

Genesis 2:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

Analysis

And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.... This passage continues the detailed account of Eden, human creation, and God's design for human flourishing. Genesis 2 complements chapter 1 by providing intimate details about human origins, the garden setting, marriage institution, and humanity's vocation as priest-kings in God's sanctuary-garden.

The narrative emphasizes God's personal involvement, careful preparation of human habitation, clear communication of covenant requirements, and provision for human needs including work, rest, relationship, and worship. The garden of Eden represents perfect environment where heaven and earth intersect, God dwells with humanity, and everything needed for life and blessing exists.

Key theological themes include human dignity as divine image-bearers, work as divine calling (not curse), marriage as covenant partnership, moral freedom with accountability, and the necessity of obedience for blessing. The detailed geography and placement of Eden in historical space-time (rivers, lands) presents this as real history, not mythology. These foundational truths establish the pattern for understanding humanity's purpose, relationships, and destiny throughout Scripture.

Historical Context

Genesis 2 provides a detailed account of human creation and Eden's establishment, using different literary style than chapter 1. Ancient Near Eastern parallels include the Sumerian Paradise myth and the Gilgamesh Epic's plant of life, but Genesis transforms these motifs within strict monotheism. The garden sanctuary with its rivers, trees, and divine presence parallels ancient temple theology where gods dwelt in sacred spaces.

The geographical references (Pishon, Gihon, Hiddekel/Tigris, Euphrates) ground the narrative in historical space-time rather than mythological timelessness. While the exact location of Eden remains debated, the inclusion of identifiable rivers presents this as real geography, not allegory. The Mesopotamian setting connects to humanity's ancient origins in that region, confirmed by archaeology.

Ancient audiences would have recognized marriage's divine institution as countercultural, elevating women beyond their typical status as property. The intimate account of woman's creation from man's side presented revolutionary equality and partnership. The garden-temple imagery established patterns for Israel's tabernacle and temple, where God would again dwell with His people in sacred space requiring holiness and obedience.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How does this verse contribute to the biblical doctrine of creation, fall, or redemption?
2. How does this passage challenge modern cultural assumptions about identity, purpose, or morality?

3. What connections can we trace from this verse to Jesus' life, death, and resurrection?

Interlinear Text

וְשָׁמַם מִקְרָב בַּעַד אֱלֹהִים יְהִי הַיּוֹם
 planted And the LORD God a garden in Eden eastward he put

H5193 H3068 H430 H1588 H5731 H6924 H7760

וְשָׁם בַּעַד אֶת־פָּנָיו אֲשֶׁר־יצַרְתָּ
 and there the man whom he had formed

H8033 H853 H120 H834 H3335

Additional Cross-References

Genesis 3:24 (Parallel theme): So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

Ezekiel 28:13 (References God): Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

Genesis 4:16 (References Lord): And Cain went out from the presence of the LORD, and dwelt in the land of Nod, on the east of Eden.

Genesis 13:10 (References Lord): And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar.

Isaiah 51:3 (References Lord): For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody.

Joel 2:3 (Parallel theme): A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth: the land is as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them.

2 Kings 19:12 (References God): Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed; as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Thelasar?

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