

# Garden of Eden

Genesis 2-3

By Scott Huckaby

9/3/2023

**BIG BEND  
BIBLE  
FELLOWSHIP**

## How might we benefit from a study of the Garden of Eden?

It gives us a sense of what God has in mind for people before sin entered the picture. This gives us a sense of what we can expect when we will be able to live without sin in eternity.

### Genesis 2:8-20

<sup>8</sup> Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed.

<sup>9</sup> The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

<sup>10</sup> A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. <sup>11</sup> The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. <sup>12</sup> (The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) <sup>13</sup> The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. <sup>14</sup> The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Ashur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

<sup>15</sup> The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. <sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die.”

<sup>18</sup> The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”

<sup>19</sup> Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup> So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals. But for Adam no suitable helper was found.

## v8 – What was the Garden of Eden?

Eden was a garden specifically planted by God; it was a place God made to be a perfect habitation for Adam (and later, Eve).

## v9 – What did Adam observe about the Garden?

*Out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow:* Genesis chapter 2 does not represent a contradictory account of creation. Rather, it is probably the history of creation from Adam’s perspective.

## What were the two most significant trees in the Garden?

*The tree of life... the tree of the knowledge of good and evil:* These two trees were among all the other trees God created and put in the Garden of Eden.

- The tree of life was to grant (or to sustain) eternal life (Genesis 3:22). God still has a tree of life available to His people (Revelation 2:7), which is in heaven (Revelation 22:2).
- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was the “temptation” tree. Eating the fruit of this tree would give Adam an experiential knowledge of good and evil.

## Why did God put the temptation tree in the Garden?

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not there so man would know good and evil, but so God could test good and evil in man.

- We are made in the image of God so we have a free will and there had to be a choice in order to exercise that free will.

## Why did God create us with a free will knowing we would exercise it to disobey Him?

He wanted us to experience the depth of love with Him that is only possible if we are free to choose or reject a relationship with Him.

### **v10-14 – What were the rivers of the Garden?**

These rivers are given specific names which correspond to the names of rivers known in either the modern or ancient world.

### **Can we tell where the Garden of Eden was based on these river names?**

No, the flood dramatically changed the earth's landscape and "erased" these rivers.

- We know modern rivers today such as the Tigris or Euphrates because Noah and his sons named some rivers in the post-flood world after familiar pre-flood rivers.

### **What does it tell us that the Garden rivers start out as one and branch out to four rivers?**

It is the opposite of what we find in our world where multiple rivers join to form one.

- If Eden represents heaven on earth, it is the source of blessings that fan out from there.
- It is similar to the rivers flowing from the Millennial Kingdom temple (Ezekiel) and the New Jerusalem (Revelation).

### **How does the presence of gold on the earth support the Genesis creation account?**

The evolutionary world view believes the earth was formed from a molten mass of matter that cooled over time on the surface. If that happened, gold would not be found on the surface because of its density.

### **v15 – What is the significance of God giving Adam work in the Garden?**

Work is something good for man and was part of Adam's perfect existence before the fall.

- It gives us an outlet for creativity (image of God)
- Work only became drudgery after the fall (thorns and thistles)
- We will have work to do in eternity

### **v16-17 – How did God test Adam & Eve in the Garden?**

If there was not something forbidden then there wouldn't have been a choice. God wants our love and obedience to Him to be the love and obedience of choice.

### **How are people being tested today?**

The truth about God is readily available... people have a choice to believe it or instead trust in some other alternative.

Romans 1:20 – *since the creation of the world God's invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse*

### **What is the significance of God making this command originally to Adam and not to Eve?**

It was to exercise Adam's role as head of the family. He gave Adam responsibility to make sure his wife did not do what would cause harm.

Of course, God knew he would fail that test...

1 Peter 1:19-20 – *with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world*

### **v18 – What did God's creation lack?**

For the first time, God saw something that was not good — the aloneness of man. God never intended for man to be alone, either in the marital or social sense.

- Marriage has a civilizing influence on man. The wildest, most violent, sociopathic men in history have always been single, never under the plan God gave to influence men for good. For society as a whole, this is not good.

### **What does it mean that God would make a helper comparable to Adam?**

Different versions of the Bible translate this idea in a variety of ways...

- Helper meet (suitable, adapted, completing) (Amplified).
- A companion... a helper suited to his needs (Living).
- A helper such as he needs (Beck).
- A helper correspondent to himself (Septuagint Bible).
- A helper suitable (NIV, NASB).
- A help meet for him (KJV).

### **What were the implications of Eve being a helper comparable to Adam?**

She should be considered and honored the same as Adam. A woman or wife cannot be regarded as a mere tool or worker, but as an equal partner in God's grace and an equal human being.

- In reference to the marriage relationship, God created woman to be a perfectly suitable helper to the man. This means God gave the plan and agenda to Adam, and he and the woman together work to fulfill it as equal partners.

