The Creation of the World

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 

2 Now the earth was without shape and empty, and darkness was over the surface of the watery deep, but the Spirit of God moved across the surface of the waters.

These verses introduce the creation narrative, with God as the creator and the earth as the focus of the creation story. The opening phrase, "In the beginning," sets the stage for a new creation story, distinct from the previous account of creation in Genesis 1:1. The earth is described as void and empty, a chaotic state, with darkness over the watery deep, before God's creative work begins.
was moving over the surface of the water. God said, “Let there be light.” And there was light! God saw that the light was good, so God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.” There was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

6 God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters and let it separate water from water.” So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. It was so. God called the expanse “sky.” There was evening, and there was morning—the second day.

9 God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place and let dry ground appear.” It was so. God called the dry ground “land” and the gathered waters he called “seas.” God saw that it was good.
God said, “Let the land produce vegetation:** plants yielding seeds and** trees on the land bearing fruit with seed in it, according to their kinds.” It was so. The land produced vegetation—plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning, a third day.

God said, “Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs to indicate seasons and days and years, and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” It was so. God made two great lights— the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also. God placed the lights in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth, to preside over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness. God saw that it was good. There was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day.

God said, “Let the water swarm with swarms** of living creatures and let birds fly** above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” God created the great sea creatures and every living and moving thing with which the water swarmed, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.” There was evening, and there was morning, a fifth day.

God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, vegetation. But it could also be a deliberate design to avoid naming “sun” and “moon” or promoting them beyond what they are, things that God made to serve in his creation.

The Hebrew text uses the Polrol form of the verb instead of the simple Qal; it stresses a swarming flight again to underscore the abundant fruitfulness. For the first time in the narrative proper the verb **create** (כָּרָא, bara) appears. It is used to describe a mythological sea creature that symbolizes God’s enemies.

While the translation “blessed” has been retained here for the sake of simplicity, it would be most helpful to present it as **blessing** in its proper the word of blessing guarantees success. The word means “to enrich; to endow,” and the most visible evidence of that enrichment is productivity or fruitfulness. See C. Westermann, Blessing in the Bible and the Life of the Church (OBT).

The instruction God gives to creation is properly a fuller expression of the statement just made (“God blessed them”), that he enriched them with the ability to reproduce. It is not saying that these were rational creatures who heard and obeyed the word; rather, it stresses the fruitfulness of work—the word of blessing guarantees success. The repeated emphasis of “be fruitful—multiply—fill” adds to this abundance God has given to life. The meaning is
understood by the similar sounds: רָבָה (baraʾ) with רָב (rab), and רָבָה (pa-raḥ) with רָב (raḥah). A כ There are three groups of land ani­mals: domesticated things like sheep, cattle, and livestock (mostly domesticated), things that crawl or move close to the ground (such as reptiles or rodents), and the wild animals (all animals of the field). The three terms are general classifications without specific details.

B כ The plural form of the verb has been the subject of much discussion throughout the history of the Hebrew language. Several suggestions have been put forward. Many Christian theologians interpret it as an early hint of plurality within the Godhead, but this view imposes later trinitarian concepts on the ancient text. Some have suggested the plural verb indicates majesty, but the plural of majesty is not used with verbs. C Westermann (Genesis, 1:145) argues for a plural of “de­liberation” here, but his proposed examples of this use (2 Sam 24:14; Isa 6:8) do not actually support his theory. In 2 Sam 24:14 David uses the plural as representative of all Israel, and in Isa 6:8 the LORD speaks as if he were the Lord of all. In its ancient Israelite context the plural is most naturally understood as referring to God and his heavenly court (see 1 Kgs 22:19–22; Job 1:6–12; 21:6–8; Isa 6:1–8). The most well-known members of this court are God’s messengers, or angels. In Gen 3:22–24 it is used in the form with God in its own image, as “divine beings.” See the note on the word “evil” in 3:5. If this is the case, God invites the heavenly court to participate in the creation of humankind (perhaps in the role of offering praise, see Job 38:7), but he himself is the one who does the creative work (v. 24). Of course, this view does assume that the members of the heavenly court possess the divine “image” in some way. Since the image is closely associated with rulership, perhaps they share the divine image in that they, together with God and under his royal authority, are the executive, constituting the world.

C כ The Hebrew word is הָאָדָם (haʾadam), which can sometimes refer to man, as opposed to woman. The term refers here to humankind, comprised of male and female. The singular is clearly collective (see the plural verb, “[that] they may rule” in v. 26b) and the refer­ent is defined specifically as “male and female” in v. 27. Usage elsewhere in Gen 1-11 supports this as well. In 5:2 we read: “Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and called their name ‘humankind’ (הָאָדָם).” The noun refers to humankind in 6:1, 5:7 and 9:5–6.

D כ The two prepositions translated “in” and “after (or “according to”) have overlapping fields of meaning and in this context seem to be virtually equivalent. In 5:3 they are reversed with the two words. The word הַצָּמֵא (tsalem, “image”) is used frequently of statues, idols, and im­ages—replicas (see D. J. A. Clines, “The Etymology of Hebrew ‘selah’,” JNSL 3 [1974]: 19–25). The word הָדָם (de­mut, “likeness”) is an abstract noun; its verbal root means “to be like; to resemble.” In the Book of Genesis the two terms describe human beings who in some way reflect the form and the function of the creator. The form of God is more likely stressing the spiritual rather than the physical. The “image of God” would be the God-given mental and spiritual capacities that enable people to relate to God and to serve him by ruling over the created order as his earthly vice-regents. H כ In order to fulfill our likeness. Similar language is used in the instruc­tions for building the tabernacle. Moses was told to make it “according to the pat­tern” he was shown on the mount (Exod 25:9, 10). Was he shown a form, a replica, of the spiritual sanctuary in the heavenly sanctuary? In the act of giving mankind his image is that they might rule the created order on behalf of the heavenly king and his royal court. So the divine image, however it is defined, gives human­kind the capacity and/or authority to rule over creation.

F כ The MT reads “earth”; the Syriac reads “wild animals” (cf. NRSV).

G כ In his own image, the im age is closely as­so­ciated with rul­ing over the earth, after our like­ness, and after our like­ness.

