

The Conflicting Biblical Creation Accounts

by Jim Schicatanano

The first story of the Holy Bible tells us about God's creation of all things in seven days. From Genesis 1:1 to 2:4, God's steps in creation are revealed to the reader.

A universe was created from what was once nothing. The Earth was transformed from a fiery ball of molten materials into a planet capable of sustaining life. Life arose from lifelessness. Simple organisms appeared at first but over time organisms became more complex. The foundation of the food chain was created first; the pinnacle of the food chain was created last. Light illuminated the Earth before plants took root. Plants appeared before animals. Life in the sea flourished long before there was life on the land. The higher mammals were among the last creatures created, followed only by human beings, which were God's final creation. There is increasing order and complexity with each passing day. Intelligence, design, and purpose are all evident and increasing with each verse. By the Seventh Day the Lord desisted from all work and rested.

After the Creation Story ends at Genesis 2:4, the Bible begins another story that strangely appears to be a different account of creation. In the second story of the Bible, God formed a man from the ground at a time that seemed to precede any plants or animals. God gave life to the man by breathing the "breath of life" into his nostrils. He then created a garden, called Eden, where He placed the man. The animals were created so that the man could find a suitable helper. Animals were brought before the man, and he determined an appropriate name for each of them; but no suitable helper was found among the animals. God placed the man in a deep sleep and removed something (not necessarily a rib) from the man's side. From this extracted part of the man, God formed a woman, and the man finally found a suitable mate.

Much has been made about the Bible containing separate, conflicting creation stories. However, many Theologians do not consider the story in Genesis 2 to be a true creation story. In this account, the Earth, the sun, and the rest of the universe already existed before the story began.

The story of Adam and Eve focuses on man's creation, not the creation of the heavens and the Earth. In the Creation Story, highlights of each of the seven days of Creation are revealed. In the second story of the Bible – the story of Adam and Eve – the Bible returns to the Sixth Creation Day and reveals more details about the creation of

mankind. In the Creation Story, both the first man and the first woman were created on the Sixth Day. In the story of Adam and Eve, Adam was formed first and Eve was created later. Since we were already told in the Creation Story that they were both created on the same day, we can logically conclude that it is the details of the Sixth Day that are being revealed. Consequently, all of the events occurring up to and including Eve's creation must have transpired on the Sixth Creation Day.

There is no conflict, then, about these two creation stories. The first story is an outline of the creation of all things, while the second story focuses on the details of the creation of mankind.