

The Garden of God

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It has been assumed that when Almighty God uses terms like “planting” and “garden” in the pages of the Bible, they are being applied literally and should therefore be understood literally. However, it is important to examine scriptures very closely to see whether the context requires a literal interpretation or perhaps one that was intended to be figurative. More often than not, when God “plants” He is bringing something into existence, or establishing something, and in the case of the Garden located east of Eden it would be an error to assume that God is describing a literal physical garden. For example, when God planted the nation of Israel, He did not dig a hole and place them in it,

Moreover I will appoint a place for My people Israel, and I will plant (SHD 5193) them, that they may dwell in a place of their own and move no more (2Sam. 7:10a; NKJV throughout unless noted; emphasis added).

In 2Samuel 7:10, the Hebrew word translated “plant” is exactly the same word used in Genesis 2:8 to describe God’s action of establishing a territory that He defines as a “garden”,

The Lord God planted (SHD 5193) a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed (Gen. 2:8; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The territory that God described as a garden is mentioned in a number of other scriptures, and the context has to do with activities in the heavenly realm,

You (ref. to Satan) were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering: the sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold (Eze. 28:13a; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Although it could be assumed that Satan had physical gemstones (jewels) as a covering, it does not fit the scene that is taking place. First, Satan is not composed of flesh and blood and as a consequence he would not be wearing physical gemstones (jewels). Secondly, this section of scripture is dealing with Satan’s activities around Almighty God’s throne prior to his rebellion (cf. vs. 15). Therefore, it is not a physical location. Instead, God is using figurative language that is familiar to human beings to describe a heavenly scene. Figurative language is used in the next scripture to describe activities that took place in the spirit realm between Satan and other members of the angelic family, and the term “trees” is used to represent specific groups of angels,

The cedars (other angels) in the garden of God could not hide it (king of Egypt, who is compared to a majestic tree representing Satan); the fir trees (angels) were not like its boughs, and the chestnut trees (angels) were not like its branches; no tree (angel) in the

garden of God was like it in beauty (cf. Eze. 28:12). I (Almighty God) made it beautiful with a multitude of branches, so that (unfortunately as a result) all the trees of Eden envied it, that were in the garden of God (heavenly realm) (Eze. 31:8-9; cf. 31:16, 18; Ed. notes in parentheses).

It is no coincidence that God compares His spirit realm to a garden because a garden is a place intended to produce an increase and provide sustenance to everyone who partakes of it. God's Garden is watered by His Holy Spirit which is meant to encourage the growth of good fruit (cf. Eph. 5:9; Gal. 5:22-23),

Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divided and became four rivers (heads) (Gen. 2:10; NASB).

For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, and hewn themselves cisterns – broken cisterns that can hold no water (Jer. 2:13; cf. 17:13; Jn. 4:14; Rev. 7:17; emphasis added).

This water, that represents the action of God's Holy Spirit, flowed from Eden eastward into the Garden. As we will see later Eden represents the central location of God's government and throne, and although God's Garden is east of Eden both areas are still under His jurisdiction.

Almighty God leads people by His Holy Spirit (Rom. 2:4b; Jn. 6:44, 65), but He does not force them to do anything against their will, which explains why Adam and Eve could choose to believe the word of Satan rather than the word of God,

And the serpent (Satan) said to the woman, "You will not surely die." (Gen. 3:4)

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate (Gen. 3:6)

However, for those who have made a decision to obey the word of Almighty God, there is no turning back to Satan's way of living,

For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift (God's Holy Spirit pictured symbolically by physical waters), and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the son of God, and put him to an open shame (Heb. 6:4-6; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The holy spirit has always flowed out from Almighty God to all His created beings, whether they are composed of spirit or flesh and blood. This action is described in the book of Revelation with one change in the figurative language. Instead of using Eden to describe the location of Almighty God's government and throne, the *City of God* which is also referred to as the holy city Jerusalem from above, is substituted (Gal. 4:26). This confirms that Eden and the City of God are one and the same. They are different terms used to describe the same location, and both are composed of spirit,

And he (an angel) carried me (the apostle John) away in the Spirit (in a vision) to a great and high mountain (symbol of government), and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God (Rev. 21:10; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Part of this spiritual city appeared as if it was constructed with precious jewels. This is important because the Adversary was also described as having precious stones as part of his covering (Eze. 28:13). By comparing these two examples, it is logical to conclude that Satan was in the presence of Almighty God's throne (Eze. 31:9), or City of God, prior to his rebellion,

And the foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with all kinds of precious stones: the first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald (Rev. 21:19ff).

The same figurative river that flowed from Eden to a location east of Eden (Gen. 2:10) is described in the book of Revelation,

Then he (an angel) showed me (the apostle John) a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb (symbolic of Jesus Christ) (Rev. 22:1; NASB; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Also, the tree of life pictured in the Garden of God (Gen. 2:9) is present in the City of God confirming that Eden, the Garden of Eden, and City of God are all figurative terms used to describe the same area of Almighty God's jurisdiction,

In the middle of its street (main street in the City of God), and either side of the river, was the tree of life (Rev. 22:2a; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It is important to note that the Second Covenant confirms details associated with the First Covenant. In other words, sections of scripture in the book of Revelation regarding the City of God are a second witness to some of the events that occurred in Eden and the Garden of Eden. Ignoring this reality is tantamount to removing Holy Scripture,

And if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book (Rev. 22:19; NASB; cf. Dt. 4:2; 12:32; emphasis added).