H כ The Hebrew text has the article prefixed to the noun הָאָדָם (haʾadam). The article does not distinguish man from woman here (“the man” as opposed to “the woman”). But rather it in­dicates previous reference (see v. 26, where the noun appears without the article). It has the same function as En­glish “the aforementioned.”

I כ The third person suffix on the par­ticiple הָאָדָם (ʾet) is singular here, but collec­tive.

J כ The distinction of “humankind” as “male” and “female” is another point of separation in God’s creation. There is no possibility that the verse is teaching that humans were first androgynous (having both male and female physical characteristics) and afterward were separated. The mention of male and female pre­pares for the blessing to follow. K כ As in v. 22 the verb “bless” here means “to endow with the capacity to reproduce and be fruitful,” as the following context indicates. As in v. 22, the statement directly precedes the command “be fruitful and multiply.” The verb carries this same nuance in Gen 17:16 (where God’s blessing of Sarai is addressed to her and “causing her capacity to produce vegetation). L כ “And God said.” For stylistic reasons “God” has been repeated here in the translation. M כ Elsewhere the Hebrew verb translated “subdue” means “to en­slave” (2 Chr 28:10; Neh 5:5; Jer 34:11, 16), “to conquer,” (Num 32:22, 29; Josh 18:1; 2 Sam 8:11; 1 Chr 22:18; Zech 9:13). In our context it may mean “to rule.” N כ The several imperatives addressed to both males and females together (plural imperative forms) actually form two commands: reproduce and rule. God’s word is not merely a form of blessing, but is now addressed to them personally; this is a distinct emphasis with the creation of human beings. But with the blessing comes the ability to be fruitful and to rule. In procreation they will share in the divine work of creating human life and passing on the di­vine image (see 5:1–3); in ruling they will preserve and extend it.

They together, the human race collec­tively, have the responsibility of seeing to the welfare of that which is put un­der them and the privilege of using it for their benefit.
every seed-bearing plant on the face of the entire earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the animals of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food. It was so.

31 God saw all that he had made—and it was very good.

There was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

The heavens and the earth 2 were completed with everything that was in them. 2 By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, 3 and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. 3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy 4 because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation.

The Creation of Man and Woman

4 This is the account of the heavens and the earth 5 when they were created—when the LORD God 6 made the earth and heavens.

5 Now 9 no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field 8 had yet sprouted, for the LORD

The text uses "hinenneh" (hinneh) often archaically translated "behold." It is often used to express the dramatic present, the immediacy of an event—"Look, this is what I am doing!"

A sn G. J. Wenham (Genesis [WBC], 1:34) points out that there is nothing in the passage that prohibits the man and the woman from eating meat. He suggests that eating meat came after the fall. Gen 9:3 marks the postfall practice of eating meat rather than inaugurate the practice, as is often understood.

B sn The phrase "I give" is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied in the translation for clarification.

C sn The Hebrew text again uses הִנֵּה (hinneh) for the sake of vividdness. It is a particle that goes with the gesture of pointing, calling attention to something.

D sn See the note on the phrase "the heavens and the earth" in 1:1.

E sn Heb "and blessed the host of them." Here the "host" refers to all the entities and creatures that God created to populate the earth. Gen 1:24-27 is structured around the theme of the next section, the particulars of which means "at the creation of man and women, the narrative tells what became of that creation. As a beginning, the construction of 2:4-7 forms a fine parallel to the construction of each הַדָּה (toledot, "this is the account of") section of the book traces a decline or a deterioration through to the next beginning point, and each is thereby a microcosm of the book which begins with divine blessing in the garden, and ends with a coffin in Egypt. So, what became of the creation? Gen 2:4-4:26 will explain that sin entered the world and all but destroyed God's perfect creation.

M sn See the note on the phrase "the heavens and the earth" in 1:1.

Part 2

The heavens and the earth 2 were completed with everything that was in them. 2 By the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing, 3 and he ceased on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. 3 God blessed the seventh day and made it holy 4 because on it he ceased all the work that he had been doing in creation. 5

The Creation of Man and Woman

This is the account of the heavens and the earth 5 when they were created—when the LORD God 6 made the earth and heavens.

Now 9 no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field 8 had yet sprouted, for the LORD

N sn Heb "on the day." In contrast to the numbered days in ch. 1 (see note on "day" at 1:5), "day" appears here in a phrase which means "at the time when..." It can be translated as "when" but does not need to refer to a particular day. It can refer to a broader period of time (cp. Obad 11), though typically a short period of time pertaining to a particular event. Here it summarizes the seven days of creation as "when" the Lord created.

Q sn Advocates of the so-called documentary hypothesis of pentateuchal authorship argue that the introduction of the name Yahweh (LORD) in combination with the name God. For a recent discussion of the documentary hypothesis from a theologically conservative perspective, see D. A. Garrett, Rethinking Genesis.

For an attempt by source critics to demonstrate the legitimacy of the source critical method on the basis of some external parallels, see J. H. Tigay, ed., Literary Models for Biblical Criticism. For reaction to the source critical method by literary critics, see I. M. Kikawada and A. Quinn, Before Abraham Was; R. Alter, The Art of Biblical Narrative, 131-54; and Adele Berlin, Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative, 131-54.

P sn See the note on the phrase "the heavens and the earth" in 1:1; the order here is reversed, but the meaning is the same.

Q sn Heb "Now every spring of the field before it was." The verb forms, although appearing to be imperfects, are technically perfects coming after the adverb לְכַלּוּ (terem). The word order (conjunct + subject + predicate) indicates a disjunctive clause, which provides background information for the following narrative (as in 1:2). Two negative clauses are given ("before any sprig...", and "before any plant...") followed by two causal clauses explaining them, and then a positive circumstantial clause is given—again dealing with water in 1:2 (water will well up).
refers to the wild, uncultivated plants (see Gen 21:15; Job 30:4, 7); whereas the second, נֶפֶשׁ (nēfēsh), refers to cultivated grains. It is a way of saying “back before anything was growing.”

**A** **TN** The two causal clauses explain the first two disjunctive clauses: There was no uncultivated, general growth because there was no rain, and there were no grains because there was no man to cultivate the soil.

