

Genesis 2:4-25
The Breath of Life!
WRCoB 9.8.19

**Psalm 19:1 (KJV) The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament sheweth his handywork.**

When I look at the beauty and grandeur of nature
 Whether it is a sunset over the Blue Ridge
 Or a sunrise on the beach at Nags Head
 Or a thunderhead on the Iowa prairie
 I think of this Bible verse.

When I think about the probabilities of life on earth
 And the complexities of how it came to be . . .

The workings of the human mind . . .
 The incredible study of quantum physics . . .

I am completely awed, astounded, and convinced
 That it could not have all just randomly happened.

Others would disagree.

The late physicist Steven Hawking argued
 That the laws of physics, not God
 Provide the real explanation.

*“I don’t want to give the impression that my work is about
proving or disproving the existence of God. My work is about
finding a rational framework to understand the universe
around us.”*

Science and religion are not at odds with one another

As Albert Einstein said,

*Science without religion is lame
Religion without science is blind.*

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According to the Big Bang theory the universe
Began as a very hot, small, and dense superforce
Called a singularity.

In the first second after it exploded
The temperature surrounding the explosion
Was near 10 billion degrees F.

Francis Collins, a physicist and a Christian
In his book, *The Language of God:
A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*

Writes, “*Nearly all of the atoms in your body were once cooked in the nuclear furnace of an ancient supernova—you are truly made of stardust.*”

How does the Bible explain the phenomena of life?

Genesis 2:4b When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens . . . ⁷ The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

The Biblical account of creation

Does not attempt to offer scientific explanations
It simply presents God as the one who created.

A fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible

Claims Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible.

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy.

We may never know whether this is true or not.

Others in the field of Bible interpretation

Would argue the origins of these books

And even content within these books

Point to several authors.

For instance Genesis 1:1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4-25.

A literal/fundamental look at these two chapters would state

Chapter 2 is a continuation of Chapter 1.

But a critical/historical look proposes

That these are two different accounts

Of the story of creation.

For example, in 1:1-2:3, the name of God is *Elohim*

Simply translated in English as God.

However, in 2:4-25, the name of God is *YHWH Elohim*

Translated in English as LORD (all capitals) God.

This suggests two authors writing from two different eras.

Also, if you read down through

The first and second creation accounts

The creation events are in differing orders.

The first account has water first, then land
Followed by plants, animals, and finally humans.

God created human beings in his image
At the very same time.

By contrast, the second account begins with dry land
Then water, followed by a man
Then plants, animals, and finally a woman.

The critical/historical method of interpretation
Placed them side-by-side
To offer different perspectives of the same Truth.

Genesis 1:1 NIV In the beginning God created the heavens and earth.

Genesis 2:4b NIV When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens.

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Three truths stand out for me in today's passage.

1. God gave life
2. God gave purpose
3. God gave one to another

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Our first verses shows the earth barren and void of life.

Rain had not yet fallen.

Water wells up from the earth in the form of springs
Watering the surface of the ground.

God forms man from the dust of the ground
And breathes into his nostrils the breath of life.

It's beautiful imagery here.

If chapter 1, the 7 day account of creation
God appears as transcendent
Looking down over creation from above

In chapter 2, God is immanent
Crouched down over the form of man

Like a potter with his clay
Kneeling down and forming man
And breathing life into him.

God then plants a garden and places man in the garden.

A river flows from the garden
And separates into four rivers
The Pishon, Gihon, Tigris and Euphrates.

It is creation, as we know it today.

God is the giver of life.

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The second truth that stands out for me
Is that God gives humankind its purpose.

**Genesis 2:15 The LORD God took the man and put him
in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

What is our purpose?
To care for creation.

Call me a fundamentalist because this, to me,
Is a fundamental truth.

Our place in creation is small
When we compare ourselves
To the vastness of the heavens and the earth.

However, our God-given purpose is extremely large
To care for what God has created.

How well have we implemented creation care as a whole?

- As we consider the garbage dump we have made of our oceans
- The annihilation of so many species of our plants and animals
- The human impact on the earth's climate
- Paving paradise to put up a parking lot

. . . I would say, not so good.

This is principle and foundational Truth.

God gave us the responsibility
To care for the earth and all that is in it.

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The third fundamental truth found in today's passage
Is that we were designed for one another.

That is, God created us to be in relationship.

It is interesting as you read through
The first creation account

God created and then called what he had created, good.

But here in chapter 2 in verse 18
The LORD God said . . .

Genesis 2:18 It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.

God created the man
And then upon further consideration
Decided the man needed a partner.

And so, God has the man look to the animal world
To find his counterpart.

Wait! Let me finish!

Genesis 2:19 Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them.

Genesis 2:20b But for Adam, no suitable helper was found.

Kind of like saying, "Okay, so what's this animal?
It says moo, gives milk and has a long, swishy tail.

Nice!

I'll name it cow!"

"Hmmm, but cow, I don't find you so compatible."

So because of the naming process
And not finding a suitable corresponding match
Within the animal world . . .

God designs and creates a woman
From the rib of Adam.

Now the enterprise of naming the animals
Changes the way first man relates to them.

Growing up on a farm
Your parents might have told you
Not to name the animals.

Why?

Because you might be eating it the following winter.

By naming the pig, or chicken, or cow
You developed a closeness to it
That makes it harder to eat.

"Well, who are we eating today?"

The man's perspective changes when he names the animal.

God created man to be in relationship to the animals.

But the closest relationship God gave the man, the woman.

Genesis 2:23 The man said,

**This is now bone of my bones
And flesh of my flesh
She shall be called “woman”
For she was taken out of man.”**

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God gave life
 God gave purpose
 God gave relationship.

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It may not be a very scientific explanation
 Of how life was formed.

But the Biblical accounts of creation
 Ring with truth.

God created humankind from dust
 And to dust we shall all return.

God gave each of us the purpose
 To care for creation

And to this end our own survival on earth is to be.

And finally, God created us to be in relationship

We relate to God as our Creator

To the absolute wonderful creation he has placed us
And one to another.

Indeed, it is glorious thing

This thing called life.

Let us give thanks and rejoice in it.

**Psalm 19:1 (KJV) The heavens declare the glory of God;
and the firmament sheweth his handywork.**