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A narrative analysis of humans, animals, and sin in Genesis 1-4

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Abstract

In this thesis, I use characterization to examine the relationship, interaction, and development between humans, animals, and sin in Genesis 1-4. God established order and unity in Genesis 1, and humans were created as the dominant species to rule over animals (Gen. 1:26-28). I propose that the narratives in Gen. 3:1-24 and 4:1-16 are sequenced with the repeated motif of human-animal interaction. In Genesis 3, humans failed to obey God's voice and rule the serpent; instead, the serpent ruled them. In Genesis 4:7, sin is portrayed as an animal that wants to rule Cain. In both narratives, humans give in to the animal's rule, which results in disorder and broken relationships. In conclusion, I propose that the narrative presents sin as an animal in order to show how humans were created to rule over sin and not be ruled by it.

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1. Introduction

In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve disobeyed God when they ate a fruit that God explicitly forbade them to eat. The word for sin does not appear within this narrative, but shows up for the first time in a comparable narrative in Genesis 4, where Cain kills his brother, Abel.¹ It may be that this latter story provides us with a key to understand the former. Robert Alter points out that “[t]he bible does not employ symmetrical double plots, but it constantly insists on parallels of situation and reiterations of motif that provide moral and psychological commentary on each other.”² In Genesis 3:1-7 Adam and Eve interact with an animal, the serpent, and in the parallel situation in Genesis 4:7, Cain interacts with sin zoomorphized as an animal that lies in wait and wants to rule over him.³ In both stories, the human-animal interaction negatively affects all parts involved (Gen. 3:14-24, 4:8-16). From a narrative perspective, it is no coincidence that the Pentateuch introduces us to the concept of sin as an animal and sequences the two parallel stories of human-animal interaction. The zoomorphized sin recalls the serpent and invites the reader to reinterpret the serpent in a fresh light. Further, it suggests that sin has something to do with the relationship between humans and animals. In Genesis 1:24-31 God creates humans and animals on the same day. The main reference point for the relationship between humans and animals seems to be Genesis 1:28, where God gives humans the unique role to rule over animals. Through the narratives presented in Genesis 3 and 4, it becomes evident that humans failed to rule animals.

1.1 Research question

So, what does the hierarchy of creation have to do with sin? How are readers to make sense of this repeated motif? The answer may lie in the text of Gen. 1-4. The relationship between humans and animals is first mentioned in Gen. 1:20-31 and further developed in the two parallel stories in Gen. 3:1-24 and 4:1-16. These three text units will be my primary texts to analyze. There is one text of secondary interest in Gen. 2:18-25, where God creates the animals, makes a helper for Adam, and gives him the task of naming the animals. This text has strong textual and thematic links to the primary texts. In Genesis 6-9 Noah interacts with animals in a significant way, but I have chosen not to include it within the main scope of my analysis as, in the narrative chronology, it appears after the Cain and Abel story where the

¹ The Hebrew word for sin that is used in Gen 4:7 is חטאת.

² Alter, *Art*, 115.

³ Throughout the paper I use the term sin-animal in reference to חטאת רבץ in Gen. 4:7. For a discussion of the term see section 3.4.

concept of sin is introduced. However, I will briefly look at Gen. 6-9 as a test case supporting my thesis at the end.

A central theme to the creation account in Genesis 1:1-2:3 is the introduction of cosmic order.⁴ I will argue that God is characterized as a wise king who brings the cosmos into a functional, unified order through His speech and rule. Humans, animals, and other characters get their functions within God's well-organized and good creation.⁵ In Gen. 1:26-28 humans are assigned to rule and sustain order on God's behalf, on the earth, and over the animals. My main argument is that when humans failed to rule the animals in Genesis 3 (the serpent) and 4 (the sin-animal), it allowed the animals to rule over and through them. When humans exchanged God's voice and rule for the animals' voice and rule, the result was disorder. The narrative presents sin not just as the human failure to fulfill the God-ordained role of ruling, but sin is also a force that may rule humans when they give in to it. When sin gets space to rule, the good order is demolished, and damaging consequences appear in all human relationships; with God, the earth, animals, and fellow human beings.

1.2 Literature review

The thousand-year-old conversation on how sin should be defined and interpreted in Genesis is still ongoing. The space is limited, but I will give a brief overview of the most relevant research.

Scholars like André LaCocque,⁶ Seth D. Postell,⁷ John Walton,⁸ and Ziony Zevit⁹ have written extensively on and examined the narratives in Gen. 1-4 from different angles. Their contributions are helpful for my analysis, however, none gives adequate attention to the developing relationship between humans, animals, and sin in Gen. 1-4. Joshua John Van Ee has written extensively on the relationship between humans and animals. He examines texts from ancient Mesopotamia and Gen. 1-9 and concludes that the initial state in Gen. 1-2 was

⁴ Hereafter the creation account in Genesis 1:1-2:3 is referred to as Gen. 1.

⁵ Bauckham, 'Nature', 240.

⁶ LaCocque provides a synchronic reading of Gen. 2-3. LaCocque, *Trial*. Additionally, in another book he explores Genesis 4 through three dimensions: the anthropological, the theological and the psychological. LaCocque, *Onslaught*.

⁷ Postell applies a text-centered approach to examine and interpret Gen. 1-3 as the introduction to the Pentateuch. Postell, *Adam*.

⁸ Based on insight from the ancient Near Eastern texts, Walton examines Genesis 1 (Walton, *Cosmology*.) and Genesis 2-3 (Walton, *Adam and Eve*.)

⁹ Zevit considers the original context and its readers, and present Gen. 2:4-3:24 in a fresh light. Zevit, *Garden*.

not characterized by immorality, vegetarianism, and animal peace.¹⁰ Richard Bauckham, on the other hand, contends that the initial situation between humans and animals in Gen. 1-2 was peaceful and harmonious.¹¹ In this paper, I will investigate both the peaceful and the non-peaceful aspects of the relationship between humans and animals.¹²

Regarding sin, Joseph Lam has analyzed and identified four major metaphors for sin in the Hebrew bible: Sin as a burden, sin as an account kept by God, sin as a path, and sin as a stain or impurity. Lam examines the Hebrew term נָשָׂא in Gen. 4:13 and concludes that it has the lexicalized meaning “forgive” in contrast to its use in Priestly material where it means “bearing” of sin.¹³ He argues based on narrative factors, but does not discuss sin/חַטָּאת presented as a character in Gen. 4:7 or the prominent theme of uplifting/laying within Gen. 4:1-16. I will argue, based on the central motif of sin ruling Cain in Gen. 4:7, that it seems most reasonable to understand נָשָׂא as a term pointing towards the heaviness and burden of being under sin’s rule.¹⁴ Accordingly, Gary Anderson, in his book “Sin: a History,” argues that ‘sin as a burden’ was the dominant depiction of sin, but it changed during the Second Temple period. The new conception, sin as a debt, became the governing metaphor for early Christianity. Anderson’s linguistic depiction of sin as a burden seems to align with my findings and be an important contribution to the argument in this paper.¹⁵ The concept of sin continues to develop throughout history. Paula Frederiksen explores how the ancient idea of sin developed from Jesus to Augustin. She concludes that the ideas of sin are culturally constructed and that the historical context arbitrates meaning.¹⁶ Jonathan Klawans explores the relationship between impurity and sin in rabbinic literature, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Hebrew Bible. He concludes that moral impurity is sinful; it defiles the person, the sanctuary, and the land and may lead to punishment and exile.¹⁷ Klawan's findings about moral impurity and sin enlighten my analysis of Adam and Eve’s actions, punishment, and exile from the garden.¹⁸

¹⁰ Van Ee, ‘Death’, 326–29.

¹¹ Bauckham, *Living*, 1–7, 107–8.

¹² David Carr explores Genesis 1-11 and analyzes the different presentation of human–animal in P and the non-P sources. Carr, ‘Competing’.

¹³ Lam, *Sin*, 58–65.

¹⁴ See my analysis of Gen. 4:1-16 in section 4.1.

¹⁵ Anderson, *Sin*.

¹⁶ Frederiksen, *Sin*, 150.

¹⁷ Klawans, *Impurity*, 26–27.

¹⁸ See section 3.5.

Augustine has been one of the most influential voices on sin in church history, and he derives from Gen. 3 that pride, “an appetite for inordinate exaltation,” is the root of all human sin.¹⁹ Mark Biddle offers a study of the biblical theology of sin that draws on insight from psychology and psychotherapy and concludes that sin must be more than human pride. In accordance with my thesis, Biddle argues that human sins by failing to embrace their humanity and “attain authentic autonomy – they underachieve.”²⁰

Mark J. Boda examines every book of the Hebrew bible and traces the theme of sin and its remedy. He considers the phenomenon of sin as a violation against God, humans, or creation, a disruption of a divinely ordered norm. Regarding Genesis 1-3, Boda emphasizes sin as the violation of God’s command resulting in difficulties related to the creation mandate in Gen. 1:28.²¹ However, Boda does not examine the significant characterization of sin as an animal (Gen. 4:7) and its close association to the serpent in Gen. 3. Related studies on sin/evil in Genesis are done by Robert R. Gonzales,²² Ingrid Faro,²³ Igal German,²⁴ Harold Shank,²⁵ Margaret D. Bratcher,²⁶ and Mark S. Smith.²⁷ None of them sufficiently analyzes the narrative relationship between sin as a character in Gen. 4:7, animals, and the creation mandate given to humans in Gen. 1:28.

This paper may contribute to the ongoing discussion of sin in Genesis in at least two ways: First, by offering a narrative analysis of the relationship between humans, animals, and sin in Gen. 1-4, I illustrate how humans failed to embrace their place in the creation hierarchy and rule the animals. Secondly, by proposing that the narrative intentionally characterizes sin as an animal with the point of alluding to the preceding creation mandate in Gen. 1:28 and the failure of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3.

¹⁹ Augustine, *City*, 14:380.

²⁰ Biddle, *Sin*, 51, 49–74. See section 3.5.

²¹ Boda, *Sin*, 18–20.

²² Gonzales tracks the spread of sin as a major theme throughout Genesis. Gonzales, *Sin*.

²³ Faro conducts a contextual analysis of the Hebrew lexemes of Evil in Genesis. Faro, *Evil*.

²⁴ German has done a thorough literary synthesis of the fall narratives in Genesis 3 and 4. German, *Fall*.

²⁵ Shank’s dissertation analysis how the theme of sin in Genesis 1-11 can determine the sin theology of the Cain and Abel story. Shank, ‘Sin’.

²⁶ Bratcher’s dissertation examines the patterns of sin in Genesis 1-11 by using a literary critical method. Bratcher, ‘Pattern’.

²⁷ Smith draws upon biblical scholarship in order to explore the traditional reading of the fall and original sin in Genesis 3. Smith, *Good*.

1.3 Methodology

In this paper I will do a text-centered, narrative analysis of Genesis 1-4 to discern the significance and function of sin. Sean McEvenue points out that “[t]he meaning of a word is not determined by its definition, but by its context. So also a single story’s meaning is only determined by the relationship of all its elements to the whole text.”²⁸ The context determines how to understand the word sin in Genesis 4:7, so using a text-centered narrative approach is most suitable to answer the research question. Sin is not just presented as a human act, but as a character that interacts with humans. In order to discern the function and significance of sin in the narrative, I will analyze the main characters; the way they interact, and how those interactions shed light on who sin is, how it acts, how it potentially takes hold of characters, and what the consequences of that are.

1.3.1 Characterization

Wim J.C. Weren points out that characters are language constructs gradually being constructed during interpretation. The meaning evolves when characters are seen in relation to each other and additional textual data.²⁹ According to Genesis 1, humans and animals have a predetermined relationship with God as their creator and the land as their material of origin and place of residence. In Genesis 1-4, the author presents us with five different types of characters that interact and affect each other: God, humans, animals, sin, and the land. Their relationships are neatly interwoven throughout the narrative, and they cannot be separated in the narrative analysis and characterization, even though I will give the most attention to humans and animals. According to David McCracken, biblical characters should not just be analyzed individually by looking at their traits. The characters exist and have their functions within the narrative based on the dialogic relationship with other characters.³⁰ My analysis will examine the dialogic and dialectical relationships between God and humans, Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel, and humans and animals. I will examine what constitutes the relationships, what function, and what influence the different characters have on each other. According to Shimon Bar-Efrat, “a character in a work of literature is merely the sum of the means used in the description [...] it is the portrayal which creates the character.”³¹ In

²⁸ McEvenue, *Interpretation*, 171.

²⁹ Weren, ‘Characterization’, 89.

³⁰ McCracken, ‘Character’, 32, 36.

³¹ Bar-Efrat, *Narrative*, 48.

portraying characters, Bar-Efrat differs between direct and indirect ways of shaping characters and presents some helpful categories and techniques used in characterization.³²

1.3.1.1 Direct characterization

Rarely in the Bible do we find direct statements that describe the characters' traits, outward appearance, or inner personality, but when it appears, "it is going to be a factor in a plot."³³ Nothing is written by coincidence, and "[t]he biblical tale through the most rigorous economy of means, leads us again and again to ponder complexities of motive and ambiguities of character."³⁴ In Genesis 1-4, there seem to be only a few occurrences of direct characterization. In Gen 2:25, man and wife felt no shame/בוש, the serpent is described as shrewd/ערום in Gen. 3:1, and Cain is described as distressed/הרה in 4:5.³⁵ From a modern perspective, the narrator may seem too economical with the words and descriptions, but as Robert Alter points out, this seems to be the biblical narrators' "supple techniques for the imaginative representation of human individuality."³⁶ Meir Sternberg calls this gap-filling, where "the literary work consists of bits and fragments to be linked and pieced together in the process of reading."³⁷ The need for gap-filling may occur in the presentation and evaluation of a character and the plot itself; questions and gaps may arise that the reader needs to fill in. When the narrator infrequently offers a direct characterization, it "is always extremely important in the development of the plot."³⁸ Where the narrator's direct characterization offers us an evaluation and judgment of the one involved, the indirect characterization invites the reader to evaluate the character's actions, speech, and morals.³⁹ The absence of direct characterization is not the sign of lazy or inadequate authorship, but rather the opposite since "[m]inimal representation can give maximum illusion."⁴⁰ One of the big tasks in interpreting Genesis 1-4 is to discern the characters' motives and intentions through predominantly indirect characterization.

³² Bar-Efrat, 48.

³³ Bar-Efrat, 53.

³⁴ Alter, *Art*, 24.

³⁵ All three occurrences of direct characterization will be discussed individually in the following sections, 3.2, 3.3, and 3.4. See also section 4., for the direct characterization of Noah as righteous/צדיק and blameless/תמים in Gen 6:9.

³⁶ Alter, 144.

³⁷ Sternberg, *Poetics*, 186. On the technique of gap-filling, see also Berlin, *Poetics*, 137–38.

³⁸ Bar-Efrat, *Narrative*, 53.

³⁹ Bar-Efrat, 53.

⁴⁰ Berlin, *Poetics*, 137.

1.3.1.2 Indirect characterization

According to Bar-Efrat, “deeds do in fact serve as the foremost means of characterization, and we know biblical characters primarily through the way they act in varying situations.”⁴¹ The characters' speech and actions may reveal the characters' inner state.⁴² Herman Gunkel points out that actions often express thoughts in the biblical narrative, and the Pentateuch does select “the action which is most characteristic for the state of feeling of his hero.”⁴³ The absence of thoughts and speech may amplify and lead the interpreter to reflect upon the character's actions and inner state. A great example is Adam receiving and eating the forbidden fruit without the narrative saying anything about his thoughts or speech (Gen. 3:6).⁴⁴ The reader is tasked to interpret Adam's inner state by reflecting upon his action. Why did Adam eat the forbidden fruit? Does the incident change Adam? Did Adam purposely break God's commandment, or did he act in ignorance with good intentions? The interpretative task raises many questions, and the way forward is to look for answers in the surrounding narrative, “drawing our conclusions from the outcome (the deeds) about the reasons (the decisions) which preceded and gave rise to them.”⁴⁵

Speech is another means of characterization. Jan P. Fokkelman points out that “[t]he Bible does not contain one single instance of *small talk*; almost every word by a character is existentially revealing or rooted.”⁴⁶ After the eating incident in Genesis 3:7, the narrative seems to reflect upon the incident by presenting a conversation between God, humans, and the serpent (Gen. 3:8-19). The speech may give us insight into the character's inner state and help the reader interpret the previous act of eating the forbidden fruit. Adam verbalizes that he fears God and puts the responsibility for his failure onto Eve.⁴⁷ The speech reveals that there has been a change, a breach in the relationship between God, Eve, and Adam.

