

A Suitable Helper for Adam

Genesis 2:15-25
SS Lesson for 09/30/2018

Devotional Scripture: Matt 9:3-12

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Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

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Introduction

Overview and Key Verse of the Lesson

The lesson reviews how God saw a need for Adam and made another human being as **A Suitable Helper for Adam**. The study's aim is to remember that God created woman to be with man. The study's application is to remember that husbands and wives are called to honor God's plan for marriage.

(Adapted from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary)

Key Verse: Gen 2:18

And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

2:4a. This section (vv. 4-25), as indicated in verse 4a, traces **the account of** (what became of) **the heavens and the earth when** (*beyôm*, lit., "in the day," an idiom for "when") **they were created**. What became of Creation is that sin entered and devastated it.

2:4b-7. In the creation of Adam the contrast is striking: against the background of a time when there was no life, no growth, no rain, no one to till the ground, God took great care in forming man. The arrangement in these verses includes a title (v. 4), three circumstantial clauses beginning in the Hebrew with "when" ("when" **no shrub... had yet appeared**, "when" **there was no man to work the ground**, "when" **streams... watered the... ground**), and the verb beginning the narrative (**and [He] formed**). This mirrors chapter 1 (title, 1:1; circumstantial clauses, 1:2; and the first of the narrative verbs, 1:3). The repeated emphasis on **the LORD God** is significant (2:4-5, 7-9, 15-16, 18-19, 21-22). The sovereign Creator ("God") of chapter 1 is also the covenant-making Yahweh (**LORD**). Thus Israel would know that her **LORD** had created everything, and that *He* had formed mankind by special design. The work of the Lord in creating human life involved both fashioning **from the dust** and inbreathing. The word **formed** (from *yāšar*, 2:7) describes the work of an artist. Like a potter shaping an earthen vessel from clay, so **God** formed man from clay. Man was made by divine plan; also he was made from the earth. He is "earthy" in spite of subsequent dreams of being like God (3:5). The Hebrew for **man** (*'ādām*, whence "Adam," 2:20) is related to the word for **ground** (*'ādāmāh*; cf. 3:17). God's breathing **the breath of life** into man transformed his form into a **living being** (lit., "a living soul"). This made man a spiritual being, with a capacity for serving and fellowshiping with God. With this special Creation in mind, the reader can see the significance of the Fall. Since the Fall, regeneration by the "inbreathing" of the Holy Spirit is essential in order for people to enjoy fellowship with God.

2:8-10. Mankind was placed in a perfect setting. The **garden** provided the arena for man's test of obedience. The description of the lavish garden (v. 8) and the **trees** (v. 9) and **river** in it (v. 10) leads up to the commandment: man could enjoy it all but he must not eat from the one forbidden tree (v. 17). Whereas God had possibly created trees with the appearance of age (1:12), the trees in the garden were others that had grown later (2:9). Among those trees in the garden was one that produced life (**the tree of life**) and another that produced knowledge (**the tree of the knowledge of good and evil**), or at least eating from them did. This "knowledge" was experiential. "Good and evil," a merism for the things that protect life and that destroy life, would be experienced if the forbidden fruit were eaten (v. 17). The potential for catastrophe was great if they in self-confident pride (hubris) overstepped their bounds and attempted to manipulate life. The tree of life, on the other hand, was apparently a means of preserving and promoting life for Adam and Eve in their blissful state. These trees were **in the middle of the garden**, apparently close to each other; they provided the basis for the testing to come. The trees (v. 9), the river (v. 10), and the precious gold and gems (vv. 11-12) in the garden will also be in the new earth in its eternal state. The new Creation will be endowed with all these elements (Rev. 21:10-11, 21; 22:1-2), thus indicating that paradise will be restored in the new earth.

2:11-14. These verses, a long parenthesis, describe the richness of the then-known world. The garden was probably in the area of the Persian Gulf, judging from the place names in these verses. If the geography of that area was the same after the Flood as before, then **the Tigris** (lit., *Hiddeqel*) and **the Euphrates**, the **third** and **fourth** rivers, can be identified. The first of the four rivers, **Pishon**, was in **Havilah**, in north-central Arabia, east of Palestine. The second river, **Gihon**, was in **Cush**, probably not Ethiopia but possibly the land of the Cassites (*kaššu* in Akk.) in the mountains east of Mesopotamia.

