



CREATION AND THE BEGINNING OF HUMAN HISTORY

#22 – The Garden of Eden Genesis 2:4-20

PICTURES NEEDED

- 22-1 Adam in the Garden
- 22-2 Beautiful Place
- 22-3 Jesus as our Shepherd

REVIEW (Before Teaching Lesson)

- **Journal Review:** Ask students to share an important truth that they learned from their journal readings at home that week. Share some of your own insights.
- **Previous Lesson Review:** (Use the visual from the last lesson to aid in review)
Why are people who know God blessed? Why are we to praise God? Why are we to fear God? Why are we to revere God? What does it mean that God is sovereign?
- **The Big Question Review: Why should we fear God**
Let the students give their answers to the question.
- **Bible Verse Review: Isaiah 33:5-6**
The fear of the Lord is the key to salvation and wisdom.

The LORD is exalted, for he dwells on high; he will fill Zion with justice and righteousness. He will be the sure foundation for your times, a rich store of salvation and wisdom and knowledge; the fear of the LORD is the key to this treasure.

LESSON CONTENT

Note: The Bible verses included in the lesson are from the NIV 1984 edition. The wording of the questions is derived from that version. If another version of the Bible is used, questions may need to be adapted.

We have seen through our study of creation in the first chapter of Genesis that God designed the earth as a place for people to live, multiply and flourish. Human history began in the Garden of Eden. Genesis two reveals more about the creation of man and the perfect place God designed for him to live. Listen and follow along in your Bible as we read Genesis 2:4-20 because afterwards we will be answering questions to see how well we understand what life was like in the beginning. **(picture 22-1)**

⁴This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created.

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens-- ⁵and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up, for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, ⁶but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground-- ⁷the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

⁸Now the LORD God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden; and there he put the man he had formed. ⁹And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰A river watering the garden flowed from Eden; from there it was separated into four headwaters. ¹¹The name of the first is the Pishon; it winds through the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. ¹²(The gold of that land is good; aromatic resin and onyx are also there.) ¹³The name of the second river is the Gihon; it winds through the entire land of Cush. ¹⁴The name of the third river is the Tigris; it runs along the east side of Asshur. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. ¹⁶And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; ¹⁷but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."

¹⁸The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

¹⁹Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field.

- Vs. 6 – If there was no rain in the beginning how was the earth watered? In the beginning the earth was watered by water that came up from the ground.
- Vs. 10-14 – Why do you think the names of the rivers are given? Naming the rivers that ran from the Garden of Eden shows that Eden was a real place on earth. It was a geographical location with four rivers defining where it lay in relation to other areas.
- Vs. 7 – What was man formed from? Genesis says that man was formed from the dust of the ground. From our study of creation we know that the ground contains all that basic elements or matter that living things are made up of.
- Vs. 7 – Since the elements that make up a living being are the same basic elements that make up the earth what is the difference between man and the ground he was made from? Each part of creation has its own design. God organized the matter (dust) that man is made up of into a unique form, then he breathed life into the man.
- Vs. 9 – What grew in the garden? In the Garden of Eden grew things that were both pleasing to the eye and good to eat; in other words all the things that man needed to live well. God wanted man to take delight in and enjoy his beautiful creation. He provided for all of man's needs. The tree of life supplied what was needed for man to physically live forever.
- Vs. 15 – What was man's responsibility in terms of the garden? God put man into the garden to work it and take care of it. He was to be a good steward and cause it to flourish.
- Vs. 16-17 – What was God's one command to the man? God's one command to the man was that he was not to do something; he was not to eat from tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil belonged to God alone. That means the man was not to set himself up to be God. He was not to be his own moral determiner and decide for himself what was good and what was evil. God alone is the determiner of good and evil.
- Vs. 17 – If the man ate from the tree what would be the consequence? God said that he would surely die. That meant that he would not physically live forever in the way he was designed to, and he would also die spiritually.
- Vs. 19 – What had God formed the animals from? The animals were formed from the ground like Adam. People and animals are made from the same basic elements that are found in all of creation.
- How are people different from other animals? People eat, breathe, move and grow like other animals, but they are very different from other animals as only they were created in the image of God. People have a mind, a will and emotions like God, animals don't.

- What does having a mind, will and emotions enable people to do? Having a mind enables people to think, learn and create. Having a will enables people to make moral choices to choose between what is right and wrong. Having emotions enables people to love and have sympathy for others or to hate and do destructive things.
- Vs. 20 – What did God have Adam do with the animals? Adam named the animals. In the Bible in naming something, one has dominion over it. God gave men the right to rule over the earth and everything in it.
- If God brought the animals to man and Adam named them, what was the relationship between Adam and the animals? There was no fear between them. They lived in harmony with one another.

The Garden of Eden is referred to as paradise. What is a paradise? A paradise is a place of perfect harmony. **(picture 22-2)**

What are things that made the Garden perfect?

- God was present in the garden with Adam and they had a perfect relationship.
- Death had not entered the world and there was peace and harmony between men and animals.
- Adam had all that he needed for both physical and spiritual life.

This condition of perfect harmony soon changed as we will see in later lessons but at creation the man was in right relationship with God, with himself, and with his environment. This was God's original plan for man, to live in a harmonious place and to dwell with him forever.

