

Genesis 2:10-20

**"And the LORD God planted a garden
Eastward in Eden."**

Last week we entered that beautiful garden without a moment to look around.

However, this week I would like to look at the first habitation of man through the eyes of John Phillips, a Bible commentator I depend upon a great deal. His description is quite unique, and I'd like to share it with you:

"When Adam first opened his eyes to the light of day, he looked out upon a scene of matchless beauty and tranquility. The fields were emerald green, the hedgerows ablaze with blossoms, the atmosphere laden with the

fragrance of flowers, the forests ringing with joyous song. Strolling through his vast estate, Adam could pause to see a wolf playing tag with a lamb, could stop to romp with a jungle lion or to inhale the perfume of the most perfect rose that ever gladdened the eyes of man. He could pause to pick a plum, to prop a burdened vine, to plant a peach tree, to gaze with awe and wonder at the tree of life - the first tree ever to become extinct upon the earth. He might wander by way of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil standing silent, mysterious, alone - the only tree forbidden to him in all his boundless domains. **"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: 17: But of the tree of the knowledge of**

good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." He would remember the divine decree. He would continue on his way, happy that he could demonstrate his love for the living God by refraining from tampering with that tree. At last he would come to the river, for **"a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads."** -- and we will stop right there.

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Last week, we gleaned some very interesting information about trees.

Genesis 2:9 **"And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food--."**

Primarily, God made trees for the good of man, as was the case with all of creation.

Among other things, trees were made for food.

And since Genesis 1:29-30 makes it clear that both man and animals were vegetarians at the time, this fruit would form a very necessary and pleasant part of their diet.

So the modern-day theory that trees evolved both flowers and fruit for their own purposes is absolutely incorrect.

We only need to look around us to realize the fallacy of that theory.

If the preservation of the species was the only criteria, then a world full of pines trees would have done the job quite nicely.

But would they satisfy man's need for
beauty? And have you ever tried to eat
a pine cone?

What a hungry, boring world it would be if
trees only provided for their own
needs!

But God had other ideas.

He wanted trees of all shapes and sizes
which would be "**pleasant to the eye,
and good for food.**" So that's exactly
what He created.

He created maples with their colorful leaves
and sweet sap.

He created the mighty elm, towering over our
heads like a graceful fountain.

He fashioned fruit trees bearing apples,
pears, oranges, plums, and on and on.

Yes, He created different shapes and
different foods almost without number,

trees that were "pleasant to the sight,
and good for food."

In short, God made trees to supply man's
need.

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V 10-14 "And a river went out of Eden to
water the garden; and from thence it
was parted, and became into four heads.
11: The name of the first is Pison:
that is it which compasseth the whole
land of Havilah, where there is gold;
12: And the gold of that land is good:
there is bdellium and the onyx stone.
13: And the name of the second river is
Gihon: the same is it that compasseth
the whole land of Ethiopia.
14: And the name of the third river is
Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward

the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates."

The river that "**--went out of Eden to water the garden**" must have been mighty, for each tributary was significant in itself.

Its abundant supply would have greatly assisted the mist that went up from the earth "**and watered the whole face of the ground.**"

Which reminds us of fact that these rivers would not have been supplied in the conventional manner familiar to us.

Our present system of irrigation, which lifts great quantities of water from the ocean by solar power and redistributes it in the form of rain, did not exist.

However, it seems quite probable that the rivers of Adam's day, indeed of the whole Antediluvian age, were amply supplied by Artesian wells.

No doubt the oceans of the world emptied into underground reservoirs, which, in turn, were pressurized by subterranean heat to become "**the fountains of the great deep**" spoken of in Genesis 7:11.

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Some of the names mentioned here are still with us.

The mighty Euphrates still flows, and the lands of Ethiopia and Assyria appear on our present-day maps.

And, apparently, according to descriptions found on ancient Assyrian monuments, the river Hiddekel was later named the Tigris.

However, before you spend a lot of money looking for the gold of the land of Havilah, you should consider the fact that we are talking about Antediluvian geography here.

As the book of 2 Peter 3:6 tells us, **"the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished."**

And as we will learn in future lessons, the flood of Noah's day totally rearranged the geography of our earth.

The Pison and the Gihon no longer exist, and the Hiddekel (or Tigris) flows along the western border of Assyria, not the eastern side.

So it is quite evident that these were only Antediluvian names for entirely different rivers and lands which perished in the flood long ago.

However, these names would be familiar to Noah's family, and no doubt would have been applied to new rivers and places to make them feel at home, much as London, Ontario, was named after London, England.

Apparently, this has not been taken into consideration by those who believe they can use the present day Tigris and Euphrates to identify the geographical location of Eden.

And wherever Eden was originally, it would have been swept away by the same universal flood that altered the rest of the world's geography.

Well, I think that's enough about rivers.

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V 15 **"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."**

It was never God's intention that Adam lay around eating fruit all day.

He gave him a job because Adam *needed* a job.

And he got that job before he sinned, not as a punishment, but because God knew it was not good to be unemployed.

