

## Origins Matter! (Pt. 3)

"Eden & Beyond ...Worship & Work"

March 23, 2025

**INTRO** ...Who am I? ...&... WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO BE DOING?

Last Week: "Self-DEFINITION"    This Week: "Life-TRAJE+CTORY" (Eden is Our Launching Pad)

### EDEN... the Starting Place of Man

Gen 2:8-15, 3:8

NOTICE: [Image 1 - Map with Eden] A Geography Lesson - Eden is Not the Whole Earth. (1) Eden Contains a Unique Garden where God Uniquely Dwells, (2) there's a RIVER flowing from Eden into the Earth, (3) man is given a role/assignment in Eden

Commentary on "Eden" (**Rule #1 "Scripture Interprets Scripture"**...so, what else does the Bible say about this setting?) - Eden Gets Associated with The "Tabernacle", the "Mountain of God", the "Throne of God" ...**These are the places where God "DWELLS" and Has a Unique Exchange with the Earth.**

### A DWELLING Place of HARMONY

Ez 28:13-15 You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared. <sup>14</sup> You were an anointed guardian cherub. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked. <sup>15</sup> You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created,

...Eden is a "garden" and a "mountain of God" where things are in Dazzling Harmony!

Is 51:3 <sup>3</sup> For the LORD comforts Zion; he comforts all her waste places and makes her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song.

Ez 36:35 And they will say, 'This land that was desolate has become like the garden of Eden, and the waste and desolate and ruined cities are now fortified and inhabited.'

...Eden becomes the Reference Point for the Great Day of RESTORATION!

Rev 21:1-3 <sup>1</sup> Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. <sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.

Rev 22:1-2 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb <sup>2</sup> through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit

"The geographical aspect is limited to the garden of Eden, the throne-room, as it were, of the kingdom. The place that will become the prime habitat for the human couple is a garden planted by the Lord God. This

term 'plant' is a rich theological term used to describe something that God produces to give life to and to nourish its surroundings. The garden brims with life, with fruit trees, a tree of life, a tree of knowledge of good and evil and a river whose head waters flow out of Eden, dividing into four branches, providing water to the rest of the earth (Gen. 2:8–17). The presence of cherubim later in the narrative (Gen. 3:24), and the description of the garden as the place where the Lord God walks (Gen. 3:8), all contribute to understanding it as a cosmic mountain where heaven and earth are united and from which the divine rule is exercised. Some scholars observe the similarities between Eden and the later tabernacle and temple on Mount Zion (e.g. Wenham 1986)." **Stephen Dempster**, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (NSBT))

***Eden is a "Tabernacle" it is a "Throne" it is a Unique Place--Made so by the Dwelling Presence of God!! ...Man engages, interacts with, has an exchange with the influence of the Presence of God—THEN, we transfer that Image into the Earth! ...Eden has a Centrality on God and His Unique Presence!! THIS is the Starting Place of Understanding Our Existence and Our Design!!***

"There is a difference between being set loose in a nice garden and being placed close to God in his house on earth. What difference does that make for the way you tell your own story?" **Ed Welch**, "Created to Draw Near", p. 24

- **We SHOULD have a significant value for "individuality"!**
  - **BUT!!... What happens when you detach this from these "ORIGIN INSIGHTS"??** ... (1) You're an IMAGE Bearer ... (2) You're Either MALE or FEMALE ... (3) You're Set in "EDEN" ... (4) You're Given a MANDATE (that shapes the rest of your days)

## **A TABERNACLE and a PRIESTHOOD**

"God places Adam in the garden and tells him that he is to "work it (Heb.- abad) and keep it (Heb.- shamar)". ..these two words are the precise job description given not only to Adam but also eventually to the priests in Israel's temple (tabernacle) (Nu. 3:8). ...You see the point? The garden of Eden was, in its very essence, a perfect temple. It was the dwelling place of God with man, the place where man and God met, the place where they walked together in the cool of the day." **Greg Gilbert**, *The Epic Story of the Bible*, p. 68

"...the garden was the first tabernacle, and humanity's home was in the presence of God, in his Most Holy Place. The evidence is unmistakable (figure 2).<sup>7</sup> Wherever God is, there is the tent of his dwelling. **Welch, Edward T.**.. *Created to Draw Near: Our Life as God's Royal Priests* (p. 21)

All this means that from the beginning, our everyday existence was intended to be lived out in the temple precincts. Our heritage is the royal priesthood. And since God's purposes for us have never changed, you are a royal priest. You have a rich job description, and his Spirit is with you. ...He desires that we be close. This certainly can erode old myths of God being far off and chronically disappointed with you. Communion. Closeness. Heaven comes to earth, and our home is at the intersection of the two. This has been God's plan for humanity, and he has done it. **Welch, Edward T.**.. *Created to Draw Near: Our Life as God's Royal Priests* (p. 24)

...Adam & Eve (Humanity) ...were meant to be "priests"—those who "mediated the image/presence of God" into the earth!

The O.T. Tabernacle FEATURED an awareness of SIN & SEPARATION!

