All of Us
Genesis 2:21-25
Dr. Pierre

I. On Him v. 21

a. Took
    i. Caused
        1. Deep Sleep- to drop
            a. Then the Lord God made a heavy sleep overcome man." "Heavy sleep," תרדמה, is often divinely induced sleep (cf. Isa 29:10; 1 Sam 26:12) and the occasion for divine revelation (Gen 15:12; Job 4:13). Possibly sleep is mentioned here because God's ways are mysterious and not for human observation
            b. Third, the narration indicates by the method of making the woman that she is a special creation in the eyes of God (v. 21). She is taken from the man by a "surgical" act of God. The "deep sleep" (*tardēmâ*) that Adam experiences and the procedure that follows is initiated and carried out exclusively by God. The man is not even a conscious spectator. The "sleep" preserves for the man the mystery of her creation and the subsequent surprise at her appearance. "Deep sleep" is commonly used of a night's sleep (Job 4:13; 33:15; Prov 19:15), but here it is the special work of God as with Abraham's slumber
            c. is a hypnotic trance, induced by supernatural agency The purpose here is to produce anæsthesia, with perhaps the additional idea that the divine working under human observation
    ii. Took- to grasp and seize
        1. Ribs
    iii. Closed
        1. Flesh
b. Built
    i. Fashioned - built Elsewhere the biblical poets describe the ordered universe as a building which YHWH designed and built (Amos 9:6; cf. Ps 104:2–3)
        1. "The Lord God then built the rib … into a woman." "Built" (בנה): only here and in Amos 9:6 is this verb used of God's creative activity,

2. God is depicted as a “builder” who constructs the woman from the raw resources derived from the man (v. 22). *Bānâ*, translated “made”, “fashioned” or “built” , is a frequent term for the building of edifices, but it occurs only once in early Genesis.

ii. The Rib which He had Taken

1. The symbolic significance of the “rib” is that the man and woman are fit for one another as companions sexually and socially. The body metaphor is employed by Paul in his writings to indicate respective roles in community, especially speaking of Christ and the church (1 Cor 12:21–25; Eph 1:22–23; 4:15–16; Col 2:19). In Eph 5:22–31 he draws on the “head-body” imagery in a domestic metaphor where the husband as “head” of the wife parallels Christ as “head” of the church (cp. 1 Cor 11:3). Paul’s quotation of Gen 2:24 shows that Eph 5:28–30 is an allusion to Gen 2:22–23. It would seem that Paul had appealed to the woman as man’s “rib” to indicate their loving unity, not their domestic equality. This is the significance of the “rib”; they are of the same human “stuff.”
2. The woman was taken from the man’s side to show that she was of the same substance as the man and to underscore the unity of the human family, having one source.
3.

c. Brought

i. To the Man

1. The God-created partner is introduced to man by the creator himself. The man’s passivity in the match-making process is notable,
2. The Lord presents his special “project” to the man, suggesting by this that she is a gift from the man’s Maker. The language “brought” is reminiscent of God’s presentation of the animals to the man (2:19; cf. 7:9, 15). This echo reinforces what the man discovers: the woman is Adam’s *human* partner. A significant difference between the two passages is that the first has a stated purpose, the naming of the animals. Here, however, there is no utilitarian purpose prescribed although the man proceeds to name her

II. Me and You v. 23

a. Bone of Bone

i. The first three lines are a poetic formulation of the traditional kinship formula. For example, Laban said to his nephew Jacob, “You are my bone and my flesh” (29:14; cf. Judg 9:2; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:13–14 [12–13]). Whereas English speaks of blood relationships, Hebrew spoke of relatives as one’s

"flesh and bone." It is often suggested that the story of woman's creation from man's rib illustrates the meaning of this traditional kinship formula. "The first man could employ … (these) words in their literal connotation: actually bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh!" (Cassuto, 1:136). This formula sets man and woman on an equal footing as regards their humanity, yet sets them apart from the animals (vv 19–20; cf. 1:26–28).

ii. Adam's response centers on the sameness that he and the woman share as opposed to the creatures. The parallel elements "bone [out] of my bones and flesh [out] of my flesh" have the preposition *min*, indicating source. Although "bone and flesh" are used figuratively in the Old Testament for kinship

b. Flesh of Flesh
    i. Possibly the expression refers to covenant loyalty, in which case Adam is expressing a covenant commitment. "*My* bones" and "*my* flesh" with their pronouns heighten the effect

c. Called
    i. Woman- The word *ʾiššâ* is the most common word for "woman" and "wife" in the OT. The origin of woman is explained in Gen 2:23, 24. She is depicted as the physical counterpart of man, deserving of his unswerving loyalty. It is in this context (vv. 24–25) that the word is first used in the sense of "mate" or "wife.
    ii. "Because she was taken out of Man"
        1. Frequently Hebrew folk etymologies offer a wordplay on the circumstances of the person's birth (cf. 4:1, 25; 17:17, 19; 29:32–30:24, etc.). Here the first man names the first woman in a similar fashion. Though they are equal in nature, that man names woman (cf. 3:20) indicates that she is expected to be subordinate to him, an important presupposition of the ensuing narrative (3:17).
        2. it suggests "the moral and social relation of the sexes to each other, the dependence of woman upon man, her close relationship to him, and the foundation existing in nature for … the feelings with which each should naturally regard the other

III. On Us vs. 24-25

a. Formed
    i. Leave
        1. Mother and Father
            a. "Forsakes," יעזב. The traditional translation "leaves" suggests that the man moves from his parents and sets up home elsewhere, whereas in fact Israelite marriage was usually patrilocal, that is, the man continued to live in or near his parents' home. It was the wife who left home to

join her husband. So it is preferable here to translate עזב as "forsake." Israel is bidden not to forsake the poor and the Levite, or the covenant (Deut 12:19; 14:27; 29:24). On the other hand, God promises not to forsake Israel (Deut 31:8; Josh 1:5). These examples show that forsaking father and mother is to be understood in a relative sense,

b. On marriage a man's priorities change. Beforehand his first obligations are to his parents: afterwards they are to his wife.
c. this may seem a minor point to make, but in traditional societies like Israel where honoring parents is the highest human obligation next to honoring God, this remark about forsaking them is very striking.

ii. Join - to cling, to **stick**

1. To His Wife
    a. "And sticks to his wife." This phrase suggests both passion and permanence should characterize marriage
    b. Israel is repeatedly urged to stick to the LORD (Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:5, etc.). The use of the terms "forsake" and "stick" in the context of Israel's covenant with the LORD suggests that the OT viewed marriage as a kind of covenant.
2. Shall Become One Flesh
    a. *one flesh*] If the view just mentioned could be maintained, this phrase might be equivalent to 'one clan' (Lv. 25:49); for "both in Hebrew and Arabic 'flesh' is synonymous with 'clan' or kindred group"
    b. The expressions originate in the primitive notion of kinship as resting on "participation in a common mass of flesh, blood, and bones" so that all the members of a kindred group are parts of the same substance, whether acquired by heredity or assimilated in the processes of nourishment (cf. 29:14; 37:27; Ju. 9:2; 2 Sa. 5:1; 19:13). The case before us, where the material identity is expressed in the manner of woman's creation, is unique
    c. "They become one flesh." This does not denote merely the sexual union that follows marriage, or the children conceived in marriage, or even the spiritual and emotional relationship that it involves, though all are involved in becoming one flesh. Rather it affirms that just as blood relations are one's flesh and bone (cf. *Comment* on v 23), so marriage creates a similar kinship relation between man and wife. They become related to each other as brother and sister are. The laws in Lev 18 and 20, and possibly Deut

