

“...eastward in Eden...”

Atheists use our Bible website as ‘proof’ texts for the alleged ‘stupidity’ of Christianity. They claim that because we believe implicitly in God’s word, most of which they see as myth or legend, that we do so out of fear of retribution. They also question our intellectual capacity for believing in the first place. For this we thank them, for they pay us, and other ministries like this, a compliment. It is a compliment because they obviously see our work as typical of genuine Christianity. Therefore, such a criticism is worth its weight in gold!

I would put it this way... an atheist has never encountered God, therefore he cannot accept that God exists. Christians *have* encountered God, and that is why they are convinced. Atheists do not believe, but Christians do. It has nothing to do with education, or intellect, or any human attribute... and no matter how much an atheist learns, or how deeply he delves into the structure of Christianity or its beliefs, he can never, ever, come to a proper conclusion. This is because, unlike human learning, Christian learning has a vital element that is always missing from the thinking of unbelievers – the Holy Spirit.

The Christian’s spirit communes with the Holy Spirit, and the link is made directly with God. It means that the Christian, with all his faults, transcends mere earthly knowledge and understanding, and can know things unavailable to the unsaved. Atheists only have each other, as they gather in tiny huddles to stick pins in dolls of Christians! Their thinking cannot transcend the earth and so they are very limited in scope. Like dogs that chase their own tails, atheists chase their own theories, unable to know or understand what is truly behind Christian logic or thinking. To reverse the saying – they commit intellectual suicide with inadequate resources.

It is true that many Christians have a rather odd view of their own faith, and that is partly why this ministry exists. But, if the Christian is genuine, he or she can overcome this problem with sound teaching... so long as they have a willing heart.

To say that we obey scripture because we are afraid of retribution is simply a silly thing for atheists to suggest. It might be true of certain folk, such as true Romanists or true charismatics, but it is not true of genuine, faithful Christians. True beliefs arise from true faith in God’s word. We obey because that is how God gives us blessings – but we obey out of love for our Messiah and the salvation He gave us. We cannot fear retribution if we love God.

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It is also true that a genuine Christian will be afraid to disobey *consistently* because he or she knows what God can do – and continues to do – in history; He can, and does, bring lives to an end, or allows them to experience life-long misery, if they continue in deliberate sin. But, in which way is this different from the fear of prison or death for any citizen who does not wish to be caught in a crime? It is proper to fear what God can do, and we are advised strongly to have this fear. This is because God does act in our lives. Only a fool would ignore this fear!

The atheist, of course, claims not to have this fear, because he does not believe in God. So he cannot understand it. At least he claims not to. It is my view that every atheist knows in his heart that God is alive and well, and that his own rejection of God is unreasonable. We are told this in scripture, and I observe it in the lives of unbelievers. Why else does an atheist argue so hotly about the non-existence of God, unless he knows, deep down, that God *does* exist? It is a psychological give-away!

So, take atheistic pronouncements with a great big pinch of salt. They are unbelievers without an ability to understand God or what He says. They may have intense and wonderful intellects, but they are bound by their own ignorance and are unable to perceive Christian thought and life. They can only stand outside the palace walls and guess!

It is very easy to shout abuse at those inside the walls, but such an action is put on them by their own folly, not by the truth. The truth is within the walls, not outside them. As these sadly deficient people live outside the walls of God's kingdom, they are unable to see what goes on *behind* the walls. So, they make it all up and base their views on observation marred by lack of true knowledge. As with physical scientists, their *observations* are usually correct – but their *interpretation* is often wrong. Atheists can observe Christians until doomsday, but it will not do them any good, for their interpretations are fully on the earth, whilst the experiences of the true Christian are mainly in heaven.

Do not, then, fall to the lie, the deception put out by atheists! They make up what they do not know. It might sound convincing to other unbelievers, but it is just a bucketful of inedible mush to those 'in the know'. How can paupers know what it is like to live in the presence of the King as His sons and daughters? They cannot! Only Christians live in God's presence, as His children. So, only they know what it is like.

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Atheists, then, laugh and scorn Christian belief in a literal six-day creation. Frankly, I do not care less... atheists have nothing to offer me, so they can laugh until their sides hurt. However, I know that their laughs are a smokescreen for their inward anxiety, for they *know* God really exists... the more they argue against it, the more they prove their own anxiety! They shout loudly not because they know God is a myth, but because they know He is real... they shout loudly to hide their fear and hatred, for they do not want God telling them what to do. As a result true atheists will enter hell, and they know it. That is why they shout so loudly.

