



New Covenant

Presbyterian Church

Genesis 2:4-17 Small Group Questions and Answers

1. Explain two things that describe the nature of the Garden of Eden?

- A. It was the place of God's supreme blessing.
- B. It was a reflection of Heaven--the first Temple on earth.

The remainder of the Scriptural record after man's fall from Paradise is essentially "Paradise Regained." The Tabernacle and the Temple were stepping stone in the restoration of God's presence with men in Emmanuel, God with us. It should come as no surprise that these OT sacred spaces had symbols of Paradise in their constitution. Pomegranates, Palm Trees, Lilies, Cedar, etc. were all part of the typical sacred space until the coming of Christ. Jesus has opened the way to the heavenly paradise by His death and resurrection.

G.K. Beale explains:

It should not be unexpected to find that Ezekiel 28:13-14, 16, 18 refer to 'Eden, the garden of God...the holy mountain of God', and also alludes to it as containing 'sanctuaries', which elsewhere is a plural way of referring to Israel's tabernacle (Lev. 21:23) and temple (Ezek. 7:24; so also Jer. 51:51). The plural reference to the one temple probably arose because of the multiple sacred spaces or 'sanctuaries' within the temple complex (e.g., courtyard, holy place, holy of holies)... Ezekiel 28 is probably, therefore, the most explicit place anywhere in canonical literature where the Garden of Eden is called a temple.

Phil Ryken suggests the following:

[the Temple] really was like the gates of Paradise. And for many people the way of access was still denied. Unless they were priests they would never see the golden wonders inside. Only the High Priests would enter that most holy place. Yet however limited it was there was access. You see God was opening back up the way to Paradise. You might think of Solomon's temple as a kind of spiritual portal. The paradise lost could be regained.

2. What two important things do we learn from the fact that Adam was made from dust outside of the Garden of Eden and then placed within it?

- A. That everything he had he received from God and all boasting was excluded.

Matthew Henry wrote:

Man was made out of paradise, for after God had formed him, he put him into the garden. He was made of common clay, not of paradise dust. He lived out of Eden before he lived in it, that he might see all the comforts of his paradise-state owing to God's free grace. He could not plead a tenant-right to the garden, for he was not born upon the premises, nor had anything but what he received. All boasting was hereby forever excluded.

- B. That the work of God in creation painted the picture for what he would do in redemption (i.e. the new creation) when he takes men from the wilderness of this world to the heavenly Paradise.

Jonathan Edwards explained:

Man was not made in this garden, but was made in some more mean place, and then brought and put into the garden (Gen. 2:7-8); as man in the new creation is first brought into being and spiritual life in this earthly country, in this barren wilderness, and then is brought to heaven.



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3. What four things did God give Adam to do in the Garden?

- A. Extend the Garden
- B. Cultivate the Garden
- C. Populate the Garden
- D. Protect the Garden

4. What would be the end result of Adam doing those four things?

The earth, in its entirety, would become the Temple--where God dwelt with his perfected image bearers. Adam and Eve were to populate the earth with unfallen image bearers who would show forth the glory of God by reflecting His holiness and righteousness and wisdom, etc.

5. God told Adam to “tend” and “keep” (lit. “work” and “protect”) the Garden. When are those two words used again in Scripture that help us understand what Adam was in the Garden? Why is this important?

They are only ever used together in Scripture, after the Gen. 2 account, of the Priests with regard to their work in the Temple. Adam was the Priest who was to keep everything unclean out of the Temple. When the evil one came in he should have driven him out immediately. Instead, he allowed the Temple to become polluted. The only way that the Temple is cleansed after the fall is for God to take a body to Himself and have all the sin and corruption of His people imputed to Him in that body and to have that body (Temple) destroyed on the cross.

6. How does God accomplish what Adam failed to do in turning the world into the Garden? How do we know that He does it by Himself?

God became man in Jesus, the second Adam, and shed His blood to secure the new creation.

Hebrews 2:5-11 tells us that it is still God's intention to put all things in dominion under men's feet. After quoting Psalm 8--which points back to the language of Genesis 1:26-27, the writer says, “Now, we do not yet see all things put under man, but we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor that He by the grace of God might taste death for everyone.

7. What is the Garden-Temple of God now? How do we know this.

The church is the Garden-Temple of God now. God dwells in His people. There were allusions to this in the Song of Songs where the beloved speaks to His bride and uses botanical imagery. God the Father and God the Son are cultivating the souls of His people so that we will be a fruitful Garden, dwelling place in Christ.

8. How are we to extend, cultivate, populate and protect the Garden-Temple?

- A. We now extend the Garden through evangelistic witness
- B. We cultivate the Garden by using our gifts in the church
- C. We populate the Garden in godly parenting and in making disciples
- D. We protect the Garden by keeping ourselves from sin and from keeping false teaching out of the church.