

Genesis 2:8-17- A Garden Paradise: Special Gifts

TSK, HebrewLexicon, JFB, Poole, Geneva, Outlines, Delitzsch, Gill, Henry, Trapp, Calvin, Handfuls, Leupold, Armstrong, Gaebelein, Sailhamer
Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: **God made men the emperors** of the world to rule for his glory. As emperors, **God gave man a wife!**

God gave men a Sabbath – a day of rest– to reconnect with him for strength.

God gave man sustenance for physical strength.

God gave man a soul – reflecting the image of God – **so men could live godly lives in order to have dominion under God.**

Today, **hear details of the sustenance God provided.** Next time you will see the details of the most wonderful gift of all –a wife!

Our headings are:

Food

Water

Work

Our goals are: That you will **see the great blessings God gave to man, blessing which he lost, but blessings which are restored to him in Jesus,** and seeing **those blessings, you will worship God better and work for his dominion.**

Food

8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed. 9 And out of the ground the LORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

1. Even with the whole world in front of him, God chose a special spot and planted a garden for man– the Garden of Eden.

What a sweet place Eden was. The very name “Eden” means “pleasure” or “pleasant place.”

We don’t know the location of this Garden, but many assume it is somewhere in modern day Iran.

The problem with that theory is they ignore the fact the continents most likely shifted during the Great Flood. Mesopotamia is the general location.

2. Man did not plant the Garden of Eden, he just had to enjoy it. It was 100% a gift!

God intended man enjoy the garden because the garden was *described as pleasant*.
The smells were pleasant, the leaves were beautiful in color.

The foods were delicious and nutritious.

No corner of the Garden was barren.

The Garden of Eden was the palace of the new emperor...a mansion for man.

Henry: *Heaven was Adam's roof, and the earth was his floor. The walls were beautifully decorated, that even Solomon in all his glory was not decorated as one of the flowers of the Garden of Eden.*

3. God also placed a tree of life in the midst of the garden, along with the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

4. What was the tree of life?

The tree of life was a sign and seal of immortal life. (You have the tree of life, circumcision, and then baptism.)

It was the non-bloody sign of the covenant God established with man.

Adam and Eve were to remember their Creator and his blessing, and fulfill their responsibility of having dominion over the earth for God's glory.

This tree of life was put in this prominent place in order for man to see it and remember.

Every time he saw the tree, he would think about that covenant God made with them...

It was good to the taste. It was a life-giving tree.

17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

5. What was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

This was the test tree...to test if man would love good or love evil. If Adam ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that was the standard for bad.

If Adam didn't eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, **that was the standard for good** and he would have been confirmed in righteousness.

6. Lessons:

a. Even a fallen world can produce enough food so people can have in abundance. God can do that. Deuteronomy 28 shows this.

In fact, **Canaan was a picture of the Garden of Eden being restored.** It was a land of "milk and honey."

You even see this **picture of restoration of Eden in the decorating of the tabernacle and temple.**

b. Learn to enjoy what God has given to you.

Don't feel guilty for having! Don't eat too much. Share with others.

c. When people starve, it is not because the world is unproductive (though it is not as productive because of the curse) but it is because of man's fault.

It is his sin!

Sometimes he **wars instead of works**, he **pollutes instead of planting** the land, or he is **lazy and doesn't work**.

d. Man has a way back to God that will bring, not only food for the body, but food for the soul so man can be strengthened in his soul to work for the glory of God and have dominion for him.

Deuteronomy 30:19 "I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;

e. This Tree of Life appears in Revelation again and refers to Christ.

Revelation 2:7 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes **I will give to eat from the tree of life**, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God."

He hung on a tree so that you, if you believe Jesus was forsaken by God for you, will have eternal life.

Jesus is also the Bread of Life, and if people eat of him they would never be hungry again. John 6:53.

Those who ate the Fruit of Calvary's tree will never die.

Revelation 22:2 In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, **was the tree of life**, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the **healing of the nations**.

f. Dominion will come through Christ over the whole face of the earth. He is the great restorer.

Isaiah 4:2 In that day the Branch of the LORD shall be beautiful and glorious; And the **fruit of the earth shall be excellent and appealing For those of Israel** who have escaped.

Keep fighting for it.

Water

10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. 11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the **gold** of that land is good. **Bdellium** and the **onyx stone** are there. 13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. 14 The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

1. God gave Adam more gifts in order to have dominion in the earth: God gave him rivers of water that he, the animals, and the plants could enjoy.

Trees thrive best when they are nourished with good fresh river waters... And this water was in abundance.

