

## Dr. Meredith Kline, Prologue, Lecture 20

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If we may get started gentlemen and ladies. Alright shall we pray together as we start? *“Oh Lord we call upon thy name, we give thee thanks Lord that thou hast redeemed our life from the pit and thou has crowned us with love and compassion. We thank thee that thou has by thy Spirit has united us with Christ Jesus that we are united unto him that has been raised from the dead and exalted on high. Therefore we pray of thee that being in this state that we might set our affections on those things which are in the heavens with Christ Jesus for our life is hid away with him. We thank thee that we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him and that we shall share in the reward which he has earned for us of fellowship with thee and eternal life in thy presence. We pray that in this world as we are called of thee to serve thee as witness of the Lord Jesus that we may do so in such a way that thy church might witness in such a way that from the nations there might be brought forth a company of those that shall sing a new song of praises of the redeemer. It is wondrous to be involved in this great enterprise of grace in the name of the one who is king of kings and lord of lords. The one to whom all authority of heaven and earth, has been given that he has commissioned us to go forth with the assurance that he is with us through all our days till the end of the age. May it be so and may thy church triumph in thy name, gathering the elect from every people so that there may be joy in heaven both now and forever. May we find our part in this blessed ministry we pray through Christ our Lord. Amen.”*

### **Covenant of Creation: review summary**

Alright, folks we are analyzing the Covenant of Creation you may recall. Maybe I should mention at the outset that I am not wearing a Halloween Frankenstein mask up here tonight. I just had a little surgery under the eye a couple of days ago to remove something that apparently was benign thankfully. But in any case, that accounts for the problem, now we go on from there.

So we're analyzing the Covenant of Creation, and let's see, we had dealt then with

the Lord's claims in the first two chapters as the one who is the creator of all and has claim of all and so on. We had dealt in the second chapter with the claim of his goodness and the way he created man in his image and bestowed upon him this wonderful garden of God, sanctuary, paradise.

Then we had moved onto chapter 3 which corresponds then to the stipulation section in the pattern of the treaties remember. We had dealt with the general principles involved there: the imitation of God and the service of God. Then we were the dividing the creation, the Covenant of the Creation commandments for the rest of the areas culture and cult: the kingly function and the priestly function. We had dealt with the first of those with the cultural with the royal task. We saw that it can be summed up in the thought that man's cultural assignment, his historical mission, which would by the way be primarily fulfilled once he had passed his probation. That historical mission could be summed up we said in terms of the idea of the city of God. This was the thing that was to be developed in terms of the dual functions of pro-creation and labor. The citizens of the country of the city would be produced. The architectural statement of the city would be produced. The family itself would constitute the authority structure of the city. So the cultural assignment which would have taken in any case many generations to fulfill was one then that was moving on from his initial the role of the royal gardener of the paradise of God to the point where there was a global mastery manifested in man.

Man's proprietorship and dominion over the world would have been advanced to the point it would come into expression in the world-wide holy city of God. It would be the temple of God at the same time. So this was the royal priestly function in view from the beginning. We know the first Adam failed in this, but nevertheless it is worthwhile to note that the eschatological goal of the city of God that was placed before the first Adam is still the objective of God's purposes. It's still the goal of redemptive history. It is now, of course, accomplished for us by Christ as the second Adam but in our thinking about the Lord Jesus and his mission while then here is one component. He is the one who is building the great city of God doing it through redemptive means now to be sure but nevertheless that is the ultimate goal where his people will be the holy people, the new

Jerusalem. You see there is an identification of the people themselves with the city of God with the new Jerusalem. The bride of Revelation is the city. So this is the ultimate achievement of Christ redemptively by the Spirit.

### **The priestly function: Cultic ministry**

Now getting back to the first Adam and the assignment that was his from the beginning there is then the priestly aspect. While treating the second in order here we are nevertheless wanting to make the point along the way, that the priestly is the prior function. The priestly function has priority over the royal function. The royal task is ancillary, it's subordinate, it contributes to the achievement of the goals of man's priestly functioning which are what then? Well we turn in our *Kingdom Prologues* then to page 52, under the heading of cultic ministry. I'll just sort of highlight maybe the headings under that section.

