Work Given as a Source of Happiness

Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. Genesis 2:15, NKJV.

God placed human beings under law, as an indispensable condition of their very existence. They were subjects of the divine government, and there can be no government without law. God might have created humans without the power to transgress His law; He might have withheld the hand of Adam from touching the forbidden fruit; but in that case people would have been, not free moral agents, but mere automatons. Without freedom of choice, their obedience would not have been voluntary, but forced. There could have been no development of character. Such a course would have been contrary to God's plan in dealing with the inhabitants of other worlds. It would have been unworthy of humans as intelligent beings, and would have sustained Satan's charge of God's arbitrary rule....

The home of our first parents was to be a pattern for other homes as their children should go forth to occupy the earth. That home, beautified by the hand of God Himself, was not a gorgeous palace. Men and women, in their pride, delight in magnificent and costly edifices, and glory in the works of their own hands; but God placed Adam and Eve in a garden. This was their dwelling. The blue heavens were its dome; the earth, with its delicate flowers and carpet of living green, was its floor; and the leafy branches of the goodly trees were its canopy. Its walls were hung with the most magnificent adornings—the handiwork of the great Master Artist.

In the surroundings of the holy pair was a lesson for all time—that true happiness is found, not in the indulgence of pride and luxury, but in communion with God through His created works. If people would give less attention to the artificial, and would cultivate greater simplicity, they would come far nearer to answering the purpose of God in their creation. Pride and ambition are never satisfied, but those who are truly wise will find substantial and elevating pleasure in the sources of enjoyment that God has placed within the reach of all.

To the dwellers in Eden was committed the care of the garden, "to dress it and to keep it." Their occupation was not wearisome, but pleasant and invigorating. God appointed labor as a blessing to our first parents, to occupy their minds, to strengthen their bodies, and to develop their faculties.—Patriarchs and Prophets, 49, 50.