24:1–4, illustrate the application of this kinship-of-spouses principle to the situation following divorce or the death of one of the parties.

b. Naked and Unashamed
    i. Naked
    ii. Unashamed - The states of mind may be classified into three broad categories: first, those where an individual is or might be the object of contempt, derision or humiliation; second, those where he feels bashfulness or shyness; The usage representing shyness or bashfulness is not as important, since it occurs infrequently. A clear example is the statement concerning the man and his wife before the fall in Gn. 2:25.
    iii. It calls attention to the difference between the original and the actual condition of man as conceived by the writer. The consciousness of sex is the result of eating the tree: before then our first parents had the innocence of children, who are often seen naked in the East
    iv. They were not ashamed." The Hebrew root בוש "to be ashamed" does not carry the overtones of personal guilt that English "shame" includes. Hebrew can speak of "shame" triggered by circumstances completely extrinsic to the speaker (Judg 3:25; 2 Kgs 2:17). Perhaps then it might be better to translate here, "they were unabashed" or "they were not disconcerted." They were like young children unashamed at their nakedness.

Word Studies

You did nothing just sleep. God's Surgery
Caused – to drop

Took- to grasp and seize

Ribs -

Closed up the Flesh

Fashioned – built Elsewhere the biblical poets describe the ordered universe as a building which YHWH designed and built (Amos 9:6; cf. Ps 104:2–3).[1]

Brought

Called

Woman -The word *ʾiššâ* is the most common word for "woman" and "wife" in the OT. The origin of woman is explained in Gen 2:23, 24. She is depicted as the physical counterpart of man, deserving of his unswerving loyalty. It is in this context (vv. 24–25) that the word is first used in the sense of "mate" or "wife."[2]

Reason

Leave

Joined - to cling, to **stick**[3]

One Flesh

Naked

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[1] Bruce K. Waltke, "255 בָּנָה," ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 116.
[2] Thomas E. Mccomiskey, "137 אִישׁ," ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 59.
[3] Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 209.

Unashamed - The states of mind may be classified into three broad categories: first, those where an individual is or might be the object of contempt, derision or humiliation; second, those where he feels bashfulness or shyness;[4] The usage representing shyness or bashfulness is not as important, since it occurs infrequently. A clear example is the statement concerning the man and his wife before the fall in Gn. 2:25. The usage which represents awe or respect is also rare. An OT instance is Ezr. 9:6; and there is the apostolic injunction of 1 Tim. 2:9. In the former instance the common Heb. root *bôš*, which appears on over 90 other occasions in the OT text in the Qal stem alone, is used; whereas 1 Tim. 2:9 is the only passage where *aidōs* occurs in the NT.[5]

[4] P. Woolley, "Shame," ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1085.
[5] P. Woolley, "Shame," ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 1085.

Commentary Studies

21 "Then the LORD God made a heavy sleep overcome man." "Heavy sleep," תרדמה, is often divinely induced sleep (cf. Isa 29:10; 1 Sam 26:12) and the occasion for divine revelation (Gen 15:12; Job 4:13). Possibly sleep is mentioned here because God's ways are mysterious and not for human observation (Dillmann, von Rad) or because to imagine man conscious during the operation would destroy the charm of the story (Cassuto). Certainly the remark about closing up the flesh afterwards must be ascribed to the narrator's concern with the beauty of the occasion.

22 "The LORD God then built the rib … into a woman." "Built" (בנה): only here and in Amos 9:6 is this verb used of God's creative activity, though in Akkadian and Ugaritic it is the regular term for creation.

When man woke up, God "brought her to the man." The God-created partner is introduced to man by the creator himself. The man's passivity in the match-making process is notable, but fits easily into a society where arranged marriages were the norm.

23 In ecstasy man bursts into poetry on meeting his perfect helpmeet. The verse is traditionally scanned into a two-beat tricolon and a three-beat bicolon, literally:

This, this time,	2	(4 syllables)
(is) bone of my bones	2	(6 syllables)
and flesh of my flesh	2	(7 syllables)
This shall be called woman	3	(7 syllables)
for from man was taken this	3	(7 syllables)

In these five short lines many of the standard techniques of Hebrew poetry are employed: parallelism (lines 2–3; 4–5), assonance and word play (woman/man); chiasmus (ABC/C´B´A´) (lines 4–5, "this … called woman"//"man … taken this"); and verbal repetition: by opening the tricolon and bicolon with "this" and then by concluding with the same word the man's exclamation concentrates all eyes on this woman.

The first three lines are a poetic formulation of the traditional kinship formula. For example, Laban said to his nephew Jacob, "You are my bone and my flesh" (29:14; cf. Judg 9:2; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:13–14 [12–13]). Whereas English speaks of blood relationships, Hebrew spoke of relatives as one's "flesh and bone." It is often suggested that the story of woman's creation from man's rib illustrates the meaning of this traditional kinship formula. "The first man could employ … (these) words in their literal connotation: actually bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh!" (Cassuto, 1:136). This formula sets man and woman on an equal footing as regards their humanity, yet sets them apart from the animals (vv 19–20; cf. 1:26–28).

"This shall be called a woman, for from a man was she taken." The last two lines are a typical example of Hebrew naming. Despite their similarity, it is doubtful whether there is any

etymological connection between אִשָּׁה (*ʾiššāh*) "woman" and אִישׁ (*ʾîš*) "man." (But see S. Qogut, *Tarbiz* 51 [1982] 293–98 for possible link.) Frequently Hebrew folk etymologies offer a wordplay on the circumstances of the person's birth (cf. 4:1, 25; 17:17, 19; 29:32–30:24, etc.). Here the first man names the first woman in a similar fashion. Though they are equal in nature, that man names woman (cf. 3:20) indicates that she is expected to be subordinate to him, an important presupposition of the ensuing narrative (3:17).

24 "Therefore a man forsakes his father and his mother." This is not a continuation of the man's remarks in v 23, but a comment of the narrator, applying the principles of the first marriage to every marriage.