This chapter, too, will elicit mirth from these fellows. So be it. I will not alter my faith to suit their inglorious ignorance and lack of understanding. I have been told that I am wrong to ignore their need for multiple facts and figures, and that I ought to argue my case intellectually. For goodness sake, why should I? It is *they* who have a problem, not me! It is they who scorn God, not me! They could engage me for many years in fruitless argumentation, without the slightest intention of learning. So, I do not bother! It is up to God to change their hearts, not me.

Having the most intricate of intellectual answers from *me* will not do this. So I do not try. People who hate God, do so regardless of any facts and obvious truths. This is because they are unsaved and outside God's walls. I have been told that this is a 'circular argument'. Again, I do not particularly care. I know the truth and I will stick to it. Scoffing means nothing to me, because I know God is true. That, my friends, is sufficient.

Here, you will come across the most absurd scenario ever – the making of a woman from a rib. Atheists will laugh yet again. But, so what? They live in the darkness and have no idea what the light is like. They stumble about, laugh (out of misery, not joy), and stumble again. Let them enjoy themselves whilst you bask in God's light, knowing that whatever He says is true. You will not be able to explain fully how you know this, but this does not matter, for the truth remains the truth, regardless of who laughs at it. (See A/513).

So, atheist, when you read this on the website, gather together in your dark corners and laugh out loud. You are lost and will enter hell if you continue with your scorn. I can only urge you to clear your muddled head and call out to God for help. And, He will help. That is, if you are elect in the first place... which is yet another matter for you to laugh at! Again, so be it.

For the true Christian this chapter, like the previous one, is *actual history*, occurring over a very

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short space of time, in days or hours, not years. Do not be afraid to accept this, for if God is real, which He is, then He can do whatever He wishes, including allowing atheists to live. Their time of reckoning will come soon enough. For us, the text is to be taken as it is written, with certainty. Again, this entire chapter is

fully

literal

. It is, then, straightforward history, not a myth or figurative poetry, meaning something else.

Verses 1-3

1.

“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.

2.

And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made.

3.

And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.”

The writer ended his account of creation and now sums up. Everything was ‘finished’. The word ‘host’ is used to encompass everything that was made, ***tsaba***. It means ‘that which goes forth’, or ‘the whole of creation’. In the previous chapter we were told that God created everything in six literal days. We then have a ‘completion note’, followed by another emphatic statement of time – God ended His work on the sixth day and rested on the next day, the seventh – which is again a literal statement concerning a literal 24 hour day.

The notion resorted to by some (mythical ‘Theistic Evolution’) cannot be found in these texts – that God created the ‘raw’ elements and then let everything just evolve. Apart from the literal creation statements in the previous chapter we now have a very definite closure of creation – *everything*

was ‘finished’,

kalah

. This means what it says. God ceased His work, because everything was complete, perfect,

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ended.

The implications of this for unbelievers, atheists, etc., are direct and final. The whole of creation was finished in six literal days and then God 'rested' on the seventh literal day. Everything was made to reproduce after its own kind – fully formed. And every species still with us today, that lived then, was as it always has been. They have not changed from one species to another. Some may have experienced minor mutations within the bounds of their own genetic structure, as determined by God. But, they have not crossed species and have not 'evolved' in the full sense of the term.

I would remind readers – including the atheists who use our studies as 'proof' of how foolish Christians are – that no scientist can produce a theory of the continuous mechanisms and means that would allow one species to change into another. They cannot even tell us how, say, a fish 'grows legs'. This is because it is impossible and the actuality does not exist. Despite all their fine theories postulating evolution, they cannot give even one simple mechanism by which a species can change!

So, next time you watch a programme with great colour where the narrator tells you "and the fish crawled out onto land and started to grow into a bird" (et al)... just shout at the TV set and ask "Oh yes? *How?* By *what* mechanism? The fish would have *died* within minutes, so how could it bring about such a drastic and scientifically impossible change, and pass on the information to its fellow fish?" You can shout it out, because there *is* no scientific answer!

No, God made everything in completed form. All of creation was made within those six literal days. That is what the text tells us. That is why Christians who meddle with the non-starter of Theistic Evolution are foolish and show a lack of faith.