Yes, when Adam was a perfect man, God **"put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."**

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So how did we get the idea that work is a curse, something imposed upon us because of Adam's sin?

Let's jump ahead to Genesis Chapter 3.

V 17-19 **" And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of**

thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree,
of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou
shalt not eat of it: cursed is the
ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt
thou eat of it all the days of thy
life;

18: Thorns also and thistles shall it
bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat
the herb of the field;

19: In the sweat of thy face shalt thou
eat bread, till thou return unto the
ground; for out of it wast thou taken:
for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt
thou return."

There are two curses mentioned here, and
they both involve the ground, not work.
One of them was corruption.
From that point on, Adam would begin his
long journey to the grave.

We will be talking more about that later.
But the one I want to talk about now is
weeds.

Of course they would be a great hindrance to
a vegetarian, and would certainly make
his work more difficult.

Not only would the ground grow what he
planted, but it would also grow what he
hadn't planted!

And because of this opposition, Adam would
work **"in the sweat of his face."**

So, it wasn't just work anymore, it was *hard*
work, and it was discouraging work.

And every time we try to bypass that problem
without work, we usually end up
poisoning ourselves.

No, work wasn't the blessing it had been,
but it certainly wasn't a curse.

So, even though sin affected Adam's work negatively, as it did everything else, its original purpose was to be a blessing, not a curse.

It had been given to a perfect man in a perfect environment to provide him with the blessing of accomplishment.

Now, I'm fully aware of the fact that all jobs are *not* a blessing, and I've had some of them, but neither is unemployment.

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And reward without work is not good either. That's a principle any government would do well to recognize, and it's a principle that God applied in Israel many years ago.

Leviticus 19:9-10 **"And when ye reap the harvest of your land, thou shalt not**

wholly reap the corners of thy field,
neither shalt thou gather the gleanings
of thy harvest.

**10: And thou shalt not glean thy
vineyard, neither shalt thou gather
every grape of thy vineyard; thou shalt
leave them for the poor and stranger: I
am the LORD your God."**

The harvest was gathered by hand in those
days, and it would be entirely possible
to reap every inch of a field.

But God would not allow it.

The corners of the fields were to remain
untouched!

Neither could they pick up any grain that
had been dropped accidentally, nor were
they allowed to go over their vineyards
a second time.

By God's express command, the poor of the land could trespass on private property during harvest and glean their rightful share.

It was God's way of providing for their needs while retaining their integrity and self respect.

And again in Deuteronomy 24:19-21, we read

"When thou cuttest down thine harvest in thy field, and hast forgot a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow: that the LORD thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hands.

20: When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger,

for the fatherless, and for the widow.
21: When thou gatherest the grapes of
thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it
afterward: it shall be for the
stranger, for the fatherless, and for
the widow."

By law, the gleanings belonged to the
stranger, the fatherless, and the
widow.

Yes, people need work, not handouts.

If they are physically fit, they need to
earn their living, and God started
applying that principle way back in the
Garden of Eden.

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V 16-17 "And the LORD God commanded the
man, saying, Of every tree of the
garden thou mayest freely eat:
17: But of the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Adam had been given all things to enjoy, while God only reserved one tree for Himself.

Nevertheless, for the first time in his very short life, Adam had been given a choice, and it was a necessary choice.

No, God hadn't made a mechanical man. He had made a moral man, made **"in the image of God."**

Adam must be given the power of choice, or he would be a mere puppet on a string.

However, once Adam had been given the right to decide, there was always the possibility that he might disobey.

So God made his alternatives very clear.

He could choose the abundant life, or he
could choose death.

Now, that was fair, wasn't it?

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No mention is made here of "**the tree of
life.**"

At that particular time, there was
absolutely no prohibition against the
eating of its fruit.

So why was that?

Why was it of no particular concern to God
if Adam ate of "**the tree of life**" when
it was of vital importance later?

It wasn't an issue then because Adam was in
his completely sinless state, and would
have lived for ever.

However, on that fateful day when he and his
wife disobeyed God, everything changed.

Remember the warning, "**--- in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.**"

After the curse of death had fallen, "**the tree of life**" offered the tempting possibility of bypassing God's judgment.

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But what did God really mean when He said -- "**in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die**"?

After all, Adam didn't die *physically* on that particular day.

Actually, he lived for a total of 930 years, and considering the fact that he started out life as an adult, that's quite an age!

But we must always remember the fact that man is more than a body and a soul.

Man has a spirit, and he needs communion
with God.

Up to that time, Adam had enjoyed God's
fellowship probably on a daily basis.
However, on that very day that he ate of the
forbidden fruit, he died spiritually,
and spiritual death is separation from
God.

He died spiritually, and he died instantly.
On that very day, Adam and Eve lost their
fellowship with God.

But there is more than spiritual death
involved here, as devastating as that
is.

Something else happened on that awful day.
We will be talking more about that when we
get to Chapter 3.

