

BEGINNINGS



WHAT
GENESIS
SAYS
(AND
DOESN'T
SAY)

Putting It Back Together:

What Does
Genesis 1--2
Mean?



Comparing Genesis 1:1--2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25

Genesis 1

Genesis 2

Name

God

LORD God

Stuff

Watery chaos

Ground

Means

Spoke

Formed

Order

Light. . .

Man. . .

Woman

humans

Comparing Genesis 1:1--2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25

Genesis 1 list

Genesis 2

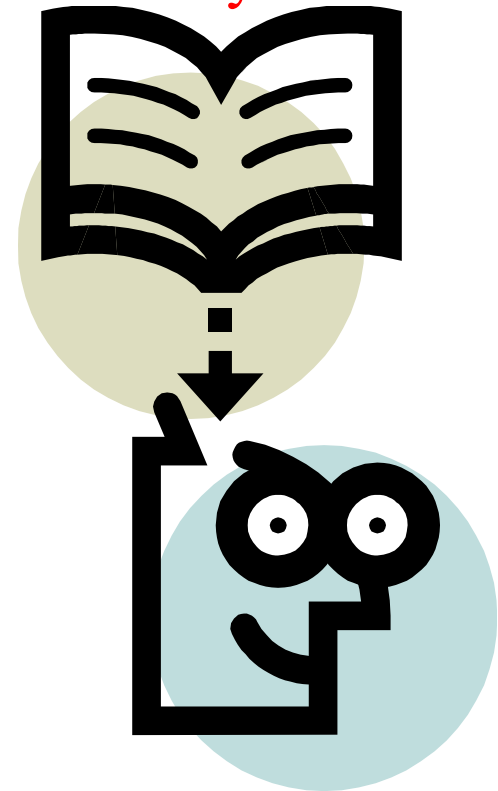


Comparing Genesis 1:1--2:4a and Genesis 2:4b-25

Genesis 1
list



Genesis 2
story



Can read them as one...

Sirach 33:7-13 Why is one day more important than another, when all the daylight in the year is from the sun? By the Lord's wisdom they were distinguished, and **he appointed the different seasons and festivals**. Some days he exalted and **hallowed**, and some he made ordinary days. **All human beings come from the ground, and humankind was created out of the dust. . . . Like clay in the hand of the potter, to be molded** as he pleases, so all are in the hand of their Maker, to be given whatever he decides.

Can read them as one...

Matthew 19:3-6 And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful to divorce one's wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that he who made them **from the beginning** made them **male and female**, and said, '**For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh**'? So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."

Can read them as one...

Genesis 2:8, 19 (NIV) Now the LORD God **had planted** a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. . . . Now the LORD God **had formed** out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air.

Genesis 1:27

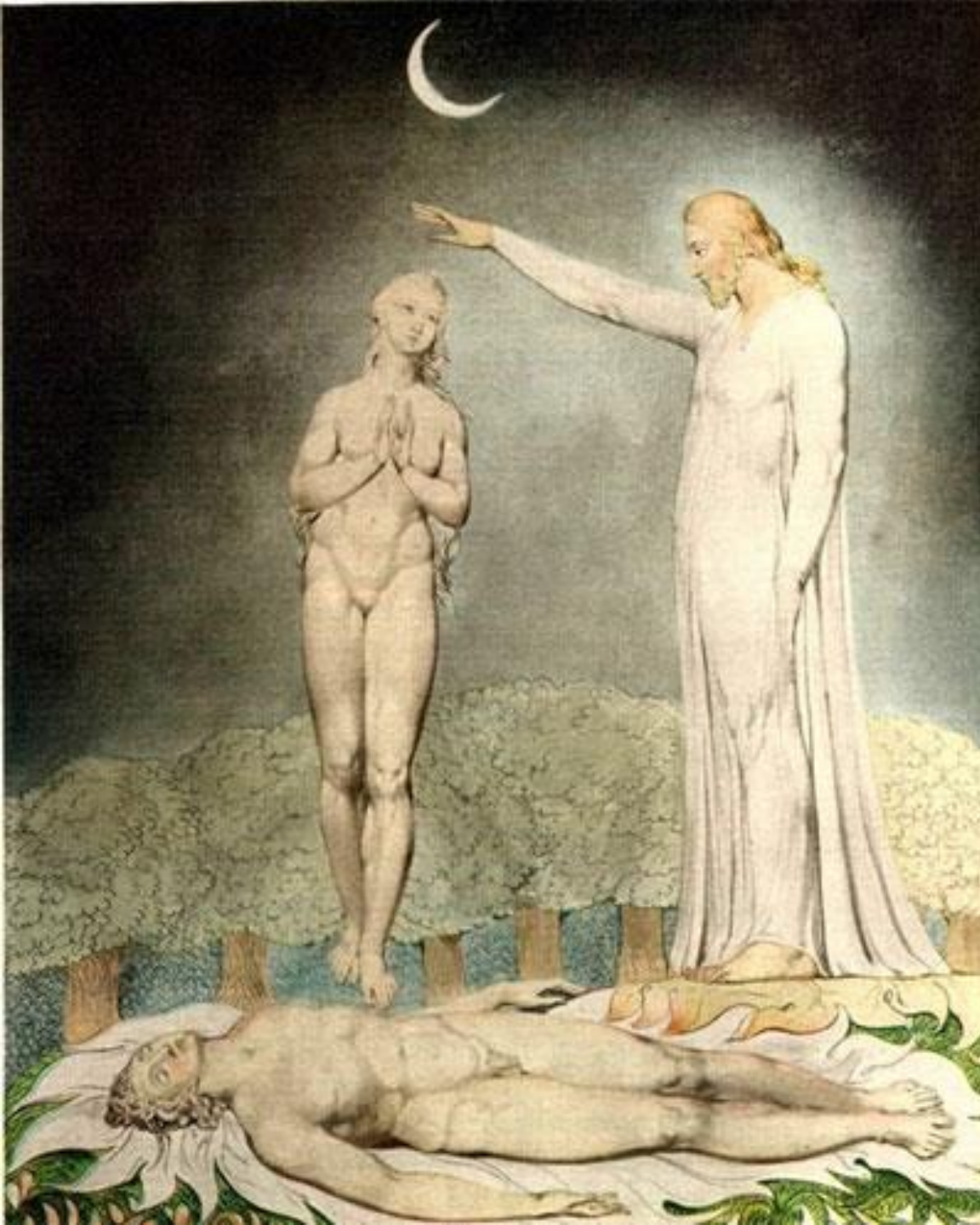
So God created humankind in his
image,
in the image of God he
created them;
male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:21-22