God said He made everything in six literal days and then rested on the seventh day. No billions of years of evolution. He said He made every species complete, with a genetic code that enabled them to reproduce after their own kind. No evolution, whether in big steps or in minute ones. So, why do you not believe it?

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The word for 'seventh' (as in seventh day) is literal – it is the ordinal number 7, **sh@biy`**. This is rooted in the ordinal

shib

iyim

, meaning 70... which is a multiple of... the cardinal number 7,

sheba`.

(Very often this number is used when describing something that is completed by God, partly because of the root,

shaba

, which refers to God swearing an oath). This single number, then, with its literal meaning, confirms what we already know, that the previous numbers were

also

literal. When coupled with the word

yowm

, it modulates and qualifies it and makes it mean a literal seventh day. Thus, there is no room for even the

slightest

hint of evolution or days that mean millions of years!

Chapter two repeats the fact: God completed His work and 'rested'. The Hebrew word for the (seventh day) Sabbath (assumed to be Saturday) is **Shabbat**. Here we have another similar word, **shabath**, to refer to God's 'rest'. It means to do no work, to rest from labour, to stop from doing something. It also means to observe the Sabbath (by resting. Worship came later).

God blessed the seventh day, **barak**. That is, He praised it to Himself, making it special. He sanctified it, too, **qadash** – consecrated it, prepared it for a reason, dedicated it, and made it holy. The seventh day, then, became a

Shabbat

for all of mankind. The idea of consecration in this word includes the idea of taboo, so no man should try to rid the world of the seventh day rest, which ought to be treated as sacred and with honour.

Shabath

also means to show oneself as majestic and sacred, an obvious allusion to God.

Do you treat the Sabbath as holy, as set apart, as sacred, and as an indication of God's majesty? In the late 1940's and in the 1950's, when I was a boy, it was not unusual to see crowds of people walking the streets to get to their churches on Sundays. Children dressed in

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their best followed on. My own family went to church three times a day and also in the week. This was normal for most families, even if they had no particular beliefs. Everyone, even within living memory, hallowed Sunday (the Christian *Shabbat*). Then, in the 1960's things started to change for the worse. That was when young people were exploited, bringing in all manner of ideas and goods that took their money and moulded their minds. From that time onward the seventh day was eroded, until now it is viewed as an inconvenience.

In the New Testament Christ told us that the Sabbath was made for man, and so we ought not become 'hung up' about the huge variety of human observances that then ruled life. This does not mean a lessening of attitude. Certain people must work on Sundays, and this is acceptable to Christ – police, nurses, doctors, etc. But all the others ought to insist on having the seventh day off. It also means that we show our children that Sunday is special, not by applying strict and remorseless rules, but by showing in our own attitudes and lives, a joyful reverence for the day... *not* by going to theme parks, theatres, cinemas, parties, etc., and allowing unsaved people dictate what we do on a Sabbath day, missing it, and so making it irrelevant in their minds. Christians must understand, because if they do not, they will sin against Almighty God, and as parents or friends we will cause them to do so by our own indifference.

Yes, we can enjoy the day, by walking, entering a park, etc., and simply enjoying the life God has given us – but do not treat the day merely as a day of recreation. This is to miss the point. The creation of a seventh day was essential to our well-being. It is a fact that when people ignore this and roll one day into another, there is an internal breakdown of psychological meaning, for there is no longer any kind of milestone by which to measure the days. There is also a spiritual breakdown, for God's plan *and command* for our days has been ignored.

As for what day should be the seventh, well, I am not going to say anything with authority at this stage, for God does not Himself specify *which* day should be the seventh. He only commands that we keep the 'seventh day' sacred, as a day of rest. Strictly speaking, to keep the day 'sacred' simply means to keep it separate – it does not imply at this stage that we ought to even attend a church! This is a later application of the meaning.

We cannot, then, say with authority that the Jewish Saturday is the 'original' seventh day. Our only touch-point is the early church's use of Sunday as the seventh day. This appears to be a new tradition rather than a command of God, but a tradition that is good. So, if we have Sunday as a day of rest we do so in honour of God, who Himself 'rested' on that day (seventh).

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Note that this 'resting' is purely for the benefit of illustration. God does not need 'rest'. He was not tired, but wanted to show mankind what to do on the seventh day. We therefore have the highest reason of all to rest on the seventh day: God's own example followed by His command.

