

## Robert Vannoy, Old Testament History, Lecture 8

### Genesis 2

#### 1. Is This Another Account of Creation?

We were discussing Genesis 2, and the first point under Genesis 2 is, “Is this another account of creation?” We really didn’t get into the discussion of that question. I think I just introduced it in the last class hour. We’ll pick up on that point this afternoon. I would respond to that question: Is Genesis 2 another account of creation? I would respond ‘yes’ but only in a very qualified sense. I think you have to be very careful saying Genesis 2 is another account of creation. Of course, it is true that there is some of the creation account of Genesis 1 that is repeated in chapter 2, particularly in the creation of man and woman. It’s elaborated and enlarged upon, but I don’t think chapter 2 should be viewed primarily as a creation account. I think the emphasis in chapter 2 is more concerned with man and his place and function in the created world. Now, to present that, chapter 2 does retell a small part of Genesis 1. You have a more detailed story of how God created man and woman.

But I don’t think that is sufficient to leave you with the conclusion, such as S.R. Driver opines in his commentary on Genesis, which I mentioned in the last class hour. He says on page 8, “Thus Genesis 1:1 to 2:4a and 2:4b-25 contain a double narrative of the origin of man upon the earth.” That is a typical, critical view. In Genesis 1:1-2:4a notice the divide between the 2 chapters at 2:4a. Between the middle of verse 2, between the first part and the second part 2:4b. Genesis 2:4b to 25 is said to be the second creation account. Those two narratives by the critical scholars then are labeled “P account” in Genesis 1, and the “J account” in Genesis 2. There you have the double creation narrative.

a. Vannoy's Approach to Genesis 2

It seems to me that it is better not to view Genesis 2 as the second creation narrative but rather as a chapter, which is given in preparation for the account of the fall of man in chapter 3. In other words, there's progression from chapter 1 to chapter 2, and chapter 3. It's better than to answer the question that we started out with, "Is this another account of creation?" with a negative. It is not simply another creation story for the following reasons.

b. The Word *Toledoth* - Chapter Division Discussion

Let me mention two things that are important in responding to that question. You notice on your outline sheet under Roman numeral I. "Is this another account of creation?" there are two sub-points. A. is the use of the word *toledoth*. Now in Genesis chapter 2:4. You read, I'll read here from the King James, "These are the generations of the heavens and earth when they were created." The English word "generations" is a translation of the Hebrew *toledoth*, which is written there in Hebrew in English transliteration for those who haven't had Hebrew, yet. "These are the generations (*toledoth*) of the heavens and the earth." Now if you recall I mentioned this briefly earlier. It seems to me preferable to divide between chapter 1 and chapter 2, at the end of verse 3 of chapter 2. In other words, if you look at your outline sheet, you'll notice that capital B. is Genesis 2:4-25 and 2a was Genesis 1:1-2:3. The dividing point, is best placed at the end of verse three and that means this phrase "These are the generations of..." introduces chapter 2 beginning with verse 4.

The critical scholars divide it differently almost without exception dividing it after

2:4a. In other words, they will take that initial clause of verse 4: “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth...” and understand it as a concluding statement to the first chapter. So then the division becomes in the middle of verse four. Chapter 2 really begins “when they were created in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens and every plain of the field before it was in the earth” and so forth. They begin chapter 2 in the middle of verse 4. Now they do that on the basis of the documentary hypothesis. We discussed that general theory earlier. According to that critical view P, the key document, is the document that is characterized by having a preference for structure and numbers and characteristics of that sort and in fact the schematic structure of the entire book of Genesis rests with that phrase “generations of heaven and earth” “these are the generations of Adam”, “these are the generations of Noah”, “these are the generations of Noah’s sons.” There are ten of them through the entire book and the book is sort of structured by that phrase. According to the critics that’s something that’s characterized by P. So, the first chapter is P that phrase is P therefore that phrase has to go with the first chapter. And then it becomes a concluding statement to the first chapter, a summary of the first chapter, rather than something that introduces the second chapter.