**sn** The last clause in v. 5, “and there was no man to cultivate the ground,” is a perfect clause signaling the end of a particular narrative sequence. The Hebrew word תָּנָה (tn) is traditionally translated “waste” because of its use in Job 36:27. However, an Akkadian cognate in Babylonian texts refers to subterranean springs or waterways. Such a spring would fit the description in this context, since this water “goes up” and waters the ground.

**C** **TN** "was going up." The verb is an imperfect form, which in this narrative context carries a customary nuance, indicating continual action in past time.

**D** **TN** The perfect with the nascent carries the same nuance as the preceding verb. Whenever it would well up, it would water the ground.

**E** **TN** The Hebrew word אֲדָמָה (ʾadamāh) actually means “ground; fertile soil.”

**sn** Here is an indication of fertility. The waters would well up from the earth (גֵד, ged) and water all the surface of the fertile soil (אָדָמה, ʾadamāh). It is from that soil that the man (אָדָם, ʾadam) was made (Gen 2:7).

**F** **TN** Or “fashioned.” The prefixed verb form with נָבַל (nabal) consecutively initiates naming a verb. The Hebrew word יָדָר (yadar) means “to form” or “to fashion,” usually by plan or design (see the related noun יָד (yad) in Gen 6:5). It is the term for an artist’s work (the Hebrew term יָד (yad) refers to a potter; see Jer 18:2–4).

**G** **TN** Various traditions in the ancient Near East reflect this idea of creation. Egyptian texts show a deity turning little people off of the potter’s wheel with another deity giving them life. In the Bible humans are related to the soil and return to it (see 3:19; see also Job 4:19, 20:9; and Isa 29:16).

**H** **TN** The line literally reads “And Yahweh formed the man, soil, from the ground.” “Soil” is an adverbial accusative, identifying the material from which the man was made.

**sn** The Hebrew word הֹגֵן (ḥōgen, “breath”) is used for God and for the life imparted to humans, not animals (see T. J. Pedley, “The Testament Level of Genesis,” VT 11 [1961]: 177–87).

**sn** Its usage in the Bible conveys more than a breathing living organism (גֵּרֵון, gerēôn, nefēsh khayyah). Whatever is given this breath of life becomes animated with the life from God, has spiritual understanding (Job 32:8), and has a functioning conscience (Prov 20:27).

**sn** Human life is described here as consisting of a man made from soil (from the ground) and breath (given by God). Both animals and humans are called “a living being” (נֶפֶשׁ-חַיָּה, nefēsh-ḥayyah) but humankind became that in a different and more significant way.

**I** **TN** The Hebrew term נֶפֶשׁ (nēfēsh, “being”) is often translated “soul,” but the word usually refers to the whole person. The phrase נֶפֶשׁ-חַיָּה (nēfēsh-ḥayyah, “living being”) is used of both animals and human beings (see 1:20, 24, 30; 2:19).

**J** **TN** Traditionally “garden,” but the subsequent description of this “garden” makes it clear that it is an orchard of fruit trees. The Hebrew word פָּרָשָׁה (parashā, “orchard”) is used of both an animal’s den and a human orchard.

**sn** Nothing is said here of the creation of this orchard took place. A harmonization with chap. 1 could lead to the conclusion that it was by decree, prior to the creation of human life. But the narrative sequence here in chap. 2 suggests the perfect use of the perfect in the relative clause in the following verse.

**K** **TN** Heb “from the east” or “off east.”

**sn** One would assume this is east from the perspective of the land of Israel, particularly since the rivers in the area are identified as the rivers in those eastern regions.

**L** **TN** The name Eden (אֵדֶן, ʾēden) means “pleasure” in Hebrew.

**M** **TN** The perfect verbal form here requires the past perfect translation since it describes an event that preceded the event described in the main clause.

**N** **TN** Heb “ground,” referring to the fertile soil.

**O** **TN** Heb “desirable of sight [or “appearance”].” The phrase describes the kinds of trees that are visually pleasing and yield fruit that is desirable to the appetite.

**P** **TN** The verse ends with a disjunctive clause providing a parenthetical bit of information about the existence of two special trees in the garden.

**Q** **TN** In light of Gen 3:22, the construction “tree of life” should be interpreted to mean a tree that produces life-giving fruit (objective genitive) rather than a living tree (absolute genitive). See E. O. James, The Tree of Life (SHR), and R. Marcus, “The Tree of Life in Proverbs,” JBL 62 (1943): 117–20.

**R** **TN** The expression “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” must be interpreted to mean that the tree would produce fruit which, when eaten, gives special knowledge of “good and evil.” Scholars debate what this phrase means here. For a survey of views, see G. J. Wenham, Genesis (WBC), 162–64. One view is that “good” refers to that which enhances, promotes, and produces life, while “evil” refers to anything that disrupts, interrupts or destroys life. So eating from this tree would change human nature—people would be able to alter life for better (in their thinking) or for worse. See D. J. A. Clines, “The Tree of Knowledge and the Tower of Babel,” ZAW 76 (1964): 514–15; and I. Engnell, “Knowledge and ‘Life’ in the Creation Story,” Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East [VTSup], 103-19. Another view understands the “knowledge of good and evil” as the capacity to discern between moral good and evil. Such wisdom is characteristic of divine beings, as the serpent’s promise implies (3:1). The tree of knowledge of good and evil, however, that this capacity does not include the ability to do what is right. God prohibits man from eating of the tree. The prohibition becomes a test to see if man will be satisfied with his role and place, or if he will try to ascend to the divine level. Man will possess moral discernment/wisdom, as God reveals and imparts it to him, but it is not something to be grasped at in an effort to become a “god.” In fact, the command to be obedient was the first lesson in moral discernment/wisdom. God was essentially saying, “I am the only god. Respect my authority and commands. Disobey me and you will die.” When man disobeys, he decides he does not want to acquire moral wisdom God’s way, but instead tries to rise immediately to the divine level. Once man has acquired such divine wisdom by eating the tree’s fruit (3:22), he must be banned from the garden so that he will not be able to achieve his goal of being godlike and thus live forever, a divine characteristic (3:24). Ironically, man now has the capacity to discern good from evil (3:22), but he is morally corrupted and rebellious and will not. This is clearly a test of his moral discernment/wisdom.

**S** **TN** The disjunctive clause (note the construction conjunction + subject + predi- cate) introduces an entire paragraph about the richness of the region in the east.

