

The Bible in Context Ep 12: The Rivers and the Woman Gen 2:10-24

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Hey, well we're back!

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Well, last time we talked about the introduction to the second story. Um, had a fun little detour on source criticism and, uh, I feel like had a pretty good discussion on the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. Not the tree of life and the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but good and bad. I thought you did a really good job of helping us better understand the Hebrew word that gets translated in BSV, at least as, as evil as, um, a better translation is bad. Yeah.

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I guess I should have said this a little

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a little more, which I had last time, but just that idea of evil brings this kind of mystical idea to the passage sometimes where they're, by eating this fruit they're gaining some kind of malevolent power or something like that that wasn't there previously. Right, right. And that's, I don't think that's what the text is trying to say. Yeah, it's basically just this choice that God gives them, like you can choose to follow my wisdom or you can choose to follow your wisdom. Which one will you choose? One will lead to life. The other one will lead to death.

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Which is basically the same thing that Moses is saying, right? Right. And Deuteronomy. Yeah.

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Well, now I guess we'll talk about, we'll move on to some of the features of Eden that we see as we go through the passage. And so we talked about the stones already with their correlation to the temple in the priestly garments, the ephod and the foundation of the new temple and where they show up a little bit in Ezekiel. But I want to move over and talk about the rivers that we see that come through Eden. And you actually hit on this in the sermon. Yeah, the four rivers. Yeah. Significant.

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Obviously, the biblical author is trying to draw us a map. And if we follow these four rivers, we will find the Garden of Eden. Right? Why, well then, why haven't we done that? Let's go. I know, they disappeared on us. No, I mean, if you look at the map, some of these rivers, they never meet. They don't have a common source. And some of them actually begin very far apart.

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back to a singular point that will lead us somewhere into the land of Eden. And it was never meant to, there's no point in history, there was no massive mudslide or something that got rid of the common mouth of these rivers or something. It's actually communicating something very significant. So the Tigris and Euphrates, those are...

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easier to talk about because I think they're a little more well known. So do you know what nations the Tigris and Euphrates run by? Assyria and Babylon. So two of these rivers come out of Eden, out of the place where Yahweh is dwelling. These two rivers run by two of the biggest enemies of Israel. Now the Gihon runs down by Cush, basically down through... Egypt. Yeah, runs by Egypt. So now we have another massive enemy of Israel that one of these rivers runs by.

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have the Pishon, which is mentioned again in Genesis 25, 18, where it talks about the land of Havla, which the Pishon runs around. Ishmael goes and settles near Havla.

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which is kind of southeast of Israel. I wonder if he's trying to communicate that this runs past the Ishmaelites and maybe Edom because Edom is in that direction. That's possible. At the very least, this river runs by the Ishmaelites. Essentially, these four rivers go out in every direction and touch the four corners of the biblical world so far.

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So the point with these rivers is not, again, just trying to give us a geography or a tributaries map or anything like that. It's trying to tell us that the source of all of these rivers that are life-giving to these other cultures, particularly these massive cultures that are enemies of Israel, are fed by Yahweh. He is the source of their life-giving waters. And you know, again, they didn't have running water. They had to live near it to survive, period.

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So the sources of life for these massive cultures and for these enemy cultures come from Yahweh. So one, that's kind of a slap in the face to Israel's enemies. And also, again, just shows his common grace towards the good and the bad alike. Well, and it's interesting too that Gihon is the name of a spring in Jerusalem. Or did you say that already? No, I haven't said that already. Yeah. Yeah. It's the name of a spring in Jerusalem.

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uh... was their main water source yet and and so yeah maybe that he's trying to communicate again this doesn't map onto actual geography but he's saying like a Jerusalem feeds one of your enemies right yeah it's interesting well i i think that the like the point and i i mentioned this in my sermon but the point uh... of all these rivers is that it's describing even as this paradise of abundance where the source of life is being spread out to all these lands

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Yahweh is the source of abundance in life to not only Israel and to his people that are in the garden But also to all the nations. Yes

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or if they can hear the music. I was just like, it's like, gosh, you guys get to hear music all the time here, don't you? Oh yeah, at least that's not bad. It's the games that's like, oh my gosh, no. If you all can't hear the high school band playing in the background, I figure you all can hear. So yeah, that's kind of the point of the author including these rivers in the story. Now we can move on to the fun topic of the creation of woman. So it's not good for man to be alone. Verse 18.

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and I will make him a helper fit for him. But then the next thing that happens are the animals come out. Yeah, and the really cool thing is we've already talked about the concept of functional ontology, about separating something out and then giving it a name which is associated with its purpose, its destiny. So...

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in naming the animals, God is taking Adam and allowing him to take part in the creation process of the animals by, I mean he's taking up his rulership of them, he is decreeing names and destinies for these. Yahweh is the one that made them, that pulled them out of the dirt, formed them from the clay and brought them to the man, but the man is the one who gets to determine what they are, what they will be. Now what's really interesting about that is that whenever

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Yoway creates the woman.