"Forsakes," יעזב. The traditional translation "leaves" suggests that the man moves from his parents and sets up home elsewhere, whereas in fact Israelite marriage was usually patrilocal, that is, the man continued to live in or near his parents' home. It was the wife who left home to join her husband. So it is preferable here to translate עזב as "forsake." Israel is bidden not to forsake the poor and the Levite, or the covenant (Deut 12:19; 14:27; 29:24). On the other hand, God promises not to forsake Israel (Deut 31:8; Josh 1:5). These examples show that forsaking father and mother is to be understood in a relative sense, not an absolute sense; cf. Hos 6:6, "I desire mercy and not sacrifice," or our Lord's remarks about hating father and mother, wife and children in Luke 16:26. On marriage a man's priorities change. Beforehand his first obligations are to his parents: afterwards they are to his wife. In modern Western societies where filial duties are often ignored, this may seem a minor point to make, but in traditional societies like Israel where honoring parents is the highest human obligation next to honoring God, this remark about forsaking them is very striking.

"And sticks to his wife." This phrase suggests both passion and permanence should characterize marriage. Shechem's love of Dinah is described as "his soul stuck to Dinah" (Gen 34:3). The tribes of Israel are assured that they will stick to their own inheritance; i.e., it will be theirs permanently (Num 36:7, 9). Israel is repeatedly urged to stick to the LORD (Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:5, etc.). The use of the terms "forsake" and "stick" in the context of Israel's covenant with the LORD suggests that the OT viewed marriage as a kind of covenant.

"They become one flesh." This does not denote merely the sexual union that follows marriage, or the children conceived in marriage, or even the spiritual and emotional relationship that it involves, though all are involved in becoming one flesh. Rather it affirms that just as blood relations are one's flesh and bone (cf. *Comment* on v 23), so marriage creates a similar kinship relation between man and wife. They become related to each other as brother and sister are. The laws in Lev 18 and 20, and possibly Deut 24:1–4, illustrate the application of this kinship-of-spouses principle to the situation following divorce or the death of one of the parties. Since a woman becomes on marriage a sister to her husband's brothers, a daughter to her father-in-law, and so on, she cannot normally marry any of them should her first husband die or divorce her. (See G. J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus*, 253–61, and *idem, JJ*[6]*S* 30 [1979] 36–40). The kinships established by marriage are therefore not terminated by death or divorce.

25 "The two of them … were nude, but they were not ashamed." This verse has an important narrative function. It closes scene 2, thereby creating a parallel with the end of scene 6 in 3:21, and it also explains the background to many of the actions in chap. 3. After eating the

forbidden fruit, the couple notice their nakedness, make fig-leaf aprons, cover themselves, and hide in the bushes when they hear God approaching (3:7–11). 2:25 points out that originally men did not react this way: "They were not ashamed." The Hebrew root בוש "to be ashamed" does not carry the overtones of personal guilt that English "shame" includes. Hebrew can speak of "shame" triggered by circumstances completely extrinsic to the speaker (Judg 3:25; 2 Kgs 2:17). Perhaps then it might be better to translate here, "they were unabashed" or "they were not disconcerted." They were like young children unashamed at their nakedness.

Some writers (e.g., Wambacq, *Meélanges B. Rigaux* [1970] 547–56; and E. Haag, *Mensch am Anfang*, 50) see nakedness as a symbol of poverty and need and suggest that feelings of sexual guilt had nothing to do with it. The LORD's subsequent provision of clothing (3:21) paralleled his earlier provision of food (2:19; 2:9), food and clothing being man's fundamental needs. Attractive though this argument is, it hardly does justice to the clause "but they were not ashamed," which surely suggests that primeval man had all he required. Nor as Coppens points out (*ET*[7]*L* 46 [1970] 380–83) does it sit well with Gen 9:20–27 and its fundamental assumption that it is grossly indecent to uncover one's sexual organs, or the law's insistence that priests must not expose their privy parts when offering sacrifice (contrast Sumerian custom; Exod 20:26; 28:42–43). It would seem much more probable then that Gen 3 is explaining why man must wear clothes, rather than that 2:25 is idealizing nudity. 2:25 reiterates the contentment of the couple with God's provision and fills in the background detail just enough for the understanding of chap. 3[8]

It has appeared that no fresh creation 'from the ground' can provide a fit companion for man: from his own body, therefore, must his future associate be taken.—תַּרְדֵּמָה] is a hypnotic trance, induced by supernatural agency (cf. Duhm on Is. 29:10). The purpose here is to produce anæsthesia, with perhaps

[7]*ETL* Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses

[8] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, vol. 1, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 69–72.

the additional idea that the divine working cannot take place under human observation (Di[9]. Gu[10].).—*one of his ribs*] A part of his frame that (it was thought) could easily be spared. There is doubtless a deeper significance in the representation: it suggests "the moral and social relation of the sexes to each other, the dependence of woman upon man, her close relationship to him, and the foundation existing in nature for … the feelings with which each should naturally regard the other" (Dri[11].). The Arabs use similarly a word for 'rib,' saying *hūa lizḳī* or *hūa bilizḳī* for 'he is my bosom companion.' On the other hand, the notion that the first human being was androgynous, and afterwards separated into man and woman (see Schw. *AR[12]W*, ix. 172 ff.), finds no countenance in the passage.—22. *built up the rib … into a woman*] So in the Egyptian "Tale of the two brothers," the god Chnum 'built' a wife for his favourite Batau, the hieroglyphic determinative showing that the operation was actually likened to the building of a wall (see Wiedemann, *D[13]B*, Sup. 180).—23. By a flash of intuition the man divines that the fair creature now brought to him is part of himself, and names her accordingly. There is a poetic ring and rhythm in the exclamation that breaks from him.—*This at last*] Lit. 'This, this time' (*v.i[14].*): note the thrice repeated זֹאת.—*bone of my bones, etc*.] The expressions originate in the primitive notion

[9]Di. *Die Genesis. Von der dritten Auflage an erklārt von A. Dillmann* (6th ed. 1892). The work embodies frequent extracts from earlier edns. by Knobel: these are referred to below as "Kn.-Di."

[10]Gu. *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, von H. Gunkel (2nd ed. 1902).

[11]Dri. S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the OT* (9th ed. 1913).
Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel (1890).
A Treatise on the use of the Tenses in Hebrew (3rd ed. 1892).

[12]*ARW Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*.

[13]*DB A Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. by J. Hastings (1898–1902).

[14]*v.i. vide infra* Used in references from commentary to footnotes, and *vice versa*.

of kinship as resting on "participation in a common mass of flesh, blood, and bones" (Rob. Sm.[15] *R*[16]*S*[172], 273 f.: cf. *K*[18]*M*[192], 175 f.), so that all the members of a kindred group are parts of the same substance, whether acquired by heredity or assimilated in the processes of nourishment (cf. 29:14; 37:27; Ju. 9:2; 2 Sa. 5:1; 19:13). The case before us, where the material identity is expressed in the manner of woman's creation, is unique.—*shall be called Woman*] English is fortunate in being able to reproduce this assonance (*'Îš*, *'Iššā*) without straining language: other translations are driven to *tours de force* (*e.g.* Jer. *Virago*; Luther, *Männin*). Whether even in Heb. it is more than an assonance is doubtful (*v.i*[20].).—24. An ætiological observation of the narrator: *This is why a man leaves … and cleaves … and they become, etc*.] It is not a prophecy from the standpoint of the narrative; nor a recommendation of monogamic marriage (as applied in Mt. 19:4ff.; Mk. 10:6ff.; 1 Co. 6:16; Eph. 5:31); it is an answer to the question, What is the meaning of that universal instinct which impels a man to separate from his parents and cling to his wife? It is strange that the man's attachment to the woman is explained here, and the woman's to the man only in 3:16.

