

*“And the name of the third river is Hiddekel: that is it which goeth toward the east of Assyria. And the fourth river is Euphrates.*

*And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to **dress** it and to keep it.*

*And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat:” (Genesis 2:14 – 16)*

**Dress-** Why don't we take some time with this word and put it in its proper perspective? Going forward, it might have a significant change as to how we hear and obey God's word. Incidentally, in the Genesis account, this word has nothing to do with the dress a woman wears. Nor does it pertain to how one dresses a wound. Nevertheless, according to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, it does have a wide range of meanings. These include: to make or set straight; to arrange (as troops) in a straight line and at proper intervals; to prepare for use or service; *specifically*: to prepare for cooking or for the table: *dress* a salad; to add decorative details or accessories to: embellish; to put clothes on: *dress* a child; to provide with clothing: feed and *dress* a growing family; to apply dressings or medication: *dress* a wound; to kill and prepare for market or for consumption — often used with *out*; **to cultivate, to tend, especially**: to apply manure or fertilizer to: *dress* a field; as well as to put through a finishing process; *especially*: to trim and smooth the surface of (as lumber or stone). Based on our review thus far, it seems that the word cultivate and tend comes close to God's expectation.

In the Strong Concordance, the Hebrew word is **abad**, Strong's #5647, a primitive root meaning to work (in any sense); by implication, to serve; (set a) work, be wrought, and interestingly, worshipper. The BlueLetter Bible dictionary shows that #5647, abad, is used a total of 290 times. Noteworthy is the fact that it is used as "keep" only two times (Gen. 2:15 & Deut. 28:39). Conversely, it shows up as "serve" in 227 passages, fifteen times as "do," nine times as "till," five as "servant," five as "worshippers," four times pertaining to the worship of Baal, as in 2 Kings 10:19, 21, 22, 23 and a few times using the words service, labour, and ear(ed) as in Deut. 21:4 and Isa. 30:24. Let us take a closer at "serve" which is employed 78.3% of the time. It means not only to serve a single person but it also speaks of a nation who serves their kings and princesses (Jud. 9:28 & 1 Sam. 11:1).

As men and women of God, we are to serve our creator as well as worship, and yield reverence and obedience to the LORD (Exod. 3:12 & 4:23). What is the message(s) being communicated by this word? God did not put us on this earth to sit and do nothing. Men especially are to be busy as servants, tending to the Lord's work, serving, worshipping, and labouring no less than six days of the week. This is definitely one of the 10 commandments given to Israel at Mount Sinai (Exod. 20:9-10). Please note that in the book of Mark, we find Christ getting into the thick of serving. It is filled with his miracles and acts of service

where he is healing people of divers diseases, casting out devils and even cleansing a man with leprousy. The reader is encouraged to conduct a more extensive study of this key word as we have only scraped the surface.

**Source:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, BlueLetter Bible Dictionary, and Wilhelm Gesenius Lexicon, page 738 (Free E-book download). All of these resources are available via the Internet.

