

# GENESIS 2:8-25

## Introduction

There are at least two "gardens" in Genesis Two!

One, of course, is Eden - - the garden that God planted for Adam, the garden that God put Adam in. "Eden" is named from a word meaning "delight" - - Eden was intended to be a delightful garden for Adam.

Eve was *also* intended, in a more romantic sense, to be a delightful garden for Adam! In his wonderful marital song, Solomon likens his own wife to a beautiful garden with many delights:

Song of Songs 4:12-15 A garden enclosed Is my sister, my spouse, A spring shut up, A fountain sealed. Your plants are an orchard of pomegranates With pleasant fruits, Fragrant henna with spikenard, Spikenard and saffron, Calamus and cinnamon, With all trees of frankincense, Myrrh and aloes, With all the chief spices; A fountain of gardens, A well of living waters, And streams from Lebanon.

So there are, in a sense, *two* gardens - - Eden and Eve; one material, one marital.

To the one, Adam is called to be a *husbandman*; to the other, he is called to be a *husband*. Both are gracious gifts from God to bring both he and Eve - - and the entire race - - delight in their walk with Him.

We understand that the world we live in is no paradise; Adam and Eve sinned and both of the delightful gardens God had given to mankind were affected. The material world you live in has lost the perfections and purity of the Garden of Eden; the person you are married to, or contemplating marrying, is no Adam or Eve before their fall!

But we also understand that Jesus Christ did some things in certain "gardens" that restore the delights of both the work God has given you, and the wife God has given you:

- - in a garden called Gethsemane Jesus submitted to the will of His Father and went to the Cross;

- - in a tomb in a garden Jesus rose from the dead; John 19:41, "Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid."

In the Garden of Gethsemane and in the Garden Tomb Jesus Christ changed everything!! Men and women and children who were lost, hell-doomed sinners can be saved for eternity! And, in our context, both the work God has given you and the wife God has given you can be delightful as you await His return.

#1 As A Husbandman, Are You Delighted  
With The Work God Has Given You?  
(v8-17)

#2 As A Husband, Are You Delighted  
With The Wife God Has Given You?  
(v18-25)

#1 As A Husbandman, Are You Delighted  
With The Work God Has Given You?  
(2:8-17)

"Husbandman" is not a term we use very much. It occurs several times in Scripture, in the King James Bible. It describes someone who is a farmer, a rancher, a steward, a gardener - - in short, it encompasses any number of occupations. It is best defined by seeing the work God gave Adam to do in the Garden of Eden; Adam was God's husbandman, and Eve his helper in that work.

Genesis 2:8 The LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man whom He had formed.

"Eden" is said to be eastward, but we don't know the reference point. It was to the east of where God "formed" Adam's material body and created Adam's immaterial soul and spirit.

There "God planted a garden" - - it is interesting to think of this in light of what has gone before. God simply spoke the universe into existence, but when it comes to this Garden He is described from our

point of view as a gardener. While we are not suggesting that God 'gardened' in the same way that we do, the picture is interesting. A garden requires a lot of work, a lot of thought, a lot of love. Here's what I'm trying to say: Back in verse 16 of chapter one it said that "He made the stars also," in an almost nonchalant way. But when it came to giving Adam his garden, God is described using words that describe more involvement and appreciation to detail!

Genesis 2:9 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.

Eden was a perfect environment for man. This is important to note because for centuries there has been a debate over the relative influence of the environment in the social and moral development of mankind. It should be clear that it is better to be raised in a good environment. Yet, if we understand the nature of man as revealed in Scripture, we must conclude that the environment is not the real problem. Sin is the problem - - and we are each born inheriting a sin nature, regardless of where we are born and raised.

Two trees are especially singled out; they will become more prominent in chapter three, and we will discuss them in more detail in that context.

Genesis 2:10 Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads.

Genesis 2:11 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold.

Genesis 2:12 And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there.

Genesis 2:13 The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush.

Genesis 2:14 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.

There was plenty of water for this garden. Earlier we learned that a mist rose up to water the ground. The word for "mist" is more than our idea of the morning dew on the leaves - - it indicates a drenching. In addition there was plenty of fresh water from the river that ran through Eden - - water Adam could utilize to irrigate.

We are told the exact location of Eden. The only problem is that Eden doesn't exist on earth anymore; the worldwide flood of Noah's

day destroyed Eden and changed both the geography and the climate of the earth thereafter.