Verses 4-6

1.

"These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

2.

And every plant of the field before it was in the earth, and every herb of the field before it grew: for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was not a man to till the ground.

3.

But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."

So, these (the above details) are the 'generations' of creation, the 'course of history' of creation, **towl@dah**. It refers to the genealogy of mankind and his descendants, the **yalad** or bringing forth. Here, yo

wm

is

used to mean a period of time... six literal days! This is using the meanings already inherent in the word, which can also be plural, e.g. 'days'. It is used in the ordinary sense, much as we would use it today, e.g. "the days of creation" (1 day x 6).

The next verse is not used chronologically, but in order to make another point. That is, God created everything that grew in the earth, but did not yet put into action the mechanism that produces rain. This astounding detail should be taken as literal, because that is what it is. Note that God created everything that grew *before* He even put them into the earth! Again, this tells me that God was showing us that *He is the creator
and sustainer*

of life,

t

no

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the mechanisms which He instituted. This is a vital fact to embrace as Christians, for it puts everything into a proper perspective.

Rain, then, did not exist at this time. The word 'rain', **matar**, is also literal, meaning – rain, or hail. Rain had not yet been commanded. The adjoining phrase “and (there was) not a man to till the ground.” Is an adjunct and not necessarily linked. That is, there was no rain and mankind had not yet been made. The text tells us that it is a fallacy to think of Adam and Eve as being persons of leisure! God intended them to keep the earth in good order, by their labour. At first, this labour, **`abad**, was easy. God could have made mankind to simply know leisure, and for plants and animals to reproduce and 'recycle' automatically, but He did not. For whatever reason, God made mankind to work, albeit in a gentle manner. Hard work only arose from the act of sin by Adam and Eve. Thus, the first people on earth were horticulturists! (Agriculture was not yet necessary).

There was, then, no rain to water the earth's plants and to provide drinking water for men and animals. Instead, God provided a fine mist, **ed**. The text also gives us a scientific clue – the mist 'went up' from the earth. That is, it **`alah**, ascended or 'go up'. Very clearly, then, the mist must have been the water that was already on the surface of the earth, whether salt or fresh. We see in this a mechanism for doing so, but we are not told what it is. Was it the action of the sun? We cannot tell from the text, but it would be a good guess. There were also to be rivers of fresh water.

This mist went up from the earth and then returned to it. We are not told if this is in the form of dew in the mornings, but it seems likely that the mist was more substantial, as the word 'watered', **shaqah**, tells us. It means to irrigate, and to give water to drink. This water was sufficient to cover the whole earth, for watering plants and for giving men and animals enough to drink. The mist likely arose from the rivers.

Verses 7-9

1.

“And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

2.

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and

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3.

there he put the man whom he had formed.

4.

And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree

5.

that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil.“

Again, this text is not entered chronologically, for that was done in the previous chapter. Verse 7 just repeats a former activity, the making of mankind, but adds more detail. We are told that Man was made “of the dust of the ground”. Frankly, I do not care if atheists or others scorn at this, too. Knowing that God is real and is my Lord, I know that what He says is true. And He tells us that Man was made from dust. God ‘formed’ him, **yatsar** – fashioned or framed Man. This is usually seen to be akin to a word of the same spelling, meaning to squeeze into shape, suggesting that God picked up dust and actually manipulated it into the shape of a man. This, however, is not given to us to know.

Obviously, God need not have actually Himself shaped a man from the dust, but here we have yet another scientific clue, that Man is made of the same substance as the rest of creation. The word also infers God’s personal attention in the making of Man, in the sense that He did not make many, as He did with everything else. Instead, He only made one man, and this shows us that mankind is special.

The next phrase indicates another fact, that a body is nothing unless God puts life into it. Only God can create life. The ‘dust’ is **aphar**, meaning dry earth, powder, ashes, from a word that means ‘to dust’ or powder, and this dust was taken from the ground or surface of the earth. Once formed into a body, God then “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life”. The word ‘nostrils’ is literal, **aph**, thus, God actually breathed into Adam’s nose, **naphach** – to breathe, blow, to cause to breathe out. Of course, God does not need to breathe literally, and

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we could say that He is Spirit and so does not have a mouth – but the text says so, and I believe it.

