

A Guide to the Garden



Growth, plants, agriculture, roots, trees, fruits and gardens feature prominently in Scripture. In Holy Week we are reminded of the events in the **Garden of Gethsemane** - located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, the place where all 4 Gospels agree, was the location of Jesus' agony and arrest. The place where Judas placed the kiss of betrayal on his cheek.

Golgotha - the place of Jesus' tomb is also a garden. We don't often think of the name 'Golgotha' as being a garden - but it is - (John 19:41-42) -

"41 At the place where Jesus was crucified, there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb, in which no one had ever been laid.42 Because it was the Jewish day of Preparation and since the tomb was nearby, they laid Jesus there".

Jesus is returned to lay in a Garden - Jesus 'the second Adam' as Paul determines (Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:22, 44-49), returns to a garden, a glimpse of a 'returning' of that which was exiled under the first Adam - the **Garden of Eden** - the **first garden** - a place of beauty and creation, in which humanity MET God - a place where you could walk with God the Creator in the evening. (Genesis 2:8-9)

And the **last garden** - **The Garden of Heaven** (Revelation 2:1-22) - a river, a tree of life, fruit and leaves for the healing of the nations. Indeed, what we discover in this place - IS healing! And it is to be found

in a garden.

The **Garden of Eden** reminds us of the power and beauty of God's creation. And how fragile is humanities dedication to it, to God and to goodness.

The **Garden of Gethsemane** reminds us that even in places of beauty and rest, bad things can happen to good people, and people, even those who appear to walk closely with Jesus can still betray Him and others.

The **Garden of Golgotha** reminds us that even in death, we are surrounded by that which lives. The simplest blade of grass, the bird overhead, the olive tree by the road side, those who weep. Today we may visit a Churchyard, Cemetery or Garden of Remembrance and find that nature and death hold each others hands very gently. Bringing a peace that passes all understanding.

And finally, The **Garden of Heaven** - located in the New City - where Eden is restored and all things are made new - and the nations are healed and life flows.

It is fascinating that humanity begins, concludes and continues in a garden. May we be reminded of the importance of sitting in the garden this Easter. And if we are in a place of sadness and Golgotha, may we be reminded that it was only a resting place for our Lord, just as it is for our loved ones. The river flows and we are invited to paddle in it - when it is our turn to dance, or run, or sing into the arms of our Saviour Jesus.

May your Easter be one of Blessing - and a maybe a little gardening too.

Love JO x