So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a **woman** and brought her to the man.

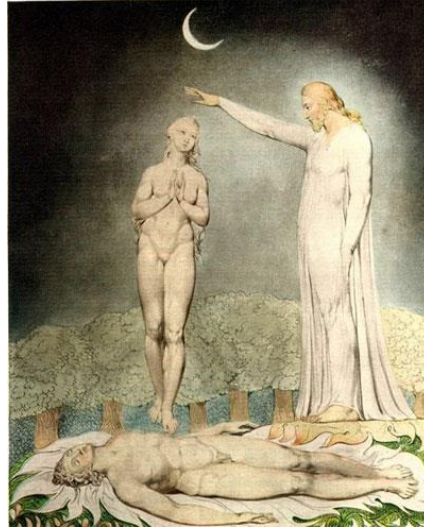


Lilith,
Adam's
first wife



Eve,
Adam's
second wife

Can read them as one...
but tensions remain



Implications: What Genesis Doesn't Say

Implications: What Genesis Doesn't Say

- Not a single account

Implications: What Genesis Doesn't Say

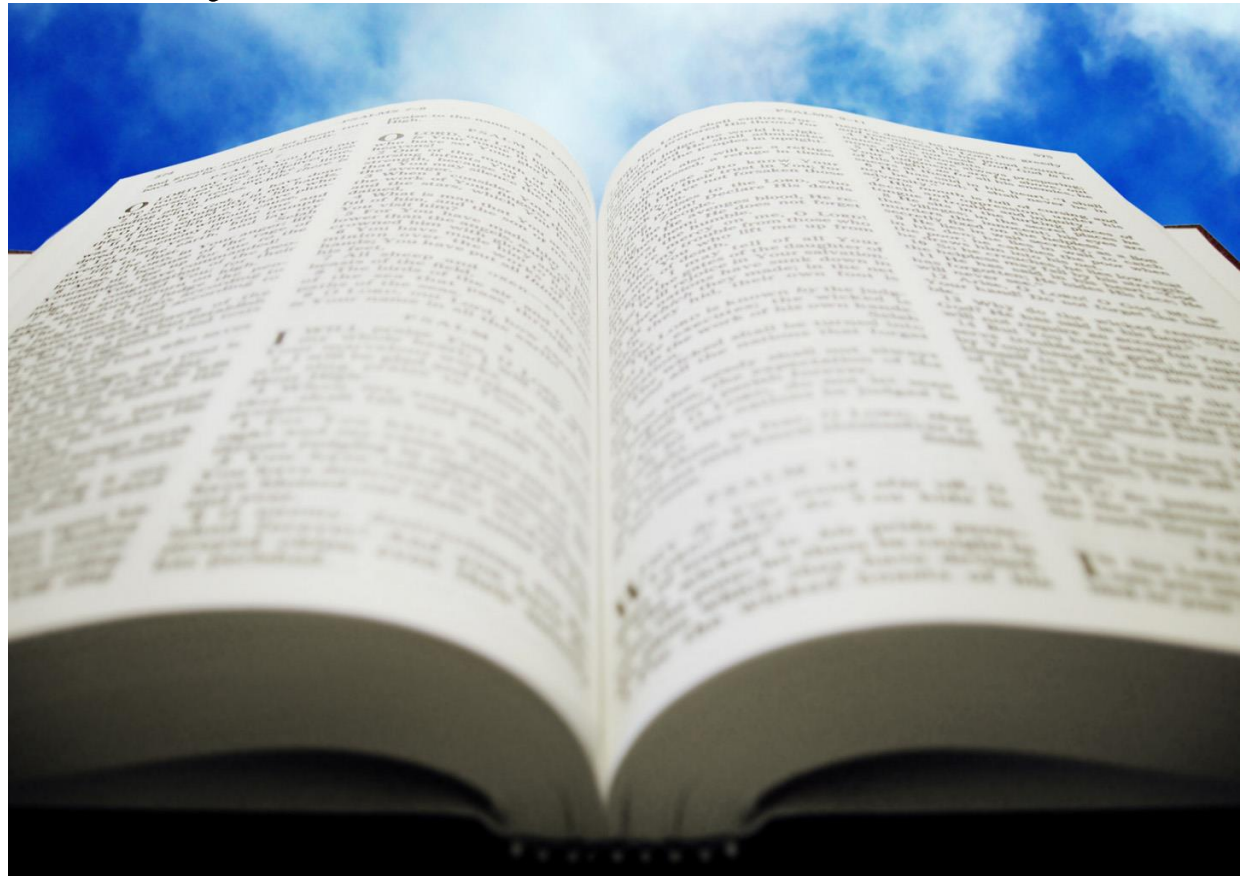
- Not a single account
- Not a factual, scientific account of origins

