

Imagining The Garden Of Eden (Part 5)

Eastward in Eden

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In the last sermon I gave on this subject I maintained that God planted the Garden of Eden after He created Adam so that the man could see God at work, and have incontrovertible proof that the One that had just awakened him and was interacting with him was indeed His Creator. And, He was not only the Creator but also the Great God of the entire universe. So, what I did was to use an imaginary conversation between Adam and God to illustrate the point.

Well, I received a question about that a few days ago, and I thought I would answer it here. Hopefully the man who asked the question will listen to this sermon. Essentially, the question was, "Could Adam reason with God like you showed in your imaginary conversation, before he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?" I have basically three answers to that question.

The first answer to that question is—that conversation was totally imaginary. The likelihood that something similar to this actually happened is nil. But, I was using it to illustrate a point, which is my second answer, and that is, just the fact that Adam saw God at work, something as big as creating the Garden of Eden, would have been plenty. He would not have needed to be convinced after seeing a spectacle like that, watching the trees and such grow in the garden at an accelerated pace, seeing this beautiful garden be brought into existence. I mean, he would have been at a loss for words, probably. He probably had no need to reason with God about that.

Now, thirdly, I want to answer this question more specifically. And the answer to that question is, yes!

What we need to understand is that the tree of the knowledge of good and evil did not impart to man his ability to reason. That was not the meaning of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. That is not what it represents. That tree does not represent the rational mind of mankind. We will see that here in Job 32.

Job 32:8 But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives him understanding.

These are very basic scriptures to the whole understanding to this subject. The spirit in

man gives him understanding. This other spirit that God put into Adam when He created him, gave him the ability to comprehend things, unlike animals who did not receive this spirit and have no ability to comprehend things. This sets mankind apart from all the other animal kinds, and gave him his intelligence, creativity, and all those other things we have touched on in the past.

So, part of man's ability to understand is his faculty of reason, logic, and judgment. Admittedly, being only minutes old, Adam probably did not have much knowledge or experience to reason very deeply. But, he would certainly have the ability to see obvious connections like, "That's God. He gives the word, and these trees in this garden grew up." It would be an obvious connection that anyone should understand simply by observation that the two were connected. God speaks, and the trees grow.

Also, we just cannot forget or ignore the keen intellect that God had given Adam in the first place. His intellect was probably the best that there ever was on the earth, as far as human beings go, except Jesus Christ. Here Adam was, just new, freshly made, and God had breathed into him this ability to understand, and it was sharp. It would not take him long to put two and two together, because he was very intelligent.

So, this begs the question, if the tree of the knowledge of good and evil did not impart the ability to reason into mankind, then what did it do to Adam and Eve? What is its significance?

Now this question, in terms of where we are in Genesis 2 puts us ahead of ourselves quite a bit, but I want to show you a few things immediately. First, let us go to Genesis 3 and see what the Bible says that eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil did to them.

Genesis 3:7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.

So, this is very clear. Upon eating the forbidden fruit, the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked. Those are the two key things that happened to them there.

I do not intend to plunge into this very deeply. It is not the main theme of what I am going to talk about today, although it does apply. But, I do want to answer this man's question if I can.

What we can understand about eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was that at its base was disobedience to a direct command of God to them. God had told them:

Genesis 2:16-17 And the LOORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 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."

So, it was a direct command not to eat of it, but they did eat of it. So, eating the fruit of that tree was disobedience of a direct command of God. And so, to put it in just one word, it was sin, or it was rebellion. Either word fits the situation. They missed the mark. God said no, but they did, and so they sinned. Now, because they sinned in eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, they became aware of—their eyes were opened—new areas of knowledge, and all of them were bad.

See? Before, they had only experiences of good, the things that God had shown them and blessed them with in the Garden of Eden, and He had promised all of these good things to them too. Of course, living in that paradise would have been a wonderful thing, and they could have, between the time that God put them there, and the time sin happened, experienced a great deal of good and blessings—wonderful sights, sounds, smells, and tastes, and all the things that we would really long to be able to enjoy ourselves. They had all that.

But once they sinned, they began to experience other things that are not so good. And this leads us into this next point, that they lost their innocence. They suddenly realized that they were naked. It never crossed their minds before that this was a shameful thing. But now, once they sinned, they began to imagine how this could become shameful. They were having thoughts that they never had before. They were feeling guilt, and shame, and fear, and many other things besides, I am sure that had never entered their minds before. And immediately, then, they began to suffer the consequences of a carnal mind. They began to really hone in, tune in, to themselves—their desires, wants, needs—and they began putting up walls immediately to what God wanted for them.