2:15-17. Man's purpose is to provide spiritual service, as the carefully selected words indicate: he was placed (*nūah* "set to rest") **in the Garden... to work it** (*ābad*, "to serve") and to **take care of it**. Whatever work he did was therefore described as his service to **God**. Verse 16 includes the first use in the Old Testament of *šāwāh*, the major verb for "command." God's first command to man concerned life and death, good and evil. As with all God's subsequent commandments, there were positive blessings and negative prohibitions. All earthly goods and pleasures were at man's disposal, except this one **tree** which was forbidden. The Hebrew wording in verses 16-17 states the command in strong terms: **man** could **eat** freely from all the other fruit, but if he ate from the forbidden **tree** he would **surely die**. Once again the primary lesson is related to the people of God under Moses. God prepared mankind with a specific design and gave them the capacity for moral responsibility. He set them **in the Garden** to be obedient servants, warning that before them was life or death, depending on whether they obeyed the commandment. Deuteronomy 30:11-20 set forth for Israel all the instructions parallel to the motifs of Genesis 2:8-17: obedience to the commandments of God results in life and blessing.

2:18-25. This section records the creation of the first woman and the institution of marriage; so it says much about the mainstay of Israel's society. God intended husband and wife to be a spiritual, functional unity, walking in integrity, serving **God**, and keeping His commandments together. When this harmony is operative, society prospers under God's hand. Adam was **alone** and that was **not good**; all else in Creation was good (cf. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). As man began to function as God's representative (naming the animals [2:19-20] represented his dominion over them; cf. 1:28), he became aware of his solitude (2:20). **God** therefore put him to **sleep** (v. 21) and created Eve from his **flesh and bone** (vv. 21-23). God decided to **make a helper suitable** (lit., "a helper corresponding to him," or "a corresponding helper") **for** the man (v. 18). "Helper" is not a demeaning term; it is often used in Scripture to describe God Almighty (e.g., Pss. 33:20; 70:5; 115:9, where it is trans. "help" in the NIV). The description of her as "corresponding to him" means basically that what was said about him in Genesis 2:7 was also true of her. They both had the same nature. But what man lacked (his aloneness was not good) she supplied, and what she lacked he supplied. The culmination was **one flesh** (v. 24)—the complete unity of man and woman in marriage. Since Adam and Eve were a spiritual unity, living in integrity without sin, there was no need for instruction here on headship. Paul later discussed that in relationship to the order of Creation (1 Cor. 11:3; 1 Tim. 2:13). The words *al-kēn* (**for this reason**, Gen. 2:24) are used frequently in Genesis. If the words in verse 24 were spoken directly by God to Adam, then the verb "leave" must be translated as the future **will leave** (as in the NIV). But if God said those words through Moses, they should be translated in the present tense: "that is why a man leaves..." The implication is that marriage involves one male and one female becoming "one flesh." Their nakedness (v. 25) suggests that they were at ease with one another without any fear of exploitation or potential for evil. Such fellowship was shattered later at the Fall and is retained only in a measure in marriage when a couple begins to feel at ease with each other. Here the nakedness, though literal, also suggests sinlessness.

Commentary from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

As I approached my wedding, I found myself reflecting on it a lot. What does it mean to be a wife? This lesson reveals God's heart for marriage and its intent. It began with Adam. Everything was brand-new. It was just God, Adam, and the animals. Although Adam lived in paradise and enjoyed an amazing communion with God, there was something missing. Adam was alone. Although he loved God, there was no other earthly being who could relate to him. God knew that Adam needed an earthly companion who could help him and be his companion along life's way. In literary circles, a foil is a character that serves as a contrast to another. The foil is often quite distinct in nature from the character being contrasted. This can serve to emphasize traits in both characters that might get overlooked otherwise. In some ways Eve was Adam's foil. In the first marriage, God provided in Eve someone similar to Adam, but also distinctly different. Eve was not like any being Adam had ever seen. She looked, thought, and even experienced emotions in a way that was unique to her. She was not merely a female copy of Adam. How many of you have a mate who seems to be your exact opposite? My husband and I fit the bill, He loves math; I like English. He enjoys westerns; I like classic historical movies. What is both strange and amazing is how our

