

PAPYRUS

**RODEF SHALOM BIBLICAL BOTANICAL GARDEN
4905 5TH AVE. PITTSBURGH, PA 15213**

Paradise on Fifth Avenue



An Introduction to Heaven

Come and visit

Take a tour

Enjoy a concert

Meet a friend

July 2015 Vol.28 No 1

Walter Jacob, Editor

**Open-FREE-Handicapped
Access— Free Parking**

10 am—2 pm

Sun—Thurs

12—1 pm Sat

7-9 pm. Wed

**Free tours by
appointment**

412-621-6566

**This special exhibit
accompanies our
ongoing display**

**PLANTS OF
THE BIBLE**

GOING TO HEAVEN ?

The biblical account of humanity began with a perfect Garden of Eden from which humanity was exiled through its own fault. The ultimate goal of humanity was a return to this state of perfection, the Garden of Eden - a grand hope. Warlike nations were unlikely to reach this goal. Good nations have never existed, but good individuals surround us and should reach this idyll at least as a final resting place. The fond hope of a perfect world became a peaceful Garden of Eden, an idyllic after life as perfect as the Garden of Eden for Adam and Eve. Judaism has not done as much to develop these ideas. Philosophers and mystics have dealt with them, but never given them as important a place in their systems. Christianity and Islam have made them central in their philosophies and theologies. They have been made vivid and reached the broader population through masterpieces of Christian and Islamic art. Our exhibits have translated those images of heaven into two miniature scenes.

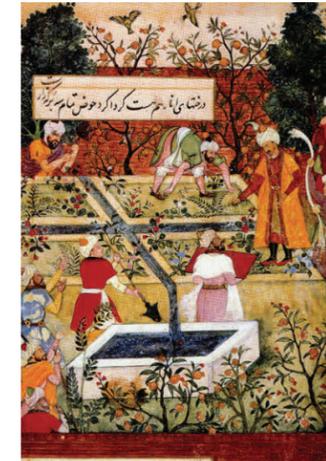
The evolution of the biblical tale of the Garden of Eden to a heavenly Paradise is a vivid expression of the universal hope that our final resting place will be better than what we now have. It also expressed the longing for ultimate justice, a place where the wrongs of this world would be corrected and those who deserved a reward for a life well lived would receive it while others were punished. A heavenly eternal garden also unites the biblical concept of our beginnings with our ultimate hope. Humanity enjoyed that blissful Garden of Eden for a very short time, but it would be ours for eternity. Such thoughts provide a circle of existence on a philosophical level, and in a very human and personal way. As these concepts with many variations became well established in the three monotheistic religions, they form another common thread

A RENAISSANCE CHRISTIAN VIEW



This charming painting only a little larger than a picture book is a scene of paradise. It might seem a bit crowded for our idea of eternal life, but pleasant enough for those who like company. Several saints, the Virgin Mary, and others have been placed into this small garden created by low cut boxwood surrounded by rose bushes. Behind that lie a variety of common flowers as well as bushes and in the distance, hints of fruit trees. The individuals show by their clothing that this is an upper-class paradise

A SIXTEENTH CENTURY ISLAMIC VIEW



The Prophet himself promised an afterlife of Paradise; he spoke of its setting as a perfect garden beautifully designed. In the desert Near East, the emphasis was on water and plants evergreens and palms needed minimal irrigation. As Islam rapidly spread into temperate and tropical climates, the image of a paradise garden became lush as shown in India, East Asia, and Africa south of the Sahara.

Programs

Wednesday, June 3 2.15 p.m.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GARDEN

Marian Finegold

Wednesday, July 1 - 12.15 p.m.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GARDEN

Arlyn Gilboa

Wednesday, August 5 - 12.15 p.m.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GARDEN

Gabi Dinman

Wednesday, September 2 12.15 p.m.

INTRODUCTION TO THE GARDEN

Phillis Ochs

Music

Thursday, June 18 - 6.30 p.m.

ARLO AL DO

Thursday, July 16 - 6.30 p.m.

BROOKE ANNIBALLE

Thursday, August 20 - 6.30 p.m.

BOILERMAKERS QUARTET

OPEN TO ALL

NO ADMISSION CHARGE

FREE PARKING

Major Other Religions

Hinduism

The Hindu religion represents a way of life and a broad range of philosophies; there is no rigid belief system. It is the third largest world religion after Christianity and Islam. The ultimate goal is freedom from the cycle of life, perhaps accompanied by union with the divine. It emphasizes moral behavior in this world and does not stress an afterlife as rebirth in another cycle of life is the common human destiny. The range of its philosophies is very broad so reward and punishment for wrongdoings play a role, but not tied to an afterlife.

Buddhism

Buddhism, the other great religion of ancient India and China and much of southeast Asia is not concerned with a permanent afterlife though it is posited as existing. The ultimate goal is the release from the cycle of life. Individuals may go through several stages of elevated life. Those who have attained Enlightenment (Nirvana) and are called Bhodhisatvas have reached a higher stage and may exist in a different kind of world, but this reflects only a new stage of life. They may remain there or choose to return to our world and help others to the next stage of existence