When analyzing biblical characters, it is crucial to recognize that they exhibit a “capacity for change.”⁴⁸ The characters and the relationships between them may develop and change throughout the narrative. The interpretive task is to analyze the reasons behind the change and

⁴¹ Bar-Efrat, *Narrative*, 77.

⁴² Bar-Efrat, 64.

⁴³ Gunkel, *Legends*, 61.

⁴⁴ Gunkel, 60–61.

⁴⁵ Bar-Efrat, 81-82. For the analysis of Gen. 3:6, see section 3.3.

⁴⁶ Fokkelman, *Narrative*, 68.

⁴⁷ Gen. 3:10-12

⁴⁸ Alter, *Art*, 158.

its consequences; thus, one may evaluate the development's moral validity. A well-known classification of characters in literary criticism is Edward M. Forster's two categories, "flat" and "round."⁴⁹ To avoid reductionism, by seeing the characters within the fixed categories of either flat or round, Cornelis Bennema argues for categorizing characters on a "continuum of development, characters range from those with no development (they are static, unchanging), to those who display some development, to those who change dramatically."⁵⁰ Indirect characterization "tends to regard personality as being mobile," while direct characterization "embodies a static view of the person."⁵¹ In the following discussion, the development of human characters and the consequences of their relationships will be of particular interest. No characters exist independently, and "[w]hat people say witnesses not only to their thoughts, feelings, etc., but is often slanted to accord with the character, mood, interests and status of their interlocutor."⁵² A key interest in this thesis is the relationship between the different characters, and their interplay is mainly shown through indirect characterization.

Conflict may arise between human characters (Adam and Eve, Cain and Abel), the different types of characters (God, humans, animals, land), or the characters "may even be in conflict with themselves."⁵³ Parallel conflicts exist on different levels throughout the narrative; Cain's ultimate choice in Genesis 4:7 to rule over sin or let sin rule over him is presented as his internal conflict that has severe consequences for his external relationship to Abel, the land, and God.⁵⁴ Bar-Efrat points out that "[t]he characters in biblical narrative often have to choose between conflicting values or ethical precepts on the one hand and the desire for power, vengeance, or the pleasure of the flesh, on the other."⁵⁵ In Genesis 4:7, the sin-animal is presented in the context of choice, and through evaluating Cain's conflicting values, response, and consequences, it may be possible to establish the function of sin in the narrative. On the other hand, Powell points out that it may be highly significant when conflicts are "left unresolved within a narrative."⁵⁶ Genesis 4:3-5 will be of particular interest, where the big question arises, why did God acknowledge Abel's offering and not Cain's? Does the narrative

⁴⁹ Bennema, *Character*, 2, 45–46; Powell, *Narrative*, 54–55. Flat characters according to Forster: "In their purest form, they are constructed round a single idea or quality: when there is more than one factor in them, we get the beginning of the curve towards the round." Forster, *Aspects*, 48.

⁵⁰ Bennema, *Character*, chap. 3.2, sec. Character Analysis: The Continuum of Development.

⁵¹ Bar-Efrat, *Narrative*, 89–90.

⁵² Bar-Efrat, 65, 75.

⁵³ Powell, *Narrative*, 42.

⁵⁴ See section 3.4

⁵⁵ Bar-Efrat, 81-82.

⁵⁶ Powell, *Narrative*, 43.

leave the question unresolved on purpose, or is there any indication and answers within the narrative?⁵⁷ The absence of direct characterization leaves the reader in the “realm of inference” where one tries to find an answer through indirect characterization that may be there or that may have been intentionally left out.⁵⁸

Bennema problematizes the reconstruction of characters through gap-filling because it “has the inherent tendency to be speculative, fanciful, and ignore cultural differences.”⁵⁹ He argues that indirect characterization, which uses gap-filling, must be governed by the knowledge of the texts' socio-cultural context “for understanding the personality, motive, and behavior of ancient characters.”⁶⁰ Powell points us in a similar direction and argues for using social and historical context in interpreting symbols since “the meaning of these symbols is not gained through the narrative itself,” but it is assumed that the reader already possesses it.⁶¹ The talking serpent in Genesis 3 will be of particular interest since it is an animal character with human abilities. Who is the snake, and how should the reader understand this animal-human hybrid?⁶² In this and similar cases, I will examine ancient near eastern sources as a key in the analysis.

1.3.2 In-textuality and inner-textuality

As mentioned, I will argue that there is an inner linkage between Gen. 1:20-31, Gen. 3:1-24 and 4:1-16 concerning the relationship between humans and animals. The linkage between these texts may be called inner-textuality and is a compositional strategy that is vital and of central concern to OT theology.⁶³ Postell points out that “[i]ntertextuality has received a great deal of attention in Biblical Studies in recent years, and, to date, definitions and even terminology vary from scholar to scholar.”⁶⁴ In this paper, I will use John Sailhamer’s terminology; “in-textuality” and “inner-textuality.”⁶⁵ In-textuality “is the inner coherence of

⁵⁷ See section 3.4.

⁵⁸ Bennema, *Character*, 34.

⁵⁹ Bennema, chap. 3.1, sec. Character in Text and Context.

⁶⁰ Bennema, chap. 3.1, sec. Character in Text and Context. Concerning using ANE sources in biblical interpretation, John Walton points out that “[e]ffective communication must accommodate to the culture and nature of the audience.” Walton, *Scripture*, 39, 39–48.

⁶¹ Powell, *Narrative*, 29.

⁶² See section 3.3.

⁶³ Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 212; Postell, *Adam*, 63.

⁶⁴ Postell, *Adam*, 64. For a thorough discussion of intertextuality in Biblical interpretation see: Hays, Alkier, and Huizenga, *Intertextually*; Oropeza and Moyise, *Intertextuality*.

⁶⁵ Sailhamer, *Introduction*, 207–13.

the smallest units of text.”⁶⁶ While the linkages binding these smaller text units together into a larger whole is what Sailhamer calls “inner-textuality.”⁶⁷ I will attend to in-textuality when analyzing the primary and secondary text units. By analyzing how the texts relate, I am attending to inner-textuality. I will occasionally explore how the texts may have an inner-textual relationship to other texts in the Pentateuch. The decisive question regarding intertextual linkages is determining which texts are meant to be linked and which texts have “an unintentional congruence of language.”⁶⁸ Scholars have presented different perspectives and criteria to determine intertextual links.⁶⁹ Alter differentiates between textual links established by root words or phrases and links created by actions, motifs, and ideas.⁷⁰ Both types of linkage will be of interest in this paper; as an example, I will examine the repetition of the words *urge/תשוקה* and *rule/משל* in Gen. 3:16 & 4:7, and I will analyze the linkage between Adam/Eve and Cain’s actions when they interact with animals.⁷¹ The biblical narrative uses in-textuality and inner-textuality in the form of parallel situations and repetition to characterize and develop the plot.⁷²

1.4 Outline

I will analyze the texts as they appear in the narrative chronology. First, I examine the two creation narratives in Genesis 1 and 2, with particular attention given to the characterization of God and his establishment of order. I propose that humans are given a priestly and royal function to rule within God’s ordered creation. The following chapter examines the horizontal and vertical relationship between humans and animals. An analysis of Adam and Eve’s interaction with the shrewd serpent in Genesis 3 sets the stage for analyzing Cain’s encounter with the sin-animal in Genesis 4. Before the conclusion, I will briefly look at Noah’s interaction with animals (Gen. 6-9) in relation to my findings from Gen. 1-4.

⁶⁶ Sailhamer, 207.

⁶⁷ Sailhamer, 209.

⁶⁸ Postell, *Adam*, 65.

⁶⁹ Richard Hays present seven criteria to recognize and discern intertextual echoes, Hays, *Echoes*, 29–32. Robert Alter describes “a scale of repetitive structuring and focusing devices in biblical narrative”, and points out how to recognize the patterns. Alter, *Art*, 119–21. See also Jeffery M. Leonard who present eight principals as methodological guidelines for textual connections. Leonard, ‘Allusions’.

⁷⁰ Alter, *Art*, 119–21.

⁷¹ See section 3.4.

⁷² Alter, *Art*, 115, 123.

2. Creation and order

There are two different creation accounts, Gen 1:1-2:3 and Gen. 2:4-3:24. They are complementary, and each carries unique perspectives on creation.⁷³ The first creation account “is concerned with the cosmic plan of creation” and the second focuses on “man as a cultivator of his environment.”⁷⁴ God is at the center in Genesis 1:1-2:3, meaning “the account is not anthropocentric, but theocentric.”⁷⁵ Within this short account, God/אלהים occurs significantly thirty-five times.⁷⁶ Humans and animals are introduced, but presented in the narrative as subordinate beings, created by God in the same manner as the rest of creation. The characterization of God governs the characterization of humans since humans are made in the ‘likeness’ and ‘image of God.’⁷⁷ In order to analyze how humans and animals are characterized, God's role, function, and character must first be examined. My interest in this chapter is to examine how the creation narratives characterize God, humans, and animals. This is the necessary narrative background for the upcoming analysis of humans and animals in Gen. 3-4.

Numerous scholars have pointed out the parallels between the creation accounts in Genesis and Ancient Near Eastern [from now on, abbreviated with ANE] creation narratives.⁷⁸ Trygve Mettinger recognizes three structural elements from the ANE context that may have played a role in Israel; “1. God’s victory over the forces of chaos. 2. God’s acclamation as king. 3. Construction of his palace/temple.”⁷⁹ All these three elements seem to be present in the creation narratives and will be discussed in the following sections.

2.1 A wise, royal God establishes order

God is characterized as a craftsman who brings order to the cosmos through his speech. Based on the biblical text and ANE context, John Walton convincingly argues that Genesis 1 is ancient cosmology and function-oriented.⁸⁰ He makes a helpful distinction between modern and ANE ontology, where he points out that the ancient world “thought of existence as

⁷³ Alter, 175.

⁷⁴ Alter, 175.

⁷⁵ Bauckham, *Living*, 5.

⁷⁶ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 14.

⁷⁷ Gen. 1:26-27.

⁷⁸ Gunkel, *Chaos*; Walton, *Cosmology*; Mettinger, *Names*, 92–104; Smith, *Monotheism*, 167–72.

⁷⁹ Mettinger, *Names*, 96.

⁸⁰ Walton, *Cosmology*, 14–36.

defined by having a function in an ordered system.”⁸¹ Walton gives an example from an Egyptian creation account where “the god Atum is conceptualized as the primordial monad – the singularity embodying all the potential of the cosmos, from whom all things were separated and thereby were created.”⁸² Creation is seen as acts of separation and not as material origins. Atum was responsible for bringing “the world into order and to assign places and functions.”⁸³ Similarly, the Babylonian creation account, *Enuma Elish*, presents creation as acts of organizing and giving functions to elements. Walton points out that in tablet five, the god, Marduk, organizes the celestial sphere (V.1-24), organizes time (V.25-45), and makes the weather function (V.47-52).⁸⁴ In IV.135-139, Tiamat’s corpse (the sea personified as a deity, representing chaos) is split in half by Marduk, and the “body becomes the basis for the formation of the earth.”⁸⁵ Separating and organizing are both seen as creation acts in ANE. Similarly, Walton points out that naming appears as a typical act in ANE creation narratives, with the purpose of giving identity, roles, and function.⁸⁶ With this ANE ontology, one may conclude that the pre-creation state in Genesis 1:2, where the earth is described as “unformed and void/תהו ובהו,” is a non-functional state.⁸⁷ The following acts of creation can thus be seen as “an activity of bringing functionality to a nonfunctional condition.”⁸⁸ Through creation, the unformed primordial watery mass/תהום in Gen. 1:2 is transformed “into the world that sustains human existence with water.”⁸⁹ God’s acts of speaking, naming, and separating in Genesis 1 may be understood within the ANE ontology, where creation was depicted as the process of bringing order out of chaos by separating, naming, and assigning functions.⁹⁰

⁸¹ Walton, 34. Walton bases his argumentation on the investigation of Egyptian texts (Memphite Theology, Papyrus Leiden, Pyramid Texts, Coffin texts and Book of the Dead), Sumerian (Nippur, Tree and Reed) and Babylonian (Atrahasis, *Enuma Elish*) texts (Walton, 26-34).

⁸² Walton, 29. Accordingly, Richard Clifford points out that “[t]he created world originates by diversification of the one, or by the separation of previously united elements. Earth and sky, once united, are separated [...] light emerges from darkness, land from primeval water.” Clifford, *Creation*, 104.

⁸³ Wilson, ‘Egyptian’, 9.

⁸⁴ Walton, *Cosmology*, 31–32. For a English translation of ‘Enuma Elish’ (called ‘The Creation Epic), see Speiser, ‘Akkadian Myths’, 60–72.

⁸⁵ Clifford, *Creation*, 91.

⁸⁶ Walton, *Cosmology*, 29–30. Walton points out that this can be seen in ‘The Egyptian Memphite Theology’ where the creator is the one giving names to everything, and in ‘Enuma Elish’ 1.1-10, where the creation narrative “begins with neither the heavens and earth nor the gods having yet been named.” Walton, 29. See also Mettinger, *Names*, 6–11.

⁸⁷ Walton, *Cosmology*, 46–52. Tsumura concludes that תהו ובהו “simply means ‘emptiness’ and refers to the earth, which was a desolate and empty place, ‘an unproductive and uninhabited place.’” Tsumura, *Creation*, 35. See also section 2.1.2 for a discussion of תהו ובהו.

⁸⁸ Walton, *Cosmology*, 52.

⁸⁹ Smith, *Priestly*, 51.

⁹⁰ Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern*, 147–70; Walton, *Cosmology*, 21–35. Based on linguistic and textual examination of Genesis 1, Ellen Van Wolde argues that the verb ברא/ברא (in Gen. 1:1, 21, 27, 2:3) does not mean ‘to create’ but rather ‘to separate’. She points out that “the process of separation which is expressed by the verb ברא appears to start from a situation of non-unity. The verb ברא, on the other hand, initiates with some sort of

Gen. 1:3-2:3 has a repetitive pattern of God speaking, seeing, separating, and naming.⁹¹ Exemplified with day one, “*God said*, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and *God separated* the light from the darkness. *God called* the light Day, and the darkness He called Night [emphasis added. JPS,⁹² here and throughout].”⁹³ God rules the cosmos through his speaking, and his words carry an ultimate royal authority in ordering the world.⁹⁴ Mark Smith points out that “God’s primary role of speaking the world into existence [...] perhaps echoes the priestly role of teaching aloud to the Israelites at the Temple.”⁹⁵ In the Pentateuch, priests were teachers (Lev. 10:10-11, Deut. 24:8, 31:9-13, 33:10), and the Torah instructions they taught originated in the divine speech that expressed divine authority. God may be seen as a priestly figure in Gen. 2.16-17 since he instructs and gives a command/צוה to man. Seen from the order/chaos paradigm and God’s previous speech in Genesis 1, God’s command to man may be seen as an instruction on how to live within God’s ordered world in a proper way. God follows up the command by giving man insight into the consequence of disobedience, “but as for the tree of knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat of it; for as soon as you eat of it, you shall die.”⁹⁶ If humans follow the voice of God, order are upheld, but if they act contrary, death will be the consequence. Life and death, or said in another way, order and chaos, are related to God’s speech and the human response.