Implications: What Genesis Doesn't Say

- Not a single account
- Not a factual, scientific account of origins
- Not an alternative to scientific, historical accounts of origins

What Genesis Says

Reading canonically



What Genesis Says

- Literary effects of reading canonically

“it was good”

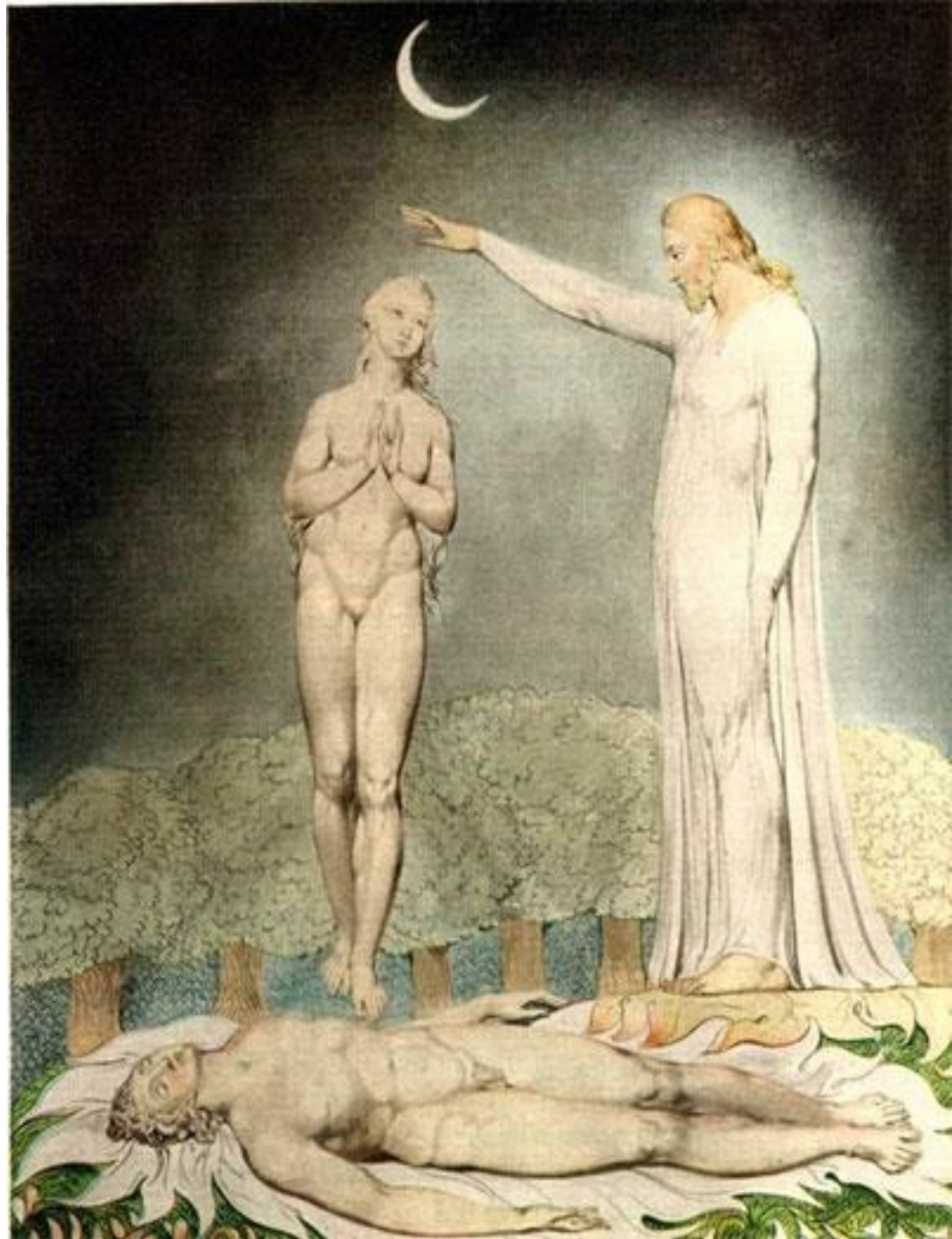
- **Genesis 1:4** And God saw that the light was good
- **Genesis 1:10** And God saw that it was good.
- **Genesis 1:12** And God saw that it was good.
- **Genesis 1:18** And God saw that it was good.
- **Genesis 1:25** And God saw that it was good.

