

## **Humanity Not Pronounced Good: A Re-Reading of Genesis 1:26–31 in Dialogue with Genesis 2–3**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The creation of humanity on day six of creation is the climax of creation (Gen 1:26–30); however, there is an anomaly at this climactic moment of creation, which interpreters tend to overlook: humanity is not singled out as "good." The anomaly is accentuated by the fact that the final evaluative formula, "and God saw everything that he made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:31), which is generally regarded as encompassing creation activities from the first day to the sixth day. This necessitates the question: why is humanity not singled out as "good," as with most of the creation activities? This article suggests that the answer to this question rests in the dialogic relationship between the two creation narratives, Gen 1:1–2:4a and Gen 2:4b–3:24. The second creation narrative, Gen 2:4b–3:24, is for the most part a resumption of day six of creation. Contrary to the commonly held view that Gen 3 describes events subsequent to the creation process, or that it is thematically and materially different, this essay suggests that Gen 3 be viewed as thematically and materially related to Gen 1:26–31, and thereby provides a key as to why humanity is not singled out as "good."*

### **A INTRODUCTION**

The creation of humanity on day six of creation, as is often noted, is the climax of creation (Gen 1:26–30).<sup>1</sup> However, there is an odd anomaly at this climactic moment of creation, which interpreters tend to overlook: humanity is not singled out as "good." The anomaly is accentuated by the fact that the final evaluative formula, "and God saw everything that he made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen 1:31), is generally regarded as encompassing all creation activities from the first day to the sixth day. This necessitates the question: why is humanity not singled out as "good" as with most of the creation activities? This essay suggests that the answer to this question rests in the dialogic relationship between the two creation narratives, Gen 1:1–2:4a and Gen 2:4b–3:24. This is particularly so if Gen 3 is viewed as part of the creation process, thereby taking Gen 2:4b–3:24 *in toto* as a creation narrative, and not just Gen 2:4b–25.

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<sup>1</sup> Kenneth A. Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26* (vol. 1A; NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 160; David Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction: A Reappraisal of the Chaoskampf Theory in the Old Testament* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2005), 34; Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis* (IBC; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 31; Nahum Sarna, *Genesis* (JPSTC; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1989), 11.

In reading the two creation narratives, I adopt a dialogic approach in which Gen 1–3 is viewed as a polyphonic text. In Bakhtinian terms, a polyphonic text is characterised by dialogism, that is, the intertextual dimension of the text in which "all discourse is in dialogue with prior discourse, as well as with discourse yet to come, whose reaction it foresees and anticipates."<sup>2</sup> A polyphonic text, as Newsom notes, is "an intentional artistic presentation of the dialogic nature of an idea."<sup>3</sup> The author of a polyphonic text is viewed as a creative designer of his/her artistic work, which is "dialogic through and through."<sup>4</sup> In this approach it is not necessary to make a heuristic assumption of a plurality of sources, as in the historical critical approach; rather, Gen 1–3 will be treated as a work by a creative author who artistically designed his work. Thus, this study is concerned with the text in its final form. The two creation narratives are viewed as standing in a dialogic relationship in which they mutually enrich each other and there is a widening of meaning. This implies that the first creation narrative is dialogically expanded by the second creation narrative and vice versa, and thus each of these two creation narratives, Gen 1:1–2:4a and Gen 2:4b–3:24, is a perspective on the other.

## B AN ANOMALY ON THE SIXTH DAY OF CREATION

The anomaly in Gen 1:1–2:4a is perhaps not easily noticeable, considering the history of interpretation of this text, which tends to view the final climactic evaluation as implying that creation as it came from the hands of God was "perfect," implying that it was sinless or without distortions or imperfections. Narratively the text seems to pose no problems, as the evaluative formula appears in almost all the creation days, with the exception of day two, and thereby accentuates the positivity of the narrative. The most notable anomaly is the absence of the evaluation formula with regard to the creation of the heaven (firmament) cycle on the second day of creation. However, a similar anomaly is found on the sixth day of creation, in the creation of humanity cycle.

In the Masoretic Text (MT) there are seven evaluative formulas in total; however, in the Septuagint (LXX) we have eight evaluative formulas in total,

<sup>2</sup> See Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogic Principle* (trans. Wlad Godzich; THL 13; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), x.

<sup>3</sup> Carol A. Newsom, "Bakhtin, the Bible, and Dialogic Truth," *JR* 76 (1996): 297.

<sup>4</sup> Mikhail M. Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics* (ed. and trans. by Carly Emerson; Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 40. For Bakhtin some of the biblical books, especially the book of Job, are among the predecessors of Dostoevsky's polyphonic work. Bakhtin writes, "The influence on Dostoevsky of Job's dialogue and several evangelical dialogues is indisputable, while Platonic dialogues simply lay outside the sphere of his interest. In its structure Job's dialogue is internally endless, for the opposition of the soul to God—whether the opposition be hostile or humble—is conceived in it as something irrevocable and eternal" (Bakhtin, *Problems*, 280).

as there is an evaluative formula on the creation of heaven cycle (second day) in the LXX where there is none in the MT. The LXX supplies the evaluative formula for mechanical uniformity, unless the LXX were following a variant text.<sup>5</sup> Surprising, however, is that the LXX translators do not harmonise the anomaly on the sixth day of creation, which the translator(s) perhaps did not take note of or intentionally did not harmonise.