Now, you see they have to go with the 2:4b statement as being a part of J because the word Yahweh (Jehovah) occurs there. See in 2:4b, “when they were created in the day of the LORD God.” The Lord God is *Yahweh Elohim*. So, there you get the shift to the J source. The second part of the verse has to be J, the first part of the verse has to be P. So, what do you do? You slice the verse in half, and say this part belongs with the P source, the second part of the verse belongs with the J source. But to do that raises a problem. That phrase “These are the generations of...”, occurs these ten times through

the book regularly and if you look at them you will find that it introduces what follows, not summarizes what precedes. It introduces what follows. That means if you take the phrase in 2:4a as a concluding statement, like the critics do. Then in each of the other 9 places you have to give that expression a different meaning, a different function because it obviously introduces what follows, rather than summarizes what precedes. Now we take an example here, I'll just pick one out. Genesis 11:27, "These are the generations of Terah...". What follows Genesis 11:27? You know your book of Genesis and think through it. Beginning in chapter 12, is right at the end of chapter 11, beginning in chapter 12 you have the story of Abraham, you're not being told anything about Terah. What your being told is what comes forth out of Terah? What follows? What issues forth from Terah? It's Abraham.

And the same way with Genesis 37:2, "These are the generations of Jacob..." What follows is not really much about Jacob, as Jacob enters occasionally, but what follows from Genesis 37 is the Joseph stories see that's what issues forth you might say out of Jacob; the story about Joseph and the descendants of Jacob and the brothers going down into Egypt. Of course, Jacob went down into Egypt too, but the focus is not on Jacob, it's on what issues forth from Jacob.

So, we can ask the question what's the meaning of *toledoth* in this expression: "These are the generations of the heavens and the earth..." *Toledoth*, for those of you who have had some Hebrew, you maybe can see it, in the letters there. It is a derivative of the Hebrew verb, *yalad*, which means "to bear (children)" or "to beget." And it's a noun form of that. It indicates the product of bearing, or that which is brought forth. It is usually children and it is usually used in the sense of offspring, or children. These are the generations of a certain person. But sometimes it refers to the product or result of a

historical development. I think that's the sense here in Genesis 2:4. In other words, when it says "These are the generations of the heavens and earth...", it speaks of what comes forth in history from the making of the heavens and the earth in Genesis 1. So, the significance of the phrase here, is that it marks the beginning of a new phase of God's dealing with his creatures.

Now, why have we been discussing all this in relation to this question? Is Genesis 2 a second creation account--a duplicate narrative of some sort of Genesis 1? I think the implication is that from Genesis 2:4 on, you don't have a repetition of the creation of the heavens and the earth, what you find is what issued forth or came out of God's creative activity in Genesis 1. The point of this phrase is to point forward not backward. That's consistent with the way it's used in the rest of the book. This is the history of the heavens and the sense of what proceeded onward from the point of their creation. And I think this phrase then tells us that Genesis 2 centers on man, the place in which he lived, his dominion over the animals, the creation of woman as his companion and helpmate and so forth has prepared the way for Chapter 3. You see we're moving forward from chapter 1. *Toledoth* here is indicative of historical lines from the beginning to an end point. It points to the product, the result. The genitive, when you get "These are the generations of..." The genitive indicates the starting point, the *toledoth* indicates the outcome.

Now interestingly, it's a hard thing to translate. Now those of you who are looking at the NIV, what's it say? I know it's quite different. "This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created...this is the account of the heavens and the earth." That's lost something. I think really the King James at this point, even though it's quite literal you don't really think of generations in the sense of the heavens and the earth producing offspring, gives you the idea of what "issues forth" or "comes out of" more

than “the account of,” which is what the NIV does with all of these. Let’s just take Genesis 37:2 and you see that it almost becomes a distortion. Yes, this is the account of Jacob, you see it’s not the account of Jacob, however, that follows. That’s very confusing, it’s what issues forth out of Jacob.

“This is the account of” makes some sense but it loses something with Genesis 2:4. So, I don’t know a better way to translate it other than “These are the generations of...”, even though that may be a bit obscure with Genesis 2:4. Even with the other phrases, you may think what is coming is a genealogy. It’s not so much that. It’s this idea: what is the product? What is the result? What is coming forth out of the individuals? It sort of marks a new beginning point in history. It marks that phrase in the structure of the book of Genesis. A lot of them are dead ends, you see in Genesis 25:12, “what comes forth out of Ishmael” is a kind of genealogy but then it’s a dead end and it stops, it doesn’t trace it on forever. Another example is with Isaac and Esau after Genesis 25. In Genesis 25:19 you see what follows is the story of Jacob, getting Isaac’s blessing in chapter 27. Then he pleads to Laban where he gets his wives and sons, so what really follows 25:19 is the story of Jacob. That’s the way it works, and I think that’s the significance of the term.

