

The Gain and Loss of Paradise: Genesis 1-3

I. Theology and Structure

A. God Revealed

- In Genesis 1 the text reveals God as King of the universe.

- Beginning in chapter 2

B. The Narrative

- Genesis 1 is a poetic account of the creation of the universe that is not interested in how it was created but rather who created it.

C. Structure

- There are two major sections in the first four chapters of Genesis. The first section is the creation account. The second account is of Adam, which is marked by the Hebrew word “generations” or “accounts” (toledot). These “accounts” will be carried on throughout Genesis.
 1. The Creation of the Universe (1:1-2:3)
 2. The Heavens and the Earth (2:4-4:26)
 - a. The Creation of Man and Woman (2:4-25)
 - b. The Temptation and Fall (3:1-7)
 - c. The Oracles of God and the Fall (3:8-24)

II. The Creation by the Word

A. The Pagan Cultures

B. God as Creator

- The point of Genesis 1:1-2

- Genesis 1:1-2:3 presents three major theological ideas:
 - 1)

 - 2)

3)

- Unlike the other gods,

C. Forming and Filling

1. Pre-Creation

- Psalm 89
- Canaanite mythology
- God is portrayed as battling this monster at different times
- Job
- (Gen. 3; Dan. 7; Rev. 13)

2. Chaos into Creation

- Genesis 1 begins with the ocean and chaos subdued
- Verse 1 serves as a heading for the creation account that follows.
- The verb for create (*bara*)
- Isaiah 45:18 states
- The summary of creation ends

3. The Six Days

Formlessness		Emptiness	
Day	Item Created	Day	Item Created
1	Light with darkness	4	Lights for day and night
2	Sea and sky	5	Creatures of the water and air
3	Fertile earth	6	Creatures for the fertile earth

4. The Seventh Day

- The seventh day (2:1-3) breaks with the “it was good” pattern and instead shows a ceasing, blessing and sanctifying. The emphasis of the seventh day shows a perfect completion, which is shown through the pattern of the words and clauses.
 - There are thirty-five words in the Hebrew texts of these verses, which is a multiple of seven.
 - The three middle clauses (2:2a, 2:2b, 2:3a) have seven words each and the adjective “seventh” is in each one.
- The word for “rest”

D. The Garden

1. The Source of Life

- The Garden of Eden was paradise on earth a reflection of heaven.
- The mention of the rivers shows
- The word for “placed” has overtones of “rest,”
- The two infinitives “to serve” and “to keep” are used throughout the torah for spiritual service.

2. The Setting

- Where in Genesis 1:1-2:3 the idea of the narrator shows the Word of the Lord active in creation; Genesis 2:4-25 shows the Word of the Lord in a test of obedience.
- The point of the narrative is

- In Genesis 2:5 the mention of man's tilling the ground anticipates the expulsion from the garden under the curse (3:23), and the mention of rain anticipates the great flood (6:17; 7:4).
- "The magnitude of that sin and destruction can be fully understood only when the nature and purpose of humankind is understood. To know what God had invested in human life and what He had expected of it is to know what was lost at the fall." (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, p. 117.)

III. Man Created in the Image of God

A. Unique to All Creation

1. Separate from Creation

2. The Apex of Creation

- The structure of Genesis 1 is climatic.
- The poetry of verse 27, which is balanced with three lines that each contains four beats demonstrated the uniqueness of man. In each of the lines the Hebrew word *bara*, "He created," is used. The only other time that this verb appears in chapter one is in the summary statement of verse 1 and in verse 21, yet it is used three times of man in verse 27. This repetition is for emphasis and artistry.
"The poetic structure of the sentence, its stately diction and its particular emotional quality attest the special importance that the Torah attributes to the making of man—the noblest of the creatures." (U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part 1: From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams, p. 57.)

