

A Second Look

Genesis 2:4-7

The word microscope comes from the Greek word *mikroskopein* which is compound word: *mikros* meaning small and *skopein* meaning to look or see. It is an instrument used to look at things that are too small to see with the naked eye. There are different kinds of microscopes each with their own particular or specific purposes. Essentially they magnify an object so that it can be studied close up.

This is a nativity scene so tiny it is only visible by means of a microscope.

This is the magnification of blood cells. They look like gummy life savers and essentially they are life savers.

In comparison to the creation of the universe that we looked at in Genesis chapter 1, chapter 2 is a microscopic view of one part of creation.

We noted in 1:1-2 that God is the author and originator of creation. He was there in the beginning. There was no big bang. There was no evolutionary process by which everything came into existence. Nothing happened by chance. It is the purposeful design of a Master Designer. God was there in the beginning because He was there before the beginning. The one who knows all things and sees all things is outside of creation having no beginning and no ending. In the beginning God created. The ensuing verses of chapter 1 unveil the canvas of creation on which everything in the universe was placed.

There were the heavens comprised of an unknown number of galaxies extending into an unknown boundary of space. Scientists can only speculate the distance from one edge of the universe to the other edge, if such a boundary even exists. Within each galaxy are billions of stars all placed there by the hand of God.

Psalm 8:3 “When I look at the night sky and see the work of your fingers—the moon and the stars you set in place.”

Psalm 147:4 “He [God] determines the number of stars and calls them each by name.”

The panoramic scene of the heavens as viewed from a telescope now switches to a microscope in chapter 2. Within the expanse of the universe there is a tiny planet that becomes the focal point of all this vast creation. Chapter 1 zooms in from the distance of space. We considered the building blocks of earth and its foundation in verse 2. In verse 3 there is a light that dispels the darkness of space and like a spotlight seems to be pointed at this tiny planet. Beginning in verse 4 God takes His canvas of earth and begins to add His creative touch to each day. Each day God adds something by creating from nothing what would fill the planet. In six days God created everything. On day six, the final day of His creation work we find the apex of His creation, the final brushstroke of His creative genius. On the final day, not as an afterthought, but the purpose of His creation was the making of man. When we look at all of His creation, only of man is it said that he was made in the image of God. That isn't a likeness in form because God is a Spirit, but one of character and morality and creativity.

We considered last week that after those six days God rested on the seventh day. His work was complete. There was nothing else He needed to do. It was finished. In it He gave us a model or pattern a week and for work.

Beginning in verse 4 there is a shift in focus. We turn the dial on the side of the microscope so that we can get an even closer look at the creation of man. Let me make it abundantly clear this is not a separate or second creation as some critics suggest. It is not something that occurred after the original creation was completed in chapter 1. This is a look specifically at the creation of man. Beginning in

verse 4 and running all the way to the end of Revelation, the focus is on man and God's relationship with man. Chapter 1 sets the stage. We see that shift most evident in what we read in verse 4. Today I want to consider three things about God from our passage.

He is the Creator God
 He is the covenant God
 He is the caring God

I. HE IS THE CREATOR GOD – v. 4a

We noted in chapter 1 that on each day there was the *creative word* of God which resulted in a *creative work* by God.
 “God said...and it was so”

When God spoke what He commanded to be created was made just as He wanted. We noted last week that God is mentioned 10 times in verses 2-3. Creation is all about God because He is the grand architect. He did it and He did it alone. God is no casual bystander in the process of creation. He didn't start it and then let evolution do its thing as the theistic evolutionist believes. That view attempts to somehow reconcile theology with evolution and millions of years. God spoke and out of nothing – *ex nihilo* – He created. It is an attack on the authority, inerrancy and infallibility of God's Word. God's Word said He did it and it says He did it in six days.

John 1:3 “Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made.”

Hebrews 11:3 “By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”

As I said, this not as critics argue, a second account of creation different in some way from chapter 1. There is only one account of creation and that's seen in chapter 1. Chapter 2 does not deal with anything in the creation week other than the

creation of man. From here on out this chapter and the rest of the Bible is the story or history of man.

In Chapter 1 we are introduced to the creation of man. Chapter 2 is more of the detail about his creation. Man is now at center stage of all God's creation. This begins the story of redemption. The rest of creation are the props or the backdrop to the story. Chapter 2 deals with man's creation, his location – the Garden of Eden, and then his probation – what he is to do and not do as directed by God.

Our text in verse 4 reads: “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.”

The KJV reads “These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created.”