**T** **TN** The Hebrew active participle may be translated here as indicating past durative action, “was flowing,” or as indicating the passive, “flows.” Since this river was the source of the rivers mentioned in vv. 11–14, which appear to describe a situation contemporary with the narrator, it is preferable to translate the participle in v. 10 with the
from Eden to water the orchard, and from there it divides into four headstreams.\footnote{11} The name of the first is Pishon; it runs through\footnote{12} the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold.

\footnote{12} (The gold of that land is pure,\footnote{13} pearls\footnote{14} and lapis lazuli\footnote{15} are also there.) The name of the second river is Gihon; it runs through\footnote{16} the entire land of Cush.\footnote{17} The name of the third river is Tigris; it runs along the east side of Assyria.\footnote{18} The fourth river is the Euphrates.

\footnote{17} The LORD God took the man and placed\footnote{18} him in the orchard\footnote{19} Eden to care for it and to maintain it.\footnote{20}M\footnote{21}N\footnote{22}O Then the LORD God commanded\footnote{23} the man, “You may freely eat fruit\footnote{24} from every tree of the orchard,\footnote{25} but\footnote{26} you must not eat\footnote{27} from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will surely die.”

\footnote{18} The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.\footnote{19} I will make a companion\footnote{20} for him who corresponds to him.”\footnote{21} Or “branch es”;\footnote{22} Heb “heads.” Cf. NAB “streams”; NASB “rivers.”

\footnote{D} D\footnote{10} Tn “Eden is that which goes around.” E\footnote{E} Tn “Eden”\footnote{F} “good.” F\footnote{F} Tn The Hebrew term translated “pearls” may be a reference to resin (cf. NIV “aromatic resin”) or another precious stone (cf. NAB, NASB, NRSV “billionum”). G\footnote{G} Tn Or “onyx.”

\footnote{H} H\footnote{H} Tn “it is that which goes around.” I\footnote{I} Tn Cush. In the Bible the Hebrew word \textit{kush} (“Kush”) often refers to Ethiopia (so KJV, CEV), but here it must refer to Egypt, the land of the papyruses, the area of the later Casite dynasty of Babylon. See Gen 10:8 as well as E. A. Speiser, \textit{Genesis (AB)}, 20. J\footnote{J} Tn “Asshur” (so NIV, NIV). K\footnote{K} Tn The Hebrew verb \textit{na\text{n}kh}, translated here as “placed” is a different verb than the one used in Z. L\footnote{L} Tn Translated as “The Gar­den of Eden,” the context makes it clear that the garden (or orchard) was in Eden (making “Eden” a genitive of location). M\footnote{M} Tn Heb “to work it and to keep it.” N\footnote{N} SW Note that man’s task is to care for and maintain the trees of the orchard. Not unlike after the fall, when he is con­demned to cultivate the soil, does this task change.

O\footnote{O} SW This is the first time in the Bible that the verb \textit{tavash} (\textit{h\text{\text{\textcopyright}}} “to command”) appears. Whatever the man had to do in the garden, the main focus of the narrative is on its distinctiveness. Mankind created humans with the capacity to obey him and then tested them with commands. P\footnote{P} Tn The imperfect verb form proba­bly carries the nuance of permission (“you may eat”) since the man is not being commanded to eat from every tree. The accompanying infinitive absolute adds emphasis “you may freely eat,” or “you may eat to your heart’s content.” Q\footnote{Q} Tn The word “fruit” is not in the He­brew text, but is implied as the direct object of the verb “eat.” Presumably the only part of the tree the man would eat would be its fruit (cf. 2:2).

R\footnote{R} Tn The directive clause here indicates contrast: “but from the tree of the knowledge...” S\footnote{S} Tn The negated imperfect verb form indicates prohibition, “you must not eat.” T\footnote{T} Or “in the very day, as soon as.” If one understands the expression to have this more precise meaning, then the fol­lowing narrative presents a problem, for the man does not die physically as soon as he eats from the tree. In this case one may argue that spiritual death is in view. If physical death is in view here, there are two options to explain the following narrative. 1) The following phrase “You will surely die” concerns mortality which ultimately results in death (a natural paraphrase would be, “You will become mortal”), or 2) God mercifully gave man a reprieve, allowing him to live longer than he deserved.

U\footnote{U} Tn Heb “dying you will die.” The im­perfect verb form here has the nuance of the specific future because it is intro­duced with the temporal clause, “when you eat...you will die.” That certainty is underscored with the infinitive absolute, “you will surely die.”

S\footnote{S} Tn The Hebrew text “dying you will die” does not refer to two aspects of death (“dying spiritually, you will then die physically”). The construction simply em­phasizes the certainty of death, however it is defined. Death is essentially sepa­ration. To die physically means separa­tion from the land of the living, but not extinction. Physical death essentially means to be separated from God. Both occur with sin, although the physical alienation is more gradual than instant, and the spiritual is immediate, although the effects of it con­tinue the separation.

V\footnote{V} Tn Heb “The being of man by himself is not good.” The mean­ing of “good” must be de­fined contextually. Within the context of creation, in which God instructs humans to be fruitful and mul­tiply, the man alone cannot comply. Being alone prevents the man from fulfilling the design of creation and the purpose for which he was created. W\footnote{W} Tn Traditionally “helper.” The English word “helper,” be­cause it can denote so many different ideas, does not ac­curate. A parallel of the connotation of the Hebrew word \textit{\textit{ezer}} (‘ezer) Usage of the Hebrew term does not suggest a subor­dinate role, a connotation which English “helper” can have. In the Bible God is fre­quently described as the “helper” to the one who does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, the one who meets our needs. In this context the word seems to express the idea of an “indispensable companion.” The woman would supply what the man was lacking in the design of creation and logically it would follow that the man would supply what she was lacking, although that is not stated here. See fur­ther M. L. Rosenberg, "A Helper Equal to Him," \textit{Juda 139} (1986): 277-80.