Again, we should see all this as proof that everything, from regeneration, to reproduction, to life itself, is in the hands of God, Who alone sustains life. We should never confuse the mechanisms of life with the cause, for the mechanisms which science can monitor and analyse are only the end result, not the beginning or the root of life.

The 'breath' that God put into the man, **n@shamah**, has several meanings, such as the breath of God, the breath of man, 'every breathing thing', and the spirit of man. This phrase alone does not tell us if this breath was actual breath or spiritual life. We have to look for a modulating word before we can say for sure. That word is 'life' and it follows 'breath of'. 'Life' in this text is

chay

, meaning living or alive, from

chayah

, meaning to live, to be quickened, to have life. These all suggest that we are talking about actual breath.

If this is the case, to breath is to be a 'living soul'. He 'became', **hayah**, or existed, or came into being. Until God did this, the form was lifeless and without meaning. Now, with breath, he became a living soul. 'Living' is the same word as 'life'. 'Soul' is

nephesh

, which can have a number of meanings. It is a common mistake to say that 'soul' is always different from 'spirit', for this is not found in scripture with such obviousness. Half the instances of 'soul' also mean 'spirit', and 'spirit' obviously has a separate meaning at times, so a clear-cut distinction does not exist.

The soul can simply mean the self. It can also mean creature, or person, or appetite, or living being. It can mean mind, or desire, or emotion/passion. It can just mean 'that which breathes', or it can mean the innermost being of man. It can also mean life as existing in the blood (e.g. blood is one of the 'mechanisms' for life). It can refer to a man as an individual or person, or to his activities, of either his mind or his body. So, which meaning applies in this case?

The root of 'soul' is **naphash**, to take breath. In this case there is a modulating phrase and not just a word... "the breath of life". We have already seen that this means man literally being given breath to live. The next phrase is therefore connected and gives us the meaning – that

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once God put breath into the man, so that he was breathing, this enabled the man to be a living being, with a soul, or mind and emotions, etc.; a fully-functioning person. This also implies that on death the soul no longer abides in the body and, as mere emotions and mind, must disappear almost altogether (e.g. with no memory of bad times, etc., in heaven). It is our *souls*

that continue to exist, as later texts in scripture prove. It must be emphasised that the meanings are all literal.

Man was made as a fully-functioning male from the start. God made him breathe and live, and he had a soul, which may, or may not, in this text, also include 'spirit'. God created a special area in which the man could live (verse 8). He "planted a garden eastward in Eden", and placed him there. You may remember that God had already created plants, trees, etc., so these were already in existence. However, the words 'planted a garden' tells us that the man God created was given special status and privilege. This was something different from general creation, and was personally given. God planted, *nata* (established, as a separate place), 'a garden', *gan*. It means an enclosure or enclosed garden with plants. It was not for protection, but as a special place created by God just for the man.

The garden was "eastward in Eden". This is yet another juncture at which atheists and others scoff. They just do not believe that a Garden of Eden ever existed. Yet, the language used here is again literal – it was 'east of Eden', which is a very specific place. That we do not now know where exactly that garden was is irrelevant, because many places come and go, are known and are then lost again.

East, *qedem*, holds no real clues for us. Nor does the name 'Eden', *Eden*. We know that it means 'pleasure', but we do not know where it was. The Middle East? Africa? Somewhere else? We cannot tell. The root words imply that the garden was a place of dainty delights, finery or even luxury. It is not possible to locate Eden now, for the great Flood (another fact) destroyed the then known world, and so any reference point would have been lost, especially as the whole surface of the earth was altered. So, if anyone tries to tell you they 'know' where Eden was, remember that it is guesswork. We cannot go by colour of skin, because the first man was 'ruddy' with reddish-brown hair and skin, so he might have been close to what we now see in the Middle East, or Ethiopia. But, we do not really know.

We do know, though, that God prepared this garden as a place of beauty and goodness for man. God had already created trees and plants, but in the garden He grew plants and trees that were especially pleasing to the eye, *chamad*, to delight in, to have pleasure in. The trees and plants provided man with food that was pleasant and valuable,

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towb

, and that was 'good' for him. (The same name is also found in 'Paradise')

We then have mention of two trees that unbelievers think of as mythical. They are the "tree of life" and "the tree of knowledge of good and evil." But, why should they be figurative, when up to this text everything has been literal? The word used for 'tree' in both instances is the word for a literal tree, **`ets**. The tree of life, *chay*, can mean to be green, or living, or renewal, and it is possible that the root, *chayah* may also be pertinent, as it means to sustain life, to cause to prosper, to be restored to health. Possibly, then, this tree was one that man could use for health purposes to maintain a good life. The idea given to this tree, that of 'salvation' is not really a proper interpretation, and is more a product of spiritualising of texts than of true meaning.