What broke man's harmonious relationship with God? This relationship was broken through sin but God still desires for people to dwell with him and through Jesus a way has been made for each of us to come back into a right relationship with him.

King David, who lived a very long time ago, knew God, desired to be in right relationship with him, and expressed that desire in the psalms he wrote. Psalm 23:1-3 says, *¹The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.*

How did King David view God? **(picture 22-3)** King David saw God as his shepherd, his caretaker and the one who had a right to rule over him. When we see ourselves as sheep and put ourselves under God's authority as our shepherd to lead and guide us, he takes care of us both physically and spiritually.

How would do the verses from Psalm 23 seem like being in the Garden of Eden? In some ways it is like being back in the Garden of Eden as God gives us everything we need so we aren't in want (verse 1). He supplies our physical needs for food and rest (verse 2). He makes us right spiritually (3a) and he enables us to live rightly (3b).

Even though people no longer lives in a perfect place, we can still be rightly related to God. We need to hold on to that understanding as we study the history of all that happened to men in the beginning because they didn't want to be the sheep in God's pasture and be led by God. We need to understand history so we don't make the same mistakes that others have made before us.

LESSON WRAP-UP

- **Overview Questions:** How was the earth watered in the beginning? What was the man formed from? What grew in the garden? What was the man to do with the garden? What one thing wasn't the man to do? What would happen if he did that? What did Adam do with the animals?
- **Thought Questions:** What did God want for the man when he created him? What does that say about who God is?
- **Prayer:** Thank God that he created people to have a relationship with him and enjoy all the good things of his creation. Thank God that his heart is inclined toward us. Pray that you would desire above all else to dwell with God and live as a sheep in his pasture.
- **The Big Question: What happens when God is our Shepherd?**
Let the students give their answers to the question. Share the memory verse. Ask how it answers the question.
- **Memory Verse: Psalm 23:1-3** When God is our shepherd, we have everything we need.

1The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. 2He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, 3he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Questions: What does it mean that God is our shepherd? What does it mean not to be in want? What does God provide for his sheep?

ACTIVITIES (Completed after the lesson)

Any age appropriate activity can be included which fits into the class time. The activities with a star are included on the class notes.

- ★ **Lesson Notes:** Ask the students to summarize in one sentence what the lesson was about. Then have them give three main points covered in the lesson. An example is below.

Theme: God made a perfect place for man to live. It was called the Garden of Eden.

1. God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed life into him.
2. God put the man in the Garden of Eden and told him to take care of it.
3. The man and the animals lived together peacefully and the man gave a name to each animal.

- ★ **Memory Verse:** Read the memory verse on the cover of the class notes and then have the students fill in the blanks in the verse.

★ **Activity Page:** Acrostic Poem

Instructions: Work in pairs (competition) or as a whole group to write an acrostic poem for the word "Garden". Use each letter of the word to start a word or phrase that describes what the Garden of Eden was like. Brainstorm words before writing the poem. Below are some words that start with the letters.

G – God’s presence, gorgeous, great, good, glorious

A – Attractive, all-providing, awesome

R – Restful, refreshing

D – Delightful, different

E – Elevating, environmentally perfect, enchanting

N – Near to God, no death, needs provided for

• **Further Understanding:** Investigation/Reasoning Skills

What made the Garden of Eden a perfect place? **(picture 22-2)**

Discuss with the class what made the Garden of Eden a perfect place. Some of the ideas they should come up with are listed below. You can divide them into small groups to first come up with some ideas to share with the entire class. As a whole class, discuss why each element would be essential to perfection. (There are no discussion notes. Ideas can be written on the back of the journal. You can also have the children draw a picture that represents the garden. Have them think about colors and what is both pleasing to the eye and good to eat.)

- God was present.
- There was no death.
- It supplied all man’s physical needs.
- It was beautiful.
- It was peaceful.
- The animals and the man lived together in harmony.

The journal is passed out at the end of class for the students to complete at home. It has six readings that answer a digging deeper question. It would be beneficial for the teacher to work through the journal readings also.

Digging Deeper: What are the benefits of dwelling with God?

Reading 1: Psalm 23 God is our shepherd and leads us to good places.

How does God want to shepherd us? What will be the result of letting God be our shepherd?
What happens to sheep who don't follow a shepherd?

Reading 2: Psalm 46 We have no fear in trouble.

What does it mean that God is our refuge and strength? When is God our refuge and strength?
What is the result when God is our refuge and strength?

Reading 3: Psalm 67 God blesses and provides for us.

What does God do for the nations and peoples who praise him? Why does God do that?

Reading 4: Psalm 121 God watches over us.

What happens when we look to God as our helper? Why can only God truly be our helper?
Who do we usually put our trust in? What is the problem with that?

Reading 5: Psalm 26 God keeps us on level ground.

What does it mean to stand on level ground? Why does being with God do that for us?
How do we dwell with God?

Reading 6: Revelation 7:9-17 Following the Shepherd

Think about what a shepherd does to take care of his sheep and what happens to a sheep that doesn't follow a shepherd. Memorize Psalm 23.