The first point I'm making is: What did it take for man, for Adam, there in the beginning to be made aware of his priestly obligations, duties and privileges? It is something I would say that didn't require *per se* some special revelation. Man is made with a sense of deity. He knows not only the "thatness" but the "whatness" of God. He knows that God is the one that is great and holy and the one who is to be adored and worshipped with our whole souls. That sense of deity within man already tells him that this is his calling to be involved in priestly adoration of the one who is his God and maker. So that is there, that is this priestly assignment from the beginning to be involved in the confrontation with this God of glory who had made mankind in his own image, that God of glory. We analyzed the concept of paradise. We suggested that God of glory was manifested on the top of the mountain of God and the top of Armageddon, the mount of assembly, the earth's a projection of the heavenly reality. There was the greatness of God and man stands from the beginning in the presence of the glory and that he should be evoked. He knows from him adoration right from the outset.

The consecration is the other point I combined there and on page 52. "Adoration and consecration" because he stands under this great God of glory, the one who is the great King. He, Adam, is the servant, to the one who is his Father in heaven. Adam, the

son, knows then that his life is a stewardship right from the beginning. He knows that the has this proprietorship over the earth that it's not an ultimate proprietorship but it is one that he has under in stewardship to the Lord. Therefore it is his function to be handing over, to be consecrating, to the Lord the fruits of his royal victories in the world. So there is consecration of that sort, a positive kind of consecration. In a moment we are going to be speaking about a second kind of consecration the negative thing: the guardianship of the sanctity of the garden type of thing. But first the priestly function we note is one of positive consecration that we should be in worship with the doxological expressions and praises of our lips, committing ourselves in praise and thanksgiving to God. But also then taking of the fruits of our labor under God's blessing and giving those back to him.

### **Symbolism expressed in positive consecration**

On page 53, I guess it is, that I get into some discussion of how that might have come to expression from the beginning. In the exercise of sinless worship, before the fall, as man worshiped God, would there be any place for symbolism? Would this function of consecration come to expression in symbolic, token, visible offerings? Or is this kind of visible symbolism something that enters into the religious relationship only after the fall?

Well, I think the answer is clear enough that there is a place for visible, outward symbolism even quite apart from the presence of sin because, the Lord himself made use of symbolism right from the beginning. You think of the Sabbath and at the Sabbath the observance is a token expression that all of our time is to be consecrated to God. So there is the one day in seven in this weekly cycle that we talked about the last time, the ordinance of the Sabbath. That is a God ordained token, a symbol of the greater heavenly, eschatological realities and within the gardens along with the ordinance of the Sabbath. The Lord sets up these trees, now they're real trees, but the Lord invests them with symbolic meanings that is the "Tree of Life" and the "Tree of Discerning and the knowing of good and evil."

So the Lord himself has instituted the visible symbolism as a part of a pure and sinless worship right from the beginning. You might even ask whether it would have been in place for man right there in the Garden of Eden, apart from sin, to take animals as

later on we know after the fall, there is the whole burnt offering. It was especially symbolic of the whole idea of consecration where animal life is taken and is placed on the altar and is consecrated to God in token expression. All that is under man's dominion is to be consecrated. In principle, I would have no problem with conceiving of that from the beginning, although there was a place, it would have been appropriate there at the mountain of God considerably to set up the altar and to have a token sacrifice of that kind.

Now mind you, if there were such a sacrifice that was appropriate at the beginning, of course, it would not be expiatory. There was no need for expiation. It would simply have given expression to the thought of consecration. But that at least, as far as I can see, it would not have been inconsistent with the situation there given the view that at least I adopted the other week. It would have been appropriate as part of man's dominion of animals to use them for whatever purposes for food for this, that or the other but also for religious symbolism. But in any case, that question apart, certainly from the beginning it was man's duty as a priest to consecrate himself and at least in verbal expression from his heart through his lips to give verbal expression to the Lord that "all that we have is yours Lord," that would have been a duty from the beginning. That would have been positive consecration.

### **Negative type of Consecration: priestly guardianship**

The other kind which is talked about on page 54, you might say is negative type of consecration it has to do with the fact that Adam is placed there, with Eve, of course, in a holy place. We analyzed Eden as being a sanctuary, as a holy place, the mountain of God. God is there, there is a present sanctification of the place. It is a holy place and it is a priest's function to be a guardian of sanctuary. That is certainly later on when redemptively the sanctuary reality is reproduced in Israel that certainly is a function then of the Levitical priest to be on guard there. It is sort of like a military outpost type of function that belongs to the priest lest the strange, the defiled one, should enter into the holy precincts. His job is to keep them out, that is his priestly guardianship function later on. That surely belonged there from the beginning.

