

**Series: God & Man & Woman #750**

**Title: Genesis 2.15, Part 3**

Thank you for joining me today from wherever you are and by however you listen as we meet together coast-to-coast here in the United States and all the way around the world! As you (hopefully) remember if you were with us last time, we're in the middle of a study of Hebrew words. These words are found in Genesis 2, verse 15. The text reads, "<sup>15</sup> **Then the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it.**" The specific words we are looking at are: "put," "cultivate" and "keep."

We began with "put." We cross-referenced the Hebrew word in the Old Testament and visited its use in Genesis chapter 19 and the true story of Lot and his family being taken by God's angels from Sodom and put into Zoar before Sodom was destroyed by God. This word put is used in reference to God providing safety and rest to people, specifically *in the land*. As God put man in the garden in Eden to give the man safety and rest, so too God took Lot and his family out of the land of Sodom and put them in the land of Zoar for safety and rest. The second purpose for God putting man in the garden was so that man would experience safety and rest.

And then we just got our foot in the door on the other usage for this same word "put" in the Old Testament. And this is so that man would be dedicated to God in the presence of the Lord. In a few moments I will show you this meaning of "put" in the Bible, but I just want to make certain you are tracking with me, so back to the big picture for a minute. Our main goal here is to uncover the purposes for which the Lord God took the man and put him into the garden in Eden. We're focused on to cultivate it and to keep it. Taken together, on Wednesday, we found the first purpose: **man was made for work**. Man is to work the garden.

Then, yesterday, the second purpose: God put man in the garden in Eden **to provide safety and rest for the man in the land of Eden**. The experience that Lot, his wife, and daughters had sure did show us one reason why we need the safety and rest of God for us even to this very day. We live in a culture just like that of Sodom. This is a culture that is violent, ruled by the mob, hyper sexualized, particularly abhorrent forms of sexuality such as homosexuality, bi-sexuality, and pansexuality. Ours is a dangerous world where safety and rest are essential to our well-being as the people of holy God. Following Jesus Christ and being obedient to Him in all ways creates for us the need for safety and rest, because the world has little tolerance for biblical Christianity.

If, for example, you dare to suggest publicly that heterosexuality (sexual attraction between a man and a woman, two people of the opposite sex) is the only form of sexuality acceptable to God – expressed in marriage between one man and one woman, and therefore the only form that should be acceptable to our society, well then (if you suggest that) you will feel in danger. In large part it is not safe to state that as *truth* today. But it is true and must be stated. Therefore, danger! So, aren't we glad that we serve our God who keeps us safe and well rested amidst much that could keep us awake all night long?

The garden of Eden in that perfect world was a safe and restful place. Heaven will be an eternally safe and restful place, both provided by God. But in-between we still have God, who, as He did with Lot gives us land for safety and for rest.

I told you yesterday this will get practical and will be applicable to your life. I hope you stayed with us through the teaching of the text to get to the application of the Scripture. And now let's come to our second reference for the use of this same Hebrew word for "put" used in Genesis 2.15. What we will see is that the word for put also means to be dedicated to God in the presence of the Lord. I could give you several references for this, but let's focus on one, which is found in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus. Specifically, if you want to turn there in your Bible, Exodus 16, verses 33 and 34.

Let me introduce you to the context. Exodus chapter 16 – an important chapter in the history of the Israelite people – is the true story of how God gave His people manna. Manna is like bread, which came from God, supernaturally provided to His people on their departure from the land of Egypt. This chapter begins with the people of God complaining to Moses, **“Would that we had died by the Lord’s hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”** (That’s Exodus 16.3).

Well, the Lord of course hears their complaint. And He answers, promising to **“rain bread from heaven”** (verse 4). I’ll read verses 13 through 15 of Exodus 16. **“<sup>13</sup> So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. <sup>14</sup> When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. <sup>15</sup> When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, ‘What is it?’ For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, ‘It is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.’”**

So the Lord provided for His people, and let’s drop down to verse 31 in Exodus 16. **“<sup>31</sup> The house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.”** That is the context for our verses. What God then commands is that an omerful (which is slightly more than two quarts) of this manna be kept and be dedicated to God in His presence. This is where we find our key word for “put.” I’ll read Exodus 16, verses 32-34. Listen for the words “place” and “placed.” (Listen for the words place and placed. That is our word, in Exodus 16.32-34.)

**“<sup>32</sup> Then Moses said, ‘This is what the Lord has commanded, ‘Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’ <sup>33</sup> Moses said to Aaron, ‘Take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it, and place it before the Lord to be kept throughout your generations.’ <sup>34</sup> As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept.”**

What is “the Testimony”? The Testimony (capital T) is another name for the ark of the covenant. It was called the Testimony because the ark contained the Law (given by God to Moses). The Law was a testimony of the mind and will of God for Israel. So as the Law was put in the ark, so too was this omerful of manna. And, here is the key: the manna was put there (was placed there) in dedication to God and in the presence of the Lord!

Well, follow me closely now, as the manna was put into the ark in dedication to God and in the presence of the Lord, *so too* was man put into the garden in dedication to God and in the presence of the Lord!

In Genesis 2.15 God was certainly present at the garden! And when God walked the man He had made into the garden, I believe God was dedicating that man to Himself. The first man (and woman) were dedicated to God in the presence of the Lord. So that when we bring together what was said yesterday, God put man in the garden in Eden to provide safety and rest for the man, with what has been said today, man was put into the garden in dedication to God and in the presence of the Lord, we have our second full purpose for why God put man in the garden.

I am praying this is clear to you. If not, here is what I suggest you do. Listen to yesterday and today’s podcast together, with your Bible open. Just carve out 26 minutes of your time this weekend and listen attentively to these from my website [godisministry.org](http://godisministry.org). Whenever I read a passage of Scripture pause the podcast, find that in your Bible, and read it along with me or before I read it. If you will do this, what I have been speaking of will become clear to you. Then, if you have any questions or comments, write to me with those.

I will be *very happy* to hear from you. The email is [mark@godisministry.o-r-g](mailto:mark@godisministry.o-r-g). The mailing address is God Is, PO Box 802, Winchester Massachusetts 01890 and these are available at my website [godisministry.org](http://godisministry.org).

Keen listeners will want to remind me, “You said we would study the words put, cultivate, and keep. So far we have only discussed put.” Great point! That’s right. And on Monday we will come back again to verse 15 and look more closely at cultivate and keep as we learn more purposes for God putting man into the garden in Eden. Please be here Monday for that!

As I leave you for the weekend I remind you that thus far we have two purposes. First, man is to work the garden. Second, God put man in the garden to provide safety and rest for the man and in dedication to God and in the presence of the Lord. And we'll return here when you join me on Monday as we continue to discover who God is and who we are!

---END---