strengths complement each other's weaknesses. This blending of two people is what God intended. He knew that we would need this intertwining in order to face the challenges in life. He saw that people had a need for companionship. That is why Christian couples should not work independently of each other (1 Cor. 11:11). They are not separate but a unit ordained in a lifelong covenant before God (Matt. 19:5). With Christ as their Head, they become that "threefold cord ... not quickly broken" (Eccles. 4:12). God knows each person before he is even born (cf. Ps. 139:16), so He knows both members of a couple. He knows the right timing to bring a couple together. Since He also knows what is best for each of us, we can trust Him to bring us that person designed specifically to share our lives. When we remain faithful and committed to our spouse, we exercise trust in His wisdom in the area of marriage. Is this always easy? Hardly! I know that my husband is God's answer for my earthly companion, however. That is why I see it through, even when it is tough. We are no longer two people but one unit (Eph. 5:31). Our marriage covenant is not just for us but for God as well. Are you married? If you are, how well are you doing at truly giving yourself to this relationship? Ask God to show you how to grow in love and understanding. Are you single? Do not despair. There are reasons for whatever state God has us in at this time. Remember, Paul was single and one of the Lord's greatest missionaries. It may simply be that the timing is not right and that you still have things that you can best do while you are single. Whatever the case, we can praise God for the blessings of companionship that marriage brings.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Assignments for Man (2:15-17)

15 Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.
16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;
17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

Assignment to work (15)

Man must work to eat (2 Thes. 3:10)

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

Man must always work so they can share with those in need (Ephes. 4:28)

28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

Any work for God is never in vain (1 Cor. 15:58)

58 Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

All work should be to the glory of God (1 Cor 10:31)

31 So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Assignment of obedience (16-17)

Obedience is better because it delights God (1 Sam 15:22)

22 But Samuel replied: "Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams.

Obedience leads to righteousness (Rom 6:16)

16 Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey — whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?

Obedience leads to the praise of God by others (2 Cor 9:13)

13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else.

Obedience keeps us remaining in God's love (John 15:10)

10 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love.

Obedience leads to the reward of blessings (Deut. 28:1-6)

1 If you fully obey the Lord your God and carefully follow all his commands I give you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations on earth. 2 All these blessings will come upon you and accompany you if you obey the Lord your God: 3 You will be blessed in the city and blessed in the country. 4 The fruit of your womb will be blessed, and the crops of your land and the young of your livestock — the calves of your herds and the lambs of your flocks. 5 Your basket and your kneading trough will be blessed. 6 You will be blessed when you come in and blessed when you go out.

Obedience brings the reward of freedom (James 1:25)

25 But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it — he will be blessed in what he does.

Obedience is the key to work (Matthew 21:28-31)

28 "What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, 'Son, go and work today in the vineyard.' 29 'I will not,' he answered, but later he changed his mind and went. 30"Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, 'I will, sir,' but he did not go. 31"Which of the two did what his father wanted?" "The first," they answered.

Obedience rejected results in death (Rom 6:23)

23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Additional general requirements (15)

Three good requirements (Micah 6:8)

He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To **act justly** and to **love mercy** and to **walk humbly with your God**.

Five things God has asked of man (Deut 10:12-13)

12 And now, O Israel, what does the LORD your God ask of you but to **fear the LORD your God**, to **walk in all his ways**, to **love him**, to **serve the LORD** your God with all your heart and with all your soul, 13 and to **observe the LORD's commands** and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

Man must always take care of home and family (1 Tim. 5:8)

8 If anyone does not provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

Devotion to service to the saints (1 Cor. 16:15-16)

15 You know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints. I urge you, brothers, 16to submit to such as these and to everyone who joins in the work, and labors at it.

Helper Needed for Man (2:18-20)

18 And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."
19 Out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.
20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

A Helper to combat loneliness (18)

God delivers and finds homes for the lonely (Ps 68:6)

6 God sets the lonely in families, he leads forth the prisoners with singing; but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land.

Take comfort in knowing that when we feel the loneliest, God shows His strength to us (Kings 19:9-11)

9 There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too." 11 The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

God is always our refuge when no one else seems concerned (Psalm 142:4-5)

4 Look to my right and see; no one is concerned for me. I have no refuge; no one cares for my life. 5 I cry to you, O Lord; I say, "You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."

When we need someone and no one is there Jesus is always at our side (2 Tim. 4:16-17)

16 At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. 17 But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth.

Why helper is needed (19-20)

Two are better than one (Eccl 4:8-12)

8 There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth. "For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?" This too is meaningless-- a miserable business! 9 Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work: 10 If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! 11 Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? 12 Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

A helper because sometimes the burden is too heavy for one (Num 11:14-17)

14 I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now — if I have found favor in your eyes — and do not let me face my own ruin." 16 The Lord said to Moses: "Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. Have them come to the Tent of Meeting, that they may stand there with you. 17 I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.

A helper because one person can make the other better (Prov 27:17)

17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.