It has been imagined that the v. presupposes the primitive custom called *beena* marriage, or that modification of it in which the husband parts from his own kindred for good, and goes to live with his wife's kin (so Gu[21].: cf.

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[15]Rob. Sm. *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (2nd ed. 1894).
[16]*RS Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (2nd ed. 1894).
[172] *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (2nd ed. 1894).
[18]*KM* W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (2nd ed. 1903).
[192] W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (2nd ed. 1903).
[20]*v.i. vide infra* Used in references from commentary to footnotes, and *vice versa*.
[21]Gu. *Genesis übersetzt und erklärt*, von H. Gunkel (2nd ed. 1902).

K[22]*M*[232], 87, 207); and other instances are alleged in the patriarchal history. But this would imply an almost incredible antiquity for the present form of the narrative; and, moreover, the dominion of the man over the wife assumed in 3:16b is inconsistent with the conditions of *beena* marriage. Cf. Benz. *E*[24]*B*, 2675: "The phrase … may be an old saying dating from remote times when the husband went to the house (tent) of the wife and joined her clan. Still the passage may be merely the narrator's remark; and even if it should be an old proverb we cannot be sure that it really carries us so far back in antiquity."—See, however, Gressmann, *AR*[25]*W*, x. 353[1]; van Doorninck, *Th*[26]*T*, xxxix. 238 (who assigns 2:24 and 3:16 to different recensions).

one flesh] If the view just mentioned could be maintained, this phrase might be equivalent to 'one clan' (Lv. 25:49); for "both in Hebrew and Arabic 'flesh' is synonymous with 'clan' or kindred group" (*R*[27]*S*[282], 274). More probably it refers simply to the *connubium*.—25. *naked … not ashamed*] The remark is not merely an anticipation of the account given later of the origin of clothing (3:7, cf. 21). It calls attention to the difference between the original and the actual condition of man as conceived by the writer. The consciousness of sex is the result of eating the tree: before then our first parents had the innocence of children, who are often seen naked in the East (Doughty,[29] *A*[30]*D*, ii. 475).

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[22]*KM* W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (2nd ed. 1903).
[232] W. Robertson Smith, *Kinship and Marriage in Early Arabia* (2nd ed. 1903).
[24]*EB Encyclopædia Biblica*, ed. by T. K. Cheyne and J. Sutherland Black (1899–1903).
[25]*ARW Archiv für Religionswissenschaft*.
[26]*ThT Theologisch Tijdschrift* (1867–).
[27]*RS Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (2nd ed. 1894).
[282] *Lectures on the Religion of the Semites* (2nd ed. 1894).
[29]Doughty, C. M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (1888).
[30]*AD* C. M. Doughty, *Travels in Arabia Deserta* (1888).

V. 25 is a transition verse, leading over to the main theme to which all that goes before is but the prelude. How long the state of primitive innocence lasted, the writer is at no pains to inform us. This indifference to the non-essential is as characteristic of the popular tale as its graphic wealth of detail in features of real interest. The omission afforded an opportunity for the exercise of later Midrashic ingenuity; *Jub*[31]. 3:15 fixes the period at seven years, while R. Eliezer (*Ber. R*[32].) finds that it did not last six hours.[33]

2:21–22 Third, the narration indicates by the method of making the woman that she is a special creation in the eyes of God (v. 21). She is taken from the man by a "surgical" act of God. The "deep sleep" (*tardēmâ*) that Adam experiences and the procedure that follows is initiated and carried out exclusively by God. The man is not even a conscious spectator. The "sleep" preserves for the man the mystery of her creation and the subsequent surprise at her appearance. "Deep sleep" is commonly used of a night's sleep (Job 4:13; 33:15; Prov 19:15), but here it is the special work of God as with Abraham's slumber (15:12; cf. 1 Sam 26:12 and fig. use Isa 29:10 with Rom 11:8). The verbal root from which this noun is derived (*rādam*) describes Jonah's sleep, which was not disturbed even by the roaring seas battering his Tarshish-bound ship (1:5–6).

The building block for constructing the woman is a portion of the man's essential skeletal frame. As we have already observed, the language of the garden scene is found in the tabernacle description; the term *ṣēlāʿ*, here rendered "ribs," appears frequently in the construction setting of the tabernacle, there translated "side."[11347] The woman was taken from

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[31]*Jub. The Book of Jubilees*.

[32]*Ber. R.* The Midrash *Bereshith Rabba* (tr. into German by A. Wünsche, 1881).

[33] John Skinner 1851-1925, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Scribner, 1910), 68–71.

[34117] Of its thirty-nine occurrences, צֵלָע appears nineteen times in delineating the tabernacle construction and its furniture in Exod 25–38 (e.g., 25:12; 26:20, 26–27; 27:7; 30:4; 36:31–32;

the man's side to show that she was of the same substance as the man and to underscore the unity of the human family, having one source. This is made clear by the man's description of her: "Bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (v. 23). The verb "took" (*lāqaḥ)*, which is given prominence in the narrative (vv. 22–23), may anticipate the marital union of the two since it is the common idiom for marriage.[11358]

In Jewish tradition Adam was believed originally androgynous, that is, biologically bisexual (e.g., *Gen. Rab*[36]. 8.1; Rashi), for Gen 5:2 says, "And when they were created, he [God] called them 'man.' " This opinion is not dead. Support for this notion has been advanced by appeal to the rabbinic argument noted above and from 2:22 on the basis that man's "side," not his "rib," was used in the creation of Eve.[11379] Whether "side" or "rib," it is transparent from 1:27–28, which is the basis of 5:2, that two persons are meant here, not one with two sexes, since 1:27 refers to two persons (plural "them") of differing gender after the singular "him." Moreover, there is no hint elsewhere in the Eden narrative that the first man in 2:7 was bisexual.[12380]

Commentators from antiquity to the present have made much of the body image where the woman is derived from the man's side as opposed to some other part of the anatomy. Does it indicate that the woman is the man's equal in position as opposed to his "helper"? In the mind of the modern feminist, "side" may suggest equality, but the rabbis could well take the same "side" and make it suit their patriarchal presumption. *Genesis Rabbah* (18.2) reads, "He [God] thought to himself: 'We should not create her beginning with the head, so that she not be frivolous, nor from the eye, that she not be a starer [at men], nor from the ear, that she not be an eavesdropper, nor from the mouth, that she not talk too much [a gossip], nor from the heart, that she not be jealous, nor from the hand, that she not be light-fingered, nor from the foot, that she not be a gadabout, but from a covered up place on man. For even when a man is standing naked, that spot is covered up." One must beware, then, reading too much into the significance of the "side." Perhaps the best-known explication is Aquinas's *Summa Theologiae* (1a, 92, 3c): "For since the woman should not have 'authority over the man' (1 Tim 2:12) it would not have been fitting for her to have been formed from his head, nor since she is not to be despised by the man, as if she were but his servile subject, would it have been fitting for her to be formed from his feet."