In our opening message on Genesis 1:1 we looked at the word toledoth which means generations. Our verse is not implying that this current earth is just one of many in a long succession of creations in which God started over multiple times. This word never signifies creation or the act of generations, but always the history of what has been created or begotten. I mentioned that Genesis has 10 such genealogies of which the genealogy of the heavens and the earth is the first. So verse 4 is highlighting the history of the heavens and the earth. It's telling us to look back at the six days of creation and now in the ensuing verses Scripture emphasizes one part of that brief history. Once again it's a reminder that God is the Creator.

Isaiah 32:17 “Ah, Sovereign Lord, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for You.”

Colossians 1:16 “For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible.”

Revelation 4:11 “You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for You created all things, and by Your will they were

created and have their being.”

Things didn't just appear by chance after a lightning bolt struck the primordial soup of earth when conditions were just right for life to begin. I'm going to repeat this in a moment, but let me say it here. Non-life cannot create life. Life cannot come from something that has no life in it.

Neil deGrasse Tyson stated that the more he learns about the universe the less convinced he is “that there's a benevolent force that has anything to do with it, at all.”

You don't need a PHD in astrophysics or astronomy or biology or archeology or paleontology or philosophy to know that the Bible is true. God is the Creator. People won't accept that because then they have to acknowledge His existence and the issue of sin and judgment. They don't want to believe in absolute truth as given to us in the Bible. They want truth to be relative and fluid. To question the authority of Scripture in the opening chapters opens the door to question the rest of the Bible.

You have heard the saying that “*God said it, I believe it, and that settles it for me.*” A more accurate rendering would be “*God said it and that settles it.*” What God says is true on any matter whether I believe it or not. That God said He made creation should settle it – period.

Just because the same materials that make up a monkey like arms and legs and ears and bone and tissue and muscle and DNA are also found in man doesn't mean we're related. It only means that God used the same building blocks for both. Take a computer and a car for example. Both have glass, metal, plastic and wires. You won't ever make the mistake that a computer evolved from a car. So why do they believe that about nature?

God said it. That settles it. He is the Creator.

The second point we also see in verse 4. In the

latter part of the verse we see the covenant God.

II. HE IS THE COVENANT GOD – v. 4b

“When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.”

There is an important differentiation here about God. In chapter 1 we were introduced to Elohim. It is the plural form of God used some 2700 times in Scripture and refers to the Godhead indicating that each person of the Godhead was involved in creation. It does not mean that there are many Gods, but that there is one God with distinct personalities. Perhaps the best illustration of this is in the baptism of Jesus where we see the Father, the Son, and the Spirit separately. Scripture attests that each is God. Charles Ryrie writes that in the Old Testament there is an emphasis on divine unity in the Trinity but even when we look at Deuteronomy 6:4 a divine plurality is seen in the meaning of the word Elohim. He then adds that in the New Testament the emphasis is on the individual persons of the Trinity and their separate responsibilities as it relates to redemption. But even Matthew 28:19 refers to a divine oneness of essence – Three persons – one essence.

We noted that the name Elohim implies strength or power of effect referring to the power of God to create. In chapter 1 we are introduced to the Creator God who has unlimited power to make everything from nothing. In chapter 2 we are introduced to another name of God. Here He is given the name Jehovah Elohim or the “Lord God”. This name refers to Him as the covenant God.

He is the same God as in chapter 1 but combined with Jehovah it refers to Him as having a covenant relationship with His creation, and in particular with man. Jehovah is His redemptive name.

As Elohim He planned and created the world.

As Jehovah Elohim He planned redemption even before the fall of man. Although He is the

Sovereign ruler over all of creation, He is also a relational God. We will see this relationship when we begin to look at God and man walking together.

A covenant is a transaction between two parties. It welds a relationship between the two based on certain requirements. In this case it is between God and His creation and specifically with man. We'll see that later in this chapter. A covenant establishes a relationship. A relationship is always two sided requiring two people to make it. Marriage is such a covenant made between husband and wife.

The Lord God is a relational God, one who has made Himself known to us and one who wants us to fully know Him and be in a covenant relationship with Him. When we are having difficulty of some kind Jehovah God wants us to come to Him because He is relational.

When we are feeling discouraged He is there to encourage us.

When we are feeling alone He is there to demonstrate His love for us.

When we are feeling overwhelmed He is there to give us strength.

As a relational God He is an ever present help in time of our trouble.

From this point on throughout the rest of Scripture we will see God's plan to establish a personal relationship with us made possible only through His Son. In chapter 3 we'll see how man broke that relationship through the sin of disobedience. The rest of the Bible is how God made it possible for that relationship to be mended or reconciled. The covenant He makes is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Our faith binds that covenant together.