A helper for interdependence (1 Cor 11:11-12)

11 In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. 12 For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.

A helper who is both good and a blessing from God (Prov 18:22)

22 He who finds a wife finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord.

Creation of Woman as Helper (Gen 2:21-25)

21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

22 Then the rib which the Lord God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Woman was created from man (21-23).

The first woman came from man (1 Cor 11:8-9)

8 For man did not come from woman, but woman from man; 9 neither was man created for woman, but woman for man.

Adam was created before Eve (1 Tim 2:13)

13 For Adam was formed first, then Eve.

How God views the wife (24-25)

Husband and wife are of one body, just as the Church is one body (Eph 5:28-30)

28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church-- 30 for we are members of his body.

Husband and wife are God's in both body and spirit as one (Mal 2:15)

15 Has not [the LORD] made them one? In flesh and spirit they are his. And why one? Because he was seeking godly offspring. So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth.

The wife is the glory of man (1 Cor. 11:7)

7 A man ought not to cover his head, since he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of man.

The noble wife is a blessing and praise of her husband (Proverbs 31:10-12; 27-28)

10 A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies. 11 Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value. 12 She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life. 27 She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:

Many women have been helpers all through the Bible (Acts 9:36)

36 In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor.

The great Timothy had women who helped him (Acts 16:1)

1 He came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was a Jewess and a believer, but whose father was a Greek.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from Bob Deffinbaugh

Man's Delight (2:18-25)

One deficiency remains. There is now adequate water, the beautiful and bountiful provision of the garden, and a man to cultivate it. But there is not yet a companion suitable for man. This need is met in verses 18-25.

The garden, with its pleasures and provisions for food and meaningful activity was not sufficient unless these delights could be shared. God would provide Adam with that which he needed most.

Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; I will make him a helper suitable for him' (Genesis 2:18).

Adam's mate was to be a very special creation, a 'helper, suitable for him' (verse 18). She was to be a 'helper,' not a slave, and not an inferior. The Hebrew word *ezer* is most interesting. It was a word that Moses obviously liked, for in Exodus 18:4 we are told that this was the name he gave to one of his sons.

And the other was named Eliezer (El=God), for he said, 'The God of my father was my help (*ezer*), and delivered me from the sword of Pharaoh' (Exodus 18:4).

The other three times *ezer* is found used by Moses in Deuteronomy (33:7,26,29), it refers to God as man's helper. So also in the Psalms (20:2; 33:20; 70:5; 89:19; 115:9; 121:1,2; 124:8; 146:5).

The point of the word as it is most often employed in the Old Testament is that the help given implies no inferiority whatsoever. In a way consistent with its usage, God is helping man through women. What a beautiful thought. How far above some conceptions this is.

Then also, she is a helper who 'corresponds to' Adam. One translation reads, "... I will make a helper like him."

This is precisely opposite the point. Yet this is often what we consider the perfect wife—one who is just like us. Incompatibility is by divine design in many instances. As Dwight Hervey Small has correctly observed,

Incompatibility is one of the purposes of marriages! God has appointed conflict and burdens for lessons in spiritual growth. These are to be subservient to high and holy purposes.

Just as Eve was fashioned so as to correspond to Adam in a physical way, so she complimented him socially, intellectually, spiritually and emotionally.

As a result, when I counsel those who plan to marry, I do not seek to discover as many points of similarity as possible. Instead, I am concerned that each partner has an accurate view of what the other is really like, and that they are committed to the fact that God has joined them permanently. A recognition that God has made man and woman differently by design, and a determination to attain unity in this diversity is essential to a healthy marriage.

Before creating this counterpart, God first whet his appetite. The creatures which God had formed are now brought to Adam to name. This naming reflected Adam's rule over the creatures, as God intended (cf. 1:28). It probably involved a careful study on Adam's part to note the unique characteristics of each creature.

This naming process may have taken some time. In the process, Adam would observe that no mere creature could ever fill the void in his life. Further, I would use a little sanctified imagination to conjecture that Adam observed each creature with its mate, a wonderfully designed counterpart. Adam must have realized that he, alone, was without a mate.

At this moment of intense need and desire, God put Adam in a deep sleep, and from his rib and attached flesh fashioned the woman. He then presented the woman to the man.

What excitement there is in Adam's enthusiastic response:

And the man said, ‘This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man (Genesis 2:23).

I like the way the RSV renders Adam’s initial response, “at last ...”

