

Visiting the Garden of Eden

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from multiple Internet sources)

Introduction:

- A. Gen. 2:8-17
- B. This account is history, not mythology
 - 1. Moses wrote it as history - Gen. 2:4, 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, 11:10, 27, 25:12, 19, 36:1, 37:2
 - 2. Jesus authenticated the Creation account - Matt. 19:3-6, 24:37-39
 - 3. These inspired apostles confirmed it - 1Tim. 2:13-14; 1Peter 3:18-21; 2Peter 2:5-8
 - 4. Though little remains of the pre-flood world, the testimony of Jesus Christ, Moses, and the apostles leave us no doubt that it once was in this world
 - 5. Genesis one through three is essential to our faith. They reveal to us the origin of this universe, the origin of life, the origin of souls, the beginning of families, the beginning of God's revelation of Himself to man, and the first prophecy of the gospel of salvation in Christ. No part of it is myth.

I. WHERE WAS THE GARDEN OF EDEN?

- A. Eden - "edhen" (Hebrew) delight, pleasure; Greek "ayden"; Aramaic root "edinnu" meaning "fruitful, well-watered."
 - 1. Garden - "A fenced, gated enclosure" (Strongs). Therefore, it is a delightful, walled garden
 - 2. Humans like to see boundaries; it gives them a sense of security.
 - 3. The walled garden was eastward in Eden; the Bible does not describe what the rest of the world outside the wall was like until midway through chapter three
 - 4. It came to be used as a place name - 2Kings 19:12; Isa 37:12; Ez. 27:23; Amos 1:5
- B. Ezekiel used Eden as a metaphor for the prosperous region of Tyre, which explains why God was so angry with that city. They had every advantage and squandered it, reminiscent of Adam and Eve - Ez. 28:12-19
 - 1. The Garden of Eden or Garden of God became a term of comparison for beautiful places on the earth
 - 2. Kings often tried to recapture the Garden of Eden by creating beautiful gardens of their own.
 - a. Ecc. 2:5 - Solomon's palace gardens
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar's Hanging Gardens of Babylon
 - c. The Greek Garden of the Hesperides
- C. "Kush" is often incorrectly translated as Ethiopia, which was also known as Cush, but in this case thought to be referring to Cossaea, a Greek name for the Kassite lands north of Elam, immediately to the east of ancient Babylon, which, unlike Ethiopia, does lie within the region being described. In Antiquities of the Jews by the first-century Jewish historian Josephus, he identifies the Pishon as what "the Greeks called Ganges," and the Geon as the Nile. This places Eden in the middle of the Mideast.

II. THINGS TO DISCOVER IN THE GARDEN OF EDEN

A. The perfect Provider - Gen. 1:31, 3:8

1. Can you imagine a place where God personally manifest Himself in a form that can be discerned? - "Holy ground"

B. The most perfect place on earth - Gen. 2:8

1. Human minds in a world overcome with sin cannot imagine or describe such a place.
2. Time was not measured there; there was no point; they had access to the tree of life, and in theory could have eaten of it and lived there perpetually - Gen. 3:22

C. The perfect provisions - Gen. 2:9-10, 16

1. "The Eden of Genesis has been variously located at the headwaters of the Tigris and Euphrates in northern Iraq, in Africa, and in the Persian Gulf. Eden in Ezekiel appears to be located in Lebanon" (Wikipedia)
2. "I cannot tell you where the Garden of Eden was. I am sure it was somewhere near the Tigris-Euphrates Valley. Originally, that valley was a very fertile place, and it still is, for that matter. At one time, the peoples inhabiting that region did not even plant grain there; they simply harvested it, for it grew by itself." (J.V. Magee Commentary on Genesis)
3. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was there. This is how God provided for humankind's fulfillment. Of what value are the Divine gifts of free will and self-determination if there is no way to exercise them?
4. Eden was not Paradise or Heaven. As wonderful as it was, it was in this world and therefore subject to the laws God set for this world. Temptation and sin were possible there; and where sin happens, death follows soon after - Gen. 3:1, 6, 19

D. A Perfect Passion - Gen. 2:18, 21-24; Matt. 19:4-6

1. Marriage as God intended it to be, a little bit of Paradise on earth

E. What not to look for in the Garden of Eden

1. Houses - God moderated the climate
2. Clothes - They had no knowledge of nakedness
3. Roads, industry, stores - it was the Garden of Eden
4. Churches or temples - There was no sin

Conclusion:

A. Sadly, no one will ever visit the Garden of Eden again - Gen. 3:24

1. The world was changed by the flood - Gen. 7-8
2. The Tree of Life is in heaven now - Rev. 22:1-2

B. The perfect place to be will never be found on this earth nor in this universe

1. John 14:1-3, 6 - In Christ, we do not go back to Eden where God will visit us; we will go to heaven where we will live with Him