God is pictured as the one that creates and brings life to all creatures, and His “breath of life/נשמה חי” (Gen. 2:7) is the very substance that makes humans come alive. Life and blessing are closely related in both Gen. 1,22 and 1,28. In both instances, the “blessing/ברך” is pronounced by God and immediately followed up by “be fruitful and multiply and fill.” The blessing “is purely one of fertility and increase.”⁹⁷ In the same way, God creates and generates life in creation. God shares this power by blessing the sea creatures, the sky creatures (Gen.

unity: the elements that are not yet separated are conceived as belonging to the same set.” Wolde, ‘ברא’, 20. In response to Wolde’s thesis, see also Wardlaw Jr., ‘ברא’.

⁹¹ God said/אמר אלהים occurs in Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29. God saw/ראה אלהים occurs in Gen. 1:4, 9, 11, 14, 21, 25, 31. Separate/בדל occurs in Gen. 1:3, 6, 7, 14, 18. Called/קרא occurs in Gen. 1:5 (twice), 8, 10 (twice).

⁹² Jewish Publication Society Tanakh translation, 1985.

⁹³ Gen. 1:3-5.

⁹⁴ Middleton, *Image*, 26.

⁹⁵ Smith, *Priestly*, 67. See also section 2.2.1 for a discussion of humans as priest.

⁹⁶ Gen. 2:17

⁹⁷ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 51. There are several places where blessing and fertility are related in Genesis, see Gen. 9:1, 12:2, 17:16, 20, 22:17-18, 24:35, 24:60, 26:3-4.

1:22), and humans (Gen. 1:28) to multiply and bring forth more life.⁹⁸ God's intention and will is to establish an order that sustains and generates more life. In the Pentateuch, priests get the function of bestowing blessings on the people (Num. 6:22-26, Gen. 14:18-20). There seems to be an inner-textual link between the priestly role of blessing within the Pentateuch and God's blessings (Gen. 1:22, 28, 2:3) in the creation narrative. God is characterized as "the ultimate priest" who mediates blessing to His creation.⁹⁹

Ingrid Faro concludes in her analysis of the Hebrew lexemes for evil in Genesis that there is a relationship "between the associated triads of good-life-blessing and evil-death-curse."¹⁰⁰ Death can be seen as a sign of disorder and an incident contrary to God's will. In the same manner that a blessing brings life, a curse brings death and a lack of fertility.¹⁰¹ There are three occurrences of curse/רָרַח in Genesis 1-4: Gen. 3:14, where the serpent is cursed, Gen. 3:17, where the ground is cursed, and Gen. 4:11, where Cain is cursed. All three curses seem to come as a consequence of the previous failures to follow the voice of God. However, God never explicitly tells humans that the consequence of not following His voice will be 'curses'; instead, God states that the consequence will be death (Gen. 3:17). In Deut. 30:19 Israel gets the choice of life and death, blessing and curse, choices that are similar to what humans get in Gen. 2:16-17 and 4:6-7.¹⁰² Walter Moberly points out a linkage between death, adversity, and curses in the Pentateuch: "The meaning of death is explicated particularly by the terrible curses enumerated in Deuteronomy 28:15-68."¹⁰³ In Deut. 28:45 curses are presented as something that "shall pursue you and overtake you, until you are wiped out, because you did not heed your God and keep the commandments and laws that were enjoined upon you."¹⁰⁴ Death for Israel in the mentioned passage does not necessarily mean instant physical death, but death seems to be a metaphorical construal closely related to curses. Curses can be seen as the means and the outworking of death. Moberly proposes that the death God warns humans about in Gen. 2:17 is best understood within this same framework where death works itself out in God's good creation through curses, manifesting as alienation between humans and God, animals, and the ground.¹⁰⁵ Humans can either follow the voice of God and live within

⁹⁸ The reason for and the absence of 'land animals' not being blessed will be discussed in section 3.

⁹⁹ Smith, *Priestly*, 67, 102-8.

¹⁰⁰ Faro, *Evil*, 78.

¹⁰¹ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 168.

¹⁰² Peterson, *Genesis*, 43.

¹⁰³ Moberly, *Genesis*, 84.

¹⁰⁴ In Deut. 28:15, 45, and 30:15-20 curses are presented as the direct consequence for disobeying God's voice.

¹⁰⁵ Moberly, *Genesis*, 83-86..

his blessing and order, or they can disobey God with the consequence of bringing death and curses into creation. God trusts humans to carry an immense responsibility for His creation, which may result in blessing and life or curse and death.

God as creator, carries the ultimate kingly authority in creation. Wright points out how “kings and emperors in ancient times [...] would set up an image of themselves in far-flung corners of their domains to signify their sovereignty over that territory and its people. The image represented the authority of the true king.”¹⁰⁶ Along these lines, Wright argues that in Genesis 1:26-28 God is portrayed as a king when He creates and installs humans as an image of himself. Humans image the authority and sovereignty that belongs to God, the ultimate King of the earth.¹⁰⁷ Robert Alter points out that the structure, symmetry, language, and details in Gen. 1:1-2:3 is all “beautifully choreographed” and that the orderly style reflects a “particular vision of God, man, and the world.”¹⁰⁸ Creation is a governed process where God is the wise ruler, architect, and executor. With a well-organized style, the narrative portrays God as an orderly king that cares about and brings order to all creation, including the land, plants, trees, sun, moon, stars, animals, and humans.¹⁰⁹ Accordingly, Wright concludes that “God’s creating work exudes wisdom in planning, power in execution, and goodness in completion.”¹¹⁰ In Gen. 1:31, God evaluates all his work and finds it very good; thus, the order created by God is good.¹¹¹ In sum, God is characterized as a wise, powerful king, the source behind all life, and the craftsman of the cosmic good order.

¹⁰⁶ Wright, *Ethics*, 121. On divine statues in ANE, see McDowell, *Image*, 15:43–116.

¹⁰⁷ Wright, *Ethics*, 121. God is depicted as a king several places within the pentateuch: Exod. 15:18; 19:6; Num. 23:21; Deut. 33:5. Wright, 227.

¹⁰⁸ Alter, *Art*, 176–77, 178. On the “system of numerical harmony” in Gen. 1:1-2:3 see Cassuto, *Genesis*, 12–15. See also Fishbane on how the texts “economy of vocabulary and technique produces a dictum of controlled energy and force.” Fishbane, *Biblical*, 8.

¹⁰⁹ Westermann, *Genesis*, 2004, 12.

¹¹⁰ Wright, *Ethics*, 121. Kugel points out that some ancient interpreters of the bible “came to the conclusion that not only was wisdom the first thing God created, but the phrase “In the beginning” in Gen. 1:1 was intended to imply that it was by means of, or with the help of, wisdom that God had created the world.” Kugel, *Traditions*, 46. On “creation as divine wisdom,” see Smith, *Priestly*, 23–27.

¹¹¹ On the term good/טוב see section 2.2.2.

2.1.1 Creation battle

In ancient near eastern religions, there were many different rival gods, and creation could be perceived as “a result of divine conflict”¹¹² This can be seen in Enuma Elish (IV.91-V.22), where there is a battle between the two gods Tiamat and Marduk. The conflict ends with Marduk killing, dividing, and using Tiamat’s body as the basis for creation.¹¹³ In light of the ANE creation myths, Herman Gunkel has been one of the influential voices that have argued for interpreting Genesis 1 as God’s battle with the personified primordial ocean monster “תְהוֹם/ tēhôm” in Genesis 1:2.¹¹⁴ Relatedly, but not mentioning Genesis 1, Trygve Mettinger argues based on Canaanite combat myths and Psalms 74, 89 and 104 that God is characterized as a battling king. Creation can be seen as a battle that “bears witness to God’s victory over chaos.”¹¹⁵ The question is not whether God brings order in Genesis 1; instead, one may ask, is creation depicted as God’s active battle with chaos? David T. Tsumura argues convincingly that tēhôm “is simply a reflection of the common Semitic term *tiham- ‘ocean,’ and there is no relation between the Genesis account and the so-called *Chaoskampf* mythology.”¹¹⁶ Richard J. Middleton offers a helpful clarification and calls it a “methodological fallacy to assume [...] that any creation text that draws on the theme of God dividing or separating primordial waters must refer to a primordial battle.”¹¹⁷ This perspective seems to align with the flood story in Genesis 6-9, where God states that He will destroy the earth (Gen. 6:13), and it all happens through God controlling and sending the primordial waters, tēhôm (Gen. 7:11) upon the earth. The water is not in opposition to God, but under his control. In Genesis 1, God is the only one that speaks, unchallenged by other voices or forces. I find Walton’s conclusion appealing: “Genesis 1 resonates well with the ancient world but need not be provided with [...] a chaoskampf motif.”¹¹⁸ Rather than reading a creation battle into Genesis

¹¹² Longman, *Genesis*, 107–8, 79. See also Smith, *The Origins of Biblical Monotheism*, 167–68. On “the structure of the heavens” and what gods were related to the various elements in ANE, see Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern*, 134–38.

¹¹³ Another conflict that appears in the creation epic is between the gods Ea and Apsu (I.27-78) for further analysis of Enuma Elish and its conflicts, see Clifford, *Creation*, 82–93.

¹¹⁴ Gunkel, *Chaos*. “The primordial ocean is personified as a fertile being. The Babylonian form of the monster, Tī’āmat, actually corresponds in the Hebrew to the technical term for the primordial sea, תְהוֹם [tēhôm]. The invariable use of this term *without* the definite article allows us to conclude that it was once a proper name and hence designated a mythical figure.” Gunkel, 75–76.

¹¹⁵ Mettinger, *Names*, 100, 92–100.

¹¹⁶ Tsumura, *Creation*, 57. Cassuto points out that the biblical poets on occasion allude to tēhôm as a “creature endowed with its own volition, which rebelled against God and was ultimately subdued by the Divine might,” exemplified by Isaiah 51:9-10. “The Torah, however, refrained from accepting any part of this tradition.” Cassuto, *Genesis*, 23–24. Accordingly John Day argues that “all thought of conflict has disappeared and in which there is no longer trace of personality within the waters” of Genesis 1. Day, *Conflict*, 49.

¹¹⁷ Middleton, *The Liberating Image*, 243.

¹¹⁸ Walton, ‘Creation in Genesis’, 62. Accordingly Clifford concludes that Genesis 1 is eclectic and “[b]etraying the influence of different traditions.” Clifford, *Creation*, 144.

1, it seems reasonable to conclude that the narrative is presented as a “modification of old mythical material,” an alternative creation story that alternates from envisioning creation as a divine conflict.¹¹⁹ God is not characterized as a warrior, but as the ultimate, powerful unopposed craftsman.¹²⁰ Conflict and evil do not emanate from divine conflict in Genesis 1; instead, I will argue that it evolves from Adam and Eve’s interaction with the snake in Genesis 3.¹²¹ André LaCocque makes a similar argument and points out that “[t]he only enemy of God is found among His creatures. Only creatures can overshadow God’s goodness. Dualism is out.”¹²² This perspective aligns with the previous argument that humans’ disobedience to God’s voice initiates chaos, death, and conflict.

2.1.2 A generous God, sharing His rule

There seems to be an in-textual linkage between Gen. 1:2 and Gen. 1:28 that contributes to the characterization of God as a trusting and generous king. In Genesis 1:2, the earth was “unformed and void” [תהו ובהו/*tōhû wābōhû*] before God started to create. Middleton points out that the human vocation given in Gen. 1:28 is to form and fill the earth, which “presents a partial parallel to the *tōhû wābōhû*” and implies that humans are called to imitate and continue the work God started in Gen 1:2.¹²³ Humans are the last ones to be created, and God trusts them with a unique function to rule and serve within His creation (Gen. 1:26-28). The Hebrew term used for rule/רדה in Gen 1:28 is “often linked with kingship in the Old Testament.”¹²⁴ God, the ruling King in Genesis 1, trusts, delegates, and shares his royal rule with humans. This portrayal seems to contrast with how ANE sources portrayed humans’ role. In Enuma Elish VI. 1-38 humans are created and “charged with the service of the gods. That they might be at ease!”¹²⁵ Humans in Enuma Elish are slave laborers created to meet the needs of the deities. In Genesis, God provides food and clothes (Gen. 1:29, 2:9, 15, 3:21), and humans are portrayed as kings ruling alongside the ultimate King.¹²⁶ The contrast to ANE emphasizes

¹¹⁹ Smith, *Monotheism*, 167–69.

¹²⁰ Middleton, *Image*, 266. Even though there is little evidence for arguing that God is characterized as a warrior based on Genesis 1, there are arguably other biblical texts (Pss. 74:12-17, 89:11-13, 104:6-7; Job 26:7-13, 38:1-11; Jer. 31:35) that seems to present creation as a *Chaoskampf* and God as the victorious warrior. Day propose that “a process of demythologization has taken place and Yahweh’s control of the waters has simply become a job of work” in Genesis 1. Day, *Conflict*, 49. See also Smith, *Priestly*, 17–23, 59–64.

¹²¹ Longman, *Genesis*, 79.

¹²² LaCocque, *Trial*, 51.

¹²³ Middleton, *Image*, 89.

¹²⁴ Middleton, 51.

¹²⁵ Citation of Enuma Elish VI. 8 are retrieved from the translation of Speiser, ‘Akkadian Myths’.

¹²⁶ Humans as slave laborers are seen in several Sumerian and Akkadian sources, see Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern*, 186.

God's unique care for humanity; thus, God's command to humanity in Gen. 1:26-28 "must be understood in terms of caregiving, not exploitation."¹²⁷ The one powerful God that ordered the cosmos is characterized as a caring and generous King that trusts and shares His rule with humanity.

2.1.3 God as a divine parent

God is characterized as a father and humans as his children in Gen. 1-4. In Gen. 1, plants and animals are created after their own kind/מין.¹²⁸ In Gen. 1:25, there are three occurrences of מין, but in the following verses where humans are created, the term is absent. Instead, the terms "likeness/דמות" and "image/צלם" of God are used. Humans do not have their own 'kind' like animals and plants, but are made after God's likeness and image.¹²⁹ Catherine L. McDowell points out that by using the terms 'likeness' and 'image' instead of 'kind,' Genesis 1 presents humans as their "own category, type, or species, which is defined by being created in the image and likeness of God. However, at some level, humans belong to the divine class or species, that is, humanity's *kind or type is God*."¹³⁰

In the same way that a son bears the likeness of his father, humanity could be understood to bear the likeness of its father, God. Gen 1:26 seems to be an inner-textual linkage to Gen. 5:3, where the text points out that Adam "begot a son in his likeness [דמות] after his image [צלם], and he named him Seth." The two terms are used in describing Adam's relationship with his son, which may imply that the same terms in Gen. 1:25 also carry the notion of a father-son relationship.¹³¹ Additionally, Gen. 5:2 points out that God "names/קרא" the man, and in the following verse, Adam "names/קרא" his son Seth. The similarities between Adam and Seth's father-son relationship and Adam's relationship with God, allude to the reader that God is Adam's father.¹³² Further evidence could be seen in Gen 1:29 and 2:16-17, where God provides food and instructs man in a similar way that a Father provides food and instructs his

¹²⁷ Fretheim, *Pentateuch*, chap. 3, sec. The Creation and Disruption of the Universe (1:1–6:4).

¹²⁸ מין occurs in Gen. 1: 11, 12 (twice), 22 (twice), 24 (twice), 25 (thrice).

¹²⁹ Dumbrell, *Covenant*, 28–29.

¹³⁰ McDowell, *Image*, 15:133.

¹³¹ דמות appear in Gen. 5:1. The use of דמות and צלם in ANE may strengthen the argument. McDowell points out that "extrabiblical examples from the *Tukulti Ninurta Epic*, *Enūma Eliš*, and "The Instructions for Merikare," demonstrate that image and likeness terminology was indeed used in the ancient Near East to define the relationship between a god and his offspring as one of sonship." McDowell, 15:136.