In this expression there is a mixture of relief, ecstasy, and delighted surprise. “This (for Adam has not yet named her) is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh” (verse 23a). The name of Adam’s mate is woman. The English translation nicely picks up the play on similar sounds. In Hebrews, man would be pronounced *'ish*; woman would be *'ishshah*. While the sounds are similar, the roots of the two words are different. Appropriately *'ish* may come from a parallel Arabic root, conveying the idea of ‘exercising power,’ while the term *'ishshah* may be derived from an Arabic parallel, meaning ‘to be soft’.

The divinely inspired commentary of verse 24 is of utmost import:

For this cause a man shall leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:24).

From the account it is imperative that a man leave his mother and father and cleave to his wife. What is the relationship between this command to leave and cleave and the creation of women? Verse 24 begins, “For this cause ...” What cause is this? We can understand the reason only when we explain the command. Man is to leave his parents, not in the sense of avoiding his responsibility to them (e.g. Mark 7:10-13; Ephesians 6:2,3), but in the sense of being dependent upon them. He must cease to live under their headship and begin to function alone as the head of a new home.

The woman is not commanded similarly because she simply transfers from one head to another. While she once was subject to her father, now she is joined to her husband. The man, however, has the more difficult transition. He, as a child, was dependent upon and submissive to his mother and father.

When a man marries he must go through the more radical transition from a dependent, submissive son to an independent (from a parents) leader, who functions as the head of the home.

As many have observed, the husband-wife relationship is permanent while the parent-child relationship is temporary. Even if the parents are unwilling to terminate the dependent relationship of son to parents, the son is responsible to do so. To fail to do so is to refuse the kind of bond necessary with his wife.

Now, perhaps, we are in a position to see the relationship of this command to the creation account. What is the reason for its mention here in Genesis? First of all, there are no parents to whom Adam or Eve have been born. Eve’s origin is directly from her husband, Adam. The union or bond between Adam and his wife is the union of coming from one flesh (Adam’s) and of becoming one flesh (in physical union). This bond is greater than that between parent and child. A woman is, of course, the product of her parents, as the man is of his. But the original union involved no parents, and the wife was a part of the flesh of her husband. This first marriage, then, is evidence of the primacy of the husband-wife relationship over that of the parent-child relationship.

The last verse is not incidental. It tells us a great deal that we need to know. “And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed” (Genesis 2:25).

We learn, for example, that a sexual side of this relationship was a part of the paradise experience. Sex did not originate with or after the fall. Procreation and physical intimacy were intended from the beginning (cf. 1:28). Also we see that sex could be enjoyed to its fullest in the divine plan. Disobedience to God did not heighten sexual pleasure; it diminished it. 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.

Ignorance, if you will forgive me for saying so, is bliss. In our generation we are cool, if you prefer, sophisticated, only if we know (by experience) all there is to know about sex. “How naive are those who have never had sex before marriage,” we are led to believe. There are many things it is better not to know. Sex was never enjoyed so much as it was in sweet ignorance.

Later revelation does add much light to this text. Our Lord, significantly, quotes from chapter one and chapter two as though from one account (Matthew 19:4,5), a fatal blow to the source document critics.

The divine origin of marriage means it is no mere social invention (or convention), but a divine institution for man. Because God joins a man and woman in marriage, it is a permanent union: “What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate” (Matthew 19:6).

The fact that Adam preceded his wife in creation and that Eve was brought forth from Adam also establishes the reasons why the husband is to exercise headship over his wife in marriage (cf. I Corinthians 11:8-9; I Timothy 2:13). The role of women in the church is not just Paul's idea, restricted to the time and culture of the Corinthian Christians. The biblical role of women is established on the biblical account of creation (cf. also I Corinthians 14:34).

(Adapted from [URL:https://bible.org/seriespage/3-meaning-man-his-duty-and-his-delight-genesis-126-31-24-25](https://bible.org/seriespage/3-meaning-man-his-duty-and-his-delight-genesis-126-31-24-25))

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator Commentary

1. Work has always been part of God's design for man (Gen. 2:15)
2. Our choices either bring us closer to God or further away from Him (vss. 16-17)
3. God perfectly fills our need for companionship (vs. 18)
4. As we devote ourselves to God's work, we see Him at work meeting our needs (vss. 19-20)
5. Men and women are created with different roles, but they have equal responsibility to glorify God (vss. 21-22)
6. As one flesh, whatever affects one partner affects both (vs. 23)
7. Believers stand on the truth and goodness of God's plan in a world that rejects Him (vss. 24-25)