Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ,

We have now finished with chapter 1 and creation week. We started “*In the beginning,*” and we worked through each of the seven days, finishing with the day that God blessed and made holy in chapter 2:1-3. And as I explained last time, chapter 2 should really begin at verse 4. For that is where the rest of Genesis begins. And we know this because verse 4 begins with a very specific phrase that we are going to come across nine more times in Genesis. So, ten times altogether we will read something like: “*These are the generations of (or the accounts) of…*” And they function as **headings of each of the next sections of Genesis**. Some of them are straight out genealogy lists, and some of them begin the account of Noah and the flood or Abraham, etc. But all these “generations” phrases tell us who the descendants are of the person that is named in the verse.

So, why have I given you this detailed explanation about the structure of Genesis and these “generations” phrases? Well, I have done this because **today’s sermon is about how Genesis 2 relates to Genesis 1**. We will come back to some smaller chunks of Genesis 2 in the coming weeks, but our focus today is simply how Genesis 2 relates to Genesis 1. You see, there are many today who argue that the Bible has two creation accounts, Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, and that they differ from one another. And they do this to argue against understanding Genesis 1 as an historical and literal account of a six-day creation. And perhaps, as we read chapter 2, you noticed what appear to be some discrepancies. For example, in chapter 1, we read that God created the vegetation and plants and trees on the third day, and human beings on the sixth day. But verses 5-9 of chapter 2 appear to suggest that there were no bushes or plants before God created Adam, and that it was after God created Adam that God made the trees appear. So, how are we to understand these apparent discrepancies? Are these two creation accounts? Do they disagree? Or is there a much better way to understand how Genesis 2 relates to Genesis 1? And of course, as interesting as all that might be, so what? Does it really matter? What does it have to do with salvation in Jesus Christ? What does it mean for you and me, and faith and life?

Well, it does matter. Let’s see why as we consider how Genesis 2 relates to Genesis 1.