### Evaluation Formula in Gen 1:1–31

<b>Day One: single evaluation formula:</b> Light evaluated as good (v. 4).	<b>Day Four: single evaluation formula:</b> Heavenly lights evaluated as good (v. 18)
<i>Day Two: no evaluation formula.</i>	<b>Day Five: single evaluation formula</b> Sea creatures and flying creatures evaluated as good and blessed (v. 21 and v. 22)
<b>Day Three: double evaluation formula:</b> Land and seas evaluated as good (v. 10). Land's production of vegetation evaluated as good (v. 12).	<b>Day Six: double evaluation formula:</b> Land creatures evaluated as good (v. 25). <i>Humankind – not singled out as good.</i> Overall creation evaluated as very good (v. 31)

The anomaly in the sixth day is not easily noticeable. The sixth day of creation appears to be consistent with the third day of creation as they both have a double evaluative formula:

#### Genesis 1:9–13

God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered into one place, and let the dry ground appear".... And it was so .... *And God saw that it was good.*

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so... *And God saw that it was good.* And there was evening, and there was morning, the third day.

#### Genesis 1:24–31

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds" .... And it was so .... *And God saw that it was good.*

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground" .... God blessed them and said to them ... Then God said .... And it was so. *God saw all that he had made, and it*

<sup>5</sup> According to Cook, "the harmonization of discrepancies and the explanation of ambiguous passages formed an integral part of the approach of the translator of Genesis." See Johann Cook, "The Translator of the Greek Genesis," in *La Septuaginta en la investigacion contemporanea: V. Congreso de la IOSCS* (TECC 34; Madrid, 1984), 169–82, esp. 182. For a similar conclusion, see John W. Wevers, "An Apologia for LXX Studies," *BIOSCS* 18 (1985): 37; Martin Rösel, *Übersetzung als Vollendung der Auslegung: Studien zur Genesis-Septuaginta* (BZAW 223; Berlin, 1993), 248–50.

*was very good.* And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

In both days there are two creation cycles and two evaluative formulas; however, the two are not entirely consistent in their structures. In the creation of dry land and sea cycle (vv. 9–10) and the creation of vegetation cycle (vv. 11–12) of the third day, and the creation of land creatures cycle (vv. 24–25), the *וַיְהִי־כֵן* formula ("and it was so") functions as a link between divine announcement and the fulfilment.<sup>6</sup> The structure of the creation of humanity cycle (vv. 26–30) is unique. The *וַיְהִי־כֵן* formula in the creation of humanity cycle, unlike in all other creation cycles, is positioned at the end of the cycle with no fulfilment following.

I am convinced that if the author wanted to single out humanity as "good" or "very good" as a climax, he/she would have followed either of the following options:

*Option 1:* Following the creation of light cycle structure in Gen 1:3–5, the creation of humanity cycle structure would be rendered as follows; also note in particular the position and wording of the evaluation formula:

<b>Divine Announcements:</b>	Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."
<b>Fulfilment:</b>	God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
<b>Evaluation Formula:</b>	<i>And God saw humanity was good.</i>
<b>Blessing:</b>	And God blessed them, 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 the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."

<sup>6</sup> The *וַיְהִי־כֵן* formula, according to Steck, is used to express "Feststellung folgerichtiger Entsprechung" ("the assertion of a consistent equivalent"), meaning that this formula functions as link between the divine order and the report of fulfilment. See Odil Hannes Steck, *Der Schöpfungsbericht der Priesterschrift: Studien literakritischen und überlieferungsgeschichtlichen Problematik von Genesis 1,1–4a* [FRLANT 115; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1975), 36. See also Erich Zenger, *Gottes Bogen in den Wolken: Untersuchungen zu Komposition und Theologie der priesterschriftlichen Urgeschichte* (SBS 112; Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1983), 52–53; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15* (WBC; Waco: Word Books Publisher, 1987), 7–8; Christoph Levin, "Tatbericht und Wortbericht in der priesterschriftlichen Schöpfungserzählung," *ZTK* 91 (1994), 115–33; Othmar Keel and Silvia Schroer, *Schöpfung: Biblische Theologien im Kontext altorientalischer Religiosität* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 2002), 176.

<b>Food Provision:</b>	And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food."
<b>End of day announcement:</b>	And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

In this structure, just as the light is singled out as good in the creation of light cycle, humanity would be singled out as good.

*Option 2:* Following the common structure of divine announcement, **וַיֹּאמֶר** formula, fulfilment, evaluation formula, and end of day announcement (vv. 9–10, 11–12, 14–19, 24–25), the creation of humanity cycle would be rendered as follows:

<b>Divine Announcements:</b>	Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."
<b>וַיֹּאמֶר formula</b>	<i>And it was so.</i>
<b>Fulfilment:</b>	God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
<b>Evaluation Formula:</b>	<i>And God saw that it was good.</i>
<b>Blessing:</b>	And God blessed them, 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 the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."
<b>Food Provision:</b>	And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food."
<b>End of day announcement:</b>	And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

This positioning of the **וַיֹּאמֶר** formula is different from its positioning at the end of Gen 1:30 with no fulfilment following in the creation of humanity cycle. In this structuring, the **וַיֹּאמֶר** formula functions as a linking device, whereas in Gen 1:30 it functions as a concluding formula.

