

THE CREATION OF MAN AND WOMAN: A DETAILED EXPLANATION

INTRODUCTION

- As we come to Genesis 2, we need to deal with the supposed discrepancy between the creation accounts of Genesis 1 and 2
- Many critics of the Bible believe that there are two separate creation stories in these chapters
- And they suggest that the “inconsistencies” that exist between these chapters proves that the Bible cannot be trusted
- Even some Christians who believe in billions of years try to show that these chapters should not be understood in their plain sense
- Some of the “inconsistencies:”

1. Differences in Style

- Supposed stylistic differences are enough to convince some critics that different authors wrote Genesis 1 and 2
 - Different emphases – Genesis 1 follows an organizational, chronological tone; Genesis 2 focuses on the sixth day
 - Different names of God – Genesis 1 refers to God as the name Elohim (“God” see vv. 1-12); Genesis 2 uses the title of Yahweh-Elohim (“LORD God,” see vv. 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22)
- But differences in emphasis occur in other books by the same author (Daniel)
- And different names of God can highlight different features of God (Elohim focuses on God’s nature as creator; Yahweh is more of a personal name which coincides with the more personal nature of Genesis 2)

2. Differences in Chronology

- Critics argue that the order of creation events are different in Genesis 1 and 2
 - When vegetation was created – Genesis 1:11 says that vegetation was created on day 3 but Genesis 2:5 seems to say that plants didn’t show up until after God created man

Genesis 1:11 ~ Then God said, “Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees on the earth bearing fruit after their kind with seed in them”; and it was so.

Genesis 2:5 ~ Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

- When animals were created – Genesis 1:24 says that God created animals before man and woman but Genesis 2:19 makes it seem like the opposite was true (Gen 2:19 follows Gen 2:7)

Genesis 1:24 ~ Then God said, “Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth after their kind”; and it was so.

Genesis 2:19 ~ Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name.

- These supposed discrepancies are easily understood
 - Regarding vegetation, the words for “shrub/plant” in Gen 2:5 are not the same in Hebrew as “vegetation” in Gen 1:11. The word in Gen 1:11 refers to vegetation in general. The workable, farmable, cultivated, or garden-able plants did not grow up until man came into the picture to tend them.
 - Regarding the animals, the pluperfect tense of the verb used in Gen 2:19 (“formed” = literally “had formed”) indicates God had already created the animals when He brought them to Adam. This is the way the NIV translates it:

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; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.

- Thus, there are no contradictions between these two chapters and there are not two creation accounts in the Bible
- Both passages refer to the same creation account
- But they each focus on creation from a different perspective: Genesis 1 provides the overall chronology and sequence of events; Genesis 2 zooms in on the creation of man and woman on day 6
- Genesis 1 is the big picture; Genesis 2 is the detail
- Chapter 1 is a chronological account; chapter 2 is a logical account designed to set the stage for the crucial events of chapter 3
- Genesis 1 ends with the pinnacle of God’s creation (man and woman); Genesis 2 expands on the creation of man and woman with more detail
- Chapter 1 may be understood as creation from God’s perspective, the “big picture” or overview of the whole; whereas, chapter 2 views the more important aspects from man’s perspective
- There is no contradiction here but rather a common literary device describing an event from the general to the specific
- The ESV Study Bible is helpful here: “The panoramic view of creation in ch. 1 is immediately followed by a complementary account of the sixth day that zooms in on the creation of the human couple, who are placed in the garden of Eden. In style and content this section differs significantly from the previous one; it does not contradict anything in ch. 1, but as a literary flashback it supplies more detail about what was recorded in 1:27. The picture of a sovereign, transcendent deity is complemented by that of a God who is both immanent and personal. The two portrayals of God balance each other, together providing a truer and richer description of his nature than either does on its own. In a similar way, whereas ch. 1 emphasizes the regal character of human beings, ch. 2 highlights their priestly status.”¹
- A comparison of Genesis 1 and 2:

| Genesis 1 | Genesis 2 |
|---|--|
| God the sovereign Creator Elohim (“God”) | God the covenant-keeper YAHWEH (“LORD”) |
| God as powerful | God as personal |
| Creation of the universe | Creation of man |
| The six days of creation | The sixth day of creation |

- Jesus confirms that Genesis 1 and 2 are not contradictory when He quotes from both Gen 1:27 and Gen 2:24 in the same context in Matthew 19:4-5

¹ The ESV Study Bible, note on Gen. 2:4-25.

