THE PENTATEUCH PART I: GENESIS
LESSON 3
THE CREATION OF THE EARTH AND THE HEAVENS: FROM CREATOR TO FATHER ELOHIM TO YAHWEH

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Beloved Father-God, my Yahweh Elohim,
How awesome it is to contemplate that You breathed Your very breath into the lungs of the first man, giving Him life and creating him in Your image as a divine son.  You created Adam to know, to love, and to serve You in the earthly Sanctuary that was Eden.  You created Eve as an equal partner to her husband and You blessed them, establishing a covenant family bond between a loving divine Father and His human children.  As the younger children of Your covenant family, Father, we ask that You bless us as we journey toward a deeper understanding of our covenant relationship with You. Please send Your Holy Spirit to guide us in our study and to strengthen us in our vows of covenant obedience and faithfulness.  We pray in the name of the One True and Holy God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.  Amen

*I look up at your heavens, shaped by your fingers, at the moon and the stars you set firm, what are human beings that you spare a thought for them, or the child of Adam that you care for him?  Yet you have made him a little less than a god, you have crowned him with glory and beauty, and made him lord of the works of your hands, put all things under his feet...* [Psalm 8:3-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm8.htm#v3)

*By his divine power, he has lavished on us all the things we need for life and for true devotion, through the knowledge of him who has called us by his own glory and goodness.  Through these, the greatest and priceless promises have been lavished on us, that through them you should share in the* ***divine nature*** *and escape the corruption rife in the world through disordered passion.* [2 Peter 1:3-4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2peter/2peter1.htm#v3)

*Ours is a religion of Divine Sonship.  We are made partakers of the* ***divine nature***.
Pope Pius XI

In the prologue of the Creation event, God prepared the heavens and the earth ([Gen 1:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v1); [2:4a](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)).  In the first three-part sequence of Creation, God created the Light that parted the darkness, He raised the land up out of the waters of chaos, He established the atmosphere above the earth and the oceans below, and He created vegetative life upon the earth.  In the second three-part sequence of Creation, God filled the heavens with the sun, moon, and stars to establish the order of time, He filled the sky with birds and the seas with fish and sea creatures, and on the last "day" of His work of Creation, which for the first time in the sequence of Creation is designated "the" sixth day, God created the land animals and man.

**Question:** In the prologue account of the creation of man, what points of difference can you identify between the creation of man and the other life forms - the plants, birds, fish, sea animals, and land animals? Was the creation of man simply another of God's "works" of Creation or are humans different?  See [Genesis 1:12-13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v12), [20-31](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v20)
**Answer:**

1. In the creation of man in [Genesis 1:26-30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v26), the announcement "God said" is not followed by the impersonal (third person) command "Let the/there be" as with the creation of the other creatures.  The announcement "God said" is instead followed by the intimate (first person) command: "Let us make" ([Gen 1:26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v26)).
2. The creation of life on the previous days was defined as being created "according to its own species."  But in the creation of man and woman, they are described as being made "according to the image and likeness of God," repeated twice in [Genesis 1:27](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v27).  Humans are not made according to their own kind; instead they share their identity with the Most Holy Trinity.  As human history progressed, pagan gods came to be represented by created images, but God's "image" is, and always will be, man.
3. The gender of God's animal creation is not mentioned, but in the creation of humans their gender is identified: *male and female he created them* ([Gen 12:27](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v27)c).  As male and female, created in the image and likeness of God, man and woman are equal partners.
4. As equal partners, man and woman are given dominion over the land and all its creatures ([Gen 1: 28-30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v28)).  Created in God's image, they are God's representatives - the stewards of God's created world.
5. Humans are not equal to the other works of creation.  They are set apart from God's other works, and that difference is dependant on their creation in the "image and likeness" of God.

Each stage of the Creation event was prefaced by God's announcement: "God said", repeated eleven times during the six "day" two-part sequence of the Creation event.  In the symbolism of numbers in Scripture, eleven is the number of "incompletion," coming between the "perfect" numbers of ten (perfection of order) and twelve (perfection in government).  Creation is not "complete" until the prologue comes to a climax in the sanctification of the seventh day: *God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he rested after all his work of creating.  Such is the story of heaven and earth as they were created* ([Gen 2:3-4a](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v3)).

The word translated as "story" in [verse 2:4a](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4) of the New Jerusalem Bible is the Hebrew word toledoth (plural), which literally means "generations," or "lineage." The Hebrew phrase that completes the Genesis prologue in [2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)a is literally: "These are the begetting of the generations/lineage (toledoth) of heaven and earth." This verse refers to the Creation prologue as an historical account, not as a mythological story like the creation myths of pagan cultures like the Sumerians, Canaanites, and Egyptians (New Jerusalem, note "b", page 19). The Hebrew word toledoth will be used in the same sense of an historical account in [Genesis 6:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis6.htm#v9) in the history (toledoth) of Noah and the flood, in [Genesis 25:19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis25.htm#v19) in the history (toledoth) of Abraham, and in [Genesis 37:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis37.htm#v2) in the history (toledoth) of Joseph and his brothers. The Hebrew word toledoth will also be associated with generational lists in the Pentateuch (Brown-Driver-Biggs Hebrew-English Lexicon, page 410). There are fourteen such genealogical lists in the Pentateuch, climaxing with the toledoth of the twelve tribes of Israel in the Book of Numbers (before and after the forty years of wandering in the wilderness):

1. [Gen 4:17-22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis4.htm#v17) (descendants of Cain)
2. [Gen 5:1-32](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis5.htm#v1) (descendants of Adam)
3. [Gen 6:9-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis6.htm#v9) (sons of Noah)
4. [Gen 10:1-32](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v1) (descendants of Noah's sons)
5. [Gen 11:10-26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis11.htm#v10) (descendants of Noah's son Shem repeated)
6. [Gen 11:27-32](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis11.htm#v27) (descendants of Terah)
7. [Gen 22:20-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis22.htm#v20) (descendants of Terah's son Nahor)
8. [Gen 25:1-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis25.htm#v1) (Abraham's descendants by Keturah)
9. [Gen 25:12-18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis25.htm#v12) (descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael)
10. [Gen 35:23-26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis35.htm#v23) (the twelve sons of Jacob)
11. [Gen 36:1-43](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis36.htm#v1) (Esau's descendants)
12. [Ex 6:14-25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus6.htm#v14) (descendants of Ruben, Simeon, and Levi)
13. [Num 1:20 – 3:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers1.htm#v20) (descendants of the twelve sons of Jacob/Israel)
14. [Num 26:5-65](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers26.htm#v5) (final census of the descendants of the twelve tribes before their entry into the Promised Land)

There are those who view chapters one and two of Genesis as two separate accounts of Creation whose origins come from two separate oral strands composed by separate authors.  This interpretation does violence to the text of the Holy Spirit inspired Creation narrative.  Chapter divisions in Scripture were not introduced until the 13th century AD, and verse divisions were added several centuries later.  What we now designate as chapters one and two of Genesis must be viewed as they were intended to be read as one whole account in which a prologue provides an overview which flows into a more detailed account of God's intimate creation of, and interaction with, man.  In the prologue, the focus of the narrative is on the creation of the heavens and the earth ([Gen 1:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v1); [2:4a](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)), but in the next section of the narrative the focus changes.
**Question:** Comparing [Genesis 1:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v1) and [2:4a to 2:4b](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4), what is the shift in the focus of the narrative?  Hint: the literal first words of [2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)b are: *At the time when Yahweh Elohim made earth and heaven....*
**Answer:** The focus changes from Elohim's creation of the "heavens and the earth" to Yahweh Elohim's creation of **"earth and heaven"...**

If chapters one and two are not read as one complete account, one misses the significant shift in focus.  Then too, in reading chapter two as a separate and contradictory account, one is deprived of the importance of the theme of the sanctity of the "seventh day" (only mentioned in the prologue) and its link to the Creation event when man was first invited to enter into God "rest."  The sanctification of the "seventh day" and the promise of entering into God's "rest" will prefigure the future promise of eternal salvation in God's unfolding plan of salvation history.

**Question:** How is it that entering God's "rest" became a theme in the Old Testament?  How did God's "rest" become a theme in the New Testament?  Please give some examples from Scripture.
**Answer:** God's "rest" on the seventh day of the earthly Creation foreshadows the promise of Israel's entrance into God's "rest" on the Sabbath as a covenant command of the Sinai Covenant, temporal "rest" from Israel's enemies in the Promised Land of Canaan, and the promise of entering into God's eternal "rest" in the heavenly Sanctuary at the conclusion of man's life on earth.  For example:

* In the Old Testament, the theme of God's "rest" is made present to the children of Israel as God's covenant people in the command to keep the Sabbath.  During the Theophany at Sinai, God gave the commands of the Decalogue (Ten Commandments).  He told Israel: *Remember the Sabbath day and keep it holy.  For six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath for Yahweh your God.  You shall do no work that day, neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your servants, men or women, nor your animals nor the alien living with you.  For in six days Yahweh made the heavens, earth and sea and all that these contain, but on the seventh day he rested; that is why Yahweh has blessed the Sabbath day and made it sacred* ([Ex 20:8-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus20.htm#v8)).  This command is the transition between those covenant commands in the Ten Commandments that address man's relationship to God and those commands that address man's interaction with other members of the family of man.  For additional passages on the sanctity of the Sabbath "rest" as a covenant obligation see [Ex 23:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus23.htm#v12); [31:15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus31.htm#v15); [34:21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus34.htm#v21); [35:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus35.htm#v2); [Dt 5:12-15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy5.htm#v12); etc*.*
* God's "rest" in the Creation event is also made present to Israel in the promise of temporal salvation in the Promised Land, where Israel was promised to have a place of "rest" from her enemies (see [Lev 26:3-13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/leviticus/leviticus26.htm#v3); [Dt 28:1-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy28.htm#v1)).  In [Deuteronomy 12:8-10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy12.htm#v8), Moses warned the children of Israel: *You must not behave as we are behaving here today, each of you doing what he himself sees fit, since you have not yet come to the resting place and the heritage that Yahweh your God is going to give you.  You are about to cross the Jordan and live in the country given you by Yahweh your God as your heritage; he will grant you peace from all the enemies surrounding you, and you will live in safety* (also see [Jos 1:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/joshua/joshua1.htm#v11), [13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/joshua/joshua1.htm#v13), [15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/joshua/joshua1.htm#v15)).   When the first Israelite generation of the Exodus experience was punished for covenant disobedience, their judgment was to wander for forty years and to die in the wilderness (Num 32-35).  It was the next generation of Israel that entered Yahweh's "rest" in the Promised Land: *For forty years that generation sickened me, and I said, 'Always fickle hearts; they cannot grasp my ways.'  Then in my anger I swore they would never enter my place of rest* ([Ps 95:10-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm95.htm#v10)).
* In the New Testament which announces the New Covenant in Christ, blessings for covenant faithfulness are no longer temporal - blessings became eternal, and entrance into God's "rest" became the promise of the eternal blessing of heaven - a heritage which had been God's plan for man since before the foundation of the earth ([Mt 25:34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew25.htm#v34), [46](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew25.htm#v46)).  The [Psalms 95:10-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm95.htm#v10) passage is repeated by the inspired writer of Hebrews in [3:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews3.htm#v11) and [4:1-5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v1).  In the Letter to the Hebrews, the longed for promise of entrance into the perfect communion of God's rest in the heavenly Sanctuary, which was prefigured in the sanctification of the seventh day in the Creation event, is repeated twelve times: [Heb 3:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews3.htm#v11), [18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews3.htm#v18); [4:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v1), [3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v3) (twice), [4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v4), [5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v5), [8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v8), [9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v9), [10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v10) (twice), and [11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v11).

Connecting the theme of entering God's "rest" on the first Sabbath of Creation to Israel's promise of entering God's place of "rest" when Joshua led them into the Promised Land, and the promise of the obedient faithful entering God's "eternal rest," the inspired writer of Letter to the Hebrews encouraged Christians to remain faithful to their covenant obligations in the New Covenant and to strive to reach God's rest in the eternal Eden:  *If Joshua had led them into this place of rest, God would not later have spoken of another day.  There must still be, therefore, a seventh-day rest reserved for God's people, since to enter the place of rest is to rest after your work, as God did after his.  Let us, then, press forward to enter this place of rest, or some of you might copy this example of refusal to believe and be lost* ([Heb 4:8-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews4.htm#v8))*.*

The Hebrew word for "rest" is *shabat*; the Hebrew word for seven is *shaba*; also written seba, saba, or sheva (b and v are the same letter in Hebrew; the addition of the "h" is optional).  *Shabat* (rest) is the name of the seventh day of the week, the *Shabbat* - the Sabbath. The day that was sanctified by God received its name from the number seven (the other days were designated days one through six).  The Hebrew root word *shaba [sava],* which can also mean "fullness and completion," is the origin of the Hebrew word for the number seven, for the Hebrew word meaning "rest," and the name of God's Holy Day, that is referred to in English as the Old Covenant Sabbath.  But *shaba* is also the Hebrew word for "oath."  To "swear an oath" in Hebrew is to "seven oneself" (*Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew English Lexicon*, pages 987-989).

**Question:** Why did God create the Sabbath for mankind, as Jesus taught in [Mark 2:27](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark2.htm#v27)?  Hint: the answer to this question lies in the link between the Hebrew words for "rest" = *shabat*, "seven" = *shaba [or sheba or seva]*, and "Sabbath" *shabbat.*
**Answer:** The seventh day was created as a divine institution and as an expression of the covenant bond between God and man. Adam and Eve were to enter into "God's rest" on this day, in full communion with their Creator (Elohim) and Father (Yahweh).  The sanctification and invitation of the seventh day is the beginning of man's covenant relationship with God.

Covenants are formed by oath-swearing between God and men. For examples of oath swearing and covenant formation in Scripture see: [Gen 22:16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis22.htm#v16); [26:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis26.htm#v3), [28-31](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis26.htm#v28); [Dt 7:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy7.htm#v8); [29:11/12-13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy29.htm#v11); [1 Sam 20:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1samuel/1samuel20.htm#v17); [2 Sam 21:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2samuel/2samuel21.htm#v7); [23:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2samuel/2samuel23.htm#v5); [Ps 110:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm110.htm#v4); [105:8-10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/psalms/psalm105.htm#v8); [Sir 44:19/20-21/23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/sirach/sirach44.htm#v19); [45:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/sirach/sirach45.htm#v25); [Lk 1:73](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke1.htm#v73); [Acts 2:29-30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/acts/acts2.htm#v29); [Heb 6:12-20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews6.htm#v12). The first covenant between God and man was formed on the 7th day; therefore, to swear an oath in Hebrew is to "seven oneself."  In the Bible, oath swearing forms covenants, and covenants form family bonds.  For example, it may be because of the personal covenant between David and Jonathan that David referred to Jonathan as his "brother" ([1 Sam 18:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1samuel/1samuel18.htm#v3); [2 Sam 1:26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2samuel/2samuel1.htm#v26)), or the kinship could also be their bond in the Sinai Covenant which made all Israelites "brothers" ([Acts 2:37](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/acts/acts2.htm#v37)).  The divine covenant bond is expressed in the love and grace Yahweh Elohim freely gives His children and the obedience of the sons and daughters in submission to the will of their divine Father.  In God's plan of salvation history, He formed seven covenants with men in the Old Testament and one final covenant, promised by the prophets, with God the Son and His Bride, the New Covenant Church universal.  Please refer to the handout: **Yahweh's Eight Covenants**.

**Question:** How do we continue to swear our oaths of obedience to the eighth and last covenant, the New Covenant established through the blood of Jesus our Savior?  Is there a connection to the number seven?
**Answer:** We swear our covenant obedience in living out the **seven** Sacraments of our faith established by Jesus Christ: The Eucharist, Reconciliation (Penance), Baptism, Confirmation, Holy orders, Marriage, and the Sacrament of Anointing (CCC# 774-76, 1114-1134).

**Question:** Are the Sacraments instituted by Christ necessary for our salvation?  See CCC# 1129.
**Answer:** Yes.  The sacramental grace dispensed by God the Holy Spirit heals and transforms those who receive Him by conforming them to the life of God the Son, making them partakers of His divine nature.

The word "sacrament" is from the Latin word *sacramentum,* meaning "oath, solemn obligation; from *sacrare*, to set apart as sacred, a sacrifice, consecrated."  In the days of the Roman Empire, the *sacramentum* was the oath of allegiance Roman soldiers swore to the Roman state and the Emperor (*Modern Catholic Dictionary,* Hardon, page 380; *New Webster's International Dictionary,* Grolier, page 739.  Through the Sacraments of our Catholic faith, we swear our allegiance to the King of Kings and His Body, the Church.

**Question:** Why is it binding for humans in "oath swearing" to "seven themselves" (in Hebrew to swear an oath)?
**Answer:** Because that is what God did in the first covenant formation on the seventh day of Creation.

This unique connection to the number seven in the Creation event will be repeated in the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, where there are an abundance of sevens signifying the fullness and completion of the history of man.  See **The List of the Sevens in Revelation** in the Chart section.

The Sabbath "rest," as a day solely devoted to worship, will not be imposed as a covenant obligation until the Sinai Covenant.  In issuing this command in the Ten Commandments in [Exodus 20:8-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus20.htm#v8), God recalled the Creation event and how He set the example for the necessity of the communal relationship between man and Himself at the beginning of salvation history.

God's relationship with man and man's destiny in salvation history will be the focus of the rest of Sacred Scripture from [Genesis 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)b to [Revelation 22:21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation22.htm#v21).

**Please read** [**Genesis 2:4b-25**](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)**: Man and Woman Created to be the Keepers of God's Sanctuary in the Garden Set in the East of Eden**

***2:4bAt the time when Yahweh God [Elohim] made earth and heaven 5there was as yet no wild bush on the earth nor had any wild plant yet sprung up, for Yahweh God had not sent rain on the earth, nor was there any man to till the soil. 6Instead, water flowed out of the ground and watered all the surface of the soil. 7Yahweh God shaped man from the soil of the ground and blew the breath of life into his nostrils, and man became a living being.***

[Genesis 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)b begins the transition period in the relationship between God and Creation.  In these passages God is identified as Yahweh Elohim: *At the time when Yahweh God [Yahweh Elohim] made earth and heaven there was as yet no wild bush on the earth nor had any wild plant yet sprung up...* ([Gen 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)b)*.*  Please note, if your translation has "LORD" in all capital letters, this designation is the substitute for the literal translation "Yahweh."  The word "Lord," with a capital first letter, is the translation of the Hebrew word "Adonai," meaning "lord" as in "God who is lord."

**Question:** Given the unique condition of God's covenant relationship with our first parents, what reason might there be for Moses not to use God's covenant name, the name revealed to him in the burning bush experience ([Ex 3:13-15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus3.htm#v13)), until after the Genesis prologue?
**Answer:** Bible scholars who do not see Genesis 1 and 2 as two different Creation accounts believe the change in God's name from "Elohim" in Genesis chapter 1 to "Yahweh Elohim" in Genesis chapter 2 indicates the change in relationship from the great Elohim of Creation to Yahweh Elohim the "Father" of humanity.  God is no longer only the God of Creation; He is now the God of the first man and woman with whom He has formed a covenant family bond.  He is now "God the Father," and in this more intimate relationship it is fitting that God's personal covenant name should be used to show the shift in that relationship.

In the Bible there are many different names given to the One True God.  The most frequently used names or titles for God are YHWH, usually rendered as Yahweh (ca. 6,800 times); Elohim (ca. 2,600 times); Adonai (ca. 439 times); and El (ca. 238 times).  Most of the other names are combinations of these names like Yahweh Elohim, El Shaddai, and El Eloah.  The most commonly used names for God in Hebrew and Protestant Bibles are Ha-Shem, meaning "the name," which is used in the modern Jewish Masoretic Text (a text that dates to not earlier than c. 1000 AD) translations of the Jewish Tanach (Old Testament), and Jehovah (used in both Protestant and Jewish translations). Both are names for God that are not found in the Hebrew text of Sacred Scripture and only date back to copies or translations of Scripture from the Middle Ages.  For more information on the names of God in the Bible see the document "**The Many Names of God**" in the Documents section of this Study.

