

# Genesis 2:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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;

## Analysis

**And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, a...** This passage continues the detailed account of Eden, human creation, and God's design for human flourishing. Genesis 2 complements chapter 1 by providing intimate details about human origins, the garden setting, marriage institution, and humanity's vocation as priest-kings in God's sanctuary-garden.

The narrative emphasizes God's personal involvement, careful preparation of human habitation, clear communication of covenant requirements, and provision for human needs including work, rest, relationship, and worship. The garden of Eden represents perfect environment where heaven and earth intersect, God dwells with humanity, and everything needed for life and blessing exists.

Key theological themes include human dignity as divine image-bearers, work as divine calling (not curse), marriage as covenant partnership, moral freedom with accountability, and the necessity of obedience for blessing. The detailed geography and placement of Eden in historical space-time (rivers, lands) presents this as real history, not mythology. These foundational truths establish the pattern for understanding humanity's purpose, relationships, and destiny throughout Scripture.

## Historical Context

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Genesis 2 provides a detailed account of human creation and Eden's establishment, using different literary style than chapter 1. Ancient Near Eastern parallels include the Sumerian Paradise myth and the Gilgamesh Epic's plant of life, but Genesis transforms these motifs within strict monotheism. The garden sanctuary with its rivers, trees, and divine presence parallels ancient temple theology where gods dwelt in sacred spaces.

The geographical references (Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel/Tigris, Euphrates) ground the narrative in historical space-time rather than mythological timelessness. While the exact location of Eden remains debated, the inclusion of identifiable rivers presents this as real geography, not allegory. The Mesopotamian setting connects to humanity's ancient origins in that region, confirmed by archaeology.

Ancient audiences would have recognized marriage's divine institution as countercultural, elevating women beyond their typical status as property. The intimate account of woman's creation from man's side presented revolutionary equality and partnership. The garden-temple imagery established patterns for Israel's tabernacle and temple, where God would again dwell with His people in sacred space requiring holiness and obedience.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 2:1** — Judging others

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. What theological truths about Eden emerge from this passage?
2. What obstacles prevent us from living out the truths presented in this verse?
3. How does this passage point forward to Christ and the gospel of redemption?

## Interlinear Text

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וַיַּעֲשֵׂה	וְאַתָּה	יָמָן	יְהוָה	יָמָן	אֱלֹהִים	הָיָה	תַּרְדַּם	הָיָה	עַל	פָּנָיִם	מִפְנָא	וְאַתָּה	יָמָן	וַיַּעֲשֵׂה	
caused	And	the	LORD	God	a	deep	sleep						and	he	sleep
H5307	H3068		H430			H8639		H5921		H120				H3462	

  
וְאַתָּה	יָמָן	מִצְלָעָת	יְהוָה	אַחַת	וַיַּסְגֵּר	רַב	בְּשֶׁר	תַּחַתְּבָה								
and	he	took	one	of	his	ribs	and	closed	up	the	flesh					
H3947		H259		H6763			H5462		H1320		H8478					

## Additional Cross-References

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**Genesis 15:12** (Parallel theme): And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and, lo, an horror of great darkness fell upon him.

**Job 4:13** (Parallel theme): In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men,

**1 Samuel 26:12** (References Lord): So David took the spear and the cruse of water from Saul's bolster; and they gat them away, and no man saw it, nor knew it, neither awaked: for they were all asleep; because a deep sleep from the LORD was fallen upon them.

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