Matthew 19:4-5 ~ “Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female,’ 5 and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’?”

- By combining both passages in this way, Jesus in no way regarded them as separate, contradictory accounts
- Some theologically significant truths in Genesis 2:
 - The direct and unique creation of man (from dust) and woman (from man’s side) – “If the story of creation presented the foundation of the theocracy with the purpose of calling allegiance to the sovereign Creator, the story of the creation of the man and the woman explains that humans have the God-given capacity and responsibility to serve the Lord with integrity.”²
 - Adam and Eve’s test of obedience
 - A theology of work
 - God’s design for the institution of marriage

THE CREATION OF MAN

- As already noted, the creation of man and woman was the pinnacle of God’s creative work
- This is evident in the fact that:
 - Man and woman were created in God’s image (Gen 1:26-27)
 - Mankind was tasked with being God’s vice-regent, exercising dominion over the rest of God’s creation (Gen 1:26, 28)
 - They were created in the very last step of God’s work of creation, the climax, after everything that was needed to support human life had already been created
 - Although God created thousands (if not millions) of pairs of animals, birds, and sea creatures, He made only one male and one female
- Thus, Genesis 2 describes the creation of man in terms of him....from man’s perspective
- “...the narrative works outwards from man himself to man’s environment (garden, trees, river, beasts and birds) in logical as against chronological order, to reveal the world as we are meant to see it: a place expressly prepared for our delight and discipline.”³
- The emphasis is again on the fact that mankind is a unique and personal creation of God

Genesis 2:4 ~ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made earth and heaven.

- The uniqueness of God’s role in creation (in particular the creation of man and woman) is evident from the chiasm found in v. 4

2:4 This is the account of

A the heavens
 B and the earth
 C when they were created,
 D in the day that the LORD God
 C’ made
 B’ earth
 A’ and heaven.

² Allen Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, 118.

³ Derek Kidner, *Genesis*, 58.

- The purpose of the repetition of the starting point of creation in Genesis 2:4 is to establish the context for understanding the ensuing story of human sin and its devastating consequences on the human race
- Verse 4 also introduces the important concept of *toledot* in Genesis
- The Hebrew word *toledot* (“these are the generations of...this is the account of...this is the history of”) appears 11 times throughout the book of Genesis
- *Toledot* is the story or genetic line that came from – *generated* from – a person or event
- *Toledot* can have slightly different meanings depending on the context:
 - In Genesis 2:4, it is used somewhat metaphorically as “heaven and earth” don’t literally procreate...it refers to the events that came about with the advent of heaven and earth
 - In the other instances in Genesis, *toledot* identifies both the progeny of these men and the stories that ensued in their time

| Section | Topic | Reference |
|---------|--|---|
| I. | Book Preface: Creation Narrative | 1:1–2:3 |
| II. | The Genealogy of the Heavens and the Earth | 2:4–4:26 |
| III. | The Book of the Genealogy of Adam | 5:1–6:8 |
| IV. | The Genealogy of Noah And the Genealogy of Noah’s Sons | 6:9–9:29 10:1–11:9 |
| V. | The Genealogy of Shem And the Genealogy of Terah And the Genealogy of Ishmael And the Genealogy of Isaac And the Genealogy of Esau | 11:10–26 11:27–25:11 25:12–18 25:19–35:29 36:1–8; 36:9–37:1 |
| VI. | The Genealogy of Jacob | 37:2–50:26 |

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- The recurrence of the word *toledot* is critical to understanding the structure of Genesis as each instance marks the heading of a new section
- “The *toledot* heading announces the historical development from the ancestor (or beginning point) and could be translated paraphrastically ‘this is what became of _____,’ or ‘this is where it started from’ (with reference to the following subject.) Genesis 2:4, then, introduces the subject of what became of the heaven and the earth, and 2:4b-4:26 delineates what subsequently happened in and to the cosmos. What follows, of course, is the story of the fall, the murder of Abel, and the development of sin within expanding civilization. The story does not simply present another creation account; it traces the events from the point of the climax of creation to its corruption by sin.”⁵
- The Genesis 2:4-4:26 *toledot* is a description of what became of God’s perfect universe and the pinnacle of His creation, mankind
- Each *toledot* contributes greatly to the theological message of Genesis...namely the narrowing process of God’s chosen line through which He would bring His Promised Deliverer

Adam → Noah → Noah’s sons → Shem → Terah/Abraham → (Ishmael) Isaac → (Esau) Jacob

⁴ Chart taken from Terry Mortenson, *Searching for Adam: Genesis and the Truth About Man’s Origin*, 24.