¹³² Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, 45–46; Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 117–18. McDowell points out that Yahweh as Israel's father is well attested in the Hebrew Bible (Deut. 32:6; Jer. 3:19, 31:9; Exod. 4:22–23; Isa. 63:16, 64:7; Mal. 2:10, 2 Sam. 7:14). She argues that "the royal commission to rule and have dominion over the earth and creation—comes as a result of being the child of the Creator, Elohim." McDowell, *Image*, 15:137, 133–34, 139–41.

children. The blessing God provides for humanity in (Gen. 1:28) may be seen as a parallel to the blessing that fathers provide for their children within the Pentateuch (Gen. 9:27-27, 27:27, 48:15, 49:28)¹³³ Based on the arguments above; one may conclude that God is characterized as a father indirectly in Gen. 1-4. However, nowhere in Gen. 1-4 or Gen. 5:1-2 is God directly characterized as Adam's father in the same direct way that Adam is explicitly pronounced to be the father of Seth (Gen. 5:2-4). Sailhamer and Kline rightly conclude that God is characterized as a father, but they fail to distinguish between the indirect and direct characterization of God as a father.¹³⁴ The significance of the indirect portrayal of God as a father is well articulated by McDowell: “Gen 1:26–27 is defining the divine-human relationship in terms of sonship while at the same time carefully avoiding the divinization of humankind.”¹³⁵ In other words, one may say that the characterization of God as a divine parent point towards a likeness and unity between God and humans. On the other hand, the narrative clearly distinguishes between God as the divine creator and humans as His creatures.

2.2 God’s ruling shapes humans ruling

Humans are given the task to image God in and through their rule. In Genesis 1, humans are the last creatures to be created, and they get a unique and elevated place within creation. One of the primary and most direct ways humans are characterized is in Gen. 1:26-28. They are created in ‘the image of God/צֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים’ and subsequently, God commands them through speech to “[b]e fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule” the animals.¹³⁶ There seems to be a relationship between humans as images of God and the following command or function given to humans. According to Middleton, the image of God “refers to human rule, that is, the exercise of power on God’s behalf in creation.”¹³⁷ Frymer-Kensky points out that in Assyrian texts, ‘the image of god’ was used to describe kings as divine representatives on earth. Similarly, Genesis 1 claims that all humans are images of God, His representatives called to rule and act on His behalf.¹³⁸ Genesis claims that humans are made in the image of

¹³³ Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 117–18.

¹³⁴ Sailhamer, 117–18; Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, 45–46.

¹³⁵ McDowell, *Image*, 15:134. Ellen Van Wolde makes a similar point based on her discussion of the term ‘בָּדָא’ in Gen. 1:27. She argues that ‘בָּדָא’ means to separate, and that the function of the verb is to differentiate between humans and God. The ‘likeness’ and ‘image’ points towards unity with God, and the ‘בָּדָא’ points toward a distinction. Wolde, ‘אָרַב’, 14–18.

¹³⁶ On a linguistic-syntactical study of ‘צֶלֶם’ and its use in Genesis 1 see Middleton, *Image*, 43–60. See also McDowell, *Image*, 15:117–77.

¹³⁷ Middleton, *Image*, 88.

¹³⁸ Frymer-Kensky, ‘Image’, 322. On the “Image of God” in ANE and the OT, see also Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern*, 184–85.

God, which gives humanity a royal and elevated role in creation. Genesis 1 seems to challenge the ANE notion where the king was elevated as the image of god above other humans that did not share the same status.¹³⁹ If humans are to represent and exercise power on God's behalf in creation, "it must reflect the character and values of God's own kingship."¹⁴⁰ Humans are not free to abuse or rule as tyrants; their rule is to be shaped after God's model.¹⁴¹ In Genesis 1, God is revealed as a mighty King who is generous by sharing power, cares by providing food, and uses wisdom in bringing order. This is what humans are to image in and through their rule.

2.2.1 Priests leaving the Garden Sanctuary

I will argue that humans are characterized as priests created to live in intimate communion with God. However, they end up moving gradually away from both God and the Garden of Eden.¹⁴² According to Tremper Longman, "[c]reation comes to a completion with the introduction of humanity."¹⁴³ In one sense, humans may be seen as the pinnacle of the creation account in Genesis 1 since they are the only creature created in the image of God, and they are trusted with a special and unique function in ruling over both the animals and the land. On the other hand, humans are created on day six, but the whole narrative sequence is building towards the fulfillment of creation on the seventh day (Gen 2:1-3). Michael Morales points out that "[h]umanity, nevertheless, is not the culmination of creation, but rather humanity in sabbath day communion with God."¹⁴⁴ In Gen. 2:2-3 "the seventh day" is mentioned three times, thus emphasizing its distinctiveness and significance.¹⁴⁵ On that day, God finally rests with humanity inside His creation. This communal aspect seems to fit the earlier mentioned characterization of God as a father and humanity as His children. The Father-son communion on the Sabbath day seems to be part of the intention of creation. I agree with Morales that the culmination of creation is the Sabbath union with God; on the other side, I propose that the union is not limited to humans. In a sense, all creation works

¹³⁹ Middleton, *Image*, 146, 235.

¹⁴⁰ Wright, *Ethics*, 121.

¹⁴¹ Fretheim, 'Self-Limiting', 161.

¹⁴² Gen. 3:24, 4:14.

¹⁴³ Longman, *Genesis*, 106.

¹⁴⁴ Morales, *Leviticus*, 47.

¹⁴⁵ Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 7. The term "Sabbath/שבת" is not mentioned in Gen. 2:1-3, rather it is called "the seventh day/יום שביעי" and contains an allusion to the sabbath day. According to Cassuto the term, Sabbath day was used by the Babylonians and the Assyrians and "dedicated to the worship of the moon god, Sin-Nannaru and of the gods related to it." Consequently Gen. 1 uses "the seventh day" in order to prevent association, and in opposition to the pagan sabbath with its astrology and gods. Cassuto, *Genesis*, 65, 63-68.

together, and everything that happened in the previous six days comes to completion on the seventh day, and all of creation could thus be seen as a complete unity. The six days of creation are interrelated and paired up. On day one, light is created (Gen. 1:3-5), and on day four, the two lights are installed to dominate the day and night (Gen. 1:14-18). On day two, the skies and waters are separated (Gen. 1:6-8), and on day five, the birds and fish are installed to inhabit the skies and waters (Gen. 1:20-22). Lastly, on day three, land and plants are created (Gen. 1:9-12), and on day six, humans and animals are created to inhabit the land and eat from the plants (Gen. 1:24-30).¹⁴⁶ Daniel L. Hawk points out that “God is concerned with maintaining the good, the original harmony and unity, for the sake of the creation.”¹⁴⁷ All creation is interrelated; humans and animals cannot live without the light God created on day one and four, they die without the water separated out on day two, and they cannot live without the land and the plants for food created on day three. The seventh day is unique since God does not work, but rests from the previous work. The only day not paired up is the seventh, which could “be understood as paired with the first six days taken together, an inclusion serving to explain their goal.”¹⁴⁸ The oneness of creation is seen on the seventh day, where God comes to rest within the whole of what He created on the previous six days. Even though Genesis 1 points towards the intended intimate and unique relationship between God and humans, man is not the center of the narrative. I propose that the culmination of creation is the sabbath day community between God and all creation. Creation is incomplete without God in it or said with temple imagery; the temple is a temple because God rests in it. Concerning humanity, Westermann puts it best: “man can maintain his humanity only in the presence of God. Man separated from God has not only lost God, but also the purpose of his humanity.”¹⁴⁹

The creation narrative in Gen. 2-3 points toward an intimate relationship between God and humans. Alexander Desmond points out that Gen. 1 “provides a panoramic description of creation,” while Gen. 2-3 is a close-up that “concentrates [...] on the first human couple, Adam and Eve, and their activity within the Garden of Eden.”¹⁵⁰ The creation account in Genesis 1 starts with God (Gen. 1:1) and ends with God (Gen. 2:3), the self-sufficient creator

¹⁴⁶ Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 6-7; Sarna, *Genesis*, 4.

¹⁴⁷ Hawk, *The Violence of the Biblical God*, 24.

¹⁴⁸ Morales, *Leviticus*, 43.

¹⁴⁹ Westermann, C., *The Genesis Accounts of Creation*, (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 21-22, quoted in Morales, 47.

¹⁵⁰ Desmond, *From Paradise*, 10.

and “transcendent Being” that is sovereign and exists outside of time and space.¹⁵¹ In Gen. 1, God is only designated by the general term for a deity אֱלֹהִים. However, in the following account in Gen. 2-4, God is given a personal name, “Yahweh/יהוה,” that “emphasizes the personal nature of God’s relationship with humanity.”¹⁵² Norman C. Habel points out that “the anthropomorphisms of Genesis 2–4 are so bold that they almost seem to depict Yahweh in terms of human limitations.”¹⁵³ God *molds* and *breaths* into the man in Gen. 2:7, He *plants* in Gen. 2:8, *walks* in Gen. 3:8, and *made garments* in Gen. 3:21. The transcendent and sovereign creator from Gen. 1 is now presented in a complementary account, where God is described by human terms, and thereby depicted as an even more personal, immanent and intimate ruler.¹⁵⁴ The intimate relationship between God and humans may be seen in how they interact and talk together inside the garden (Gen. 2:15-18, 3:9-13, 16-19, 22). Additionally, in Genesis 3:8, God walks in the garden, “apparently looking to spend some time with Adam and Eve.”¹⁵⁵ McDowell points out that “[b]y placing *human beings* in the sacred garden rather than in an urban environment removed from Yahweh’s holy habitation, the Eden story makes a remarkable statement about the divine-human relationship: God and humankind were meant to dwell together.”¹⁵⁶

The garden of Eden in Gen. 2-3 could be understood as a sanctuary.¹⁵⁷ Gordon Wenham has pointed out that the Garden of Eden is “an archetypal sanctuary, that is a place where God dwells and where man should worship him.”¹⁵⁸ He argues that sanctuary symbolism is used in Gen. 2-3. Several parallels are mentioned in Wenham’s article, but only a few are significant for the following discussion and will be mentioned here:

¹⁵¹ Sarna, *Genesis*, 2–4.

¹⁵² Desmond, *From Paradise*, 12. Yahweh occurs 30 times within Gen. 2:4-4:26.

¹⁵³ Habel, *Literary*, 25. See also LaCocque for the anthropomorphic way J speaks of the divine. LaCocque, *Trial*, 55–56.

¹⁵⁴ Desmond, *From Paradise*, 12.

¹⁵⁵ Hays, *Temple*, 21. Beale points out that “Israel’s temple was the place where the priest experienced God’s unique presence, and Eden was the place where Adam walked and talked with God. The same Hebrew verbal form (stem) *mithallek* (hithpael) used for God’s ‘walking back and forth’ in the Garden (Gen. 3:8), also describes God’s presence in the tabernacle (Lev. 26:12; Deut. 23:14 [15]; 2 Sam. 7:6–7).” Beale, *Temple*, 66.

¹⁵⁶ McDowell, *Image*, 15:156–57.

¹⁵⁷ For a representative list of scholars and the common arguments for sanctuary symbolism in Gen 1-3, see Davidson, ‘Sanctuary’.

¹⁵⁸ Wenham, ‘Sanctuary’. See also Beale, *Temple*, 66–87; Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 104–27; Hinckley, ‘Sanctuary’. Based on similarities to ANE sources in Mesopotamia and Egypt, McDowell argues that the garden of Eden is a sacred place (similar to Ea’s garden of the Apsû). McDowell, *Image*, 15:142–52.

1. In Gen. 2:15, “God took the man and placed him in the garden of Eden, to till [עבד] it and tend [שמר] it.” Wenham points out that the only other places in the Pentateuch the two verbs עבד and שמר are used together is in Num. 3:7-8, 8:26, 18:5-6 where they describe “the Levites’ duties in guarding and ministering in the sanctuary.”¹⁵⁹ Accordingly, “the collocation of verbs in Genesis 2:15 gives Adam’s vocation a priest-like character,” one that ministers and guards the Eden sanctuary.¹⁶⁰

2. In Gen. 3:24, God stationed a cherub in the east at the garden entrance “to guard the way to the tree of life.” The Garden of Eden and the temple/tabernacle were entered from the east. In Exod. 25:18-22 cherubs are placed on the top of the ark, and in 26:1, 31-33, cherubs are embroidered on the curtains in the tabernacle that separated the Holy and the Holy of Holies. Similarly, in 1 Kings 6:23-29 cherubs decorate the walls in the temple, and they are placed in the temple to guard the inner sanctuary.¹⁶¹ Adam and Eve’s expulsion from the garden can thus be perceived as the high priests being expelled from the Holy of Holies. In Gen. 4:16, “Cain left the presence of the LORD and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden.” The significance of Cain going to the east suggests that he is going further away from the entrance to the garden, thus leaving the presence of the Lord.

3. In Gen. 3:21, “the LORD God made garments [כתנת] of skins [עור] for Adam and his wife, and clothed [לבש] them [Hebrew words added].” Wenham points out that similar vocabulary, כתנת and לבש, is associated with the clothing of the priests in the Pentateuch (Exod. 28:40-29:8, 40:14, Lev. 8:7-13, 16:4).¹⁶² The clothes were given the priests so their nakedness would be covered (Exod. 20:26, 28:42).¹⁶³ Accordingly, the clothing and garments of Adam and Eve in Gen. 3:21 may be alluding to their priestly status.

¹⁵⁹ Wenham, ‘Sanctuary’, 401.

¹⁶⁰ Hinckley, ‘Sanctuary’, 7. A similar argument for understanding עבד and שמר as priestly terms are made by Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 104–15. See also Sailhamer, who argues that the two words are best translated with the priestly terms “to worship and obey.” Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 100–102.

¹⁶¹ Wenham, ‘Sanctuary’, 401.

¹⁶² Wenham, 401–2.

¹⁶³ Robert Hinckley points out that “[a]fter they realized their nakedness (עירום), the man and the woman made for themselves ‘aprons’ (Gen 3:7). From the root for ‘gird oneself’ (הגיר), a similar notion exists with the sashes the priests girded around their waists (Exod 29:9). Aaron also was girded with the ephod, which was like an apron (Exod 28:6; Lev 8:7).” Hinckley, ‘Sanctuary’, 7.

One may conclude that the Garden of Eden is depicted as a sanctuary, and humans as its priest. The planting of the garden in Gen. 2:8 makes clear that the garden is within an area called Eden. When Adam and Eve in Gen. 3:24 are expelled from the garden, they are still living in the area called Eden, but now outside of the garden. When Cain moves further away from the garden in Gen. 4:16, one may perceive that he moved to a place outside of Eden. Michael Morales has pointed out that there may be a cultic structuring of Genesis 2-7 where the garden corresponds to the Holy of Holies, Eden corresponds to the Holy place, the outside of Eden corresponds to the outer court, and the deluge in Gen. 7 corresponds to the wilderness.¹⁶⁴ Humans gradually move away from the Sabbath communion with God in the garden sanctuary, towards the chaotic waters. The narrative moves from order to chaos, from communion to detachment.

2.2.2 God's original plan for humans to extend the garden

The garden seems to have clear geographical boundaries that spatially separate it from the rest of the world. William Dumbrell points out that the term garden/גן in Gen. 2:8 refers to a “fenced-off enclosure” that may have been protected by a wall.¹⁶⁵ There is an inside and an outside of the garden, made evident by God expelling humans and thereby placing a cherub to guard the entrance (Gen. 3:24). The guard and the implied fence around suggest that the garden is a sheltered place where creatures are safe; thus, in one way or another, the garden needed to be protected from what is threatening on the outside.¹⁶⁶ The previously mentioned role of humans to rule on God's behalf may be understood in relation to extending the geographical size of the garden. Beale points out that Adam and Eve “were to extend the smaller liveable area of the garden by transforming the outer chaotic region into a habitable territory.”¹⁶⁷ The ordering of the outer world is to be modeled upon God's ordering of the Garden of Eden as a sacred space. The sacred garden may be seen as the blueprint for what the whole earth is envisioned to become, “a temple-city filled with people who have a holy or priestly status.”¹⁶⁸ Walton makes a helpful distinction between ‘non-order’ and ‘disorder.’