Now the tree was first mentioned in Genesis 2:9.

Genesis 2:9 And out of the ground the LOORD God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food [these were part of the good things that they had been enjoying]. The tree of life was also in the midst of the

garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Here the tree is given its full name—the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. And I want to focus in on this last part of it, "of good and evil." This is a very interesting phrase because it is thought to be by linguists of the Bible something they call a "merism." This is a figure of speech in which opposites are used together to create the meaning of the term.

We have this in English too. Let us say you lose something in your house. What do you do? You search high and low for it. What does that mean? It means you search everywhere. You leave no rug unturned; you search every cupboard and closet; you search everywhere.

Merisms are used frequently in the Bible, and I know that you will recognize some of them, such as the one found in Revelation where Jesus Christ says, "I am the Alpha and the Omega; the Beginning and the End; the First and the Last." This is the same sort of thing. What is Jesus Christ saying? He is saying essentially what Paul said several times, that He is our "all in all." He is everything to us. He is the beginning and the end, and everything in between.

And so, here, we have in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, a hint that this title can imply that eating of this tree's fruit opened Adam and Eve's minds to all knowledge; that before, God had purposely confined them to knowledge of good things, right things, true things, knowledge that would bring them into His Kingdom. But the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represented the fact that sin opens our minds to this whole other vista of knowledge that is evil.

Now their minds were opened to all of it—the good and the evil. And as we understand the way that human nature works, even though it begins neutral but inclined toward the flesh at first, it is now inclined toward the evil more than to the good. We are already inclined to go that way to begin with, and Satan is out there influencing us toward his attitudes, and his way of life, and pretty soon, he has us right where he wants us. And unless God steps in, then we succumb to that end of the spectrum of knowledge, even though we do have the ability now and then to do something that is good.

So, when they ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, what they did was to open their minds to the experiential knowledge that comes as a result of sin. They began to experience life cut off from God. It happened immediately. What did they do? They hid. They heard the voice of God in the Garden in the cool of the day, and they

tried to get away from Him. They were already separating themselves from God even before He made His presence known to them.

And I should also mention that it was not just Adam and Eve, but it is all of us too. All of their descendants have been exposed, you might say, to this tree of the knowledge of good and evil because it is open now; it was shut then. Nobody had opened it up until then. And once they took of that tree, it opened it up for all of us. And so, we are all having to experience life cut off from God. He had wanted to spare them from all that. He wanted to live with them, and among them. And if you go back to Revelation 21, you will find that His ultimate aim is to come back and live with us—God living with mankind in the new heavens and the new earth. That is what He wanted for all of mankind, but it had to go through His plan because of sin.

So, instead of enjoying the blessings of life and union in cooperation with God, they now had to suffer the curses of sin and rebellion—the whole gamut of experiential knowledge.

Also, we cannot forget what Herbert Armstrong taught us about them taking of this tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He said that in taking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve took to themselves the prerogative of deciding what is good and evil. And that is true. Essentially, rather than leaving that to God, and trusting Him to tell them what was good and evil, they decided to make their own system of morality and ethics. And mankind have been following those human-devised systems to this day, and will continue to do so until Christ returns to set up the Kingdom of God.

But they will still be doing it even then because we know that in the end, they are ripe for Satan once again, and it will not be until He truly establishes the new heavens and the new earth that those things will be totally eradicated from mankind. There will be better times in the Millennium, and then later in the Great White Throne Judgment, but there is still the possibility of sin throughout this whole period of time until all is put down.

So, in rejecting God, His law, and His wisdom, mankind subjected themselves to forge their own way and to suffer the consequences of their own foolish choices.

Hopefully, this answers that fellow's question, "Could Adam reason with God before he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?" I needed to go through all that to show just what the tree of the knowledge of good and evil did to them. It opened them to Satan, and sin, and all the consequences of such rot.

Now, we will continue in our imaginative study of Genesis 2, in the Garden of Eden, and as I always tell you in these sermons, remember that God gave us our imaginations to use for good, but we must always keep them within the bounds of the revealed Word. We do not want to add to it, or take away from it. But, we can, if we use it correctly, use our imagination to enhance our study of His Word, and understanding of His instructions.

