THE QUESTION

Does Genesis 2 say man was made before the animals, unlike Genesis 1?

Asked by a THF member on April 27, 2026 · published November 9, 2026 · 9 numbered quotations · the 18 early Christian passages and 39 Bible verses we kept are listed at the back, each with a link.

Read it online: thehistoricfaith.com/early-church-questions/does-genesis-2-say-man-was-made-before-the-animals-unlike-genesis-1

The short answer *Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words*

No. In these passages the early writers follow Genesis 1 for the order: land animals first, then man, both on the sixth day. They read Genesis 2 as a closer telling of how the same one man was formed, not a second creation, and they quote its scene of animals brought to Adam without seeing a conflict.

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POINT 1 OF 7

Animals came first on the sixth day

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Theophilus walks through the days of creation in order. On the sixth day God first made the land animals, and only then made man, saving His blessing for him.

1 "On the sixth day, after God had made the four-footed animals, the wild beasts, and the reptiles of the land, He did not speak a blessing over them. He was keeping His blessing for man, whom He was about to create on the sixth day."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 17 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 5, page 5** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

POINT 2 OF 7

Other writers give the same order

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Lactantius says God made the animals after finishing the world, and then formed man from the dust. Clement of Rome lists the animals called into being by God's word before man, the most excellent of His creatures.

2 "Therefore, after He had finished the world, He commanded that animals of many kinds and different forms should be created, both large and small."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Lactantius,** *Divine Institutes* 11 (c. 290–320 AD) **Source 17, page 6** Read it in the library ›
THF's updated English

3 "The animals on it He commanded into existence by His own word."

later in the same passage

"Above all, with His holy and undefiled hands, He formed man, the most excellent of His creatures, and truly great through the understanding given him—the express likeness of His own image."

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Clement of Rome,** *First Epistle to the Corinthians* **Source 18, page 6** Read it in the library ›
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POINT 3 OF 7

Genesis 2 is about the same man

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Hippolytus rejects the idea that the two chapters describe different men. He says the whole account is about one man: Genesis 1 announces that he will be made, and Genesis 2 tells how God made him.

4

“The whole account is about one man. For the words, "Let us make," are about the man who was going to be made.”

later in the same passage

“For first He says, "Let him be made," and now He makes him, and the account tells how He makes him.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Hippolytus,** *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (c. 200–236 AD) **Source 11, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 4 OF 7

Man was made at one time

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Methodius says the first man was made by one act, on the very day God said, "Let us make man." He compares this with the earth bringing forth the other animals at God's command.

5

“For if, according to the Word of salvation, He who made what is outside also made what is inside, then He certainly made both by one act and at the same time, on that very day when God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness,"”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Methodius,** *Concerning Free Will* 1 (c. 270–311 AD) **Source 15, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 5 OF 7

Animals brought to Adam raised no problem

Our note · compiled by machine learning · Interpretation: our reading of the passages, not their words

Theophilus quotes the Genesis 2 scene where God forms the beasts and birds and brings them to Adam to name. He gives it as part of the same sacred history he told day by day earlier, and does not treat it as a new order of creation.

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6 “And out of the ground God formed all the beasts of the field and all the birds of heaven, and brought them to Adam.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Theophilus of Antioch,** *To Autolycus* 20 (c. 169–183 AD) **Source 4, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 6 OF 7

Two different first men was a mistake

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Justin says Plato misread Moses' two mentions of man and imagined a first man existing before the one made from dust. Irenaeus reports that certain heretics taught one man made in God's image and another made from the earth. Both writers present this as a mistake.

7 “He believed that the first man named existed before the man who was made, and that the one formed from the earth was later made according to a pre-existing form.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Justin Martyr,** *Hortatory Address to the Greeks* (c. 130–165 AD) **Source 1, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

8 “Some of them also believe that one man was formed in the image and likeness of God, both male and female, as the spiritual man; and that another man was made from the earth.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Irenaeus,** *Against Heresies: Book I* (c. 175–202 AD) **Source 7, page 5** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

POINT 7 OF 7

Moses did not forget what he wrote

Our note · compiled by machine learning · From the text: says what the passages say

Origen answers a critic who claimed Moses forgot his six days when he later wrote "in the day" God made heaven and earth. Origen says the change in wording was meant, not careless.

9 “But it is not at all believable that, after what he said about the six days, Moses would immediately add the words, in the day that God made the heavens and the earth, without a special meaning.”

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITER **Origen,** *Against Celsus* 50 (c. 215–254 AD) **Source 13, page 6** **Read it in the library ›**
THF's updated English

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THE LIMITS

What these passages don’t tell us

- None of these passages comments directly on the wording of Genesis 2:19 or its verb tense.
- They do not settle how long the days of creation were.
- A word-for-word match shows that a quotation really is in our text. It does not show that our reading of it is right, or who wrote each work.

