Jeremiah 31:22 (expectant mother envelopes her unborn man-child), Proverbs 26:14 (door turning and returning on its hinges), etc.

**Verse 12.**

Havilah-land's gold (*zâhâb*) is noted as especially "good" (*tôb*), plus Havilah-land has "the bdellium" (*ha-bedôlah*) and "the stone of the onyx" (*'eben ha-šôham*). "Bdellium" is later compared—perhaps as to its color/color-pattern—to the "heavenly bread" that God provided to the wilderness-wandering Israelites after the exodus from Egypt (see Numbers 11:7). The "onyx" stone is a gem that later appears in jewelry settings (*pardon the pun*), including the sacred ephod and priestly breastplate of Aaron (see Exodus 25:7; 28:9,20; 35:9,27; 39:6,13; etc.).

**Verse 13.**

The second distributary "river" (*nâhâr*) is the Gîhôn, "the one that flows around" (*ha-sôbêb* = article-prefixed, Qal-act part of *sâbab*) all of the land of Cush (*kûš*), corresponding to whatever was the pre-Flood version of Africa's landmass (since post-Flood Africa = "land of Cush").

**Verse 14.**

The third distributary "river" (*nâhâr*) is Hidekkel (*hiddegel*), "the one that goes" (*ha-hôlēk* = article-prefixed, Qal-act part of *hâlak*, "to go," "to travel," "to walk," etc.) east of Assyria (*ašûr*), and the fourth "river" (*nâhâr*) is Euphrates (*perât*). Often a last-named item (or person) in a series is of special importance, introducing and linking to subsequent events or information—in this case the Euphrates River (in its post-Flood version) will be linked to the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11) and later political establishments in the same area, i.e., the kingdoms/empires of Babylon.

**Verse 15.**

This verse resumes the action reported in Verse 8, of God placing His newly-created creature, man, into Eden's garden. This verse reports the LORD God's immediate purpose—for

which the LORD God "took him [i.e., Adam]"—and "put him [i.e., Adam]" into Eden's garden: "to dress it and to keep it," literally, "to work it and to protect it" (*le'âbdâh ûlēšâmrâh* = preposition-prefixed, Qal infinitive construct [of *'âbad*, "to work," "to serve," "to labor," etc.] with 3<sup>rd</sup> person, feminine singular suffix, followed by conjunction-and-preposition-prefixed, Qal infinitive construct [of *šamar*, "to safeguard," "to care for," "to be responsible for," etc.] with 3<sup>rd</sup> person, feminine singular suffix).

Within Genesis 2:15, "and He took him" = *wayyiqqah* (*waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *lâqah*, with 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular suffix). Within Genesis 2:15, "and He put him" = *wayyanniḥēhû* (*waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *nûah*, with 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular suffix).

**Verse 16.**

Verses 16 and 17 report one commandment: the general rule is recorded in Verse 16; the exception is reported in Verse 17. In Verse 16, "and He commanded" = *wayešâw* (*waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Piel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *šâwâh*, "to command"). In Verse 16, the directive "thou shalt eat" from Eden's trees (except for one to be noted as an exception in 2:17) is a double verb, *'âkôl tō'kêl* (Qal infinitive, absolute form of *'âkal*, followed by Qal imperfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *'âkal*).

This two-part commandment was Adam's critical test of loyalty and obedience: the LORD God (YHWH *'elôhîm*), after inserting Adam into Eden's garden, "commanded" (*wayešâw*) Adam to "thou shalt eat"—with the sole exception of one forbidden tree-fruit (to be specifically banned in Genesis 2:17)—from all of the food of the various trees within Eden's garden.

**Verse 17.**

Only one tree's fruit is forbidden for Adam to eat: "thou shalt not eat" (*lō' tō'kal* = negative particle, followed by Qal imperfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *'âkal*) from the "Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil" (*'ēš ha-da'at tōb wara'*)!