X\footnote{X} Tn The Hebrew expression 13325 (\textit{kenegdo}) literally means “according to the opposite of him.” Translations such as “suitable for” (NASB, NIV), “match­ing,” “corresponding to” all capture the idea. (Translations that render the phrase simply “partner” [cf. NAB, NRSV], while not totally inaccurate, do not reflect the nuance of correspondence and/or suit­ability.) The man’s name is matched by the woman’s as she reflects him and complements him. Together they correspond. In short, this prepos­itional phrase indicates that she has ev­erything that God had invested in him. Y\footnote{Y} Tn Or “fashioned.” To harmonize the order of events with the chronology of chapter one, some translate the imperfect verb form with \textit{vay} (1) consecutive as a past perfect (“had formed,” cf. NIV) here. (In chapter one the creation of the animals preceded the creation of man; here the animals are created after the man.) How­ever, it is unlikely that the Hebrew con­struction can be translated verbatim into the middle of this pericope, for the criteria for unmarked temporal overlay are not present here. See S. R. Driver, \textit{A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew}, 84-88, and especially R. Buth, “Methodological Collision between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis,” \textit{Discourse Linguistics}, 138-54. For a con­trary viewpoint see \textit{IBHS} 552-53 33.2.3 and C. J. Collins, “The \textit{Wayqiytol} as ‘Pluperfect’: When and Why,” \textit{TynBul} 46 (1995): 117-40.

Z\footnote{Z} Tn The imperfect verb form is future
from the perspective of the past time narrative.

A TN Here for the first time the Hebrew word הָאָדָם (’adam) appears without the article, suggesting that it might now be the name “Adam” rather than “[the] man.” Translations of the Bible differ as to where they make the change from “man” to “Adam” (e.g., NASB and NIV translate “Adam” here, while NEB and NRSV continue to use “the man”); the KJV uses “Adam” twice in v. 19). B TN “He had not found a companion who corresponded to him.” The subject of the third masculine singular verb form is indefinite. Without a formally expressed subject the verb may be translated as passive; “one did not find = there was not found.” C TN Heb “And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man.” D TN Heb “and he slept.” In the sequence the verb may be subordinated to the following verb to indicate a temporal clause (“while”). E TN Traditionally translated “rib,” the Hebrew word actually means “side.” The Hebrew text reads, “and he took one from his sides,” which could be rendered “part of his sides.” That idea may fit better the explanation by the man that the woman is his flesh and bone. F TN Heb “closed up the flesh under it.” G TN The Hebrew verb is בָּנָה (banah, “to make,” “to construct”). The text states that the Lord God built the rib into a woman. Again, the passage gives no indication of precisely how this was done. H TN The Hebrew term הָאָדָם (happa’ am) means “the [this] time, this place,” or “now.” The expression conveys the futility of the man while naming the animals and finding no one who corresponded to him. I TN The Hebrew text is very precise, stating: “of this one it will be said, ‘woman.’” The text is not necessarily saying that the man named his wife—that comes after (“Adam” here, “was saying”); 2 Sam 19:13; 2 Chr 7:14; 24). There is no sense of vulnerability. But after the entrance of sin into the race, nakedness takes on a negative sense. It is then usually connected with the sense of vulnerability, shame, exploitation, and exposure.” J TN The imperfect verb form here has a habitual or characteristic nuance as the preceding verbs in the verse. The Hebrew form of the word “flesh” (שָׂרָה, basar) in the translation often leads to improper or incomplete interpretations. The Hebrew word refers to more than just a sexual union. When they unite in marriage, the man and woman bring into being a new family unit (יִבְנָה plus suffix). The phrase “one flesh” occurs only here and must be interpreted in light of v. 23. There the man declares that the woman is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. To be one’s “bone and flesh” is to be related by blood to someone. For example, the phrase describes the marital relationship between Laban and Jacob (Gen 29:14); Abimelech and the Shechemites (Judg 9:2; his mother was a Shechemite); David and the Israelites (2 Sam 5:1); David and the elders of Judah (2 Sam 19:12); and David and his nephew Amasa (2 Sam 19:13; verse 2). The Hebrew language later marriages do not involve such a divine surgical operation, the first marriage sets the pattern for how later marriages are understood and explains why marriage supersedes the parent-child relationship. K TN Heb “And the two of them were naked, the man and his wife.” L TN The imperfect verb form has a habitual or characteristic nuance. For other examples of יָדוֹן (’al ken, “therefore, that is why”) with the imperfect in a narrative framework, see Gen 10:9; 32:32 (the phrase “to this day” indicates characteristic); Num 21:14, 27; 1 Sam 5:5 (note “to this day”); 19:24 (perhaps the imperfect is customary here, “were saying”); 2Sam 5:8. The verb translated “leave” (גָּזֶה, avoz) normally means “to abandon, to forsake, to leave behind, to discard,” when used with a subject “his”; see Josh 22:3; 1 Sam 30:13; Ps 27:10; Prov 21:7; Isa 54:6; 60:15; 62:4; Jer 49:11). Within the context of the ancient Israelite extended family structure, this cannot refer to emotional or geographical separation. The narration is using hyperbole to emphasize the change in perspective that typically occurs when a young man when his thoughts turn to love and marriage. M TN The perfect with וַיָּבוֹא (vav) consecutively carries the same habitual or characteristic nuance as the preceding imperfect. The verb is traditionally translated “cleaves [to]”; it has the basic idea of “stick with/to” (e.g., it is used of Ruth repeatedly staying with her mother-in-law in Ruth 1:14). In this passage it describes the inseparable relationship between the man and the woman in marriage as God intended it. O TN Heb “and they become one flesh.” The perfect with וַיָּאָבְךָ consecutively carries the same habitual or characteristic nuance as the preceding verbs in the verse.
ashamed, to put to shame," but its meaning is stronger than "to be embarrassed." The word conveys the fear of exploitation or evil—enemies are put to shame through military victory. It indicates the feeling of shame that approximates a fear of evil.

A sn The chapter begins with disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + predicate) that introduces a new character and a new scene in the story.

B sn Many theologians identify or associate the serpent with Satan. In this view Satan acts as a "lie" in the serpent's capacity to speak. While later passages in the Bible may indicate there was a satanic presence behind the serpent (see, for example, Rev 12:9), the immediate context pictures the serpent as simply one of the animals of the field created by God (see v. 14). An ancient Jewish interpretation explains the reference to the serpent in a literal manner, attributing the capacity to speak to all the animals in the orchard. This text (Jub. 3:28) states, "On that day [the day the man and woman were taken out of the orchard] the mouth of all the beasts and cattle and birds and whatever walked or moved was stopped from speaking because all of them used to speak to one another with one speech and one language [presumed to be Hebrew, see 12:26]."

