

The creation accounts in Genesis 1 and 2 provide an understanding of how God lives in relationship with God’s creation. Within the poetic structure of chapter one, each day’s work ends with the words “God saw that it was good.” It is not until the 18th verse of chapter two that God finds something that is described as “not good.”

Genesis 2 begins with God gathering up dust, forming it into the shape of a man and breathing life into Adam. In verse 21, God creates Eve from one of Adam’s ribs. What does this teach us about our deep connection with one another?

Verse 18 declares that loneliness, which often leads to feelings of helplessness and hopelessness, is not God’s plan. God’s purpose is for us to live in healthy and thriving relationships. How does this idea influence your understanding of God’s purpose for your family?

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God gives to humanity a tremendous gift in Genesis 1:28 when God says, “Be fruitful and increase in number. Fill the earth and subdue it.” Humanity is given the opportunity to participate in the continual creation of the world. As Adam was formed from the dust and Eve from the rib of her husband, their children are to be born from Eve’s womb. In chapter four, the first miracle of life occurs.

Within this first family we see the first signs of an “imperfect” family. What is the cause of the rift? How does God respond?

Sin is always the root cause of broken relationships. God is direct with Cain’s sin when he says, “It desires to have you, but you must master it.” How can the “mastering” of sin help preserve the very relationships which are designed for our benefit?

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Genesis 12 is a turning point in the opening book of the Bible as God makes a covenant with a man named Abram. In that exchange, God says, “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you . . . and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.” Abram, who is later renamed Abraham, and his wife Sarah eventually give birth to their son Isaac who will carry that promise to the next generation. Genesis 25 records the birth of Abraham’s twin grandsons, Esau and Jacob.

Conflict among siblings is a recurring theme in Genesis. This will continue in the lives of Esau and Jacob. How does the story of their birth foreshadow dissension between these two boys?

Today’s text reminds us that parents have a tremendous influence on their children’s emotional and spiritual health. How would you describe how your family has influenced you?

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Moses serves as one of the most significant characters of the Old Testament. After leading the Israelites out of slavery and through 40 years of wandering in the “wilderness,” Moses takes them to the edge of the Promised Land where he shares his final instructions before his death. The NIV Study Bible describes the theme of Deuteronomy as “a series of short farewell messages in which Moses exhorts the new generation of Israelites to live as his obedient people in the promised land.”

The first few verses of today’s text contain one of the central beliefs that is affirmed by Jesus in the Gospels when he is asked to name the “greatest commandment.” How does Moses instruct the Israelites to share this belief with future generations?

How does this challenge and/or help shape your understanding of God’s purpose for your family?

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