

## Your Life Can Be Like a Watered Garden (Isaiah 58:11)

Zac Poonen:

There are three gardens found in Scripture.

1. The Garden of Eden: It says in Genesis 2:8,15 that "the Lord God planted a garden and He put the man and woman there to cultivate it". How did sin come in that garden? It was basically because of two wrong attitudes that Adam and Eve had. The first was pride. They thought they knew better than God. They thought they could disobey God and get away with it. That's how many people in the world think today too. The second was selfishness. They thought of what they would get for themselves if they ate of that fruit. It says there that "the woman looked at the fruit and saw that it was good, that it would satisfy her desire and make her wise." Pride and selfishness were the causes of sin in the beginning. And these are the root-causes of all the sin in the human race today - and there are many manifestations of these. Basically, man is centered in himself and wants to live a life independent of God. That is how sin comes.

2. The Garden of Gethsemane and Calvary: Sin came in a garden. And Jesus wrought our salvation in a garden too. Many know about the garden of Gethsemane. But they don't know that Jesus was crucified in a garden too and that He was buried in a garden as well. John 19:41 says, "In the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid." Jesus was betrayed in a garden, He was crucified in a garden, He was buried in a garden and He was raised from the dead in a garden. Salvation now comes to us in that garden. The benefit of all that Jesus did in that garden can be ours today. When we look at the earthly life of Jesus, we see in it, the exact opposite of the pride and selfishness that we see in Adam's race. In Christ's life we see a humility that was willing to do exactly what His Father wanted Him to do - even if it was to die on a cross. He readily chose that way - without any reservation whatsoever. Christ also selflessly thought of the needs of others and not His own - and was willing to sacrifice Himself in order to help them. This is the attitude that God wants us to have.

3. The Garden of the Bridegroom: This garden is mentioned in the Song of Solomon (which is a song that describes the relationship between a Bridegroom and a Bride, between a husband and a wife). In Song of Solomon 4:12, the Bridegroom says, "My bride is like a private garden". The bridegroom here is Christ. And we, His bride, are to be a garden reserved exclusively for Him. But that garden is not primarily for our benefit, or even for the benefit of others, but for the Lord. Keep this in mind always - that our life is to be a private garden for the Lord. Then, as a by-product, others will also be blessed through it.

This is what Jesus taught. When somebody asked Him what the greatest commandment in the law was, He said, "The greatest commandment is to love God with all your heart - and then will you be able to love your neighbour as yourself" (paraphrase of Matt.22:37-40). Our life must always begin with God first. That was why God created Adam and Eve separately and not together - so that when Adam opened his eyes, the first person he would see would be God and not Eve. And when Eve was created later and she opened her eyes, the first person she saw was God - not Adam. That's the way it must be in our life always, if our life is to be like a watered garden.

In Song of Solomon 4:16 - It is written "Awake, O north wind, and come, wind of the south (The wind from the north is cold and the wind from the south is warm). Make my garden breathe out fragrance. Let its spices be wafted abroad. And may my Beloved Lord come into His garden and eat its choice fruits". In our life, we will face the cold north wind of adversity and the warm south wind of prosperity. But when Jesus is our Head and we allow Him to control our lives, then whether we face adversity or prosperity, trial or comfort, both these winds will spread abroad the fragrance of Christ through us. And finally, we read here: And may my Beloved Lord come into His garden and eat its choice fruits. Your triumphs in times of adversity are for the Lord alone to see and not for you to show off to others. The Lord sees your life in secret, at times when others do not. And when He comes into His garden, He should find something there always, that delights His heart.

Every garden needs rain. And in the new covenant, we have the opportunity to be filled with the Holy Spirit - the rain of heaven. I want to encourage you to seek God wholeheartedly for this. To be filled with the Holy Spirit means to have every area of your life under the control of the Holy Spirit. Open yourself to Heaven's rain, every day of your life. Then your life will be like a watered garden.