¹⁶⁴ Morales, *Leviticus*, 64–66.

¹⁶⁵ Dumbrell, *Covenant*, 41.

¹⁶⁶ Osborn, *Death*, 35. See further discussion in section 3.5.

¹⁶⁷ Beale, *Temple*, 82.

¹⁶⁸ Desmond, *From Eden*, 30. Desmond points out that “The earliest readers of, or listeners to, Genesis would have automatically associated the creation of God's sanctuary on the earth with a city. They would have quickly realized that Eden was the elevated location designated by God to be at the center of his temple-city.” Desmond, *From Paradise*, 16–17. Gregory Beale points out that the commission to expand the garden-sanctuary have

The world before Genesis 3 had both order and non-order, and humans were placed in the world to continue God's work of bringing order to the whole world. Non-order is neither evil nor good, but neutral. On the other side, disorder is the destructive consequences humans brought about in Gen. 3 and 4 through their disobedience and interaction with the animals.¹⁶⁹ Humans that brought disorder are removed from the sacred and ordered garden (Gen. 3:23). By using Walton's terminology of non-order and disorder; one may raise the vital question of how one is to understand the state of the 'good creation' before the human failures in Genesis 3 and 4?

According to Ronald E. Osborn, the term good/טוב in Gen. 1 is used in a similar way as other places in the Hebrew Bible (Gen. 24:16, 50:20 Num. 24:17) where it "describes qualities of beauty, worthiness or fitness for a purpose but never absolute moral or ontological perfection."¹⁷⁰ It is important to distinguish between what is perfect, complete in the sense that there is no more work or development to do, and what is declared good, "beautiful as a work of stupendous art" ready to develop to fulfill its purpose.¹⁷¹ Within creation, God commands humans and animals to multiply (Gen. 1:22, 28), an ongoing process that will continue after the seventh day. The earth is given an essential function in this ongoing process, to bring forth "vegetation: seed-bearing plants, fruit trees of every kind" (Gen. 1:11) that will be food for humans and animals (Gen. 1:29-30). As pointed out earlier, humans are given the work to master the earth and rule the animals; this indicates that creation is not perfect or "yet all God planned it to be," but it is made good, ready for humans and animals to fulfill God's command.¹⁷² The space of non-order "needs to be brought under the dominion of the divine rule for which Eden is a model."¹⁷³

This raises an important question: Was non-order, death, and pain part of God's intended good creation? Death is first introduced to the narrative in Gen. 2:17, where God mentions it to Adam as the consequence of not following the command. It is reasonable to conclude that Adam already knows what death is at this stage in the narrative since God refers to it in the

parallels or "imperfect echoes" in ANE concepts of temple expansion through the rule of priestkings. For further discussion see Beale, *Temple*, 87–93.

¹⁶⁹ Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 49–52, 159–60.

¹⁷⁰ Osborn, *Death*, 29. טוב occurs in Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31. Osborn points out that "[t]here are other words in biblical Hebrew that are closer to the English sense of 'perfect' than tob me'od and that might have been used instead." Osborn, 29.

¹⁷¹ Wright, *Ethics*, 107.

¹⁷² Wright, 108; Osborn, *Death*, 26. Walton comes to a similar conclusion, see Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 53–57.

¹⁷³ Dumbrell, *Covenant*, 41.

conversation.¹⁷⁴ Accordingly, Gen. 3:16 states that the pain in childbirth will multiply/רבה , thus implying that humans “knew pain before the fall even if not prolonged suffering.”¹⁷⁵ On the other hand, pain and death seem abnormal for humans inside the garden since the increased pain and death result from eating the forbidden fruit.¹⁷⁶ In Gen. 3:22-24 humans are banished from the garden so they cannot access the Tree of Life and live forever. Humans were not created immortal, but by placing them inside the garden with the Tree of Life, one may conclude that humans were destined to live forever.¹⁷⁷ Only by their disobedience did they lose access to the Tree of Life and were doomed to die outside in the realm of non-order. Just because humans originally had their residence inside the garden does not mean that they did not go outside; instead, one may expect that they went outside if they were to extend the garden.¹⁷⁸ However, one may conclude that the outside is related to death and the inside to life and that both spaces were present from the beginning.¹⁷⁹ It is not necessary to think of death and pain as part of God’s “good” creation, but it is possible to see them as neutral elements that are part of the non-ordered world outside of the good garden.¹⁸⁰

In Genesis 1, it is stated seven times that God “saw/ראה” and thereby pronounced what He had created to be “good/טוב” (Gen. 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). God uses His sight to evaluate and judge what is good.¹⁸¹ The sevenfold repetition of creation being good may be perceived as a reflection of who the creator is, a good God.¹⁸² The two terms ראה and טוב do have a significant inner-textual connection to Gen. 3:6, where both terms occur in Eve’s interaction with the snake. This time it is not God, but Eve that sees/ראה and judges on her own what is good/טוב. Osborn points out that there are “principles of freedom at work in creation,” God ‘completes’ his work on the seventh day (Gen. 2:2) and then hands it over to his creatures.¹⁸³ God has trusted Eve with the freedom and responsibility to judge; however, her judgment is supposed to be shaped by God’s wisdom and voice. Eve’s judgment is conflicting with God’s

¹⁷⁴ Osborn, *Death*, 36.

¹⁷⁵ Osborn, 36.

¹⁷⁶ LaCocque, *Trial*, 99.

¹⁷⁷ Van Ee, ‘Death’, 176.

¹⁷⁸ Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 135–36.

¹⁷⁹ The same argument may be made based on Gen. 4:13-16 where Cain leaves Eden and fears that he will be killed. God answers by putting a mark on Cain to protect him from being killed on the outside.

¹⁸⁰ Walton, *Old Testament Theology*, 184–86.

¹⁸¹ Faro, *Evil*, 140.

¹⁸² Faro, 98.

¹⁸³ Osborn, *Death*, 31.

command in Gen. 2:16-17.¹⁸⁴ In this incident, Eve fails to image God, listen to his voice, and judge correctly, which brings consequences (Gen. 3:9, 15-24) that disrupt the good order.¹⁸⁵ Creation was set up, good, and ready for humans, but they misused the freedom and damaged what was initially good. Instead of extending the garden and transforming the realm of non-order to order, humans were expelled from the ordered space into the realm of non-order.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁴ For further discussion on Eve's disobedience, see section 3.3. Another example of God's judgment can be seen in Gen. 2:18, where God evaluates that it is not good/טוב for man to be alone, and so He makes the woman.

¹⁸⁵ The same is true for Adam since he silently agreed and acted upon Eve's judgment (Gen. 3:6).

¹⁸⁶ Beale, *Temple*, 87.

3. Relationship between humans and animals

In this chapter, I propose that humans failed to rule the animals and thus ended up being ruled by them. The consequence was that humans brought disorder into God's good and well-organized creation.

Richard Bauckham has helpfully pointed out how humans stand in vertical and horizontal relationships with animals. In Gen. 1:28 (and 2:15), the vertical is emphasized by placing humans on top in the creation-hierarchy where they are to master the earth and rule the animals on God's behalf. Thus, the horizontal relationship is emphasized by presenting humans similarly to animals and the earth.¹⁸⁷ Humans do not get their own day in creation, but are created on the same day as the land-animals (Gen. 1:24-31). Both are created from the earth (Gen. 1:25, 2:7, 19), both are called a "living being/נֶפֶשׁ חַי" (Gen. 1:20-21, 24, 2:7, 19), both are blessed (Gen. 1:22, 28), and the overarching equality is that both are created and formed by the hand of God.¹⁸⁸ The earth is the space where land animals and humans live (Gen. 1:24-28), and the earth is what produces food for both humans and animals (Gen. 1:29-30). Humans depend on the earth; likewise, the earth depends on humans "to till the soil" (Gen. 2:5-6) for it to produce food.¹⁸⁹

From this horizontal perspective, one may argue that the royal task of mastering and ruling in Gen. 1:28 should be understood similarly to how God rules and how an ideal king in the Pentateuch rules and serves his people.¹⁹⁰ In Deut. 17:14-21 The king is presented as one among his brothers who should not be lifted above others. Based on an OT survey of kingship, Wright argues that the command to rule (Gen. 1:28, 2:15) is best understood in terms of "dominion exercised through servanthood."¹⁹¹ Thus, the king's duties go beyond human relations, and animals "are brought into the sphere of human ethics."¹⁹² Accordingly, Saul M. Olyan points out biblical laws (Exod. 22:28b-29 & Lev. 27:28-29) where "domesticated animals and human beings receive a consistently symmetrical treatment."¹⁹³

¹⁸⁷ Bauckham, *Living*, 2–5. See also David Clough's chapter on what humans have in common with animals, Clough, *Animals*, 31–44.

¹⁸⁸ Osborn, *Death*, 28. David L. Clough mentions several places within the Pentateuch that depict the shared life of humans and animals (Gen. 12, 15:7-11, Exod. 11:7, 12:37-8, 13:11-16, 22:29b-30, 23:12, Lev. 20:16-6, 25:6-7). Clough, *Animals*, 35–36.

¹⁸⁹ LaCocque, *Trial*, 52–53.

¹⁹⁰ Bauckham, *Living*, 5, 228.

¹⁹¹ Wright, *Ethics*, 122–26. Bauckham understands the command in Gen. 1:28 in similar terms, "authority to be exercised by caring responsibility, not domination." Bauckham, *Living*, 7.

¹⁹² Murray, *Cosmic*, 113.

¹⁹³ Olyan, 'Symmetry', 79.

Along the same lines, through surveying animal laws and rights in the Pentateuch, Chilkuri V. Rao concludes that “animal life just as human life belongs to God,” and humans need to show “kindness and compassion to animals, shielding them from suffering and from all avoidable pain [...] animals have rights. Primarily the right to life!”¹⁹⁴ In Gen. 1-2, God cares for animals and wants them to coexist with humanity on the earth, and the legal rights that appear later in the Pentateuch should be no surprise. Rao argues that humans, as images of God (Gen. 1:26), are to treat animals like God does, and in his understanding, this certainly means not killing or using them for human “pleasure and existence.”¹⁹⁵ I agree that humans are to image God, but Rao fails to assess how God treats and relates to animals and killing in Gen. 1-4. In Gen. 3:20, God made garments for Adam and Eve out of animal skin, demonstrating how killing an animal may be appropriate when it benefits humans. God was the first to kill an animal, and this incident may be perceived as the first sacrifice in the Pentateuch.¹⁹⁶ Osborn points out that the killing may be seen as “moral pedagogy” where “Adam and Eve must learn that the consequences of their sin are death.”¹⁹⁷ Additionally, and not necessarily exclusively, the significance of the new animal clothes may be “to protect them in the unsheltered, untamed world outside the Garden.”¹⁹⁸ Regardless of the clothes’ significance, God is the one that takes the initiative and kills an animal for human benefit.¹⁹⁹ In Gen. 4:2-4 Abel brought the firstborn sheep as an offering, and God accepted the animal sacrifice in counter to Cain’s fruit of the soil offering. Nothing in the text points toward seeing animal-killing/sacrifice as forbidden; rather, the opposite seems true regarding sacrifices.²⁰⁰ The whole sacrificial system, including the killing of animals, within the Pentateuch was instituted by God (Exod. 20:24, Lev. 1-7). It is hard to argue that God is against all kinds of animal-killing when God is the first one recorded to kill an animal, and he commands humans to do likewise as part of the sacrificial cult. However, Blenkinsopp argues that there was a “state of peaceful coexistence” between humans and animals in the original creation where both were created herbivores (Gen. 1:29-30). He points out that the peaceful coexistence got lost, and thereby God opened

¹⁹⁴ Rao, *Animal*, 284. See also Olyan that argues based on Exod. 23:10-11, 12; Lev. 25:2-7 and Deut. 5:12-15, for animal rights and their legal standing. Olyan, ‘Legal’.

¹⁹⁵ Rao, *Animal*, 276, 283–85.

¹⁹⁶ Parry, ‘Garden’, 142–43; Davidson, ‘Sanctuary’, 76; Hinckley, ‘Sanctuary’, 8.

¹⁹⁷ Osborn, *Death*, 36.

¹⁹⁸ Osborn, 36. See also section 3.1.2.

¹⁹⁹ The human prerogative to use animal skin for their physical need may also lend evidence to the use of animals for consumption. Stanhope, *Genesis*, 202.

²⁰⁰ A similar point may be made in Gen. 8:20-21 where Noah offered several animals, and the odor pleased the Lord. Peterson points out that the sacrifice in Gen. 3:21 “helps explain the sacrificial practices of the patriarchs as well (8:20; 12:7; 13:4, 18; 22:9; 26:25; 33:20; 35:1–7).” Peterson, *Genesis*, 55.

for killing animals for food in Gen. 9:3-5.²⁰¹ This horizontal view of peaceful harmony between animals and humans in Gen. 1-2 has been contradicted by Joshua Van Ee in his doctoral thesis on death and animal peace in the garden. He argues persuasively for a more vertical view and concludes that:

Death and conflict also need to color the picture [...] The Hebrew Bible does not describe a time without carnivores, a time of animal peace. Instead, some level of conflict or strife among animals and between humans and animals is assumed from the beginning.²⁰²

Regarding Blenkinsopp's and similar arguments using the food distribution in Gen. 1:28-30 and Gen. 9:3-5 as an argument for animal peace, Van Ee interacts and points out that the food in Gen. 1:29-30 is mentioned in reference to Gen. 1:11. The purpose of Gen. 1:29-30 is to define that the different plants created on day three may be used as food, and not to present a complete detailed human-animal diet. Nothing is said about other food sources like milk, honey, or animals.²⁰³ Van Ee points out that the Hebrew Bible says nothing negative about humans or carnivorous animals eating meat. Instead, it was seen as a blessing for humans to kill and eat animals given in creation, and the task to rule in Gen. 1:28 "most likely allow the use of animals as a food source."²⁰⁴

According to Van Ee's examination, the two key terms in Gen. 1:28, master/כבש and rule/רדה, "describe humankind's unique position and duty. The Former focuses on the pursuit of dominion over the animals and the latter on exercising that dominion."²⁰⁵ Progress and the royal human task to extend the garden will not happen without resistance and conflict with the animals.²⁰⁶ Ronald E. Osborn comes to a similar conclusion as Van Ee in his study of death before the fall. He points out that pain, death, and conflict are present before Genesis 3 and

²⁰¹ Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch*, 62.

²⁰² Van Ee, 'Death', 329.

²⁰³ Van Ee, 197-98; Driver, *Genesis*, 16. In Gen. 9:4-6 God instructs humans to only eat prepared meat. "In Gen 1:28 the right to eat animals was implied, but in 9:3 it needs to be explicitly mentioned since God was modifying that portion of humankind's relations with animals." Van Ee, 'Death', 249, 263. For the full argument see Van Ee, 193-265.

²⁰⁴ Van Ee, 'Death', 194, 334-42.

²⁰⁵ Van Ee, 213.

²⁰⁶ Van Ee, 328.

that the human task in Gen. 1:28 suggests a battle with animals.²⁰⁷ Humans are to engage in “a battle,” but nothing in the narrative suggests that God is threatened or engages in some kind of battle. David M. Carr points out that large numbers may depict great power, and the human-animal hostility may be seen in God’s “empowering multiplication blessing” in Gen. 1:28, where only humans, in contrast to the other land animals, are granted the blessing.²⁰⁸ The birds in the sky and creatures in the waters live in a different space than humans. Their multiplication will not be a threat, which may be the reason why God grants them a similar blessing as humans get, to be fruitful and multiply in their habitats (Gen. 1:22).²⁰⁹ God’s command concerning multiplication, mastering, and ruling in Gen. 1:28 can thus be seen as an argument for the vertical relationships between humans and animals. However, the implied human-animal hostility does not erase the horizontal relationship to animals, nor does it permit animal cruelty or erase the animal laws within the Pentateuch.²¹⁰ The human task to rule animals points towards a wise rule that in accordance with the horizontal relationship, take care of and respect animals as God’s creatures; on the other hand, this wisdom and respect for animals does not exclude killing if there is a good reason for it (like, sacrifices, clothing, food, and threats).²¹¹ Said in another way, humans are given the responsibility and trust by God to rule over animals’ life and death.