⁵ Ross, *Creation and Blessing*, 72-73.

- It is critical to understand this structure because it is the very fabric around which the whole book of Genesis has been constructed
- This unifies the book as a whole...as one historical narrative...thereby contradicting those who say that Genesis 1-11 is myth whereas Genesis 12-50 is historical narrative
- It shows that the early chapters of Genesis are just as much history as the later chapters

Genesis 2:5-6 ~ Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground. 6 But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground.

- These two verses provide the setting for the creation of human life
- Some things were notably absent in the initial days of creation:
 - There were no agricultural plants
 - There was no rain yet
 - There was no man to work the ground
- These verses are important in that they establish the fact that before the earth could flourish under God’s blessing, the crowning point of His creation needed to occur, namely human life
- The mention of the absence of rain and man to cultivate the earth serve as an ominous foreshadowing
- The “mention of man’s tilling the ground anticipates the expulsion from the garden under the curse (3:23), and the mention of rain anticipates the great flood (6:17; 7:4).”⁶
- Did it rain before the flood? → We cannot know for sure

Yes

- Although there was a “mist” that watered the surface of the ground, the text does not require it to be the only water source after Adam’s creation
- The water cycle (water evaporation, cloud formation, precipitation) likely was in existence prior to the flood because of the presence of the sun and seas (Gen 1:10, 15), both necessary components for the water cycle
- The presence of the rainbow (Gen 9:13) does not imply that God had never set a rainbow in the clouds before but only that, from then on, the rainbow would serve as a reminder of God’s promise to never again send a worldwide Flood

No

- No mention is made of rain on the earth until the flood (Gen 7:4, 12)...the earth could have been sufficiently watered by the mist (Gen 2:6) and rivers (Gen 2:10)...also part of Adam’s responsibility in the garden may have been to provide irrigation to the plants (Gen 2:15)
- The vapor canopy that may have existed prior to the flood would have ruled out rain showers
- The rainbow's appearance to Noah may have been its first occurrence in the sky (Gen 9:13)
- Perhaps the “things not yet seen” in Hebrews 11:7 refers to rain (although it more likely refers to the catastrophic worldwide flood)

Hebrews 11:7 ~ By faith Noah, being warned by God about things not yet seen, in reverence prepared an ark for the salvation of his household...

- Conclusion: All we can be certain of is that God did not send rain on the earth until after He created Adam and Eve

⁶ Ibid., 122.

Genesis 2:7 ~ Then the LORD God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.

- “formed” (*yatsar*) = to form, fashion, shape, or sculpt...i.e. the work of an artist
- It is much more personal than merely making or doing something...it implies a “hand on” involvement, something more intimate and personal
- This word is used only 3 times in Genesis and only in chapter 2 (Gen 2:7, 8, 19); it adds detail to what was stated about the creation of man in Gen 1:27
- The picture is that of a master craftsman at work...or a potter taking the clay and carefully molding it into a living being
- This shows the personal attention and deliberate care that God used in forming first Adam, then Eve
- Adam’s name (*adam* = “man”) comes from the very substance he was created from (*adamah* = “ground”)
- In spite of his dreams of living like God (Gen 3:5), man is “earthy”...his name is a reminder that he is created, not the Creator
- Adam’s sin in chapter 3 would result in the ground (*adamah*) being cursed...and the promise that death would result in him returning to the ground (*adamah*)

Genesis 3:17-19 ~ Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the **ground** because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. 18 “Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; 19 By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the **ground**, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

- Although Adam’s body was created from the dust of the ground, his soul/spirit was created directly by God’s immediate act when He “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life (*nephesh*)”
- This was not just air being pumped into Adam’s lungs, but God’s vital, life-giving breath giving him both physical and spiritual life
- This demonstrates that man has both material and immaterial aspects
- This also proves that, unlike the rest of God’s creation, man possesses the capacity for serving and fellowshiping with God
- This shows that God created us to relate to Him...to have communion with God
- With this as the backdrop, it makes the events of chapter 3 all that more heinous
- It also demonstrates that, since the Fall, regeneration by the “inbreathing” of the Holy Spirit is essential in order for people to enjoy fellowship with God again

