

## **Dr. Meredith Kline, Kingdom Prologue, Lecture 12**

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### **Review of the Various Covenants**

Remind me at the break that the articles are available including the copies of “Covenant Theology under Attack.” There were several of them that were available last week. Maybe some of you already have it. But those who don’t can pick this up. In addition to that, tonight I gave Greg a copy for you of another article. In fact, I’ll sort of start with that tonight by way of picking up where we left off in continuing. We analyzed the covenants in terms of the creator’s covenant of works with Adam, and then the Father’s covenant of works with the Son contemplated as the second Adam and the fulfillment by which Son qualifies himself to be the mediator of the third covenant namely the Lord’s Covenant of Grace with the church. So that was the big overall arrangement of things. Then looking at the Covenant of Grace which the Son of God is the Lord of and he’s the mediator of that covenant from the fall to the consummation.

We noted that there was a continuity throughout. There was also underneath the Covenant of Common Grace. We’re not as much concerned with that now, but we’re especially concerned with the Covenant of Saving Grace. We then saw that there were various subdivisions of this Covenant of Grace leading up to the New Covenant preceded by the Old Covenant, preceded by the Abrahamic Covenant and the earlier features like the Noahic Covenant, and so on. So there’s a whole series of sub-administrations of this one Covenant of Grace.

Now we especially then focused on the problems that arise in connection with the law, with the Torah Covenant, with the Mosaic Covenant. So here’s Moses and the Old Covenant. We noticed that whereas the way of salvation is the way of grace, this way that individuals get to heaven is consistently through grace. That’s true of the Mosaic Covenant as well. That’s the bottom line, that’s the fundamental ground structure of the Mosaic Covenant. Jews during this period, like Christians today or like Abraham before, we’re saved in terms of a faith in Christ to come. So yes there’s only one way of salvation; that was true then.

However, the complexity is then that there was under the law this arrangement whereby this covenant community, which existed all along and which normally did not take the form of an outward earthly nation, it didn't have a geopolitical organization. At this point it did and so we now have an anticipation of heaven, which is an external copy of the kingdom of God. There is an anticipation of that in Israel so that here we have an earthly theocracy. We were just talking about the Exodus, as a prefiguration of the Messianic salvation and so on. Well hear the whole experience of Israel in the Holy Land was a prefiguration of the heavenly kingdom.

It is precisely in connection with that then that we can then suggest that this second layer up here on top of the ground foundational grace level. Here is this typological kingdom, and the national election of Israel to be distinguished from the individual election of people to heaven. The national election of Israel is that they may enjoy this typological kingdom and then the third ingredient that goes along with the national election and the typological kingdom is the principle of works. So it is by works then that the corporate Israel, the national election, will be able to enjoy, and to have tenure within that land. So it was like Adam under his covenant of works that's sort of is recapitulated here in the experience of Israel. They too are in their paradise land, but to stay there, they, like Adam, if he's going to stay in his paradise land, has to fulfill his Covenant of Works. Israel if they're going to stay in their paradise land must fulfill a works arrangement too. That's our contention.

We looked then at a whole series of passages in Paul--Romans 10, Galatians 3, Galatians 4, and 2 Corinthians 3--and as well as back in Jeremiah 31. All of which indicated that there was a difference then between the New Covenant represented by Paul's gospel of justification by faith, which was a principle of grace. There was a difference between that and what was going on in this Old Covenant which was a breakable arrangement. Paul tells us the law is not of faith, and so on. So we went through all of that.

### **The Works Arrangement: Rom. 5**

Now all I wanted to do was add just one more passage to the arsenal of our arguments, exegetical arguments, demonstrating that this was a works arrangement. That's an article that I wrote from years back in 1991, I guess, in a journal you all

familiar with, *The Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* or *JETS*. So back in 1991 I wrote an article there on Romans 5 verses 13 and 14. We're just going to take a quick look at that because we have to keep moving. But I just wanted to bring it to your attention and for your closer study. Greg will make copies of this article and then have them available by next week to distribute among you.

