

# Rooted in God's Earth: Trees in Scripture



## **SESSION 1**

### **The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge (Part 1)**

**Monday 24 June 2024**

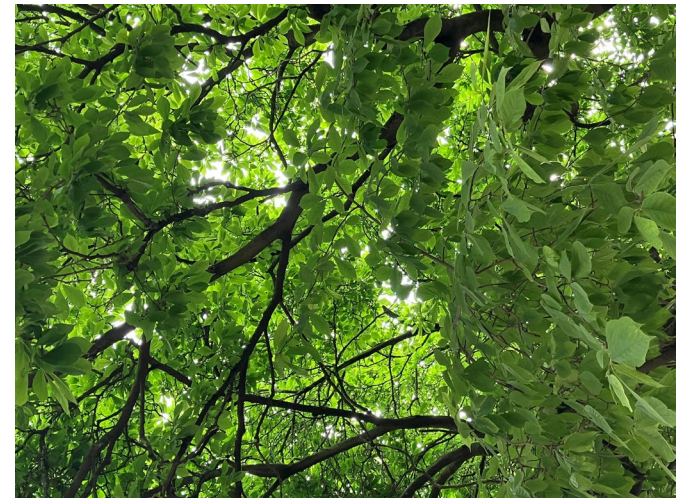






<sup>8</sup>And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. <sup>9</sup>Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

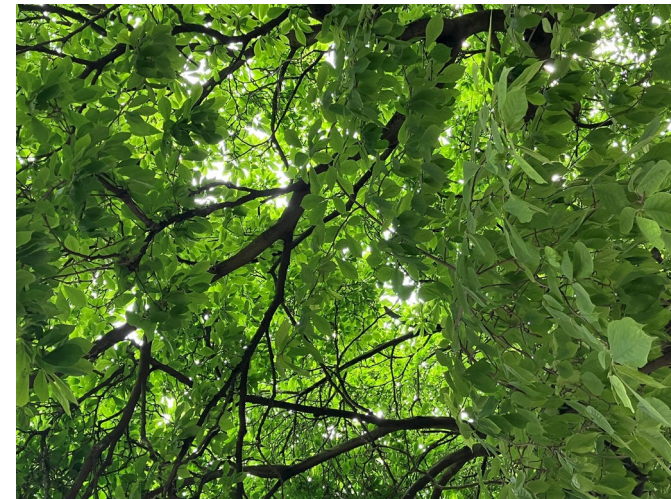
<sup>10</sup>A river flows out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it divides and becomes four branches. <sup>11</sup>The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; <sup>12</sup>and the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. <sup>13</sup>The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one that flows around the whole land of Cush. <sup>14</sup>The name of the third river is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.



15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. <sup>16</sup>And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; <sup>17</sup>but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.'



18 Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' <sup>19</sup>So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. <sup>20</sup>The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man<sup>\*</sup> there was not found a helper as his partner. <sup>21</sup>So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. <sup>22</sup>And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man.



<sup>23</sup>Then the man said,  
'This at last is bone of my bones  
and flesh of my flesh;  
this one shall be called Woman,\*  
for out of Man\* this one was taken.'  
<sup>24</sup>Therefore a man leaves his father  
and his mother and clings to his  
wife, and they become one  
flesh. <sup>25</sup>And the man and his wife  
were both naked, and were not  
ashamed.



*It is not good that the adam is alone; I will make a mighty helper correlating to it.*

Genesis 2.18

(Transl. Wilda C. Gafney)