Thus one sees the uniqueness of verse 27 in its threefold statement of man:

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- The uniqueness of man is further emphasized in 2:5-7. “The point of these clauses [Gen. 5-6] is that, in a world that had yet to flourish with fertility, the Lord God was preparing for abundant growth. But more important, when joined with verse 7, this part of the passage plays a subordinate role: before the earth could flourish under God’s blessing God focused His attention on the crowning point of creation, human life.” (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, pp. 121-22.)
- “Every relationship to God in the world is thus summed up in man. In him the world has its most direct connection to God; no creature is closer to God than he. Before God he is the center goal of creation.” (Gerhard Von Rad, *God at Work in Israel*, trans. John H. Marks, p. 103.)

3. A Little Lower than God

- Psalm 8
- The Psalmist in verses 3-4
- The Hebrew word ‘*elohim*’ means God yet in Psalm 8:5 it is translated as angels.
- What prompts David to make such a bold statement

“To a creature of seeming insignificance, God has given great dignity. To man, little and lost in the vastness of space, God has given sovereignty. To man, puny and restless and weak, God has given a part of Himself. Of all God’s creatures, only man is made in His image. Man is the crown of the Cosmos, the measure of creation. Man as male and female is God’s finest work.” (Ronald B. Allen, *The Majesty of Man: The Dignity of Being Human*, pp. 66-67.)

B. Created to Manifest Glory

1. Caution in Determining What is the Image of God

- Some scholars have tried to make a distinction between “image” and “likeness”

- The Scriptures never associates intellectual and emotional capacities with the image of God.
- Image as dominion is often emphasized as a consequences of Creation.

2. Image as Physical Glory

- The Hebrew word for “image”
- We find in Genesis 1 that humans were not the only ones that were created to have dominion for in 1:16

“This observation suggests the intriguing possibility that people were created to share a particular ruling quality with the sun and the moon, namely, the divine glory. Compared to the shining of the sun or the stars in later texts, the glory of God is a manifestation of physical light or brilliance that was commonly associated with His sovereign rule.” (Robert A. Pyne, *Humanity and Sin*, p. 58.)

- God made his glory visible to the community of Israel through the pillar of fire and cloud (Exod. 20:18-19).
- Moses,

“After witnessing this, how might the people have pictured Adam, created to mediate God’s rule over the earth while enjoying unbroken fellowship with his Maker?” (Robert A. Pyne, *Humanity and Sin*, p. 58.)

- Ezekiel 1:26-27
- This is supported by Psalm 8:3-6 that interprets image in terms of divine glory.

- Psalm 104:1-2
- Daniel 12:2-3

3. From a New Testament Perspective

- Matt. 13:43
- 2 Cor. 3:7-8
- “If Moses was transformed by what he saw, how much more shall we be changed by this intimate relationship with God! Paul said that believers ‘are being transformed into the same image’—the image of the exalted Christ, the object of our meditation. Christ is Himself ‘the image of God’ (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15), representing the invisible God more completely than Adam ever could. After all, He is the One in whom ‘all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form’ (Col. 2:7), the One who eternally existed ‘in the form of God’ (Phil. 2:6), and who is ‘the radiance of [God’s] glory and the exact representation of His nature’ (Heb. 1:3). Since He is the image of God, for us to be conformed to Christ’s likeness is to be renewed in the pattern of the original. It is to become what we were supposed to be. ‘If any man is in Christ, there is a new creation’ (2 Cor. 5:17).” (Robert A. Pyne, *Humanity and Sin*, pp. 62-63.)
- Examples of Jesus fulfilling in His life the potentialities of the unfallen Adam just as by His death He restored all mankind to those potentialities. See Matt. 8:23-27 (Mark 4:36-41; Luke 8:22-25), Matt. 14:22 (Mark 6:45-51; John 6:16-21), Matt. 17:27 and Mark 11:1-10 (Matt. 21:1-11; Luke 19:29-38).