WHERE EVERY QUOTE CAME FROM

The Sources

The 18 early Christian passages and 39 Bible verses we kept for this question (repeats and weak or off-topic search hits were left out): early Christian passages first (sources 1–18, grouped by writer, earliest first), then Bible verses in The Faith Once Delivered Bible (sources 19–47, in Bible order), then 10 more verses THF links to these passages, by reference. **Quote 1, page 2** beside a source shows where the study quotes it. Passages are in THF’s updated English unless marked “1885 English” (the Roberts–Donaldson translation, public domain). “… [continues online]” marks a passage the library gave only in part. **On paper?** At **thehistoricfaith.com**, Bible verses are in the **Audio Bible** and early Christian writings in the **Library** (search for the title).

EARLY CHRISTIAN WRITERS *18 passages from 11 writers*

Justin Martyr, *c. 130–165 AD · sources 1–2*

1 *Hortatory Address to the Greeks* (1885 English) **Quote 7, page 4** “as Moses wrote thus, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,” and then subjoins this sentence, “And the earth was invisible and unfashioned,” he thought that it… [continues online] **read ›**

2 *On the Resurrection, Fragments* (1885 English; on point 3) “does not the word say, “Let Us make man in our image, and after our likeness?” What kind of man… [continues online] **read ›**

Theophilus of Antioch, *c. 169–183 AD · sources 3–5*

3 *To Autolycus* 11 (on point 1) “God blessed them, saying, "Increase and multiply, and fill the waters of the sea, and let… [continues online] **read ›**

4 *To Autolycus* 20 **Quote 6, page 4** “out of the ground God formed all the beasts of the field… [continues online] **read ›**

5 *To Autolycus* 17 (1885 English) **Quote 1, page 2** “on the sixth day, God having made the quadrupeds, and wild beasts, and the land reptiles, pronounced no blessing upon them, reserving His blessing for man, whom He was about… [continues online] **read ›**

Irenaeus, *c. 175–202 AD · sources 6–7*

6 *Against Heresies: Book III* (1885 English; on point 3) “But this is Adam, if the truth should be told, the first formed man, of whom the Scripture says that the Lord spake, “Let Us make man after Our own… [continues online] **read ›**

7 *Against Heresies: Book I* (1885 English) **Quote 8, page 4** “that another man was formed out of the earth… [continues online] **read ›**

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Clement of Alexandria, *c. 190–215 AD · source 8*

8 *Stromata* 6.16 (1885 English; on point 7) “days of our years in them are seventy years… [continues online] **read ›**

Tertullian, *c. 196–220 AD · sources 9–10*

9 *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* 5 (on point 3) “us make man," Genesis 1:26, said He before He created him, and added, with our hand, for the sake of his pre-eminence… [continues online] **read ›**

10 *Against Hermogenes* 22 “1:11-12 And again: "And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that… [continues online] **read ›**

Hippolytus, *c. 200–236 AD · source 11*

11 *Exegetical Fragments* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 4, page 3** “what does this import? Are we to say, according to the opinion of some, that there were three men made, one spiritual, one animal, and one earthy… [continues online] **read ›**

Origen, *c. 215–254 AD · sources 12–13*

12 *Against Celsus* 60 (1885 English; on point 1) “with regard to the creation of the light upon the first day, and of the firmament upon the second, and of the gathering together of the waters that are under… [continues online] **read ›**

13 *Against Celsus* 50 (1885 English) **Quote 9, page 4** “since he makes the statements about the days of creation ground of accusation — as if he understood them clearly and correctly, some of which elapsed before the creation of light… [continues online] **read ›**

Apostolic Constitutions, *c. 250–380 AD · source 14*

14 *Apostolic Constitutions* (1885 English; on point 2) “at the conclusion of the creation You gave direction to Your Wisdom, and formed a reasonable creature as the citizen of the world, saying, Let us make man after our… [continues online] **read ›**

Methodius, *c. 270–311 AD · sources 15–16*

15 *Concerning Free Will* 1 (1885 English) **Quote 5, page 3** “1:26 whence it is manifest that man was not formed by a conjunction of the body with a certain pre-existent type… [continues online] **read ›**

16 *Fragments* 1 (1885 English; on point 4) “1:26 whence it is manifest that man was not formed by a conjunction of the body with a certain pre-existent type… [continues online] **read ›**

Lactantius, *c. 290–320 AD · source 17*

17 *Divine Institutes* 11 (1885 English) **Quote 2, page 2** “having finished the world, He commanded that animals of various kinds and of dissimilar forms should be created, both great and smaller… [continues online] **read ›**

Clement of Rome · *source 18*

18 *First Epistle to the Corinthians* (1885 English) **Quote 3, page 2** “God made man; male and female He created them.” Having thus finished all these things, He approved them, and blessed them, and said, “Increase and multiply.” We see, then, how… [continues online] **read ›**