The warning is clear—disobedience produces death (because if Adam disobeyed "in that day...to dying thou shalt die"). The divine warning's double verb is *mût tāmût* (Qal infinitive, absolute form of *mût*, followed by Qal imperfect, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *mût*).

This verse reports one of the most amazing events in the history of the universe: the LORD God gave Adam, His image-bearing creature, a moral test—with serious consequences—to try (i.e., test/prove) Adam's moral character and loyalty. The testing of Adam's character (and free will) was rightly linked to *just* consequences, because God is holy and deserves to be obeyed. Adam was genuinely put on trial: to obey would be moral, with good consequences (continued life and innocence)—but to disobey would be immoral, with bad consequences (a death sentence, applied over time).

Regarding how Genesis, Chapters 2 & 3, are genuine reports of real human history, that should not be revisionistically "backdated" by humans who dislike the historical facts and/or the moral theology presented in Scripture (John 5:45–47; Romans 5:8, 12–21) (Johnson 2013a, p. 10).

**Verse 18.**

After the warning of Verse 17 (i.e., warning that death will result if Adam disobeys the prohibition against eating one specific tree's fruit), God notes Adam's need for a proper companion. God evaluates the situation: it's "not good" (*lō' tōb*) for Adam to be alone, so the LORD God announces His so-

lution: “I shall make for him [i.e., for Adam] a helper.”

This announcement, by God, “I shall make for him a helper” = *‘e’ēseh-lô ‘ēzer* (Qal imperfect, 1<sup>st</sup> person, singular form of *‘āsâh*, with preposition-prefixed, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular pronoun/suffix, followed by masculine singular noun, *‘ēzer*).

The noun *‘ēzer* (“helper”) is derived from the root verb *‘āzar*, “to help,” used of God helping humans (e.g., 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 7:12; 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 12:18; Psalm 10:14), and of humans helping other humans, such as allies (e.g., Joshua 10:33; 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel 8:5; 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 18:5). Also, Adam does not need just any “helper”—Adam needs a helper who is a proper match, i.e., a “fit for him,” one who complements Adam, as is further noted below in discussing Verse 20.

### Verse 19.

For Adam to recognize his need for a fellow-human partner in life, and to appreciate her (when God gives her to Adam), God shows Adam how animals were created in pairs—specifically male-and-female pairs, which were phenotypically recognized (by Adam) as male-and-female pairs. God sent (literally, “caused-to-go” = *wayyābē’*) animal pairs, of land-based beasts and birds, to Adam, so that Adam could see and name each “kind” (*minâh* – see Genesis 1:24–25) of land-beast and bird. This male-and-female pair universality is emphasized later in Genesis, during the Flood, as reported in Genesis 6–9 (e.g., 6:19–20; 7:3; 7:9; 7:14–16). In Verse 19, the verb “and He brought” = *wayyābē’* (*waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *bô’*, “to go”).

Whatever “he [i.e., Adam] would call it” (*yiqrá’ lô* = Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *qārâ’* [“to call” or “to speak”], followed

by preposition-prefixed, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular pronoun/suffix), that would be its name.

### Verse 20.

While naming all the animal pairs, which appeared before Adam two-by-two (for naming), Adam could see the universal pattern in both land-beasts and birds, and thus Adam saw his own lack of a “fit” (i.e., matching) partner. The English phrase “fit for him” translates the compound word *kenegedô* (= preposition + noun [3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular pronoun/suffix]).

Thus, within the Hebrew word *kenegedô* the noun is *neged*, which denotes the idea of being in front of, i.e., facing or opposing, like a mirror’s image. Thus, Adam needed a “helper” who would be his opposite, who would be facing him, i.e., who would complement him.

### Verse 21.

Now that Adam recognizes his need, his lack, the LORD God provides the solution: Woman. God “caused to fall” (*wayyapēl* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *nâphal*, “to fall”) a deep-sleep (*tarerēmâh*) upon Adam, while God performed the first thoracic surgery! The root verb *râdam* appears in Daniel 8:18 and 10:9, where Daniel was put into a deep-sleep (Young, 1879, pp. 899–900).