Now to get back to our initial question then it has implications for how you see the question in Genesis 2 is it simply a duplicate repetition of the creation account? On the basis of that expression I think you would say, “no.” There’s progression, its moving forward.

## B. What is the Function of Genesis 2 in Relation to Genesis 3?

1. Genesis 2 is to Center Attention on Man in Preparation for the Account of the Fall

Alright secondly, B. “What is the function of Genesis 2 in relation to Genesis 3?” I think the function of chapter 2 is to center attention on man in preparation for the account of the fall and the sin as recorded in Genesis 3. In relation to that purpose we find a number of things. First, there is an extensive description of the location of the garden in Genesis 2:8-14. He mentions that God planted a garden of Eden and then talks about a river in verse 10. It gives the names of the four rivers that are in relation to the location of the garden in 11-14. So there’s an extensive description of the location of the Garden in verses 8-14. Of course, the garden is the location where in chapter 3 the fall takes place. Also you have, in verses 16 and 17 the prohibition given not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden... “For the day that you eat, you shall surely die.” That prohibition is important in connection to chapter 3 because in chapter 2 you have the prohibition that prepares the way for that. I think it is likely, or reasonable to conclude, that the more detailed description of woman that is in verses 18-24 is because Eve played such an important role in chapter 3. Because you have a more elaborate description than you have in chapter 1 where it just says, “and God created them male and female.”

And then verse 25 is also necessary in connection with chapter 3 because verse 25 says that they were both naked, the man and his wife and were not ashamed. This is important in connection with chapter 3 verse 7 and following where immediately, subsequent to the fall you read, “they're eyes were opened, they knew that they were naked. They sowed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons,” and so on. You see there are close connections between chapter 2 and chapter 3. Chapter 2 provides the foundation for much of what goes on subsequently in chapter 3. So again, I don’t think that there is a basis for saying we don’t simply have duplicate creation accounts with

chapter 1. There's progression and there is a role that chapter 2 plays under chapter 3.

## 2. Does Genesis 2 Contradict Genesis 3?

Alright, number 2 under Genesis 2 is "does Genesis 2 contradict Genesis 1?" You will find among some critical scholars and even some evangelicals who have bought into a degree of critical theories statements saying these two chapters are contradictory. For the source critical theory and the way it dealt with Scripture that's no problem in the context of that kind of a theory. If you have a high view of Scripture and you feel that this one's reliable, then you have a historiography to tell you things as they really happened. If they're contradictory that creates a problem. What is alleged is that the order of events in Genesis 1 differs from the order of events in Genesis 2. In Genesis 1 you have vegetation created in verse 11, "God said let's bring forth vegetation." You have animals in verse 24, "let the earth bring forth living creatures, after its kind, cow, cattle, creeping things, beasts of the earth after its kind." Then man in verse 26 and 27 and then woman. Then the theory is when you come to this second creation account the order is different. Man is created first, verse 7 "the LORD God formed man out of the dust of the ground." Vegetation is second, verses 8-9 "the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, where he placed man." Animals are third. Verse 19 "out of the ground, the LORD God formed every beast of the field." The woman last "the LORD God took a rib from Adam and made woman from man."

Now what do we do with that? Is there really a discrepancy in order? I think there are several things that we can notice. I think that there isn't any real discrepancy here. Firstly, the creation of vegetation is not described in Genesis 2. What is described is the planting of the Garden. I think that's something quite different from the initial creation



of vegetation. In verse 8 of chapter 2 it says, “The LORD God planted a garden, east.” So that’s an assumption to conclude that that is the creation of vegetation. Secondly, I think we can say on the basis of context and general common sense, that verse 8 is best understood as indicating that God planted the garden before Adam was created. This gets to an ambiguity of Hebrew verbal forms. The King James if you notice in Genesis 2:7 says, “and the LORD God formed man out of the dust of the ground.” If you look at NIV, of Genesis 2:8 “now the LORD had planted a garden eastward of Eden.” The King James says, “the LORD planted a garden.” NIV says “the LORD God had planted.” Now in Hebrew you cannot make a distinction like we have in English, between the past tense and perfect tense verb. It could be either. The only way you can tell the difference is context and common sense. And it seems that God's going to create man to put him in the garden, so he prepared the garden first, so he could put him in the garden. And it makes much more sense to translate it as “had planted” than “planted.” So I think the NIV is correct at that point and its suggesting a better English translation that time.

