

# Utilising the Triple T approach:



1. Begin with an approved translation of the TEXT.



2. TRANSLATE at adult level.



3. TRANSLATE to the classroom.

**A process of finding meaning at adult and student level.**

## **Genesis 2:4-9** Contemporary English Version (CEV)

### **The Garden of Eden**

When the LORD God made the heavens and the earth, <sup>5</sup>no grass or plants were growing anywhere. God had not yet sent any rain, and there was no one to work the land. <sup>6</sup>But streams<sup>[a]</sup> came up from the ground and watered the earth.

<sup>7</sup>The LORD God took a handful of soil and made a man.<sup>[b]</sup> God breathed life into the man, and the man started breathing. <sup>8</sup>The LORD made a garden in a place called Eden, which was in the east, and he put the man there.

<sup>9</sup>The LORD God placed all kinds of beautiful trees and fruit trees in the garden. Two other trees were in the middle of the garden. One of the trees gave life—the other gave the power to know the difference between right and wrong.

### **Footnotes:**

- a. 2.6 *streams*: Or “mist.”
- b. 2.7 *man*: In Hebrew “man” comes from the same word as “soil.”

## **Genesis 2:15-25** Contemporary English Version (CEV)

<sup>15</sup>The LORD God put the man in the Garden of Eden to take care of it and to look after it. <sup>16</sup>But the LORD told him, "You may eat fruit from any tree in the garden, <sup>17</sup>except the one that has the power to let you know the difference between right and wrong. If you eat any fruit from that tree, you will die before the day is over!"

<sup>18</sup>The LORD God said, "It isn't good for the man to live alone. I need to make a suitable partner for him." <sup>19-20</sup> So the LORD took some soil and made animals and birds. He brought them to the man to see what names he would give each of them. Then the man named the tame animals and the birds and the wild animals. That's how they got their names.

None of these was the right kind of partner for the man. <sup>21</sup> So the LORD God made him fall into a deep sleep, and he took out one of the man's ribs. Then after closing the man's side, <sup>22</sup>the LORD made a woman out of the rib.

The LORD God brought her to the man, <sup>23</sup> and the man exclaimed,

"Here is someone like me!

She is part of my body,  
my own flesh and bones.

She came from me, a man.

So I will name her Woman!"<sup>[a]</sup>

<sup>24</sup>That's why a man will leave his own father and mother. He marries a woman, and the two of them become like one person.

<sup>25</sup>Although the man and his wife were both naked, they were not ashamed.

#### Footnotes:

- a. **2.23** *a man. . . Woman*: In Hebrew the words "man" and "woman" are similar.

#### Acknowledgements:

Notes are drawn from the article written by Dr Ian Elmer, ACU (Elmer, 2010).

Elmer, I. (2010). Puzzling Passages: Adam's rib. Retrieved from  
[http://www.catholica.com.au/gc0/ie3/157\\_ie\\_170910.php](http://www.catholica.com.au/gc0/ie3/157_ie_170910.php)

**Placing the text in context:**

- This story is found in the book of Genesis, the first book in the OT, in the Torah (first 5 books of laws).
- It is the second, and probably less known creation story, but it was actually written many years earlier than the first creation story in Genesis.

**Exploring the text:**

- God creates the earth from a barren land, where no life existed (no plants, no people). The emphasis is on God – God had not sent the rain. God is creator and responsible for all creation. Then God sends streams up from the ground to water the earth. Creation is evolving. (We know from science that creation is still evolving today – this story has not been completed.)
- God takes a handful of soil and creates man. Notice that man does not have a name at this point. (Therefore, it is important to refer to “the man” and not “Adam”.) The most accurate translation of the term ‘man’ is actually ‘earth creature’ (a genderless term).
- Notice the action of God – who “breathes life into the man” (earth creature). (Hold your hand in front of your face and breathe out slowly – you can feel the breath of life that God has breathed into each of us. This story tells us that it is God who breathed life into all of us, and the air within us is this same breath of God.)
- The earth creature is born of the earth and the breath or wind (ruach) of God. This is the story of how every human being comes to life. This is the story of God’s relationship with people, and God’s desire for human beings to flourish. (This story sets the scene for what happens in life – that humans fail to flourish when they misuse power and try to be godlike, resulting in the breakdown of relationships and disasters that are caused by humans and not nature.)
- The earth creature starts breathing, and God creates a beautiful garden called Eden, filled with trees and fruit trees.
- There are two significant trees in the garden – one gives life and the other gives the power to know the difference between right and wrong.