J sn in a positive sense "he repudiated the serpent's actions to jealousy. He writes that "the serpent, living in the company of Adam and his wife, grew jealous of the blessings which he supposed were destined for them if they obeyed God's behests, and, believing that disobedience would bring them harm, he maliciously persuaded the woman to taste of the tree of wisdom."

C sn The Hebrew word שׁדע (‘arum) basically means "clever." This idea then polarizes into the nuances "cunning" (in a negative sense, see Job 5:12; 15:5), and "prudent" in a positive sense (Prov 12:16; 14:8; 18:15; 22:3; 27:12). The positive polarization of meaning can be detected in related words derived from the same root (see Exod 21:14; Josh 9:4; 1 Sam 23:22; Job 5:13; Ps 83:3). The negative nuance obviously appears in Gen 3, where the snake attempts to talk the woman into disobeying God. He does so by first representing himself to the woman in the form of a harmless creature (cf. KJV, NAB, JPS). We know some of these beings as messengers or "angels." An examination of parallel constructions shows that a predicative understanding ("you will be like God himself, knowing good and evil") is possible (see Gen 27:23, where "hairy" is predicative, complementing the verb "to be"). Other evidence suggests that the participle is attributive, modifying "divine/heavenly beings" (see Ps 31:12; Isa 13:14; 16:2; 29:5; 58:11; Jer 14:9; 20:9; 23:9; etc.).

D sn There is a wordplay in Hebrew between the words שׁדע (‘arum) שׁדע (‘arum) 25 in 2:25 and "shrewd" (‘arum, 'arum) in 3:1. The point seems to be that the integrity of the man and the woman is the focus of the serpent's craftsmanship. At the beginning they are naked and he is shrewd; afterward, they will be covered and he will be cursed.

E sn in a positive sense "animals of the field." E sn "Indeed that God said," The beginning of the quotation is elliptical and therefore difficult to translate. One must supply a phrase like "is it true": "Indeed, [is it true] that God said..." F sn God. The serpent does not use the expression יָהוּ אֱלֹהִים (Yahweh God) because there is no covenant relationship involved between God and the serpent. He only speaks of "God." In the process the serpent draws the woman into his manner of speech so that she too only speaks of "God." G sn Heb "you must not eat from all the tree[s] of the orchard." After the negated prohibitive verb, הסע (mikkoli, "from all") has the meaning "from any." Note the construction in Lev 18:26, where the statement "you must not do from all these abominable things" means "you must not do any of these abominable things." See Lev 22:25 and Deut 28:14 as well.

H sn There is a notable change between the Lord God had said and what the woman says. God said "you may freely eat" (the imperfect with the infinitive absolute, see 2:16), but the woman omits the emphatic infinitive "in this way" of God ("you will surely die," see 2:17). J sn The Hebrew construction is קם (pen) with the imperfect tense, which conveys a negative imperative: "Test you die" = "in order that you not die." By stating the warning in this way, the woman omits the emphatic infinitive used by God ("you shall surely die," see 2:17). K sn The response of the serpent includes the infinite absolute with a blatan negation equal to saying: "Not—you will surely die" הֵיהָ קָם לֵאמֶר קָם תְּמֻתֶּנֶּךָ, לאֵموت תְּמֻתֶּנֶּךָ. The construction makes this emphatic because normally the negative particle precedes the finite verb. The serpent is a liar, denying that there is a penalty for sin (see John 8:44).

L sn Surely you will not die. Here the serpent is more aware of what the Lord God said than the woman was; he simply adds a blatan negation, normally saying God said. In the account of Jesus' temptation Jesus is victorious because he knows the scripture better than Satan (Matt 4:1–11).

M sn Or "like divine beings who know." It is unclear how the plural participle translated "knowing" is functioning. On the one hand, יָדֵי (yode'e) could be taken as a substantival participle functioning as a predicate noun in the sentence. In this case one might translate: "You will be, like God himself, knowers of good and evil." On the other hand, it could be taken as an attributive adjective modifying יָדֵי (elohim). In this case יָדֵי has to be taken as a numerical plural referring to "gods," "divine or heavenly beings," for if the one true God were the intended referent, a singular form of the participle would appear as a modifier. Following this line of interpretation, one could translate, "You will be like divine or heavenly beings who know good and evil." The following context may support this translation, for in 3:22 God says to an unidentified group, "Look, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil." It is possible that God is addressing his heavenly court (see the note on the word "make" in 1:26), the members of which are "gods," "heavenly beings." In all of these texts, where a comparative clause and accompanying adjective/participle follow a copulative ("to be") verb, the adjective/participle is attribute after the noun in the comparative clause. The translation of "God" though is supported by how דָּמָי (elohim) is used in the surrounding context (see Gen 1:26), pointing to the true God and many translations take it this way (cf. NIV, TNIV, RSV, RSVV, ESV, HCSB, NLT, NASB, REB, and NKJV). In this interpretation the plural participle refers to Adam and Eve.

N sn You will be like God, knowing good and evil. The serpent raises doubts about the integrity of God. He implies that the only reason for the prohibition was that God was protecting the divine domain. If the man and woman were to eat, they would enter into that domain. The temptation is to overstep divinely established boundaries. (See Ben Ezer, When Man Becomes God [PTMS, 25].)

O sn Heb "And the woman saw." The clause can be rendered as a temporal clause subordinate to the following verb in the sequence.
produced fruit that was good for food, and it was attractive to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise. She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

The Judgment Oracles of God at the Fall

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about in the orchard at the early morning time of the day, and they hid themselves from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard. But the LORD God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?” The man replied, “I heard you moving about in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.” And the LORD God said, “Who told you that you were naked?” Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from? The man said, “The woman whom you gave me, she gave me some fruit from the tree and I ate it.” So the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman replied, “The serpent tricked me, and I ate.”

