



50 Fascinating Questions & Mysteries of the Bible

*Large-Print Stories of Faith, Wonder & Discovery
for Seniors*

**Easy to Read Aloud • Memory-Care Friendly • Gentle
Conversation Questions**

GOLDEN FAITH PUBLISHING

A Note to the Reader

The Bible is filled with stories we know and love. It is also filled with questions.

Where was the Garden of Eden? What happened to the Ark of the Covenant? Who was the mysterious Melchizedek? What was the Star of Bethlehem?

For centuries, Christians, historians, and Bible scholars have wondered about questions like these. Sometimes the Bible gives us a clear answer. Sometimes it gives us only part of the story. And sometimes it leaves us with a mystery.

This book approaches those mysteries with humility. Where Scripture speaks clearly, we begin with Scripture. When Christians have understood a passage in different ways, those views are shared respectfully. Historical ideas are included when they help us picture the world of the Bible — but theories are never presented as biblical fact. Tradition is named as tradition. Possibility is named as possibility. And when something simply is not known, we are comfortable saying: we do not know.

Faith does not require us to have an answer to every question. Sometimes wonder itself can draw us closer to God.

So open these pages with curiosity. There is nothing to memorize. There will be no test. Simply read, remember, wonder, and enjoy some of the most fascinating questions in all the Bible.

For Families and Caregivers

This book has been written to be especially comfortable for older adults, including those living with memory loss.

Each story stands on its own. A reader does not need to remember the previous chapter to enjoy the next one.

The questions at the end of each story are not quizzes. They are gentle invitations to talk, remember, imagine, and share. If you are reading with someone living with dementia, there is no need to correct an answer or search for the “right” response. A smile, a memory, a feeling, or even a few quiet moments together can be enough.

You do not have to remember the answer to enjoy the wonder.

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Contents

Part One — Mysteries From the Beginning

1. Where Was the Garden of Eden?
2. What Happened to the Tree of Life?
3. Who Was Cain's Wife?
4. What Was the Mark of Cain?
5. What Happened to Enoch?
6. Who Were the Nephilim?
7. Where Did Noah's Ark Come to Rest?
8. What Was the Tower of Babel?
9. Who Was Melchizedek?
10. Where Were Sodom and Gomorrah?
11. What Happened to Lot's Wife?
12. What Did Jacob See in His Dream?
13. Who Wrestled With Jacob?

Part Two — Egypt, Exodus & the Wilderness

14. What Do We Know About Joseph's Egypt?
15. Which Pharaoh Ruled During the Exodus?
16. What Was the Burning Bush?
17. Where Did the Israelites Cross the Sea?
18. What Was the Pillar of Cloud and Fire?
19. What Was Manna?
20. Where Was Mount Sinai?
21. What Were the Urim and Thummim?
22. What Was the Bronze Serpent?
23. Where Is Moses Buried?

Part Three — Promised Land, Kings & Prophets

24. What Happened at Jericho?
25. Where Did Samson's Strength Come From?
26. Who Was the Queen of Sheba?
27. Where Was the Land of Ophir?
28. What Was Inside the Ark of the Covenant?
29. What Happened to the Ark Among the Philistines?
30. What Happened to the Ark of the Covenant?
31. What Happened to Elijah?
32. What Became of the Ten Lost Tribes?

Part Four — Prophets, Poetry & Wisdom

- 33. What Kind of Creature Swallowed Jonah?
- 34. Who Was Job?
- 35. What Were Behemoth and Leviathan?
- 36. What Does the Word “Selah” Mean?
- 37. Who Was the Fourth Man in the Fiery Furnace?
- 38. What Was the Writing on the Wall?
- 39. Why Is God's Name Not Mentioned in Esther?

Part Five — Mysteries Around the Life of Jesus

- 40. What Was the Star of Bethlehem?
- 41. Who Were the Wise Men?
- 42. What Do We Know About Jesus' Childhood?
- 43. What Happened at the Transfiguration?
- 44. Where Was Golgotha?
- 45. What Happened to the Stone at Jesus' Tomb?
- 46. What Happened on the Road to Emmaus?
- 47. What Happened at the Ascension?

Part Six — Mysteries of the Early Church & Beyond

- 48. What Did Paul See in the Third Heaven?
- 49. What Was Paul's “Thorn in the Flesh”?
- 50. Who Wrote the Book of Hebrews?