This is the structuring employed in the LXX with regard to the creation of heaven cycle of the second day to establish uniformity with other creation cycles. See below the different structures of the MT and LXX:

Structure of MT:	Second Day Following MT		Structure of LXX	Second Day Following LXX
Divine Announcement	And God said, "Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters."		Divine Announcement	And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the water, and let it be a division between water and water,
Fulfilment	And God made the firmament and separated the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament.		וַיְהִי־כְּנֻסֶּה for-mula	<i>and it was so.</i>
וַיְהִי־כְּנֻסֶּה for-mula:	<i>And it was so.</i>		Fulfilment	And God made the firmament, and God divided between the water which was under the firmament and the water which was above the firmament. And God called the firmament Heaven,
Naming	And God called the firmament Heaven.		Evaluation formula:	<i>and God saw that it was good,</i>
End of Day Announcement:	And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. (Gen 1:6-8 RSV)		End of Day Announcement:	and there was evening and there was morning, the second day. (Gen 1:6-8 LXE)

*Option 3:* Following the structure of the creation of sea and flying creatures cycle (vv. 20-23), which has the blessing aspect, the structure of the creation of humanity cycle would be as follows:

Creation announcement:	Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."
Fulfilment:	God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
Evaluation Formula:	<i>And God saw that it was good.</i>
Blessing:	God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have domin-

	ion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth."
<b>Food Provision:</b>	And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food."
<b>End of day announcement:</b>	And there was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

The positioning of the evaluation formula prior to the blessing would have established congruence between the creation of sea and flying creatures cycle and the human creation cycle.

If any of the options above was followed in the human creation cycle, it would be logical to conclude that humanity is singled out as "good," but none of the options above is followed. The final evaluative formula in Gen 1:31 does not single out humanity as good, also taking into consideration the following:

First, in the human creation cycle, the food provision aspect is not solely focused on humanity; it also includes land creatures. The food provision aspect is marked off by the use of the first person singular, "I have given" (נָתַתִּי) in v. 29, which only occurs in this instance in the first creation narrative. The intertwining of humanity's food provision and other land creatures' food provision distances the final evaluative formula from referring specifically to humanity.

Secondly, in the human creation cycle, the וַיַּהֲי֣ן formula does not function as a link between the divine announcement and the fulfilment; rather, in its position at the end of v. 30, it functions as a concluding formula of the whole creation process. No creation activity follows after it; the creation process is complete. This implies that the "all" (כָל) in the evaluative formula in v. 31 has to be viewed as not referring specifically to the creation of humanity, but rather as referring to the whole creation process.

For the author of Gen 1, the creation of humankind should be viewed as included in the final evaluative formula. This implies that humankind is good only in so far as humankind is part of the overall "very good" creation. The question, however, remains: Why is humanity not singled out as good?

## C WHY IS HUMANITY NOT SINGLED OUT AS GOOD?

The anomaly with regard to the creation of humanity does not have to be viewed as an accidental omission, but may rather be seen as an intentional

silence or gap in the text. This gap in the text, to use Sternberg's words, "becomes proportionate to the havoc it plays with (or the other way round, the contribution its filling would make to) the intelligibility of the plot."<sup>7</sup> In dialogic terms, the gap in the text is part of the author's intention to make his/her work rich in potentials.<sup>8</sup> The absence of the evaluation formula serves as an intentional literary technique by the author to create openness in the text. In so doing, the author generates suspense and anticipation in the story.<sup>9</sup>

The absence of the evaluative formula in the human creation cycle (Gen 1:26-30) functions as an initiating means in anticipation of a response that has the potential of enriching the initial event in unexpected ways. The first creation narrative, inasmuch as it is a self-contained narrative, is also an open text in that it forms part of a larger narrative. The Gen 1:1-2:4a creation narrative does not independently tap into the suspense it generates; rather, it anticipates another voice, which comes in the form of another creation narrative, Gen 2:4b-3:24. Unlike in the historical critical view in which the two creation narratives are attributed to different sources, with Gen 1:1-2:4a attributed to the Priestly (P) author and Gen 2:4b-3:24 to the Yahwist (J) or the non-Priestly (non-P) author, the second creation narrative is in the proposed view not from a different source. Considering the book Genesis in its final form, both creation narratives are here viewed as fitting within the bounds of the author of Genesis, who set the two narratives in a dialogic relationship in which they mutually enrich each other.