But I'll just suggest then the line of argument. You might want to open then to Romans 5:13-14. Although unfortunately the meaning of the passage gets fogged up in some of these translations especially the NIV is not helpful. I hope maybe someone else has another version or two. What other versions are floating around here besides the NIV? We can see what that says [NASB]. Just in anticipating, here's what I suggest is going on here. In Romans 5 Paul gives us a panoramic overview, the kind of thing that we've been trying to do here precisely, the series of covenants and how they relate to one another. Romans 5 is the great overview of that kind that Paul provides for us.

Now you're familiar with Romans 5 along with 1 Corinthians 15, two passages in which the two Adams scheme is brought up which is so important. So at the beginning and at the end of Romans 5 you find developing that. So there was the first Adam back there before the Fall. Then there is Christ, the second Adam, down here at the end. He is emphasizing that Adam was, he uses the word "type" actually, Adam was the type of Christ with respect to the role that he occupied in terms of the divine government. Namely, that in each of these two cases we have that principle of the "one and the many." The activities of the federal head are imputed to the many whom he represents. So that's the principle that is present in both cases. It is so very important for our whole thing about imputation, the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us and so on. Like in the case of Adam, the emphasis then that in Adam, in his sin, we all then sinned and sin and death entered into the whole world as a result of his activity. Then over against that, Christ provides the solution for the problems of sin and death. So life and righteousness come now as the gift of grace. That's the big overall teaching of Romans 5.

Then in the middle of the thing here, Paul takes this chunk of time between the fall and the coming of Christ, the New Covenant, and he divides it into two parts. So

you get a big four paneled mural you might say. Here's a big mural of all of history in four panels: one, two, three, four; and the dividing line here is Moses and the Law. A certain state of affairs existed from Adam. Adam is conceived of as having fallen. So from Adam to Moses, from Adam until the Law such and such was the situation. Then, of course, why does he put his *terminus ad quem*? Why does he stop there? Clearly because that was a turning point, and something changed so that there was a different situation after that point and what he was saying is that in this period there was something going on that was different than what was going on before with Adam and different also than what was going on once you come to Moses and the Law.

Now the title of my article is "Gospel until the Law." My suggestion is that what Paul was saying is that it was in this period from the fall of Adam up until Moses, namely, in your Bible the material covered the book of Genesis, the history of Patriarchs, especially Abraham. What is highlighted by the Abrahamic Covenant in the midst of all of this and in the case of Abraham, of course, he believed in God or, as I suggested in an article some years ago, that it could be translated "And Abraham said 'Amen' to God." In making of covenant one's consent to the arrangements could be expressed by "Amen." I think that actually is what's being described there in Genesis 15:6. Abraham heard God's covenant promises and Abraham says, "Amen" which is the way he verbalized his faith. God then reckoned that to him for righteousness. Now that is the Gospel then. That was the Gospel operating in this particular period in the line of covenant. This happened until Moses, until the Law. Of course, the clear implication is that something happened then after Moses and the Law that was different. That was that the principle of works was introduced.

Paul is doing the same sort of thing in these verses that we have seen him do elsewhere. He looks at this old Israelite situation here. Let's set it up the way we did again before like a square and the bottom line is individual grace. But the top line is works. When Paul looks at this Old Covenant, he sort of ignores the bottom line and just deals with it sometimes in terms of the top line, the works arrangement, and says that the law is not of faith. The law at that level is not of faith. That's what he's doing again in this passage. So he's saying that the things up until then are representative of the gospel.

But by implication then this is what you'll find if you studied the commentaries on this thing that they simply do not do justice to the fact that Paul terminates the thing here. Why does he say until the law and until Moses? There's something clearly that changes at that point and that's why he says that and that's something the commentaries seem to ignore.

