

In the beginning God.... Leaders Guide Week 6

(Times are approximate) – start time: ______ Welcome & Opening prayer (+5 min)

Opening Comments -

- Many people have suggested that Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 contradict each other.
- But this is not the case.
- Genesis 1:1-2:3 gives the *chronological* account of what God made on each day, with man being created on the sixth day.
- Genesis 2:4-25 gives a *descriptive* account, with man being the central theme, and is not meant to be chronological.
- The two accounts look at a similar series of events from two distinct points of view.
- The one is concerned with the big picture, the other with a few tantalizing details; the one sees the entire forest, the other a few trees.
- Another way of explaining it is: Genesis 1 is the wide-angle lens; Genesis 2 is the close-up zoom.
- So let's zoom in and study Moses' close-up account in Genesis 2:4-25.

(+1 min)

Discussion of the Study Lesson – (~50 min) – Weekly theme: The breath of life – Genesis 2:4-25 Day 1: Overview – Read Genesis 2:4-25

- **1.** Identify what you consider the primary divisions of this narrative. What seems to be the shift in focus compared to Genesis 1? Explain.
- This is a two part question so be sure to get answers to both parts.
- Part 1: some possible divisions are:
 - 1. The earth was formed but had no growing plants because of no rain nor **man** to work the ground.
 - 2. God made the man breathed the breath of life (spirit) into his nostrils
 - 3. God had planted a garden for the **man** to care for. Some of the details: two special trees, three rivers, precious metals, etc..
 - 4. God put the man in the garden and warned him not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil
 - 5. God saw the **man** was alone and therefore made woman from the man's rib.
 - 6. The **man** accepted the woman and thus is the first marriage.
- Part 2: The shift in focus can be seen in the phases above from Genesis 1 where we see the awesome power of God to Genesis 2 where the focus shifts to God preparing and caring for man/woman.
- Answers will vary on the number of phases and the content.

(+1 min)

- 2. How would you compare this narrative to that of Genesis 1? What days do verses 2:5-7 match in Genesis 1?
- This is a two part question so be sure to get answers to both parts.

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- Part 1: Instead of considering Genesis 1 and 2 as two separate accounts of creation that contradict one another, both chapters must be studied as one whole.
- Per the introduction, Genesis 1 is a chronological view while Genesis 2 is a more historical view.
- As one studies the two chapters, it becomes clear there is no real contradiction between the statements of both chapters.
- For instance, Genesis 1 starts with watery chaos and Genesis 2 seems to begin with a dry earth.
- This is because the Genesis 2 account begins at a later place in the series of events in Genesis 1.
- Part 2: To support this, 2:5-7 appear to cover multiple days from day 3 to day 6. 2:5-7 do not contradict Genesis 1 though. It is a different view of God's working in creation. It is a view focused on "man."

(+2 min)

- 3. What is added to the name for God in this narrative?
- The new name is "Lord God"
- In Genesis 1 Malcolm pointed out that "In the beginning God" are just two words: Berasheth... Elohim.
- Genesis 1 gives us a condensed revelation of God Almighty (the Hebrew name used is *Elohim*) creating the universe, heaven, and earth with the creation of man and woman as the crowning work.
- God (*Elohim*) is seen in chapter 1 in His infinite wisdom and power He, who creates, provides, preserves, and governs every creature.
- Now in chapter two the emphasis is on God's personal relationship with man.
- This is why the name for God is changed to Yahweh Elohim translated Lord God.
- In Hebrew *Yahweh* is always used for God when speaking of His special relation to His covenant with His people, in redemption, and any personal revelation of Himself.
- Yahweh Elohim links these two names together: Elohim, the Almighty God of creation, and Yahweh, the personal God in His relationship with man.

(+1 min)

- 4. What is different about the creation of man compared to the beasts, creatures, and birds?
- God created the sea creatures and birds on the fifth day in 1:20-23.
- He then created the various animals on the sixth day 1:24-25
- Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness and let them rule over..." all the creatures.
- So in Genesis 1 we see a significant difference between man and animals.
- Man is created in the image and likeness of God animals are not.
- Man is created to rule over the animals man has a limited sovereignty over the animals.
- In Genesis 2, we see an even more intimate statement than our image, our likeness when it says, "the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being."
- God didn't "breath the breath of life" into any animals.
- Breathing the breath of life into man was the method God used to transfer His spiritual element into man.
- Man was physical like the animals since both were made from the ground.
- But God set man apart by breathing His spirit, His essence, into the man which set him apart from all other created beings!