We had started into Genesis 2:8 and concentrated mostly on the planting of the Garden of Eden after He had made Adam. And we saw there that Adam could watch God at work, and then emulate Him as a worker too. God works, and wants man to work. And it is very important that he work, not only physically, but also spiritually as well. Faith and grace are wonderful things, but there is a great deal of work that must be done. There is energy, and effort that must be expended so that we can grow toward the image of Jesus Christ.

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

We will not go into all the details about where the Garden of Eden was, although I will get into some of it. But, I want to refer you to my dad's sermon series during the Feast of Tabernacles 2007, "Eden, the Garden, and the Two Trees." He did a detailed analysis of all that, if you recall, and it is well worth the effort for another listen if you have not done so recently.

I want to point out a few things, while going over the same territory that he did, just so that we can get a bit of refresher.

I need to point out the word translated in the New King James Version as "eastward," is the Hebrew word, "miqedem." This word means, "on the east." More literally, it means, "from the front quarter." That sounds odd. Why would they call the direction east "from the front quarter?" You need to understand that the Hebrews were very earthy people. They thought of things in terms of their surroundings, and from their point of view in their land, and that is exactly what has happened here. "From the front quarter" references the fact that all directions in ancient Hebrew are given as if one is standing in the center of the land, with his back to the Mediterranean Sea, and facing the rising sun.

Now, if you were standing in Jerusalem, generally the center of the land, with your back to the west, where would your front quarter be facing? East. So, from the front quarter is their direction east.

Care to guess what their direction for south is? It is to the right (quarter). They did not say, go south, but they say, go to the right. Again, this is because directions are given in this manner. The Mediterranean is the hinder sea (back, or hind quarter). This is their way of doing things, because this is how they thought. It interesting to see this in their culture. So, the front quarter would be east. Keil and Delitzsch put it, "as in the eastern portion." It is like an eastern quadrant.

What this suggests, then, reading this into it, is that "The Lord God planted a garden in the eastern quadrant of Eden," which seems to say that Eden was a larger region, and the garden was in the eastern portion of it.

Let us see some of this, especially "miqedem," used in other places. And we will see how this works. Turn to Genesis 11, and the section about the Tower of Babel.

Genesis 11:1-2 [Moses writes] Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from [toward] the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there.

How do I know that it should be "toward" the east? Turn back to Genesis 8.

Genesis 8:4 Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat.

This is where Noah and the family of mankind got out of the big boat, made sacrifices, and they began to live somewhere close by Ararat. They did not venture too far afield; it was where all the animals were, and who knows what the terrain was like beyond that. So they stayed fairly close by.

By the time we get to Genesis 11, it says that the people were now beginning to leave the area of Ararat, and going to a place known as the Plain of Shinar. If you look on a map, we know that the Plain of Shinar is the place where Babel was built. And so, the Plain of Shinar is in Babylon. Looking at a map, Ararat is in eastern Turkey, and look to see where Babylon is, you will find that you have to go mostly east and a bit south to get there. They did not travel from the east, but toward the east from the mountains of Ararat. So, it is very clear that miqedem, here, should mean "to the east."

Turn to Genesis 13. This is chapter where Abraham and Lot part ways, their men were quarrelling, and there is just too many people and animals to dwell together in one

place. So Abraham gives Lot first choice, and Lot chooses the cities of the plain of Jordan.

Genesis 13:1-3 Then Abram went up from Egypt, he and his wife and all that he had, and Lot with him, to the South [Negev, or to the right]. Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. And he went on his journey from the South as far as Bethel, to the place where his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Ai.

So, we are now in the hill country of Judah, to the west of the Jordan River. Remember when the children of Israel came into the land from the east, they crossed over Jordan, the first places they accosted after Jericho were Bethel, and Ai. Ai is where they suffered that loss, and the episode with Achan.

Genesis 13:11 Then Lot chose for himself all the plain of Jordan, and Lot journeyed east. And they separated from each other.

So, he had been somewhere around Bethel and Ai, to the west of the Jordan river, and in order to get down to the plain of Jordan (which is down by the Dead Sea, which is no longer there being destroyed and put under water of the Dead Sea) he had to go east. This word "east" is again "miqedem."

Once again, the same word found in Genesis 2:8, as "eastward." The Bible confirms that it means to the east, eastward, or in the eastern sector.

The garden was located in the eastern part of Eden. Even so, even though we may know this, it does not do us a lot of good since no one knows for sure how big Eden was. Was it as large as Florida? Texas? Alaska? Or was it small and only a few miles around? Nobody can say for certain.