As for the tree of knowledge (of good and evil), the word for 'tree' is again literal, so it was a real tree with real fruit. It is common to say that it was an apple tree, but that is just a traditional guess. All we know about this tree is that eating its fruit enabled the eater to know what was good or bad. 'Knowledge' in the text is **da`ath**, and it means to have perception or discernment, understanding, or wisdom. The root is **yada`**, which means to find out and discern, to know by experience, to recognise, to make acquaintance with.

A number of theories have been developed as to the real meaning of this tree, but the meaning is already given in the words of the text. The 'good' is *towb* – what is good, pleasant, agreeable, excellent (or 'better'), making one happy and glad and prosperous. The 'evil',

ra

, is a new concept in these verses, and means bad, evil, disagreeable, malignant and giving pain and misery. It even includes the notion of badness for water and land, worthlessness, sadness, unhappiness, vicious in disposition, wickedness of deeds and thoughts. It comes from the root

ra

a

, which also includes the meaning of to be broken asunder.

What, then, can we make of these trees? Well, we know that they were actual trees with actual fruit. One was good and was possibly used for health purposes. The other had fruit that, when

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eaten, would give the person active and personal understanding of the difference between what was good and what was evil. There is no reason to suppose that this was figurative at all, for the rest of the text is literal.

Verses 10-14

1.

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.

2.

The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold;

3.

And the gold of that land is good: there is bdellium and the onyx stone.

4.

And the name of the second river is Gihon: the same is it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.

5.

And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.”

A river went out of Eden. ‘River’ in this text is *nahar*, and it could mean a river or a stream. It could also mean an underground stream. In this context it appears to mean a river above ground, for we are told that when it went out of Eden it branched off into four heads of other rivers. This suggests that the river had its source in Eden itself. The river irrigated the garden (*shaqah*), and then flowed outside the enclosure to be parted, *parad* , into the heads of four other rivers. This, of course, answers a question sometimes raised about

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original creation – were there fresh waters? Yes, there were rivers, if not lakes.

Again, ‘four’ is literal, **arba**, and modulates the word ‘heads’ as meaning heads of rivers. This is confirmed by the names given. The first is Pison, the meaning of which is not known, but we do know that it surrounded, **cabab**, the land of Havilah and it had another name, Araxes. At this time, there were no national lands as such, but must have been added to the writer’s knowledge by God. It seems that the writer knew where this place was. Havilah, or **Chaviylah**, means ‘circle’, so the name seems to arise from the route taken by the river. (If this is the case, the name possibly means ‘the land surrounded by the river’).

There are a number of possible locations for this land of Havilah, including Colchis (Greece), near the Caspian Sea in northeastern Asia; and a district in Arabia named after the second son of Cush, which may have been in the north west of the Yemen. But, nobody really knows. What we do know for certain is that the land was rich in top quality gold, **zahab**. There was also bdellium or

b@dolach

,
gum resin and onyx stone,

shoham

, though it may also refer to chrysoprasus, beryl or malachite, all valued stones.

A second river was the Gihon, **Giychown**. It means ‘bursting forth’, and possibly refers to its action as a rushing river. There is a spring near Jerusalem with the same name, where Solomon was anointed, but this river, also, has no precise location even though it was said to surround the whole land of Ethiopia (**Kuwsh**, meaning black and from which the name Cush comes. This was the land of Cush’ descendants, so again the writer has been given this knowledge after the event of the creation). Like all rivers, this one vanished when the Flood tore apart the whole world and recrafted the landscape. But, it does give a clue as to the possible location of Eden, in the broadest terms.

The third river was Hiddekel, **Chiddeqel**. It means ‘rapid’ and is said to be the Tigris that runs east toward Assyria, or Asshur. The fourth river was the Euphrates (is the existing river the same as the original? We do not know), or the **P@rath**. It is still the biggest river in western Asia, but it may not be the original, seeing as how the source was just outside the garden of Eden along with the other three rivers... the present river has its source in the mountains of Armenia and runs down to the gulf of Iraq (Persian Gulf).