**Question:** What stage of the creation cycle is [Genesis 2:4b-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)?  What was the condition of the land at that time?
**Answer:** It was just prior to the creation of man, probably on the sixth day.  The land was without weeds, there was no need for rain because the earth was irrigated naturally by rivers and underground streams.

Note: For the Hebrew people from the time of Creation the length of the day was measured from sunset to sunset (or from twilight to twilight).  Our measure of the day comes from the Romans for whom the next day began at 12 midnight (Pliny, *Natural History, 2.79.188*).  Most of the writers of the Gospels used Jewish time, but there is evidence to support that St. John's Gospel used Roman time.

**Question:** How did God create man and what was the significant detail of man's creation which was revealed for the first time in [Genesis 2:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v7)?
**Answer:** *Yahweh God [Elohim] shaped man from the soil of the ground and blew the breath of life into his nostrils, and man became a living being.* God formed man from the soil of the ground. Man is both corporal (formed from matter) and spiritual.  See CCC# 362.

In the new Creation, Jesus will institute the seven Sacraments, which will also be both corporal and spiritual.  The application of each Sacrament employs an element of matter: Baptism = water; Eucharist = bread and wine; Confirmation = laying on of hands and holy oil; Matrimony = the bride and groom; Holy Orders = laying on of hands; Reconciliation = laying on the hands; Anointing = holy oil and the laying on of hands.

In Hebrew there is word play between the words for "man" and "ground."  This type of word play is very common in the original languages of Sacred Scripture but which is lost in translations.  God formed the first "man" (in Hebrew *'adam*) from the "ground" (in Hebrew *'adamah*).  The collective noun "man" in Hebrew will become the proper name of the first man, Adam.  His name reflects his origin ([Genesis 4:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis4.htm#v25); [5:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis5.htm#v1), [3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis5.htm#v3)).

**Question:** How did God bring man to life?
**Answer:** God brought the man, formed from the pristine earth, to life by blowing into the man's nostrils.  The Hebrew verb "to blow" is *nephesh*, which is also the word for "soul."  You may recall that the Hebrew word for wind, or breath, or spirit is *ruah* ([Gen 1:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v2)).  "Nephesh" in its most literal sense means being animated or brought to life by "ruah."  Man is brought to life by the very Spirit/breath of God.

**Question:** What is the only other time recorded in Sacred Scripture that God blew the breath of His Spirit into man?  Hint: it is in the New Testament.
**Answer:** At the moment Jesus died upon the cross, the new Tree of Life, He breathed out His spirit upon the earth ([Jn 19:30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john19.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22v30)).  Three days later (as the ancients counted), on Resurrection Sunday, 30 AD, Jesus appeared to the Apostles in the Upper Room: *... he breathed on them and said*: *Receive (the) Holy Spirit.  If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you retain anyone's sins, they are retained* ([Jn 20:22-23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john20.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22v22); CCC# 730)*.*   At that moment, the Apostles experienced the transformation of the "new life" Jesus promised Nicodemus in [John 3:3-5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john3.htm#v3).  When God the Son breathed His Spirit upon them, the Apostles in the Upper Room become part of the "new creation" in Christ as they were filled with the Holy Spirit - a prelude to Christian baptism in which by water and the Spirit Christ's ministers were to baptize believers into new life as sons and daughters of the Most Holy Trinity - infused with the grace of divine sonship enjoyed by our original parents in Eden.

**Please read Genesis 2:8-14: Eden and God's Garden Sanctuary**
**8*Yahweh God [Elohim] planted a garden in Eden, which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned.* 9*From the soil, Yahweh God [Elohim] caused to grow every kind of tree, enticing to look at and good to eat, with the tree of life in the middle of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.* 10*A river flowed from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided to make four streams.* 11*The first is named Pishon, and this winds all through the land of Havilah where there is gold.* 12*The gold of this country is pure; bdellium and cornelian stone are found there.* 13*The second river is named the Gihon, and this winds all through the land of Cush.* 14*The third river is named the Tigris, and this flows to the east of Ashur.  The fourth river is the Euphrates.***

Note: The ancient place name *eden,* is found in the documents of other ancient Near Eastern cultures: Hebrew = *eden;* Sumerian = *eden;* Akkadian = *edinu*.  The likely Hebrew etymology of the word *eden* suggests "pleasure, delight;" the word is derived from the Hebrew root *'dn*, meaning "enjoyment."  The Hebrew word for garden (*gan*) suggests an enclosed (walled) or protected area where trees and plants flourish (*Brown-Driver-Briggs, pages 726-27; 171; New Jerusalem note "f," page 19*).

Notice the wealth of information about the creation of man and the condition of the land in which God chose to settle him.  Whenever there is an abundance of detail in Scripture concerning an event or topic, there is always something of significance which points beyond that portion of the text. In this case, the details concerning the pristine condition of the land and man's place in it before man's Fall from grace will be contrasted in the events and conditions that come after man's Fall from grace.  The land of "Cush" mentioned in [Genesis 2:13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v13) is not Ethiopia.  In the Pentateuch, the people of Arabia/Midian were called "Cushites" (in [Num 12:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers12.htm#v1), Miriam and Aaron call Moses' Midianite wife a "Cushite woman"; in [Hab 3:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/habakkuk/habakkuk3.htm#v7), Cush is presented as another name for Midian).

**Question:** Read [Genesis 2:4b-25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4) and compare and contrast the description of the land prior to man's Fall from grace with the conditions of the land and man's state after the Fall (include the whole of the Pentateuch for the post-Fall conditions).
**Answer:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Pre-Fall conditions**  | **Post-Fall conditions**  |
| No weeds([Gen 2:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5))  | Weeds (brambles/ thrones and thistles ([Gen 3:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v18))  |
| No rain; natural irrigation in a continual flow of water from its source in Eden([Gen 2:5-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5))  | The flood = rain ([Gen 7:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis7.htm#v12));drought ([Gen 31:40](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis31.htm#v40))  |
| Man did not have to till the soil to produce food ([Gen 2:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5))  | Man condemned to struggle to grow food ([Gen 3:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v17), [19a](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v19), [23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v23))  |
| Adam and Eve are settled in a garden in the east of Eden([Gen 2:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v8), [15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v15))  | Adam and Eve are expelled from the garden in Eden ([Gen 3:23-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v23));as a reminder, the future Tabernacle/ Temple, the meeting place between God and His covenant children, is to face toward the East ([Ex 40:16-33](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus40.htm#v16))  |
| Adam and Eve are to eat from the Tree of Life ([Gen 2:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v9), [16-17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v16))  | They are banished from the Tree of Life ([Gen 3:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v22))  |
| Man and woman are equal partners([Gen 2:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v24))  | Woman is subject to man ([Gen 3:16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v16))  |
| They are naked and unashamed, clothed with grace and existing in perfect covenant union with God ([Gen 2:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v25))  | They are naked and ashamed; fellowship with God has been damaged; they have become "dis-graced" ([Gen 3:10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v10)).  |

Yahweh's Sanctuary in Eden

The eschatological promise of the return to Eden: *It will happen in the final days that the mountain of Yahweh's house will rise higher than the mountains and tower above the heights.  Then all the nations will stream to it, many peoples will come to it and say, 'Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob that he may teach us his ways so that we may walk in his paths.'*
[Isaiah 2:2-3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah2.htm#v2)

*Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take as your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world.*
[Matthew 25:34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew25.htm#v34)b

**Question:** Where in Eden was the garden Sanctuary located?
**Answer:** *Yahweh God planted a garden in Eden, which is in the east, and there he put the man he had fashioned* ([Gen 2:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v8)).

It is in the east of Eden that Yahweh Elohim planted a garden Sanctuary to be a home for Adam and Eve and God's earthly dwelling place.  This protected space was the meeting place between God and man.  The place-name "eden" is significant.  The mention of this very ancient place name is exceedingly common in ancient documents.  It is written as *eden* in ancient Sumarian *cuneiform,* a wedge-shaped script developed by the scribes of Sumaria.  Sumeria was the first Near Eastern civilization, and the Sumerians were the first ancient culture to develop a writing system using consonants [please note that in addition to Hebrew, all ancient languages in the Near East were written without vowels].  By c. 2700BC great libraries had been established in the cities of Sumeria; the library at the Sumarian city of Tello, for example, yielded a collection of over 30,000 clay tablets.  Tablets from numerous Sumerian archives mention "eden" as the location of the earliest human settlement.  This ancient culture, the Biblical Shinar ([Gen 10:10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v10)), flourished from c. 4500BC until the destruction of the great city of Ur in c. 2357BC, when Sumanian civilization began to decline.

The word "eden" is, however, very rare in the writings of the next civilization, the Akkadians.  The Akkadians conquered Sumeria, adopted the Sumerian *cuneiform* script, and became the world's first empire.  In Akkadian the word is rendered as *edinu* and is based on the Sumerian *eden*, which in Akkadian is believed to mean "high plain or steppe."  The discovery of ancient Sumarian and Akkadian tablets bearing the name *eden/ edinu* verified that the ultimate source of this place-name was very ancient and must go back to the earliest cultural stratum of Mesopotamian civilizations.  The Akkadian Sumerian-based cuneiform script became the lingua franca of the ancient Near East.  Archaeologists have discovered approximately 250,000 cuneiform tablets dating from 3200 BC to the 1st century AD (*The Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. I, page 1216*).

**Question:** What two trees are in the middle of the garden Sanctuary in Eden?
**Answer:** The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

**Question:** What was the purpose of the Tree of Life and what did it symbolize?  See [Gen 3:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v22); [Wis 1:13-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/wisdom/wisdom1.htm#v13); [2:23-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/wisdom/wisdom2.htm#v23).
**Answer:** The Tree of Life was a symbol of immortality. The Book of Wisdom records that God did not make death.  Death entered creation after the Fall; God made creatures to exist.  And yet, in some way the Tree of Life sustained immortality.  The reason man was expelled from the garden Sanctuary after the Fall was because man no longer was the recipient of the blessing of physical immortality: *Then Yahweh God said: 'Now that the man has become like one of us in knowing good from evil, he must not be allowed to reach out his hand and pick from the tree of life too, and eat and live forever!'  So Yahweh God expelled him from the garden of Eden ...* ([Gen 3:22-23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v22)).