We must remember that when talking about Eden, we are talking about the fact that Moses was writing a description about a pre-Flood piece of geography. He probably had never been there. I am sure that he had not been there. There is no record of him having been there. He was just taking what had been told to him, what had come down to him, as a description of this land.

The only real clues we have are the four river-heads in verses 10 through 14.

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

We do not know where this river started. It just says it went out of Eden. And Eden could have been a large place. That river started somewhere, and made its way to the Garden. It is rather vague is it not?

Now what we have is a river coming from someplace in Eden, entering the Garden, and from the Garden, it divided into four river-heads.

Genesis 2:11-14 The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Hiddekel [also known as the Tigris]; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

So we know about the modern rivers Tigris and Euphrates. We know where they are. They are rivers whose names have come down to us in post-Flood geography. But, Pishon and Gihon are to most people unknown.

Since we know about the Tigris and the Euphrates, most people assume that the Garden and/or Eden was in Mesopotamia. It is in the east, and it features two of these rivers. And they are also convinced of this, because post-Flood civilization started in Mesopotamia in Babylon. But that is only because Noah's descendants gathered in Babel. How could something post-Flood tell you about conditions and locations pre-Flood?

The Flood was so catastrophic that what we can see in modern geography is only helpful a tiny bit. We have to remember that the Flood was so catastrophic—sloshing water over the face of the entire world—that it would have changed the face of the geography of the land considerably without any problem. So, if you believe in catastrophism, as we all do, because that is what the Flood was—a worldwide catastrophe—then we cannot trust a modern topographical map for pre-Flood landmarks like Eden. It has very little relevance.

Really, there is no way of knowing for sure that the Tigris and the Euphrates as mentioned here in Genesis 2, are the same Tigris and Euphrates as we know them

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today. It could be that the descendants of Noah named them after the pre-Flood rivers of the same name. It is difficult to know whether these things are helpful or not.

But there is help. Turn to Isaiah 51 and we will find a big clue.

Isaiah 51:3 For the LOORD will comfort Zion, He will comfort all her waste places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LOORD; joy and gladness will be found in it, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

What we are want is "like Eden," and "like the garden of the Lord." Eden was the Garden of the Lord. Now the interesting thing here is that the Garden of the Lord means that it was the Lord's Garden—He was its possessor. It was His garden.

Turn to Ezekiel 28. We usually come here to talk about Satan.

Ezekiel 28:13a You were in Eden, the garden of God.

It is a very similar way of wording that. First it was that Eden was the Garden of the Lord, and here Eden is the Garden of God. Both places tell us that this Garden was His possession. It was God's. And while He offered it to Adam to be their abode, and who knows how long He was going to have them live there, there was a whole world out there—maybe Eden was their "starter home." I do not know. Any father would do what He could to help house His children while they are under His care.

So, He allowed them to live in the Garden. But, it was really His possession, not theirs. They were tenants, if you will. His residence on the earth was in that Garden. That is where God lived. And this gives us a major clue as to its location. Where does God live when He is on the earth? We need to remember where He dwelled in historical times, and where the Bible says that He will dwell on the earth in the future, when He returns. And if we do that, we have our answer about where Eden is.

Does not Malachi 3:6 tell us that God does not change? Does not Hebrews 13:8 say, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever?" When He chooses a place, that is it. He has chosen. He has made the wisest choice. That is where He is going to live.

So, for the remainder of the sermon, we are going to go through the Bible to see where God says that He lives. Turn to Genesis 22. This one is not conclusive, but I think that it

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is very interesting. If you remember your chapters, Genesis 22 is the sacrifice of Isaac. The question is, where did God tell Abraham to sacrifice Isaac? Remember that the sacrifice of Isaac is the major type in the Bible of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. As the father of the faithful, sacrificing his only son by Sarah, the promised son, just as God sacrificed His only begotten son, for us and our redemption.

Genesis 22:1-2 Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you."

Now, the land of Moriah is—we do not know for sure—most likely the area around Jerusalem, more specifically, the area around the Temple mount.

Genesis 22:9 Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood.

So he "sacrificed" Isaac at the same place, or certainly very near where Jesus Christ 1780 years later would be sacrificed for us. It is a very strong type. Thus, God had Abraham bring his son before Him, where He had His dwelling place. Now we also know that if we look forward into the time of Christ, that He was offered before God as well. You will see that in my dad's sermon series. It was in direct sight of where God dwelled between the cherubim. And so, we have a very strong type that shows us where God dwelled was in the area where the Temple was later constructed.

