

## THE WONDERFUL GARDENS OF HEAVEN

*Story by Gertrude Nelson Diem*

Do you know that every time you listen to a story from the Word you are planting living seeds in a garden? You are planting brightly colored flowers and green trees in your own garden in heaven. And when you go to the Other World you will see this garden and live in it.

The angels all live in gardens, and so do the little children who have gone to heaven to grow up. These boys and girls play in gardens full of flowers which are much more beautiful than any that you could ever imagine. There are magic flowers, and each one is alive and full of fun. When the children come into the garden to play, all the flowers wake up and shine joyously like tiny rainbows, and dance in the breeze.

There are paths which wind in and out among the flower beds. Over some of the paths are branches of laurel woven together to make walls which meet in an arch over the children's heads. The arch is high enough for the tallest children to walk underneath, and it bends down lower when a baby is walking through. The branches of these arbors are covered with tender green leaves and sweet smelling flowers. There are also many kinds of fruit, and the boys and girls may reach up and pick them whenever they wish. Perhaps the children have games of Hide and Seek behind, the leafy walls of branches.

Once there were some men in the Other World who had never seen an angel garden. They wanted very much to see one, for they had heard that the gardens of heaven are more beautiful than any which grow in this world. So an angel came to them and said, "Come with me and I will show you the garden of our Prince."

Then they went with the angel, and at first they saw only one tree. It was the most wonderful tree that they had ever seen. Its fruit was of pure shining gold, and all its leaves were of silver with edges of greenest emeralds. And the tree sent forth a very bright light. The Angel said to the men, "This is the tree in the midst of our heavenly garden and we call it the Tree of Life. Go nearer and your eyes will be opened and you will see a garden of trees."

This they did, and their eyes were opened, and they saw other trees heavily laden with delicious fruit. Around and around stood the trees in great unending circles, each turning its choicest fruit toward the Tree of Life in the center." branches met as if they were joining hands.

The Angel and his companions walked along the grassy lawn between the rows of trees, or stopped to rest upon seats formed of interlacing branches. As they walked, they admired the flowers which grew here and there in these little square plots of earth. But most of all they admired the great trees which stood so closely together on their right hand, and on their left. There were the silver-green olive trees, and the vines bowing low with clusters of purple grapes. Then came trees which were covered with fragrant blossoms, and last of all the trees whose wood workmen love to use. At the very outmost edge was the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

The men who saw this garden said one to another that never had they beheld such beauty. Hearing this their Angel Guide promised to take them to other gardens; gardens of colored lights and rainbow fountains and of brightly glowing lamps. Then the men gave thanks and said, "Surely the love of God is great, for He gives such abundance of beauty to those who love His Word!"