In the traditional reading of Gen 1-3, Gen 1:1-2:4a's creation narrative is a story of an originally "very good" creation as it came from the hands of God prior to the distortions of Gen 3. In this reading, Gen 1:1-2:4a corresponds with Gen 2:4a-25.<sup>10</sup> Gen 2:25 in this reading is regarded as the "climax of creation" with humanity in a state of harmony and innocence.<sup>11</sup> The dogmatic reading of the biblical storyline as creation-fall-redemption-consummation puts the fall as an event that is subsequent to God's "very good" creation. This storyline, as Spykman argues, methodologically implies "adopting a canonical order

<sup>7</sup> Meir Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading* (ISBL; Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 247.

<sup>8</sup> Gary Saul Morson and Caryl Emerson, *Mikhail Bakhtin: Creation of Prosaics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 286.

<sup>9</sup> Sternberg defines "suspense" as a "temporal displacement by way of foreshadowing." See Sternberg, *Poetics of Biblical Narrative*, 259.

<sup>10</sup> See H. Paul Santmire, "The Genesis Creation Narratives Revisited: Themes for a Global Age," *Int* 45 (1991): 366-79.

<sup>11</sup> Zdravko Stefanovic, "The Great Reversal: Thematic Links Between Genesis 2 and 3," *AUSS* 32/1-2 (1994): 56; Victor P. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 1-17* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 181.

of Scripture, beginning with the Genesis narrative, which itself begins with creation."<sup>12</sup>

In the classical historical critical approach, as already noted, the two creation narratives do not fit within the bounds of a single author. In this view, Gen 1:1–2:4a (P) is commonly regarded as younger than Gen 2:4b–3:24 (J or non-P). In the current situation, it is either the P creation narrative that was written as a response to the non-P creation narrative,<sup>13</sup> or conversely the non-P creation narrative that was written as a response to the P creation narrative.<sup>14</sup> Gen 2:4b–3:24, on the other hand, have been viewed since the time of Karl Budde as a combination of two independent traditions, the creation tradition and the paradise tradition.<sup>15</sup> In this reading of Gen 2:4b–3:24, the creation tradition is considered to be contained within Gen 2:4b–25, whereas the paradise tradition is generally regarded to be extending from Gen 2 to Gen 3.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Gordon J. Spykman, *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 144.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Humbert, *Études sur le récit du paradis et de la chute dans la Genèse* (MUNeu 14; Neuchâtel: Secretariat de l'Université, 1940), 198–203; Sigmund Mowinckel, *Erwägungen zur Pentateuch Quellenfrage* (Olso: Universitaetsforlaget, 1964), 27–28; Marc Vervenne, "Genesis 1,1–2,4: The Compositional Texture of the Priestly Overture to the Pentateuch," in *Studies in the Book of Genesis: Literature, Redaction and History* (BETL 155; ed. André Wénin; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2001), 34–79.

<sup>14</sup> Eckart Otto, "Die Paradieserzählung Genesis 2–3: Eine nachpriesterschrifliche Lehrerzählung in ihrem religionshistorischen Kontext," in *Jedes Ding hat seine Zeit...": Studien zur israelitischen und altorientalischen Weisheit: Diethelm Michel Zum 65. Geburtstag* (ed. Anja A. Diesel *et al.*; BZAW 241; Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1996), 167–92; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch: An Introduction to the First Five Books of the Bible* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 54–67.

<sup>15</sup> For Karl Budde Gen 2:4b–3:24 contains a number of doublets: creation in absolute dryness in 2:5 as compared with the rivers in 2:10–14, the presence of two trees—the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and bad [2:9; 2:16; 3:3; 3:24], the placing of humanity in the garden twice [2:8, and 2:15], the double expulsion from paradise [3:23–24], within this narrative which led him to conclude that there are two accounts in this text: a creation account and a paradise account. See Karl Budde, *Die biblische Urgeschichte: Gen. 1–12:5: Anhang: Die älteste Gestalt der biblischen Urgeschichte, versuchsweise wiederhergestellt, hebräischer Text und Uebersetzung* (Giessen: Ricker'sche, 1883). Humbert, although rejecting the idea of there being two sources behind Gen 2–3, viewed this text as a combination of two independent themes. See Paul Humbert, "Mythe de création et mythe paradisiaque dans le second chapitre de la Génèse," *RHPR* 16 (1936): 445–461.

<sup>16</sup> Gunkel writes, "The two bodies of material originally had nothing to do with each other as a prelude or continuation. The two accounts were joined with each other because they both deal with the primeval period. A thorough division of sources and establishment is no longer possible, although a general separation of the bodies of material is. The paradise account surely included vv. 9, 15–17, 25; the creation

According to von Rad, Gen 2:24 forms a conclusion of a "formerly independent and compact cluster of material" and Gen 3 "begins something new, not only thematically, but also materially."<sup>17</sup> For Westermann, Gen 2:4b–24, with the exception of vv. 9–17, "is a self-contained narrative with a narrative structure that corresponds to the course of the event."<sup>18</sup> For Westermann, the story of the creation of humanity found in Gen 2 was fused with the story of alienation from God which is found in Gen 3, to form "the primeval narrative of crime and punishment."<sup>19</sup> Carr regards the man's celebration of the woman in Gen 2:23 to be corresponding with the final divine pronouncement that all was very good in Gen 1:31.<sup>20</sup> For Carr, Gen 3 is a redactional extension of the early creation narrative in Gen 2.<sup>21</sup> Thus, from a historical critical perspective, the creation tradition in the J or non-P creation account is generally considered to be corresponding to Gen 1:1–2:4a as a story of an originally "very good" creation.