The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all the cattle

This is another rhetorical question, asking more than what it appears to ask. The second question in the verse reveals the Lord God's real concern. On the Hebrew word order (“Did you from the tree—which I commanded you not to eat from it—eat?”) is arranged to emphasize that the man’s sin was eating the fruit of the tree, and that the eating of the fruit was an act of disobedience. The relative clause inserted immediately after the reference to the tree brings out the point very well. Pn The Hebrew construction in this sentence uses an independent nominative absolute (formerly known as a cusus pendens). The woman is in the independent nominative absolute; it is picked up by the formal subject, the pronoun “she” written with the verb (“she gave”). The point of the construction is to throw the emphasis on the “woman.” But what makes this so striking is that a relative clause has been deleted in what is meant by the reference to the woman: “whom you gave me.” Ultimately, the man is blaming God for giving him the woman who (from the man’s viewpoint) caused him to sin.

Q The words “some fruit” here and the pronoun “it” at the point of the sentence are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied for stylistic reasons.

R The use of the demonstrative pronoun is enigmatic, serving as an undeciphered particle for emphasis. It gives the sense of “What in the world have you done?” (see R. J. Williams, Hebrew Syntax, 26). S sn The Hebrew word order puts the subject (“the serpent”) before the verb here, giving prominence to it.

T The verb (the Hiphil of נָשַׁה, nāṣāh) is used elsewhere of a king or god misleading his people into false confidence (2 Kgs 18:29 – 2 Chr 32:15 – Isa 36:4; 2 Kgs 19:10 – Isa 37:10), of an ally deceiving a partner (Obad 7), of God deceiving his sinful people as a form of judgment (Jer 4:10), of false prophets instilling their audience with false hope (Jer 29:8), and of pride and false confidence producing self-deception (Jer 37:5, 49:16; Obad 3).

U sn Note that God uses the word “woman” in question 2. Since the question of the serpent, does not call for confession, as he did to the man and the woman; there is only the announcement of the curse. The order in this section is chaotic: The man is questioned, the woman is questioned, the serpent is questioned, sentence 3, the word “woman,” sentence 4, is passed on the man.

V The Hebrew word translated “cursed,” a passive participle from אָרָר (ʿarar), either means “punished” or “banished,” depending on how one interprets
and the living creatures of the field! On your belly you will crawl\(^A\) and dust you will eat\(^A\) all the days of your life. And I will put hostility\(^C\) between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring;\(^D\) her offspring will attack\(^F\) your head, and you\(^G\) will attack\(^G\) her offspring’s heel.\(^H\)

To the woman he said, "I will greatly increase your labors;\(^K\) with pain you will give birth to children."

Heel. The verb (translated "attack") agrees grammatically with the collective singular "offspring," see Gen 16:10; 22:17; 24:60. The word "head" is an adversarial accusative, locating the blow. A crushing blow to the head would be potentially fatal.

F 11 Or "but you will...;", or "as they attack your head, you will attack their heel." The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) is understood as contrastive. Both clauses place the subject before the verb, a construction that is sometimes used to indicate synchronic action (see Judg 15:14).

G 11 Or Your offspring’s heel. Though the conflict will actually involve the serpent’s offspring (snakes) and the woman’s offspring (human beings), v. 15b for rhetorical effect depicts the conflict as being between the serpent and the woman’s offspring, as if the serpent will outlive the woman. The statement is personalized for the sake of the addressee (the serpent) and reflects the ancient Semitic concept of corporate solidarity, which emphasizes the close relationship between a progenitor and his offspring. Note Gen 2:18, where the LORD says to Jacob, "Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you [second masculine singular] will spread out in all directions." Jacob will "spread out" in all directions through his offspring, but the text states the matter as if this will happen to him personally.

H 11 The nuance of this rare verb is difficult to know with certainty. The woman’s offspring and the serpent’s offspring are both said to הָעָלְיוּ (shuf) at each other. Some have supposed two homonymous roots meaning "to bite" and "to crush," but this appears foreign. In the other two uses of the word, threats are dark (Ps 139:11) and a storm (Job 9:17). These make a meaning "bruise" look improbable for הוּע. However for Ps 139:11 a concrete reading from הָעָלְיוּ (sakhakh; "to cover") has become widely accepted in place of הוּע. Others propose that הוּע (shuf) and הָעָלְיוּ (shag) are related, the latter including meanings "to pester, to attack" (HALOT, 1375). Cognates in West and South Semitic include meanings of spreading, rubbing, smearing, stroking, and polishing. Perhaps a certain motion, side to side or back and forth, is central to the meaning, but would easily be pictured in a confrontation between a man and a snake, whether striking at each other or swaying before the strike. The LXX uses τίπευξα (tīpera) "to watch, keep, guard" which envisages the two watching each other in wary anticipation of attack. 11:16 Or Rom 16:20 may echo Gen 3:15 but it does not use the specific language of Gen 3:15 in the LXX. Paul uses the imagery of God soon crushing Satan’s head under the feet of the church. If Paul were interpreting Gen 3:15, he is not seeing it as a conclusive in limiting to Jesus defeating Satan via the crucifixion and resurrection, but extending beyond that. 11:16 Or Heb "you will attack him [on] the heel." The verb (translated "attack") is repeated here, a fact that is obscured by some translations (e.g., NIV "crush...strike"). The singular pronoun agrees grammatically with the collective singular "offspring," see Gen 16:10; 22:17; 24:60. The word "heel" is an adversarial accusative, locating the blow. A bite on the heel from a poisonous serpent is potentially fatal.