The symbolic significance of the "rib" is that the man and woman are fit for one another as companions sexually and socially. The body metaphor is employed by Paul in his writings to

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37:3, 5, 27; 38:7). It also appears frequently in the construction of Solomon's temple (1 Kgs 6:5, 8, 15–16, 34; 7:3) and Ezekiel's vision of the new temple (Ezek 41:5–9, 11, 26). There is some dispute regarding the precise sense of צֵלָע in our passage. The NIV text note here indicates the Hebrew can be translated "part of man's side," but אַחַת, meaning "one," suggests that a single "rib" is meant (v. 21).

[35118] E.g., Gen 4:19; 6:2; 12:19; 19:14.

[36]*Gen. Rab. Genesis Rabbah*, ed. J. Neusner

[37119] A. T. Reisenberger, "The Creation of Adam as Hermaphrodite—and Its Implications for Feminist Theology," *Judaica* 42 (1993): 447–52.

[38120] This traditional interpretation (cf. Paul's opinion, 1 Cor 15:45) has been challenged by feminist theology. See P. Trible in *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1978), 80, 98, who renders הָאָדָם ("the man") as "earth-creature," which is taken as a generic expression for human life; this first living human is reckoned as "sexually undifferentiated."

indicate respective roles in community, especially speaking of Christ and the church (1 Cor 12:21–25; Eph 1:22–23; 4:15–16; Col 2:19). In Eph 5:22–31 he draws on the "head-body" imagery in a domestic metaphor where the husband as "head" of the wife parallels Christ as "head" of the church (cp. 1 Cor 11:3). Paul's quotation of Gen 2:24 shows that Eph 5:28–30 is an allusion to Gen 2:22–23.[12391] It would seem that Paul had appealed to the woman as man's "rib" to indicate their loving unity, not their domestic equality. This is the significance of the "rib"; they are of the same human "stuff."

God is depicted as a "builder" who constructs the woman from the raw resources derived from the man (v. 22). *Bānâ*, translated "made" (NIV, NRS[40]V), "fashioned" (NAS[41]B, NJ[42]B, NJP[43]S), or "built" (RE[44]B, NA[45]B), is a frequent term for the building of edifices, but it occurs only once in early Genesis. Also it is typical in ancient Near Eastern tales where the deity creates human beings.[12462] It is used of the Lord elsewhere when he "builds" his sanctuary (Ps 78:69) and is the "Builder" (*bôneh*) of his heavenly residence (Amos 9:6). The anthropomorphic language of God as Potter (v. 7) or Builder shows his special involvement in the creation of the human family. Identifying Adam again in v. 22 as the woman's source reiterates the connectedness of the first couple. Again the "rib" also indicates some discontinuity since it distinguishes her constitution from both the animals and Adam, whose source was the "ground" (2:7, 19).

The Lord presents his special "project" to the man, suggesting by this that she is a gift from the man's Maker. The language "brought" is reminiscent of God's presentation of the animals to the man (2:19; cf. 7:9, 15). This echo reinforces what the man discovers: the woman is Adam's *human* partner. A significant difference between the two passages is that the first has a stated purpose, the naming of the animals. Here, however, there is no utilitarian purpose prescribed although the man proceeds to name her (v. 23b; 3:20). The garden "Paradise" is now complete with the presence of the woman.

2:23 The narration has steadily progressed toward this pinnacle where the man speaks for the first time, for God alone has spoken up to this point (v. 18). In the man's naming of the

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[39121] For this discussion see T. O'Loughlin, "Adam's Rib and the Equality of the Sexes: Some Medieval Exegesis of Gen 2:21–22," *ITQ* 59 (1993): 44–54. O'Loughlin's earliest discovery is an eighth-century Irish commentary: "Why was the woman formed from the rib? For if she were formed from his foot or hand or some other part she would stand in shame before him. Another interpretation is that it shows the greatest love, for the rib is, after all, closest to the heart, as it is said: the rib is the guardian of the heart." More important for us, he shows that Augustine's exegesis did not make of the "rib" a metaphor for equality, while otherwise his exegesis is similar to medieval exegesis (e.g., Adam's sleep = Christ's death, Adam's rib = Christ's blood sacrifice and sacrament [John 19:34]).

[40]NRSV New Revised Standard Version

[41]NASB New American Standard Bible

[42]NJB New Jerusalem Bible

[43]NJPS New Jewish Publication Society Version

[44]REB Revised English Bible

[45]NAB New American Bible

[46122] *Banû* occurs in Ug. and Akk. texts (e.g., *Atrahasis*). An epithet for Ug. *ʾIl* (El) is *bny bnwt*, "Creator of creatures" (see citations in *UT* 373).

animals there was no recorded speech, but with the presentation of the woman, the man exclaims in poetic verse. The embedded poem is peculiar in the narrative flow and by itself draws attention to the importance of this creative event. The exclamation reflects what the narration has sought to show: the unique compatibility of the man and the woman. Adam responds by a shout affirming that he and the woman, indeed, are made up of the same "stuff." The exclamatory nature of his response is indicated by *zō't happaʿam*, rendered "This is now" by the NIV but better by the NRS[47]V, "This at last is" (cf. 29:34–35; 30:20; 46:30).[12483] The GN[49]B explains the proper sense: "At last, here is one of my own kind." The noun *paʿam* with the definite article is literally "this once" or "this time." The LX[50]X translates the clause with the neuter *touto nun*, "this (is) now," taking the demonstrative ("this," *zō't*) as a reference to the event of creation, not in reference to the feminine noun "rib." Another possible reading is to take the demonstrative as a simple deictic and read "this time, bone of my bones."[12514]

Adam's response centers on the sameness that he and the woman share as opposed to the creatures. The parallel elements "bone [out] of my bones and flesh [out] of my flesh" have the preposition *min*, indicating source. Although "bone and flesh" are used figuratively in the Old Testament for kinship,[12525] this is the one place where it has a literal meaning.[12536] Possibly the expression refers to covenant loyalty, in which case Adam is expressing a covenant commitment.[12547] "*My* bones" and "*my* flesh" with their pronouns heighten the effect. Also by naming her *'iššâ* ("woman"), a sound play on *'îš* ("man"), he underscores their attachment. This pun is heard in English "man" and "woman." In naming her the man also names himself *'îš*, and in calling her *''iššâ* he restates his own name (embedded in hers).[12558] The derivations of the two words remain unclear; they are probably used here because of their similar phonetic sound. Adam explains the meaning of the pun in the subsequent clause, again highlighting her source "out of man." Commentators have noted the wordplay between *'ādām* ("man") and *'ādāmâ* ("ground") at 2:7 and 3:19 and between *'îš* and *'iššâ*. The ending *-â* indicates feminine gender, but a double entendre has been suggested for the *-â*, which in Hebrew is sometimes used to indicate direction, "to" or "toward."[12569] For the former case the "man" returns to the

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[47]NRSV New Revised Standard Version

[48123] Other English versions have similarly, "This one at last" (REB, NJB, NJPS, NAB).