The problem with both the traditional reading and the historical critical readings is that both fail to recognise Gen 2:4b–3:24 *in toto* as a creation narrative. The separation of Gen 2:4b–3:24 into the creation account in Gen 2:4b–25 and the fall account in Gen 3:1–24 misses the anticipatory character of the first creation narrative. The havoc that is wreaked by the absence of the evaluation formula with regard to the creation of humankind finds its solution when the two narratives are read as standing in a dialogic relationship in which they mutually enrich each other. Gen 2:4b–3:24 as a whole, as will be evidenced below, should be viewed as a creation story and not simply Gen 2:4b–25. The second creation narrative, Gen 2:4b–3:24, is for the most part a resumption of

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account ... vv 7, 18–24." See Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis* (trans. Mark E. Biddle; MLBS; Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1997), 27.

<sup>17</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (OTL; London: SCM Press, 1972), 85.

<sup>18</sup> Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11* (trans. John J. Scullion; CC; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 191.

<sup>19</sup> Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 193. For Westermann, the genius of J lies in his "technique and intention" in combining the two narratives together. For J the creation account now serves as an exposition of the paradise account and in so doing J "presents the primeval event of crime and punishment as one which involved humankind in community" (Westermann, *Genesis*, 194). In its final form, Gen 2:4b–3:24, for Westermann is not two narratives side by side, but the two are "woven together by anchoring the beginning of ... Gen 3 in the beginning of the course of events in ... Gen 2; and this giving rise to a new unified narrative" (Westermann, *Genesis*, 194).

<sup>20</sup> David M. Carr, *Reading the Fractures of Genesis: Historical and Literary Approaches* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 63.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted that for Carr Gen 3 never existed independently; rather, it was written as an extension of the creation narrative in Gen 2. See David M. Carr, "Politics of Textual Subversion: A Diachronic Perspective on the Garden of Eden Story," *JBL* 112/4 (1993): 577–95.

the sixth day of creation. As Carr also notes, considering the final form of the text, "the creation and punishment story in Gen 2:4b–3:24 serves well as an elaboration and specification of Gen 1:1–2:3."<sup>22</sup> However, in contrast to Carr, Gen 2:4b–3:24 is not a story of "creation and punishment" as two separate events. Gen 3 forms part of the creation process and is therefore also a resumption of the sixth day of creation, especially picking up on the lack of the pronouncement of humanity as "good."

## 1 Congruence Between Genesis 1:24–31 and Genesis 2:7–3:24

There are many linguistic, literary, structural, and thematic correspondences between the first creation narrative, Gen 1:1–2:4a, and the second creation narrative, Gen 2:4b–3:24, and I do not try here to give an exhaustive overview of these, but will simply draw attention to some of the links between the sixth day of creation, Gen 1:24–31, and the second creation narrative, particularly focusing on Gen 2:7–3:24.<sup>23</sup> Ouro in his study on "Linguistic and Thematic Parallels Between Genesis 1 and 3" points to a number of antithetical parallelisms and synonymous parallelisms between the two chapters, on the basis of which he suggests the linguistic and literary dependence of Gen 3 on Gen 1.<sup>24</sup> Interest here is not to determine the direction of dependence between the first creation narrative and the second creation narrative; rather, the focus here is on how the two narratives mutually enrich each other, considering their linguistic, literary, structural, and thematic correspondences.

The structure of Gen 2:7–3:24 basically follows the same structure we find in Gen 1:24–30, despite the variations. See the suggested structure below:

<sup>22</sup> Carr, *Reading the Fractures*, 63, 68.

<sup>23</sup> Many today regard Gen 2:4b–3:24 as a unified story structurally and thematically, see John L. McKenzie, "The Literary Characteristic of Genesis 2–3," *TS* 15/4 (1954): 541–72; Jerome T. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *JBL* 96 (1972): 113–29; Bruce D. Naidoff, "A Man to Work the Soil: A New Interpretation of Genesis 2–3," *JSOT* 5 (1978): 2–14; Terje Stordalen, "Man, Soil, Garden: Basic Plot in Genesis 2–3 Reconsidered," *JSOT* 53 (1992): 3–26; Thomas E. Boomershine, "The Structure of Narrative Rhetoric in Genesis 2–3," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 113–29; Robert C. Culley, "Action Sequence in Genesis 2–3," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 25–34; Alan J. Hauser, "Genesis 2–3: The Theme of Intimacy and Alienation," in *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature* (ed. David J. A. Clines, David M. Gunn and Alan J. Hauser; JSOTSup 19; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982), 20–36; David Jobling, "Myth and Its Limits in Genesis 2:4b–3:24," in *Structural Studies in the Hebrew Bible* (vol. 2 of *The Sense of Biblical Narrative*; ed. David Jobling; JSOTSup 39; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1986), 17–40; David Jobling, "A Structural Analysis of Genesis 2:4b–3:24," *SBLSP* 1 (1978): 61–69; David Jobling, "The Myth Semantics of Genesis 2:4b–3:24," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 41–59; Roberto Ouro, "The Garden of Eden Account: The Chiastic Structure of Genesis 2–3," *AUSS* 4/2 (2002): 219–43.