### **Romans 5:13 and 14 and the grace/works/grace/works panels**

Now just quickly looking at the verses, let's hear--who had the NASV? Would you read the verses 13 and 14 of Romans 5? "for until the Law sin was in the world." Alright, so until the law, sin was, as a result of Adam's sin, sin was in the world and as he goes on it becomes clear that he's wanting to emphasize that sin was in the whole world even in the midst of the people who were elect in Christ. So what he's leading up to is what Christ has done. So he's emphasizing the need. There was a big need even among the elect, among the covenant people, for the work of Christ. That's what he was getting at. Sin was in the whole world even in that the line of Patriarchs described in Genesis.

Student reads NASV: "but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam, who is a type of Him who was to come."

Kline continues: Sin was in the world all during this period. Let's just focus on Abraham. Abraham was a sinner and Abraham was one of those who was dying. The whole story of the Patriarchs is right from the beginning on even when it's giving those genealogies where people live for so long and yet he died and he died and he died. See, Paul's looking at history where death is prevailing in all the world. You read the Patriarch narratives and the emphasis on death is all the way through there. Genesis even ends with a coffin in Egypt with Joseph and so on.

Yet, although sin was prevailing and as a result of that everyone was mortal and dying even the covenant people. Yet read that phrase again, "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." Now if you read that anywhere else, in fact, if you just read in the preceding chapter in Romans 4 that kind of language that "apart from the law" you know, "there is no transgression." What is it saying? It's saying that there's a works

arrangement, as in the case of Adam, where your sins are imputed to you. But if you're under a grace arrangement, your sins are imputed to Christ. So apart from the law, which was before this period, in Adam, it recurs again under the Mosaic covenant. If you're in an arrangement that is not a works arrangement, a law arrangement, then you're under a grace arrangement. This is just saying negatively, if you're under grace, if you're not under law, if you're under grace then sin is not imputed. It is not imputed to you because your sin, Abraham's sin was imputed to Christ. His righteousness is imputed to you. So that phrase is a wonderful description of the gospel. It is the same kind of language that Paul uses everywhere else when he's talking apart from the law there being no law, that describes the order of faith.

Go ahead. "Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam." Now that's much better than the NIV which throws in some language there. The text says that sin and death were reigning during this period even among the Patriarchs. So he's emphasizing, that death was prevailing. Christ was needed, desperately needed, even by his own people because death was prevailing over them, even over those who had not sinned under a covenant of works as Adam did but had sinned under an order of grace. So they were headed for heaven, but their sins were imputed to Christ. They were headed for heaven, but meanwhile death was also reigning over them who had not sinned as Adam did. Adam sinned under a works arrangement. They did not sin under a works arrangement. They sinned under a grace arrangement. So their sins were forgiven yet death was prevailing over them. How desperately the work of Christ was needed. So that, in a nut shell, shows that in that passage there's a lot more that you'd want to read the article for.

The NIV goofs this thing up by trying to interpret the force of that language. They didn't sin the way Adam sinned. Instead of understanding that in terms as I just did that he sinned under a works arrangement and they were under a gospel arrangement, the NIV throws in the language of: "Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even those who did not sin," and then completely without any basis of the Greek text throws in, "by breaking a command." As if, there were no commands around for them to break, which is nonsense. There

were, of course, when they sinned there were all kinds of commands around in the Patriarchal age. So that definitely is not what the text is saying. Well, there's another passage then for your consideration. It is very difficult and these two verses have these little parentheses in the arguments and have occasionally a lot of discussion. But I think properly conceived of they show that history has been one great cycle of works, grace, works, grace. Four panels on this mural of all of history. It ties in then with all the other passages we been reading.