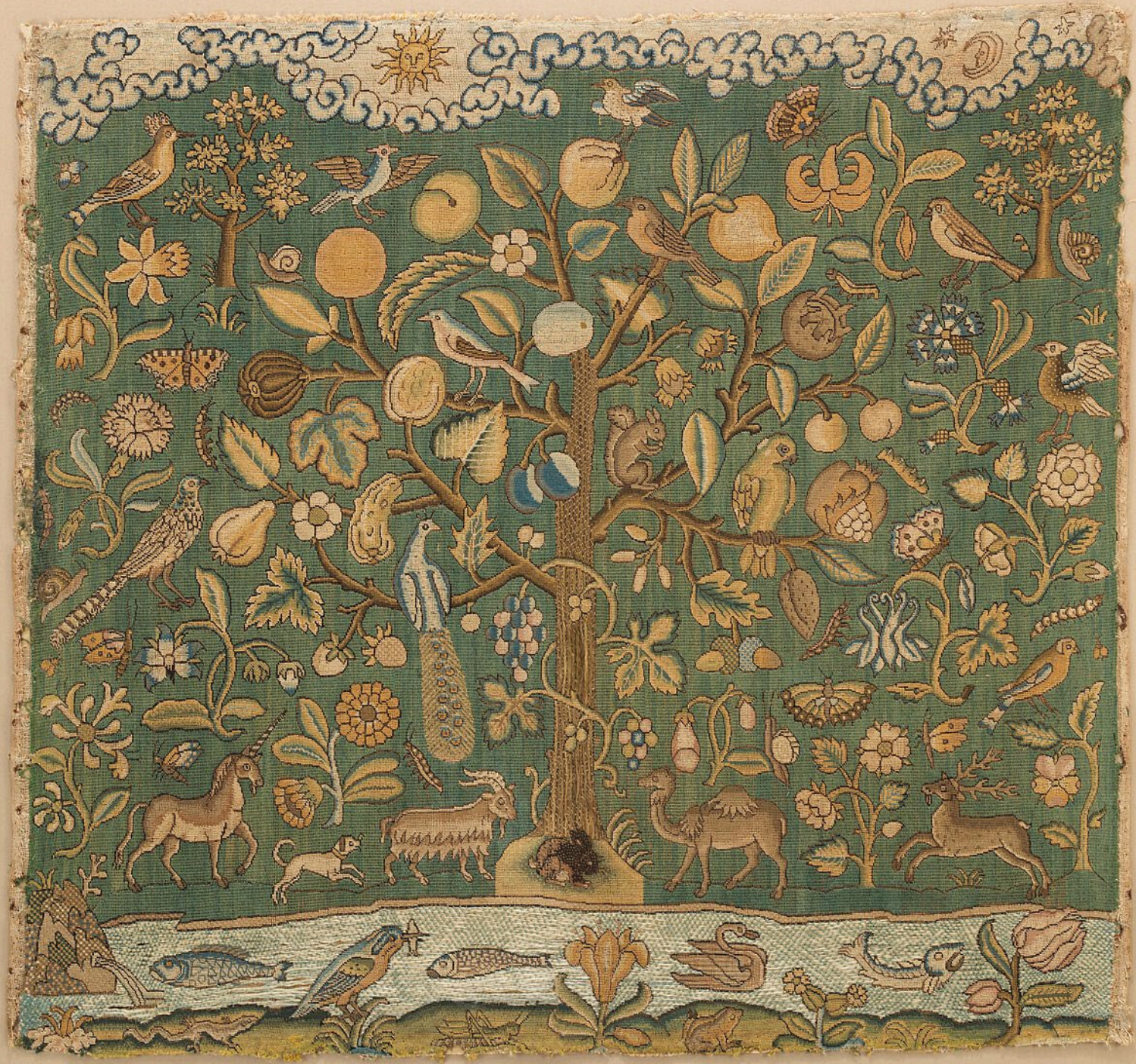
*'I have translated the adam as 'it' because 'singular and plural, bearing male and female in a single body, transcends the masculine singular.'*

*'...the culmination of creation, the creation of woman from 'ha'adam', 'the human' created from the 'humus' or the 'earthling' created from the earth...'adam' often means all of humanity.'*

(Wilda C. Gafney)

*'God puts the creature to sleep and divides it in half. This idea stems from rabbinic exegesis; Rabbi Samuel ben Nachman taught that God split the earth-coloured 'adam' into two equal parts. I think of the division as something like mitosis in cell division.'*

(Wilda C. Gafney)







Blessed are you whom they told among  
the trees,

'We have found Him who finds all,  
Who came to find Adam who was lost  
And in the garment of light to return  
him to Eden.'

The world in the symbol of the shade of  
the fig tree

Is belaboured as if in heavy shadow.

From beneath the fig tree as a symbol  
of the world, you emerged to meet our  
Saviour.'

Very sad was the Tree of Life  
That saw Adam hidden from him.  
Into the virgin earth he sank and was buried,  
But he arose and shone forth from Golgotha.  
Humankind, like a bird pursued,  
Took refuge on it so it would arrive at its home.  
The persecutor is persecuted,  
And the persecuted doves rejoice in paradise.

(Ephrem the Syrian – c.306-373)