2. What about these 4 rivers?

Pishon means “gusher” or “increase.”

Gihon means “spurter” or “bursting out.” Pishon and Gihon are likely dried river beds due to changes in weather, shifts in the earth's crust, or great phenomena as a worldwide flood.

Hidekkel means “rapid” or “arrow” which is modern day Tigris River than runs

through Iraq. The writings of the Medo-Persian king confirm this.

Euphrates means “fruitfulness.”

Archeologists have done some remarkable work in trying to identify these rivers, as two of them may have dried up, but the issue remains that there may have been shifts in the earth’s surface after the flood that could have altered a river’s flow.

So what is the significance? All 4 of these rivers flowed from the same source – from God!

(This is why some see this as a **picture of the 4 Gospels that spread to the whole world to bring life – which brings back good things!**)

3. What about all these precious and semi-precious stones of these rivers? Why were they mentioned?

These things were for beauty and for service.

Men are still trying to find gold because of all its uses for beauty and service.

4. Lessons:

a. There is a link between wickedness and the lack of water as there is between wickedness and lack of wheat.

Because of man’s sin, God could remove water and wheat.

b. The abundance of waters is not only pictured in the spread of the nourishment through the 4 Gospels, bit it is even a picture of baptism.

These things nourish your souls. (Baptism is a source of nourishment when you receive it by faith.) **Remember John the Baptist by the Jordan River?**

Revelation 22:1 And he showed me **a pure river of water of life**, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

Psalm 46:4 *There is a river whose **streams shall make glad the city of God***, The holy *place* of the tabernacle of the Most High.

You can understand why the Psalmist mourned, as slaves in Babylon, for the Garden of Eden.

Psalm 137:1 **By the rivers of Babylon, There we sat down, yea, we wept** When we remembered Zion.

As more and more men’s souls are nourished by baptism, prosperity will come.

Grace before prosperity!

Work

15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden **to tend and keep it**. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; **17 "but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

1. God gave Adam, with his wife's assistance, the command to tend and keep the Garden.

Tend = work. Keep = preserve. Work is a gift...boys and girls.

This notion of Paradise being a place of sitting under a palm tree eating delicious grapes and pomegranates and enjoying gentle tropical breezes is not the proper representation.

God commanded Adam to work.

The only difference is work was not hard.

He had the will to work and the strength to do it. It was not brutal work, for thorns and thistles were not yet growing.

Only after the fall of man when the earth was cursed that work became hard.

Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you *are*, And to dust you shall return."

2. God gave man a limit again: He was not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, otherwise he would die. (You can call this a the gift of a warning!)

Failure to obey would result in death.

a. Spiritual death by the guilt and power of sin. Ephesians 2:1.

b. Temporal death - death of the body by decay, sicknesses, terrors, dangers, etc. We often say that from the day you are born you begin to die...one step closer to it.

c. Eternal death, which will follow the temporal death...unless they find the Redeemer.

3. Lessons:

a. God has provided everything you need to have dominion and bring glory to him.

b. No man must expect to live in this world without working.

You are cursed if you are lazy. Guaranteed income is abominable. It is rebellion.

2Thessalonians 3:10 For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.

Proverbs 27:23 Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, *And* attend to your herds;

c. Man is never to go beyond the prescribed method to do anything God commanded. Never!

He is not to come up with new messages in evangelism, new ways to worship, or new things to believe! Work the way God says.

Conclusion:

Adam had everything he needed (and more) to do the work of having dominion.

He had the bliss of paradise with an abundance of delicious, nourishing food, and rich, refreshing water.

He had a perfect wife.

He could have children who were always obedient.

But he also had one test, that if Adam passed, would have confirmed him and his descendants in righteousness forever!

He lost all those gifts, but God provided an opportunity to get back those gifts.

To get those gifts he had to fix his underlying heart problem and restore his relationship with God.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Enjoy all the physical things God has given to you...

You should have lost everything because of your father, but God still provides for you.

2. Express your appreciation for your spiritual restoration to God – which brings temporal blessings too.

Let God continue to feed you with his Word and Sacraments so you will have spiritual strength to do the work he's called you to do...whether in your home, church, work, or society.

3. Evangelize others so they may come to a right relationship with God and enjoy all his benefits with you.

Yes, let Christ have dominion.

Go back to the creation mandate.

Finally: Do you want to stay under God's condemnation or do you want to be restored and resume your duty of pursuing dominion for Christ?

If you do, ask God to make you his child on account of the 2nd Adam, who took the sin of sinners when he died on the cross!