Like I said, this is not quite conclusive, but it is very telling, that a type this large for us to understand was done at this specific spot.

Little clues are placed all over the Bible. I think it is fascinating. Go on to Numbers 35. In this passage we have Levites being given certain cities in the land, and certain of these cities were made cities of refuge. So, by the time we get to verse 33, it says,

Numbers 35:33 So you shall not pollute the land where you are; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

He is talking about these rules for the cities of refuge, and I want you to understand that I read this one verse so that you see that we are talking about the land of Israel, the land of promise, the land where the cities of refuge were.

Numbers 35:34 Therefore do not defile the land which you inhabit, in the midst of which I dwell; for I the LORD dwell among the children of Israel."

Notice two things here: First, He dwells in the land where Israel dwells. This is the Promised Land. The second is that He says that He dwells in the midst of the land. What does that mean? It means in the middle, or thereabouts. God is in the middle and His children are all about Him. If you look at a map of Israel, and you find the place where the Temple mount is, you will see that place is right in the middle of the land. It is not perfectly in the middle between north and south borders, or east and west borders, but it is in that area right in the midst of the land of Israel.

Turn to Deuteronomy 12. This says something similar, before they entered the land of Canaan, and it was about what they were to do once they got there, specifically places of worship.

Deuteronomy 12:1-5 These are the statutes and judgments which you shall be careful to observe in the land which the LORD God of your fathers is giving you to possess, all the days that you live on the earth. You shall utterly destroy all the places where the nations which you shall dispossess served their gods, on the high mountains and on the hills and under every green tree. And you shall destroy their altars, break their sacred pillars, and burn their wooden images with fire; you shall cut down the carved images of their gods and destroy their names from that place. [Why?] You shall not worship the LORD your God with such things. But you shall seek the place where the LORD your God chooses, out of all your tribes, to put His name for His dwelling place; and there you shall go.

We know that He first had the tabernacle set up in Shiloh. And, why He chose Shiloh I am not exactly sure. It was a fine place. But, it is very interesting that Israel at this time had not come into the possession of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a city of the Jebusites at this time, and they held the land of this area. And so, to me, Shiloh is just a temporary place for God to put the tabernacle.

If you go through the history of David, as soon as he and his men had conquered

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Jerusalem, God inspired David to bring the ark back to Jerusalem. David brought the ark back, though not in the correct manner. So, there was a bit of time that passed before it actually made it there. It is just interesting that as soon as Jerusalem became available, God wanted that ark back in the city.

Turn to Deuteronomy 33. We can understand if you remember back to the time of Abraham where it was that Melchizedek was. He was King of Salem (King of Righteousness). If we are right in saying that was Jesus Christ, where was He living? Jerusalem! Now, this is the blessings by Moses upon the children of Israel, and somewhat prophetic. Notice what he says about Benjamin in verse 12:

Deuteronomy 33:12 Of Benjamin he said: "The beloved of the LORD shall dwell in safety by Him [God], who shelters him [Benjamin] all the day long; and he [Benjamin] shall dwell between His [God's] shoulders."

What does this tell you? It says that His habitation will be in the territory of Benjamin. Did you know that the city of Jerusalem is not in Judah? It is in Benjamin. This always made me wonder, "Why is Jerusalem in Benjamin?" Here it is. The people of Benjamin dwelled where God lived because part of that area is the city of Jerusalem. It is very interesting.

Now we will go to several scriptures just to show you throughout the Bible where all these little clues are found. And there are more than those I picked out for today.

I Kings 11:36 And to his son I will give one tribe, that My servant David may always have a lamp before Me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen for Myself, to put My name there.

So, this answers Deuteronomy 12:5—where did He put His name? Jerusalem. This is where the kings of Judah would reign, that is the descendants of David.

Turn to II Chronicles 6. This one is in regards to the Temple being built.

II Chronicles 6:5-6 Since the day that I brought My people out of the land of Egypt, I have chosen no city from any tribe of Israel in which to build a house, that My name might be there, nor did I choose any man to be a ruler over My people Israel. Yet I have chosen Jerusalem, that My name may be there; and I have chosen David to be over My people Israel.

So, it was true that God had not chosen a city to dwell in, until Jerusalem became available, when David conquered it, and then, He placed His name there.

