

**An Introductory Study of GENESIS Chapters 2:  
A Vivid Chronology of Man's Beginning**

In chapter 1 God created the heavens and the earth (1:1). Then God began to prepare the earth for the habitation of man, the climax of His creative work (1:3-23). On day 6 His work of preparation was complete; all was now ready for God's crowning work: man, who was to be created in His own image. So God created man - male and female - and He blessed them, saying: "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it" (i.e., harness its vast potential) and have dominion over all that God has made. So ended day 6; but God's good plan for man was not yet complete.

In chapter 2 the creation account continues, one day remains. On day 7, the final day, God rested from all that He had made and then blessed the 7<sup>th</sup> day. This, however, was not a rest of weariness but one of repose because of a *good* work complete. It was a rest of enjoyment and satisfaction. Thereafter, God set in motion the recurring pattern of a seven day "week," which was the next step in His good plan for man.

Then beginning with verse 4 of Chapter 2 the creation account revisits in greater detail the events of day 6. It's a vivid chronology of *man's* beginning and of God's continuing good plan for him: a plan that includes, 1) a garden of delight to dwell in, the special sanctuary of God; also 2) a responsibility assigned to him and a specific command issued to him, and finally 3) another delegated responsibility that prepared the man to receive from God's hand a beautiful helper especially made for him. The creation account concludes with the first wedding ceremony in which God Himself officiates. And so chapter 2 ends on a note of great joy! Surely with all the showers of blessings that God has poured out upon this first couple, their future can be nothing less than exceedingly bright! Chapter 3 comes next.

## The Literary Structure of the First **2** Sections of Genesis:

### I. Creation of the Heavens and Earth (1:1 - 2:3) -

**A.** God Creates the Heavens and Earth: 1:1-2;

**B.** God Prepares Earth for the Habitation of Man: 1:3-25;

Day ONE through the beginning of Day SIX:

1. Days 1 - 3: God *Forms* 1:3-13 -
2. Days 4 - 6: God *Fills* 1:14-25 -

**C. God Creates Mankind: The Climax of His Creation:** 1:26-31;

**D. God Observes a Day of Rest: Day Seven, the Sabbath:** 2:1-3;

God's Instruction concerning the Sabbath:

1. "God **rested**" (Heb. *shabbat*, means to pause, to cease; also, cf. Isaiah 40:28, "He does not faint or grow weary") -

So, this was *not* a rest of weariness but one of repose because of a *good work* complete. It was a rest of enjoyment and satisfaction.

2. "God **blessed** it" (the 7<sup>th</sup> day; He conferred on it special significance) -
3. "God made it **holy**" (i.e., to 'set apart' for divine purpose) -
4. Additionally, for this final day, day 7 (Heb. *yom*) the recurring "evening and morning" refrain does not appear. Instead God leaves the 7<sup>th</sup> day undefined and indefinite in length. The omission of the 'evening-morning' cycle is key to a fuller understanding of God's purpose for this day and for His blessing it and setting it apart (see Hebrews 3:17 - 4:10). -

So, how does the Sabbath (*Shabbat*) apply today to NT believers "in Christ?"

- From the beginning of creation the last day of the week was accorded **special significance**: 1) God ceased His work on the 7<sup>th</sup> day, 2) He blessed the day, and 3) He sanctified it (set apart) to commemorate the 6 days of His work of creation.
- The **rules and regulations** governing the Sabbath were first set forth in the Mosaic Law. (Exodus 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-14)
- Today the **Mosaic Law** or the "Old Covenant" is no longer in force; rather, it became **obsolete** (*Heb. 8:13*) with the cross of Christ. So, its

regulations for special observances are no longer in place (Col. 2:16,17; Note: God's *moral law* is still in place, all contained in the Great Commandment(s).

- Christ's death and resurrection ushered in the establishment of the **New Covenant** (see Luke 22:20). The *New Covenant* was promised in the OT (Jeremiah 31:31f). The *New Covenant* was spoken of by Jesus Christ and then enacted and ratified by His blood and resurrection.
- Now all believers "in Christ" are partakers of the New Covenant. For them **Resurrection Day**, the first day of the week, memorializes and celebrates both the *New Covenant* and the beginning of God's *New Creation* in Christ! (hence the regular celebration of the New Covenant at the Lord's Table; also see Ephesians 2:10,13-21; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; Note: the observance of the regulations of Shabbat memorializes the Old Covenant (Deut. 5:12-15) and the Genesis creation).
- Since the requirements of the Mosaic Law are not binding, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Day of the Week is the day that holds greater significance for those in Christ, what then is the NT believers obligation to continue to recognize Shabbat as a sacred (set apart, special) day?
- From the beginning God set in place many patterns for life in the world He created. One such pattern is the seven day week which includes a set time for repose, reflection, and pause. Additionally, the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the week memorializes God's good and loving work in creation. It seems best - in a general way - to perpetuate this day as a special day as a child of the Father.
- *Shabbat* also has rich figurative significance which must not be overlooked or lost. The day of God's rest (ceasing from the work), prophetically anticipated the work of Christ and the "rest" of faith apart from works that would one day be found in Him (this is wonderfully expounded in Hebrews 3:7 - 4:11). Much like the marriage union prefigured Christ and the church (Eph. 5:31,32), so also the "rest of God" on the 7<sup>th</sup> day prefigured the "rest" of righteousness by faith and not of works. Even Abraham found that "rest" of faith in Gen. 15:6.
- Therefore, because of these last 2 bullet points, some special significance should still attend the Shabbat. However, such significance can be incorporated into a celebration on and sanctity of the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the week: Resurrection Day. Resurrection Day can now

become both a day of rest and remembrance, as well as, a day of glorious hope and worship.