3.1 Adam gets a complementary companion

In Gen. 2:18, God pronounces that He will make a “fitting helper/עֹזֵר נֹגֵד” for the “man/אָדָם” because in God’s eyes, it is not good for him to be alone. Wenham points out that the expression עֹזֵר נֹגֵד points towards someone complementary, a companion that provides mutual support in work (Gen. 1:28, 2:15) and life.²¹² In the following verses (2:19-20), God created and brought the animals to the man for him to name them, but the man did not find a fitting helper among the animals. According to Raymond, C. Ortlund Jr., God brought the animals to the man “[b]ecause the man did not yet see the problem of his aloneness. And so God

²⁰⁷ Osborn, *Death*, 32–36. A similar view of death as part of God’s good creation is found in the ancient commentary, *Genesis Rabbah*, that “claim that the inclusion of death made creation very good.” Kraemer, *Suffering*, 136.

²⁰⁸ Carr, ‘Competing’, 263. Carr points out that power in large numbers may be seen in (Exod. 1:7-10, 10:1-20, Gen. 9:1, 7). Carr, 263.

²⁰⁹ Carr, 263.

²¹⁰ Van Ee, ‘Death’, 334; Carr, ‘Competing’, 264.

²¹¹ The horizontal and vertical relationship are seen in Gen. 9:1-17, where God explicitly states that humans may eat animals. In the following verses, He establishes a covenant with animals and humans, thus giving them a shared status as covenant partners. Murray, *Cosmic*, 102.

²¹² Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 68. עֹזֵר is not demeaning, but the word is used about God in Exod. 18:4 and Deut. 33:7.

translated the man's objective aloneness into a feeling of personal loneliness by setting him to this task."²¹³ In other words, God educates man about companionship and the differences between humans and animals.²¹⁴ The point is that man needs a different kind of companion, one that "is his vis-à-vis, on the same level with him, who is neither God nor beast."²¹⁵ The task of naming may have an inner-textual relation to Gen. 1:5, 8, 10, where God created through naming, and Gen. 1:28, where man is placed to rule over the animals.²¹⁶ By man naming the animals in the context of their creation (Gen. 2:19-20), man images God, and the animals are thereby depicted as "subordinated" and "inferiors, not equals."²¹⁷ In Gen. 2:23, man pronounces that "[t]his one shall be called [קרא] Woman [אשה], for from man [איש] was she taken." Tribble points out that both the noun name/שם and verb call/קרא need to be present to signify power over an object. In Gen. 2:23, only the verb appears, which makes him conclude that man's exclamation does not signify man's power over the woman, instead it is a "rejoicing in their mutuality."²¹⁸ Further evidence for this view may be seen in Gen. 2:21-22 where God took the man's side/צלע and fashioned it into a Woman.²¹⁹ The man/אדם that was closely related to, formed from, and differentiated from the ground/אדמה (Gen. 2:5-8) is now being differentiated into two creatures, Man/איש and Women/אשה.²²⁰ Wolde points out that the resemblance between איש and אשה "represent to the reader the semantic content of equality and difference in sex, of both unity and distinction."²²¹ Gen. 2:18-24 clarifies that Man and Woman; are distinct from animals, their differences are complementary, and they belong together as one unity (Gen. 1:27, 2:23-24).²²²

²¹³ Ortlund Jr., 'Equality', 100. See also Midrash Rabbah Genesis 17:4, which makes a connection to Gen. 3:12; the woman was created, only after the man "expressly demanded her," because God "foresaw that he would bring charges against her." Freedman and Simon, *Rabbah*, 1:136.

²¹⁴ Biddle, *Sin*, 10; Faro, *Evil*, 101-2.

²¹⁵ LaCocque, *Trial*, 103. See also, Tribble, *Sexuality*, 90.

²¹⁶ Blenkinsopp, *The Pentateuch*, 62. By naming, Hickley points out that Adam is making distinctions between the animals, an inner-textual relationship to the primary duties of priests, to distinguish between clean and unclean animals (Lev. 11:47, 20:24-26). Hinckley, 'Sanctuary', 7.

²¹⁷ Tribble, *Sexuality*, 92; Gage, *Genesis*, 31.

²¹⁸ Tribble, *Sexuality*, 100. See also Ramsey, who disagrees with Tribble and argues that the naming of both animals and the woman are acts of discernment rather than domination. Ramsey, 'Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2?'. However, both arguments point towards seeing Gen. 2:23 as man's discovery of the unique unity between Man and Woman, in contrast to man and animals.

²¹⁹ Based on a word analysis of צלע, Walton argues that it is best translated as "side" and not rib. Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 77-81.

²²⁰ Wolde, *Words*, 6:13-21; Tribble, *Sexuality*, 94-105. In this paper, I am referring to איש by using the capital letter on the term "Man," and "man" refers to אדם. The dividing of man into two, and then the two coming together as one unity, is a similar motif to what was found in Genesis 1, where God created by separating. See Wolde, 'ברא'.

²²¹ Wolde, *Words*, 6:19.

²²² For a similar conclusion, see Carr, 'Competing', 256-57.

3.2 Disrupted order

In Genesis 3-4, humans disrupt God's good order and unity. Man and woman are created together as God's image in Gen. 1:27; similarly, in Gen. 2:24-25, Man and woman are presented as one intertwined unity. Their innocence and intimacy are depicted by them being naked/ערום and without shame (Gen. 2:25), thus "they felt no need to hide or cover themselves."²²³ Sailhamer points out that there is an obvious play between the shrewd/ערום serpent in Gen 3:1 and naked/ערום in Gen. 2:25. "The link provides an immediate clue to the potential relationship between the serpent's 'cunning' and the innocence implied in the 'nakedness' of the couple."²²⁴ The two innocent, naked/ערום and unashamed humans in Gen. 2:25 are "susceptible to exploitation by the dark wisdom" of the shrewd/ערום serpent.²²⁵ In the following verses, humans interact with the serpent, who points them towards eating from the forbidden tree in order for them to gain more wisdom and become like God (Gen. 3:1-6). The outcome in Gen. 3:7-13 is put as a contrast to the intimacy and unity between Man and Woman in Gen. 2:25; humans got new knowledge and perceived that they were naked, but the consequences are seemingly negative when they blame each other, make clothes to cover their nakedness, hide from God and thus experience shame for the first time.²²⁶ The original unity between Man and women depicted by their nakedness/ערום and lack of shame in Gen. 2:25 are disrupted and made shameful by a third party, the shrewd/ערום animal.²²⁷ Man and woman get more concerned with covering their peculiar sexual differences from each other than valuing the original unity and interrelatedness.²²⁸

Looking at the narrative's prominent structure in Gen. 1-4, there is a negative development where Adam, Eve, and Cain fail to be the royal priests that rule God's creation and sustain its order and unity. What happened, and in what way did they fail? There are several similarities between Gen. 3 and 4.²²⁹ The human interaction with the serpent in Gen. 3:1-5, and the sin-

²²³ Faro, *Evil*, 108–9. Direct characterization is used to emphasize that humans are without shame.

²²⁴ Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 103.

²²⁵ Emmrich, 'Temptation', 12.

²²⁶ Biddle, 'Genesis 3', 361; Wolde, *Words*, 6:7–8. The disrupted unity may also be seen in Gen. 3:16. Van Ee points out that the change of word for naked in Gen. 2:25 (ערום) and 3:7 (עירם) is to highlight that humans did not become shrewd/ערום but just saw that they were naked/עירם. Van Ee, 'Death', 147.

²²⁷ LaCocque, *Trial*, 137. LaCocque points out that the serpent enters the scene in-between Adam and Eve.

"[B]efore Eve's eyes the serpent happens to be naked as is Adam. One nakedness meets another nakedness, but one is an innocent openness, while the other is manipulative calculation." (ibid. 137-138).

²²⁸ Faro, *Evil*, 151.

²²⁹ Alan J. Hauser has pointed out several linguistic and thematic links between Genesis 2-3 and 4:1-16. Hauser, 'Linguistic'. See also German's revised dissertation on the literary synthesis of Gen. 2-4: German, *Fall*. For parallels between the narratives of Adam, Cain and Noah, see Steinmetz, 'Vineyard', 197–98.

animal in Gen. 4:7-8, seem to be the decisive incidents that bring about curses instead of blessings, death instead of life, and division instead of oneness. Both interactions between humans and animals are preceded by God giving a verbal warning to humans (Gen. 2:15-17, 4:6-7) and subsequently followed up by a dialogue (Gen. 3:9-13, 4:9-15). In both cases, humans did not follow the divine warning, which resulted in; curses (Gen. 3:14, 17, 4:11), death (in Gen. 3:24, humans lost access to the tree of life, and in Gen. 4:8 Abel was killed), division (Gen. 3:12-13, 16, 4:8), a further movement away from the Eden-sanctuary and the presence of God (Gen. 3:23, 4:16), and a more troublesome relationship to the ground that provided food (Gen. 3:17-19, Gen. 4:12). Alan J. Hauser points out that the “numerous key elements in the stories have been deliberately paralleled in order to lead the reader to relate major motifs in one account to major motifs in the other.”²³⁰ Based on the parallels between the two stories, the emerging and major motif may be discerned by investigating the human response to the divine commandment played out in the interaction with an animal and the following consequences.

3.3 The shrewd Serpent and God’s wisdom

In this section, I argue that humans failed to follow God’s command (Gen. 1:28, 2:16). They abdicated their humanity, disrupted God’s order, and exchanged God’s wisdom for the serpent’s shrewdness.

Gen. 3:1 uses direct characterization to describe the serpent/נחש as shrewder/ערום then all the wild beasts God had made. Gen. 3:1 seems to contrast Gen. 3:14, where the serpent is compared to other animals, but now to say that it is more cursed than all cattle and wild animals.²³¹ On the one hand, the narrative emphasizes that the serpent is like an animal, one of the wild beasts created by God (Gen. 1:25, 2:19). On the other hand, it is presented as a shrewder and more unique animal, with the human characteristics: speech, wisdom, and possibly feet.²³² The infrequent use of direct characterization in Gen. 1-4 may be a clue towards paying extra attention to the direct characterization of the serpent as shrewd/ערום.

²³⁰ Hauser, ‘Linguistic’, 298.

²³¹ Postell, *Adam*, 123.

²³² Stordalen, ‘Echoes’, 254. Based on Gen. 3:14, Charlesworth argues that the serpent had feet before it was cursed to crawl on its belly. Charlesworth, *Serpent*, 313. A possible inner-textual allusion to Gen. 3 is Num. 22, the only other occasion in the Pentateuch where an animal speaks. Savran points out that the themes of obedience/disobedience, blessing/curse, vision, and understanding are found in both cases. Savran, ‘Beastly’. I am aware that different scholars have pointed out that the serpent may be more than a mere animal and placed it in the category of a spiritual being. See Ronning, ‘Curse’, 126–42; Heiser, *Unseen*, 73–91; Charlesworth, *Serpent*, 293–300; Gonzales, *Sin*, 21–28. This limited paper focuses on humans, animals, and sin, and the relevant discussion on spiritual beings as an additional type of character has been left out.

Charlesworth has written extensively on serpent symbolism in the bible and the ancient world. He argues that עָרוֹם is a neutral term that portrays the serpent as clever and wise.²³³ He concludes that “serpent symbolism is multivalent” and has a wide range of associations, negative and positive.²³⁴ Charlesworth argues that the serpent in Gen. 3 is never said to be evil, but it is primarily characterized positively: it is one of God’s wise creatures, it does not lie, and it tells the truth about humans becoming like God (Gen. 3:5, 22).²³⁵ Charlesworth is right in his positive characterization of the serpent in Gen. 3:1a, but fails to give sufficient attention to the character’s development and Genesis 3:14-15 where the serpent is clearly judged and cursed based on the previous interaction with humans.²³⁶

In Gen. 3:1a the serpent is wise, in Gen. 3:1b-5 the serpent converse with Eve, and in Gen. 3:14-15 the serpent is cursed. The conversation in Gen. 3:1b-5 seems to be the decisive moment where the serpent, in one way or another, does something wrong that has a negative effect on humans. The serpent proposes that Eve will not die (Gen. 3:4) by eating the fruit, a direct contradiction to God’s words in Gen. 2:17. Charlesworth argues that the serpent told the truth and God lied since humans did not die immediately after the consumption.²³⁷ Zevit convincingly contradicts the interpretation of God lying and points out that immediate death is not implied in Gen. 2:17. The terms used implies that humans would be “consigned to death” and that death would begin its reign in them.²³⁸ I find Zevit’s view reasonable, and it corresponds to Gen. 3:22-24 where humans are banned from the three of life and consigned into the realm of death and non-order. The serpent’s words about not dying are not an outright lie if one understands it as a reference to immediate death; thus, in the best sense it may be seen as a half-truth (lacking the truth that humans will be banned from the three of life).²³⁹ LaCocque points out that “[e]verything the serpent says can be understood one way or another [...] Its shrewdness pushes ambivalence to the level of pure ambiguity.”²⁴⁰ It is unnecessary to

²³³ Charlesworth, *Serpent*, 291.

²³⁴ Charlesworth, 300, 417. For a thorough analysis of serpent imagery in ANE, see Charlesworth, 58-124.

²³⁵ Charlesworth, 306, 416–17. Smith points out that “[a]part from Wisdom of Solomon, the identification of the snake as the devil or Satan is absent from the Old Testament. It evidently developed during the Greco-Roman period.” Smith, *Good*, 28. For the development and the Satan in the OT, see also Forsyth, *Satan*, 107–23; Kelly, *Satan*, 3–32.

²³⁶ Convincingly John Day and Wilson Cunha respond to Charlesworth’s positive characterization of the serpent and argues based on the literary context for a more negative view of the serpent in Gen. 3. Cunha, ‘Nāhāšš’; Day, ‘Serpent’.

²³⁷ Charlesworth, *Serpent*, 310, 316.

²³⁸ Zevit, *Garden*, 124–26. On death, see section 2.1.

²³⁹ Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 75. Accordingly, Zevit points out how people characterized as עָרוֹם “may be unpleasant and purposely misleading in speech but are not out-and-out liars.” Zevit, *Garden*, 163.

²⁴⁰ LaCocque, *Trial*, 182.

force the serpent into a set category of morally evil or good. Instead, attention should be given to how humans interact with the animal's shrewdness in contrast to God's wisdom (Gen. 2:17).²⁴¹ In a sense, the narrative leaves an open gap and thereby invites the reader to use wisdom and evaluate how humans are to relate to this talking and shrewd animal with human characteristics within God's creation.²⁴² The ambiguity related to the serpent's character and its reference to God's words (Gen. 3:1) points the reader to investigate Gen. 2:17 and the previous texts about the human role to rule animals (Gen. 1:28, 2:15, 2:19-20). It may be concluded that the serpent's shrewdness and words, that humans will not die (Gen. 3:4) is contrasted with God's wisdom and words, that humans will die (Gen. 2:17). The motif of divine speech evokes the creation narrative in Gen. 1, where God brought forth life and ordered the cosmos through His speech. Adam and Eve's choice to ignore the words of God, the royal, wise, generous, and powerful creator, becomes even more disastrous when they instead listen to an animal.²⁴³ God ruled the cosmos through his speech, and now the serpent rules Adam and Eve through its speech.²⁴⁴ The animal humans were supposed to rule (Gen. 1:28) ended up ruling them. When humans listened to the serpent, they exchanged God's wisdom for the serpent's shrewdness.²⁴⁵

As God's royal priests, humans are to extend the garden and rule according to God's wisdom and order, but how can humans obtain such wisdom? The question at stake in Gen. 3 is "whether their development would be through obedience or disobedience."²⁴⁶ The tree of knowing good and bad can be seen as a "tree of decision," where human obedience or disobedience is revealed and demonstrated by their eating of its fruit.²⁴⁷ Humans may trust that God will give the needed wisdom in due time, or they may follow the thoughts of the serpent and illegitimately take the fruit they have not been given in order to gain more knowledge.²⁴⁸ Neither the fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and bad nor the serpent's shrewdness was "complete or ideal sources of wisdom."²⁴⁹ True wisdom comes from the

²⁴¹ Charlesworth points out how "good and evil meaning may be present at the same time in one symbol or word." Charlesworth, *Serpent*, 300. See also Walton that argues for seeing the serpent as a chaos creature that "are amoral, but can be mischievous or destructive [...] if left unchecked." Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 133, 132–36.