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We can see that some rivers are known to us. But, the Flood destroyed the entire world, and threw up mountains, caused great chasms in the sea-bed. The land was totally remade by the forces of phenomena. All the rivers *may* be close to their original places, but we cannot tell. If they are, then the garden of Eden may well have been somewhere in, say, the vicinity of Egypt or southern Israel. If the Flood had not occurred, we might possibly have had the opportunity to check out landmarks. It is all, then, speculation. Even so, the very certitude of the names and places suggests strongly the actual and literal meaning of the texts.

Verses 15-18

1.

“And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

2.

And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:

3.

But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.

4.

And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.”

The fact is then repeated, that God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden specially created for him. It was to be his task to keep it in order, to “dress it and keep it.” We come across another name for God here, **Y@hovah**, ‘the existing One’ or ‘self existing One’. This name is not pronounced by Jews, though it was used freely in ancient times. Together with God,
□ *elohiym*, it means the self existing
God and Ruler.

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The word 'dress', **`abad**, tells us that the man was to work in the garden. It also means to serve. This brings us to the modern concept of subjection to God and obedience to His commands. He was also to 'keep' it, **shamar**. This *could* mean to guard it, but there was nothing and no-one to guard it from. So, the other meanings apply: to have charge of, to observe and to watch, to preserve.

God then commanded the man, **tsavah**. For the first time we have God actually talking to the man. He told him that he could eat freely of every tree in the garden, *except* for the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The man could eat freely, **akal**.
. He was told openly that he could eat anything he wished, with just that one, single proviso.

God then told the man that if he ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he would "surely die". The term "not eat" gives us another meaning for the word 'eat', **akal**. Because the context is different (a prohibition), so is the meaning. The meaning is that of slaying, destruction (of the flesh). If he were to eat of the tree, he would 'die', **muwth**.
. This includes the idea of dying as a penalty, and also the death of a nation; it also means to die as a result of an unwise or immoral decision.

The meaning seems to suggest that the first man would not live forever in the garden (the implication) but would die 'prematurely', and might even imply that such an unwise decision could affect an entire nation (or the world in this case). Of course, it is a guess to suggest that Adam might have lived forever, and it is based on a very thin notion of what 'premature' means in this case. Does it mean to die before one should have (not possible)? Or, to die when before there was no death? It is not made clear in this text.

We know from scripture that Adam lived a very long time, but so did his family (bearing in mind that all men and women belong to the same family in essence). It was only after the Flood that men's lives grew dramatically shorter. So, if '*premature*' death occurred at just under 1000 years of age, how long would Adam have lived if he had obeyed!

At some time after this (day six), God spoke to Himself and said it was not good for the man to

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be alone (as a creature). That is, it was not pleasant to be alone. God declared that He would make the man someone to help him, an 'help-meet', **`ezer**, one who helps and supports, **`azar**. In this text we are not told what form this help-meet would take, whether male or female or something else.

Verses 19&20

1.

“And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

2.

And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.”

We have yet another summary of previously given information: that God created every beast and bird. We note that God formed these creatures from the same substance as the man, the ground. However, we are not told that God made them with the same special attentiveness as He gave to the man, though each was perfect.

We now have the actual name of the first man, Adam. God 'brought' every animal and bird to Adam, **bow**'. This includes the idea of enumerating or counting. It means to be led-in or caused to come in. This is another incredible fact and shows that Man had complete dominance over all creatures at this time. God wanted to observe what Adam would call each one. And whatever name, **shem**, Adam called each animal and bird, was fixed at that time. This is full of factual evidence – that the first man had not just the *capacity* for rational thought and language, but *had*

a full language to begin with. Not only could he talk with God, but he could name animals. He had a greater list of words than we have today! So, Adam named every beast (called here cattle) and every bird, but Adam still did not have a helper.

Verses 21-25

1.

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“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof;

2.

And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

3.

And Adam 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.

4.

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

5.

And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.”

Therefore, God made Adam sleep. It was a deep sleep put on him by God. The word ‘deep’ can mean either deep sleep or trance, **tardemah**. The meaning of ‘deep sleep’ is the most accurate, because of the modulating word, ‘sleep’, **yashen** – to be asleep, or to cause to sleep.

