



# NAKED WITH FRUIT AND NO SHAME

**Psalm 139:13-14 “For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.”**

Genesis Chapter 2 speaks of man differently than chapter one. In chapter 2, we see man was made “from the dust of the ground” rather than “in the image of God.” No two descriptions could be more distinct. The point the author is intent on making is that man, though a special creature made in God’s image, was nevertheless a creature like the other creatures that God had made. Man did not begin as a “heavenly creature”; he was made of the “dust of the ground.”

The panoramic view of creation of man in chapter 1 is immediately followed by a look at the complementary nature of a husband and wife. Chapter 2 does not contradict anything in chapter 1, but as a literary flashback, it supplies more detail about what was recorded in chapter 1.

The picture of God is complimentary as it shows a God who is a transcendent deity and yet is also 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, chapter 1 emphasizes the regal character of human beings; chapter 2 highlights their priestly status.

In light of the special treatment given to man’s creation in chapter 1, the emphasis in chapter 2 on man’s “creatureliness” has great importance. The notion that man’s origin might somehow be connected with that of the divine is deliberately excluded by this narrative. Man’s origin was the dust of the ground. We can also see in this picture of man’s origin an anticipation of his destiny in the Fall, when he would again return to the “dust.” In Creation, man arose out of the dust, but in the Fall, he returned to the dust. The author graphically pictures the contrast between the work of God and the work of man.

Man is put in the garden to worship God and to obey Him. Man’s life in the garden was to be characterized by worship and obedience; he was a priest, not merely a worker and keeper of the garden.

And the Lord God commanded the man. The fact that the command was given to Adam implies that God gave “the man” a leadership role, including the responsibility to guard and care for (“keep”) all of creation; a role that is also related to the leadership responsibility of Adam for Eve as his wife.

It is also important to observe that God creates only one Eve for Adam, not several Eves (or another Adam). This points to heterosexual monogamy as the divine pattern for marriage that God established at creation. Moreover, the kinship between husband and wife creates obligations that override even duty to one’s parents (though in ancient Israel, sons did not move away when they married, but lived near their parents and inherited their father’s land). They “left” their parents in the sense of putting their wife’s welfare before that of their parents. The term “hold fast” is used elsewhere for practicing covenant faithfulness. This is why other Bible texts call marriage a “covenant”.

We must understand two words:

- Shalom: Everything in the right place, in the right space, in right relationship. Everything is alright with you and God; it is God’s favor and blessing. This is how the Earth was created and man was to live.
- Tov: This is the word translated as “good.” That which is beautiful; that which is attractive; that which is majestic; that which is useful; that which is profitable; and that which is morally right are all tov.

....I will make him a helper fit for him.” The Hebrew word “ezer” for Adam, means “a fitting helper,” one that corresponds to Adam’s humanity. None of the animals created were like Adam, nothing complemented his nature, and nothing connected and completed him like the woman.

Genesis Rabba 17:2 actually states “whoever has no wife exists without goodness, without helpmate, without joy, without blessing, without atonement... without wellbeing, without full life;...indeed, such a one reduces the representation of the divine image [on Earth].”

In Genesis 1 and 2, the author has singled out the creation of man in a unique way. This singling out has ramifications for his helper, his work, and his life. Genesis intended to portray man as a special creature, marked off from the rest of God’s works. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that behind the portrayal of the creation of man in this narrative lies the purpose of the author of Genesis and the Pentateuch. The reader is given certain facts that are to serve as the starting point for the larger purposes of the author within the Pentateuch. Man is a creature; however, man is a special creature. He is made in the image and likeness of God.