



At the heart of the Bible, the book of Genesis presents us with two seemingly distinct accounts of the creation of the world. To many, this may appear to be a contradiction, a sort of “error” in the sacred text. However, far from being a problem, this duality holds a profound theological and spiritual richness that invites us to delve deeper into the mystery of God and His plan for humanity. Why are there two accounts? What are they trying to tell us? And, most importantly, how can we apply this to our lives today?

## The Origin of the Two Accounts: A Historical and Literary Perspective

To understand why there are two creation accounts in Genesis, it is important to situate ourselves in the historical and literary context in which they were written. Biblical studies indicate that the book of Genesis is the result of an oral and written tradition that was passed down over centuries. In particular, chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis come from two distinct theological traditions: the **priestly** tradition (Genesis 1:1-2:4a) and the **Yahwist** tradition (Genesis 2:4b-25).

- **Genesis 1:** This account, known as the “first creation story,” is solemn and structured. Here, God creates the world in six days, culminating in the creation of human beings, male and female, in His image and likeness. This text reflects a universalist approach, emphasizing the order, harmony, and goodness of creation.
- **Genesis 2:** The second account, on the other hand, is more intimate and narrative. Here, God is portrayed as a potter who molds man from the dust of the earth and breathes the breath of life into him. Then, He creates woman as a suitable helper for man. This text has a more personal focus, highlighting the special relationship between God and humanity.

Although these accounts differ in style and focus, they do not contradict each other. Rather, they complement each other, offering two distinct but harmonious perspectives on the same mystery: the creation of the world and humanity by God.

## The Theological Meaning: Two Perspectives, One Truth

The Catholic Church, guided by the Holy Spirit, teaches us that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and, therefore, contains no errors in matters of salvation. However, it is not a book of science or history in the modern sense. Its purpose is to reveal to us who God is, who we are, and what our eternal destiny is.

In this sense, the two creation accounts offer us a profound and complementary teaching:



### 1. **Genesis 1: The Greatness of God and Human Dignity**

This account shows us an almighty God who creates the world with His word. Each day of creation is an affirmation of the goodness of what is created: “And God saw that it was good” (Genesis 1:12). Human beings, created in the image and likeness of God, are the pinnacle of creation, called to be responsible stewards of God’s work. This text reminds us of the intrinsic dignity of every human being and our vocation to live in harmony with creation.

### 2. **Genesis 2: The Intimacy of God and Human Communion**

In the second account, God is presented in a more personal way, like a father who cares for His creation. Man is formed from dust, reminding us of our fragility and dependence on God. The creation of woman, taken from man’s side, underscores the equality and complementarity between man and woman, as well as the importance of communion and love in human relationships.

Together, these accounts reveal a God who is both transcendent (beyond us) and immanent (close to us). They show us that creation is not a random act, but an act of love that reflects God’s wisdom and plan.

## **What Does the Catechism of the Catholic Church Say?**

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) provides invaluable guidance for understanding these accounts in the light of faith. In paragraphs 279-301, the Catechism explains that creation is the beginning of the history of salvation, which culminates in Christ.

- **Creation as an Act of Love:** “The world was created for the glory of God” (CCC 293). God does not create out of necessity, but out of pure love, to share His life and happiness with His creatures.
- **Human Beings, the Image of God:** “Man is created in the image of God, in the sense that he is capable of knowing and loving his Creator” (CCC 356). This dignity calls us to respect all human life, from conception to natural death.
- **The Vocation of Man and Woman:** “God created man and woman together and willed each for the other” (CCC 371). This complementarity is a reflection of Trinitarian love and a call to live in communion and mutual respect.

## **An Anecdote That Illuminates the Meaning of the Two Accounts**

Saint Augustine, one of the great Church Fathers, spent years trying to understand the book of Genesis. In his work *Confessions*, he recounts how he was initially confused by the two creation accounts. However, over time, he came to understand that these texts were not to



be interpreted in a literalist way, but as an invitation to delve deeper into the mystery of God.

Augustine wrote: *"You, Lord, created the world out of nothing, not out of necessity, but out of Your goodness and love."* This reflection reminds us that the creation accounts are not a scientific treatise, but a proclamation of faith in the Creator God, who loves us and calls us to live in communion with Him and with others.

## Application for Today: What Do These Accounts Tell Us in the 21st Century?

In a world marked by ecological crisis, dehumanization, and the loss of meaning in life, the creation accounts have an urgent message for us:

1. **Care for Creation:** The account in Genesis 1 calls us to be responsible stewards of creation, respecting nature as a gift from God.
2. **Human Dignity:** In a culture that often reduces the person to a mere object, Genesis 2 reminds us that every human being is unique, loved by God, and called to live in communion with others.
3. **Relationship with God:** Both accounts invite us to cultivate an intimate relationship with God, recognizing that He is the origin and the end of our existence.

## Conclusion: Two Accounts, One Message of Love

The two creation accounts are not a contradiction, but a complement that reveals the greatness and closeness of God. Through them, the Bible teaches us that we are creatures loved by a God who created us out of love and for love.

As Psalm 8 says: *"What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honor."*

Today, more than ever, we need to hear this message and live as sons and daughters of God, caring for His creation, respecting the dignity of every person, and always seeking communion with Him. May the creation accounts inspire us to live with gratitude, humility, and love, recognizing that everything is a gift from God.

**Amen.**