[49]GNB Good News Bible

[50]LXX Septuagint

[51124] *IBHS* § 17.4.2b.

[52125] E.g., Gen 29:14; Judg 9:2; 2 Sam 5:1; 19:12–13 [13–14].

[53126] The NIV rightly renders the idiom "bone and flesh" with our contemporary idiom for family, "flesh and blood."

[54127] See W. Brueggemann, "Of the Same Flesh and Bone (GN 2, 23a),"*CBQ* 32 (1970): 532–42. And Hamilton comments: "Thus it would serve as the biblical counterpart to the modern marriage ceremony, 'in weakness [i.e., flesh] and in strength [i.e., bone]' " (*Genesis 1–17*, 180).

[55128] So D. Jobling, "The Myth Semantics of Genesis 2:4b–3:24," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 41–49.

[56129] I.e., directive *hē*. See S. Meier, "Linguistic Clues on the Date and Canaanite Origin of Genesis 2:23–24," *CBQ* 53 (1991): 19–21.

"ground" (*ʾādāmâ*). In the latter the man moves toward the "woman" (*ʾiššâ*) in 2:24, where by marriage he is "united to his wife" and they "become one flesh."[57]

21. *at that spot*. Heb[58]. literally "underneath it," or "instead of it," with the idiomatic sense of "then and there."

22. *to the man*. In Heb[59]. the defined form *hāʾādām* is "man," the undefined *ʾādām*, "Adam," since a personal name cannot take the definite article. With prepositions like *lᵉ-* "to," the article is elided and only the vowel marks the difference between "to Adam" (*lᵉʾādām*) and "to the man" (*lāʾādām*), so that the consonantal text is bound to be ambiguous (*lʾdm* in either case). Since the form without preposition appears invariably as *hāʾādām* in 2–3 (the undefined form occurs first in 4:25), and is not mentioned until the naming of Adam 5:2, the vocalized "to Adam" (also vs. 20, 3:17) is an anachronism. In 3, LX[60]X favors "Adam" even in the presence of the consonantal article.

23. The assonance of Heb[61]. *ʾīš* and *ʾiššā* has no etymological basis. It is another instance of symbolic play on words, except that the phonetic similarity this time is closer than usual. By an interesting coincidence, Eng. "woman" (derived from "wife of man") would offer a better linguistic foil than the Heb[62]. noun.[63]

Genesis 1–3 is the authoritative fountain for the apostle Paul's soteriology and his instruction on home and ecclesiastical order.[13640] There is escalating disagreement about the theology and relevancy of the creation-Eden narratives pertaining to the societal and

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[57] K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 216–219.
[58]Heb. Hebrew.
[59]Heb. Hebrew.
[60]LXX The Septuagint
[61]Heb. Hebrew.
[62]Heb. Hebrew.
[63] E. A. Speiser, *Genesis: Introduction, Translation, and Notes*, vol. 1, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 18.
[64130] Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 6:16; 11:8–9; 15:21–27, 45–49; Eph 5:31; 1 Tim 2:12–15.

ecclesiastical issues of manhood and womanhood in our culture.[13651] What we have in the Eden narrative is the origins of the fundamental institution of ancient Israel's life—the family. This we said is extended beyond the family in some respects by the apostle Paul to ecclesiastical order. Since Israel's chief interest was the family and how chap. 2 presented the prototype family (so 2:24), Genesis cannot be viewed as a paradigm for all man-woman relationships in society. To apply it universally to other social contexts, such as government, education, or commerce, would be unwarranted, for chaps. 2–3 do not address such institutions. Creation and Eden (chaps. 1–3) give a balanced picture of the man and woman in cooperation and companionship. Although they share all in common, Genesis also acknowledges that there are differences. Their sameness does not mean exactness.

Transparently, they are sexually different as "male and female" (1:27) and therefore have different roles in the procreation process. In 1:26–28 the emphasis is on their sexual correlation, but Eden's narrative elucidates and amplifies on their relationship: the man has a leadership role while the woman has a followship position. Before we speak to this, some suppose that the creation account portrays men and women in one way and the Eden narrative presents their relationship differently, even irreconcilably. But the notion of hierarchical role is hardly foreign to 1:1–2:3; there is a certain succession in the creation events from the lesser to the greater. Moreover, there is the notion of "rule" in 1:14–19 regarding the sun and moon where we find the same term as that of 3:16b, "and he shall rule over you." We make only this point: the idea of hierarchy is inferred in 1:1–2:3, and the Eden narrative that ensues is not fundamentally at odds with it. Also some think that submission was unknown until the fall in the punishment oracle of 3:16b (see 3:16 discussion). But leadership-followship is a creation ordinance that is well attested in Genesis 2–3 despite recent protestations. Feminist theology admits this and therefore calls for a new basis for doing theology, freed from what it considers the historically conditioned patriarchy found in Genesis 1–3.[13662]

This role relationship of leader and follower is indicated directly and implicitly. First, the participant structure of Genesis 2–3 shows implicitly the hierarchy of creation: God, the man, woman, and animal (serpent). But this was reversed in the fall: the woman listens to the serpent, the man listens to the woman, and no one listens to God. This usurpation of the creation ideal is, however, properly rearranged in the judgment oracles: now the serpent is

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[65131] See e.g., P. K. Jewett, *Man as Male and Female* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); L. Scanzoni and N. A. Hardesty, *All We're Meant to Be: Biblical Feminism for Today*, 3d rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992); S. Foh, *Women and the Word of God: A Response to Biblical Feminism* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1980); A. B. Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985); S. Adams, *What the Bible Really Says about Women* (Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 1994). For nontraditional evangelical opinions, see A. Mickelsen, ed., *Women, Authority and the Bible* (Downers Grove: IVP, 1986); and for the defense of the traditional view among evangelicals, see J. Piper and W. Grudem, eds., *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991).

[66132] E.g., E. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983); R. R. Reuther, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston: Beacon, 1983); D. J. A. Clines, *What Does Eve Do to Help? and Other Readerly Questions to the Old Testament* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1990), 25–48.

subject to the "seed" of the woman, the woman subject to the man, and all subject once again under the Lord.[13673] Second, 2:18 makes clear that differences are present. The woman is designated a "helper" in 2:18, which affirms her subordination, for "one could not say in 2:18 that man is created as a helper for the woman."[13684] We cannot exchange the roles of the man and woman as though they were equal without undoing the narrative's texture. Also the man names the animals without the assistance of the woman; he expresses dominion over the lower orders, but he cannot complete the task of subduing and thus achieving the blessing by himself. If anything, Eden shows that Eve's attempt to subdue the serpent proved a folly. But this does not mean that the woman was only useful for procreation purposes, for there is no discussion of sexual relations in 2:23–24. The name "Eve," meaning "living," acknowledges her dignity as the source of all human life (3:20); she also is pivotal to the salvation of the fallen family (3:15).

