

The first book of the Bible, Genesis, is believed by many to explain the origin of everything humankind knows and experiences. Mainly, Chapter 1 gives an account of the creation of all things within six days. Chapters 2 and 3 provide an understanding of the human condition, explaining why humans work and suffer. These two accounts are different explanations of how the world came to be, but they both demonstrate a theme of duality in all things.

Chapter 1 is a cosmogony, the coming to being of the visible universe, that introduces the universal theme of duality. It is about creation, and in Genesis, creation begins with the earth's emergence into the light, similar to human birth. Subsequently, duality presents itself through division. God creates a firmament to divide the earth's waters and calls it "Heaven." He then makes lights in Heaven to "divide the day from the night" (Gen. 1:14). When he creates humankind, he divides them into males and females. Many of God's creations either serve to divide or consist of two parts.

Continuing with the theme of two, God also creates dually. On the third day, God performs a double creation, creating dry land and vegetation. On the sixth day, He commits another double creation, creating land creatures and man. However, when creating man, he states, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness" (Gen. 1:26) and gives them dominion "over all the earth, and over every creeping thing." Notably, "God blessed them" (Gen. 1:28), implying they needed extra sustenance. Of all his creations, God only blesses the animals and humans. He also tells the humans to multiply and eat the vegetation for meat, the same as he said to the animals. God treats the animals and humans similarly but significantly distinguishes mankind both in substance and power.

The account of creation and the first chapter end as God recognizes everything he has created as a whole to be "very good" (Gen. 1:31), leaving only heaven and man out of explicit favor. This generalized approval confirms that something can be good overall, while containing elements that are

not good, like heaven and man. This is the first instance in which good and bad are shown a place in the world.

The connection between heaven and man is that they are both observably divided tools. Heaven is created to separate the waters of the Earth and hold the lights that shine upon it. Unlike animals, man is made to have dominion, or rule, over the Earth and is explicitly physically divided into male and female. Additionally, although man is not called good, they are the only animal created in God's image. The part of man made in His image is something nonphysical. As a result, humankind is fundamentally split, both physically and nonphysically, between animalness and humanness. Even the sexes are not said to hold only one of the two parts. Still, whatever this godliness is, it does not make humans good.

Chapters 2 and 3 account for the origin of the human condition rather than the origin of all things. Genesis 2:7 again attests to the fundamental duality of man; God constructs the physical body of a man from the dust of the Earth and breathes "life" into it, "and man became a living soul" (Gen 2:7). This "life" evidently does not need to be breathed into animals, so it is not something all living things need. Therefore, a person is made of two fundamental parts: the physical, earthly component, being the body, and the nonphysical, Godly component, being the soul.

In Chapter 3, God enforces the consequences of his mistakes on humans. Chapter 3 introduces the serpent, which induces doubt of God's only prohibition, asking Eve, "Hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?". God only directly warns Adam about eating from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Eve's knowledge is a matter of hearsay, as she only knows what Adam told her. This is made evident by Eve's response, stating they are not allowed to eat or touch "the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden," although God only said not to eat it. This miscommunication exemplifies the fundamentally ambiguous and deceptive nature of speech. Speech's flaws may also be why the narrator of these chapters never says, "God told me this," because it would make every verse

ambiguous. Secondly, Genesis 2:9 mentions two trees “in the midst of the garden”: the tree of life and the tree of knowledge and evil. Because both Adam and Eve lack knowledge, they cannot tell which tree is prohibited, which God evidently failed to consider.

However, this event also indicates that the serpent possesses the knowledge of good and evil and intentionally took advantage of Eve’s ignorance. The serpent either heard the warning directly from God or Adam. It also knew Eve wasn’t warned, which is why it quoted God with a direct negation to what he’d said in Genesis 2:17, using the word “surely,” (Gen. 3:3) which Eve hadn’t recited. Due to the deceptive nature of speech, the serpent knew she could not understand its intent. Furthermore, God sets the scene up in Chapter 2, bringing the animals in after Adam, so He knew of the serpent’s presence. Additionally, the serpent must be a fantastic creature because only humans and God are demonstratively able to speak. Man is the only being expected to obey and work *because* they are the only creation that speaks. If the serpent is speaking, it cannot be real. Therefore, it only exists in mind and speech, signifying that humans are congenitally defective and are their own downfall.

As expected, the humans ate from the forbidden tree and established two communities of life. After eating the fruit, Adam and Eve realize they are naked and become self-conscious. They do not feel shame in Genesis 2:3 before eating the fruit. Afterward, however, they recognize together that they are individually imperfect. They are compelled to have sex because seeing each other’s genitals gives them the natural urge to reproduce, or they know they will die out because the fruit of knowledge made them aware of death. They evidently felt shame for that urge because they covered themselves to hide their genitals. This part of Chapter 3 marks the creation of two communities: political, based on speech, and physiological, based on reproduction. People cannot exchange verbal communication with themselves, and the communal discovery of their nakedness could not have happened if they were isolated.

God knows they have eaten from the forbidden tree, but he still interrogates them. Adam blames the sin on Eve, and by extension, God (Gen 3:12), and Eve blames the serpent. Here, God commits the first injustice of the Bible by not also giving the serpent a trial. Instead, he punishes the serpent, without questioning it, by most notably taking its tongue, ridding it of its ability to speak. Without its ability to speak, it is no longer fantastic. Therefore, God and the serpent become representations of the two poles of human psychology. God represents what you are supposed to do, and the serpent represents your desire to deviate from that. Although there was no way for Adam and Eve to have known better, God also punished them. Their punishments included work and painful childbirth, which became universal experiences for human beings. Overall, Chapter 3 demonstrates that to be human is to be defective, as Adam and Eve were set up to fail.

The accounts of Chapter 1 and Chapters 2 and 3 both have a theme of binary existence. In the first account, the binary is created through relational division. In the second account, the binary is polar. There is right and wrong, good and evil, God and the serpent, man and woman, knowledge and ignorance, and still, the idea of fundamental ambiguity of the human being and speech.

There are two separate accounts and not one continuous one because the first account organizes a large magnitude of creation into cataloged bites of time, while the second account is specific to human development, based on a story of cause and effect. The second account is a zoomed-in part of the first. Animals had already been created, but they were “formed” out of the ground for Adam to be named. The creation of Eve was when humankind was divided into male and female. The most overarching theme, alas, is that humans are fundamentally complex as they are both animalistic and godly. Although that godliness cannot be defined, it is understood as what makes the soul separate from the body and the human different from the animal. Overall, Genesis describes the universe, the human role in it, and how polar and dual parts help the world function.