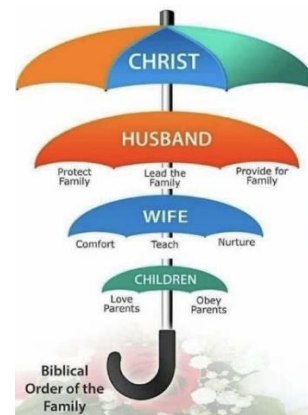
The Theological Significance that God Created Adam First

- Roles within the family

1 Corinthians 11:3, 7-15 ~ But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the man is the head of a woman, and God is the head of Christ...7 For a man ought not to have his head covered, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man. **8 For man does not originate from woman, but woman from man; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman’s sake, but woman for the man’s sake.** 10 Therefore the woman ought to have a symbol of

authority on her head, because of the angels. 11 However, in the Lord, neither is woman independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God. 13 Judge for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered? 14 Does not even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him, 15 but if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her? For her hair is given to her for a covering.

- Paul clearly states here the order of creation and applies it to marriage, proving both that men are called to loving headship and that women are called to a role of willing helper
- Paul's point is that men and women present themselves differently because they have been uniquely designed by God to fulfill complementary roles
- Because of these differences related to manhood and womanhood, there is a divinely designed order: God ----- Christ --- -- Man ----- Woman



- Roles within the church

1 Timothy 2:11-15 ~ A woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. 12 But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. **13 For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve.** 1 Timothy 2:14 And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being deceived, fell into transgression. 15 But women will be preserved through the bearing of children if they continue in faith and love and sanctity with self-restraint.

- The woman's role as helper to her husband was not a result of the Fall; it is rooted in God's original creation
- God has created man to be the spiritual leader in the home and church

THE SETTING FOR MAN

Genesis 2:8-14 ~ The LORD God planted a garden toward the east, in Eden; and there He placed the man whom He had formed. 9 Out of the ground the LORD God caused to grow every tree that is pleasing to the sight and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

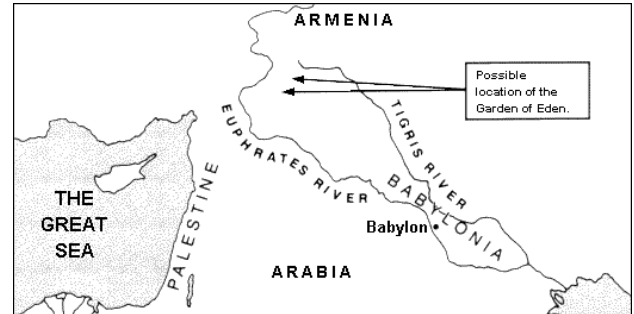
- God placed man in a perfect setting, like an oasis in the desert...this shows God's kindness in giving man this glorious location, a place for Adam and Eve to fully enjoy
- The specific description of Eden shows that it was an actual place, not symbolic of something else
- "Eden" is a translation of a Hebrew word which means "delight," suggesting a "garden of delight"
- The garden contained many beautiful and fruit-bearing trees, including the "tree of life" (a real tree with the ability to sustain eternal life) and "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (2:9), which would later provide the basis for the testing to come
- The presence of the trees (v. 9), the river (v. 10), and the precious gold and gems (v. 12) indicates that it truly was a paradise
- The trees and other vegetation in the garden were likely created with the appearance of age

- These same elements will also be found in the new heavens and earth, indicating that paradise will be restored then

Revelation 21:10-11, 21 ~ And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her brilliance was like a very costly stone, as a stone of crystal-clear jasper...21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was a single pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.

Revelation 22:1-2 ~ Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb, 2 in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

- Pinpointing the exact location of the Garden of Eden is difficult today because of the great change in topography likely caused by the Flood
- But its likely location was somewhere in eastern Turkey, above and to the west of the Persian Gulf



THE WORK OF MAN

Genesis 2:15 ~ Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.