C. Created to be Ruler

1. Kingship

- Gen. 2:19-20
- Psalm 8:6-8
- Hebrews 2:5-9 quotes Psalm 8:4-6

2. Naming

- By giving a name to every creature, Adam was asserting his dominion.
 - “In Semitic thought, naming implied the ability to learn the inner secrets or essence of an object, just as man has such powers in science today. Man’s power to so ‘name’ the animals was notably set in the context of his own relational needs.” (James M. Houston, *I Believe in the Creator*, p. 81.)
 - “The Lord of the universe named the parts of the universe and its time-divisions [Gen. 1:5, 8, 10], and He left it to man to determine the names of those creatures over which he had given him dominion.” (U. Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis, Part 1: From Adam to Noah*, trans. Israel Abrahams, p. 130.)
- ## 3. Be Fruitful and Multiple

D. Male and Female

1. Unity

- “Man” in Genesis 1:27

“If Man is male and female by the Creator’s decision and act, so *her* creation is in some sense the completion of *his* creation.” (Paul K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female: A Study in Sexual Relationships from a Theological Point of View*, p. 20.)

- God said of all that He had created that it was good (Gen. 1:31) emphasizes the importance of His statement in Gen. 2:18.
- The fact that a bone was taken from Adams side and not his heel or head

“The point of this jubilant cry is that the creation of humankind has reached its goal in the complementary partnership of man and woman. This emphasis on the meaning of woman is unique in the ancient Near Eastern texts.” (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, p. 127.)

- “And they will become one flesh”

2. Headship

- “When we read chapter 2 we learn something that was not stated in the first account. The Male, Adam, was created before the female, Eve. Whereas Genesis 1 speaks of the equality of male and female as image-bearers of God, Genesis 2 presents a slight priority of the male over the female because of the order of creation. This priority does not destroy equality; it conjoins with it.” (Ronald B. Allen, *The Majesty of Man: The Dignity of Being Human*, p. 80.)

E. Man’s Perfection and Relationship with God

1. Fellowship with God

- "First, God's deliberation shows that he has decided to create man differently from any of the other creatures—in his image and likeness. God and man share a *likeness* that is not shared by other creatures. This apparently means that a relationship of close fellowship can exist between God and man that is unlike the relationship of God with the rest of his creation. Secondly, in Gen 1, man, the image bearer, is the object of God's blessing. According to the account of creation in Gen 1, the chief purpose of God in creating man is to bless him." (John H. Sailhamer, "Exegetical Notes: Genesis 1:1—2:4a." *Trinity Journal*, p. 80.)

- Genesis 3:8

2. Without Sin

- “The naked condition of Adam and Eve does not just describe their unclothed physical appearance. It also refers to the physical and psychological oneness and transparency that existed in their relationship. Physically they were naked; they shared their bodies with each other openly. Psychologically they were not ashamed; they hid nothing from each other.” (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis*, p. 45.)

IV. The Fall

A. Disobedience

1. The Command

- The tree and the restriction are there for mans benefit. For in order for there to be freedom of choice there has to be a choice.
“The unit provides a perfect test case for the subject of temptation, for the disobedience cannot be blamed on the environment, and certainly not on heredity.” (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, p. 130.)
- “On the whole it seems probable that we should understand ‘death’ to mean a spiritual state, but a state aptly symbolized by physical death. When man sinned he passed into a new state, one dominated by, and at the same time symbolized by death. It is likely that spiritual death and physical death are not being thought of as separate, so that the one involves the other.” (Leon Morris, *The Wages of Sin*, p. 10). The basics idea seems to be more of alienation or separation rather than annihilation.
- “Before Adam and Eve fell into sin, God made a proposition to them that some have regarded as a covenant, as stated in Genesis 1:26-31 and 2:16-17. God gave Adam authority over the creatures of the world, commanded him to be fruitful, and gave him permission to eat from every green plant. The only restriction was that Adam and Eve not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for if they did so they would surely die (2:16-17). Basically, the covenant was conditional, requiring obedience; but it also declared God's purpose to elevate humanity to a place of authority and prominence, ultimately fulfilled by Christ.” (John F. Walvoord, “The New Covenant,” *Skillfulness of Hands*, pp. 187-88.)

2. The Serpent

3. The Temptation and the Sin

- Notice that Genesis does not explain the origins of evil in the universe but rather how it came into God’s creation and humanity.
- The word “crafty”

“It is interesting that three times the Word of the Lord is quoted, but never appropriately: once it is questioned in a misleading way, once it is paraphrased with major changes, and once it is flatly denied.” (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, p. 132.)