If you are feeling a bit distant from the relational God, ask yourself who moved. Is there something in your life that is infringing on the relationship God desires us to have with Him? His attitude toward you never changes. He has loved you with an everlasting love, which means He has done all

He can to be relational with you. What are you doing to be relational with Him? You can't know someone unless you spend time with them. So how much time are you spending with God in a day or in a week?

Are you spending regular time in prayer?

Are you in His Word daily?

Or better yet, is His Word in you? I hope you understand there is a difference between the two. Know God relationally by spending time with Him. He will reveal new things all the time to you the more you are in His Word.

God is a relational God. He is a covenant God. Read the Bible as if it's your story, because it's all about what He did in order to have a relationship with you through the new covenant made through His Son.

Now I want to mention one more thing from this verse before we move on. Whether it is important or not, notice that in this part of the verse the earth comes before the heavens, perhaps implying that in the entire universe earth is where God's redemptive power will take center stage in seeking out a relationship with man. Keep in mind that it is God who sought us. So let me say it once more, God wants a growing relationship with each one of us. He is Jehovah Elohim – the Lord God – the Covenant God.

In verses 5-7 we see the caring God.

III. HE IS THE CARING GOD – vs. 5-7

God provided everything man would need to meet His daily needs because He is a caring God.

Your Bible may have a hyphen at the end of verse 4 and the end of verse 6 as if this is an addendum to the text or something parenthetical. We read that there was no shrub or plant of the field on the earth and there was no rain or anyone to work the ground.

A number of scholars look at this text and conclude that it's unclear in its meaning. And honestly it does provide some challenges. It almost appears that we are being taken back to day two of creation since the plants were created on day three. But if that's the case then there is some confusion about what the subject matter is in chapter 2. So why does it seem like we are being taken back before the creation of vegetation if God is discussing the creation of man in chapter 2? And then if God created all the plants and trees on day three, how are we to understand that there was no shrub or plant of the field, especially when chapter 2 says there wasn't any rain yet or anyone to work the ground?

Let's first understand that there was no rain until the time of Noah's flood. We'll get to that in chapter 6. So how is it if we are talking about man can we say there wasn't any shrubs because there was no rain or any man to work it, especially when we read that all the plants were created on day 3 and man was created on day 6?

Did that just make your head spin?

A Hebrew scholar by the name of Kiseido offers some insight. The Hebrew way of thinking is different than the Greek way of thinking. To the Hebrew mind the first chapter deals with history by stating a general proposition. Chapter 2 then clarifies or details one part of that creation referring to the specifics of man's creation. A book may have a preface that gives the overview of the subject matter. Each chapter then provides the details.

Verse 5 picks up the creation account from day six. So when were these shrubs and plants created? Whatever shrubs and plants are being referred to here in verse 5 had not yet come on the scene. They are not part of creation on day three. They are something else. Two reasons are given why these shrubs and plants hadn't appeared yet. There was no rain and there was no one to work the ground. This vegetation was dependent on those two factors. Rain did not come until the flood.

John MacArthur writes that "we can readily conclude then that these plants appeared after the fall and so it is right to say here they weren't on the earth. Post-fall plants weren't on the earth at this time and so the revelation of God is simply telling us that as we begin the generation of man, we are in a pre-fall environment", or the time before sin.

We can better understand this passage in the context of Genesis 3:18 when God told Adam that the ground would be cursed with thorns and thistles. Before sin there were no weeds to pull and there was no labor in tending the garden. There were no shrubs or plants that produced weeds or required man to work the soil to produce his food. I believe that before sin the seed bearing plants were self-perpetuating. The soil didn't need to be worked up and seeds planted to produce what was needed for food. After the fall that changed and man had to work hard (3:19) to make it produce what would sustain him. Everything man needed was in the garden ready for him, but all that changed after sin. He would have to work the land in order to produce food to eat.

So what about the lack of rain? How did the vegetation get watered? Let's look at the text. Verse 6 "but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground."

Your translation may say "mist". So which is it? Some scholars like Henry Morris believe that the global conditions provided a greenhouse effect that likely created a mist that rose up and watered all the foliage giving the earth a type of tropical environment. The waters above created a vapor barrier that kept temperatures uniform throughout the earth. Cooler temperatures in the evening when the sun set combined with the warmer temperatures when the sun rose created a mist or dew that settled on the plants and provided the water needed for their nourishment.