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he also allows adam to name the man takes part in the creation of so we we're not all going to try and tackle the uh... find the final verdict on the egalitarian versus complementarian debate but there are some points in this narrative that are used on both sides of those arguments that shouldn't be used on either side just impartially i think we just want to point out some of the facts text

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And for those who might be asking questions about that topic, at least you can come to this text a little better informed. Cool. So I think in Adam's creation of woman, there's, or well, in Adam's inclusion in the creation of woman, there's definitely this aspect of like, you know, you're going to care for her. This is...

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something that should be looked after just as you're looking after the animals. Now what we don't have is a statement of man's dominion over woman in this text. We have very clear

statements in Genesis 1 about man's dominion over the animals and his rulership of all of the rest of creation. We don't have the same statement about the woman. Well, and it's interesting if you go back to Genesis chapter 1, that command

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to have dominion was given to both the man and the woman, wasn't it? Yeah. And God blessed them.

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And God said to them, be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of heavens and over the living things that move on the earth. And so that command wasn't just given to the man, it was given to humanity in general. Right. And they were also made male and female as the image. So she is a co-image, a co-royal representative, co-king. And I just want to point that out that at least from this particular text, you can't

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say or that creation aspect that man is included in to say that that is pointing towards the rulership of man over woman even though he does get that over the animals there's there's a distinction between being given dominion and taking part in the creation right right

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Well, and I talked about the word helper here is not this idea of like my little buddy who's gonna hand me... My assistant, my secretary. Yeah, my assistant or my secretary. In fact, that word often is used to describe God as our helper. And so we need to be careful not to misunderstand that word also. Yeah, it's often used as David crying out to Yahweh for military help.

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I need some assistance to do the tasks that I don't want to do or to delegate these things out. It's more so there's a deficiency in my abilities and I need some more muscle to get it done or some more whatever. And yeah, so the woman here comes as corresponding to the man to be an integral part of his kingship over creation. Yeah, to fix the problem of something not being good. Because that's the context of it, right? It's not good for the man to be alone.

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What's the answer to that? Well, I will make him a helper, somebody to fill that need because he is insufficient by himself. First, and I still think it's interesting that he makes all the animals first, but it's really just to point out that none of those are gonna fill that gap. And kind of shows you, like we talk about like, well, dogs are man's best friend. Maybe, maybe not. Even a dog is not sufficient

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to fill the gap and what humanity needs. And so the woman was created. Yeah, she's made to be a co-image alongside man and male and female together are to be the image. Yeah, unique

from the animals. So yeah, so do you wanna talk about the way that she was created from his rib, right? Right.

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Yep. Well, maybe we should start out with the deep sleep. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. That it went into. This deep sleep term is actually used again when you get to Abraham, when he is put into a deep sleep and Yahweh... there's a smoking pot and fire that passes through these animals that Abraham has cut up to make a covenant with him. It's got the same kind of covenantal significance to it. Maybe these overtones of Yahweh's provision... did you say something about this in your sermon?

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did, we talked about just how, if I recall, that idea of deep sleep is typically used when there's a vision that...

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the person is having. So you gave an example of Abram. I think there's some other examples. Yeah, there's some who take the interpretation that the fact that he went into this deep sleep means that everything that follows it was a vision that Yahweh gave him. Right. You know, he goes to sleep and sees himself, we'll say rib for now, but we're going to talk about that. You know, he sees his rib taken out and then sees this woman come from it and then he wakes up and there's this woman there. Abraham goes to sleep, has a vision of the covenant ceremony and he wakes up and speaks to Yahweh and there's this covenant made.

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So it may be that it's all a divine dream. I don't know necessarily, but. Yeah, I mean, I don't know that it matters a whole lot here. But it does bear this like covenantal, Yahweh's provision kind of significance. Right, right. Yeah, so the word for rib here in Hebrew is, what is it? Seila, Seila. And if you do a search on that word.

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what it's translated everywhere else, it's never translated as rib anywhere else, is it? No. It's always translated as side. Yeah, just about always. And it's like referring to like the side of the tabernacle, the side of a house. For the most part, it does seem like it's the side, the side of the altar, like the side of something holy. There is one example of like a hillside that I see in the second Samuel, but yeah, in the side of a house, but it's almost always the tabernacle.

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It occurs in the building of the tabernacle to refer to the tabernacle it occurs a couple times in Samuel then it occurs in first King six a lot six and seven which is the building of the temple temple Yeah, and then Ezekiel 41 which you've already talked about which is Ezekiel's prophetic man. Yeah, I gotta think about that for a while Yeah, I think it's interesting. I don't I don't know if it's significant, but it's I'm sure

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It seems like there's something going on there. But they're just being concentrations of that word in those tabernacle temple contexts. There's something going on here. Now what it means that he takes the side and creates the woman, I don't know.