Genesis 1:31 God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, **it was very good.**



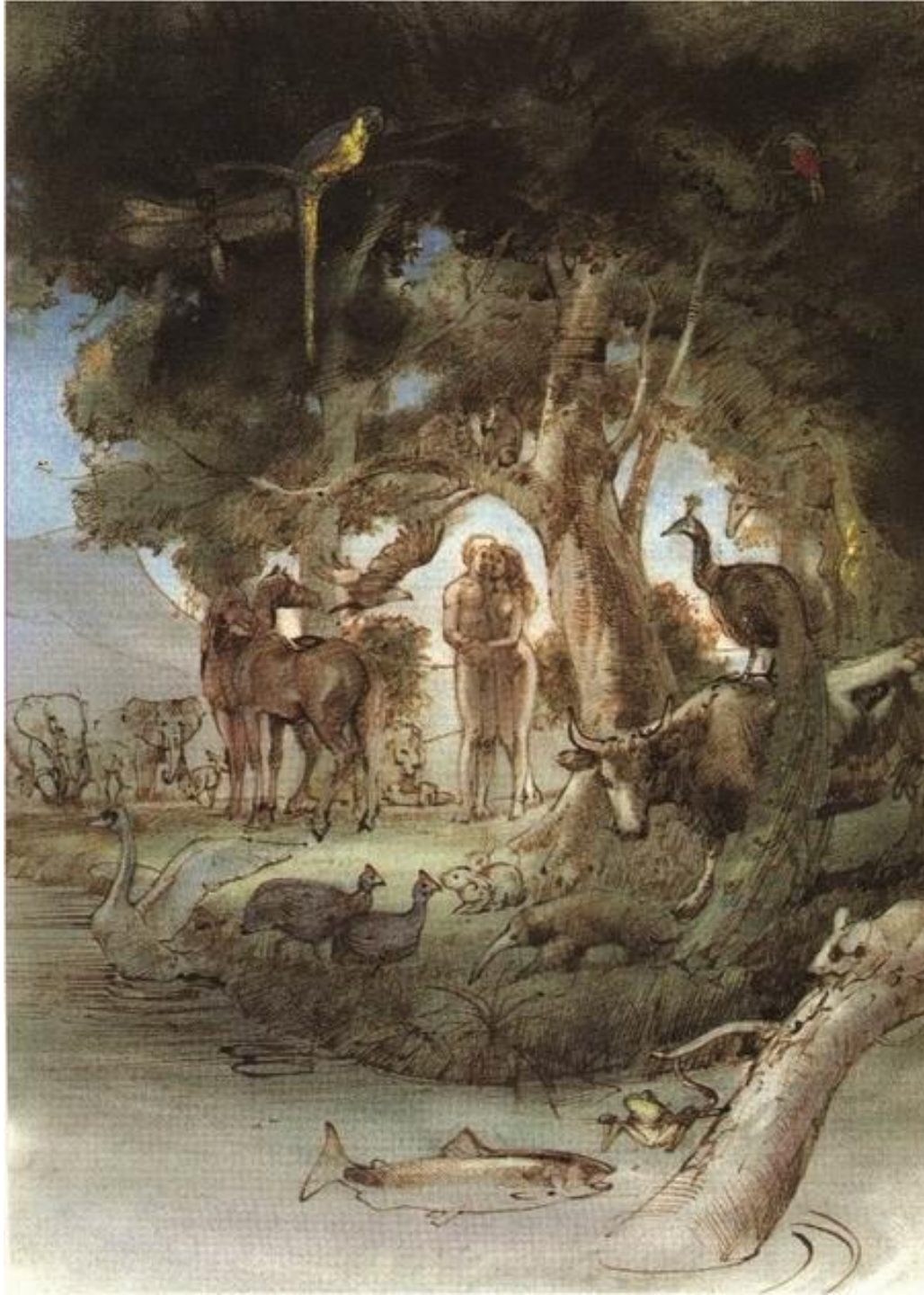
Genesis 2:18

Then the LORD God said, "It is **not good** that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner."



Genesis 1:27

So God created
humankind **in**
his image, in the
image of God he
created them;
male and female
he created them.





Genesis 3:4-5

But the
serpent said to
the woman,
"You will not
die; for God
knows that
when you eat
of it your eyes
will be
opened, and
**you will be
like God,**
knowing good
and evil."

What Genesis Says

- Literary effects of reading canonically
- Theological effects of reading canonically



Genesis 1:3

Then God said,
“Let there be
light”; and
there was
light. And
God saw that
the light was
good

God
as
transcendent



Genesis 2:7 Then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.



God as immanent



Not “either/or”

Not “either/or”

God is transcendent

God is immanent

Not “either/or”