Other scholars consider the word is better translated

“streams” and refers to a subterranean water source where water came up through the earth and watered the plants. Some marginal notes have the word “flow” indicating a moving source of water like a river or stream that was below the earth’s surface. One plausible consideration for this view is that when the flood waters came on the earth part of that is described as coming from below the surface of the earth. In Genesis 8:2 it is referred to as the “springs of the deep”. These same scholars will also look at 2:10 which speaks of a river flowing through Eden that separated into four rivers supporting the idea that streams flowed throughout all the land and watered the earth.

So whether it was a mist from global conditions or a subterranean stream is really unclear. What is clear is that there was no rain yet on the earth. Whatever the case, God took care of the vegetation in this pre-fall state before there was rain.

There is one more issue to address from our passage and it has to do with man. Notice our passage. “This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. When the Lord God made the earth...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.”

It’s an anthropomorphic scene here giving God who is a Spirit human features like nostrils and acts of breathing. The first act of God we see here is that He formed man from dust. The word “formed” means to mold or shape. It is the image of a potter giving shape to something that he is making. This passage is showing us God’s direct involvement in man’s formation. It didn’t just happen by chance over millions of years and mutations. It is His direct activity. Never forget that we are each fearfully and wonderfully made by the creative hand of God. He is the Master Potter and we are the clay in His hands. We are His workmanship.

One author writes that God “had the image of man

within His mind and possess the power and the intelligence to bring that image to life. God has both the omniscience and the omnipotence to do exactly what He wanted.”

He formed us out of the same building blocks as the rest of the world. He began with dust. Now that raw material is the same material you find in a rock. That stands to reason as we think some people are hard headed. Man was made of the dust comprising the elements of water, salt, calcium, carbon, chlorine, phosphorous, fat, iron, sulfur, and glycerin. The body is too complex to just happen.

A piece of skin the size of a postage stamp requires 3 million cells, 3 feet of blood vessels, 12 feet of nerves, 100 sweat glands, 15 oil glands and 25 nerve endings.

With the complexity of the human body it would be easier to believe that an explosion in a print shop could produce a Webster’s unabridged dictionary than to believe we just happened by chance.

God took all these components and formed man and then gave him life.

In their masterful work, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, Keil and Delitzsch state that it was an act of Divine omnipotence that man arose from the dust and in the same moment shaped that dust into the human form and provided for it divine breath creating a living being.

Man is more than just the physical. Created in the image of God he has a spiritual component to him not shared by any of God’s other creation that only God could give Him. There is a sense in which, correctly speaking, God is the source of all life. But in a special act we were created in the image of God. It was more than just a breath from God that began all the systems of the body to start functioning so that he pumped blood and breathed. He endowed man with an image of Himself that

gave him a self-consciousness that was different from the consciousness of other living creatures. God breathed into man life but He also breathed into him the immaterial and spiritual.

Let me come back to what I said earlier. Something that is not alive cannot make something else that is also not alive. I can't take a dead battery and start my car.

God who is self-existent was the life giver who energized that lifeless form and give it life. In a vision Ezekiel was taken to a valley filled with bones. God asked if those bones could come alive again. Ezekiel's response was that only God could know that. God told Ezekiel to prophesy over those dead bones to come alive. There was a wind and a rattling of the bones. Bones came together and took form, then muscle and tendons and skin formed. The breath of God was given to those forms by God so that they came alive.

Until God breathes into man, he is just a lifeless corpse. Only God can give life. Only God can give spiritual life to someone who is spiritually dead. Ephesians 2:1-5

Romans 8:11 "And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit, who lives in you."

Colossians 2:13 "When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; He took it away, nailing it to the cross."

Dear friends, when we were without Christ we were all spiritually dead in trespasses and sins and only through the quickening power of God's Spirit were we able to be made alive. There wasn't a thing we

could do. We were all in the spiritual morgue lying on a cold slab. The spiritual doctor had pronounced us dead. Walvoord and Zuck write "The only way a spiritually dead person can communicate with God is to be made alive, and that must be done by the One who is Himself alive. He is the living God, 'who gives life to the dead.'" (Romans 4:17)

By the quickening power of God's Spirit we are given the faith to believe and in that moment God made us spiritually alive. He breathed into us the breath of spiritual life.

God is a creator God who created you to have a personal relationship with Him. He is the Lord God who cares for you.

Have you been made spiritually alive by the breath of God?

The rest of the Bible is the unfolding story of God's redemptive plan so that you might know what it is to be alive as God's spiritual creation and how to live in relationship with Him. He did all this because He cares for you.