1. And the first and most obvious matter that must be addressed is that **verse 4 does not mention a *person***. I told you earlier that each of the “generations” phrases tells us about the descendants of the person mentioned in the phrase. But here in this first one, we read, “*These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created*.”
   1. But this is not a problem; this is actually *very* helpful. For it helps us understand how chapter relates to chapter 1. We noted earlier that each of the “generations” phrases introduces a new section; it is the next part in the story of salvation. And so, when we get to **chapters 11-25**, for example, we get the generations of Terah, which is about Abraham. And every part of the life history of Abraham is a part of the story of salvation; part of how the Lord supervised and governed and overruled all things to eventually bring Messiah into the world. So, it is not *just* the genealogy of Terah. It is not *just* the account of Abraham’s life. It is the salvation history around Abraham, whose father was Terah. So, one way we could describe chapters 11-25 is the Abraham part of the story of Jesus Christ.
   2. **But the story of Jesus Christ does not begin with Abraham**. It actually begins before creation. For we have spoken before that creation exists to provide the Lord Jesus with an eternal bride. Before the universe existed, the three persons of the Trinity decreed to create the world, permit the Fall, and redeem a people that would be presented to Jesus at the end of time. And Jesus will live with them in a *new* heavens and *new* earth, as we read in Revelation 21. So, don’t ever think that God’s plan A was the Garden of Eden, which Adam mucked up, and then the cross was plan B. No, the cross and the new heavens and new earth was always plan A.
   3. So, we have heard how the heavens and earth were created. And as far as the *first* man and woman are concerned, the emphasis of chapter 1 was that they were created by God. So, they are unique; they did not have human parents. And verse 4 begins as it does because the emphasis here is on the begetting or producing activity of the heavens and the earth. We will read about plants *springing up from the ground*, and a mist *going up from the land*, and that Adam was formed *from the dust of the ground* and the woman *from one of his ribs*. And so, we are meant to view the first man and woman as descendants of or the generations of or begotten from the heavens and the earth. We could say even that the first human couple are a product of the marriage of heaven and earth. And because of the Fall, human beings *and* the heavens and the earth will need to be redeemed or recreated through Jesus Christ. And that will be the rest of the story of the Bible.
   4. But that is why this section begins: “*These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created*.” Verse 4 is where the story of Jesus Christ and why He came to earth, from heaven, and was a born a human being, begins.
2. But we see this also in **the emphasis that this chapter places on man**. And this is our second point.
   1. And we see this in that there is **way more detail about the creation of the man and the woman than about anything else in this chapter**. Chapter 1 simply said that God created them, male and female. But in chapter 2 we are given a lot of detail about How God created them. It starts with the **detail about the Garden**, which is where the man and woman will live.
      * 1. And I want to point out here that chapter 2 is **topical and not chronological**. Chapter 1 had very specific chronological indicators – like the evening and morning phrases, and the consecutive days. But we don’t see any of that in chapter 2. What we do read is the Lord putting Adam in the garden in verse 8 and in verse 15. And the Lord didn’t put Him in the garden twice. This is just the same event being told from a different perspective. So, unlike with chapter 1, God is not emphasizing chronology here. He is emphasizing the forming of the man and the woman. Everything else is about its relationship to the man and the woman.
      1. But we also have **details about how the man and woman were created**. We read that God “*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*,” and that he “*became a living creature*.” And then we read why the creation of the woman was necessary and how she was formed from Adam’s rib.
      2. And we even read about **Adam’s response to the creation of the woman**, which was, effectively, a Yowzer! and then their marriage. And if you have ever witnessed a marriage, Yowzer! is how every man responds when his bride comes through the door! And the Scriptures make clear that human marriage is a picture of a more ultimate or greater marriage – that of Christ and the church. And we are being introduced to that grand theme of the Bible right here in chapter 2.
         1. In **verse 18** we read that it was **not good for the man to be alone**. And so, God created a bride that was fit for the man and then brought her to him.
         2. And in **verse 24** we see that “*a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh*.” And if you have ever thought those words odd, because Adam did not have human parents, remember what we saw in our first point – Adam’s ‘parent’ *were* the heavens and the earth. He was of the heavens and the earth, and that was his entire focus, initially. But now had a wife to hold fast to and to become one flesh with.
         3. And congregation, this is a glorious picture of the ultimate marriage of Christ and His bride. It is an explanation of why God created the heavens and the earth.
            1. You see, the Bible reveals that God has chosen *some* to salvation; they will be the bride that the Father presents to the Son at the end of time. And this earth is where we live; it is where we became a fallen people.
            2. And thinking about **verse 24**, this earth is where Christ came to redeem His bride. He left His Father in heaven to hold fast to His bride. And He did this as He hung on the cross and shed His blood that she might be cleansed.
            3. But it will only be at the end of time that the Father presents the bride to the Son and they will truly become one flesh. And Adam’s ‘Yowzer!’ point us forward to the wedding Supper of heaven that is described in Revelation. You see, Jesus is not yet one with His bride. Jesus longs for the day when He is united with His bride.
      3. And down here on earth is where this grand salvation or wedding story is unfolding! And that is the story of salvation that chapter 2 introduces.
3. But we are introduced to the story of salvation, thirdly and lastly, as we see that **chapter 2 both *develops* chapter 1 and *prepares us for* chapter 3**.
   1. Chapter 1 described the **creation of a “*very good*” heavens and earth**. And chapter 2 tells us about this amazing and delightful garden. But we will see in chapter 3 that the consequences of the Fall effect every part of the created universe. Romans 8 describes it as the whole creation being subjected to futility and being in bondage to decay. And we have seen that in the recent earthquake and cyclone. And we see it every day in the thorns and weeds and rust that make our work so repetitive and hard.
   2. And chapter 1 just told us that God made man. But chapter 2 gives us the detail about how they were created. We see that man was **formed from the dust of the ground and that he became a living creature**. But what does God threaten if they disobey His command not to eat from the fruit if the Tree of the knowledge of good and evil? “*You shall surely die*.” And in chapter 3, death will enter creation as the man and woman disobey God. And God will say, “*For you are dust and to dust you will return*.”
   3. Also in chapter 2, the man and the woman are placed in a **most beautiful garden**. But what happens at the end of chapter 3? God drives them out of the garden, and they are barred from re-entering.
   4. And a prominent feature of this beautiful garden is **the trees** and the fruit that the man and the woman may enjoy. But one of those trees, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, will be at the centre of the Fall in chapter 3. But chapter 2 also mentions the **tree of life**. And at the end of chapter 3, God bars the way to the tree of life, lest Adam and eve would eat it and live forever. So, we can infer from this that is Adam and Eve had eaten from the tree of life *after the Fall*, they would have become eternally stuck in their fallen and wretched condition. So, with access to that tree permanently barred, the focus for Adam and Eve and for all of fallen humanity becomes another tree – the cross of Jesus Christ. People in Old Testament times will have to look forward to a promised Messiah in order to be receive eternal life. And they will do this with all of the promises and ceremonies of the Old Testament that point to Jesus and the cross. And people like you and me, New Testament people, must look back to the cross. We must believe in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen, in order to receive eternal life. And in this way, we become part of the bride that the Father will present to the Son, that they may live together in the new heavens and new earth. And brothers and sisters and young people and boys and girls, this is the grand theme of the Bible! And it has its origins here in chapters 1-3 and its conclusion in Revelation 22!
   5. And in terms of every-day living, chapter 2 introduces us to marriage. And it is clear that this relationship is the supreme human relationship of human society, which is meant to be satisfying and harmonious and enjoyable and fruitful. But that will all turn to custard in chapter 3. What was supposed to most beautiful will now be plagued by the potential for the worst sorts of hurts and reversals and agonies. But there is much for us to learn here about what marriage means and signifies, and our roles as husbands and wives. And these same truthes have implications for every human relationship. So, even as we strive to be Christ-like in our relationships, we should long for life in the new heavens and new earth where there will no longer be dysfunction in our relationships. So, let’s keep praying that the Lord would return soon.

Well, as we conclude, there is one thing that **does not change** from chapter 1 to chapter 2 to chapter 3. Can you guess what that is? Or, to be more accurate, can you guess ***who*** that is? It is God. He is unchanging. He remains “*merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness*.” Chapter 3 does not rock God’s world. Chapter 3 is part of His plan to redeem a people whom He will one day present to His Son. And we are introduced to it here in chapter 2.

And that is the anchor upon which the story of your salvation hangs on – the Father’s *eternal* and *unchanging* love for the Son. And that is worth meditating on when you are troubled by your sin and guilt. Your eternal destiny does not depend on your efforts to do better or your many sins. It depends on the Father’s eternal love for the Son and Christ’s finished work on the cross.

And if you are one who has not yet received Christa s your Saviour and Lord, then I hope that today’s sermon has opened your eyes to something cosmic and wonderful and meaningful. And please talk to any of us afterwards if you want to know more about how to be saved and to inherit eternal life.

Let us pray: