

**Series: God & Man & Woman #781**

**Title: Genesis 2.23**

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world! If you were with us on Friday, and I certainly hope you were, then you may have been surprised that we covered one verse in one broadcast and podcast! Are you shocked? That was fast, wasn't it, as compared to our usual pace? Well, we have three more verses remaining in Genesis chapter 2 and our series God and Man and Woman and we'll spend more time on this one: verse 23. We are not in any rush, wanting to savor the significant content in this first Book of the Bible and only the second chapter as we discover who we are in light of who God is.

What I want to do today is to read Genesis 2.23 and then say something by way of an overview before we dip down into the details in the days ahead. If you have your copy of God's Word available to you as you listen, you can open it to Genesis 2 and pinpoint verse 22. Our focus will be verse 23, but let's set the context with verse 22. Hear now the Bible on this Monday, Genesis 2.22-23...

**"<sup>22</sup> The Lord God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man, and brought her to the man. <sup>23</sup> The man said, 'This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.'"**

As Adam's language here will reveal, he wakes up from his deep sleep and he is thrilled to learn that God has made a helper suitable for him. The first man now has the first woman. And Adam knew this gift of the woman had come to him from God. To me, the joy here at verse 23 is not because the woman came as a total shock to the man, rather **I believe God told Adam what He was going to do. Somehow God communicated Himself to Adam, either by direct Word or by God's Spirit.** Adam's response here at verse 23 is more like, at last or finally! At last, the helper you promised me; finally, here is my counterpart!

But do not let me get ahead of myself, because we will need to look harder at the Hebrew words to know what Adam means by what Adam says. And we will be doing that soon.

For now, consider with me how God spoke to Adam. We know, as I have said before, that God would visit the first man and the first woman in the garden in Eden by walking amongst them. That detail is over in Genesis 3, verse 8. I'll read it. Genesis 3.8, **"<sup>8</sup> They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden."** This verse demonstrates for us that God and man and woman knew intimate fellowship on the floor of the garden. This was not the first time holy God showed up. Therefore, in my opinion, back in Genesis 2 God also walked with, and spoke to the man.

In Genesis 2, verse 7 God made man. **"<sup>7</sup> Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being."** And then in Genesis 2, verse 8 the Bible says God placed the man into the garden in Eden. And then, following along in this chapter, at verse 16 the text says, **"<sup>16</sup> The Lord God commanded the man, saying, 'From any tree of the garden you may eat freely...'"** See! God spoke and the man heard what God said. They had some kind of shared language.

In my mind I picture God and man, together in the perfection of the garden, enjoying holy conversation with one another. The man worships and God receives that worship. At this point in Adam's life he is not a sinner, so there is no reason why he should be separated from holy God. This was a season of God and man alone together in the garden. The animals are there, but man communicates with God in a way animals do not. And God certainly communicates to man in a way God does not with the animals. It is true that our narrator, Moses, does not tell us *how* God spoke to Adam. But we do know that God told Moses that God created man and how and then woman and how. That is *how* we know! Moses took the Word of God and wrote it down, and God has preserved this for us! The Scripture we are reading today comes from God to Moses to us.

Furthermore, imagine that God comes to Adam one day and says, "Sit down here for a moment. Let's lean up against this tree. Adam, it really is not good for you to be alone. Watch. Look over there and as these animals parade on by I'd like you to name them. Go ahead and name each one. And whatever you call it, that will be its name. Ready?" Adam is eager, and at the command of God, the parade begins. A few hours pass and as this ends, imagine that God leaned into Adam and said, "You did well to name these. But, these animals are not exactly what you need. I know what you need. I am going to do something for you. I am going to provide a helper suitable for you."

Oh! At this Adam perked up! He is excited. And the Lord communicates how he will cause a deep sleep to fall upon Adam. Just a nice snooze. As Adam rests God will remove one of his ribs, and take it for a special purpose related to the provision of this helper. And when he awakes after the surgery the surprise gift of God will be waiting for him.

As theologian John Calvin says, "The deep sleep was not designed to hide from Adam the origin of his wife." "The deep sleep was not designed to hide from Adam the origin of his wife." Adam knew his helper was going to come from himself, that somehow his own rib would be used of God. The Lord is building great anticipation into Adam. "What will this being be," Adam must have wondered.

Remember – it is important we remember this – Adam completely, totally, one-hundred percent *trusts* the Lord. There is not one scintilla of doubt in the first man's mind about what God is going to do, because again Adam has not been tainted by sin. Our sin is what causes you and I to sometimes doubt God. But in the holy, perfect garden environment there is no need to doubt the Lord God, and there is absolutely no worry about this rib removal. Why would there be?

Think about it. God is God. He can do anything according to His will. It was not required of God that He take man's rib in order to create the woman. God could simply have thought "woman" and there she is. God could simply have said, "Let there be woman," and there was woman. So a logical question is: why did God use the man's rib to make the woman? I think the answer is this: again, God was communicating truth to Adam. God wants the man to know that he be closely, intimately connected to the woman. The rib and the flesh around it is going to bind the man and the woman together.

And this week we will see that it does. Adam and Eve are bound together for life. God binds them together. But so that we capture today's lesson, let me re-cap. I believe God told Adam what He was going to do. Somehow God communicated Himself to Adam, either by direct Word or by God's Spirit. I do not think the surgery itself (the rib removal) is a surprise to Adam. I *do* think he is blown away by who Eve is when he sees her post surgery. That's for sure. And that is why he reacts the way he does in verse 23, **"<sup>23</sup> This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."**

I cannot speak for you, of course, but I find myself jealous of the relationship between God and this man Adam. I think this is a proper jealousy, a kind of jealousy that is OK by God, because He knows it comes from a sincere desire of mine to be in communication with Him the same way He was with the first man. God and man in the garden: perfect relationship, perfect trust. "I am going to do this for you, Adam. You will sleep and I will act. And when you open your eyes, you will see my provision." And then Adam, perfectly trusts. "Yes, Lord, I shall sleep now and You do whatever it is You will do. I love You, God." And Adam awoke to Eve!

The reality is, because of *the greatest* of God's provisions for me and for so many of you, His Son our Lord Jesus Christ, we *do* have this kind of fellowship with this same, this One and Only God. Our sin separated us from God. But Christ came to forgive us our sins, to wash us and to cleanse and to forgive us such that we are now new men and new women. And we too enjoy the clear communication from God as to what He will do for us in our lives. And we, like Adam, can trust Him. Because of Christ, we can completely, totally, one-hundred percent *trust* the Lord. Christians do not have to have one scintilla of doubt in our minds about what God is going to do for us. We just need to trust Him *and* trust His timing.

Jesus is *the way* to enjoy the kind of relationship Adam and soon Eve had with God. Do you trust in Jesus Christ? I hope so. I pray so. If not, and you would like to, contact me. And then join me again tomorrow for God Is!  
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