God is transcendent

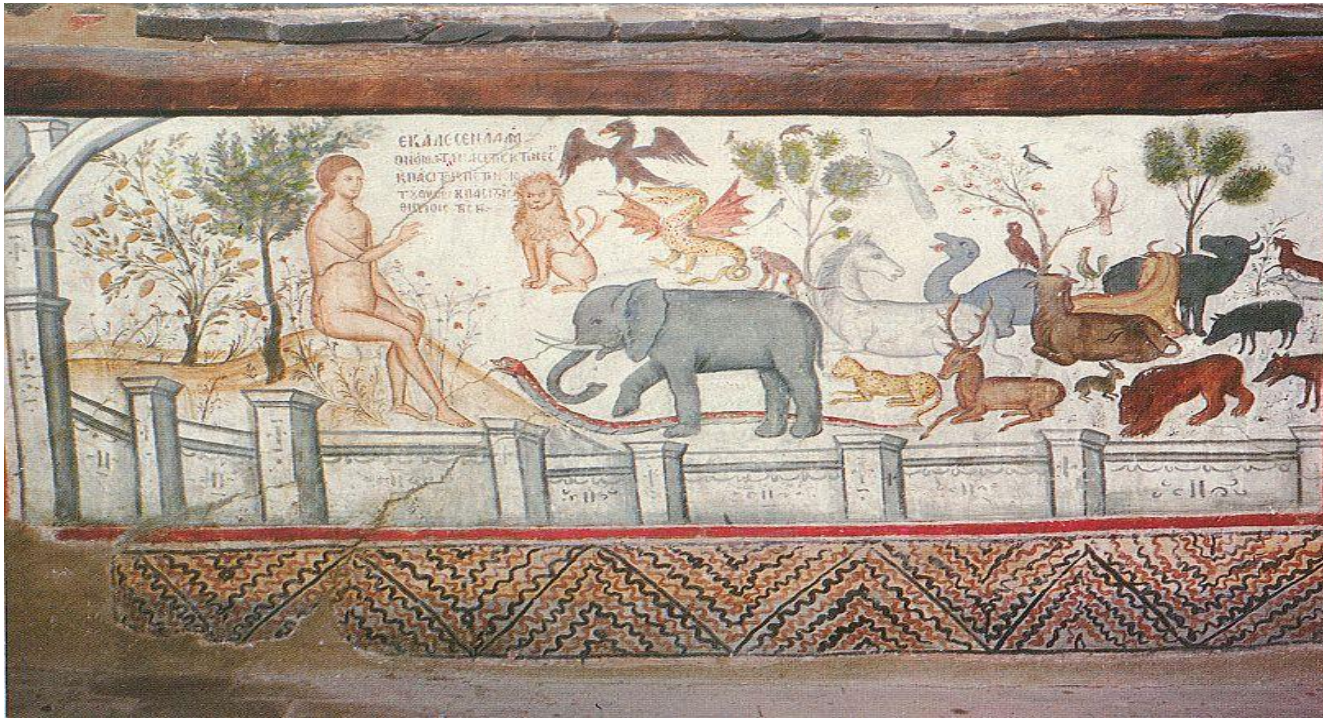
AND

God is immanent

What Genesis Says

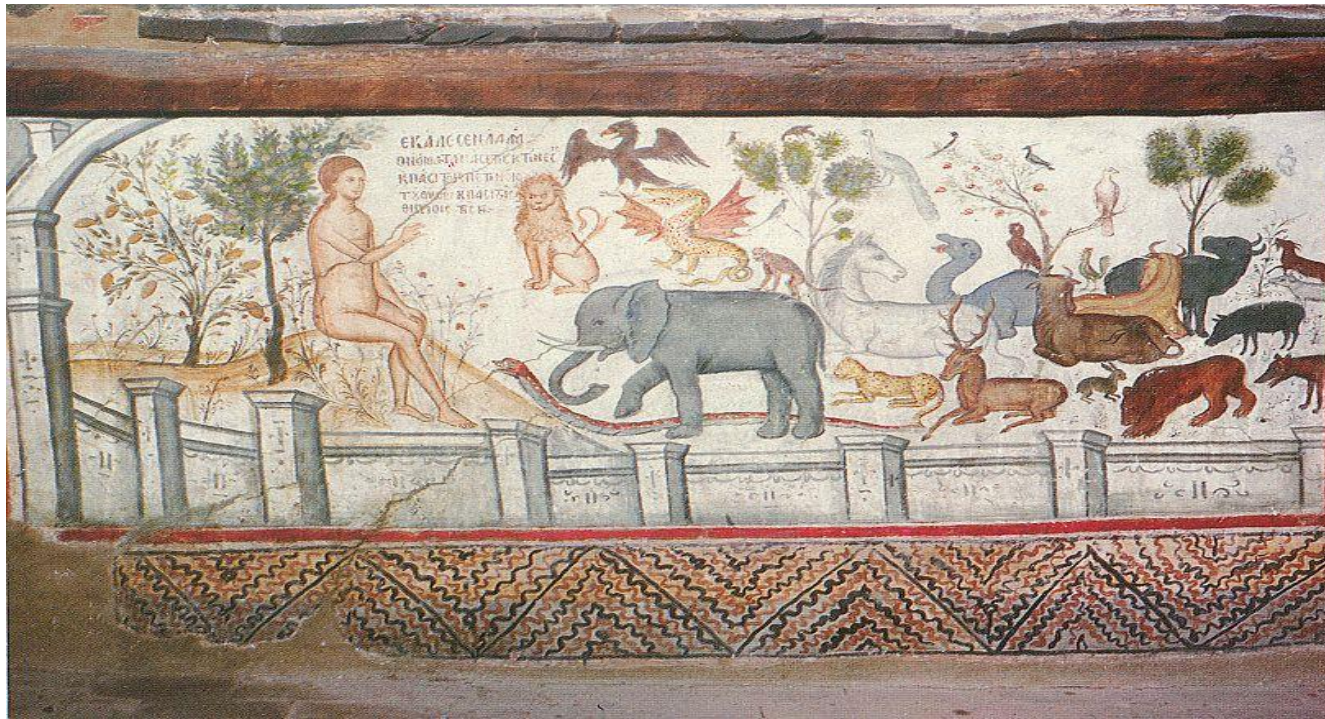
- Literary effects of reading canonically
- Theological effects of reading canonically
- Anthropological effects of reading canonically