### 3. Genesis 2:19 Does Not Say that Animals Were Created After Man and Not Woman

Thirdly, Genesis 2:19 does not say that animals were created after man and not woman. The problem here is the same problem as in 2:8, with the tense of the verbal form. The King James says, which seems to contribute to this idea of discrepancy of order, “and out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field.” The NIV says “now the LORD God had formed out of the ground, all the beasts of the field.” And I think that’s a proper understanding again, the animals were not created after man and before woman, the animals had been created earlier as we read in Genesis 1. Now the Lord is going to bring all these animals to Adam in order for him to name them. And

that's what follows in verses 19-24. It does not say man and woman were created close together in time. It doesn't say that. It just says God created man and woman, male and female. It doesn't tell you anything about them. It doesn't say anything about whether that was simultaneous or if there was a period of time that separated it. So Genesis 1 does not say that man and woman were created close together in time, and Genesis 2 does not say that animals were created between man and woman.

Now with those comments on these alleged discrepancies, you can really resolve the issue. I think the stress in chapter 2 of Genesis is logical, rather than chronological. And the order reflects a logic of progression not necessarily a chronological order. There is no necessary conflict between what it is trying to say between chapter 2 and chapter 1. The way in which one translates the verbal forms particularly the one in 2:19 and 2:8, where "had planted" and "had formed" depends entirely on context whether it's past tense, or past perfect. But what that means is that the critical factor of how one understands those verbal forms is whether or not one sees a contradiction between the two chapters. If you are looking for discrepancies, you can translate it in the way that produces it. If you're looking for harmony you can translate it in the way that harmonizes it. You can't decide it on the base of the grammar, you have to decide on the basis of context. Now as one commentator has said, even if you have accepted the documentary theory, it's still reasonable to assume that the person who put these two creation accounts together, still knew contradictions between them, otherwise why wouldn't he have edited it to harmonize it himself? Leupold, I think this is under the bibliography, the middle of page 8. Leupold, in his commentary, page 108, quotes another scholar who says, "it is just as unlikely as it can be that the author should have been such a dunce as to set down at the outset two exclusive sets of accounts of creation."

## Parallel of Genesis 2:5-6 and Genesis 1:2

Even if one had accepted the documentary theory without a problem, why would someone have done that? There is no necessary conflict between the two chapters. Okay, any questions on that? **(Student asks question).** I would follow the suggestion of Derek Kidner, Tyndale Bulletin, 1966, the title is: “Genesis 2:5-6, wet or dry.” And there is a discussion of those verses in which he concludes that those verses are really parallel to Genesis 1:2, the chaotic state of creation before the process of ordering creative matter. So he says in verses 5 and 6, there is a two-fold expansion of 4b by which the bare phrase “In the day which the LORD made earth and heaven” is given specific content. At this opening stage of creation, the reader is struck first in the negative “not yet, not yet, none of” verse 5. In an approach that starts in the known world, and strips it of its familiar features. With its mind cleared of the ordinary presuppositions, the reader is now ready for the positive statement of however strange a scene of the world is in verse 6. It is none other than a scene suggested in different terms in Genesis 1:2, the chaotic expansive waters. The fact that rain is still unknown, is therefore no sign of drought, but of the state of saturation that preceded the dividing of the waters on the second day in Genesis 1. I think that’s a good suggestion as far as how it’s being talked about and described in Genesis 2:5-6. The same thing that you have there in Genesis 1. He says later, we may paraphrase in the context of what follows, “when God made the earth and sky.” These were not initially as we now know them, not even the wild growth existed on earth, only the cultivated crops. Even the familiar heaven with its clouds and rainfall was not yet in evidence. Meanwhile the whole earth seemed undated, welled up again and again from within it. So then its focusing then on man.