<sup>24</sup> Robert Ouro, "Linguistic and Thematic Parallels Between Genesis 1 and 3," *JATS* 13/1 (2002): 44–54.

Gen 1:24–30	Gen 2:7–3:24
<b>A</b> Creation of land animals (vv. 24–25)	Creation of animals (2:19–20)
<b>B</b> Creation of humanity (מְדֹנָה) in the image of God (vv. 26–27) B <sub>1</sub> Creation of "the man" (מְדֹנָה) B <sub>2</sub> Creation of the "male and female"	Creation of "the man" (מְדֹנָה) (2:7) Creation of the man and the woman (2:21–25) Becoming like God (3:5, 22)
<b>C</b> Creation mandate (v. 28) C <sub>1</sub> Multiplication of humanity C <sub>2</sub> Dominion and subduing of creation	Childbearing (3:16, 20) To work the ground (3:23–24)
<b>D</b> Food provision: plants and trees (vv. 29–30)	Trees and plants (2:9, 3:17–19, 22)

The following observations may be made regarding the structure of Gen 1:24–30 and Gen 2:7–30:

First, the second creation narrative elaborates on the animal creation and human creation, which in the first creation narrative are creation activities of the same day. The creation of land animals precedes the creation of humanity (מְדֹנָה), in both Gen 1:24–30 and Gen 2:7–3:24. In Gen 2:7–3:24, the creation of humanity, in as much as it appears to precede the creation of animals, is also preceded by the creation of animals. The human creation process is incomplete for as long as the human being (מְדֹנָה) is alone; therefore, in this sense, the creation of animals precedes the creation of humanity. In the first creation narrative, the sequential presentation of the land animals creation cycle and human creation cycle in Gen 1:24–30 is betrayed in vv. 29–30, wherein humanity's food provision and the animals' food provision are taken together, thereby intersecting the two cycles. This suggests that even in the first creation narrative, readers cannot adhere to a strict sequential reading, taking into consideration that the land animal creation cycle overlaps with the human creation cycle. Accordingly, both creation narratives suggest that the two creation cycles intersect with each other at various points.

Others, however, suggest that the use of *wayyîtser* in Gen 2:19a is best viewed as an example of temporal recapitulation.<sup>25</sup> In this view, the *wayyîtser*

<sup>25</sup> Joseph A. Pipa, Jr., "From Chaos to Cosmos: A Critique of the Non-Literal Interpretations of Genesis 1:1–2:3," in *Did God Create in 6 Days?* (ed. Joseph Pipa Jr. and David Hall; Taylors: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1999), 153–98; C. John Collins, "The Wayyiqtol as 'Pluperfect': When and Why," *TynBul* 46.1 (1995): 117–40; C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: Linguistic, Literary and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2006), 19–20; Robert V. McCabe, "A Critique of the Framework Interpretation of the Creation Week," in *Coming to Grips with Genesis: Biblical Authority and the Age of the Earth* (ed. Terry Mortenson and Thane H. Ury; Green Forest: Masters Books, 2008), 233–40.

in Gen 2:19a is to be translated as a pluperfect, "had formed," pointing to an event prior to the immediate narrative sequence.<sup>26</sup> In line with this view, the NIV renders Gen 2:19 as follows: "Now the Lord God *had formed* out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name."<sup>27</sup> In this reading, the creation of animals is regarded as preceding the creation of the human being; it is, however, the bringing and the naming of the animals which are subsequent to the creation of the human being. The unsuccessful attempt to find a "helper" for the human being from the animal kingdom is coupled with the bringing and the naming of the animals. According to McCabe, "the temporal recapitulation in verse 19 transcends the immediate pericope of 2:4–25 and looks back to the previous pericope in 1:1–2:3."<sup>28</sup> I find it unnecessary to try to harmonise Gen 2:19 with the sequential presentation in Gen 1:24–30, because this text betrays a strict sequential reading in vv. 29–30. The land animal cycle and the human cycle, as both narratives suggest, overlap with each other. In the second creation narrative, the land animal cycle functions as a bridge between the creation of the human being (מְדֹבֶר) and the creation of humanity as two, man and woman.

Secondly, the creation of humanity (מְדֹבֶר) is a two-step process in both creation narratives. It should also be noted that in both Gen 1:26 and in Gen 2:5d, the term מְדֹבֶר without a definite article is used to refer to humanity in general, whereas the term מְדֹבֶר is used particularly for the first human being created. The human being (מְדֹבֶר) is created first before they are two, "male and female" (זְכָר וָנָקָה) in the language of Gen 1:27, or "man" and "woman" (הָנָשָׁא and הָנָשָׁא) in the language of Gen 2:23. What in Gen 1:27 is stated in just a few words is elaborated on and specified in Gen 2:7–25. In the first creation narrative, the human creation process is not concluded in v. 27; rather, the process continues until v. 30. Similarly in the second creation narrative, the creation process continues into Gen 3. If the creation process indeed comes to an end in Gen 2:25, then the creation process draws to a close with humanity yet to have the creation mandate and yet to be like God, both of which aspects form part of the creation process in the first creation narrative.

