

Genesis 2:4 – 4:26

^{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. 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. ⁶ But a mist used to rise from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground. 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. ⁸ 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. ¹⁵ Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. ¹⁶ 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.' ¹⁸ Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him.' 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. ²⁰ The man gave names to all the cattle, and to the birds of the sky, and to every beast of the field, but for Adam there was not found a helper suitable for him. ²¹ So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh at that place. ²² The LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. ²³ The man said,

'This is now bone of my bones,

And flesh of my flesh;

She shall be called Woman,

Because she was taken out of Man.'

²⁴ For this reason a man shall leave his father and his mother, and be joined to his wife; and they shall become one flesh. ²⁵ And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. ^{3:1} Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said to the woman, 'Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden?'' ² The woman said to the serpent, 'From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³ but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.''' ⁴ The serpent said to the woman, 'You surely will not die! ⁵ 'For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.' ⁶ When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. ⁸ They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, 'Where are you?' ¹⁰ He said, 'I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.' ¹¹ And He said, 'Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?' ¹² The man said, 'The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.' ¹³ Then the LORD God said to the woman, 'What is this you have done?' And the woman said, 'The serpent deceived me, and I ate.' ¹⁴ The LORD God said to the serpent,

'Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle,

And more than every beast of the field;

On your belly you will go,

And dust you will eat

All the days of your life;

¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman,

And between your seed and her seed;

He shall bruise you on the head,

And you shall bruise him on the heel.'

¹⁶ To the woman He said, 'I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth,

In pain you will bring forth children;

Yet your desire will be for your husband,
 And he will rule over you.'

¹⁷ 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.'

²⁰ Now the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all the living. ²¹ The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. ²² Then the LORD God said, 'Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever'-- ²³ therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden, to cultivate the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. ^{4:1} Now the man had relations with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain, and she said, 'I have gotten a manchild with the help of the LORD.' ² Again, she gave birth to his brother Abel. And Abel was a keeper of flocks, but Cain was a tiller of the ground. ³ So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. ⁴ Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; ⁵ but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. ⁶ Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?' ⁷ 'If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it.' ⁸ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. ⁹ Then the LORD said to Cain, 'Where is Abel your brother?' And he said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' ¹⁰ He said, 'What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to Me from the ground. ¹¹ Now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. ¹² When you cultivate the ground, it will no longer yield its strength to you; you will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.' ¹³ Cain said to the LORD, 'My punishment is too great to bear! ¹⁴ Behold, You have driven me this day from the face of the ground; and from Your face I will be hidden, and I will be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth, and whoever finds me will kill me.' ¹⁵ So the LORD said to him, 'Therefore whoever kills Cain, vengeance will be taken on him sevenfold.' And the LORD appointed a sign for Cain, so that no one finding him would slay him. ¹⁶ Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden. ¹⁷ Cain had relations with his wife and she conceived, and gave birth to Enoch; and he built a city, and called the name of the city Enoch, after the name of his son. ¹⁸ Now to Enoch was born Irad, and Irad became the father of Mehujael, and Mehujael became the father of Methushael, and Methushael became the father of Lamech. ¹⁹ Lamech took to himself two wives: the name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other, Zillah. ²⁰ Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. ²¹ His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ²² As for Zillah, she also gave birth to Tubal-cain, the forger of all implements of bronze and iron; and the sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah. ²³ Lamech said to his wives,
 'Adah and Zillah, listen to my voice,
 You wives of Lamech, give heed to my speech,
 For I have killed a man for wounding me;
 And a boy for striking me;
²⁴ If Cain is avenged sevenfold,
 Then Lamech seventy-sevenfold.'

²⁵ Adam had relations with his wife again; and she gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, 'God has appointed me another offspring in place of Abel, for Cain killed him.' ²⁶ To Seth, to him also a son was born; and he called his name Enosh. Then men began to call upon the name of the LORD.

Handout

Analysis of Genesis 2:4 – 4:26: What Happened to Relationships?

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| <p>Gen.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.</p> | | |
| | Original Ideal That Was | Current Reality That Is |
| Humanity and Land | | |
| Husband and Wife | | |
| Mother and Child | | |
| Sibling and Sibling | | |
| Father and Son | | |
| Humanity and God | | |

Small Group Leader Notes: The Impact on Relationships

Questions

1. There are at least six major relationships in Genesis 2:4 – 4:26. Trace through the ‘before and after’ to see the contrast between the ‘ideal that once was’ to the ‘real that now is.’ If possible, divide people up to study and fill out the table (groups of two, have them take 1 – 2 of the relationships). Then have them report back to the group what they find. Help them see the information below:

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| <p>Gen.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.</p> | | |
| | <p>Original Ideal that Was</p> | <p>Current Reality that Is</p> |
| <p>Humanity and Land</p> | <p>Humanity designed to spread the special conditions of the garden, eat abundantly without toil (2:5 – 17)</p> | <p>Adam brings thorns and thistles on all creation (note 2:5 – 6; 3:17 – 19).</p> <p>Cain sheds blood on the land and it becomes unfruitful for him (4:9 – 12)</p> <p>Cain equates the face of the ground and the face of God. Blessing from one involves blessing from the other.</p> <p>Innocent animal blood seems to ‘cover’ corrupt human blood in some sense.</p> |
| <p>Husband and Wife</p> | <p>Marriage is lifelong and loving; it is the basic social unit (2:18 – 24)</p> <p>Marriage is monogamous (2:18 – 24)</p> | <p>Adam and Eve: Adam blames Eve. Some kind of asymmetrical ‘desire’ and ‘rule’ begins (3:16), probably to control birth, property, honor, sex.</p> <p>Cain: Lamech has two wives (polygamy), and seems to intimidate them (4:23)</p> |
| <p>Mother and Child</p> | <p>No pain or minimal pain in childbirth and childrearing (implied, 3:16)</p> | <p>Eve is still the mother of all living (3:20) but childbirth and childrearing would be painful (3:16)</p> |
| <p>Sibling and Sibling</p> | <p>Cain is his brother’s keeper (implied, 4:9 – 10)</p> | <p>Cain does not want to be his brother’s keeper. Jealousy in Cain, leads to anger, violence and murder; then Lamech makes a mockery of justice and twists God’s protection into a self-promoting defense (4:24).</p> |
| <p>Father and Son</p> | <p>A son leaves his father and mother (2:24)</p> | <p>Cain makes his son Enoch run the city, provide him with security, protection and food; Enoch cannot leave his father (4:16 – 17).</p> |
| <p>Humanity and God</p> | <p>Adam and Eve constantly received breath of life from God.</p> <p>Accept their limits. Do not define good and evil for themselves.</p> <p>They were supposed to grow in the goodness God intended for them.</p> <p>Acquire the knowledge of evil theoretically, by growing in goodness</p> <p>At some point each person would have eaten from the Tree of Life.</p> | <p>Adam and Eve became dying beings. Some call upon the name of the Lord (4:26). God speaks a promise – a special human child (‘seed of the woman’) will conquer the serpent (3:15) – Jesus. People must breathe in hope.</p> <p>Recognize no limits. Want to displace God. Want to define good and evil for themselves.</p> <p>They defied God’s goodness and usurped His place.</p> <p>Adam and Eve needed an external voice to become jealous and steal what was not theirs. Cain did not need an external voice. He is now corrupted internally. He had internalized the voice of jealousy, theft, murder. Humans became partially evil ontologically, by internalizing boundary breaking. But they lost insight into what was truly evil, ironically.</p> <p>All people were forbidden from eating from the Tree of Life.</p> |

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| | Be the image of God: bring forth more human life | Cain killed his brother Abel, defacing the image of God |
| | Be the image of God: bring forth more order and beauty (turn wilderness into garden) | Cain is spilling human blood on the land, polluting it and making it not fruitful |

Notes: Humanity and Land: First we have abundance without farming, irrigation without digging. This is before shrubs and plants of the field had sprouted. That is, before the thorns and thistles and before the need to farm. The need to farm ‘fields’ came about after the fall. So there is no contradiction between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 in terms of the order in which things we created. Secondly, God would supernaturally care for the ground. In v.6, not rain, but a mist would rise from the earth and water the surface of the ground. Sounds like a tropical climate! And thirdly, out of Eden flowed a supernatural river. Rivers converge in the natural world; they don’t divide. So this is a supernatural river, reflecting how God provides for all His creation. It also symbolically represents how this is the source of things. And actions done at the source of all things have repercussions on all things.

2. What would the world be like if humanity had not sinned?
3. What does that tell us about the character of God?
 - a. God is very relational
 - b. God cares about our entire being: physical, spiritual, familial, social, ecological
 - c. God wanted us to bring forth life (garden, children), and still helps us do that, but now producing life is painful
 - d. The main lesson here is that even though all our relationships have been marred, it doesn’t mean that God’s character is evil. In fact, He is undoing and healing all this mess.
4. STATE: Sin disrupts the fabric of *all* relationships. It’s not just an individual thing, between you and God. In future sessions, we’ll talk about how God heals all of this mess.
5. APPLICATION (MISSION): Look at James Choung’s True Story framework of four circles: 1) created for good, 2) damaged by evil, 3) restored for better, 4) sent together to heal.
 - a. Does it make sense why we start with the top two circles?
 - b. What other explanations for evil and brokenness in the world are offered by other worldviews, beliefs, and stories?
 - i. Atheism: Self-centeredness and random disasters have been with us for all time.
 - ii. Hinduism, Buddhism: Evil is eternal; good and evil are actually aspects of the same reality, so there is really no difference. ‘Enlightenment’ means that we see that there is no difference and become content with reality as it is, and, though there is some engagement aspects to these religions, basically withdraw from trying to change things.
6. APPLICATION (PERSONAL): Which aspect of human brokenness and sin do you need prayer for the most right now?