PART ONE

Mysteries From the Beginning

MYSTERY 1

Where Was the Garden of Eden?

Read in the Bible: *Genesis 2:8-14; 3:22-24*

THE STORY

The Bible begins with a picture of a world made good by God. After creating the heavens and the earth, God formed Adam and placed him in a garden called Eden. It was a place of life and beauty, where trees grew that were pleasant to look at and good for food, and water flowed through the land.

Genesis gives us an unusual detail: a river flowed out of Eden and then divided into four branches. The Bible names them as the Pishon, the Gihon, the Hiddekel — usually identified with the Tigris — and the Euphrates. Adam was given work to do, caring for the garden, and one command: he could eat freely from every tree except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Then God created Eve, and the two lived in the garden without the shame, fear, and sorrow that would later enter the human story.

But they disobeyed God. Afterward they could no longer remain in Eden. God sent them out, and cherubim and a flaming sword guarded the way to the tree of life. And then the Garden of Eden quietly disappears from the story. The Bible never tells us that anyone returned to it, and never gives directions for finding it.

Yet it leaves us with those four rivers. Two names still sound familiar today — the Tigris and the Euphrates — and that has made readers wonder for generations whether Scripture has left us clues to Eden's location.

THE MYSTERY

Where was the Garden of Eden? Genesis names rivers connected with it, including the Tigris and Euphrates.

But no place known today has ever been proven to be the biblical garden. We do not know exactly where Eden was.

WHAT THE BIBLE TELLS US

Genesis says plainly that God planted a garden “eastward in Eden” and placed Adam there.

“And a river went out of Eden to water the garden.” — Genesis 2:10, KJV

The Bible tells us what happened in Eden and why Adam and Eve left. It does not give us enough geography to locate the garden with certainty today.

WHAT CHRISTIANS HAVE BELIEVED

Many Christians have understood Eden as a real place in humanity's earliest history. Because Genesis mentions the Tigris and Euphrates, some have looked for it in or near ancient Mesopotamia. Others suggest the ancient landscape changed so much that its location can no longer be found.

Many also emphasize Eden's deeper meaning: it is the place where humanity enjoyed God's presence, received His gifts, and then lost that peaceful fellowship through disobedience. Christians can agree about the message of Genesis while differing about whether Eden can still be found on a map.

WHAT HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY CAN TELL US

The Tigris and Euphrates are real rivers tied to ancient Mesopotamia. The Pishon and Gihon are far less certain, and researchers have proposed locations from Armenia to Arabia to the Persian Gulf. None has been proven, and archaeology has never uncovered a site that can be identified as the Garden of Eden.

WHAT REMAINS A MYSTERY

We do not know where Eden was, or whether its landscape could still be recognized today. Genesis

gives us tantalizing details — but not enough to solve the mystery. Perhaps that is part of why the garden still speaks to something deep in us: a longing for a home of peace we have never stopped remembering.

A MOMENT TO WONDER

What do you imagine it would have felt like to walk through a peaceful garden untouched by fear or sorrow?

A MEMORY TO SHARE

Was there ever a garden, park, farm, or quiet outdoor place where you felt especially at peace?

A SHORT PRAYER

Creator God, thank You for the beauty of the world You have made. Help us notice Your goodness in the peaceful places around us, and remember that we are always held in Your care. Amen.

MYSTERY 2

What Happened to the Tree of Life?

Read in the Bible: *Genesis 2:8-9; 3:22-24; Revelation 22:1-2*

THE STORY

In the middle of the Garden of Eden stood a remarkable tree. Genesis calls it the tree of life. The Bible introduces it quietly: God caused many beautiful trees to grow in Eden, and two of them received special names — the tree of life, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

At first, Adam and Eve lived with access to all the garden's abundance. Then came their disobedience. They ate from the one tree God had told them not to eat from, and their relationship with God, and their life in Eden, changed.

Genesis then tells us something striking. God said that humanity must not be allowed to take from the tree of life and live forever. Adam and Eve were sent out, and at the entrance God placed cherubim and a flaming sword “to keep the way of the tree of life.” Then the story moves on. We never read that anyone found the tree, that it was cut down, or that it died. The Bible simply leaves it behind the guarded gate.