Genesis 1: Humanity distinct from the world



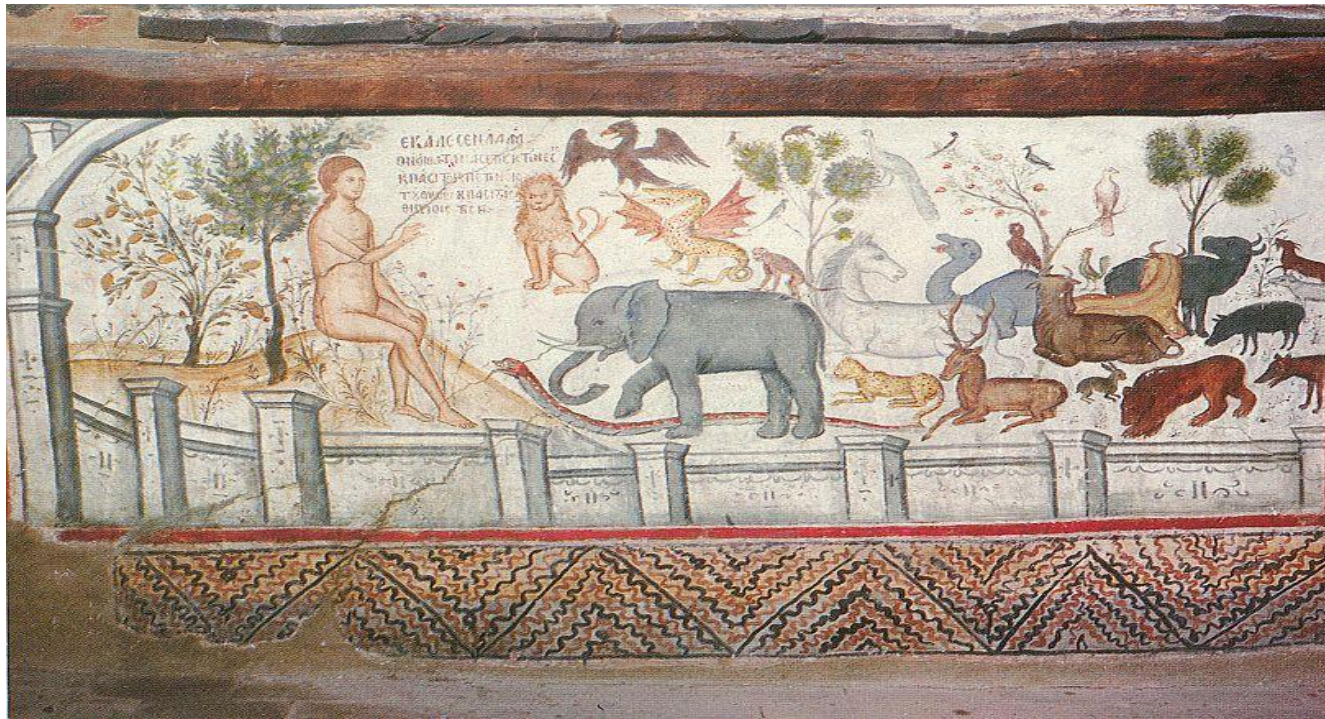
Genesis 1: Humanity **distinct** from the world

- Divine council referenced



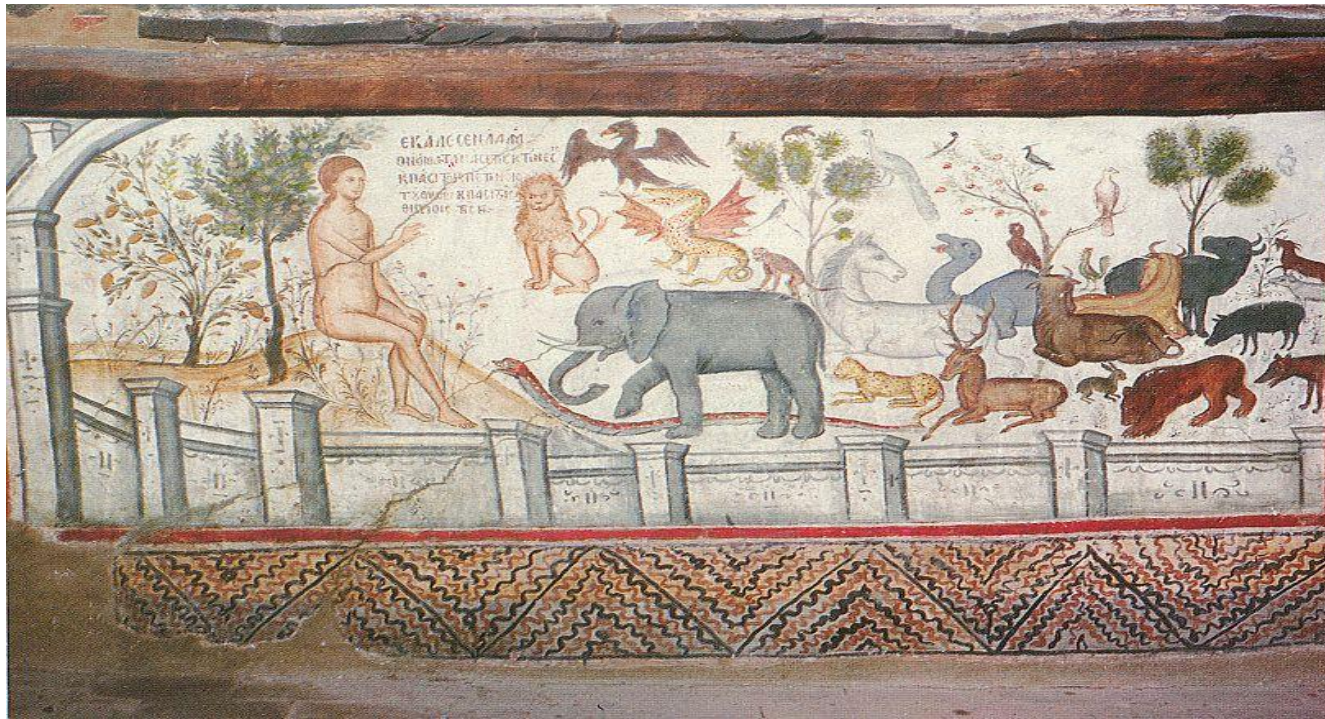
Genesis 1: Humanity **distinct** from the world