²⁴² Emmrich, 'Temptation', 10. Zevit points out that the serpents "incomplete utterance" in Gen. 3:1 is left with the purpose for the reader "to complete the thought." Zevit, *Garden*, 166.

²⁴³ See section 2.1 and 2.2. for the characterization of God.

²⁴⁴ See section 2.1 for God's rule and speech in Gen. 1.

²⁴⁵ Walsh, 'Genesis 2,4b-3,24', 176.

²⁴⁶ Van Ee, 'Death', 145. See also Gonzales, *Sin*, 33.

²⁴⁷ Van Ee, 'Death', 145.

²⁴⁸ Walton, *Adam and Eve*, 143–44.

²⁴⁹ Smith, *Good*, 44.

creator God, and the serpent's strategy was to evoke Eve's desire (Gen. 3:5-6) to seek wisdom outside of God's boundaries.²⁵⁰ Similarly, as a father raises children and gives the needed wisdom in due time, God may be seen as a divine father to humans.²⁵¹ Accordingly, LaCocque concludes that "the serpent presents God as a castrating father."²⁵² Humans may trust in the serpent's suggestion that their Father's order and provision are insufficient, and therefore they need to become more like God/אלהים.²⁵³ Alternatively, they can trust their Father and His established order, wisdom, and goodness. Humans that were created in the likeness of God (Gen. 1:26) were tempted by the serpent to have its eyes opened and be more like God (Gen. 3:5). According to McDowell, "the opening of eyes" was an act of divinization; thus Gen. 3:5-6 is "an attempt by Adam and Eve at divinization."²⁵⁴ In other words, being created in the image of God was not enough. Humans were dissatisfied and wanted to be more than humans, and paradoxically, an inferior animal started to lead them down that path.²⁵⁵ Humans share characteristics with God and animals, and are "constantly tempted, either to play God or to revert to animal irresponsibility."²⁵⁶ In Genesis 3, Adam and Eve failed to embrace their place as humans within the creational hierarchy. They wanted to be like God, failed to trust God as their provider of wisdom, and exchanged God's wisdom for the serpent's shrewdness; thus, they disrupted God's good order.

Within God's interrelated creation, humans have a specific "connectivity to everything around them."²⁵⁷ Humans are given a unique status and responsibility in relation to God (as his image), the land (which they are to fill and master), animals (whom they are to rule), and each other (as fellow partners in multiplying and ruling).²⁵⁸ The order and unity in creation are severely disrupted after the human failure in Gen. 3: Humans hide from God (Gen. 3:8), humans get a troublesome relationship with the land (Gen. 3:17-19), increased enmity with an animal (Gen. 3:15), and lastly, there is increased pain in childbirth and disruption in their marital unity (Gen. 3:12, 16). Humans, as "the dominant species on earth," brings damage to

²⁵⁰ Emmrich, 'Temptation', 9. A similar theme of humans gaining illegal wisdom that belonged to the divine, followed by punishment, may also be seen in 1 Enoch 7-9 and Hesiod's Prometheus myth. Strazdins, 'Fire', 285-95.

²⁵¹ Smith, *Good*, 38-40.

²⁵² LaCocque, *Trial*, 175.

²⁵³ The term אלהים is used in reference to God in Gen. 3, with a possible exception in Gen. 3:5b, where the term may be interpreted as a more general reference to divine beings.

²⁵⁴ McDowell, *Image*, 15:169.

²⁵⁵ Biddle, 'Genesis 3', 364-65.

²⁵⁶ LaCocque, *Trial*, 276.

²⁵⁷ Walton, *Cosmology*, 70.

²⁵⁸ Gen. 1:26-28. See section 2.2.1 for the interrelatedness in creation.

all its relations.²⁵⁹ One may conclude that the human failure in Gen. 3 had cosmic consequences that brought disorder into all the intended harmonious relationships established in creation; thus, the incident may be described as anti-creational.²⁶⁰

3.4 The sin-animal

In this section, I argue that Cain disrupted God's intended order and unity when he failed to rule and gave into the rule of the sin-animal. Genesis 4:2 presents Cain as a tiller of the soil and Abel as a keeper of sheep. Both brought an offering from their occupation, but God only "paid heed to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed."²⁶¹ God looks at Abel and not Cain, which makes Cain very angry (Gen. 4:5) and eventually leads him to kill his brother. Much ink has been spilled to discuss Cain and Abel's different types of vocations and offerings and why Abel's offering came better off than Cain's.²⁶² I agree with Sailhamer that the narrative does not omit any clear explanation for what was wrong with Cain's offering; instead, it is concerned with Cain's response to the situation.²⁶³ Significantly the brothers' different vocations are aligned with the original occupation given humans; to till the ground and rule the animals (Gen. 1:28, 2:15), and the two brothers function as one unity representing two different, but integrated aspects of humanity.²⁶⁴ In the same manner, as Adam and Eve were supposed to be one marital unity (Gen. 2:24-25), Gen. 4 "holds out a plea for brotherhood between human beings despite their differences."²⁶⁵ In Gen. 4:6-7 God gives a warning and direction for how Cain should treat and accept his brother, and thereby in Gen. 4:9-15 God examines and punishes Cain for how he treated and killed his brother.²⁶⁶ Wolde points out that Abel is described as a brother/אָבִיב seven times (Gen. 4:2, 8 (twice), 9 (twice), 10 & 11), whereas Cain is never described as a brother; thus, the narrative presents Cain as one who fails to behave as a true brother.²⁶⁷ When Cain killed and disrupted the intended unity with his brother, he did the opposite of the original command, to be fruitful and multiply (Gen. 1:28). The narrative starts by depicting an integrated brotherhood that represents

²⁵⁹ Bauckham, 'Nature', 240. See also, Fretheim, 'Self-Limiting', 163.

²⁶⁰ For a similar conclusion, see Walsh, 'Genesis 2,4b-3,24', 177.

²⁶¹ Gen. 4:4-5

²⁶² Wenham lists up different scholars and views taken in the discussion. Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 104. See also Waltke, 'Cain'; LaCocque, *Onslaught*, 19-29. For Jewish and early Christian views see Hayward, 'Cain', 101-23.

²⁶³ Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 112. Accordingly, Wolde points out that there is "no obvious distinction between the two offerings." Wolde, *Words*, 6:59. See also Sarna, *Genesis*, 31.

²⁶⁴ LaCocque, *Onslaught*, 21; Westermann, *Genesis*, 2004, 32.

²⁶⁵ Wolde, *Words*, 6:62.

²⁶⁶ Wolde, 6:55.

²⁶⁷ Wolde, 6:55.

humanities vocation according to God's order (Gen. 1:28, 2:15). It ends with Cain killing his vocational partner and brother. The one that ruled the animals is dead, and Cain, the tiller of the soil, ends up being banished from the soil (Gen. 4:14). God's intended order, vocation, and unity for humans are disrupted by Cain.

In Gen. 4:5, direct characterization is used to describe Cain; he “was much distressed [חרה] and his face fell.” There is a significant relationship between Cain's חרה and his *fallen face*, “[h]is face was an expression of his anger.”²⁶⁸ Looking up and being face to face with someone is “the supreme form of expression for a good relationship,” and looking down with a fallen face is the opposite.²⁶⁹ In Gen. 4:6, God asks Cain why he is angry/חרה and why his face is fallen, a question that emphasizes the relationship between looking down and his anger. In the following verse, God advises Cain, “if you do right, there is uplift [שאת]” (Gen. 4:7a). God clarifies that his face will be lifted, and his relationship with Abel will be restored if he does the right thing. There are no signs of God being upset with or condemning Cain for not bringing a good enough offer; instead, the opposite seems true.²⁷⁰ Von Rad points out that God addresses Cain in a fatherly way; he “wants to show the threatened man a way out before it is too late.”²⁷¹ God wants Cain to do what is right and for him to lift his face towards Abel, which implies restoring the good brotherly relationship. The contrast to “doing right” and “uplift of the face” is seen in the following sentence where God says, “[b]ut if you do not do right Sin couches at the door” (Gen. 4:7b). The first part “if you do not do right” contrasts doing right in 4:7a. The second part about sin laying at the door requires further explanation before it fits as a contrast to the “uplift” in 4:7a. Cassuto points out that Genesis 4:7 is “one of the most difficult and obscure Biblical sentences.”²⁷² I will not attempt to argue for or discuss the different translations, but I will primarily work with the JPS translation and comment on the central terms. The essential term for perceiving sin as an animal is found in Gen. 4:7b, where it says that “Sin [חטאת] couches [רבץ] at the door.” Within the Pentateuch, רבץ is used to describe both peaceful animals that lay down and threatening animals that lay down.²⁷³ The negative context of Gen. 4:7 implies that רבץ carries a “threatening meaning, possibly

²⁶⁸ Boloje, ‘Violence’, 3.

²⁶⁹ Wolde, *Words*, 6:55.

²⁷⁰ God's warning to Cain in Gen. 4:7b, implies that nothing wrong has happened yet. Swenson, ‘Keeping’, 379.

²⁷¹ Rad, *Genesis*, 105.

²⁷² Cassuto, *Genesis*, 208. For the history of interpretation see Scarlata, *Outside*, 74–110; Byron, *Cain*, 14:48–62. See also Morales for a contrary view, he argues that חטאת רבץ in Gen. 4:7 is best understood as a sin offering that is lying down. Morales, ‘Lamb’.

²⁷³ רבץ is used in relation to animals in Gen. 29:2, 49:9, 14, Ex. 25:5, Nu. 22:27, Dt. 22:6.

associated with wild animals” that lie in ambush for their prey.²⁷⁴ Cassuto argues convincingly that the term רבץ “was chosen because it carries the nuance of couching [...] in contrast to the upstanding position implicit in the word שאה” from the preceding sentence.²⁷⁵ Taking into consideration the substantial textual similarities between Genesis 3 and 4 and the recurrent theme of humans and animals (Gen. 1:26-31, 2:15, 19-20, 3:1-6, 13-15, 21, 4:2-4), it is no coincidence that sin is characterized by a term used to describe animals.²⁷⁶

In the last part, Gen. 4:7c says: “Its urge [תשוקה] is toward you, Yet you can be its master [משל].” The phrase echoes and is closely related to Gen. 3:16b: “Yet your urge [תשוקה] shall be for your husband, And he shall rule [משל] over you.”²⁷⁷ According to Condren, Gen. 3:16b is best understood in terms of the woman returning to the original marital unity (Gen. 2:23-24) that was disrupted by human disobedience (Gen. 3:1-6).²⁷⁸ Where there once was mutuality and unity, the man will now rule the woman, not as a prescribed punishment, but as a consequence of their disobedience. In Gen. 3:20, Adam names Eve in a similar manner as he did with the animals in Gen. 2:19-20; in this way, he rules and “reduces the woman to the status of an animal.”²⁷⁹ Concerning Gen. 4:7, Joyce Brooks points out that the woman’s good desire for unity and intimacy in Gen. 3:16b may have a similar function in Gen. 4:7, where sin desires intimacy and unity with Cain in a figurative sense.²⁸⁰ The couching sin-animal will urge and endeavor to make Cain “couch on the ground just as it does.”²⁸¹ God warns Cain to rule and control his desire to crouch like a wild animal waiting for its prey.²⁸² Cain fails to rule it and to raise his face towards Abel; instead, in Gen. 4:8, Cain’s body ‘rose up/קוּם’ from his couching position and killed his brother like a wild animal.²⁸³ Abel’s name, הבל which means “worthless,” indicates his narrative function.²⁸⁴ Cain dehumanizes Abel as worthless

²⁷⁴ Wolde, *Words*, 6:54. Based on the close association between the Hebrew rōbēṣ/רבץ and the Akkadian term for demon, rābiṣum, Ephraim A. Speiser argues for translating רבץ with ‘demon’. Speiser, *Genesis*, 32–33. See also Anne M. Kitz’s analysis of the two terms. She concludes that rōbēṣ in Gen. 4:7 is not to be identified as a demon in modern terms, as intrinsically evil. Kitz, ‘Demons’.

²⁷⁵ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 211. Accordingly, Wolde argues that Gen. 4:7a and 4:7b are parallel sentences. Wolde, *Words*, 6:54.

²⁷⁶ Hauser, ‘Linguistic’, 297–305; Scarlata, *Outside*, 80–81.

²⁷⁷ For the interpretive challenges and the relationship between Gen. 3:16b and Gen. 4:17, see Condren, ‘Battle’.

²⁷⁸ Condren, 244–45. The positive view of desire/תשוקה in Gen. 3:16b aligns with the positive use of the term in Song of Sol. 7:11.

²⁷⁹ Tribble, *Sexuality*, 133, 128.

²⁸⁰ Brooks, ‘Similarities’, 26–27. See also LaCocque, *Onslaught*, 37.

²⁸¹ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 211. For the grammatical construction and a corresponding translation of Gen. 4:7, see Wolde, *Words*, 6:52–55.

²⁸² For an alternative interpretation of Gen. 4:7, seen in terms of Cain’s role as the firstborn to rule over his younger brother, see Scarlata, *Outside*, 74–82.

²⁸³ Wolde, *Words*, 6:57–58.

²⁸⁴ Wolde, ‘Cain and Abel’, 39.

and treats him like an animal he can rule and kill.²⁸⁵ In the same way that Adam and Eve wanted to be more like God (Gen. 3:5-6), Cain exalts himself to a divine position when he exerts the divine job of deciding life and death for his human brother.²⁸⁶

There is a contrast between Abel killing and sacrificing an animal as an offering to God (Gen. 4:4) and Cain killing his brother as an animal for selfish gain (Gen. 4:8). Abel is depicted as selfless and Cain as selfish. Cain fails to rule the couching sin-animal, instead he rules and kills his brother. Likewise, in Gen. 3:1-6 humans fail to rule the serpent, and the following consequence is that the man will rule over the woman (3:16b, 20).²⁸⁷ The intended unity between humans is exchanged for unity with the serpent and the sin-animal. Cain exercised his power to rule animals in the wrong place; or said in another way, Cain misused the divine gift of rulership by exerting it over a fellow human being. The consequences are not just seen within human relationships, but Cain's refusal to look at Abel's face makes him go away from God's face/פנה (Gen. 4:14-16), just as Adam and Eve hid from God's face/פנה.²⁸⁸

Furthermore, the close relationship between the ground and Cain, as its tiller, is severely broken when the ground "no longer yield its strength" (Gen. 4:12), and the blood of Abel cries out from the ground to accuse Cain.²⁸⁹ Along the same lines, Wolde concludes: "to sever the tie with one's sibling is to sever one's tie with YHWH and the earth."²⁹⁰ Similarly to Adam and Eve, Cain's failure to rule brought disorder into the relationship with God, the earth, and his fellow human brother. The devastating consequences may be seen as a contrast to the well-established and good order in Genesis 1.

In Ex. 23:5 and Num. 22:27, the verb רבץ is used to describe someone bowing down under a heavy burden. The same motif may be seen in Gen. 4:5-7 where Cain's face and body bow down under the burden and rule of the sin-animal.²⁹¹ Anderson points out that "the concept of sin as a burden is by far the most productive in the Hebrew Bible."²⁹² The result of Cain's failure to lift his face and rule his urge is seen in Gen. 4:13: "The weight of my sin [עון] is too

²⁸⁵ See section 3 for how humans are given the trust by God to rule over animals' life and death.