Turn to II Chronicles 33. This passage is in regards to the reign of Manasseh.

II Chronicles 33:3-4 For he rebuilt the high places which Hezekiah his father had broken down; he raised up altars for the Baals, and made wooden images; and he worshiped all the host of heaven and served them. He also built altars in the house of the LOORD, of which the LOORD had said, "In Jerusalem shall My name be forever."

So we add a bit more, here. God had not just put His name on Jerusalem while David and descendants were kings, but He had put His name on Jerusalem forever. It was going to be one of those things that was going to be happening for a very long time, and we know from what the Bible tells us that He really means forever in this context. So, this confirms Jerusalem as God's dwelling place.

There are a lot of psalms that talk about this sort of thing. I have chosen two for right now.

Psalms 132:13-14 For the LOORD has chosen Zion; He has desired it for His dwelling place: This is My resting place forever; here I will dwell, for I have desired it.

Here we find a new name thrown at us. Interesting is it not? What does the name Eden mean? It means, "desired; delight."

Psalms 135:21 Blessed be the LOORD out of Zion, who dwells in Jerusalem! Praise the LOORD!

I think this is obvious. Now, off to the prophets! Turn to Isaiah 8. This is within a well known prophecy.

Isaiah 8:18 Here am I and the children whom the LOORD has given me [Jesus Christ and his disciples]! We are for signs and wonders in Israel from the LOORD of hosts, who dwells in Mount Zion.

Though called Mount Zion now, we are still talking about the same area, where the Temple is/was—Mount Zion.

This next one is actually a millennial prophecy in the midst of a call to repentance by Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 3:17 At that time Jerusalem shall be called, "The Throne of the LOORD," and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LOORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts.

So now we are looking into the future, that in the Millennium, people are going to be coming to God where He rules, where His throne is, where His name will be once again.

Turn to Joel. Remember that at the end of the book of Joel is showing the great day of the Lord, with the multitudes in the valley of decision.

Joel 3:17, 21 So you shall know that I am the LOORD your God, dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. Then Jerusalem shall be holy, and no aliens shall ever pass through her again. . . . For I will acquit them [Judah] of the guilt of bloodshed, whom I had not acquitted; for the LOORD dwells in Zion.

Here again, God's future dwelling is going to be in Zion, which is Jerusalem.

Zechariah 8:3 Thus says the LOORD: 'I will return to Zion, and dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, the Mountain of the LOORD of hosts, the Holy Mountain.'

We are, now, getting all different kinds of names so that we understand which mountain He is talking about. And if you will remember in chapter 14 when He comes back, where does He stand? He stands on the Mount of Olives. And, the Mount of Olives is another one of those hills in the area of the temple mount in Jerusalem, right across from it, directly east.

Turn to Revelation 3. This is within the promise to the church at Philadelphia.

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Revelation 3:12 He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God [the Temple], and he shall go out no more. And I will write on him the name of My God [the name] and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.

So, there we have it. Jerusalem is His habitation forever, not just as it was in ancient times, not just the city that Jesus Christ came to, but it is also the city that will be the New Jerusalem.

To me, these are pretty conclusive arguments that the land of Israel, is what was called Eden; the garden of the Lord, the Garden of Eden is in the area of what we now call Jerusalem, and I would hazard the educated guess of Mount Zion, that prominence in the city, at the top of the hill. That is just my guess from all these bits, hints, and clues throughout the Bible.

Turn back to Genesis 2 again, and I will give my final proof.

Genesis 2:13a The name of the second river is Gihon.

(I will explain the remainder of that verse at another time.)

The name of the second river, to me, convincingly places the Garden of Eden in the area of Jerusalem. Here is why I think this. Turn to I Kings 1. This passage concerns the time when David is about to die, and we have Adonijah threatening to make himself king.

I Kings 1:32-35 And King David said, "Call to me Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada." So they came before the king. The king also said to them, "Take with you the servants of your lord, and have Solomon my son ride on my own mule, and take him down to Gihon. There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel; and blow the horn, and say, 'Long live King Solomon!' Then you shall come up after him, and he shall come and sit on my throne, and he shall be king in my place. For I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and Judah."

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If you have margin notes, you may notice regarding "Gihon," it is a spring, on the east side of the hill, in the Kidron Valley. That is my margin notes. Yours might say something a bit different. But, it may also have a reference back to Genesis 2:13. Some do, some do not.