### **Covenant of Works with Adam**

Now then from this general overview of the covenants and with special focus on the key problem for us in our ministry, and our teaching, and as well as our personal experience of salvation, the problems of work and grace. Now we pick up our *Kingdom Prologues* and start to fill in detail on what we have just sketched in the big overview. Of course, what we're going to start with is this first covenant, this creator's Covenant of Works, with the first Adam. And in doing so, if you look ahead in your *Kingdom Prologues*—by the way, I hope that you are reading ahead so that when you come to class you have read beforehand and given some thought to what we will be dealing with in class. But if you have looked ahead, then you'll see that what I've done in analyzing this covenant of works with the first Adam is to utilize the main subdivisions in that treaty form we discussed in the Ancient Near Eastern treaties. We said that they began with a title or a **preamble**. Then they have a **historical prologue**. These two together constitute the claims. Here our arrangements whereby a great king who imposes his constitution, his arrangements, on a vassal, on a servant king. So we can speak of it as **suzerain-vassal covenant** or a lord-servant covenant. Of course, that's very appropriate for what God is doing with his people. He is the suzerain, he is the lord. They are the servant, they are a vassal people. So this legal form was a very appropriate one to convey the central relationship. So the first two sections of it were the claims: **Preamble and Historical prologue**.

We saw that this very outline of the two tables of God's covenant with Israel and in the book of Deuteronomy as well. Then there were the **Stipulations**, or the commandments. There was the **document clause**. There were the **invocations** of the deities. The next major section would be the **sanctions**, the curses and the blessings.

What I've done then, is to use these four categories as separate chapters and looked at the early material there in the first few chapters of Genesis. I organized the covenants in terms of these categories.

Now mind you, I'm not saying that Genesis 1-3 exhibits this structure. Exodus 20 does exhibit this structure. "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt." Then here are the commandments mixed in within the sanctions. The book of Deuteronomy actually has this structure. I'm not saying that Genesis 1-3 is in this form. All I'm doing is saying that here are some useful categories and we're looking through Genesis 1-3 and picking out materials here and there that fit under each of these categories.

So we start then with the Preamble, with the Title, and we look at the material dealing with God's covenant with Adam to see what aspects of God's nature that constitute a claim to man's fear and awe and so on emerged there. What I think that the text emphasizes is the name Alpha and Omega. That he is the first and he is the last. He is the beginning and the end. As we said when we were looking at the structure of the chapter, it tells us that all things are of God, all the kingdoms of the world, all the kings he establishes, all things are of him--he is Alpha. But also all things are unto him. He is the Lord of the seventh day and all things are consecrated unto him. That's what we do then in the first chapter only trying to work it out in a little more detail.

### **Covenant in Genesis 1-3?**

Just before then coming to that first chapter however I have a little section dealing with the question of whether we are justified in doing what we've been doing. We've been using the word "covenant" for the material in Genesis 1-3. Actually, the word "covenant" doesn't appear until you come to Genesis 6:18 which is long after the Fall. So you don't actually get in the biblical text the word "covenant" appearing here. So some might challenge the appropriateness of using the word "covenant" since that particular word is not actually used in the text itself. So I have a few pages dealing with that question on page ten, eleven, twelve, thirteen, and fourteen. The gist of it is this: although the term "covenant" is not used, that particular label is not used, in these chapters, it appears that there are two other passages which are best



understood to refer back to this period that do call it a covenant. It's similar to the situation with the Davidic Covenant described in 2 Samuel 7. The word "covenant" is not used in 2 Samuel 7 to describe God's covenant with David promising everlasting throne and so forth. But you read along elsewhere in Scripture later on referring back to that they called it a covenant. So clearly it was.