The Hebrew word for the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, *eshadda't tob wara'*, is difficult to translate.  Both "good" and "evil" are direct objects, and the ra' connotes not only moral evil but ordinary unfitness'"bad," as in "bad apple."  The Latin word *malum* means both "bad" and "apple," which is how the apple came to be associated with the fruit of the forbidden tree (*Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. 6,* page 656-57).

**Question:** How will the "Tree of Life" be depicted in the desert Tabernacle and in the Jerusalem Temple?  What else did this object represent?  What was it copied from?  See [Ex 25:8-9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus37.htm#v8) [31-40](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus25.htm#v31); [37:17-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus37.htm#v17).
**Answer:** The golden Menorah (lampstand), with its plant motifs and burning oil lamps represented both the Tree of Life ([Gen 2:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v9); [3:33](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v33); [Rev 2:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation2.htm#v7); [22:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation22.htm#v14)) and the burning bush in which God's presence was made known to Moses ([Ex 3:1-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus3.htm#v1)).  The Tabernacle Menorah was a copy of the lampstand that Moses saw in the Heavenly Sanctuary ([Ex 25:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus25.htm#v9); [Rev 4:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation4.htm#v5)), and it symbolized the presence of God in His Sanctuary (just as the candle or oil lamp which burns next to the Tabernacle containing the Eucharist signifies the presence of God in His Sanctuary).

**Question:** If Adam is sinless and immortal, why does he need the Tree of Life?  What purpose does it serve?  Hint: see [Genesis 3:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v22) and the chart Yahweh's Eight Covenants in the handouts for this lesson.
**Answer:** It is the symbol of immortality, and the Tree of Life is the sign of God's covenant with Adam.

**Please read** [**Genesis 2:10-14**](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v10)**: The Rivers of Eden**
2:**10*A river flowed from Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided to make four streams.* 11*The first is named the Pishon, and this winds all through the land of Havilah where there is gold.* 12*The gold of this country is pure; bdellium and cornelian stone are found there.* 13*The second river is named the Gihon, and winds all through the land of Cush.* 14*The third river is named the Tigris, and this flows to the east of Ashur.  The fourth river is the Euphrates.***

**Question:** What is significant about a river "flowing out from Eden" from which four rivers water the earth?  How does [Ezekiel 28:12-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezekiel/ezekiel28.htm#v12) describe Eden? What does the account suggest about the location of Eden and the garden Sanctuary in Eden?
**Answer:** Eden was the source of "life" for the whole earth.  No living thing can live without fresh water.  If a river flowed out of Eden to form four rivers that watered the earth, Eden must have been an elevation, a mountain or a mountain plateau.  Ezekiel describes Eden as "the holy mountain of God."

**Question:** What were the four rivers that flowed out of Eden and what information does Scripture provide concerning the location of each river?
**Answer:**

1. Pishon: winds through Havilah where there is gold
2. Gihon: winds through Cush
3. Tigris: flows east of Ashur
4. Euphrates: no information

Eden was located somewhere in the region of the earth which scholars often refer to as the Near East, an area that stretches from the coast of Turkey to central Iran and from northern Anatolia on the Black Sea to the Red Sea of Egypt.  The land mass is situated on three tectonic plates that determine the geology of the region.  In its strategic placement at the intersection of the continents of Asia, Europe and Africa, the Near East became the crossroads of the ancient world.

Genesis records that the Tigris flowed east of Ashur.  Ashur (Asshur/Ashshur) was a son of Noah's righteous firstborn son, Shem ([Gen 10:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v22); [1 Chr 1:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1chronicles/1chronicles1.htm#v17)).  Ashur's descendants settled in northern Mesopotamia near the Zagros Mountains.  He is believed to the father of the people who were ancestors of the Assyrians ([Num 24:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers24.htm#v22)).  Ashur is also the name of the oldest of the Mesopotamian (later Assyrian) city-states, situated on the right bank of the Tigris, whose territory was close to the Zagros Mountains on the East and the mountains of Armenia on the North.  In their art, the people of Ashur have the appearance of Semites (which fits the Biblical account, since they were descendants of Shem, the father of all Semites); their features differing significantly from the features of individuals depicted in the art of the Sumerians and the Babylonians (Hardon, *Dictionary of the Bible,* page 63; *Anchor Bible Dictionary,* page 500).

The Tigris and Euphrates are the two rivers of Eden that are still great rivers today, flowing from eastern Turkey, into Iraq and merging near the Persian Gulf.  Within the banks of these rivers are the boundaries of an area that has been called the "cradle of civilization"'Mesopotamia (the-land-between-the-rivers).  The Hebrew names for these rivers are Perath (Tigris) and Hiddekel (Euphrates).  Hiddekel is Hebrew for the Sumerian river Idiglat, which in Greek is the Euphrates.  The Euphrates is the longest river in southwest Asia, traveling about 1,800 miles from the source of one of its headwaters, the Murad Su, in the Taurus Mountains of eastern Turkey, to the Persian Gulf.  The Euphrates is mentioned nineteen times in the Old Testament ([Gen 2:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v14); [15:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis15.htm#v18); [Dt 1:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy1.htm#v7); [11:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/deuteronomy/deuteronomy11.htm#v24); [Jos 1:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/joshua/joshua1.htm#v4); [2 Sam 8:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2samuel/2samuel8.htm#v3); [2 Kg 23:29](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings23.htm#v29); [24:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings24.htm#v7); [1 Chr 5:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1chronicles/1chronicles5.htm#v9); [18:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1chronicles/1chronicles18.htm#v3); [2 Chr 35:20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2chronicles/2chronicles35.htm#v20); [Jer 13:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah13.htm#v4), [5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah13.htm#v5), [6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah13.htm#v6), [7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah13.htm#v7); [46:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah46.htm#v2), [6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah46.htm#v6), [10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah46.htm#v10); [51:63](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah51.htm#v63)) and twice in the New Testament book of Revelation ([Rev 9:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation9.htm#v14); [16:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation16.htm#v12)).  The Tigris is fed from two sources in the Taurus Mountains of eastern Turkey and is swifter and carries more water than the broader Euphrates.  The Tigris (Hiddekel) is mentioned twice in Scripture ([Gen 2:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v14) and [Dan 10:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/daniel/daniel10.htm#v4)).

The Pishon River no longer exists; it is only mentioned in [Genesis 2:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v11). Satellite imagery has detected the huge, dry riverbed of an ancient river that once flowed through the Arabian Peninsula. It has been speculated that this ancient river watered the Arabian Peninsula from c. 10,000 BC until the river gradually dried up sometime after 3500 BC (see "The River Runs Dry," Biblical Archaeology Review, July/August, 1996). [Genesis 2:10-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v10) relates that the river Pishon flowed "around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold..." Havilah was the name of the second son of Cush, a son of Ham and grandson of Noah ([Gen 10:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v7)). The sons of Cush occupied the lands of modern day Syria and Iraq. Havilah was also the name of the twelfth son of Joktan ([Gen 10:26-29](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v26)). Joktan was a grandson of Shem who was the firstborn son of Noah ([Gen 10:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v1), [22-25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v22)). Joktan's sons occupied lands from "Mesha all the way to Sephar, the eastern mountain range;" Sephar is believed to be a mountain range in eastern Arabia ([Gen 10:30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v30)). Some scholars have proposed that the lands of Havilah and his brothers were somewhere between the head of the Gulf of Aqaba and the Persian Gulf (Anchor Bible Dictionary, vol. 4, page 708).

The place-name "Havilah" is mentioned again in [Genesis 25:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis25.htm#v18) and [1 Samuel 15:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1samuel/1samuel15.htm#v7). [Genesis 25:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis25.htm#v18) records that when Ishmael son of Abraham died his territory stretched from "Havilah-by-Shur just outside Egypt on the way to Assyria." Shur is believed to be the Sinai Peninsula and if that is the case, Havilah is again connected to Arabia. [1 Samuel 15:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1samuel/1samuel15.htm#v7) also identified Havilah as a district east of Amalek "in the direction of Shur, which is to the east of Egypt." Amalek was a nomadic tribe first mentioned in [Genesis 14:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis14.htm#v7) and listed among the tribes in the genealogy of Jacob/Israel's brother, Esau ([Gen 36:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis36.htm#v12)). According to [Numbers 13:29](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers13.htm#v29) Amalek dwelt in the "Negeb," a Hebrew word usually translated as "south" but which literally means "dry desert." [Genesis 2:11-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v11) identified Havilah as a region rich in gold deposits. The ancient river bed discovered by the satellites is located near Mahd edh-Dhahab, one of the richest gold mines in Saudi Arabia, which may have been worked as early as 1000 BC.

Some Bible scholars and linguists have suggested that the Hebrew word "Pishon" is linked to the name of the Iranian river called the Uizhun.  These scholars have suggested that the Iranian vowel "u" converted to Semitic labial consonant "p" transforms Uizhun to "Pizhan," which can also be rendered "Pishon."  The river Uizhun, which on modern maps is identified as the Qezel Uzun, flows down from the Zargos Mountains of Kurdistan and empties into the Caspian Sea.  In the Zargos Mountains of western Iraq, an ancient seal depicting the temptation of Adam and Eve was discovered in ruins dating to the period of the ancient Sumerian civilization, the earliest civilization in Mesopotamia.  Dated to circa 2800 BC, the "Temptation Seal" depicts a male and female figure, a tree, and a serpent.  The artifact is in British Museum and its inscription, deciphered by Reginald Walker 1917-89, tells a story similar to the Genesis account of the Fall.

The second river mentioned in the description of the location of Eden is the Gihon.

**Question:** Where does one find the geographic feature called the Gihon today?
**Answer:** It is the name of the natural spring which is the only water source for the city of Jerusalem.