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But the point that we're trying to make here is that it's more than just a bone that was taken out of Adam. It's like he was literally split in half. A side of him was taken to create the woman. A better understanding of this passage is to not just think of a single bone, but to at least the ribcage. Yeah. The woman truly is the other half of man, not just, you know, this small piece that was made into the woman. Right, right, right.

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That's good. So then when he wakes up and sees this.

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other half of him, this woman that came out of man, he names her woman because she came from man. It's in Hebrew, it's actually the wordplay kind of works because it's she shall be called Isha because she came from Ish. And he says this is my bone and my flesh, which is family language. You'll see it later whenever Laban sees Jacob and says truly you're my bone and flesh, you're my family. Or in Judges 9, 2.

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some leaders of a town in his area. He wants to rule over them and there's...

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he's kind of a half brother of the rest of jerebel's sons and so he says it's a better that your flesh and bone rule over you than you know these other guys so it's it's very much this um family language which we need to remember the ideas of corporate solidarity that they had um they were not individualistic like us they thought corporately and so when someone is your family that is a very significant bond yeah

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It's very similar to us saying that they're my flesh and blood. Yeah. In fact, I want to, I feel like there was a translation that I saw.

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where that's how they translated this. Yeah, I think I have seen that in some of the more thought for thought translations. Yeah, yeah, a little bit more liberal way of translating it. Yeah. But it gets the point across, and it's correct in its meaning. Kind of like at a wedding where you're now husband and wife. Yes, the terminology is different, but the idea in our culture is like, that is a uniting statement. Yeah. It now makes you covenantally tied together in all aspects of life, at least ideally. Yeah, it's the same kind of language, though.

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I've done some weddings where there's actually a variety of ways that in our culture will kind of symbolize that idea, whether it's a unity candle or I've seen now Unity Sand. I had one wedding where they did spray paint and they got a canvas and they blended their colors together and made something, a keepsake basically is what they wanted to come out of.

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different people that were coming together to make a single unit. Yeah, and the same thing even, I think whenever you see some groups within our different soul cultures that we'll call each other brothers because they're not actually family, but because of whether it's a common interest or some kind of commonality, some group that they're a part of, they see each other as having this deep bond. Yeah. And so it's similar language. Yeah. Well, and you get to the New Testament.

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languages everywhere. Oh yeah. Brothers, sisters, and yeah, they really focus in on just that concept of being the body of Christ, where now we are bone of my bones, in a sense, where we've come together as a family, flesh of my flesh. Yeah, you really, if you know anything about honor shame cultures, like this bone and flesh language, they're entering into

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Family obligation to one another this I mean we talked a lot about in our church has said Just how it has this loving loyalty idea where it's it's love that is Not just an emotion, but it is actually like how voting voting Bacchum puts his definition of love it is action That is undergirded by emotion. Mmm. That's good. That's good something like that My daughter Hannah is actually I think it's due tomorrow or maybe

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I think it's due tomorrow. She's got a five page paper that she's got to do on the word hesed. Oh, that's cool. Yeah. So I'm curious to read it. And again, I think this kind of goes back to...

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Paul's mystery in Ephesians 5 that we've already talked about where you know we're supposed to see Christ in the church as as married as Bone and flesh we are Christ's bone and flesh and also one and others We're supposed to have these kind of these hesed You know honor shame culture kind of obligations to one another not to say that we should all become an honor shame subculture within America and form our own little offshoot societies or whatever, but this kind of dedication to another action actual

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familial care is what we're supposed to be taking part in. Yeah. Treating one another almost as close as a husband and wife treat one another. Right. In the way that they care for one another. They share everything. Just like the early church where they had all things in common. Again,

I'm not saying we should all go start our own little commune, but we need to keep these ideas in practice and kind of have this idea of like...

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I love these people, I am willingly obliged to these people, and if you have a problem and I have a surplus, what's mine is yours. Yeah, and this is so much swimming upstream in our culture to think that way because in America we're so autonomous and we don't like to ask for help because we don't want to be a burden to other people. We tend to want to not look to other people like when we're making a big decision, like

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our church to see what their thoughts on it are. And so to live as the Bible describes, the way that the first church did and what the body of Christ is meant to, is very much counterculture in our society. Yeah, yeah, absolutely. We need to really have these kind of you are my bone and flesh mentality among the church and also realize that that's how Christ sees us. He has that same kind of hesed, that same love, loyalty,

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us. Yeah for sure, for sure. Well I mean there's plenty more to say about the creation of woman and man and woman's relationship and we'll talk about that a little more in chapter 3 but I think for now that that gives us a good starting place as far as how Genesis paints this creation story and this relationship starting out. So we finished up chapter 2 finally. Awesome, we're moving pretty quick now. Yeah. Relatively, soon we'll be moving faster but we're moving.

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All right, good deal.