
"Then the Lord God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there He put the man He had formed."
(Genesis 2:7-8).

I. Garden of Eden, Heaven on Earth

- a. A reflective look at the Garden of Eden will bring into a focus a picture of the New Heaven and New Earth God will prepare for us.
- b. What stands out above all creation in the picture of the Garden of Eden, was the people God put there. The Garden was the first place where God and humanity were in harmony.
 1. The Garden of Eden was a place established by God to be in direct intimacy with humanity.
 2. The New Heaven and the New Earth will not be complete until intimacy is established between God and humanity.
- c. It was in The Garden of Eden where humanity experienced His goodness, generosity in perfect paradise. There were no natural disasters, no death and no pollution.
- d. The Garden of Eden was perfectly suited to Adam's needs and capabilities.
- e. The Garden was a place where Adam and Eve could enjoy God and each other.
- f. In order to understand *Why Heaven*. We need to see that Heaven is the dwelling place (abode) of God. And not just a place where some people go when they die. We go there by invitation!
- g. 1st / 2nd Heaven → Earth (very good) → Eden (East) → The Garden → Earth(bad)(vv.7-8) (Gen 3)
- h. Adam had free reign. He could live anywhere he wanted; use anything he wanted; and eat anything he wanted, with only one restriction.
- i. God only puts fences around things that will hurt us. Divine do's and don'ts.
- j. Sin corrupted Creation and it must be dealt with by redemption, mercy, grace and judgement. (p.55)

II. God Wants to Be With You in the New

- a. To fully grasp our future Heaven, we must see the parallels between God's original place for humanity and His future home for us.
- b. The Heaven that God has planned is very much like the paradise He created in the beginning.
- c. Notice the distinct traits of humanity that Genesis describes.
 1. Dignity – man is created in the image of God. All life is valued without division.
 2. Dominion – we are to rule and have authority over all other creating things.
 3. Duty – God gave the purpose. *Be fruitful and multiply. Rule and tend over creation.*
 4. Dependence – We are dependent upon God for the blessings of life and sustenance; and we are accountable to God for service and obedience.
- d. God will make *everything new*. The word *new* refers to a new quality or character.

III. Application and Practice

- a. What new insight did you gain about Heaven from this week's teaching?
- b. Let's read Revelation 21:1-7. What one thing about the New Heaven and New Earth most excites you? Why?