- “Satan's first step was to plant a seed of doubt in Eve's mind concerning God's ways (vv. 1-3). The key phrase is ‘from any’ (v. 1). Satan focused Eve's attention on God's one prohibition. He suggested that God did not really want what was best for Adam and Eve, but rather was withholding something from them that was essentially good. He hinted that God's line of protection was actually a line that He drew because of His selfishness... The second step in Satan's temptation was to *deny* God's *word*. In denying it he imputed motives to God that were not consistent with God's character. God's true motive was the welfare of man, but Satan implied it was God's welfare at man's expense.” (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis*, pp. 48-49.)
- Eve was vulnerable to Satan’s suggestion because she distorted the word of God:
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
- The fact that she weakens the command is what makes the appeal to sin stronger.
- “What Satan said about Eve's being as God was a half-truth. Ironically she was already as God having been made in His image (1:26). She did become like God in that she obtained a greater knowledge of good and evil by eating of the tree. However, she became less like God because she was no longer innocent of sin. Her relationship with God suffered. Though she remained like God she could no longer be with Him. The consequent separation from God is the essence of death (2:17).” (Thomas Constable, *Notes on Genesis*, p. 49.)
- All three avenues of fleshly temptation are present in 3:6:
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)
- Note that verse 3:6 states that Adam was there with her.

- 1 Timothy 2:14
- “It is because 'Yahweh Elohim' expresses so strongly the basic OT convictions about God's being both creator and Israel's covenant partner that the serpent and the woman avoid the term in their discussion. The god they are talking about is malevolent, secretive, and concerned to restrict man: his character is so different from that of Yahweh Elohim that the narrative pointedly avoids the name in the dialogue of 3:1-5.” (Gordan J. Wenham, *Genesis 1-15*, Word Biblical Commentary, p. 57.)

4. The Effects of the Sin

5. Surrender of Authority

B. The Consequences

1. Creation

2. Serpent

- The fact that God causes the serpent to crawl on his belly and eat dust is symbolic of how despised and low he will be made (Ps. 72:9; Isa. 49:23; 65:25; Mic. 7:17). How literally we can take this and how it directly applies to the snake and Satan is not clear. Since Satan is the prince of this world now this may yet to be completely fulfilled.

3. Woman

4. Man

5. Death

- Verse 3:22

- Adam and Eve did not die immediately in the sense that Satan said that they would but they did experience death in three ways, which will be developed more fully throughout scripture.
 - 1)
 - 2)
 - 3)

- The first verse in chapter 5 says, “This is the written account of Adam’s line.”

6. Exile from the Garden

- “Eating from one tree kept the humans from eating from the other; or if we say it in terms of spiritual reality behind the story, when the human beings disobeyed God and experienced evil, they were prevented from living on perpetually in that state.” (Allen P. Ross, *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of Genesis*, p. 142.)

C. Image Defaced, Not Erased

1. Evidence of Not Erased

2. What Remains

- “If the glory has been lost, then what has been retained? There is apparently something to be said for the capacity to demonstrate God’s likeness even when that capacity is not fully realized. Unbelievers retain the ability to make moral decisions (even if they continue to make them wrongly). In the same way, their bodies, though fallen, still give testimony to the Creator who designed people to reflect His glory. Likewise, all persons retain the capacity to rule as God’s vice-regents in spite of the fact we committed mutiny through sin, essentially transferring our allegiance to another god (2 Cor. 4:4). In short, though sin prevents us from fully demonstrating God’s likeness, something special remains about people. We were made in the image of God.” (Robert A. Pyne, *Humanity and Sin*, p. 67.)

D. Hope of Restoration

1. Glimmer of Hope

- Notice in verse 3:9
- Genesis 3:15 gives the first words for the coming of the Messiah.
- In chapter 4 Adam names his wife and she names her children.
- Man’s origin is not an accident, but a profoundly intelligent act by One who has eternal value; by One who stamps His own image on each person. God creates men and moves heaven and earth to redeem them when they fall. Our origin is in creation and our destiny is for redemption. Between these points every human heartbeat has value.” (R. C. Sproul, *In Search of Dignity*, p. 94.)

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