Thirdly, the Gen 1:28 twofold creation mandate or blessing—the multiplication of humanity and humanity's lordship over creation—is resumed in Gen 3 in the wake of humanity's transgression. The aspect of human procrea-

<sup>26</sup> Pipa, "Chaos to Cosmos," 156.

<sup>27</sup> Emphasis added.

<sup>28</sup> McCabe, "Critique of the Framework," 238. Cassuto and Hamilton regard the animals created in Gen 2:19 as a creation of a special group of animals that were created in order to be presented to the human being. See Umberto Cassuto, *From Adam to Noah* (vol. 1 of *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*; Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 1961), 129; Hamilton, *Chapters 1-17*, 176.

tion is taken up in Gen 3 on two levels. First, within the judgment scene in vv. 14–19, where God's words to the woman in v. 16 are an indication of human fertility—the woman "shall bear children." Verse 16 also functions as aetiology to explain the painful experience which women go through in childbearing. Accordingly, in the multiplication of pain will be the multiplication of humanity.<sup>29</sup> Secondly, the man makes a positive affirmation regarding human procreation in the naming of his wife, Eve, "because she was the mother of all living" (Gen 3:20).<sup>30</sup> The aetiological note in Gen 2:24, as Bauks notes, anticipated the procreation mandate in Gen 3:16 and 20 on the basis of the parent-child motif.<sup>31</sup> The woman is the man's "helper" (עָזֵב), not just as a partner, but even more so as the one through whom human life continues.<sup>32</sup> The parallel between Gen 1:28 and Gen 3:16, 20 is not one of reversal or contradiction; rather, the former is enriched by the latter. The two, male and female or the man and the woman, will multiply and fill the earth even in the face of death.

As Fretheim notes, the role of humanity in Gen 1:26–28 is essentially the same as that stated in Gen 2:5.<sup>33</sup> The aspect of humanity subduing the earth in Gen 1:28 parallels the human mandate in Gen 2:15 and even more so in Gen 3:23. The initial mandate "to work and care" for the Garden of Eden in Gen 2:15 is superseded in Gen 3:23, as human beings are expelled from the garden and new guards are set to guard the way to the tree of life (v. 23–24). In so doing, the creation mandate to לְעַבֵּד אֶת־הָאָדָם in Gen 2:5d is aligned with the global creation mandate in Gen 1:28 to "subdue" (כְּבָשׁ) the earth. The act of tilling the ground, as Turner suggests, "may legitimately be subsumed under

<sup>29</sup> Ouro notes that in Gen 1:18 and Gen 3:16 there is a synonymous parallelism. He states, "in Genesis 1, God blesses the couple and tells them by means of three Qal imperatives, 'be fruitful; multiply, fill the earth.' Therefore, they have children in abundance. However, in Genesis 3, He tells the woman He 'will greatly multiply' not only her conception but her sorrow, and He reiterates it when He tells her 'in pain you shall bring forth children.'" See Ouro, "Linguistic and Thematic," *JATS* 13/1 (2002): 50–51.

<sup>30</sup> See Erhard Blum, "Von Gottesunmittelbarkeit zu Gottähnlichkeit: Überlegungen zur theologischen Anthropologie der Paradieserzählung," in *Göttes Nahe im Alten Testament* (ed. Gonke Eberhardt and Kathrin Liess; SBS 202; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2004), 24.

<sup>31</sup> Michael Bauks, "Text- and Reception-Historical Reflections on Transmissional and Hermeneutical Techniques in Genesis 2-3," in *The Pentateuch* (ed. Thomas B. Dozeman, Konrad Schmid, and Baruch J. Schwartz; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 139–168, 145.

<sup>32</sup> Ellen van Wolde, *Words Become World: Semantic Studies of Genesis 1–11* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 28.

<sup>33</sup> Terence E. Fretheim, *God and the World in the Old Testament* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 53.

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the imperative to 'subdue the 'eres.'"<sup>34</sup> However, the earth that humanity is mandated to subdue will also subdue humanity: "since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return" (Gen 3:19 NIV).<sup>35</sup>

Fourthly, Gen 1:29–30 deals with the food provision for human beings and animals, a subject that is dealt with in Gen 2–3 with special reference to humanity. In Gen 1:29, human beings are provided with two kinds of vegetation for food—עַשְׂבִּים and צַדְּקָה, the same kind of vegetation which humanity is given the freedom to eat in the second creation narrative. From within the garden, humanity is provided with צַדְּקָה for food (Gen 2:9) and from outside of the garden humanity will also eat עַשְׂבִּים (Gen 3:18). In the second creation narrative, from the inside of the garden, humanity had the freedom to eat "of the fruit of the trees in the garden" (מִפְרִי עֵץ הַגָּן) with only one exception, that being the "tree [צַדְּקָה] of knowledge of good and bad" which human beings were commanded not to eat, but ate from anyway; from outside the garden there is also an exception, that being "the tree of life" which humanity was barred to eat from (Gen 3:22, 23). So inasmuch as humanity is given the freedom to eat from כל-עַשְׂבִּים ("every plant") and כל-צַדְּקָה ("every tree"), the second creation narrative registers an exception to the rule—humanity is barred from eating from "the tree of life" which is in the Garden of Eden.