Genesis 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.

Genesis 2:16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat;

Genesis 2:17 "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."

God appoints Adam as His husbandman over the Garden of Eden and gives him work to do. The Garden of Eden was a sacred trust; it was also a spiritual test, as we see in this one prohibition. Much has been said and suggested about the command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. What is most obvious is this: Adam and Eve were given a free will to choose. Love for God must be voluntary on their part; involuntary love is a contradiction! The man God created was moral, not mechanical; he was responsible, not a robot. But to be moral and to be held responsible implies having a real choice. God graciously provided that choice so that Adam and Eve could be confirmed as moral and responsible beings in their voluntary love for God.

Before we get to their failure in chapter three, there are lessons we can learn here. Twice we are told that God "put" Adam into the Garden of Eden. The word for "put" can be translated "set to rest." God set him to rest in a delightful garden paradise by giving him meaningful work to do as His husbandman.

You do not find yourself in a delightful garden; the world is a dreadful wilderness in comparison to the Garden of Eden. Spiritually speaking, though, God has work for you to do - - meaningful work as God's "husbandman!" In the New Testament we are called stewards; we are compared to farmers, sowing seed, watering, laboring in the harvest fields; in James 5:7, in the King James, we are compared to husbandmen.

Even though the world is a dreadful wilderness, we are not without resources. In Eden, Adam had water, fruit, gold, bdellium, and onyx. So do we:

- - "Water" is ever a symbol of the abundant provision of God's indwelling Holy Spirit;
- - "Fruit" reminds us that God prunes and cultivates our lives to produce the fruit of His Holy Spirit;
- - "Gold" speaks to us of the trials of our faith which are providentially intended to refine us;
- - "Bdellium" is said to be the color of manna in Numbers 11:7, the color of God's bread which came down from heaven, speaking to us of Jesus and of the Word of God;
- - "Onyx" is not as desirable as wisdom from God, according to Job 28:16 & 28...In James we are promised wisdom if we seek it to know the will of God.

God is mindful of the wilderness that this earth has become. He has nevertheless "set you to rest" in it as you await the return of Jesus Christ from heaven to restore it to a delightful garden. In the meantime you are to delight in the work He has given you to do - - and you can only do so by depending upon the abundant supernatural resources He has provided by grace!

*His "water," His "word," and His "wisdom" are all that you need to produce His "fruit" and to persevere in the trial of your "faith."*

If you are not delighted in the place of service that God has set you, then you are not resting in one or more of these abundant resources!

## #2 As A Husband, Are You Delighted With The Wife God Has Given You? (v18-25)

Eve was an important part of what made Eden a delightful garden for Adam - - and, as we've seen in the Song of Solomon, marriage was itself intended to be a delightful garden.

Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Here we are being given a more detailed description of the events of the sixth 24 hour day of the creation week. Things were "not good" only in the sense that they were incomplete. Adam needed a "helper comparable to him." The idea is that Eve would complete Adam, and that he would complete her, and that together they would be God's husbandman over the Garden.

Genesis 2:19 Out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to Adam to see what he would call them. And whatever Adam called each living creature, that was its name.

Genesis 2:20 So Adam gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper comparable to him.

The animals which had already been formed on days 5 and 6 were supernaturally brought to the Garden for Adam to name them. The result was that Adam came to realize that he alone was alone - - without a corresponding, suitable companion.

Genesis 2:21 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, and he slept; and He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh in its place.

Genesis 2:22 Then the rib which the LORD God had taken from man He made into a woman, and He brought her to the man.

This unique creation of the woman absolutely refutes any thought of combining evolution with special creation! If the Bible is true, then evolution cannot be true. The woman was specially formed and created from the man, who already existed. There is no way she can be said to have evolved.

Genesis 2:23 And Adam said: "This is now bone of my bones And flesh of my flesh; She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man."

Genesis 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.

Genesis 2:25 And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

These verses tell us what marriage is from God's point of view. Marriage wasn't devised by man somewhere along the course of human history; God Himself established and ordained marriage at the beginning of human history! God designed marriage as the foundation for all human society. Before there was ever a church, a school, a government, or a business, God instituted marriage as the foundation of each.