- Divine council referenced
- No “kinds”



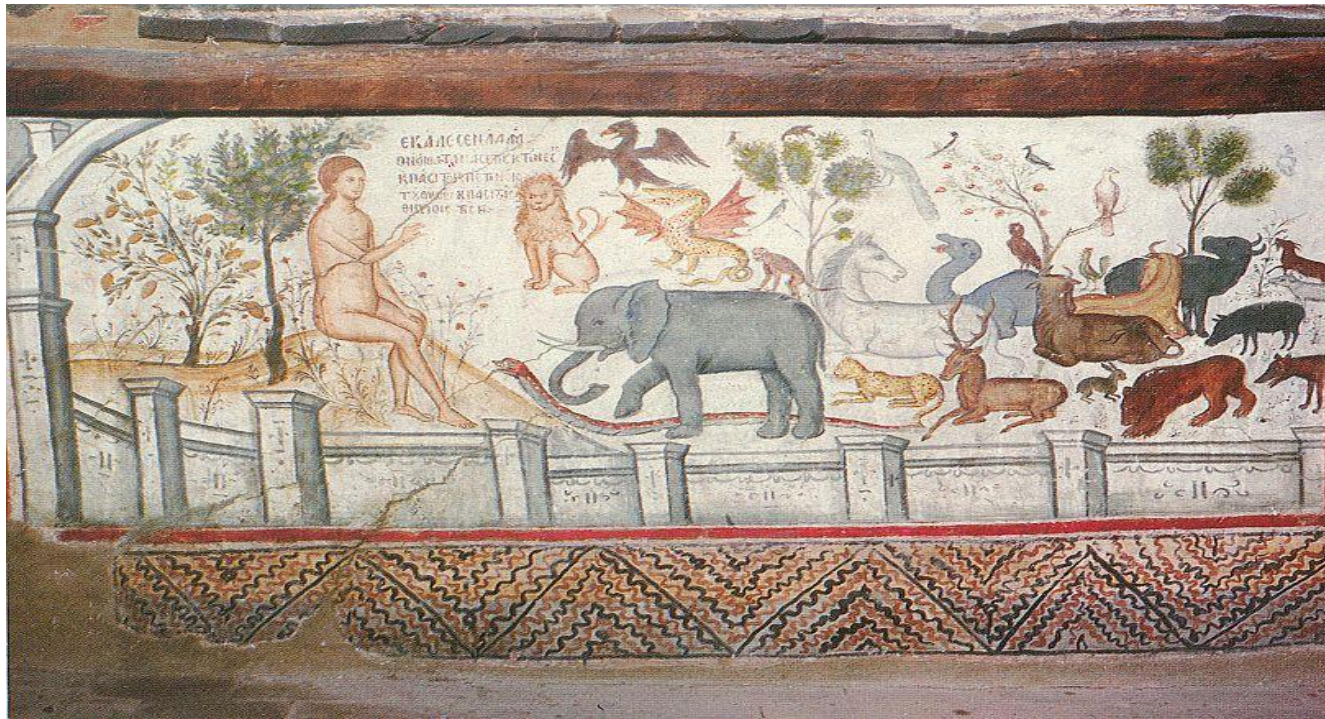
Genesis 1: Humanity **distinct** from the world

- Divine council referenced
- No “kinds”
- Image and likeness



Genesis 1: Humanity **distinct** from the world

- Divine council referenced
- No “kinds”
- Image and likeness
- dominion



Genesis 2: Humanity **joined to** the world

Like the animals, we
are:



Genesis 2: Humanity **joined to** the world

Like the animals, we
are:

- **formed** (Hebrew *yatsar*)



Genesis 2: Humanity **joined to** the world

Like the animals, we
are:

- **formed** (Hebrew *yatsar*)
- made from the ground (Hebrew *'adamah*)



Genesis 2: Humanity **joined to** the world

Like the animals, we are:

- **formed** (Hebrew *yatsar*)
- made from the ground (Hebrew *'adamah*)
- Called “living beings” (Hebrew *nephesh chayah*)



Not “either/or”

Humanity is BOTH

Not “either/or”

Humanity is BOTH

Joined to the world

Not “either/or”

Humanity is BOTH

Joined to the world

AND

Not “either/or”