BUT... in the N.T. the Next Step of Redemption is taken

1 Pet 2:9 "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

SUMMARY THOUGHT:

- (1) Eden is a Unique Place of "Dwelling/Contact" with God's Presence
- (2) Man (of all creatures) is Uniquely "Set" in Eden ...TO DO WHAT??
  - a.) To "work & keep", ie, to "minister" in the Garden
  - b.) To Extend the Image of God Throughout the Earth (Gen 1:28)

## A Setting of WORSHIP & WORK

"...Eden was the first place of worship, since it was where God's presence dwelt and the only place where satisfaction in God could be found. God's plan was not static, but Adam was to expand Eden until it filled the whole earth. ...God's purpose for worship in Eden would overflow in mission to the ends of the earth." **G.K. Beale**, "God Dwells Among Us- A Biblical Theology of the Temple", p. 15

**...Jn 4:23** "...the Father is seeking such people to worship Him. ...those who worship Him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

"EDEN IS A PLACE of God's presence, and the place of God's presence is a place of worship. The expansion of Eden, therefore, is an expansion of worship. Worship fuels mission in Eden—bearers of the image of God reflect his presence in worship and are propelled forward in their mission to "fill the earth" with reflections of God's glory (Gen 1:28). Worship is in fact the goal of mission in Eden, filling the earth by multiplying image bearers in the temple of God's presence who would worship and reflect God's glory to the ends of the earth." **G.K. Beale**, "God Dwells Among Us- A Biblical Theology of the Temple", p. 17

***It's Possible that OUR Ideas about "Worship" and "Priesthood" might be VERY Different Than Eden's Life Lessons! ...What Does Adam & Eve's "Priestly Life of WORSHIP & WORK" Look Like?***

...Does it Look Like the Creatures known as Seraphim?

...Does it Look Like the Angel Michael or Gabriel?

Gen 1:27 ...2:5, 15 ...There is an assignment to "tend, work, subdue, have dominion over" ...expand ...develop

Gen 2:18 ...There is unique companionship & human relationship

Gen 2:24 ...There is one flesh intimacy

## THIS is EDEN! The Launching Pad into Earth!!

... "WISDOM" for doing life "Under-the-Sun" (a broken/fallen/confusing setting)

Ecc 9:7-10 <sup>7</sup> Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do. ...<sup>9</sup> Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. <sup>10</sup> Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might, for there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going.

Prov 5:18-19 <sup>18</sup> Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice in the wife of your youth, <sup>19</sup> a lovely deer, a graceful doe. Let her breasts fill you at all times with delight; be intoxicated always in her love.

Ecc 5:18-20 <sup>18</sup> Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. <sup>19</sup> Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. <sup>20</sup> For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

***THIS is Incredibly Clarifying! ...In a fallen world, where there's a lot about life that is WRONG and "Out of Bounds", it can become easy to create some over-simplified default settings that make nearly "everything wrong"! ...we have "misplaced worship and substituted other things in the place of God"—thus, the only righteous thing we do is perhaps restrained to some "narrow categories of "worship activity" (Bible Reading, Prayer, Singing, Offerings, ...Gospel Sharing ...Serving the needy ...etc.) ...BUT, what do we learn from our Origins?***

**Worship is Multifaceted! ...The ONE THING that is Central is that it is Affectionately tethered to God!**

Deut 8:1, 6-14 <sup>1</sup> “The whole commandment that I command you today you shall be careful to do, that you may live and multiply, and go in and possess the land that the LORD swore to give to your fathers. ... <sup>6</sup> So you shall keep the commandments of the LORD your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him. <sup>7</sup> For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and springs, flowing out in the valleys and hills, <sup>8</sup> a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, <sup>9</sup> a land in which you will eat bread without scarcity, in which you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills you can dig copper. <sup>10</sup> And you shall eat and be full, and you shall bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. <sup>11</sup> “Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping his commandments and his rules and his statutes, which I command you today, <sup>12</sup> lest, when you have eaten and are full and have built good houses and live in them, <sup>13</sup> and when your herds and flocks multiply and your silver and gold is multiplied and all that you have is multiplied, <sup>14</sup> then your heart be lifted up, and you forget the LORD your God,

**Jeremiah 2:4-8, 12-13**

<sup>4</sup> Hear the word of the LORD, O house of Jacob, and all the clans of the house of Israel.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says the LORD: “What wrong did your fathers find in me that they went far from me, and went after worthlessness, and became worthless?...

<sup>6</sup> They did not say, ‘Where is the LORD who brought us up from the land of Egypt, who led us in the wilderness, in a land of deserts and pits, in a land of drought and deep darkness, in a land that none passes through, where no man dwells?’

<sup>7</sup> And I brought you into a plentiful land to enjoy its fruits and its good things. But when you came in, you defiled my land and made my heritage an abomination.

<sup>8</sup> The priests did not say, ‘Where is the LORD?’ Those who handle the law did not know me; the shepherds transgressed against me; the prophets prophesied by Baal and went after things that do not profit.

<sup>12</sup> Be appalled, O heavens, at this; be shocked, be utterly desolate, declares the LORD,

<sup>13</sup> for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.

**What were Adam & Eve to do? ...WORSHIP & WORK! (That multifaceted word!)—What Does That Mean?**  
What Does That Look Like 24/7/365???

***...By tethering everything in their life and their world and their priorities and their affections ...to GOD!***

- God gave them relationships to enjoy!
- God gave them adventure, exploration, development, achievement, accomplishments, challenges, ingenuity
- God gave them taste buds, pleasure sensors, ability to "desire", ...God gave them ENJOYMENT!!

***"Are you Hav'in Any Fun?"*** (Song written in 1939, recorded by Elaine Stritch in 1950's)

Are you having any fun?  
What you getting out of living?  
Who cares for what you've got if you're not having any fun?  
Are you having any laughs?  
Are you getting any loving?  
If other people do, why can't you? Have a little fun