



Have You Worked Your Garden?

SOME THINK THAT when you reach a state of financial independence or material comfort, all you need to do is sit back, relax, and enjoy. But the following Scriptures in Genesis 2:10–15 highlight the assignment that GOD has given to all of us with respect to this garden called Earth:

- 10 And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads.
- 11 The name of the first *is* Pison: that *is* it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where *there is* gold;
- 12 And the gold of that land *is* good: there *is* bdellium and the onyx stone.
- 13 And the name of the second river *is* Gihon: the same *is* it that compasseth the whole land of Ethiopia.
- 14 And the name of the third river *is* Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river *is* Euphrates.
- 15 And the LORD GOD took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.

In verse 15, we read that GOD put man in the garden “to dress it and to keep it.” The word “dress” is translated from the Hebrew word *abad*. Its primary meaning is “to serve.” The word “keep” is translated from the Hebrew word *shamar*. Its primary meaning is “to keep, guard, or observe.” Your assignment from GOD is to be a servant or worker, and keep, guard, and watch over all that He has placed in your care.

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The very nature of a garden requires you to work. The soil must be prepared or tilled before seeds are planted. Once the seeds are planted, they must be watered. Once the seeds start to grow, you must continually work the garden to get rid of weeds so it will be as fruitful as possible. The one thing you cannot do is sit back and do nothing.

A river serves many purposes in the ecosystem. It helps to feed and nourish the land around it. It provides water for man to drink. Water evaporates from the river to help form clouds that rain on the dry lands. GOD gave Adam four rivers to sustain himself and other life in the garden. If one of the rivers were to go dry, he would still have the others available to him.

A river also changes the land through which it runs. It can overflow, develop tributaries, branches, or even other rivers. Such actions can bring new life to areas that were previously dry or without life. The river was the most important part of the Garden of Eden because it was its life force. Adam had to take great care to keep the river clean and pure.

But Satan hated what was going on in the garden. He knew that all rivers have a source. The source of the river in the Garden of Eden was the heart of GOD. If Adam continued to keep the garden as GOD instructed him, the garden might begin to spread beyond its existing boundaries. This was a threat to Satan.

Throughout the Bible, sinfulness and evil are often identified as being dry places. The Garden of Eden was a lush place that was full of life. Outside of the garden, the world was dry, harsh, and desolate. This was Satan's domain. Because of this, we may now understand why he hated what was going on in the garden. If a river that flowed from the heart of GOD was allowed to overflow, or develop tributaries, branches, or other rivers, it would surely bring life to those parts of the world. If Satan could cutoff the rivers, his world of sin and evil could remain.

So he entered the garden, took the form of a serpent, and eventually got Eve and Adam to give in to sin. The purity of GOD cannot coexist with sin. The sin committed by Adam and Eve polluted the rivers of the garden and threatened to choke out its growth. To make the garden pure again, GOD cast out Adam and Eve. Now, they were cutoff from the very garden that allowed them to prosper and live well. They failed at their assignment. They failed to keep sin out of the garden!

Building Wealth through Spiritual Health

Because of the fall of Adam and Eve, we are all born into a world that is spiritually dry, harsh, and desolate. Nevertheless, each of us can make it back to Eden. How? By accepting Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour. Eden is no longer a place here on earth, but is now the Kingdom of GOD. When we accept Jesus, the Kingdom of GOD will reside in our hearts (see Luke 17:21). Like Adam, we will be charged with the responsibility to “dress it and keep it.”

But just as he did with Adam, Satan will hate the work in your garden as well. He knows that GOD is the source of the rivers that flow in the hearts of the born-again. He knows that the Blood of Jesus is the water that runs in your rivers. Satan will try his best to choke the rivers in your garden with sin.

Genesis 2:10–14 tells us the names of the rivers, but take a look at the meaning of each name. Pison means “increase.” Gihon means “bursting forth.” Hiddekel means “rapid.” Euphrates means “fruitfulness.” The name of each river was a clue to the blessings that awaited Adam if only he would have remained obedient. But, we can learn from Adam’s mistakes. GOD has given us more than one river as well. Just like Adam, these rivers will provide a bounty of blessings, if we are obedient to His Word.

From a financial standpoint, many of you have only discovered one of your rivers. Maybe that river is the job that you go to every day. It is your primary source for sustaining yourself and your family. Your job is your life. But what if your job is taken away from you? What if you get laid off? Your river (job) has dried up. This can be devastating if you haven’t discovered your other rivers.

Where are your other rivers? They’re already in your personal garden. You just have to find them. An investment portfolio can be a river. Owning your own business can be a river. Owning rental real estate can be a river. All of these can help sustain you and your family if one of your other rivers should dry up. More importantly, these rivers can **increase, rapidly bursting forth** to bring **fruitfulness** in your life and the lives of others. Like the rivers in the Garden of Eden, they can be resources to help you fulfill your assignment. But you just can’t sit there and do nothing.

You are required to work (keep) the garden. Additionally, you should remember that you are here to serve (dress) the garden. You work for the garden; the garden doesn’t work for you. Your life should be based on service to others. Financial resources will be the tools to help you fulfill your assignment of service.