### 3. The Garden of Eden

#### a. Its Geographic Location

Number 3. is: “The Garden of Eden.” A few sub-points here. a. is: “Its geographic location.” Where was the garden of Eden? As already mentioned, there is quite a description mentioned in chapter 2 of its location. You find that in verses 8-14. You read there particularly in verses 10 to 14, of the rivers that were connected in location to the Garden. A river went out of Eden and into the garden. And then it was parted and became four heads. The name of the first is Pishon. That is it which encompasses the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. The gold of that land is good and there is onyx stone. And the second river is Gihon. The same as that which encompasses the land of Cush. The third river is Tigris, “it which goes into the east of Syria.” And the fourth river is the Euphrates. In Genesis 2:10, does the river originate in Eden or elsewhere? I’ve read from the King James, “The river went out of Eden and watered the garden and from thence it parted and became four heads.” Now that sounds like a river went out of Eden and from there parted and became four heads. Now that goes contrary to the way rivers function. Unless you are talking about a delta. The normal way rivers come together is the other way. Where rivers come together to form a larger river. Ephraim Speiser, in the Anchor Bible on Genesis, pages 14, 17, 19, 20, translates that verse: “a river rises in Eden. The water of the garden.” Meaning it’s about to come over its banks as the water of the Nile does. Outside it formed four separate branch beds. And he argues effectively for that translation. That’s kind of a confirmation.

In verse 14 the last reference is the river Euphrates. We know where the river is. The Mediterranean sea, the Red Sea, the armies coming up here. Over here is the Persian Gulf. The Euphrates river comes down into the Persian Gulf. Those two rivers can be

identified: the Tigris and the Euphrates. The two others are unknown. No one knows they are. There has been all kinds of speculation on that, it is just unknown. But in fact, I think there are three basic approaches to location. The first is this, the geography at that time, we're talking about the earliest of times in the human race, was different, in the pre-flood period. The Tigris, the Euphrates, the Gihon, and the Pishon were four major rivers that came together somewhere in the Persian Gulf region. What's happened with the Pishon and Gihon we don't know. Some have suggested that the area that the rivers watered in the garden of Eden, is now underneath the northern part of the Persian gulf. The Persian Gulf has extended area has covered the earth, and the Garden of Eden has gone underneath. That's possible, but no one really knows.

Then there's just this discussion that is usually referenced in Genesis 4:16 saying, "Cain went out in the presence of the LORD, east of Eden." The land of Nod is east of Eden. You compare that with 2 Kings 19:12, and you read "did the gods of the nations that were destroyed by my forefathers deliver them ..and the people of Eden who were in Tel Assar," where are the kingdom of..." "the children of Eden were in Tel Assar." That's the Mesopotamian area. So that really doesn't help a great deal but those are the references that are sometimes associated with it. So one possibility is that it was located in the Persian gulf area.

Second possibility, the names of these pre-flood three rivers were remembered subsequent to the flood and applied to other rivers. If that is the case, that means the garden of Eden could be most anywhere. That would mean that the Tigris and Euphrates are simply names that were carried through after the flood and applied to rivers that could be named to any rivers, but not necessarily the same rivers that might have changed in configuration after the flood.

Third position is one you'll increasingly find and that is, the garden of Eden never existed. All we have here is a story, a sort of religious fantasy, with no historical basis with no reality and we're really asking the wrong question if you are asking where the garden of Eden is located. Let me illustrate that with this little book, which is on your bibliography, J.C. Gibson, *The Daily Study Bible* series, Westminster, 1981. It's a popular series, it's written for lay people. And it's a contemporary series, it's used in a lot of churches in their Christian education programs. Page 100, let me read you what it says about the location of the Garden of Eden: "it is my contention that if we approach the story of the Garden of Eden with a similarly imaginative spirit." His previous paragraph was talking about the story of Cinderella. "Everything will similarly fall into place. The naïve pictures of God as potter and land owner, the trees who's magical fruit inferred wonderful gifts, the talking snake, the guardian cherubim, the very garden itself all these... So all these are furniture in the story. They are not part of its underlying meaning. There never was such a place as the Garden of Eden. Nor was there ever an historical person called Adam who lived in it and conversed with snakes and God in Hebrew. The garden is a garden of the mind. It is a garden of men's dreams. The kind of place they would like this world to be, a kind of place indeed they know this world ought to be. And Adam is each one of us, he is everyman. That this world is not what it ought to be is due to man's disobedience to God, the sinful Adam in us all. Each and every day paradise beckons us. But each and every day we eat the forbidden fruit and are banished from it." So that kind of approach says that there never was such a place as the Garden of Eden, and there never was such a man as Adam. This is a story of religious significance, only it's not historical fact. It goes back to those issues that we were talking about earlier. It goes back to what is Old Testament historiography, does it tell us things that happened,

or doesn't it? I think those are the three basic approaches to the question of geographic location.

b. is: "The trees of the garden." But my time is up, so we'll stop at this point and begin there next time.

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