Jay Adams:

"If marriage were of human origin, then human beings would have a right to set it aside. But since God instituted marriage, only He has the right to do so...Marriage [cannot] be regulated according to human whims. Marriage...is subject to the rules and regulations set down by God. If He had said nothing more about marriage after establishing it, we might have proceeded to draw up such rules on our own. But He did not leave us in the dark; God has revealed His will about marriage in the pages of the Bible. Individuals may marry, be divorced, and be remarried only if, when and how He says they may without sinning...Neither a private individual nor the state has any competence to decide who may be married (or divorced) and on what basis. The state has been given the task of keeping orderly records...but it has no right (or competence) to determine the rules for marriage or divorce; that is God's prerogative."<sup>1</sup>

What is marriage all about? God's own answer is in verse 18. Marriage was established because Adam was alone and incomplete, and that was "not good." Companionship is the essence of marriage; marriage is a covenant of companionship between one man and one woman for life.

Throughout the Bible marriage is described in terms of this covenant of companionship:

Proverbs 2:17 [the strange woman] "...forsakes the companion of her youth, And forgets the covenant of her God."

Malachi 2:14 "... the LORD has been witness Between you and the wife of your youth, With whom you have dealt treacherously; Yet she is your companion And your wife by covenant."

The husband is called the companion of his wife; the wife is called the companion of her husband. Marriage is a covenant, a vow and promise, before God and between a man and a woman, to meet each others needs for companionship and to help each other. Love in marriage should focus on giving your spouse the companionship he or she needs.

As a husband, are *you* delighted with the wife God has given *you*? Answer the question in the light of what we've just learned - - that marriage is a covenant of companionship, and that the husband is called upon to meet his wife's needs for companionship.

You may think it unfair to single out the husband; after all, the wife is to meet his needs for companionship as well. I am singling out husbands for three reasons:

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<sup>1</sup>Jay Adams, Marriage, Divorce, And Remarriage In The Bible, p. 4

#1 - - It gives me a good outline for this study!

#2 - - The text we are studying does, in fact, focus on Adam, on his response to his wife and on his responsibility. Eve does not speak, and it is the man who is uniquely described as "leaving to cleave." It is *his* responsibility to see that the two of them become one person instead of two - - to be one intellectually, emotionally, and physically.

#3 - - It is the sad experience of any marriage counselor that most wives intrinsically understand this idea of companionship, whereas most husbands do not. The wife has the biblical expectation that her husband will be her companion and that she will be his helper. Most husbands, on the other hand, are only interested in being helped! They often continue to be better "companions" to *other* people than their wife and to *other* activities besides their marriage.

Do you know what happens then? The wife begins to seek and to find other companionship of her own - - either in separate activities or, tragically, in other arms.

I don't want to press it too far, but here is an interesting observation. In chapter three we will see Eve take the fruit of the prohibited tree. Before she does so, she engages in a very intense and very personal conversation and relationship with a serpent! Even if we understand that animals could perhaps talk in the Garden of Eden, the level of communication between Eve and the serpent is too involved. These are the kinds of things she ought to be discussing with her husband - - with her companion. While she is clearly at fault and is certainly responsible for her own sin, that same pattern has repeated itself in countless hurting marriages. The wife seeks and finds companionship elsewhere, in some interest or activity or person, *because her own husband fails in his responsibility to be the companion his wife needs.*

You find this principle of companionship in the New Testament as well:

1 Corinthians 7:3 Let the husband render to his wife the affection due her, and likewise also the wife to her husband.



"Affection" here does not mean physical affection; that is coming up later in 1 Corinthians 7. It means the emotional affection due her - - due her because marriage is first and foremost a covenant of companionship.

Marriages in God's Church are hurting today because men and men who become husbands do not understand their responsibility to be their wife's companion.

## Conclusion

There is something else you see here that should encourage you to make the most of your marriage. There is a picture to the unsaved of Jesus Christ's love for lost men and women!

Jesus is described in the New Testament as the heavenly Bridegroom in love with His bride. His bride is the Church, composed of saved men, women, and children.

Adam slept and God took his bride from his side. Jesus "slept" the sleep of death in the Garden Tomb; His "bride" - - you and I - - were taken from *His* "side" in the sense that His pierced side speaks of the Cross of Calvary.

As you are delighted with the spouse God has given you, unsaved people who desperately need Jesus are witnessed to by the supernatural picture that your marriage is intended to be.

Then, with your wife as your helper, the two of you can be set to rest in the delightful work that God has called you to accomplish with His resources.