Fifthly, in both creation narratives the aspect of human likeness to God is part of the human creation process. In Gen 1:26–27, the human likeness to God is presented as a divine initiative, "let us create man in our image, in our likeness." In the second creation narrative the human likeness to God is a subject matter in Gen 3, which is anticipated in Gen 2:16–17 with the instruction regarding what the human being may and may not eat. It is God who sets the stage for the further creation process, although He is not the executioner; it is not uncommon in biblical literature for God to take credit for acts that he did not execute in person.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Laurence A. Turner, *Announcements of Plot in Genesis* (JSOTSup 96; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 35.

<sup>35</sup> Turner, *Announcements of Plot*, 36. As Hart also argues, 'כְּבָשׂ' ('subdue,' v. 28) also emphasises that there is a job to be done; it is only used of the earth itself, not the animals, and must mean 'to work' or 'to cultivate'. Cultivation is 'subduing' because it is making the soil produce what you need it to produce, rather than simply taking what happens to grow there." See Ian Hart, "Genesis 1:1–2:3 as a Prologue to the Book of Genesis," *TynBul* 46/2 (1995): 323. See also Daniel Patte and Judson Parker, "A Structural Exegesis of Genesis 2 and 3," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 55–75; James Barr, "Man and Nature: The Ecological Controversy and the Old Testament," *BJRL* 55 (1972–73): 9–32.

<sup>36</sup> The book of Job offers the best example of this. In the prologue of Job, God not only allows the satan to execute his devious plan against Job, but he also takes credit for it (Job 2:3).

The human likeness to God in Gen 1:26–27 is portrayed as a top-down process. In the second creation narrative, God's admission of human likeness to the divine, as in Gen 1:26, is stated in the first person plural, exhibiting clear correspondence between these texts. From the bottom up, humanity's likeness to God is part of the creation process. In the second creation narrative, the human likeness to God is presented as a human initiative through humanity's transgression. However, the privilege of being like God comes with the loss of other privileges—the privilege of eating from the tree of life and the privilege of remaining in the garden. Humanity's likeness to God becomes a privilege that humanity has to enjoy outside the garden as a tiller of the ground (Gen 3:22–23).

The problem of being "like God" also has a positive side to it. In the first creation narrative, humanity as a divine image is in no way enclosed; rather, it is set on earth with the mandate to fill the earth, and not in some out of reach location—the Garden of Eden, as Stordalen describes it, a "world apart."<sup>37</sup> In the end, both creation narratives locate the image of God nowhere else other than on "the ground" (מַמָּתָה) or "land/earth" (אָרֶץ) (cf. Gen 1:10, 24, 26, 28 with Gen 2:5d; 3:23).

The parallels between Gen 1:24–30 and Gen 2:4b–3:24, particularly Gen 3, are not antithetical parallels which point to the great deterioration of creation; rather, the second creation narrative sharpens or intensifies the first creation narrative. The second creation narrative drives the point home as to why humanity is not pronounced good.

Thus, following the narrative flow of the second creation narrative, the creation process comes to an end with humanity having transgressed the command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and bad, given in Gen 2:17. The prohibition quickly led to the actual eating—a violation of the prohibition.<sup>38</sup> The violation of the prohibition resulted in the reuniting of humanity with the ground from which it was taken and for which it was created—the ground outside the Garden of Eden. The apparent negativity in the second creation narrative in as much as it may be understood as counteracting the positivity of the first creation narrative is better viewed as tapping into gap in the first creation narrative—the absence of an evaluation formula to single out humanity as "good."

<sup>37</sup> Regarding the Garden of Eden Stordalen states, "On the one hand, we are caused to construe the Eden Garden as a cosmic 'world apart,' whose events are not conceivable in the ordinary realm. On the other hand, precisely its 'otherness' accounts for its symbolical relation to the everyday world." See Terje Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature* (CBET 25; Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 301. See also Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 215–16.

<sup>38</sup> Peter D. Mischall, "Jacques Derrida in the Garden of Eden," *USQR* 44 (1990): 5–6.

## D CONCLUSION

For the author of Gen 1–3, the “very good” creation is one in which deterioration took place. The correspondences between Gen 1:24–31 and Gen 2:4b–3:24 are indicative of the reiterating nature of the second creation narrative as a whole, particularly focused on the sixth day of creation. What in the first creation narrative is stated in just a few sentences is in the second creation narrative an elaborate story with many twists and turns. These correspondences also illustrate that Gen 2:4b–3:24, as a whole, have to be viewed as a creation narrative. The creation process in Gen 2:4b–3:24 finds its logical conclusion in Gen 3:24, as also evidenced by the basic plot of Gen 2:4b–3:24, to which I shall turn attention in a publication to follow on this one.

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