(+2 min)

- 5. Why do you think the man and woman felt no shame being naked?
- At this time, the world was without sin, nothing negative existed except Satan and he isn't introduced
 yet.
- So the man and woman wouldn't see anything negative or embarrassing about being naked.
- At this time the man and woman were perfect and being ashamed or embarrassed was not possible.

(+1 min)

Application 1: What will you do today, as a result of this study, to glorify God? **(+1 min)**

Day 2: The missing man. - Read Genesis 2:4-6

- 1. What was the order of earth and heaven found in Genesis 2:4 as compared to the order in Genesis 1:1? What do you think is the significance of this change in the narrative?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- Part 1: The difference is the order: 1:1 = heaven and earth; 2:4 = earth and heaven.
- Part 2: One thought is that this indicates God is shifting the narrative's priority of focus from His realm (heaven) to man's realm (earth).

(+2 min)

- 2. What were two hindrances that prevented plants and shrubs from growing on the earth (see Genesis 2:5, 3:23, 4:12)?
- The two hindrances were no rain and no man to work the ground.
- This gives us an insight of God's expectations for man to work the ground.
- Genesis 4:12 is after the fall and the ground has been cursed.

Genesis 2:5 – "and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was <u>no man to work the ground</u>" **Genesis 3:23** – "So the LORD <u>God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground</u> from which he had been taken"

Genesis 4:12 – "When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. You will be a restless wanderer on the earth"

(+2 min)

- 3. Instead of rain, how did God make provisions for the plants to grow? What does this tell you about how the plants originated? Using Genesis 1 what day in the creation cycle do you think this happened?
- This is a three part question, be sure to get answers for all three parts:
- Part 1: God caused streams to come up from the earth to water the ground.
- Part 2: God enriched the soil so plant life would spring up when the ground was watered.
- Part 3: Seems Genesis 1:11-13 fits best and that is the third day.

(+2 min)

4. What do you learn about God from these verses?

- Answers will vary. Some possible responses are:
- God is sovereign, Creator, omnipotent, omniscient, wise, loving, knows His creation intimately.
- That He loved the man and prepared a wonderful Garden for him to live in.
- He knew the man needed something to do so He had him work in the Garden and name the creatures.
- He knew it was not good for man to be alone and made from him a woman.
- He gave a portion of His sovereignty to the man and his mate to have dominion over the creatures and plants of the earth.

(+2 min)

Application 2: How will you demonstrate your appreciation to the Lord for the provisions He gives you this day? Name a few:

(+1 min)

Day 3: God breathed the "breath of life" into the man. – Read Genesis 2:7

- 1. Compare the two accounts of man's creation. Genesis 1:26-30 to this verse 2:7. What is the focus of each account?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- Part 1: Genesis 1:27 says that God created people in His own image.
- On the other hand, Genesis 2:7 says that God formed mankind out of the dust of the ground.
- Some critics offer this contrast as yet another "proof" that Genesis chapters 1 and 2 present differing accounts of creation.
- God is spirit.
- The image of God is immaterial.
- It is not made from matter.
- Your body is made from matter the dust of the ground if you go back far enough in Genealogy.
- However, your body is merely a "suit of clothes" worn by the real you.
- Your SPIRIT, not your body, bears the image of the living God.
- Both accounts are the work of God, they do not contradict one another but rather enhance.
- Part 2: The focus of the first account is God making people in His image and likeness.
- The focus of the second account demonstrates an even closer relationship God has with humanity in that He breaths the *breath of life* into the nostrils of the man.
- The focus of the first creation story is a wide angle lens and the second is a close up lens. What a God! (+2 min)
- 2. What does "the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground" tell you about God's plan for man (see Genesis 2:5)? Is man at this point any different than the animals (see 2:19)?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers to both parts.
- God knew man would need something to occupy him and therefore had plans for him before he was ever created.

Genesis 2:19a – "Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air"

As a created being from the ground, bodily man is no different. Both are made from the ground.

(+1 min)

- 3. To appreciate 2:7 fully we must recognize the connection between God's Spirit and the word for "breath." In Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, the words for spirit and breath are identical. Latin the word is spiritus, Greek it is pneuma, and Hebrew it is Ruach. To even say Ruach requires exhaling. Paul uses the word: theopneustos (God breathed) in 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...". This demonstrates God's consistency—He breathed His own living and eternal Spirit into man in Genesis. And, through Paul, assures man that the scriptures are derived from the same source! Hence, the spirit of man is nourished on the Word. Seeing these relationships to the word breath, what do you think is the significance of God, "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the man became a living being"?
- Following is an excellent commentary by William Barclay about this topic it is long so you might need to paraphrase it but it is a worthy read:
- "The mean origin, and yet the curious structure, of the body of man.
- The matter was despicable.
- He was made of the dust of the ground, a very unlikely thing to make a man of; but the same infinite power that made the world of nothing made man, its master-piece, of next to nothing.
- He was made of the dust, the small dust, such as is upon the surface of the earth.
- Probably, not dry dust, but dust moistened with the mist that went up, v. 6.