Humanity is BOTH

Joined to the world

AND

Distinct from the world

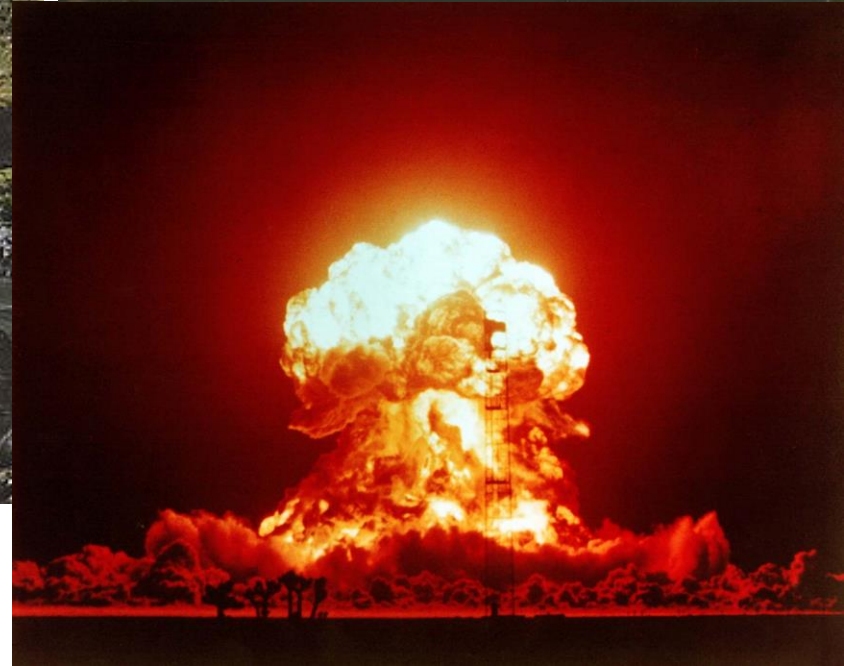
Responsibility



Responsibility



Responsibility



The “shape” of Scripture

Creation



Genesis 2:9 Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden

The “shape” of Scripture

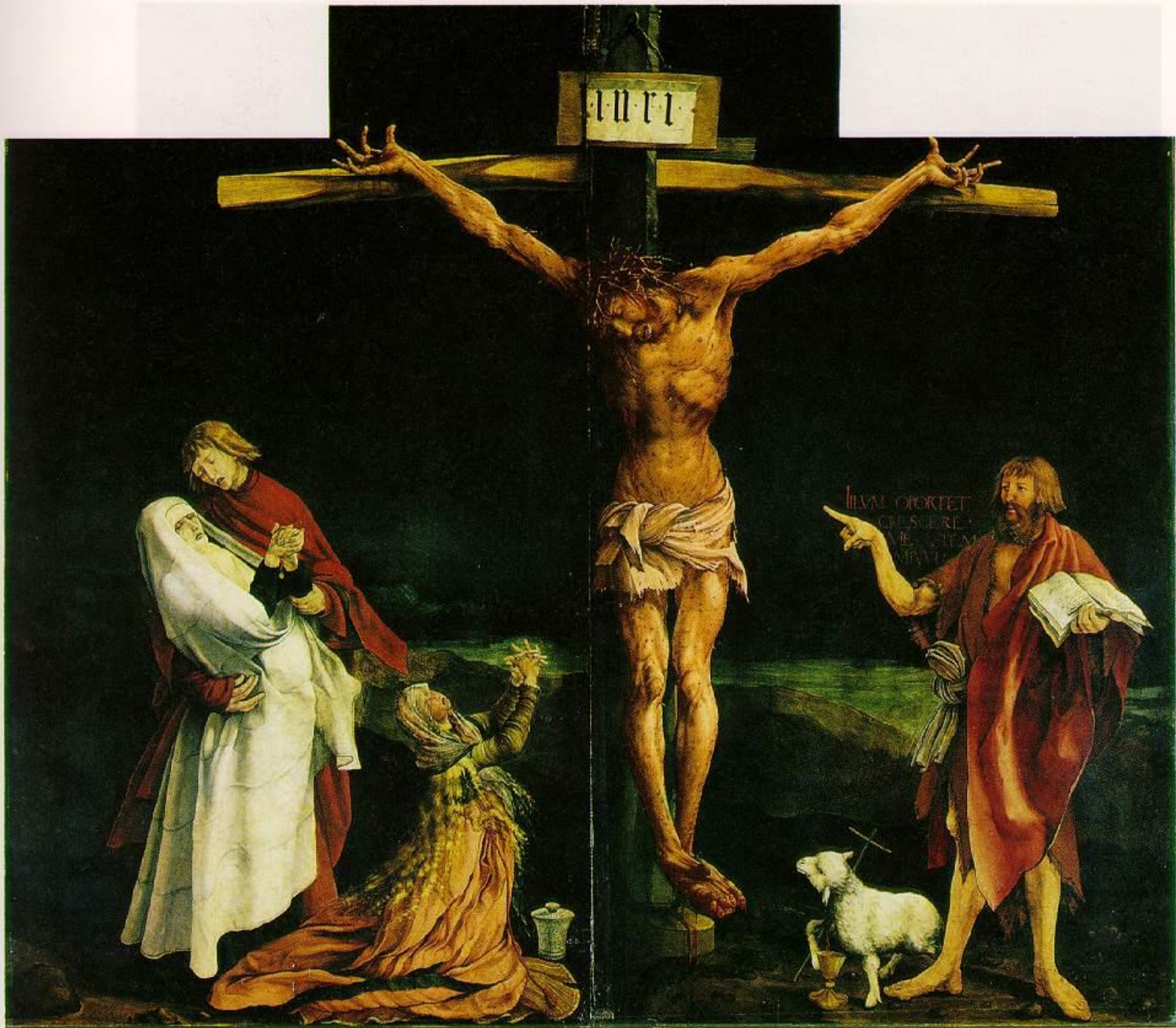
Fall



The “shape” of Scripture

Redemption

John 3:16-17 For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life. Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.



The “shape” of Scripture-- Culmination

Revelation 22:2 On
either side of the river
is the tree of life with
its twelve kinds of
fruit, producing its
fruit each month; and
the leaves of the tree
are for the healing of
the nations.



The shape of comedy

“a series of misfortunes and misunderstandings brings the action to a threatening low point, after which some fortunate twist in the plot sends the conclusion up to a happy ending”

-Northrop Frye, *The Great Code*



The Bible as Divine Comedy