Likewise, Genesis 1, 2, and 3 there are two passages one is Isaiah 24:5 and the other is in Hosea 6:7. I think properly understood each of these refers to this arrangement as a covenant. Isaiah 24:5 it speaks of the "everlasting covenant" and says it was because mankind broke the everlasting covenant that is why sin and death entered the world. Tie that together with what we were just doing in Romans 5 and what you'll see is that Paul's mind was very much filled with Isaiah. It is often said that his concept of the explanation of sin and death entering the world as a result of transgression of sin is a jump that you get from Genesis 3 to Romans 5 with nothing else between. That's not the case. Here right in between there in Isaiah 24 is precisely this thought that the reason that death is everywhere in the world, Isaiah is saying, and the reason that the whole creation is groaning and moaning along with mankind is that the everlasting covenant had been broken. So Isaiah 24 is dealing with that subject and speaks of what happened with Adam as being a covenant.

Hosea 6:7 speaks about Adam as the one who broke the covenant. If you consult the commentaries there are some other attempts to exegete it. But I've given that the proper understanding.

Now even if that were not the case, that you have Hosea and Isaiah referring back to this as a covenant, the proper approach would be this: you arrive at a definition of what a covenant is, it's a matter of commitments with divine sanctions and so on. Then you look at the texts and you see if the stuff that makes a covenant is there, whether the label is there, if the key elements that make a covenant are attested here then you shouldn't withhold the proper label, which is the label "covenant." Certainly the stuff of our definition is there. Here you'll look at God's dealings with Adam, and here you have divine commitments with divine sanctions. God commits himself and Adam is called upon to commit himself to God with curses, "in the day you eat thereof and you shall die." The blessings and the sanctions are held forth in

the Sabbath and in the Tree of Life and so on. So that the whole arrangement is definitely one that fits our definition of covenant. I have a whole series of other articles, it's an important point in establishing an overall covenant theology to be able to justify the use of covenant for this first one. So I really have been at some pains to develop quite a series of arguments to establish that.

### **God's name in Genesis 1: Alpha**

But we'll move on and we come to this first chapter which is the one then where the name of God will be revealed in various ways. On page 15, I show how as Moses is writing the whole history of Israel and the Patriarchs in this period, he's very much concerned with this whole subject of God's name. In the early chapters of Exodus, you remember how important that is and pharaoh wants to know what is his name. Moses says "the people will ask me what is your name" and God says "I am that I am" and you get the introduction of what God's name is there. So Moses is very much preoccupied with the name of God as the revelation of who he is.

So now on page 16 I have the heading "God the Alpha, the Author." Now here we've dealt with some of this already under a different heading when we were dealing with the question of the chronology. We already then had occasion to examine the text and to see what the first verse meant that "in the beginning God created the heavens and earth." Remember that we argued that heaven is the invisible heavens and the earth is the visible cosmos. So here we have in the very opening of the verse a comprehensive statement that God is the creator of all there is both visible and invisible. So I rehearsed some of that under the heading that he is the creator of all. So in God's creative activity creating all things there was a revelation of his nature as the Alpha, the source, the author, the beginner of all things.

### **God as creator of all things and pagan parallels**

Then sort of supplementing that idea and underscoring it on page 17, I have the heading, "In his creating of all things that he was a sovereign builder." He was a sovereign architect-builder.

Now in this section what I'm concerned to do is to set the biblical view of God as the creator of all things over against the pagan view that would sort of deny that the Lord was the source of all things that would not have room for the thought that there

was originally God and that all things as a result of *ex nihilo* creation were brought into being. We want to emphasize that that is the biblical picture. He does stand there alone with no rivals, no others who coexist from eternity along with himself. He is the beginning of all things visible or invisible. That's the emphasis through here.

I want to contrast that with the kind of thing that you get in the pagan literature. I have here a little book that you can get. I don't know if they are still publishing it or not. It's by a fellow named Alexander Heidel. He was a conservative Lutheran Christian and he taught at the University of Chicago. It's no mean job for a conservative theologian to get a job on the staff at the University of Chicago. He was an outstanding Assyriologist and he was on the staff there. There's a famous dictionary project *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* and he worked on that. He was a world class Assyriologist.