(+2 min) – He was not made of gold-dust, powder of pearl, or diamond dust, but common dust, dust of the ground. Hence he is said to be of the earth, choikos-dusty, 1Co. 15:47.

- Our foundation is in the earth, Job 4:19.
- Our fabric is earthly, and the fashioning of it like that of an earthen vessel, Job 10:9.
- Our food is out of the earth, Job 28:5.
- Our familiarity is with the earth, Job 17:14.
- Our fathers are in the earth, and our own final tendency is to it; and what have we then to be proud of?
- The high origin and the admirable serviceableness of the soul of man.
- It takes its rise from the breath of heaven, and is produced by it.
- It was not made of the earth, as the body was; it is a pity then that it should cleave to the earth, and mind earthly things.
- It came immediately from God; he gave it to be put into the body...
- Hence God is not only the former but the Father of spirits.
- Let the soul which God has breathed into us breathe after Him; and let it be for Him, since it is from Him. Into His hands let us commit our spirits, for from His hands we had them.
- It (man's soul) takes its lodging in a house of clay, and is the life and support of it.
- It is by it that man is a living soul, that is, a living man; for the soul is the man.
- The body would be a worthless, useless, loathsome carcass, if the soul did not animate it.

(+2 min) To God that gave us these souls we must shortly give an account of them, how we have employed them, used them, proportioned them, and disposed of them; and if then it be found that we have lost them, though it were to gain the world, we shall be undone for ever.

- Since the extraction of the soul is so noble, and its nature and faculties are so excellent, let us not be of those fools that despise their own souls, by preferring their bodies before them.
- When our Lord Jesus anointed the blind man's eyes with clay perhaps he intimated that it was he who
 at first formed man out of the clay; and when he breathed on his disciples, saying, Receive you the Holy
 Ghost (John 20:22), he intimated that it was he who at first breathed into man's nostrils the breath of
 life.

- He that made the soul is alone able to new-make it."¹
- So the significance of this phrase is that breaths His image and likeness into the man.
- This is the process by which the man received his soul with would never die.

(+4 min total)

4. Using the following verses, identify some of God's traits He gave man when He breathed life into him: Deuteronomy 7:7-8; 1 John 4:16; Isaiah 55:8; Jeremiah 9:23-24; John 4:24; Philippians 4:7, 2:7

Deuteronomy 7:7-8 – "The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples. But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt" - **Love**

1 John 4:16 – "And so we know and rely on the <u>love God has for us</u>. <u>God is lo</u>ve. Whoever lives in love lives in God, and God in him" - **Love**

Isaiah 55:8 – ""For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD" – He gives us the ability to think and do

Jeremiah 9:23-24 – "This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight," declares the LORD" – He gives us the ability to understand and know Him John 4:24 – "God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in Spirit and in truth" – God is spirit and the soul of man is Spirit

Philippians 4:7 – "And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" – **We have peace in Him**

Philippians 2:7 – "but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" – Jesus became like man – He understands us in every way. (+3 min)

- 5. Using Genesis 1:26-30; 2:7, 19 describe how man was created with a special dominion over the animals.
- Genesis 1:26-30 God states that men will *rule* over the creatures (1:26, 28) and God gave them all to man (1:30)
- Genesis 2:7 Man was uniquely made in that God breathed the *breath of life* into him (2:7) and God gave man the authority to name all creatures.

(+1 min)

Application 3: The "breath of life" was God's breath that gave Adam life, spiritual understanding, and a functioning conscience. Write a brief prayer of thanksgiving to God for His intimacy in your life, even though you may not sense it at times.

(+1 min)

Day 4: God prepares a special garden for the man. – Read Genesis 2:8-17

1. Use the map in your Bible; try to locate at least two of the four rivers in Eden. What is the name of the region that sets between the two main rivers today?

- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- Part 1: The Rivers Tigris and Euphrates should be on today's Bible maps.

- Part 2: Mesopotamia which is part of Iraq, Iran, Syria, and Turkey
- Archaeological research demonstrates the basin of Eastern Mediterranean and the region east of it may be the cradle of civilization.

(+1 min)

- 2. Give some of the pleasant conditions that existed for Adam and Eve in Eden?
- Some conditions are:
- It was plush and green unlike where Moses lived when he wrote this!
- They had everything they needed including eventual eternal life 2:16-17 if they were obedient.
- There was no embarrassment of nudity.
- They loved one another.
- There were no negative problems for them to solve.
- Work was enjoyable for Adam and childbirth was easy for Eve (see Genesis 3:16).

(+1 min)

- 3. How did God test the obedience of Adam (and Eve)? What do the words "you will surely die" tell you about God's original plan for the life of men and women?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- Part 1: He placed the tree of knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the Garden.
- Part 2: This indicates that God never intended for man to die!

(+1 min)

- 4. What are some things you do that test your obedience to God and your love for Him?
- This is a personal question, may be interesting to discuss but should probably be by volunteering. (+1 min)
- 5. What do you think the tree of life represents? See John 4:14, 6:29-63, 10:28.
- **John 4:14** "but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water <u>I give him will</u> <u>become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life</u>"

John 6:29-63 – you need to mark this passage in your Bible because of its length.

John 10:28 – "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand"

- The tree of life in the midst of the garden was not forbidden to Adam (2:16-17) until after he sins.
- It was most likely given this name because through it the life that man already had as an initial and partial possession was to be transferred into a full possession of never-ending life.
- This test for Adam holds far more serious implications than are often realized.
- Erich Sauer says, "Before the fall, man's body was not exactly "mortal" for it did not have to die.
- But neither was it "immortal" because it could die if sin entered, as actually was the case.
- Through enjoyment of the fruit of the tree of life the "psychic" (soulish) body of man, capable of dying, though not mortal, should have been transfigured by sacramental, organic means into a "pneumatic" (spiritual) and, in the full sense of the word, immortal body (Genesis 3:22-23).
- However great and inconceivable the glory of Paradise, it was only the beginning of a yet mightier upward development of Adam's path.

It began in glory, but it was to have gone on "from glory to glory."²
 (+4 min)

Application 4: What garden has God placed you in and how are you being obedient to Him in it? Do there seem to be a lot of weeds? Maybe your obedience to Him is lacking? Will you ask Him for help? **(+1 min)**

Day 5: God gives man a helper and institutes marriage. - Genesis 2:18-25

- 1. God had placed Adam in the Garden of Eden and gave him the assignment of naming all the animals. God brought the animals and birds to Adam to name. However after naming them all, the Lord saw there was a problem, what was it (see 2:20)? Had Adam been complaining of being alone? List some reasons that you think made it bad for Adam to be alone (see Proverbs 18:22)?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- Part 1: No helper was suitable for Adam
- Part 2: Adam wasn't complaining but God knew he needed a female partner.
- Part 3: He could not procreate, he had no one to share his life with that was made in the *image* and *likeness* of God, no one to talk with on a personal level... just some ideas, no scriptural support for these.

(+2 min)

- 2. Who was Jesus referring to when He used the same word (*ezer*) for *helper* in these passages: John 14:16, 14:26, 15:26, 16:7-11? What are some ways He will be a *helper* for believers?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers for both parts.
- **John 14:16, 26** "¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to <u>be with you forever</u>" and "²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, <u>will teach you all things</u> and will remind you of everything I have said to you"
- **John 15:26** "When the Counselor comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father, he will testify about me"
- **John 16:7-11** "But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counselor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, <u>he will convict the world</u> of guilt <u>in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment</u>: in regard to sin, because men do not believe in me; in regard to righteousness, because I am going to the Father, where you can see me no longer; and in regard to judgment, because the prince of this world now stands condemned"
- Part 1: The helper Jesus is referring to is the Holy Spirit.
- Part 2: 1) He will be with believers forever; 2) He will teach us all things; 3) He will testify to us about
 Jesus Christ; 4) He could only come when Jesus left; 5) it is the Holy Spirit who convicts us of our sins
 and judgment.

(+2 min)

3. Some people think the word *helper* is demeaning and speaks in a negative way of women. However this is not true since this word *helper* (*ezer*) is often used in Scripture to describe God Himself. How do these verses describe God: Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:29; Psalm 118:7; Hebrews 13:6.

Exodus 18:4 – "and the other was named Eliezer, for he said, "My father's God was <u>my helper</u>; he saved me from the sword of Pharaoh"

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Deuteronomy 33:29 – "Blessed are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD? He is your <u>shield and helper</u> and your glorious sword. Your enemies will cower before you, and you will trample down their high places."

Psalm 118:7 – "The LORD is with me; <u>he is my helper</u>. I will look in triumph on my enemies" **Hebrews 13:6** – "So we say with confidence, "<u>The Lord is my helper</u>; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"

God is our helper and He does not view that as being a demeaning task at all.