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Genesis 2:18 **"And the LORD God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."**

During those six days of creation, when God had finished a particular phase of His work, He said **"it is good,"** and upon its full completion, **"God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good."**

But now we find Him looking at the perfect man He had made, surrounded by a perfect environment, and making this surprising statement---**"It is not good that the man should be alone."**

Adam was physically perfect.

In his present condition, his body would have never seen corruption.

He was spiritually perfect, enjoying sweet communion with God, probably on a daily basis.

And yet he was alone!

Yes, God's perfect creation had a perfect *deficiency*.

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In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul points out some advantages of being single.

And certainly there are situations, as in Paul's case, when an individual can perform his or her ministry for the Lord more effectively if they are single.

However, Paul's statement has given rise to the mistaken belief that it is more spiritual to be single than it is to be married.

Actually, Paul didn't say that.

He only said there are situations when the responsibilities of marriage will limit a person's ability to fully accomplish a particular work for God.

For instance, some missionaries and travelling evangelists have found this to be true, and they have voluntarily sacrificed marriage for the Lord's Work.

But that's not usually the case, and Paul even says that "**--every man hath his proper gift of God.**"

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So here we have a *perfect* man who needs a wife.

In fact, God said, "**It is not good that the man should be alone.**"

Oh, really!

Can a man be alone when he has daily
fellowship with God?

Apparently he can.

He can, and God says **"It is not good."**

Even though Adam knew all the animals on a
first-name basis, and even though he
had fellowship with his Creator on a
daily basis, God still said he was
"alone."

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A few years ago, I saw a bumper sticker that
said: "The more people I meet, the
more I love my dog."

Have you ever felt like that?

However, even though V 20 tells us that **"--
Adam gave names to all cattle, and to
the fowl of the air, and to every beast
of the field,"** even though any of those
creatures could have been his constant

companion, "**there was not found an help meet for him.**"

They say a dog is a man's best friend, and I suppose that's because he wags his tail instead of his tongue, but, actually, a man's best friend is not his dog or his horse.

No, man needs a partner, a female partner, that like himself, is created in the image of God.

That's why V 20 tells us, "**there was not found an help meet for him.**"

Animals could give him affection and loyalty, and they still do, but only another human being, created in the image of God, could give him the mental and spiritual companionship he really needed.

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So we have to ask ourselves the question, Do I provide for the needs of my partner? Certainly, we should be a comfort to our spouse, both in body and soul.

However, in a Christian marriage, there is a deeper fellowship of the *spirit* which God wants us to share together.

And the stated reason that God gave for creating Eve was the fact that--"**for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.**"

Are we helping our spouse to achieve his or her greatest potential for the Lord? It's a question we need to ask ourselves very often.

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V 19-20 "**And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them**

unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof.

20: And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him."

And I don't think he called them Molly, and Sparky, and Sam either.

No, he gave them appropriate names that would describe their character, or perhaps their specific place in creation.

That's not bad for a cave man who had just evolved from an ape, is it?

No, Adam was never a cave man.

He was a highly developed individual, made in the image of God, from the very moment of his creation.

However, it still amazes me that God would entrust Adam with such an important assignment.

I would have expected Him to handle that job Himself.

Think of the intelligence required to name every animal appropriately.

What a mind Adam must have had, and what confidence God put in him!

No, man didn't evolve down through the centuries to eventually get as smart as modern man.

In fact, modern man would make a very poor showing if he were compared to God's first perfect creation.

Yes, Adam was *finished* on the sixth day of creation, and no updates were ever necessary!

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As we have already noted back in Genesis 1:29-30, both man and animals were vegetarians at the beginning.

When Adam named the animals, the rabbit wasn't concerned that he might end up as rabbit stew that night!

Nor was Adam fearful when he named the tigers, or the black panthers, or the lions.

No, Adam was living in a world full of *big* cuddly pets!

It's not like that today, is it?

You just have to look at a nature film to be reminded of the fact that the law of the wild still prevails.

But that's going to change.

Let's look at Romans 8:20-21.

**"For the creature (or the creation) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,
21: Because the creature (or the creation) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."**

Yes, Adam, and indeed the whole Antediluvian civilization, once lived in a vegetarian world full of tame animals.

That changed after the flood.

Genesis 9:2 **"And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth---."**

However, someday we will come *full circle*,

did you know that?

When Jesus comes back to reign over this earth, the animals will be tame once again!

We see that foretold in Isaiah 11:6-10 **"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.**

7: And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

8: And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.

9: They shall not hurt nor destroy in

all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

10: And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious."

We've never seen anything like that, have we?

However, in that day, the law of the wild will be abolished, and every animal will be a vegetarian once more.

Let's back up to Isaiah 11:1-5, where the One who is responsible for this great change is described--"**And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:**

2: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;

3: And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears:

4: But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.

5: And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins."

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Yes--♪ "Jesus shall reign where'er the
sun

Doth his successive journeys run.

His kingdom spread from shore to shore

Till moon shall wax and wane no more."

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When the Second Adam reigns over this earth,
there will be no cries in the night.

**"They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My
holy mountain."**

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Next week we will be witnessing the first
operation, complete with anaesthetic!

I hope you can be with us once again.