- Jesus Himself said, "The Son of Man (Jesus) is lord of the Sabbath," meaning that He has ALL authority over this day. He further reminded the Jewish leaders that "the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath."(Mark 2:27,28)

## II. The Earth's First Family In & Outside the Garden (2:4 - 4:26)

### A. Man's Beginnings: Man's First Day, A Vivid Chronology: 2:4-25;

In Genesis 1, God *prepared* the **earth** for man to live;

In Genesis 2, God *prepares* the **man** to live - for Him - on the earth.

Moreover, the glorious transcendent God is now the immanent, personal God. His compound name in ch. 2 bears this out: the LORD God (Heb. *Jehovah Elohim*, v.2:4)

#### 1. Man's Habitation Prepared and Complete; Ready for the Creation of Man 2:4-6;

- Genesis' Format is that of an ancient **genealogy**; in fact, it is mankind's genealogy from the beginning of life on planet earth.

The phrase beginning v. 4, "*These of the generations of,*" will appear 10 more times in the book (for ex.: 2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:10, etc; 11 times in all)

- Verse 4 is a poetic summary of chapter 1.

A	<i>of the heavens,</i>
B	<i>and the earth,</i>
C	<i>when they were <b>created</b>,</i>
C'	<i>in the day ... they were <b>made</b>,</i>
B'	<i>the earth,</i>
A'	<i>and the heavens.</i>

The central 2 verbs of this verse, both pick up and echo the 2 verbs ending the first section at verse 3 (“*He rested from all His work which God created (bara) to make (asah).*” NASV marginal reading).

- Life outside the garden both *anticipated* and *awaited* the presence of man. God would provide much for man to experience and to do. It will be another aspect to his stewardship responsibilities.

(v.5) Some Hebrew scholars have suggested that this rendering of the Hebrew better fits the context of the verse: “*Not every bush of the field was yet in the earth and not every small plant of the field had yet sprung up - [Why? 2 reasons] for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the land (earth), and there was no man to work the ground.*” This will change in v.15.

- (6) God provided a mist or springs to water the earth’s surface.

## 2. God Carefully Forms the Man, then Gives Him LIFE 2:7 -

- (v.7) “*The LORD God formed the man ...*” (Heb. *yasar* or *yatsar*). This word is used for the work of a *potter* (cf. Isa. 64:8). As such it is a graphic word that pictures the skillful hands, purpose, and loving care of the craftsman.
- (v.7) “*the breath of life*” speaks of God giving life and well as breathing into Adam the human spirit; thus making man both a physical and spiritual being, or one that is material and immaterial.

## 3. The Dwelling Place God *had* Prepared for Man: a Garden of Delight in Eden: 2:8-14;

- (v.8) “*Now (ESV and) the LORD God [had] planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there He put (placed, 2xs, v.15) the man ...*”
- God places Adam in close proximity to Himself. He is highly favored, a creature “*formed*” of dust, yet God placed him in His garden of “*delight.*” (Eden: pleasantness, beauty, delight).
- (v.9) God planted in His garden every tree that was “*pleasant to the sight*” and “*good for food*” (s. qualities repeated in 3:6). Qualities of

beauty and goodness, both are categories originating and defined by God.

- (v.9) Two trees in the midst of the garden. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was God's test for man. God gave Adam an abundant YES and a solitary NO. It was a divine test; but it was NOT a temptation! As Genesis reveals, God uses "testing" as His means to both prove and to grow those who would enjoy His presence and be in His service.
  - His love (*"If you love me, keep My commandments"*)
  - His faithfulness (*"It is required of stewards that a man be found faithful,"* 1 Cor. 4:2)
  - His trust in God's Word (Jesus prayed: *"Thy word is true ..."*)

James 1:2, *"Count it all joy ... when you face trials, knowing the testing of your faith produces steadfastness, and ..."*

- (v.9) God's instruction was given to the man first and only; it was then his responsibility to faithfully and fully communicate it - one day - to his wife, Eve.

4. Adam Placed in God's Sanctuary with Responsibility and ONE Command 2:15-17;

5. God Creates from Adam a Partner and Helper Fit for Him 2:18-23;

6. God Establishes Marriage and the Family to Fill and to Order the Earth 2:24-25;

**B.** The Temptation and the Fall: 3:1-24;

**C.** Cain and Abel: the Progress of Sin, *Hostility* Commences 4:1-16;

**D.** The Spread and Accomplishments of Cainite Civilization: 4:17-26;

III. The Descendants of Adam to Noah (5:1 - 6:8)