(+2 min)

- 4. What do you think is the significance of God making the woman from the man's rib? Was Adam satisfied with the helper God provided?
- This is a two part question, be sure to get answers to both parts.
- Part 1: William Barclay says it best, "That the woman was made of a rib out of the side of Adam; not made out of his head to rule over him, nor out of his feet to be trampled upon by him, but out of his side to be equal with him, under his arm to be protected, and near his heart to be beloved. Adam lost a rib, and without any diminution to his strength or comeliness (for, doubtless, the flesh was closed without a scar); but in lieu thereof he had a help mate for him, which abundantly made up his loss: what God takes away from his people he will, one way or other, restore with advantage. In this (as in many other things) Adam was a figure of him that was to come; for out of the side of Christ, the second Adam, his spouse the church was formed, when he slept the sleep, the deep sleep, of death upon the cross, in order to which his side was opened, and there came out blood and water, blood to purchase his church and water to purify it to himself. See Eph. 5:25, 26"³
- Let's be clear on this, God did not view Eve (the woman) as an afterthought or a lesser being as is sometimes chauvinistically implied.
- It isn't reasonable to think God looked at Adam and said, "hmmm, something is missing here" [e.g., the "helper"].
- That would suggest that God didn't get it right the first time!
- It seems more reasonable that God allowed Adam to discover on his own that he was incomplete.
- Thus, Adam wouldn't take Eve for granted.
- Then, by creating Eve as He did, God wanted to accomplish at least two things:
- (1) To forcefully demonstrate for all time, the uniqueness of the human male and female relationship [physical/psychological/spiritual] through organic transfer as contrasted with the creation of other living species by fiat;
- (2) To emphasize the commonality of the humans' responsibilities that He knew would be coming [from the rearing of children to fulfilling the Great Commission].
- While the male is assigned the "lead" role in the unfolding human drama, the helper's charge is identical, complimentary and no less critical.
- Part 2: YES!

(+3 min)

- 5. From these verses 2:21-25, identify particulars about marriage that God originally intended?
- Here are four particulars we can see from this passage:
- 1. God instituted marriage. All marriages are important to God.

- 2. <u>God intended marriage to be monogamous</u>. One woman completed Adam. Matthew 19:8 "Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning."
- 3. *God intended marriage to be heterosexual*. Marriage is one man and one woman!
- 4. <u>Marriage involves a physical union</u>. Jesus says in Matthew 19:4-5 ""Haven't you read," he replied, "that at the beginning the Creator `made them male and female,' and said, `For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate."
- In the context of marriage, sex should be enjoyed to its fullest.
- Today the world wishes to believe that they have invented sex and that God only seeks to prevent it.
- But sex, apart from God, is not what it could or should be.
- It is unfortunate that we don't talk about sex much in the church, but everybody else does.
- The best reason for the church to talk about it is because the Bible does.
- If there's one thing that we learn from Genesis 1-2 it is this: God created and prepared the world for our good.
- God desires and expects us to enjoy all that He has created for us.
- There are more expectations but space didn't permit more.

(+4 min)

Application 5: His image, His relationship, His best, these are all things He desires for you. How will you demonstrate your appreciation to Him this day/week/month for all He has done for you? Will others see His image in your relationship with them, will you give Him one day in seven, will you work in the garden He has placed you in, and if you are married, will you love your spouse as He intended him/her to be loved by you?

(+1 min)

Closing Comments

- You may add your own closing comments if you like.
- Here is a quote from James Boice which is key to every person, "Child of Adam, whoever you are, know that one day you will stand before the judgment bar of God. You will stand there in one of two ways. Either you will be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ and therefore as one for whom He died. Or you will stand there in the horror of your spiritual and moral nakedness and will be condemned for your sin. The Book of Revelation speaks of this day (Rev. 6:15-16). Do not wait until the day of God's wrath overtakes you, when you will vainly attempt to flee from Him. Flee to Christ now! The Bible says, "I tell you, now is the time of God's favor, now is the day of salvation." (2 Cor. 6:2)"⁴

(+2 min)

Closing Prayer (+1 min)

¹ "The Matthew Henry Commentary," Matthew Henry, Twenty-fourth American printing, 1980, ISBN 0-310-26010-8, pg. 5

² Erich Sauer, "The King of the Earth," The Paternoster Press, 1962, page 83.

³ Same information as note 1.

⁴ James Montgomery Boice, "Genesis Volume 1 Creation and Fall Genesis 1-11," Baker Publishing, 2002, ISBN 0-8010-1161-2, pg 149