**‘Eden’**

***8And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil .10Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers. 11The name of the first is Pishon; it flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12The gold of that land is good; the bdellium and the onyx stone are there. 13The name of the second river is Gihon; it flows around the whole land of Cush. 14The name of the third river is Tigris; it flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.*** Genesis 2:8-14

First there was Eden. Then God planted a garden in Eden. Rarely is this distinction made, but it is in the text. Eden was a geographic place on earth before God planted a garden in it. What, then, is **The Garden in Eden**? It is a place longed for by man to this very day. Does it exist today? No it does not. The Flood in Noah’s day was so devastatingly destructive that it wiped any landmarks of it off the face of earth. Even the exact location of two of the rivers mentioned in Genesis 2:11-14, the Pishon and the Gihon, aren’t known.

We know the garden had to have been HUGE because ***“the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food”*** from out of the ground within its boundaries. ***“Every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food”*** is not going to fit inside of anyone’s normal garden plot, nor will all of these trees fit within the acreage of the largest of commercial farms. Another sign of the garden’s great size is that a **RIVER** flowed out of Eden to water it – not some ordinary garden hose, but a river. This Garden was GIGANTIC!

This river **originated** in Eden itself. The word ***“Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden”*** gives us the impression that this river may have originated as an underground spring of some sort. If this is so, then it was an extremely vibrant spring. Not only did it produce the river which watered everything in God’s garden, it divided into four other rivers the Pishon; the Gihon; the Tigris; and the Euphrates. These watered the lands of Havilah, Cush (Ethiopia), Assyria (modern Syria), and modern day Iraq.

Also interesting is this: We don’t know the name of the river which flowed out of Eden. We know the names of the four rivers which divided from it. But, we don’t know the name of the river from which they originated. Did this river even have a name? If so, why would God leave out this point?

We do not know. The answer may be as simple as this: God didn’t want anyone searching for and finding Eden. The way was barred to it when sin entered into the world, so why give identifying information which would lead many on a futile pursuit.

So, we don’t know a lot about Eden, but we nevertheless long for it. We long for it because we live in a broken world and Eden reminds us of how wonderful the world was BEFORE sin made a mess of things.

Thankfully, there will come a day when the beauty and tranquility of Eden will be restored. God has promised to do this for He is going to make a new heaven and a new earth. The old order of this world with all of its brokenness will pass away.

Everyone is invited into what God will do when He makes “all things new.” Our entrance into the marvelous place will not come by our striving to enter into it. We will only enter it by faith in the One who satisfied all of God’s just requirements and who overcame sin and death. That One is the Only-Begotten Son of God. His name is Jesus. He is our way, the only way, to Paradise.

*Kathleen*