The Gihon bears the same name as the natural spring that is the only water source for Jerusalem, in ancient times as well as today.  Genesis identifies this river as flowing through the land of Cush.  Cush is an ancient Biblical name for the land of Midian in the Arabian Peninsula ([Hab 3:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/habakkuk/habakkuk3.htm#v7)).  Some scholars identify Cush as the land of the Kassites, east of the Tigris, also known as Kush during ancient times.  Cush was a grandson of Noah, a son of Noah's dispossessed son Ham ([Gen 10:6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v6)), and the father of six sons including Havilah ([Gen 10:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v8)) and Nimrod ([Gen 10:8-9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis10.htm#v8)), "the first potentate on earth." Nimrod was king of the land of Shinar (Sumer) and founded the cities of Babel, Erech and Accad.  However, some geographers have suggested the Biblical Gihon may be the River Aras, which flows into Caspian Sea from the mountains north of Lake Urmia.  This river was once called Gaihun by 8th century AD Islamic geographers; Victorian atlases named this river as Gaihun-Aras.  For more information of the possible locations of these ancient rivers, see [www.accuracyingenesis.com/adam.htm1#paradise](http://www.accuracyingenesis.com/adam.htm1#paradise).

Although much ink has been spilled and many paths trod in attempts to determine the physical location of Eden, it is impossible to positively identify the site.  The evidence in Genesis may point to a location near the Persian Gulf where two of the rivers mentioned, the Tigris and Euphrates, empty into that body of water, or perhaps Eden was in the area of the mountain lakes that feed tributaries of the Tigris and Euphrates, the great lakes of Van and Urmia in Armenia (Eastern Turkey and Western Iraq-Iran). However, it is impossible to determine the location through identifying the ancient rivers since the devastating effects of the Great Flood could have changed the courses of many of the pre-flood rivers.

More important are the extraordinary details concerning the waters of Eden.

**Question:** What is the significance of water imagery in Sacred Scripture?  What Biblical theme is associated with this imagery? Hint: For example, see [Is 44:1-4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah44.htm#v1); [55:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah55.htm#v1), [3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah55.htm#v3); [Ez 47:1-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezeliel/ezekiel47.htm#v1); [Zec 14:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/zechariah/zechariah14.htm#v8); [Jn 7:37-39](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john7.htm#v37); [19:34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john19.htm#v34).
**Answer:** Water imagery becomes an important often-repeated symbol in sacred Scripture for the blessings of salvation.  In the New Testament, water will become a symbol of the Holy Spirit.  Just as the river that flows out from Eden feeds the rivers that bring life to the earth, so too will the "waters of salvation" nourish the Church, from which flow "rivers of living water" (for Catholics the Most Holy Eucharist), flowing out from the Church to bless the whole earth (see [Ez 47:1-12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezeliel/ezekiel47.htm#v1); [Zec 14:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/zechariah/zechariah14.htm#v8); [Is 27:6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah27.htm#v6); and [Rev 22:1)](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation22.htm#v1): *Then the angel showed me the river of life, rising from the throne of God and of the Lamb and flowing crystal-clear...* ([Rev 22:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation22.htm#v1)).  The Fathers of the Church saw the rivers flowing out of Eden, home of the Tree of Life, as symbolic of the four Gospels flowing out from the Cross, the true Tree of Life which the Tree of Life in Eden prefigured.

During the holy remembrance feast of Tabernacles (also call Booths or Shelters), the blessings flowing out from God and the Prophets' promise of the return to the Eden Sanctuary was the focus of the liturgy during the seven days of the Temple services.  It was in the last year of Jesus' ministry during this festival when He interrupted the liturgical ceremony on the last day by crying out: *Let anyone who is thirsty come to me!  Let anyone who believes in me come and drink!  As scripture says, 'From his heart shall flow streams of living water'* ([John 7:37-39](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john7.htm#v37)). During the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles, water from the Gihon spring of Jerusalem was poured out on God's holy sacrificial altar.  Gihon was the name of the second of the four rivers whose source was the holy river of Eden that flowed from the Holy Mountain of God.  For more references to the "mountain of God" see [Ez 28:13-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezekiel/ezekiel28.htm#v13); [Is 2:2-4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah2.htm#v2); [11:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah11.htm#v9); [25:6-9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah25.htm#v6); [56:3-8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah56.htm#v3); [65:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah65.htm#v25); [Dan 2:34-35](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/daniel/daniel2.htm#v34), [44-45](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/daniel/daniel2.htm#v44); [Mi 4:1-4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/micah/micah4.htm#v1); [Mt 5:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew5.htm#v14).

That Eden was the original "holy mountain" explains the significance of the other mountains that will become important in the history of God's covenant people as sites for God's redemptive acts and revelations.

**Question:** How many such "holy mountain" sites can you think of in Scripture?
**Answer:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Mountain**  | **Scripture Passage**  |
| 1.  The Garden of Eden  | [Genesis 2:10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v10);[Ez 28:13-14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezekiel/ezekiel28.htm#v13)  |
| 2.  Noah's Ark rested on Mt. Ararat after the Great Flood  | [Genesis 8:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis8.htm#v4)  |
| 3. The substitutionary atonement of the ram in place of the sacrifice of Abraham's son Isaac on Mt. Moriah  | [Genesis 22:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis22.htm#v2)  |
| 4. Sinai Covenant on Mt. Sinai/Horeb  | [Exodus 19:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus19.htm#v12)  |
| 5. The site of Solomon's Temple on Mt. Moriah  | [2 Chronicles 3:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2chronicles/2chronicles3.htm#v1)  |
| 6. Elijah's defeat of the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel ["carmel" is a Hebrew word for "garden"]  | [1 Kings 18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings18.htm)  |
| 7. Jesus and the giving of the New Covenant law on the Mt. of Beatitudes  | [Matthew 5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew5.htm)  |
| 8. Jesus' official appointment of St. Peter as Vicar of the Church on the mountain at Caesarea Philippi  | [Matthew 16:13-19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew16.htm#v13);[Mark 8:27-30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark8.htm#v27);[Luke 9:18-21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke9.htm#v18)  |
| 9.  Jesus prevailed over temptation on a mountain  | [Matthew 4:8-11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew4.htm#v8);[Luke 4:1-13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke4.htm#v1)  |
| 10. The Mt. of Transfiguration when Jesus appeared in His glory  | [Matthew 17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew17.htm) [Peter refers to this place as "the holy mountain" in [2 Peter 1:16-18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2peter/2peter1.htm#v16)]  |
| 11. Jesus was arrested in a garden on the Mt. of Olives; Jesus ascended to the Father from the Mt. of Olives  | [Matthew 26:47](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew26.htm#v47)ff;[Mark 14:43](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark14.htm#v4)ff;[Luke 22:47](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke22.htm#v47)ff;[John 18:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john18.htm#v3)ff;[Acts 1:1-19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/acts/acts1.htm#v1)  |
| 12. Golgotha, where Jesus was crucified was a lower elevation of Mt. Moriah  | [Matthew 27:32-36](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew27.htm#v32);[Mark 15:21-27](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark15.htm#v21);[Luke 23:26-34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke23.htm#v26);[John 19:17-24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john19.htm#v17)  |

**Please read** [**Genesis 2:15-25**](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5)**:  The First Priest-king of God's Sanctuary and the Gift of Free-will**
2:**15*Yahweh God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate and take care of it.* 16*Then Yahweh God gave the man this command.  You are free to eat of all the trees in the garden.* 17*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you are not to eat; for, the day you eat of that, you are doomed to die.* 18*Yahweh God said, 'It is not right that the man should be alone.  I shall make him a helper.* 19*So from the soil Yahweh God fashioned all the wild animals and all the birds of heaven.  These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it.* 20*The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild animals.  But no helper suitable for the man was found for him.* 21*Then, Yahweh God made the man fall into a deep sleep.  And, while he was asleep, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh up again forthwith.* 22*Yahweh God fashioned the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man.* 23*And the man said: This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!  She is to be called Woman, because she was taken from Man.* 24*This is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and they become one flesh.* 25*Now, both of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame before each other.***

**Question:** How many times is God referred to as Yahweh Elohim from [Genesis 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4), in the account of God's intimate association with man, to the Fall of Adam and Eve in [3:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v24)? Your translation may read LORD God.  "Yahweh Elohim" is not used prior to [2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4) nor is it used again after the account of the Fall until [Genesis 24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis24.htm) where father Abraham sends his unnamed servant in search of a bride for Isaac.  Abraham's unnamed servant calls his master's god "Yahweh Elohim."
**Answer:** Twenty times ([Gen 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4), [5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5), [7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v7), [8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v8), [9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v9), [15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v15), [16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v16), [18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v18), [19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v19), [21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v21), [22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v22); [3:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v1), [8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v8) (twice), [9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v9), [13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v13), [14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v14), [21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v21), [22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v22), [23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v23)).

**Genesis 2:15:** *Yahweh God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden...* Yahweh Elohim placed man in the garden in the East in Eden ([Gen 2:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v8)).  This will be the special place God has set aside as a meeting place between the Divine Father and his human children.

**Question:** What was the purpose of placing man in the garden in Eden instead of just letting man roam the earth?
**Answer:** The whole earth was God's possession, but the garden in Eden was created as a special meeting place in which man could have fellowship with God.

**Question:** How will the children of Israel express the concept of a special meeting place for communion with God?  How do we express this same concept?
**Answer:** This is man's first experience with a sacred Sanctuary - a special place where God is present among men.  The garden in Eden has become what the children of Israel will call the Holy of Holies of God's Sanctuary.  It will be in the Holy of Holies of the desert Sanctuary that the Ark of the Covenant will be the object upon which God's presence rests,  and what Roman Catholics call the Sanctuary of the church where, in many Catholic churches, the Tabernacle containing the living presence of God (the consecrated Host) rests.