God took “one” (*‘aḥat*) from his [Adam’s] side/ribs (*mišale’ôṭâyw*), then closed Adam’s body. Some have wondered how Biblical Hebrew can be used to express what in English is called an “indefinite article,” since Hebrew can be anarthrous (i.e., having no article) or it can use a definite article—but it has no “indefinite article” (as English does). However, this verse illustrates the grammatical equivalent, because “one” (yet which one is not definitely specified) of Adam’s side/ribs was

taken by God, i.e., a specific one was taken but that one is not identified specifically, the equivalent of an indefinite article (Johnson, 2013c).

Girolamo Zanchi (1515–1590) suggested that this fact of history had Messianic-typological importance: Adam’s deep sleep symbolically foreshadowed Christ’s life-giving death as the Last Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45b; see Ephesians 5:30)—because out of Christ’s side flowed blood and water (John 19:34), to redemptively make Christ’s bride, the Church (Zanchi, 2021, pp. 13–30).

### Verse 22.

God’s work in making woman (*‘išâh*) was a construction project: God “built” (*wayyiben* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Qal imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *bânâh*, “to build”) the rib (taken from Adam) into woman (*le’išâh* = preposition-prefixed, feminine singular noun). Earth’s first wedding then occurred, when the LORD God “brought her to the man” (*wayyibi’eha* = *waw*-consecutive-prefixed, Hiphil imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine singular form of *bô’*, followed by preposition *‘el*, plus definite article-prefixed, masculine singular noun *hâ-‘âdâm*).

### Verse 23.

Adam awakens to woman—“at last” (*ha-pa’am*)! Perhaps our idiomatic equivalent would be “spot on!”—God’s solution (to Adam’s lack) had struck the target’s bull’s-eye! Woman was “bone of [Adam’s] bone” and “flesh of [Adam’s] flesh,” literally. Because woman was taken from out of “man” (*‘iš*), her name would be “Woman” (*‘išâh*), i.e., the female version of mankind. (Of course, she is to be re-named “Eve” [life] in Genesis, Chapter 3, Verse 20, but that is another matter.)



**Verse 24.**

This verse (2:24) is quoted by the Lord Jesus Christ as the defining norm for marriage (Matthew 19:3–9; Mark 10:6–12; see also Ephesians 5:28–31; 1 Corinthians 6:16–17), with three essential elements: (a) leaving one's parents; (b) cleaving to one's spouse; and (c) becoming/being one flesh.

The verb *'āzab* ("to leave") is used in contexts involving some kind of movement or changes that cause leaving people behind, or emigrating from land formerly lived in, or forsaking God (or His covenant), or forsaking the poor by ignoring their needs, etc. (Wigram, 1874, pp. 915–917).

The verb *dābaq* ("to cleave") is used in contexts of joining, staying joined to, being stuck to, i.e., the union of two or more parts, caused by joinder and continued attachment (Wigram, 1874, pp. 318–319).

Ironically, the mention of "father" (*'āb*) and "mother" (*'ēm*) in this verse did not literally fit Adam or Woman (a/k/a Eve), because neither had any human parents.

**Verse 25.**

As a married couple (with no neighbors), then unfallen, Adam and Woman were "naked" (*'arūmmîm* = masculine plural adjective), yet "not ashamed" (conjunction-prefixed negative particle, followed by Hithpoel imperfect, 3<sup>rd</sup> person, masculine plural form of *bôš*).

Regarding the first couple's pristine nakedness, it is likely that Adam and Woman, before they sinned, were quasi-clothed in a glowing aura of God's favor, somewhat like the glow that Moses gained while fellowshiping with God, for 40 days, on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34:29–35).

Interestingly, the action of a Hithpoel is like an emphatic mix of Piel intensity, Hithpael reflexivity, and Polel continuity—such that the original human couple's pre-Fall condition of confident unashamedness might be expressed as: "they were [then] very much [confidently] unashamed of themselves."

But this emphatic and innocent confidence was not to last.

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