²⁸⁶ Pfoh, 'Genesis', 40.

²⁸⁷ The textual similarities between Gen. 3 and 4 may open up a possibility to consider the sin couching "as a personification of the cursed serpent upon its belly." Scarlata, *Outside*, 80.

²⁸⁸ Hauser, 'Linguistic', 301-3.

²⁸⁹ Wolde, *Words*, 6:56.

²⁹⁰ Wolde, 6:60.

²⁹¹ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 211.

²⁹² Anderson, *Sin*, 16.

great for me to bear [נִשָּׂא].”²⁹³ Cain listened to the urge of the couching sin and ended up in the same low place, burdened by the weight of his action which is now called sin/עוֹן.²⁹⁴ Cain committed a sinful act when he listened and collaborated with the sin-animal instead of God. The sin-animal couches by Cain’s door (Gen. 4:7),²⁹⁵ which may point towards depicting the sin-animal as an external object that is welcomed in and becomes a burden to carry if one fails to rule it.²⁹⁶ God gave humans the ability and task to rule animals in Gen. 1:28, but still, humans failed to exercise their rule. When Adam and Eve failed to rule the serpent, it ruled them. The narrative makes the same point about sin; humans can rule it, but if they fail, sin will rule them.

3.5 Humans as animals

In the following section, I will argue that when humans fail to rule and are ruled by animals, they end up behaving like animals. There is a distinction between different kinds of animals, not just in species, but also in terms of wild and domestic. In Gen. 1:21, it is made explicit that “the great sea monsters/גְּדוֹל תַּיִן” are created together with the other creatures in the waters. In Gen. 1:24, both domestic animals/בְּהֵמָה and wild animals/חַיָּה are created. Osborn points out that the “still-untamed and wild aspect of the creation” is to be brought “completely under God’s dominion” by humanity.²⁹⁷ One may perceive that wild animals live in the realm of non-order, where humans are to extend the garden. In one sense, humans may be presumed to domesticate wild animals, but simultaneously fighting, killing, and eating may be appropriate responses if needed.²⁹⁸ As previously mentioned, the garden seems to be a protected area with a fence and guards, and the role given to humans in Gen. 2:15 to guard/שָׁמַר the garden sanctuary makes sense in view of the wild animals that are to be kept outside, or domesticated within or outside of the garden. The human task to guard/שָׁמַר in Gen. 2:15 has an in-textual connection to Gen. 3:24, where God expels humans from the garden and places a cherub to guard/שָׁמַר the garden as a substitute for humans.²⁹⁹ They failed in their

²⁹³ The translation of Gen. 4:13 is retrieved from Anderson, 24. For a different translation, see Lam, *Sin*, 62–65.

²⁹⁴ On the use of עוֹן and נִשָּׂא in the Hebrew Bible see, Anderson, *Sin*, 15–26. Gen. 4:13-16 and Lev. 16 have a similar motif of carrying the weight of sin into the wilderness. Thus, there is a significant difference; the human being is substituted with an animal in Lev. 16. (Anderson, 22-26)

²⁹⁵ Cassuto, *Genesis*, 211.

²⁹⁶ LaCocque, *Onslaught*, 31; Smith, *Good*, 68.

²⁹⁷ Osborn, *Death*, 32. Wild animals as threats to humans may be seen in Gen. 3:1-7, 15, 4:7, 37:20, Lev. 26.6, 22.

²⁹⁸ Lohfink, *Pentateuch*, 12. There is a concern for wild animals in Exod. 23:11 and Lev. 25.7, where they are given the right to exist. Bauckham, *Living*, 7.

²⁹⁹ Middleton, *Image*, 59.

priestly task to guard the sanctuary garden against a wild animal, the serpent (Gen. 3:1), and thereby God gave the guarding job to a cherub instead.³⁰⁰ The serpent got to create disorder and defilement within the garden sanctuary, and the proper response for humans as priestly rulers when they encountered the “antagonistic and unclean being” in Gen. 3 would probably have been to judge, slay or cast it out of the garden.³⁰¹ The same motif may be alluded to in Gen. 4:7, where Cain is supposed to rule and keep the sin-animal outside his door.

Paradoxically, Adam, Eve, and Cain let an unclean animal inside, resulting in them being exiled to the outside of the Garden/Eden, to the place where the wild animals lived.³⁰²

Accordingly, Westermann points out concerning Cain that “[o]ne who has killed a member of the community is expelled to live with the wild animals [...] He becomes a ‘wolf.’”³⁰³

Humans have exchanged roles with wild animals. Biddle points out that humans “abdicate their role and their responsibility, subjecting themselves to a crafty beast.”³⁰⁴ Said in another way, humans gave up their authentic humanity. They refused to exert their godlikeness in their priestly ruling, resulting in humans being exiled from the garden like unclean wild animals.³⁰⁵

The human rule was supposed to image God’s rule, but instead, “[b]y obeying the serpent, Adam and Eve take on his image and defile the earth.”³⁰⁶ Similarly, Cain does not image God’s rule, but he images his master, the sin-animal (Gen. 4:7-8). There are two kinds of images and ways humans may rule: the Godly and the animalistic way. This dualistic perspective on how humans rule may be seen more clearly in the much-discussed verse, Gen. 3:15, where God pronounces that there will be enmity between the offspring of Eve and the Serpent.³⁰⁷ According to Afolarin Ojewole’s dissertation on Gen. 3:15, the snake's offspring is best understood as “a moral group of disobedient humans” in contrast to the offspring of Eve that represent “a moral group of righteous human beings.”³⁰⁸ The following story in Gen. 4,

³⁰⁰ Beale, *Temple*, 87.

³⁰¹ Beale, 87.

³⁰² Beale, 87; Beale, *Unfolding of the Old Testament*, 34. The same motif of exile may be seen within the purity laws (Lev.18:24-30, 20:22-25), and as Klawans points out, severe defilement could lead to exile. Klawans, *Impurity*, 27, 31–32, 41. For the relationship between exile and sin, see Kepnes, ‘Image’, 295–97.

³⁰³ Westermann, *Genesis*, 1984, 316. With reference to Gruppe, O. “Kain.” *ZAW* 39 (1921) 67–76.

³⁰⁴ Biddle, *Sin*, 52.

³⁰⁵ Gonzales, *Sin*, 137–38; Biddle, *Sin*, 52.

³⁰⁶ Desmond, *From Eden*, 107.

³⁰⁷ Ojewole points out that Gen. 3:14-15 is the climax and center of a chiasmic structure in Gen. 3; thus, its message is emphasized. Ojewole, ‘Seed’, 98. For the history of the interpretation of Gen. 3:15, see the dissertations of Ronning, ‘Curse’, 6–101. and Ojewole, ‘Seed’, 12–49.

³⁰⁸ Ojewole, ‘Seed’, 216.

where there is enmity between Cain and Abel, should be understood as a continuation and expression of what was predicted in Gen. 3:15. Cain is the disobedient offspring of the serpent, and Abel is the righteous human. Ronning points out three ways that Cain is characterized in a similar way as the serpent: Both are lying (Gen. 3:4, 4:9), both are murders since the serpent deceived humans into doing what would lead them to death (Gen. 2:17, 3:1-7, 4:7-8), and both are cursed (Gen. 3:14, 4:11).³⁰⁹ When Cain listens and lets the Sin-animal rule him, he acts and image the serpent, “his spiritual father” in Genesis 3.³¹⁰ The three characters are intertwined, or by using the terminology from Gen. 3:15, they are from the same offspring. The command to multiply (Gen. 1:28) seems to be renewed in Gen. 3:15, but now with the anticipation that Eve's future offspring may strike the serpent's head.³¹¹ Childbirth is the means to defeat the serpent.³¹² Sailhamer points out that there is a gap in the narrative where the victorious seed gets no identity; it is left unanswered, thus creating anticipation for a future birth.³¹³ Birth-giving is part of the God-given order (Gen. 1:28), contrasted to killing, which seems to be a characteristic of disorder related to the serpent's offspring: Cain and the sin-animal. Cain acts like an animal and kills Eve's potentially victorious human offspring.³¹⁴ Cain's actions and treatment of his brother revealed that he belongs to the morally disobedient group of humans, the serpent's offspring.³¹⁵

Another place humans are modeled after animals are in Gen. 3:7. Adam and Eve make clothes out of fig leaves, but these are replaced by God in Gen. 3:21 when he makes garments out of animal skin. It has been pointed out that this may be seen as a gift, an act of grace and goodness, where God cares for humans by making clothes suitable for the new environment outside of the garden.³¹⁶ Simultaneously the significance of dressing humans in ‘animal clothes,’ and thereby sending them outside the garden to where the wild animals live, may have a function of characterizing humans as animalistic.³¹⁷ Additionally, and maybe not excluding, the animal clothing could be seen as a reminder of God's hierarchy since He has provided animals for human usage; thus, the clothes made of animals clarify humans' place

³⁰⁹ Ronning, ‘Curse’, 144–45.

³¹⁰ Waltke, ‘Cain’, 370.

³¹¹ Ojewole, ‘Seed’, 229.

³¹² Sailhamer, *Pentateuch as Narrative*, 108.

³¹³ Sailhamer, *Composition*, 322.

³¹⁴ Hamilton, ‘Seed’, 257.

³¹⁵ Desmond, *From Eden*, 107.

³¹⁶ Osborn, *Death*, 36; Walton, Matthews, and Chavalas, *IVP Bible*, 33; Wenham, *Genesis 1 - 15*, 84.

³¹⁷ Van Ee draws the opposite conclusion and points out that clothing in itself distinguishes humans from animals. Van Ee, ‘Death’, 130. He fails to recognize that Adam and Eve, at this point, already had clothes made of fig leaves, and the significance is therefore the new type of clothes, animal skin.

over the animals in the creation hierarchy. The clothing may be a moral reminder of their failure to be authentic humans. To sustain and bring about God's good order in creation, humans must master their role within the creational hierarchy of ruling animals and not behave like them. In conclusion, I suggest that when humans fail to rule over the animals as true humans, they dehumanize themselves and act like animals.³¹⁸

³¹⁸ The motif of a human characterized as an animal is found in Daniel 4:15-16, 32-33. God judges king Nebuchadnezzar to dwell with the animals; subsequently, his body takes on animalistic features. See also Macumber who argues that Daniel 7 depicts Antiochus IV as a monstrous being (human-animal hybrid), in order to dehumanize him. Macumber, 'Monster'.

4. Epilogue

In the chronological sequence after Genesis 4, the narrative about Noah (Gen. 6-9) is the subsequent narrative where a human being interacts with animals; thus, it may be a test case for my thesis. In Gen. 6:5-6, 11-12, God saw/הִרְאָה how wickedness and evil had filled the earth, a contrast to how God saw/הִרְאָה everything was good in Gen. 1:31.³¹⁹ Adam and Eve were supposed to extend an already ordered and good garden. In contrast, Noah lives in a chaotic world and is chosen as part of God's plan to re-order and eliminate wickedness. Direct characterization and three parallel sentences emphasize Noah's moral status: "Noah was a righteous man; he was blameless in his age; Noah walked with God."³²⁰ In Gen. 6:13-22 God commands Noah to build an ark for him, his family, and animals. In contrast to Adam, Eve, and Cain in Gen. 3-4, the narrative says, without any objection, Noah did as God commanded (Gen. 6:22).³²¹ In Gen. 6:19-20, 7:2-4 God tells Noah to take the animals into the ark, and in Gen. 7:14-16 the animals came to Noah and were led into the ark.³²² In other words, Noah, a righteous man, rules the animals in accordance with God's speech. Further evidence may be seen in Gen. 8:6-12, where Noah sends out and works together with birds. Lastly, God is pleased when he smells the odor of Noah's animal offerings in Gen. 8:20-21. Noah followed God's voice, ruled the animals, and played a significant role in God's re-ordering of the world. The original creation mandate given in Gen. 1:28 is restated in Gen. 9:1-3, but now with a longer description and more emphasis on humans' relationships to animals' (Gen. 9:2-3). Could it be that the narrative stresses the importance of ruling animals within the newly ordered world, precisely because this was the primary human failure in Gen. 3-4 that brought disorder into God's good creation?

I propose that the same motif of human-animal interaction from Gen. 1-4 is present in Gen. 6-9, although the accounts present contrasting narratives related to how humans ruled animals. In Genesis 3 and 4, humans brought disorder when they failed to live in accordance with God's voice and rule the animals. However, in Gen. 6-9, Noah is presented as a righteous man

³¹⁹ See section 2.2.2 for the significance of the term הִרְאָה. Concerning Gen. 6:1-4, Heiser argues convincingly that the 'the sons of God' are divine beings that rebelled. Heiser, *Unseen*, 92-109. See also 1 Enoch 6-10. When the divine beings took human wives, they stepped out of their space and boundary within God's order. As a result, the earth was filled with wickedness. The motif seems to align with my findings in Gen. 3-4; disorder evolves due to creatures stepping out of their boundaries and their given roles within God's order.

³²⁰ Gen. 6:9. Note the inner-textual relation to God walking/אָחַל with humans in Gen. 3:8, 5:22, 24.

³²¹ The same pattern where God speaks, and Noah obeys is repeated in Gen. 7:1-5.

³²² Similarly, Noah leads the animals out of the ark in Gen. 8:16-17.

that followed God's voice, managed to rule the animals, and thereby was part of God's re-creating and ordering of the world.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have done a narrative analysis of humans, animals, and sin in Genesis 1-4. I examined the relationship, interaction, and development between the characters in order to see how they shed light on who sin is and how it potentially takes hold of humans. I propose that the narratives in Gen. 3:1-24 and 4:1-16 are sequenced with the repeated motif of human-animal interaction. When Cain encounters sin as a couching animal in Gen. 4:7, it recalls Adam and Eve's interaction with the serpent in Gen. 3:1-6. Humans failed to obey God's voice and rule the serpent in Gen. 3, instead they attended to the voice of an inferior animal that ended up ruling them. The narrative makes the same point about sin in Gen. 4; when humans attend to sin's voice and fail to rule it, sin will rule them.

I have examined how God established order and unity between the different characters in Genesis 1-2 and how humans abdicated their role as humans in Genesis 3-4. The result was ruined relationships and distortion of God's intended order and unity. Sin characterized and interpreted as a couching animal in Gen. 4:7 fits the narrative context and seems to have a significant inner-textual relationship to Gen. 1:26-28, where humans are created and assigned to rule animals. To conclude, I propose that the narrative intentionally presents sin as an animal, in order to show how humans were created to rule over it and not be ruled by it.

The narrative method in this paper has certain limitations. I have used characterization and treated sin/הטאת as an animal; although sin is portrayed as an animal, little attention is given to discussing or developing the concept of sin within the narrative. The following narratives in the primeval history (Gen. 5-11) do not elaborate or even mention sin/הטאת or the sin character from Gen. 4:7. However, the motif related to sin seems to be present in the subsequent narratives.³²³ The narrative is more interested in the motif related to sin than in developing the concept of sin in Gen. 1-11. In order to make a more substantial and normative claim about how sin is to be understood within the Pentateuch, a broader scope of texts needs to be taken into account. Nevertheless, this research may contribute to future studies on sin in a wider context.

³²³ See section 4, about Noah and the animals in Gen. 6-9.

At last, I will suggest that the motif of sin as a ruler seems to appear in Paul's letter to the Romans. Paul encourages the audience to "not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires."³²⁴ Sin is presented as a slaveholder that makes people obey its desires, but as Paul advises, humans may resist its rule.³²⁵ Along these lines, Cain's interaction with the sin-animal in Gen. 4:7 might enlighten the reading of Paul and his concept of sin.

³²⁴ Rom 6:12 (NIV).

³²⁵ Matthew Croasmun concludes in his study of sin in Romans that Sin is a cosmic tyrant that "exercises its dominion through the control of the moral reasoning of members of its body." Croasmun, *Sin*, 177. See also Gaventa for a similar view on Sin as a cosmic power in Romans. Gaventa, 'Sin', 229–40.

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