The spring on the east side of Jerusalem in the Kidron Valley—I do not know how well you know the city of Jerusalem, but you may have a map in the back of your Bible that shows something to this effect. The Kidron Valley is a narrow valley, running mostly north to south along the eastern side of the city of Jerusalem. And, it separates the temple mount and the City of David from the Mount of Olives. So you have to go over or through Kidron to get from the temple mount to the garden of Gethsemane, up on the Mount of Olives.

The Gihon Spring is on the downward slope of the City of David, just outside the ancient city walls, and it is also adjacent to the ancient place known as Ophel. Ophel is just south of the temple mount, and the City of David just south of Ophel on the spur. The spring of Gihon is just to the east of this Ophel area.

Now it is interesting that David sent Solomon down to the Gihon Spring to be anointed as king. It is very interesting. There are no reasons in the Bible given for this. But there are two that I can think of.

One might be that it was a gathering place in clear sight of most of Jerusalem, of people standing on the wall, so that the anointing would be done in public. Everybody would see who were looking down upon Gihon Spring that David had sent Solomon down to Gihon Spring on his own mule with his most trusted counselors—Zadok, Nathan, and Beniah, and they were the ones to anoint him as king. So, he was showing all Jerusalem whom he had chosen.

The second reason is more important. I believe that David understood that there was a divine connection between Gihon Spring and God; that there was something that David understood that no one else did about Gihon Spring. Well, perhaps others did, but we do not know anything except that David chose this place for the anointing. And that would be the connection that Gihon is a place of living waters, and was a symbol of God's Holy Spirit, coming out from His own dwelling place. Gihon, by the way, means "bursting forth."

So, you have an image in the name "Gihon," of the same thing that Jesus Christ alluded to in John 7:37-39. Remember that passage where Jesus Christ on that last day of the feast during the water ceremony that went down from the Temple—where to? The pool

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of Siloam. This becomes interesting too. And they drew water, and Jesus stood up in the midst of this Feast and said, "If anyone comes to Me, out of his heart show flow rivers of living water." Right? What was He alluding to? The Holy Spirit.

Turn to II Chronicles 32. This passage takes place during the reign of Hezekiah, and talks about the great things that Hezekiah did, and one stupid thing that he did at the very end of his reign, but see verse 30:

II Chronicles 32:30 This same Hezekiah also stopped the water outlet of Upper Gihon, and brought the water by tunnel to the west side of the City of David. Hezekiah prospered in all his works.

Such an interesting thing tossed out there for us!

This is what is known in history, and you can actually go and visit this now, it is called Hezekiah's tunnel. And what Hezekiah did was, because Gihon Spring was outside the city walls, it made the city of Jerusalem vulnerable during a siege where the enemy would seize the spring of water, and wait for them to succumb to thirst. So, Hezekiah figured out a way to bring that water back into Jerusalem. And what he did was to start a group of miners at Gihon Spring, and another group of miners near the City of David, and he had them tunnel toward each other, and they met someplace underground, and then he blocked the Gihon Spring, forcing the water through the tunnel down to—where? The Pool of Siloam. So Gihon Spring feeds the Pool of Siloam. It is the same living water drawn from the pool that Jesus Christ was making the connection between it and the Holy Spirit.

Is that not an interesting connection to what happened in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve? Let me add one more thing, here. What happened at the Pool of Siloam in Jesus Christ's time? In John 9 there is the story of Jesus healing the blind man from birth. What did God in the flesh do? He put the mud on the man's eyes made from His own spit, and then He told the man to go wash in the Pool. And once he washed the mud off his eyes, he could open his eyes and see.

Pool of Siloam; Gihon Spring; the residence of God; the Garden of Eden; the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil—Adam and Eve take of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and they eat of its fruit, and what happened? Their eyes were opened. What happened? They opened their eyes and they could comprehend evil. What did Jesus Christ do?

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Luke 4:16-19 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: "The Spirit of the LOORD is upon Me, because He has anointed Me [notice, Solomon was anointed at the spring] to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LOORD.

In Jesus Christ, we can pull together all the disparate pieces of this puzzle. Upon Him was the Spirit of God. And out of His heart flows rivers of living waters, like the constant flow from Gihon Spring. It is His work to restore sight to the blind—to open the eyes of those who have been blinded by Satan, ever since Adam sinned in the Garden of Eden, God's dwelling place. It is Jesus' job to set that aright.