

Genesis 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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,

Analysis

These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that th... 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

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

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. What does this passage reveal about God's sovereignty and human responsibility?

2. How should this truth about Divine Intimacy shape our daily decisions and priorities?
3. How does this verse fit into the broader biblical story culminating in Christ?

Interlinear Text

אֵלֶּה	תּוֹלְדוֹת	וְשָׁמַיִם:	אֶרֶץ	
These	are the generations	and the heavens	and of the earth	
H428	H8435	H8064	H776	
בְּהִבָּרָא	בִּיּוֹם	עָשָׂה	יְהוָה	אֱלֹהִים
when they were created	in the day	made	that the LORD	God
H1254	H3117	H6213	H3068	H430
אֶרֶץ	וְשָׁמַיִם:			
and of the earth	and the heavens			
H776	H8064			

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 5:1 (Creation): This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him;

Revelation 1:8 (References Lord): I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Exodus 15:3 (References Lord): The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.

Job 38:28 (Parallel theme): Hath the rain a father? or who hath begotten the drops of dew?

Genesis 1:31 (Creation): And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Genesis 36:1 (Parallel theme): Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.

Genesis 1:4 (References God): And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

1 Kings 18:39 (References God): And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God.

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