

TO WHAT PURPOSE THE GARDEN OF EDEN, you ask?

The purpose was four-fold.

First, it was the means by which Satan could test his power to undermine man's loyalty to God, making man subservient to a new god, Satan (Job 1; 2 Cor. 4:4).

Second, it was the means by which the Lord could make known to man the deleterious effects of disobeying Him.

Third, it was the means by which the Lord could make His grace and mercy known to mankind after the fall.

Fourth, it was a lesson for all mankind. The Lord now has no need to test the obedience of each individual of the human race. Adam represented all men and failed. Therefore, all mankind failed with him.

The Gospel is not a 'test' as many assume.

Many believe and teach God elects those whom He foreknew would 'accept Christ.'

In other words, there is an implied 'testing' of each individual to see what they would do with the Gospel.

Those who believe the Gospel pass the 'test,' and are rewarded with election unto salvation.

Those who reject the Gospel fail the 'test' and are rewarded with perdition.

But the Gospel is not a 'test,' but rather a 'call.'

And this call is efficacious to the Elect.

The Elect are His sheep (Psalm 23; Psalm 100:3; John 10:27-28).

His sheep hear His voice and obediently follow Him.

Though they are spiritually dead, they hear His voice.

"Lazarus, come forth."

Like Lazarus, they rise from their spiritual death when called.

They are called and chosen and faithful (Rev. 17:14).

They are the called, according to His purpose [to elect] (Romans 8:28).

Paul emphasizes the irresistible nature of God's call to the Elect:

Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified (Romans 8:30).

We Christians have been given the supreme honor and privilege of 'calling' God's sheep into His fold by means of the Gospel.

When accompanied with the Holy Spirit, the Gospel comes in power which fully convicts the Elect (1 Thess. 1:5; Titus 3:5).

Like Paul, all Christians have been called by God's grace (Galatians 1:15).

CONCLUSION: God's call is effectual to His chosen elect. Those are dead in unbelief, yet are called by the same omnipotent power which raised Christ from the dead. They are then blessed with spiritual life and a living faith (Ephesians 1 & 2).

Both are the free gifts of God to the undeserving of His choosing (Romans 9:15).

The testing of man has been over since the fall of Adam.

Foreseen merit/faith is out of the question.

Undeserved, unmerited efficacious grace is the biblical solution to man's enmity and inability to come to Christ.

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure (Phil. 2:13).

NEXT: Further observations.