**Key concepts to build solid foundations:**

- **Narrative:** We have a special story to tell, from the very first book in the Bible. It was written thousands of years ago – such a long time ago but amazingly it is still a special story for people today. This special story was written to help people understand something important about God. What do you think this will be?

**Age-appropriate pedagogies:**

- **Playful:** Students use play dough / putty to create the garden of Eden as the story is told (read / retell the text). Could begin with a brown piece of paper / material, reflecting the barren earth, or an empty space and invite students to imagine what the world would look like without any animals, people or plants.
- Lead students through the process of shaping a ‘person’, and then drawing some putty from the side of the person to form into another ‘person’.
- Students create items for the garden.

**Creative:** Ask students to hold their person gently in their hand, and then blow air onto the person to show how God breathed life into the person. If God was creating all that humans needed for a wonderful life, could God have breathed anything else into the person? If God breathed life into human beings, then what is the author saying about who breathed life into us? (Close your eyes, blow gently on the person and imagine this is God, breathing life into you. Notice your breath...this is the same life God has breathed into you.)



- **Collaborative:** Explore our thinking about this story. Could this be a story about the way the world really was created? Are there any other

God places the earth creature in the garden of Eden to look after the garden, and God only gives the human one instruction – not to eat from the tree that gives the power to know right from wrong. (At this point, only God has the power to know the difference between right and wrong. While this text reference does not include the man and woman disobeying God, adults may know that ultimately this happens, because the story later goes into the human quest for power, to be like God, but this quest always ends in disaster.)

- Then God decided that it was important for the earth creature to have companionship. (God's plan is for human beings to live in community and in relationship with one another, and not isolation. This part of the story reveals God's desire for all human beings to flourish. Question to consider to inspire the imagination: If God was creating the perfect world for human beings, what would God provide / do?)
- The woman is not made independently, of different substance. The woman is created from the rib of the man and formed into life. When God shows her to the man he instantly recognises that she is intrinsically linked to him, permanently. The man and woman were complete in their differences, but totally accepting of who God had created them to be. This is total complementarity.

• **Transformative potential of the text:**

What does this text reveal about God? What does this text reveal about how God wants our world to be? (In what ways do we take environmental stewardship seriously? In what ways do we live respectful relationships that promote the dignity of men and women? In what ways are we accepting of others and promote tolerance regarding individual differences? If every breath we take is the Spirit of God within us, how do our lives reflect God to others?)

possibilities? If there were no people on the earth, how did the author know this is how the world was created? Why might someone write a story like this? Share ideas; challenge thinking; promote thinking beyond a literal interpretation. Could the author want the 'earth creature' to represent the story of how human beings were created? What does the author want people to understand about God? How does this story help people to know what God wants our world to be?

- Why do you think that the author writes about these special trees? Could there have been other special trees in the garden?
- **Language rich and dialogic:** What does relationship mean? What does community mean? I wonder why the author wrote this story? Select key words, phrases and sentences from the story and write these on cards around the Garden of Eden display that the students have created. Read the cards and invite students to place the cards appropriately.
- Can stories in the Bible have important messages for people today? (Explore meaning vs literal.)
- **Active:** Take students for a walk through the school grounds to notice as many different elements of creation as they can. Students could record these through drawing / writing as they move around the school. (Did anyone draw themselves or their class? When we look around our school what things can we find that were also in the Garden of Eden? Plants, trees, people.)

**Transformative learning:**

- **Agentic:** How does this story help us to understand God's dream for our world? How does God want people to live? Dialogue possibilities then focus on class level. How does this story help us to understand how God wants our class to live? Students generate ideas and create an action plan. What would you like us to do in this class, because this story has made a difference to our lives? (Possibilities include using a 'friendship' seat in the playground so no one is left without a friend to play with; reduction of waste e.g. lunch boxes; Breath prayer at the start of the day – each time you breathe in imagine God is breathing life into you...and joy, peace, love...; investigate and promote the use of words / language and actions that promote the dignity, respect and equality of others....)