### **Since Eve was created to help Adam, does that mean the husband needn't help his wife?**

God expects the husband to be the spiritual leader. A true leader will, of course, help those helping him.

- We only see "helping" as a position of inferiority when we think like the world thinks.

Jesus considers positions of service as most important in His sight...

*Matthew 20:26-28 – whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant... just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*

God's creation wasn't complete until He created Eve... **What is the difference between "finished" and "complete"?**

- When a man finds the right woman to marry, he is complete.
- When a man finds the wrong woman to marry, he is finished.
- When the right woman finds her man with the wrong woman, he is completely finished.

### **v19-20 – What does it tell us that God had Adam name the animals?**

Since Adam had the capability to intelligently name all the animals, it shows he was a brilliant man. Because at this time Adam's intellect had not yet suffered from the fall, he was probably the most brilliant man who ever lived. Adam was the first and greatest of all biologists and botanists.

### **Why do you think Adam was given the task of naming the animals before Eve was created?**

He would have come to realize that he was essentially different from all the animals. They were not made in the image of God.

- And He would have observed that there were male and female animals so he'd see his need for a partner.
- God used this to prepare Adam to receive the gift of woman.

For the sake of time, we'll skip over the part where God creates Eve from Adam's side. We all know how impressed Adam was with Eve. What isn't recorded in Scripture but had been passed down by tradition was this comment to God by Adam: "Wow, if this is what you gave me by taking a rib, what could I have gotten for an arm or a leg?"

Before we leave the topic of the Garden of Eden, there are some other nuggets we can glean from Genesis chapter 3...

### **What was the significance of Adam and Eve being naked in the Garden?**

Before the fall, Adam and Eve were both naked... and not ashamed. The idea of "nakedness" is far more than mere nudity. It has the sense of being totally open and exposed as a person before God and man. To be naked... and not ashamed means you have no sin, nothing to be rightly ashamed of, and nothing to hide.

### **Does this mean we'll all be naked in heaven?**

No, because we will be honoring Jesus by the way we are clothed...

*Revelation 19:6-8 – I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

### **What can we make of Eve carrying on a conversation with the serpent in the Garden?**

It did not strike her as out of the ordinary to be carrying on a conversation with an animal. Perhaps such things were common before the fall and thus in eternity.

- I remember one of the creation ministries doing short segments on Christian radio where animals were interviewed explaining how the Creator made them uniquely suited for their environment.

### **What is the significance of the serpent being cursed to only crawl on its belly?**

The serpent must have not had to crawl like a snake prior to the fall... so maybe it had legs?

### **Did Satan actually possess a serpent or did he merely take on the appearance of a serpent?**

Since God called out the serpent for a special curse more than any of the other animals, it sure looks like the serpent was culpable in being indwelt by Satan.

### **Why did Satan choose the serpent to possess in order to tempt Eve?**

Genesis 3:1 – *the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made*

Was the serpent cunning before or after it was indwelt by Satan? Maybe both but certainly after because that is a characteristic of Satan.

### **What was the significance of Adam and Eve hiding themselves from God after the fall?**

They were embarrassed because they had disobeyed Him. They would no longer have the kind of fellowship with Him like they had before, walking and talking with Him in the Garden in the cool of the day.

- In Eternity, we will once again be able to walk and talk with God in the cool of the day.

### **What other consequences were there after the fall?**

- They died spiritually (spirit)
- They had a sin nature (soul)
- They would eventually die physically (body)
- Nature would be characterized by death
- Thorns, thistles & goat-heads
- Pain of child birth

- Second law of thermodynamics

### **What is the significance of Adam and Eve being banished from the Garden?**

More consequences of the fall. If they were to benefit from a garden, they'd have to plant it themselves, not enjoy the Garden of God.

- Another consequence of being banished from the Garden is that they might never see God again because it was the only place where they met Him.
- Cherubim guarded access and they are always associated with the presence and glory of God (Ezekiel 10, Isaiah 6, Revelation 4).

### **What is the significance of Adam and Eve being denied access to the Tree of Life?**

In mercy, God protected Adam and Eve from the horrible fate of having to live forever as sinners by preventing them from eating from the tree of life.

### **What was the tree of life?**

The tree of life is a life-giving tree created to enhance and perpetually sustain the physical life of humanity. We will see it again in the New Jerusalem...

Revelation 22:2 – *on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*

In the eternal state, the curse will be no more and access to the tree of life will be reinstated. Eden will be restored.

### **Will we see Adam and Eve in heaven?**

Certainly... God promised them a Savior in Genesis 3:15 and they believed God; in faith trusting in His grace.

### **What applications come to mind from our discussion?**

- All people are tested by God... where will you choose to spend eternity?
- Work is a blessing... we will not be idle in eternity!
- Marriage is a partnership & a blessing ordained by God.
- Relationships will be enhanced in eternity, with God, each other, and even with animals.
- The curse will be removed in eternity; Eden will be restored!