God settled man in the garden *to cultivate and take care of it.* 16*Then Yahweh God gave the man this command.  You are free to eat of all the trees in the garden.* 17*But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you are not to eat; for, the day you eat of that, you are doomed to die.*

**Question:** What are the first covenant obligations and commands?
**Answer:** The covenant obligations are to care for the garden Sanctuary and the command is to not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

As with most human families, the bond of covenant family unity came with obligations that the family members owe to one another.  In [Genesis 2:15-18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v15) God gave Adam the first duties of covenant family service: *Yahweh God took the man and settled him in the Garden of Eden to cultivate (abad) and take care of (samar) it* (New Jerusalem translation)*.* But what need is there to cultivate a garden that is continually refreshed with flowing water ([Gen 2:6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v6)) and in which there are no weeds ([Gen 2:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v5))?  How can "working the soil" be a blessing here when later in the narrative, "working the ground" will be a curse that is a result of the Fall ([Gen 3:17-19)](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v17)  St. Augustine made the observation: *Although man was placed in paradise so as to work and guard it, that praiseworthy work was not toilsome.  For the work in paradise is quite different from the work on the earth to which he was condemned after the sin. The addition "and to guard it" indicated the sort of work it was.  For in the tranquility of the happy life, where there is no death, the only work is to guard what you possess* (*Two Books on Genesis Against the Manichaeans, 2.11.15;* quoted from *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, O.T. vol I,* page 60).

The English word "cultivate" and the phrase "take care of" in verse 15 of the New Jerusalem Bible translation is rendered in the Hebrew by two verbs which are more accurately translated as "to serve" (*abad*) and "to guard" (*samar*).  The Hebrew verb *abad* is a prime root meaning "to work, to serve or keep"; while the verb *samar (shamar)* means to "hedge about" (as with thorns), "to guard", "to protect."  In most English translations where these words are used in other Scripture passages, the Hebrew verb *abad* is often translated as "to serve," "of service," "to do duty," "to perform duties," "to minister," and the verb *samar* is often translated as "to guard," "to protect," "to keep," "to minister," "to keep charge of," and "to attend" (*Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon*).  Biblical scholar John Sailhamer interprets the commands using the verbs *samar* and *abad* to be more accurately translated as "worship and obey" (*The Pentateuch as Narrative,* page 101).

In the body of the Pentateuch, the verbs *samar* and *abad* are only repeated together to describe the religious duties of the priests' and Levites' liturgical service in the sacred Sanctuary of Yahweh, the dwelling place of the presence of God:

1. In [Numbers 3:5-10](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers3.htm#v5) the word *samar* is used three times and the word *abad* is used twice in the Hebrew text: *And the LORD said to Moses, "Bring the tribe of Levi near, and set them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister to him.  They shall perform duties for him and for the whole congregation before the tent of meeting, as they minister at the tabernacle; they shall have charge of all the furnishing of the tent of meeting, and attend to the duties  for the people of Israel as they minister at the tabernacle.  And you shall give the Levites to Aaron and his sons; they are wholly given to him from among the people of Israel.  And you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but if any one else comes near, he shall be put to death."*
2. In [Numbers 8:23-26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers8.htm#v23) the words *abad* and *samar* are each used once in the Hebrew text: *And the LORD said to Moses, "This is what pertains to the Levites: from twenty-five years old and upward they shall go in to perform the work in the service of the tent of meeting; and from the age of fifty years they shall withdraw from the work of the service and serve no more, but minister to their brethren in the tent of meeting to keep the charge, and they shall do no service.  Thus shall you do to the Levites in assigning their duties."*
3. In [Numbers 18:3-7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers18.htm#v3) the word *samar* is used four times and the word *abad* is used twice in the Hebrew text: *They shall attend you and attend to all duties of the tent; but shall not come near to the vessels of the sanctuary or to the altar, lest they, and you die. They shall join you, and attend to the tent of meeting, for all the service of the tent; and no one else shall come near you.  And you shall attend to the duties of the sanctuary and the duties of the altar, that there be wrath no more upon the people of Israel.  And behold, I have taken your brethren the Levites from among the people of Israel, they are a gift to you, given to the LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting.  And you and your sons with you shall attend to your priesthood for all that concerns the altar and that is within the veil; and you shall serve.  I give your priesthood as a gift, and any one else who comes near shall be put to death."*

The verb *samar (shamar)* "to guard"/ "keep charge" is also found in these Old Testament passages:

1. To command the Cherubim to guard Eden in [Genesis 3:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v24): *He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard [samar] the way to the tree of life.*
2. To command the Levites to guard the Tabernacle in [Numbers 1:53](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers1.htm#v53): .*..  but the Levites shall encamp around the tabernacle of the testimony, that there may be no wrath upon the congregating of the people of Israel; and the Levites shall keep charge [samar] of the tabernacle of the testimony.*
3. To command the son of the High Priest to supervise the Levites assigned to guard the Sanctuary in [Numbers 3:32](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers3.htm#v32): *And Eleazar the son of Aaron the priest was to be chief over the leaders of the Levites, and to have oversight of those who had charge [samar] of the sanctuary.*
4. To guard the royal palace of the king and to guard the Temple in [2 Kings 11:5-7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings11.htm#v5):    *And he commanded them, "This is the thing that you shall do: one third of you, those who come off duty on the Sabbath and guard [samar] the king's house (another third being at the gate Sur and a third at the gate behind the guards), shall guard [samar] the palace; and the two divisions of you, which come on duty in force on the Sabbath and guard [samar] the house of the LORD....*

[See *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance; The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon:*  The Hebrew verb *abad* [#5647]is a prime root meaning "to work, to serve or keep"; while the verb *samar (shamar)* [#8104] means to "hedge about" [as with thorns], "to guard", "to protect."  Also see *The Interlinear Bible: Hebrew-English,* pgs 347-348; 371; 399: Owens, *Analytical Key to the Old Testament, vol. 1,* pages 658-9; *Letter & Spirit, vol. I, "Worship in the Word,"* Hahn, page 107].

The use of these Hebrew verbs, in association with the obligations of "serving/ ministering" and "guarding" Yahweh's Sanctuary, identify Adam's covenant obligations to the Sanctuary that was Eden.  Eden is the first sacred Sanctuary.  Adam was Yahweh's human son and the first priest/king to serve as the guardian of God's earthly Sanctuary.  Adam and Eve were created to be liturgical beings, living in perfect harmony with God serving as God's representatives in Eden, and caring for the plants and animals for six out of every seven days just as God had labored in the formation of Creation for six days.  In the completion of every six day period, they were to enter by invitation into God's "rest" on the seventh day ([Gen 2:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v3)), a day of communion and liturgical worship.  It is communion with God in the liturgy of worship as the sons and daughters created in the image of a divine Father that separates man from the beasts and which makes man fully "human."  Pope Pius XI wrote: *Ours is a religion of Divine Sonship.  We are made partakers of the divine nature.* It was the perfection of divine sonship in the shared life of the Trinity enjoyed by our first parents that man lost in his Fall from grace (CCC#375).  It was the mission of Jesus the Messiah to restore the salvation of divine sonship that man first enjoyed in the Sanctuary that was in Eden.  The Cross, as the true "Tree of Life," will become the symbol of that restoration.

**Question:** What is God's warning to Adam concerning the forbidden tree in [Genesis 2:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v17)?  Was the fruit of the tree poison?  What does this command test?  See CCC 396.
**Answer:** God commanded Adam not to eat the fruit of this tree, and if he disobeyed and ate of the fruit, he would surely die.  The tree was good, as everything in creation was judged to be good.  God's command and the test of Adam's obedience to the command was a covenant ordeal which tested the gift of "free will": the ability of man to choose to be obedient to the will of God or to choose his own will and desires.

In [Genesis 2:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v17) the Hebrew the word "die" is repeated twice.  There are no superlatives in Hebrew, therefore, to give a word emphasis it is repeated twice, as in this case with "die, die," usually translated as "surely die."  As long as man lived in obedience to the will of God, sharing in the divine intimacy of sonship in the life of God, man had access to the Tree of Life, the means of his immortality, and he would not have to suffer or die (CCC# 376).

**Question:** But how does a double death become a literal reality in association with the willful failure to obey the commands of God, which in Adam and Eve's case was the test of free-will in obedience to the command not to eat from the fruit of this tree?  See [Rev 2:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelaion/revelation2.htm#v11); [20:6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelaion/revelation20.htm#v6); [21:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelaion/revelation21.htm#v8).
**Answer:** To eat the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil will not only result in eventual physical death but also spiritual death.  The spiritual malaise which results from the alienation from an intimate relationship with God can become spiritually fatal.  A prolonged separation from the divine life of the Trinity in one's lifetime can result in an eternal separation from Yahweh Elohim, the eternal Father, after physical death'this is the second death.

Writing about God's command to Adam concerning the forbidden tree, St. Augustine observed: *God, referring to the forbidden fruit, said to the first man whom he had established in paradise: "In the day that you shall eat of it, you shall die the death." His threat included not only the first part of the first death, that is, the soul's deprivation of God; not only the second part of the first death, that is, the body's deprivation of the soul; not only the whole of the first death in which the soul, separated from both God and the body, is punished; but whatever of death is up to and including that absolutely final and so-called second death... in which the soul, deprived of God but united to the body, suffers eternal punishment* (Augustine, *City of God, 13.12*)

**Question:** What is the implication of the covenant prohibition concerning the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil?
**Answer:** The knowledge of what is good and what is evil is God's sole prerogative.   Man is not equipped spiritually to make these judgments.  Only the Divine Father knows what is good for His human children.

**Question:** What verdict is established in [Genesis 2:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v17) that will be repeated in [Genesis 20:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis20.htm#v7); [Exodus 31:14](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus31.htm#v14); and [Leviticus 24:16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/leviticus/leviticus24.htm#v16)?  What are the wider ranging implications which are revealed in [Genesis 3:7-13](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v7)?
**Answer:** From the beginning of the covenant relationship with the Divine Father, the verdict for covenant disobedience is the death penalty.  Failure to submit to the Father resulting in covenant and moral disobedience results in spiritual death through the loss of intimacy with God and also results in alienation from other members of the covenant family.

[**Genesis 2:18-20**](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v18)**:**
**18*Yahweh God said, 'It is not right that the man should be alone.  I shall make him a helper.* 19*So from the soil Yahweh God fashioned all the wild animals and all the birds of heaven.  These he brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it.* 20*The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven and all the wild animals.  But no helper suitable for the man was found for him.***

**Question:** For the first time in the narrative, God judges something "not good" (*lo tov* in Hebrew), whereas in the prologue, every aspect of the Creation was judged as good and the seventh day as "very good."  What is not good?
**Answer:** It is not good that man should be alone.