11 Sn The etiological nature of v. 15 is apparent, though its relevance for modern western attitudes is perhaps lost because we rarely come face to face with poisonous snakes. Ancient Israelites, who often encountered snakes (see e.g., Eccl 10:8; Amos 5:19), would find the statement quite meaningful as an explanation for the hostility between snakes and humans. (In the broader ancient Near Eastern context, compare the Mesopotamian serpent omens. See H. W. F. Saggs, The Greed of Greed, the Passover of Peace [309].) This ongoing struggle, when interpreted in light of v. 15, is a tangible reminder of the conflict introduced into the world by the first humans’ rebellion against God. Many Christian theologians (going back to Irenaeus) understand v. 15 as the so-called protovangelium, supposedly prophesying Christ’s victory over Satan (see W. Witfall, "Genesis 3:15—a Protovangelium?" CBQ 36 [1974]: 361-65; and R. A. Martin, "The Earliest Messianic Interpretation of Genesis 3:15," JBL 84 [1965]: 425-27). In this allegorical approach, the woman’s offspring is initially Cain who then fights his brother Abel (ultimately Jesus Christ, the offspring (Heb "seed") of the woman (see Gal 4:4)). The offspring of the serpent includes the evil powers and demons of the spirit world, as well as those humans who are in the kingdom of darkness (see John 8:44). According to this view, the passage begins with the first hint of the gospel. Satan delivers a crippling blow to the Seed of the woman (Jesus), who in turn delivers a fatal blow to the Serpent (first defeating him through the death and resurrection [1 Cor 15:53-57] and then destroying him in the judgment [20:15]). However, the grammatical structure of Gen 3:15b does not suggest this view. The repetition of the verb "attack," as well as the word order, suggests mutual hostility being depicted, not the defeat of the serpent. If the serpent’s defeat were being portrayed, it is odd that the alleged description of his demise comes first in the sentence. If he has already been crushed by the woman’s "Seed," how can he bruise his heel? To sustain the allegorical view, v. 15b must be translated in one of the following ways: "he will crush your head, even though you attack his heel" (in the judgment [20:15]) or "he will crush your head as you attack his heel" (the clauses, both of which place the subject before the verb, may indicate synchronic action).

11 Jn The imperfect verb form is emphasized and intensified by the infinitive absolute (see the second passage first in the sentence). If he has already been crushed by the woman’s "Seed," how can he bruise his heel? To sustain the allegorical view, v. 15b must be translated in one of the following ways: "he will crush your head, even though you attack his heel" (in the judgment [20:15]) or "he will crush your head as you attack his heel" (the clauses, both of which place the subject before the verb, may indicate synchronic action).

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You will want to control your husband, but he will dominate you.\(^a\)

But to Adam\(^e\) he said, “Because you obeyed your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ the ground is cursed because of you; in painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, but you will eat the grain\(^f\) of the field.

By the sweat of your brow you will eat food until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you will return.”\(^m\)

The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all the living.\(^n\) The LORD God made garments from skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.\(^o\) And the LORD God said, “Now that the man has become like one of us,\(^r\) knowing good and evil, he must not be allowed to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”\(^s\) So the LORD God expelled him from the orchard in Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. \(^t\) When he drove the man out, he placed on the eastern side of the orchard in Eden angelic sentries\(^u\) who used the flame of a whirling sword\(^v\) to guard the way to the tree of life.

The Story of Cain and Abel

Now the man was intimate with his wife Eve, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Cain. Then she said, “I have created a man just as the LORD did!”\(^a\) Then she gave birth\(^b\) to his brother Abel.\(^c\) Abel took care of the flocks, while Cain cultivated the ground.\(^d\)

At the designated time\(^e\) Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering\(^f\) to the LORD.\(^g\) But Abel brought\(^h\) some of the firstborn of his flock—even the fattest\(^i\) of them. And the LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering,\(^j\) but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased.\(^k\) So Cain became very angry,\(^l\) and his expression was downcast.\(^m\)

Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why is your expression downcast?\(^n\) Is it not true that if you do what is right, you will be fine?\(^o\) But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching\(^p\) at the door. It desires to domin­ate you, but you must subdue it.”\(^q\)

Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”\(^r\) While they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”\(^s\) And he replied, “I don’t know! Am I my brother’s guardian?\(^t\) But the LORD said, “What have you done? The and her husband, and because the word is used in a romantic sense in Song 7:11 HT (7:10 ET). However, this interpretation makes little sense in Gen 3:16. First, it does not fit well with the assertion “he will dominate you.” Second, it implies that sexual desire was not part of the original creation, even though the man and the woman were told to multiply. And third, it ignores the usage of the word in Gen 4:7 where it refers to sin’s desire to control and dominate Cain. (Even in Song of Songs it carries the basic idea of control, for it describes the young man’s desire to “have his way sexually” with the young woman.) In Gen 3:16 the LORD announces a struggle, a conflict between the man and the woman. She will desire to control him, but he will dominate her.
voice of your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground! 11 So now, you are banished from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand. 12 When you try to cultivate the ground it will no longer yield its best for you. You will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.” 13 Then Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment is too great to endure!” 14 Look! You are driving me off the land today, and I must hide from your presence. I will be a homeless wanderer on the earth; whoever finds me will kill me.” 15 But the LORD said to him, “All right then, if anyone kills Cain, Cain will be avenged seven times as much.” 16 Then the LORD put a special mark on Cain so that no one who found him would strike him down. 17 So Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

The Beginning of Civilization
17 Cain was intimate with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city, and he named the city after his son Enoch. 18 To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

19 Lamech took two wives for himself; the name of the first was Adah, and the name of the second was Zillah. 20 Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the first of those who live in tents and keep livestock. 21 The name of his brother was Jubal; he was the first of all who play the harp and the flute. 22 Now Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-Cain, who heated metal and shaped all kinds of tools made of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.

23 Lamech said to his wives, “Adah and Zillah! Listen to me! You wives of Lamech, hear my words! I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for hurting me.

24 If Cain is to be avenged seven times as much, then Lamech seventy-seven times!”

25 And Adam was intimate with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son. She named him Seth, saying, “God has given me another child in place of Abel because Cain killed him.” 26 And a son was also born to Seth, whom he named Enosh. At that time people began to worship the LORD.

From Adam to Noah
5 This is the record of the family line of Adam. When God created humankind, he made them in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female; when they were created, he blessed them and named them “human kind.”

instead. This interpretation also fits the tone of the passage, which is a judgment oracle. See further Susan T. Foh, “What is the Woman’s Desire?” WTT 37 (1975): 376–83.

A The Hebrew verb מָשַׁל (mashal) means “to rule over,” but in a way that emphasizes powerful control, domination, or mastery. This also is part of the baser human nature. The translation assumes the imperfect verb form has an objective/indicative sense here. Another option is to understand it as having a modal, desiderative nuance, “but he will want to dominate you.” In this case, the LORD simply announces the struggle without indicating who will emerge victorious.

SN This passage is a judgment oracle. It announces that conflict between man and woman will become the norm in human society. It does not depict the NT ideal, where the husband sacrificially loves his wife, as Christ loved the church, and where the wife recognizes the husband’s loving leadership in the family and voluntarily submits to it. Sin produces