And yet the image of the tree of life does not vanish from Scripture forever. On the last pages of the Bible, in Revelation, a tree of life appears once more — beside the river of life, its leaves for the healing of the nations. So the mystery is not only about where the tree went. It is about the life that comes from God: lost near the beginning, and promised again at the end.

THE MYSTERY

What happened to the tree of life after Adam and Eve left Eden? The Bible tells us its way was guarded. It

does not tell us what physically became of the tree afterward. We do not know.

WHAT THE BIBLE TELLS US

Genesis clearly places the tree in Eden.

“And the tree of life also in the midst of the garden.” — Genesis 2:9, KJV

After the disobedience, God kept Adam and Eve from returning to it — Genesis 3 says cherubim guarded “the way of the tree of life.” The Bible gives no later account of anyone reaching that original tree.

WHAT CHRISTIANS HAVE BELIEVED

Many Christians understand the tree as a real part of Eden and also a powerful symbol of life with God. Some believe it had a special, God-given role in sustaining human life; others focus less on how it worked and more on what it represented — life received as God's gift.

Most agree on the deeper point: we cannot find immortality for ourselves. Life ultimately comes from God, and what was lost in the garden is offered again through Him.

WHAT HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY CAN TELL US

Ancient cultures often pictured sacred trees or “trees of life” in their art and stories, which shows how powerful a symbol the tree of life was in the ancient world. But that does not tell us what became of the tree in Genesis, and no discovery has ever identified it.

WHAT REMAINS A MYSTERY

We do not know what kind of tree it was, how its connection with life worked, or what physically became of it once Eden was closed. But the Bible's message is gentle and clear: the story does not end at a locked gate. It ends beside a living tree.

A MOMENT TO WONDER

When you picture the tree of life, what do you imagine it looked and felt like beneath its branches?

A MEMORY TO SHARE

Was there a special tree from your childhood or earlier life that you still remember?

A SHORT PRAYER

God of life, thank You that every good gift begins with You. Keep our hearts close to You, and fill us with the hope of Your everlasting love. Amen.

MYSTERY 3

Who Was Cain's Wife?

Read in the Bible: *Genesis 4:1-17; 5:4*

THE STORY

Adam and Eve had two sons whose stories are told early in Genesis. The first was Cain, who worked the ground; the second was Abel, who kept sheep. In time both brothers brought offerings to God. Abel's was accepted, but Cain's was not regarded in the same way, and Cain became angry.

God warned Cain not to let sin rule over him. But Cain did not listen. He took Abel into the field and killed his brother — one of the saddest moments in the opening pages of the Bible. When God confronted him, Cain was judged: the land would no longer yield to him as before, and he would become a wanderer. Afraid that someone might kill him, Cain received a protective sign from God, and then went to live in the land of Nod, east of Eden.

And suddenly we read something that has puzzled people for centuries: Cain had a wife. “Cain knew his wife; and she conceived.” But where did she come from? The Bible had named only Adam, Eve, Cain, and Abel.

THE MYSTERY

Who was Cain's wife, and where did she come from? Genesis tells us that Cain married, but it never identifies his wife or explains how she was related to him. We do not know her name.

WHAT THE BIBLE TELLS US

“And Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bare Enoch.” — Genesis 4:17, KJV

The key clue comes a chapter later, where Genesis tells us Adam had many more children than the ones it names:

“And he begat sons and daughters.” — Genesis 5:4, KJV

The Bible never specifically calls Cain's wife his sister, niece, or any other relation.

WHAT CHRISTIANS HAVE BELIEVED

A traditional explanation is that Cain married a close relative — a sister, or perhaps a niece from the growing family. If Adam and Eve were the first couple and their family grew over many years, there would have been daughters and later generations simply not named in the short account.

The important thing is to tell an explanation apart from the words of Scripture. The Bible says Adam and Eve had sons and daughters. It does not identify Cain's wife.

WHAT HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY CAN TELL US

Archaeology cannot identify Cain's wife, and no reliable record outside Genesis tells us who she was. Ancient genealogies routinely left many family members unnamed — especially those not central to the story — so the absence of her name is not unusual for an ancient text.

WHAT REMAINS A MYSTERY

We do not know her name, exactly how she was related to Cain, or how old either of them was when they married. She steps into a single verse and is gone. What Scripture wants us to see is not her identity, but that the human family was growing and God's story was moving forward.