God formed the animals from the dust of the earth, as He formed man, but God does not animate these creatures with His breath/spirit.  The difference between the souls of the animals and the soul of man is that man possesses an immortal soul.  Notice that the sequence differs from [Genesis 1:24-27](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v24).  The prologue account is not in conflict with [Genesis 2:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v7) and [19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v19).  It simply means that the creation of man and the beasts is not chronological, as it appears in these verses, but that the creation of man and the beasts was probably simultaneous.  God is not limited as we are in our works; the chronological unfolding of time is a condition in which man lives.  Since man is made out of the same matter as the animals, it can not be claimed that man's creation was in any way divine **Adam is not a man-god**.  It is his immortal soul, a gift of the breath/spirit of God that animates him and his adoption as a divine son through his covenant relationship with God that infuses him with grace and makes him a partaker in the divine life of the Most Holy Trinity.

Note: the ancients did not see the importance of telling a story in a chronological sequence as we do in relating events today.  The only one of the Gospels that we can feel fairly certain presents a chronological sequence of events during Jesus ministry is St. John's Gospel.  Each year of Jesus' ministry in St. John's Gospel is marked by the progression of covenant holy days: three separate Passovers (first yearly ordained holy day in the spring) are mentioned in addition to the Feast of Tabernacles (last of the yearly ordained holy days in the early fall), Chanukah (a national festival of thanks in the winter), and an unnamed holy day that was probably a second Feast of Tabernacles within the three Passover yearly cycles of Jesus' ministry).

God paraded the animals before Adam as the man named each of the creatures.  It was God's intention to provide a "helper;" the gift of a "suitable" companion for man.

**Question:** Why did God parade the animals, both male and female, before Adam and what is the reason Adam named the creatures?
**Answer:**

1. God blessed man with dominion over the creatures of the earth ([Gen 1:27-30](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v27)).  In naming the animals Adam was asserting his dominion.
2. God knew that among the animals there was not a suitable "helper" equal to Adam, but Adam, in viewing each animal with its mate, needed to come to the realization that an animal was not a "suitable" companion and that he was not complete without his own female counterpart.

The word translated as "suitable" is in Hebrew *negdo*, a word more literally rendered as "equal and adequate" (*Genesis,* Waltke, page 88)*.* God created men and women to be different in their sexuality, but He created them both, in His image and likeness, to be equal to each other as human persons.  Their shared vocation was to serve God, to subdue the earth and its creatures, and to perpetuate the human race.  Adam's realization that he needed a partner (after naming the animals) prepared him to receive and to appreciate his gift of the virgin bride, who as resident of the garden Sanctuary, Adam would be obligated to guard and protect.  See CCC# 369 and 371-373.

It is also important to note that "naming" was a royal prerogative and an exercise in dominance in the cultures of the ancient Near East.  In this exercise, Adam is assuming his position as God's first earthly priest-king, ruling the earth and God's Sanctuary on God's behalf.  Jesus as the "new Adam" will rule as priest-king of the nations of the earth and of the heavenly Sanctuary after the order of Melchizedek, God's priest-king in [Genesis 14:17-20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis14.htm#v17) ([Heb 5-7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/hebrews/hebrews5.htm); [Rev 12:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation12.htm#v5); [Is 66:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah/isaiah66.htm#v7)). Other examples of "naming" as a kingly exercise can be found in God's renaming of Abram/Abraham ([Gen 17:5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis17.htm#v5)) and Jacob/Israel ([Gen 32:28](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis32.htm#v28)), indicating a change in their destiny); the renaming of King Eliakim of Judah by the dominate Pharaoh Necho of Egypt ([2 Kg 23:34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings23.htm#v34); [2 Chr 36:3-4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2chronicles/2chronicles36.htm#v3)); the King of Babylon's renaming of the defeated Judahite King Mattaniah, who was renamed Zedekiah when he became a vassal of Babylon ([2 Kg 24:17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings24.htm#v17)); and Jesus' renaming of Simon/Peter in [Matthew 16:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew16.htm#v18).

[**Genesis 2:21-25**](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v21)**:**
**21*Then, Yahweh God made the man fall into a deep sleep.  And, while he was asleep, he took one of his ribs and closed the flesh up again forthwith.* 22*Yahweh God fashioned the rib he had taken from the man into a woman, and brought her to the man.* 23*And the man said: This one at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh!  She is to be called Woman, because she was taken from Man.* 24*This is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and they become one flesh.* 25*Now, both of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame before each other.***

In describing the creation of the woman from Adam's rib, [Genesis 2:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v22) does not use the word "create," *bara*, nor does the text employ the word "made," *asah* ([Gen 1:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v7), [16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v16), [25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v25), [31](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis1.htm#v31); [2:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v2), [3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v3), [4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v4)).  Instead, in the Hebrew text, God "built" the woman from Adam's rib.  In Hebrew this word is *banah*.  It is the same Hebrew word that will be used to describe the building of altars to Yahweh and in the building of the Temple in Jerusalem (i.e. [Gen 12:7-8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis12.htm#v7); [13:18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis13.htm#v18); [22:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis22.htm#v9); [26:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis26.htm#v25); [Ex 17:15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus17.htm#v15); [24:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus24.htm#v4); etc.; [1 Kg 2:26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings2.htm#v26); [3:2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings3.htm#v2); [5:19/5](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings5.htm#v19); [8:17-19](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings8.htm#v17), [20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings8.htm#v20); etc.).  Commenting on the unusual selection of this word, St. Augustine saw the "building" up of Eve from the body of Adam as prefiguring Christ's unity with the Church as part of His Body: *"Built" is the very word the Scripture uses in connection with Eve: "He built the rib into a woman"... So too St. Paul speaks of "building up the body of Christ," which is his Church.  Therefore woman is as much the creation of God as man is.  If she was made from the man, this was to show her oneness with him; and if she was made in the way she was, this was to prefigure the oneness of Christ and the Church* (Augustine, *City of God, 22.17*).  St. Augustine referred to [Ephesians 4:12](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/eohesians/ephesians4.htm#v12) and [5:32](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ephesians/ephesians5.htm#v32).

St. Jerome also recognized the prefigurement of Christ and His Church in the [Genesis 2:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v22) passage: *"God took a rib from the side of Adam and made it into a woman."  Here Scripture said aedificavit ("built").  The concept of building intends to denote the construction of a great house; consequently Adam's rib fashioned into a woman signifies, by apostolic authority, Christ and the Church ...* (Jerome, *Homilies 66*).

**Question:** What did Adam immediately comprehend in God's gift of the bride?  What did he call her and what did this title mean?
**Answer:** That she was not only like him, she was part of him.  He recognized that he was incomplete without her.  He called her "out of man," the meaning of "woman."

**Question:** In the presentation of the gift of the virgin bride to Adam, as man's partner in life, God has instituted marriage and defined it as a spiritual and physical union between a man and a woman.  What did Jesus teach about the Sacrament of Marriage in [Matthew 19:3-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew19.htm#v3) when He quoted from [Genesis 2:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v24)?  What impact does His teaching have on society today?
**Answer:** Jesus said: *Have you not read that the Creator from the beginning made them male and female and that he said: "This is why a man leaves his father and mother and becomes attached to his wife, and the two become one flesh?" So then, what God has united, human beings must not divide.* Any attempt to redefine the nature and institution of marriage is to act in opposition to the will of God.

**Question:** [Genesis 2:25](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v25) records: *Now, both of them were naked, the man and his wife, but they felt no shame before each other.* Why were Adam and his bride unashamed in their physical nakedness?  Is there another way in which they were "clothed?"
**Answer:** Created in the "image and likeness of God," Adam and his bride are clothed in the wedding garments of righteousness and grace.  At this point in their relationship with God, the actions of their lives are ordered according to the will of God and not according to their own passions and desires.

**Question:** On what day of the Creation cycle was the bride of Adam created?  On what day did Adam awake from his death-like sleep to receive his bride?
**Answer:** Adam, the animals that roam the earth, and the woman were all created on the 6th day of Creation.  It is the first day in the Creation cycle designated in Hebrew as "the" sixth day.  According to Jewish and Christian tradition, it was on the sanctified 7th day that Adam awoke to his wedding day and received his gift of the virgin bride in the Sanctuary of the garden.

St. John will repeat the theme of the wedding on the 7th day in the Gospel of John.  After several repetitions of the words "the next day" in [John 1:29](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john1.htm#v29) (day #2), [35](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john1.htm#v35) (day #3), and [43](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john1.htm#v43) (day #4); chapter two begins with the words "On the third day" ([2:1](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john1.htm#v1)).  Four previous days plus three more days yields the seventh day when "there was a wedding at Cana," and present at this wedding are the second Adam and the second Eve, Jesus and His mother, also a holy virgin like the virgin Eve on "the seventh day," but in St. John's Gospel this is the "seventh day" of the new Creation as Jesus begins His ministry, calling all of mankind to salvation.

**Question:** Adam and his virgin bride were created as creatures of grace and holiness and were placed in a Sanctuary in Eden.  Why did God create them and why did He choose to place them in the garden Sanctuary?
**Answer:** They were created as liturgical beings, whose function was to know, love, and serve God in the Sanctuary in Eden.  Adam, as guardian of the Sanctuary, is the first priest-king and his bride is his helper.  Together, as husband and wife, Adam and his bride are the first covenant people of God.

Liturgy is the exercise of public worship whether here on earth or in the heavenly Tabernacle.  The function of liturgy is to give honor and praise to God, which fulfills a twofold purpose, to worship and through worship to obtain sanctification, the blessings which come from worship.  The etymology of the word "liturgy" is from the Greek *leitos* meaning"people" + *ergon,* meaning "work" or "duty" = *leitourgia,* public duty or public work - which in religious terms has come to mean the unity of the community actively participating in worshiping God.   Adam and his bride were the first to offer God public worship in a covenant relationship that promised blessings for covenant obedience.