Third, the priority of the man's creation is important for recognizing leadership-followship in the garden (cf. 1 Tim 2:13). It does no good to argue that by this line of reasoning the animals that were created before the woman (2:19) be reckoned as authoritative over Eve, for the sense of the entire narrative makes it indisputable that all human life is superior to the lower orders. It is *within* the human family that leadership-followship is indicated in the garden account. The reference to marriage in 2:24 recognizes the familial structure of authority where parent has priority over son and daughter; that common structure in Israelite life is presupposed in the creation ordinance of marriage (see 2:24). Granted, the reference here is anachronistic, for such parent-child pattern was yet to occur; but we miss the point if we dismiss this too lightly. The supposition of the biblical author is that the familial structure of authority had its inception in the garden, and that pattern is in place before the sin of Adam. For Israel the paradigm for family was that found in the garden narrative, as illustrated in Jesus' instruction on marriage, where he integrates 1:27 and 2:23–24. The rudimentary system was conceptually in place before the fall. Also the man names the woman, indicating a difference in function (2:23; 3:20), in the same way that the naming of the elements in God's creation and the man's naming of the animals indicated a difference in relationship (see 1:5 discussion). Although naming indicates authority in the Old Testament, the narrative of Eve's creation as a whole takes steps to show that the woman is not subject to the man in the same sense that the animals are subject to him. Rather, the text presents them as partners who together exercise rule, fulfilling the mandate of 1:28 by exercising their appropriate sexual functions and respective intrahuman roles.

Fourth, the woman has her source in the man, suggesting that the man is the leader (cf. 1 Cor 11:8). The fact that the woman came from the man, which itself so impressed the man that he exclaimed "bone of my bones," indicates that the two are inherently the same in nature, even as one connectional substance, yet they are distinctive in their person and interpersonal relationship. Ultimately, they have their mutual source in God (cf. 1 Cor 11:12), for neither creates the other. Again the text does not suggest that the man alone has access to God but rather that the man has the greater responsibility as the "firstborn" for the couple's response to God's charge. This is confirmed in chap. 3 by the quizzing of the man first about their collective actions (3:9–12), for the burden lies with the man as the responsible party for the activity of the

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[67133] See W. Neuer, *Man and Woman in Christian Perspective*, trans. G. Wenham (Wheaton: Crossway, 1991), 75–76.

[68134] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 262.

garden. When God explains man's punishment (3:17), he attributes it to Adam's following the woman in sin. However, the sin of the man is not his listening to the woman per se but his following the woman *in sin.* In other words, it is too much to say that a husband should not listen to the advice of his wife. It was not simply heeding her advice; in this case it was succumbing to the content of the advice that spelled his disaster (cf. 1 Tim 2:14).

2:24 The creation of the first couple leads naturally to their relationship expressed through marriage since it is the couple's charge to procreate and subdue the earth (1:28). This verse is not the continued speech of the man but the commentary of the narrator, which is attributed to God by Jesus (Matt 19:4–5). "For this reason" *(ʿal kēn)* does not indicate an explanation of the foregoing but rather describes the consequence of God's charge for the human family to propagate and rule. Marriage and family are the divine ideal for carrying out the mandate. As we noted, Jesus' appeal to the garden (quoting Gen 2:23) as the basis of his teaching on marriage and divorce (Matt 19:3–9; Mark 10:2–12) indicates that the garden established a paradigm for marital behavior. That Eden was viewed by the Hebrews as the model, authoritative experience can be seen also in Jewish literature of the time but especially by Paul, who appeals to its events in speaking of the most profound theological tenets of Christianity (Rom 5:12–21; 1 Cor 15:45) and in offering instructions concerning the propriety of worship (1 Cor 11:2–16; 1 Tim 2:11–15), moral behavior (1 Cor 6:16), and marriage (Eph 5:31).

As a model for marriage this passage involves three factors: a leaving, a uniting, and a public declaration. The NIV's rendering "*will* leave" is ambiguous (also NAS[69]B); it can be taken by the modern reader as a description of future behavior or as an exhortation to marry. Better is the rendering "leaves" and "clings" (NRS[70]V), indicating by the simple present tense that marriage is a universal practice.[13715] Marriage is depicted as a covenant relationship shared by man and woman. Monogamy is clearly intended. "Leave" (*ʿāzab*) and "cling" *(dābaq)* are terms commonly used in the context of covenant, indicating covenant breach (e.g., Deut 28:20; Hos 4:10) or fidelity.[13726]

The significance of the language "leave" is that marriage involves a new pledge to a spouse in which former familial commitments are superseded. Marriage requires a new priority by the marital partners where obligations to one's spouse supplant a person's parental loyalties. Illustrative of this pledge is Ruth's earnest desire to remain with Naomi: "Ruth clung [*dābaq*] to her" (1:14) and "Don't urge me to leave [*ʿāzab*] you" (1:16).

Our passage cannot mean that a man is not married unless he departs his father's house; it was customary in Israel for a man to remain, not leave, his father's household. This is best illustrated by Jacob's family, whose sons remained under their father's influence despite the founding of their own families and wealth. Although the sons are subject to their father's wishes, they also exercise some freedom and maintain their own household identity as shown

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[69]NASB New American Standard Bible

[70]NRSV New Revised Standard Version

[71135] "Leaves" is the imperfective form יַעֲזָב, and "clings" is the expected corresponding perfective form with the *wāw* consecutive (וְדָבַק).

[72136] E.g., Deut 10:20; 11:22; 13:18; 30:20; Josh 23:8, 12. At Gen 24:27 and 28:15 "not leave" indicates God's faithful provision for the patriarchs. The figurative use of "cling" occurs in 34:3, where it describes Shechem's love for Dinah.

by Reuben's authority over the life and death of his sons (42:37). Hebrew custom, rather, called for the wife to join the house of her husband (cf. Rebekah [chap. 24] and Tamar [chap. 38]).[13737] In fact, the law assumed a woman remained under the auspices of her husband's family even after her husband's death (e.g., Deut 25:5–10). The Eden narrative does not suggest that before the fall in chap. 3 men were ideally to leave their family for the woman's, which subsequently was reversed as a result of the fall.[13748] The judgment oracles do not speak to this, and it is best to view the reference to man's "leaving" as due to his priority in the narrative interest. Therefore "leave" here is metaphorical rather than literal since it was the woman who actually left her father's house.