THE BIBLE *29 verses, The Faith Once Delivered Bible (Old Testament from the Septuagint), in Bible order*

19 **Genesis 1:1** In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth. **read ›**

20 **Genesis 1:2** But the earth was invisible and unformed, and darkness was over the abyss, and the Spirit of God was moving over the water. **read ›**

21 **Genesis 1:5** God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening, and there was morning, one day. **read ›**

22 **Genesis 1:8** God called the firmament Heaven, and God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning, the second day. **read ›**

23 **Genesis 1:13** And there was evening, and there was morning, the third day. **read ›**

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24 **Genesis 1:15** Let them be for light in the firmament of heaven, to shine on the earth." And it was so. **read ›**

25 **Genesis 1:16** God made the two great lights: the greater light to rule the day and the lesser light to rule the night; and he made the stars. **read ›**

26 **Genesis 1:17** God set them in the firmament of heaven to shine on the earth, **read ›**

27 **Genesis 1:20** Then God said, "Let the waters bring forth creeping things that are living creatures, and birds flying above the earth in the firmament of heaven." And it was so. **read ›**

28 **Genesis 1:21** God made the great sea creatures, and every living creeping thing that the waters brought forth according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that they were good. **read ›**

29 **Genesis 1:24** Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kind: four-footed animals, creeping things, and wild beasts of the earth according to their kind." And it was so. **read ›**

30 **Genesis 1:25** God made the wild beasts of the earth according to their kind, the cattle according to their kind, and all the creeping things of the earth according to their kind. And God saw that they were good. **read ›**

31 **Genesis 1:26** Then God said, "Let us make man according to our image and according to likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the earth, and all the creeping things that creep on the earth." **read ›**

32 **Genesis 1:27** So God made man; according to the image of God he made him; male and female he made them. **read ›**

33 **Genesis 1:30** And to all the wild beasts of the earth, to all the birds of heaven, and to every creeping thing that creeps on the earth, which has in itself a living soul, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. **read ›**

34 **Genesis 2:4** This is the book of the generation of heaven and earth, when they came to be, in the day that the Lord God made the heaven and the earth, **read ›**

35 **Genesis 2:5** and every green thing of the field before it was on the earth, and all the grass of the field before it sprang up. For God had not sent rain on the earth, and there was no man to work it. **read ›**

36 **Genesis 2:7** Then God formed the man of dust from the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and the man became a living soul. **read ›**

37 **Genesis 2:15** The Lord God took the man whom he had formed and put him in the garden of Delight, to work it and to keep it. **read ›**

38 **Genesis 2:19** God also formed out of the earth all the wild beasts of the field and all the birds of heaven. He brought them to Adam to see what Adam would call them, and whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name. **read ›**

39 **Genesis 2:20** Adam gave names to all the cattle, to all the birds of heaven, and to all the wild beasts of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper like himself. **read ›**

40 **Genesis 5:1** This is the book of the generation of men. In the day that God made Adam, he made him according to the image of God. **read ›**

41 **Genesis 5:2** Male and female he made them, and he blessed them, and he called his name Adam, in the day that he made them. **read ›**

42 **Genesis 7:14** and all the wild beasts according to their kind, all the cattle according to their kind, every creeping thing that moves on the earth according to its kind, and every flying bird according to its kind. **read ›**

43 **Psalms 8:6** and you set him over the works of your hands; you subjected all things under his feet, (Septuagint Psalm 8:7 (Psalm 8:6 in most Bibles)) **read ›**

44 **Tobit 8:6** You made Adam, and gave him Eve his wife as a helper and support; from them came the seed of mankind. You said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone; let us make him a helper like himself.' **read ›**

45 **Wisdom of Solomon 9:2** and by your wisdom formed man, to have dominion over the creatures made by you, **read ›**

46 **Wisdom of Sirach 17:4** He put the fear of man upon all flesh, and gave him dominion over beasts and birds. **read ›**

47 **1 Enoch 89:10** Open the verse to read it. **read ›**

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ALSO LINKED BY THF TO THESE PASSAGES *10 verses, by reference*

Partly machine-linked: related to the passages, not always quoted in them. Each reference links to the verse in our audio Bible.

Matthew 5:16

John 1:3

Romans 8:22

1 Corinthians 3:12 · 7:31 · 13:8

2 Corinthians 4:6

2 Timothy 4:6

James 2:17

Revelation 22:18

Searched: Ante-Nicene Fathers volumes 1–9 and the Bible, including the Septuagint.

ABOUT THIS STUDY

A THF member asked “Does Genesis 2 say man was made before the animals, unlike Genesis 1?” on April 27, 2026. The Historic Faith answered it as a public study on November 9, 2026.

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THE END OF THIS STUDY