As the Garden east of Eden represents the location in which God placed Adam, it appears this was a separate area that was created to serve a specific purpose within Almighty God's plan of salvation. However, it was still part of God's spirit realm and His jurisdiction. After Adam and Eve sinned, they had to leave this area because they were transformed into flesh and blood, which cannot be part of the spirit realm (cf. 1Cor. 15:50),

Then the eyes of both of them (Adam and Eve) were opened, and they knew that they were naked (became flesh and blood as a consequence of their sin); and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings (in an attempt to cover their nakedness – i.e. guilt) (Gen. 3:7; Ed. notes in parentheses).

Then the Lord God said, "Because the man has become like one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" – therefore the Lord God sent him out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he had been taken. So He drove out the man; and placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3:22-24).

After Adam and Eve sinned they were transformed from spirit-beings to a flesh and blood form that would die, contrary to Satan's lie (Gen. 3:4). At this point they were removed from the presence of the tree of life and the Garden of God because they had become profane through sin (Heb. 12:16-17) and therefore could no longer abide in the spirit realm (1Cor. 15:50). As a result of their disobedience, they no longer had immediate and direct access to God's Word with the potential for everlasting life (Gen. 3:24; cf. Mt. 13:10-15). God's family is a spirit-family and Adam's family was meant to be part of it. Adam would now have to work in the physical realm in order to sustain his physical family that would come from him. This physical realm is referred to in the Bible through the use of many different terms such as waste places, wilderness, desert, present evil world, Babylon, etc.,

For the Lord will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places (SHD 2723); He will make her wilderness (SHD 4057) like Eden, and her desert (SHD 6160) like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody (Isa. 51:3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

According to accounts in the book of Revelation, once sin is finally dealt with, the original condition described in the Garden of God prior to the rebellion of Adam and Eve will be restored. This means that the area outside of Eden will be transformed from a physical form back to a spirit form,

And the leaves of the tree (of life) were for the healing (restoration) of the nations. And there shall be no more curse (cf. Gen. 3:14-19), but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His (Almighty God's) servants shall serve Him (Rev. 22:2b-3; Ed. notes in parentheses).

And I (the apostle John) saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away (area described as being outside of Eden). Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city (Eden and the Garden of God), New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from (Almighty) God, prepared as a bride for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of (Almighty) God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and (Almighty) God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed way" (Rev. 21:1-4; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

This restoration to a former state is prophesied in the First Covenant,

For the Lord will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody (Isa. 51:3; cf. 11:1-16; 65:17-25).

This scripture could be misapplied to refer to a physical restoration, but Revelation 21:1-4 shows that it is speaking of a spiritual restoration because the Garden of God was not originally a physical place.

It is important to note that Almighty God has not and cannot be seen or heard by any human beings but is represented through intercessors (angels; cf. Jn. 5:37). Had Adam and Eve obeyed the instructions they were given, they would have dwelt in the presence of Almighty God. Instead, they were cut off because of sin and their sinful state prevented them from having fellowship directly (face to face) with Almighty God and the spirit-being figuratively referred to as the tree of life,

Therefore (because of sin) the Lord God sent him (Adam) out of the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he was taken. So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3:23-24; Ed. notes in parentheses).

The present condition of mankind will change and the original intention for their creation will come to fruition due to Almighty God's plan of salvation, made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which is able to cover all the sins that have occurred and are repented of (Jn. 1:29). By the observance of God's Holy Days each year, true believers are reminded about His plan of reconciliation and restoration. These Holy Days are an outline covering past events such as the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and future events such as the resurrection and judgment of all who have ever lived (see God's Holy Days). Upon fulfillment of what God's Holy Days picture, the physical creation will come to an end and all who have repented of sin will be transformed into spirit-beings,

But the day of the Lord, will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise (a reverse of the Big Bang theory), and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the (evil) works that are in it will be burned up. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God (cf. Mt. 6:10), because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we (God's obedient servants; cf. Rev. 12:17), according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells (2Pt. 3:10-13; Ed. notes in parentheses).

It was never Almighty God's will that Adam and Eve leave the Garden east of Eden, but He gave them freedom of choice. Because they made the wrong choice, refusing to believe God's word and obey it, they were transformed into flesh and blood (a death sentence as a result of sin; cf. Gen. 3:4; Eze. 18:4, 20; Rom. 6:23) and sent away from His presence. Mankind is still in this condition today and it is only through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ that they have any hope of everlasting life. However, no one can enter the kingdom of God until they have repented of sin, which includes a determination to live in newness of life in accordance with God's law and commandments (Rom. 6:4; 7:6). For all those who refuse to obey God during their physical life, there will be a future period of judgment to determine whether they are willing to obey the law and

commandments of Almighty God. This is pictured by the last Holy Day in God's plan of salvation, referred to as the Last Great Day (Jn. 7:37; cf. Rev. 20:11-15). The fulfillment of the Last Great Day will result in the restoration of the Garden of God.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor. 11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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