

WHAT IN THE WORLD HAPPENED

Living in Paradise, Genesis 2:8-17

Open:

Summer allows for family vacation trips ... do you have a favorite place?

- I asked Margaret Lanier to do a little research ... top vacation spots in the world ...

VAC SPOT #1 – London (skyline w/Big Ben is the clue)

VAC SPOT #2 – Hawaii (palm trees are the clue to something tropical)

VAC SPOT #3 – Disney World (background castle is the clue)

VAC SPOT #4 – Yellowstone National Park (background geysers are the clue)

VAC SPOT #5 – Rome (ruins are the clue)

* Man's first home was a beautiful garden, designed by God.

- Green lush grass (no weeds), flowers in bloom, trees carefully placed bearing fruit, the forest filled with joyous sounds, a river that winds its way, waterfalls, quiet pools and rushing through rocks ... the perfume of roses and sights of animals at play ... it was called the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 2:8 The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man He had formed.

(1) A place to live

- Some have viewed the Garden of Eden as a fable, a Biblical myth. They deny the existence of such a place.

Consider:

- √ We have a specific location mentioned ... **eastward in Eden**.
- √ The exact location is difficult to pinpoint ... was it east of where Adam was at that moment or is Moses, the penman, saying it was east of where he and the Israelites were ... this would have meant east of the Arabian Desert.
- √ This would put it in the Middle East ... some have used the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers as landmarks and have concluded it is in southern Iraq.
 - We must be careful, though ... the catastrophic flood of Noah's day could well have changed the original location of these riverbeds.
- √ Jimmy DeYoung believes the Garden of Eden was in Jerusalem.
- √ What we do know is real lands and real rivers are mentioned ... making this a real place.
- You might ask, why even bring this up? It is important to believe such a place existed; otherwise, if this is a fable, maybe man's fall is a fable.
 - √ If man's fall is a fable, then Christ is unnecessary and redemption is obsolete.
- How kind of God to provide such a place for man ...
 - **He put the man there - NKJV; there He placed the man – NLT.**
 - √ I envision God picking Adam up by his arms ... more of “come here, I want to show you something, I have a surprise for you ...”
 - √ This was an act of love on God's part ... it even said **God planted a garden ...** He was directly involved.
 - √ The garden was a gift of God to man because He loved him.

➤ The word “garden” means enclosed, protected, sheltered ...

– Eden – a place of delight, pleasure, paradise.

✓ The Babylonians called the lush green land from which the water flowed “edenu.” Today we might use the term “oasis.”

✓ Thus, it was a magnificent garden paradise, unlike any the world has seen since.

• Here God fellowshiped (interacted, enjoyed) with those He created after His image and breathed His Spirit into.

* I’d like to come back to **Vs. 9** in a moment ... **Vs. 10-14** describe the real estate ... here we see one river become 4.

Genesis 2:10-14 NKJV ¹⁰ Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. ¹¹ The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹² And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. ¹³ The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. ¹⁴ The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

– As for the source of this river ... a great spring that gushed forth flowing through the garden.

✓ This would indicate a high water table and contributed the moisture needed to sustain the beautiful foliage.

✓ This underwater source would have to have been large to allow for 4 rivers to flow from it.

✓ Due to the flood that came later, we can’t say for sure ... speculate:

• The Pishon flowed through Havilah; many think this flowed toward India ... some identify the Ganges or Indus as this river.

✓ Gold, the onyx stone and bdellium (a precious gum) is said to be located there.

✓ Havilah is a name later given to a son of Cush (**Genesis 10:7**) and a son of Joktan (**Genesis 10:2**)

- √ The first is a descendent of Ham and the other of Shem (sons of Noah).
- √ The fact these names survived the flood may indicate this “rich land” made quite an impression on the sons of Noah.
- √ Havilah means sand land.
- Some suggest the Gihon later became known as the Nile River.
 - √ It flowed through the land of Cush ... which associated later in Scripture with both a region of Arabia and Ethiopia.
- The river Hiddekel is a name Assyrians give to the Tigris.
- And then we have mentioned the Euphrates.
- One wonders if Adam and his boys ever went tubing or lily pad floating ... as he stood where the one river divided into 4 did he ever travel them to see where they ended?
 - √ What we do know is this, the geography and topography would have been completely changed by the universal flood.

2 Peter 3:6 NLT Then He used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood.

(2) A job to perform

Genesis 2:15 NKJV Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

- Adam was assigned a specific task ... he was to be the gardener and the guardian.
 - √ Tend = dress, till, cultivate.
 - √ Keep = watch over, guard, take care of.

- He was assigned responsibility ... given something meaningful and worthwhile to do.

- √ Idleness is dangerous ... make good use of your time.
- √ God saw that Adam had work to do.

→ We are to be productive.

Review: A place to live
A job to perform

(3) A choice to make

Genesis 2:9 NKJV And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Vs. 16-17 NKJV ¹⁶ And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

➤ The scene is set. God places but one restriction on Adam.

- Why? God did not force himself on us, He did not program us as robots ... He gave us freedom to choose.
- A love that is forced is not love but manipulation.

- √ The tree to avoid became a test to show our love and loyalty.

* Notice in this garden were many beautiful trees ... **pleasant to the sight and good for food.**

- 2 trees are singled out:

a) The Tree of Life – a special tree that had power to sustain life.

- This tree is mentioned by Ezekiel in reference to the millennial reign of Christ.

Ezekiel 47:12 NLT Fruit trees of all kinds will grow along both sides of the river. The leaves of these trees will never turn brown and fall, and there will always be fruit on their branches. There will be a new crop every month, for they are watered by the river flowing from the Temple. The fruit will be for food and the leaves for healing. (medicine)

- As well it is found twice in the book of Revelation.

Revelation 2:7b NLT To everyone who is victorious I will give fruit from the tree of life in the paradise of God.

- We believe this tree will be located in the New Jerusalem, the capital of the new heaven and earth.

Revelation 22:2 a clear crystal river from the throne of God ... It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations.

√ the Greek word “medicine/healing” is “therapeia” from which we get “therapeutic.”

➤ This is the first tree on earth to be distinct.

- It exists only in a perfect environment.
- Found in the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem.

b) The 2nd tree: the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

- As well this tree seems to be in the middle of the garden. (**Genesis 3:3**)
- To eat of this tree was to die spiritually and eventually physically.
- The moment they ate from the tree, they were filled with shame ... sin came between God and His creation.

➤ Every day you and I are faced with choices ...

- We are not puppets on a string.
- Your choices indicate your heart.
 - √ You can choose Jesus as your Savior or reject Him.
 - √ You can choose to serve and obey or go your own way.

→ Your choice is an indication of your love.

Close:

Paradise ... you won't find it on earth ... However:

- be grateful – He has given you a place to live.
- be diligent – He has given you a job to perform.
- be wise – Your choices indicate your love for God.

Next week: Father's Day – Will you have this woman?

Message Notes
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June 10, 2012