He wrote a couple of helpful books. One was on the creation and the similarities of pagan accounts of creation to the biblical accounts, but also, of course, the dissimilarities. He also wrote one on the flood and again with the similarities and dissimilarities between the two and dealing with them. The one on the flood he called *The Gilgamesh Epic and its Old Testament Parallels* in which he gives a translation of the cuneiform text with a series of essays discussing the relationship to the biblical material. We mentioned the Gilgamesh Epic the other week where in the 11<sup>th</sup> tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic it tells the story of how Gilgamesh encounters the flood hero and who recites to him the story of the flood. There you get some interesting parallel to accounts of Genesis 6-8.

### **The Babylonian Genesis: Enuma Elish**

Now in this one, *The Babylonian Genesis*, there are various so called creation traditions in Mesopotamia, but the most famous of them is known as the "Enuma Elish." Ancient texts are known by their opening words and the opening words of this particular text is "when above." So *enuma* means "when" and *elish* means "above." These are the opening two words so that's the name of the text. Actually these traditions go back before Moses' time. So you have to keep this in mind. You can't just write it off saying that someone in Mesopotamia got a hold of Moses' material and did something with it. This material is before Moses and so we have to explain it

in some different ways.

As a matter of fact, the other week I was trying to reflect on that a little bit and just to recap that what I said is: look these things that are recounted in Genesis 1-11 really happened. The true story of those things got handed down. Meanwhile after the Fall, men took these traditions and began to pervert them. Out of their perversion you get things like the *Enuma Elish*. Out of the true accounts you get the book of Genesis. So of course, there's going to be some similarities between them. Of course, there's going to be some differences because the myth makers, the fallen sons of Adam, will rewrite the history in such a way that they will absolve themselves from the problems of the world as not due to their sin and somehow blame it on God. So that's what you'll find in the myths along with the similar features. But then in Moses and this tradition, you get an account that puts man in his place and, of course, it shows that God is faithful.

Here then is the *Enuma Elish* and it goes back then to the early part of the second millennium B.C., Moses comes in the third quarter of the second millennium B.C. It's written by the Babylonian priests and it's propaganda for their cult and their main god who is Marduk. So the Babylonian priests were interested in exalting their temple and their ritual and their god over against all others. So they recite the story of how their god, Marduk, came to be the head of the whole pantheon. This involves the role that he played in connection with the creation of the world. So it's at that point in the *Enuma Elish* that you get accounts of how the world order came to be established. It is there that you see some similarities to the Bible but where you also see the big contrasts that I'm trying to bring out here. I'm trying to emphasize that God is the Alpha and that in his creating of the world he is the sovereign architect. He simply by the word of his fiat says, "let there be" and out of nothing, it comes into being. There's no conflict, there's no rival, there's no warfare going on.

As over against the biblical view of God's creation as a purely constructive thing, the pagan accounts like the *Enuma Elish* says that the creation of the world was a matter of conflict, where you have a creator God and he doesn't create the world out of nothing, but it's the result of a conflict in which he is engaged with some rival god whom he defeats. Out of this chaos god, Tiamat is her name, he proceeds to structure

the world. So it's completely different view of world origins. Whatever similarities there may be between the accounts and toward the one place toward the end, Heidel lists the similar events that are recorded in the *Enuma Elish* and the Bible. But in spite of all these similarities, here is this basic conflict between the two. The *Enuma Elish* has, you might say, two themes. It has the theme of the origin of gods. It isn't that the Lord, God alone exists, and has no beginning. Here you have the theme of the **theogony**, which is how the different gods came into existence. You have a plurality of gods and this how they're born and so on.

Then along with that theme, the second theme you encounter is the theme of **theomacy**, which means the conflict of the gods. It is through the conflict of the gods, especially in this case the god of order, the god Marduk, and the god of chaos, Tiamat. It is through this conflict of the gods that causes the world to come into being as we know it. It is through conflict, not through pure construction. That's the basic thing I'm trying to emphasize by a way of contrast to underscore that the absolute sovereignty, the pure constructiveness of God as the one whose name is Alpha.

