

# Home group notes for 8th October 2017

## Genesis 2: 4-17 The Garden of Eden

At this point in the creation narrative, the camera zooms in close. The perspective is no longer cosmic in scale but focuses particularly on the creation of a human being (*adam*) with its play on the word ground (*adamah*). The reference to 'a garden in the East' and the named rivers that flow from it suggest a real place - though difficult now to locate. The garden, however, is conceived as symbolic of a place where God dwells, as an archetypal sanctuary, a prefiguring of the later tabernacle and temples.

1. Looking at the passage as a whole, what strikes you about the author's description of the Garden of Eden? Why do you think there is this much more intimate account of creation after the epic story of creation in six days?
2. God is the all-important actor in this story (man's role is just passive). Notice that his name is now not just God, but LORD God (throughout chapter 2 and 3). What do think could be the significance of this?
3. The focus of the whole account is v.7 **the creation of 'man' (*adam*)**, a human creature. What are the key features of his creation and what do they tell us about who we are as human beings?
4. What is odd about the description of the rivers in v.10-14? What do you think the author is wanting to emphasise? Why this sudden interruption in the account and this lingering over rivers?
5. What is the significance of the two trees being in the centre of the garden (v.9)? What do you understand the two trees to be symbolising?
6. Look at v.15. What does this verse teach us about human work and its significance?
7. Why is eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil such a serious matter that it leads to death (v.16-17)?
8. What, for you, is the overall impact and challenge of this 'alternative' creation account?