Also marriage involves the two united in commitment; two parties are bound by stipulations, forming a new entity or relationship. The two people, although freed from their parents, are not isolated or independent; they become dependent and responsible toward one another. "One flesh" echoes the language of v. 23, which speaks of the woman's source in the man; here it depicts the consequence of their bonding, which results in one new person. Our human sexuality expresses both our individuality as gender and our oneness with another person through physical union. Sexual union implies community and requires responsible love within that union.[13759] The sexual union of the couple is, however, only symbolic of the new kinship that the couple has entered. The sexual act by itself does not exhaust marriage; marriage entails far more.

Finally, this "leaving" and "uniting" involves a public declaration in the sight of God. Marriage is not a private matter. It involves a declaration of intention and a redefining of obligations and relationships in a familial and social setting. In our contemporary climate of sexual freedom and societal tolerance for moral deviance, we would do well to reconsider the biblical viewpoint toward marriage and sexual behavior. Without question 2:24 serves as the bedrock for Hebrew understanding of the centrality of the nuclear family for the survival of society.[14760] Monogamous heterosexual marriage was always viewed as the divine norm from the outset of creation. Mosaic instruction shows considerable efforts to safeguard this ideal against its dissolution by clarifying what is "family." Sexuality was instrumental in defining what a household was in Israel; abrogation of sexual boundaries threatened the identity of this core social institution. Without proper limits "family" ceased, and the consequence was the undoing of Israel as a nation, the same fate suffered by their predecessors (Lev 18:24–30). Strong prohibitions against sexual offenses often prescribed the penalty of death, as in the case of the heinous sins of murder and idolatry.

[73137] Laban's response to the departure of Leah and Rachel is not so much their going as the manner in which Jacob secretly departed with them (31:25–28). Another example of this practice is the Levite's wife (Judg 19).

[74138] It has been rendered in the modal sense, "should leave," thus depicting the initial divine intention; by sin that unity is broken, and 3:16, where the woman pursues the man, indicates the reversal of 2:24. See R. Lawton, "Genesis 2:24: Trite or Tragic?" *JBL* 105 (1986): 97–98. But rather than the reversal of 2:24, the woman's "desire" in 3:16 continues to be best explained in the light of the foregoing clause regarding childbirth.

[75139] So Bonhoeffer, *Creation and Fall*, 62.

[76140] For our discussion, see especially T. Frymer-Kensky, "Law and Philosophy: The Case of Sex in the Bible," *Semeia* 45 (1989): 89–102.

Adultery and promiscuity encroached upon another's household, and incest within one's own family resulted in confused lines of familial relationships. Since marriage formed a new kinship bond ("nakedness") between the bride and her husband's brothers, making her their sister, and between her and her father-in-law, making her his daughter, sexual relationships and even marriage of in-laws after death or divorce was considered sexual incest. Hebrew marriage expanded legal responsibilities by the family toward the new member even after the death of a spouse (e.g., Deut 25:5–10).[14771] Marriage then was viewed as altering familial identity in the eyes of the community. We also find that the Mosaic law reflects the same concern regarding the similarities and distinctions between human and animal that we have found in our Genesis narrative. Sexual relations with animals were abhorrent since that revoked creation's distinctions (e.g., Exod 22:19 [18]). Similarly, homosexual behavior was a confusion of sexual identity between men and women (e.g., Lev 18:22; 20:13; cf. Deut 22:5). Christian expectations for sexual behavior were the same and were a given among Jewish converts, but the Gentile world did not follow such norms. It was against the customary practices of the Greco-Roman world that Paul urged sexual restraints (e.g., Rom 1:24–28; 1 Cor 6:9; 1 Thess 4:3–7).

2:25 The final verse is transitional, linking the foregoing narrative of creation and marriage to the subsequent narrative of human sin and the consequences of that disobedience ("naked," 3:7, 10–11). Verse 25 explains that nakedness was not always a shameful condition for the human family. The Hebrew verb translated "felt no shame" (NIV) may be taken as a customary use of the verb, indicating that it was their normal condition.[14782] The common rendering "felt no shame"[14793] may suggest to the modern reader that shame is primarily an emotional response to guilt; in the following narrative, however, it is their knowledge that led to their understanding of personal shame (3:7); thus they "were not ashamed" (NRS[80]V, NAS[81]B). True guilt is not manifest primarily in feeling but in knowledge.

Nakedness among the Hebrews was shameful because it was often associated with guilt.[14824] The parade example is the discovery of Noah's nakedness by his son, which meant family humiliation (9:22–23). Among the Levitical laws the idioms "nakedness" (e.g., Lev 18:6, 10; 20:17) and "make naked" (*he*ʿ*ĕrâ*) for sexual relations are used of sexual offenses (e.g., Lev 20:18–19). Particularly instructive is Exod 20:26, which prohibits men (i.e., priests) ascending the steps of God's altar, lest they expose their genitals before the Lord (cf. linen underpants, Exod 28:42–43). "*And* they felt no shame" fails to make explicit the adversative sense of "*but*

[77141] Noted by Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 71.

[78142] A. B. Davidson renders the nuance of the imperfect יִתְבֹּשָׁשׁוּ "they were not (at any time) ashamed" (*Introductory Hebrew Grammar: Hebrew Syntax*, 3d ed. [Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1901], #44b).

[79143] Cf. NIV, NJPS, NAB, NJB, REB.

[80]NRSV New Revised Standard Version

[81]NASB New American Standard Bible

[82144] Nakedness is related to "shame" (בֹּשֶׁת), particularly public ridicule (e.g., 1 Sam 20:30; Isa 20:4; Mic 1:11). It often occurs as a metaphor for judgment against sin (e.g., Isa 47:3; Ezek 16:7, 22, 37, 39; Lam 1:8). The figure of "shame" at Job 8:22 connects shame and clothing.

they felt no shame."[14835] It would have been remarkable to the Hebrews that the couple could be naked without embarrassment. It was in Greek culture, and not until the early first millennium B.C., that nudity among Greek males was viewed as heroic.[14846]

Also v. 25 as transitional anticipates the role of the serpent and associates the viper's trickery with the lost innocence of the first couple. The term "naked" (pl. *ʿărûmmîm*) is a play on the word "crafty" (*ʿārûm)*, which describes the nature of the serpent (3:1). As a result of the serpent's "shrewdness," our parents sinned and experienced the embarrassment of their "nakedness" in the presence of God (3:7). Ironically, the first achievement that their newfound wisdom acquired was the realization of their nudity. Luther observed what we suspect the ancient Hebrew audience would have pondered: "Therefore this passage points out admirably how much evil followed after the sin of Adam. For now it would be regarded as the utmost madness if anyone walked about naked."[1485786]

[83145] Many English versions have "but" or "yet" (REB, NJB, NAB, NJPS) for "and" (NIV, NASB, NRSV).

[84146] L. Bonfonte, "The Naked Greek: How Ancient Art and Literature Reflect the Custom of Civic Nudity," *Archaeology* 43 (1990): 28–35.

[85147] *LW* 1.140.

[86] K. A. Mathews, *Genesis 1-11:26*, vol. 1A, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996), 219–225.