### **A reading of the Enuma Elish and Genesis 1**

Just for your interest to give you a little bit more feeling for this, let me the read the opening of the *Enuma Elish*. It goes like this, and you pick up here the similarities to Genesis 1 very quickly. "When above, [*Enuma Elish*], when above the heaven had not yet been named and below the earth had not yet been called by a name." There's Genesis 1, the heaven and earth. Here's a paganized perversion of it, but it recalls at least what the text really meant and the heaven above and the earth below.

Another very interesting thing, in Genesis, existence and meaning go together, don't they? It's "let there be." God called it into existence, "let there be." But it isn't that there are some brute facts out there. Van Til is right in his emphasis that there are no brute facts. All things come into being created with their God given meanings already, with their names. So "let there be" and "God calls it" are combined in Scripture. So much so then that even in the pagan text instead of saying "when above there was no heaven and below there was no earth," "when above heaven had not been **named** and below the earth had not been called by a **name**." So here are some

interesting connections with Genesis 1.

It goes on and it names the three original beings as sort of a triumvirate of a father, mother, and son. “When Apsu,” the male god, primeval begetter. “Marduk” who is the son, all of these representing water, salt, fresh or whatever kinds of water. Tiamat, who turns out to be the chaos monster. Later on Marduk must battle with her. “She who gave birth to them all. When they still mingled their waters together.” Alright, now you think of Genesis 1 how in the beginning account it’s the water, water everywhere deep in the darkness before the structuring takes place. So here’s a perverted account of it, but still with enough recollection of the true original tradition to reflect it in an interesting way.

Then it goes on, “And there was no pasture lands” before this one and then it proceeds to tell how the various gods in a series of peers of gods were brought into being. The story continues and then as time goes on, some of the gods are upset with the Apsu the father god and they put him to death. Then later on, his wife Tiamat, trying to avenge that calls upon the assistance of an evil sort of devil god king who led her troops against the gods who had put her husband Apsu to death. She’s a real terrifying, old, chaos, she-dragon this Tiamat. The gods, who then are thought of as the good gods here, who have put Apsu to death, are terrified and don’t know what to do. In their desperation, they think, “O here’s Marduk, one of their bright young heroes and let him go and do this for us. Let him fight Tiamat and deliver us before she kills us all off.”

Marduk is ready to do it for a price. The price is that he should be exalted as head of all the gods. Now you see these Babylonian priests what they’re up to. They’re trying to show how their god, Marduk, got to be top dog in the pantheon and this is how he did it. So he was willing to fight Tiamat and to deliver the gods.

So he does and he goes forth to battle. It’s interesting, you have pictures of the Lord in the Psalms as the God of storm when he goes forth to battle, with the thunder and the lighting and the storm clouds and so on. You have these storm theophanies to describe the Lord going forth. In the pagan accounts that’s precisely how Marduk is described a wrapped in the wind within the clouds and going forth into battle against Tiamat.

I won't read that but I've described that. Let me just read another very interesting thing that is when the time comes before the battle each has its own army, Marduk, Tiamat, they have their own armies. But instead of having the armies clash with another there's going to be an individual combat, a duel of champions. Here's the Philistine army, here's the Israelite army. They stay there. David comes forth from one and Goliath comes forth from the other. You set up the issue by a duel of champions. So there is that principle of trials by ordeal, the ordeal of champions representing a larger group.

So Marduk goes forth, and let's see if I can find that, it's on tablet 4 and line 86 where they confront each other. Marduk says, "come thou forth alone and let us, me and thee, do single combat." This is a real good TV drama set up here, full of violence too, long before TV. So they go at each other and Tiamat is slain and that brings us to the end. Just incidentally then that ...

Transcribed by Ellie Muller  
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