The state of sleep ‘fell’ on Adam, **naphal**, to become prostrate or to fall down. As Adam lay there, God opened up his side and removed a rib, **tsef**
a ;
which, in this case, literally means a rib bone. We know because the root word speaks of a ‘curve’ – the shape of a rib – and because we are told that a wound was made in Adam’s side, which God ‘closed up’,
cagar
, ‘closely joined, to close up. (Note: medically, a rib can regrow if removed).

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From the rib taken from 'man' (אָ *adam*, as in male) God then "made he a woman", אִשָּׁה *ishshah*. This means woman, wife or female. It is the opposite of 'man', and 'wife' refers only to woman and man. This is the first mention of marriage and the first mention of the proper, created, natural order for union – man with a woman. After fashioning the woman, God presented her to Adam. Both would have been perfect forms and the woman, too, would have had full language skills and mental abilities.

Why make a woman out of a rib bone? The answer is spiritual and physical. Adam said "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." In this way, both the man and the woman had a bond of genetic structure. The bond was both physical and spiritual and they were 'as one', literally. It also gives us the natural order of subjection – woman to man, not man to woman. This bond was, in all but name, a marriage. Adam declared that she would be called *Wo-man* (or *fe-male*), because she was made out of the man.

Fathers and mothers did not exist at this time, so the reference to them in verse 24 is added to the creation account as a link to the future. This is admissible. Because woman was made from man, a man should leave his parents and shall bond with a woman, to be 'one flesh'. The man shall 'cleave' to her, *dabaq*, meaning to stick close, to cling to, to be joined together as a married couple – the woman being called a 'wife'. In so doing, they would become 'one flesh'. One is אֶחָד *echad*, as in the number one. Only a man and a woman can be thus joined as one flesh, *basar* – one body, one kindred.

Do not be fooled by modern trends (that merely mimic repetitions of past immoralities). Homosexual relationships are not just immoral and sinful, they defy the natural order of relationships given by God. Men can only love other men in the *agape* sense of respect, and a son can love his father, etc., but

no
man can love another man (or a woman love another woman) in the sense of marriage. Such is sin; wrong. The two who join together do so in the plain physical sense only, not fully. The bond is just not possible between two of the same sex. This probably explains why such relationships are usually miserable or anxious, if not regularly broken. There can be no 'love' between two of the same sex, as there is between a man and a woman, because it is not possible. In reality, the 'love' is merely a sign of ownership or lust.

At that time neither the man nor the woman had clothing. We are told that they were not

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ashamed. Naked, *`arowm*, means bare. Today, this is usually linked with sexual lust or feelings of control. But, when the first man and woman were together, they were bare, but had no such sinful feelings or thoughts. They were 'not ashamed', *buwsh*, disconcerted, shamed, and did not act in a shameful manner. But, why should they, when both were made perfect and had never sinned before? Their state was natural and good. It would take a future act of folly to undo this condition of perfection.

Notes:

Remember that this chapter is a compilation of facts and not a strict chronological diary. The chapter contains summaries also. Thus, for example, though the creation of mankind is found in chapter one (the sixth day), the detail of how woman was made is found in chapter 2:22. In a similar way detail of the making of animals, birds and man are found in this chapter, though a summary of their creation has already been given in chapter 1.

- It appears that all living creatures were made from the same substance – dust. Yet, God inserted into each species its own genetic code.
- The planting of the Garden in Eden was probably done on the same day that He created all other plant life.
- Both mankind and animals were given breath by God, but only mankind is said to have a 'soul'.
- In verse 15 we find that God put Adam into the garden. This had to be on day six.
- The commandment not to eat of the tree of knowledge was also given on day six.
- Adam's activity described in verse 19 (naming animals) had to be after day seven (seven being the day of rest). Being a finite creature Adam would have taken quite some time to name everything. On the other hand, bear in mind that the actual number of kinds (today called 'species') may not have been too large at that time – today we have only a few kinds, but many sub-kinds. It is the singular separate kinds that Adam named.
- The 'fact' of marriage appears to be the enactment of physical union. For us today it means that though civil or church ceremonies have been rejected by countless modern individuals, they have been 'married' many times through their illicit and promiscuous activities. Therefore, they are just as much adulterers as those who are married and promiscuous.

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