**A Summary of the Significance of Seven in the Formation of Covenant and Liturgical Worship**

Mankind and the beasts were created on the sixth day, but it is man's creation in the image and likeness of God and man's liturgical destiny to worship and serve God that separates him from the beasts.  The difference between man and the beasts is that man was specifically created to be a liturgical being that entered into God's "rest" (communed with God) on the seventh day.  In God's first Sanctuary, "the garden in Eden," man was created to walk in God's divine Presence and to glorify God through a liturgy - a work/ duty, that was a sacrifice of praise and service.  In this first movement of God's great liturgical symphony of interaction with man, Adam served as God's first priest, he tended and guarded the holy Sanctuary of the One True God ([Gen 2:15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v15)).  The same Hebrew word (*samar,* meaning to "guard", "keep charge of," or "keep secure") that was given in the command for Adam to guard the garden Sanctuary in [Genesis 2:15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v15) can also be found in passages like [Genesis 3:24](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v24) (the cherubim guarding the garden after the Fall); [Numbers 1:53](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/numbers/numbers1.htm#v53) (the Levites guarding the desert Tabernacle); and the command  to guard the Temple - the House of the Lord ([2 Kg 11:7](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/2kings/2kings11.htm#v7)).  It was in the event of the Theophany at Sinai, where Yahweh would establish the liturgy of what we now call the Old Covenant Church, that Moses first put Yahweh's words and the covenant commands into writing ([Ex 24:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus24.htm#v4)).  And after giving Moses the instructions for building the Tabernacle, the dwelling place of God,  *Yahweh then said to Moses, 'Put these words in writing, for they are the terms of the covenant which I have made with you and with Israel'* ([Ex 34:27-28](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus34.htm#v27))*.* From the very beginning of God's interaction with man, that relationship has had a liturgical context.  The garden in Eden is the first holy Tabernacle.

Jon Levenson, professor of Hebrew studies at Harvard, and one of the leading authorities on Biblical Judaism, wrote in *Sinai & Zion: The Temple is the epitome of the world, a concentrated form of its essence, a miniature of the cosmos.* [*Sinai & Zion* page 138].  Levenson continues: *The Temple on Zion is the anti-type to the cosmic archetype.  The real Temple is the one to which it points, the one in "heaven,' which cannot be distinguished sharply from its earthly manifestation.  Thus, when Moses is to construct Israel's first sanctuary, the Tabernacle in the wilderness, he does so on the basis of a glimpse of the 'blueprint' or 'model' of the heavenly shrine which he was privileged to behold upon Mount Sinai ([Exod 25:9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus25.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22v9),* [*40*](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/exodus/exodus25.htm#v40)*)* [*Sinai & Zion* page 140].  Levenson explains that God's presence in the Temple is *"an aspect of his universal presence.  The earthly Temple is the world in nuce; the world is the Temple in extenso."* [*Sinai & Zion* page 141].

It is a mistake to spend time arguing about whether God could or would have created the cosmos in a 6-day period, resting on the 7th day.  Jewish scholars have never concerned themselves with that conundrum. Instead they have always focused on the covenant oath sworn by God to His people (to swear an oath in Hebrew is to literally *seven oneself*), and on the correlation between the 6-day Creation cycle ending on the 7th day with liturgy and communion established in the Sanctuary that is Eden.  In the Jewish tradition, the creation of the earth is seen as the creation of God's Temple'the macro Temple of God, fashioned and then sanctified on the seventh day.  In this context of Temple, Eden is the Holy Place, and the garden in Eden is the Holy of Holies, that is God's earthly dwelling place ([Is 51:3](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/isaiah.isaiah51.htm#v3); [Ez 28:12-15](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezekiel/ezekiel28.htm#v12); [31:8-18](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/ezekiel/ezekiel31.htm#v8)).  The theme of the garden in Eden as God's earthly dwelling place, its placement "in the East" ([Gen 2:8](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v8)) and its connection to the number seven is repeated in the creation of the desert Tabernacle of Moses' time.  It was built facing East, built in six days and sanctified on the seventh day.  Later Solomon's Temple, which became the epitome of the world, a miniature of the Temple cosmos, was also built facing to the East and was completed in seven years ([1 Kng 6:38](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1kings/1kings6.htm#v38)).  This concept of world Temple/ earthly Temple explains why Jesus' cleansing of the Temple ([Jn 2:14-16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john2.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22v14); [Mt 21:12-16](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew21.htm#v12); [Mk 11:11](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark11.htm#v11), [15-17](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark11.htm#v15); [Lk 19:45-46](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke19.htm#v45)) and His prophecy of its destruction ([Mt 24:1-2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew24.htm#v1); [Mk 13:1-2](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/mark/mark13.htm#v1); [Lk 21:5-6](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/luke/luke21.htm#v5)) was viewed by the Jews as threat to their entire world ([Mt 26:61](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/matthew/matthew26.htm#v61)) - which of course it was.

**Questions for group discussion:**

**Question:** What event was the final good act of the Creation event on the 6th day?  What was unique about this final act of creation?
**Answer:** It was the creation of the woman formed from the body of the man - the virgin bride who was to be Adam's helper.  She was the archetype of the "good" of Creation.

**Question:** What is the significance of the names/titles Adam gave his female partner in [Genesis 2:23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v23), [3:20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v20)?
**Answer:** In [Genesis 2:23](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis2.htm#v23), Adam called the female "Woman," which means "out-of-man," and later in [3:20](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/genesis/genesis3.htm#v20) he called her "Eve," which means "mother of all living."  "Woman" (out-of-man) is her originand her title; Eve, "mother of all living," is her destiny.

**Question:** Why do you suppose God created the male and female humans separately?  Why in the Creation account in the prologue is only man and woman's sexuality identified and not the other creatures?
**Answer:** Perhaps man and woman were created separately to establish the beauty and uniqueness of their differences as well as the equality of their humanity.  Perhaps their sexuality is emphasized to illustrate the perfection of their pairing.

**Question:** How does the manner of the female's creation, being formed "out of man," point to the promised birth of the Messiah?  Hint: In the significant prophetic passage found in Jeremiah chapter 31, the prophet Jeremiah promises the covenant people that they will return from the Babylonian exile and he calls upon "Virgin Israel" ([31:22](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah31.htm#v22)) to repentance in preparation for a New Covenant ([Jer 31:31-34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah31.htm%22%20%5Cl%20%22v31)) when God will give Israel a new sign: *For Yahweh is creating* ***something new*** *on earth: the Woman shall compass[encompass] a man* (literal Hebrew translation in [Jeremiah 31:21](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/jeremiah/jeremiah31.htm#v21)).  What other significant woman in salvation history will God address by the title "Woman?"  It is this same "Woman" who will also bear the title "the Mother of the living."  See [John 2:4](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john2.htm#v4), [19:26](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john19.htm#v26) and CCC# 494.
**Answer:** According to the prophetic statement of the Prophet Jeremiah, in the coming of the Messiah, God will create "something new." That "something new" was that "The Woman," the Virgin Mary of Nazareth, encompassed in her womb the promised Messiah.  The Virgin Mary is the new virgin Eve and her son is the new Adam ([1 Cor 15:45](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/1corinthians/1corinthians15.htm#v45)).  The "something new" was that in them God created a reversal of the creation of the first man and woman, the virgin Eve - who was "encompassed by the man, Adam.  The Virgin Mary and her son, in complete obedience and submission to the will of God, will undo the knot of disobedience of Adam and the first virgin, which tied mankind to sin and death: ... *'Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race.' Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert 'The knot of Eve's disobedience was united by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith.'  Comparing her with Eve, they call Mary 'the Mother of the living' and frequently claim" 'Death through Eve, life through Mary"* (CCC # 494; quoting St. Irenaeus, Epiphanius' early history of the Church, and St. Jerome).  See the document: The Virgin Mary's Role in Salvation History in the "Documents" section of the website, and CCC# 496-511 on Mary's perpetual virginity.

**Question:** When would Jesus the "second Adam," in a death-like "sleep," have like the first Adam, a "bride" born from His side? See [Jn 20:33-34](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/john/john20.htm#v33); [Rev 19:7-9](http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation19.htm#v7); CCC 766; 789; 796.
**Answer:** It has been a teaching of the Church that when the Roman soldier's lance pierced Christ's chest, in His sleep of "death," the blood and water that flowed from His side were symbols of Baptism and the Eucharist - signifying the birth of Christ's Virgin Bride, the Church - born from His body as the virgin Eve was born from the body of Adam:

* *Even in the beginning, when woman was made from a rib in the side of the sleeping man, that had no less a purpose than to symbolize prophetically the union of Christ and his Church.  Adam's sleep was a mystical foreshadowing of Christ's death and when his dead body hanging from the cross was pierced by the lance, it was from his side that there issued forth that blood and water that, as we know, signifies the Sacraments by which the Church is built up.  "Built" is the very word the Scripture used in connection with Eve: "He built the rib into a woman"... So too St. Paul speaks of "building up the body of Christ," which is his Church.  Therefore woman is as much the creation of God as man is.  If she was made from the man, this was to show her oneness with him; and if she was made in the way she was, this was to prefigure the oneness of Christ and the Church* (St. Augustine, *City of God 22:17*).
* *We have heard about the first Adam; let us come now to the second Adam and see how the Church is made (aedificatur) [built] from his side.  The side of the Lord Savior as he hung on the cross is pierced with a lance, and from it there comes forth blood and water.  Would you like to know how the Church is built up from water and blood?  First, through the baptism of water, sins are forgiven; then, the blood of martyrs crowns the edifice* (St. Jerome, *Homilies 66*).

**Questions for group discussion:**

**Question:** What event was the final good act in of Creation event on the 6th day? What was unique about this final act of creation?
**Answer:** It was the creation of the woman formed from the body of the man'the virgin bride who was to be Adam's helper. She was the archetype of the "good" of Creation .

**Question:** What is the significance of the names/titles Adam gave his female partner in Genesis 2:23, 3:20?
**Answer:** In Genesis 2:23, Adam called the female "Woman," which means "out-of-man," and later in 3:20 he called her "Eve," which means "mother of all living." "Woman" (out-of-man) is her origin and her title; Eve, "mother of all living," is her destiny.

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