- Clearly, work was an important part of reflecting the image of God and serving Him, even prior to the Fall
- Work was something that God had instituted in His perfect creation
- In the perfect plan of God, labor was not a curse, but a blessing to be enjoyed even before the Fall

A Brief Excursus on a Theology of Work

- Extremes to guard against in our attitudes toward work: 1) Undervaluing it/Idleness (i.e. not working hard); 2) Overvaluing it/ Idolatry (i.e. working for pay, pride, or power)
- Principles that must govern our understanding of work:

#1 God Modeled a Commitment to Work

- Genesis 1-2 are essentially a log of God's work; they paint a picture of the most perfect Being in the universe working
- God was busy during those 6 days of creation working, separating, creating, making, and blessing
- God models the inherent dignity of work...and this shows that work is not inherently bad or evil
- Jesus also models a proper attitude toward work in describing the work the Father gave him to do

John 4:34 ~ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work."

John 5:17 ~ But He answered them, "My Father is working until now, and I Myself am working."

John 17:4 ~ I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do

#2 God Made Man in His Image and Instructed Him to Work

- Being made in the image of God obligates mankind to the task of labor
- The work God gave Adam to do was in conjunction with the mandate to exercise dominion over His creation

Genesis 1:26 ~ ...and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.

Genesis 1:28 ~ God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 2:5 ~ Now no shrub of the field was yet in the earth, and no plant of the field had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not sent rain upon the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.

- Our work matters to God
- Being made in the image of God brings dignity to our work
- Our job has inherent purpose and meaning because God is the author of work
- And more important than what you do is why you do it and Who you do it for

#3 The Fall Brought About God’s Curse on Work

- It was not until the curse on the earth as a result of the Fall that work became difficult

Genesis 3:17-19 ~ Then to Adam He said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, ‘You shall not eat from it’; Cursed is the ground because of you; In toil you will eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; And you will eat the plants of the field; 19 By the sweat of your face You will eat bread, Till you return to the ground, Because from it you were taken; For you are dust, And to dust you shall return.”

- To some degree or another, all of our labors on this side of eternity will be marked by frustration
- “Where once the earth had eagerly produced its fruit – almost holding it out with eager hands and begging Adam and Eve to take it – now the earth became stingy. It withheld its riches, and the humans were forced to labor hard and painfully to get them. Life east of Eden was wholly different from life inside it.”⁷

#4 The Gospel Redeems Work From its Meaninglessness

- We can in a small way reverse the curse of work by laboring according to God’s power, in His strength and for His glory
- Being saved by the grace and mercy of Christ, we are made into God’s “workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works” (Eph 2:10)
- The Gospel revolutionizes how we view work in that work becomes another opportunity to glorify God

Ephesians 6:5-8 ~ Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

⁷ Greg Gilbert and Sebastian Traeger, *The Gospel at Work*, 15.

Colossians 3:22-24 ~ Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who *merely* please men, but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord. 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve

Titus 2:9-10 ~ *Urge* bondslaves to be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, 10 not pilfering, but showing all good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect

- As a result, there is no secular/sacred distinction...all work becomes an opportunity to worship the Lord

THE TEST OF MAN

Genesis 2:16-17 ~ The LORD God commanded the man, saying, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; 17 but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”

- This is the first command given in Scripture
- It would serve as a test of Adam and Eve’s obedience
- This test was necessary because they were perfect, but in a state of unconfirmed holiness...such holiness needed to be tested
- If God had not given Adam and Eve the choice, they would have essentially been robots, simply doing what they were programmed to do
- God created Adam and Eve to be “free” beings, able to make decisions, able to choose between good and evil
- In order for Adam and Eve to truly be free, they had to have a choice
- Adam knew “good” because he was created in God’s image and was live in a place of perfection
- But Adam did not know “evil”...and God wanted to keep him from knowing it experientially, thus the test
- “To have dominion over all things is not a blanket endorsement for man to do as he will. Human dominion must be exercised within the framework of the permissions and prohibitions of the King of whom man is only the image. The tree serves, therefore, as the testing point of man’s covenant fidelity. To partake of it is to demonstrate false dominion, a hubris in which man has become in some mysterious sense like God.”⁸
- There was nothing essentially evil about the tree or the fruit of the tree
- The consequences of failing the test would be death, in three forms:
 1. Spiritual death – the state of spiritual alienation from God
 2. Physical death – although this did not happen the moment they sinned, the process of physical death would start upon disobedience to the command
 3. Eternal death – eternal destruction for all those who die physically while being spiritually dead

⁸ Eugene Merrill, “A Theology of the Pentateuch,” in Roy Zuck, ed., *A Biblical Theology of the Old Testament*, 19.