In fact we have a text that indicates as much there in Genesis 2:15. Now when we were talking about the cultural commission we could appeal to proof text where we went to in Genesis 1:28 where God blessed them and told them to multiply and have dominion. Now if you're looking for a proof text for the priestly function of guardianship, I suggest you find it over in chapter 2 verse 15. It says, "the Lord God took the man put him in the Garden of Eden to work it." I guess we talked about that when we talked about the nature of paradise and we said there was a labor function there. We said that along with the strong language of subduing it, there was also the language of serving the garden in the verb '*avad*. So that verb appears here in 2:15, that he was placed there "to work it," "to serve it," '*avad*.

But now the second verb there is the Hebrew word *shamar* which means "to keep" or "to guard." Sometimes the translations give you the flavor all that is being described is this gardening function that Adam was placed in the garden of God to sort of dig up and cultivate the ground and to sort of keep it in the sense of keeping the thorns and the thistles and what not out. So this is all just an agricultural function but I think the context points in quite a different direction and that is the verb "shamar" then that is used regularly for the function of the Levitical priests that we were just talking about. They are to guard the sanctuary. That the best proof that that's the intention here I think is to flip over to the next chapter, Genesis 3, because there we find once Adam and Eve have forfeited their right to do this or even to be in the Garden of Eden and they are being expelled from the garden, that the Lord has placed now the cherubim there. To do what? Now you repeat that verb and we know the function of the cherubim was not be farmers there and to cultivate the tomato plants but the Lord put the cherubim there with the flaming sword to *shamar*, to guard the sanctity of the garden. That is the replacement for 2:15 as assigned to Adam. So I think the way to read Gen. 2:15 is that here we have a neat summary of everything we are trying to say.

We are trying to say that man had a cultural task and that he also had a cultic task--a king and a priest. As a king he is subduing the garden and developing it and as a priest because it is a holy garden he is guarding the sanctity of the place. So there is a primary

function and it is a key function in terms of the whole probationary testing that's about to develop.

So here is Adam set on guard against the strangers. What strangers he and Eve are the only ones around? Aha no, Satan is going to be brought into the picture. Satan is going to be that alien, that defiled one, that has no right to be thrusting himself into the presence of God there at the mount of glory and the holy place. So Adam take his stand there as the priest of God, as the military outpost and he's going to have to be alert. Because God in his wisdom, according to his purpose is going to bring you into this critical testing, this probation, where the probationary task is going to be precisely that you should stand there as the priest of God in the name of the Holy God and keep the sanctity of God's holy garden in tact by resisting the intrusion of this alien, evil presence. So this is sort of a general statement in Gen. 2:15 that points to what is actually right at the core and the heart of all of Adam's testing. Man's priestly functions were to go on throughout history, but right here at the very beginning there was to be a critical application of this function of guarding the garden. This was going to be the probationary task. This is the act of obedience that Adam was to have performed. He failed.

This was the act of obedience that one act of righteousness that our Lord Jesus performed whereby he earned eschatological heaven for himself and for us. In his case too, the act of righteousness which was to guard God's holy sanctuary to resist the intrusion of Satan into it. In those temptations of Jesus which of course so interestingly echoed the phenomenon of the first Adam's temptation.

### **Israel's guardianship of the Sanctuary: Canaan**

So here then is the man's negative consecratory function as a priest. As I say it is the very fundamental thing throughout all of history, the whole history of Israel, in a way can be subsumed under this theme. Israel is called out to be a theocratic nation, to be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. So they are invested once again with the functions that pertain to the original community of God's people and as such they must maintain the sanctity of God's garden.

Now in their case the task is somewhat complicated because by the time they come on the scene, God's garden, the holy place, is overrun with the enemy Baal. The worshippers of Baal are in that particular "New Eden" that Canaan land that God has staked out for himself. So Israel's involvement with this negative guardianship of consecration takes the form, first of all, of holy war. So Israel's great covenant commandment is to go in and cleanse the house of God.

This is Jesus later on part of his ministry when he comes on the scene the house of God has been made into a "den of thieves." It's been a house of prayer but now it's an abomination, a desolation, it's become a "den of thieves." So part of Jesus' ministry is this very thing. He has to cleanse the temple which he does.

That's what Israel had to do. It had to cleanse the Canaan temple that God has claimed for himself that involved then this task inflicting virtual final judgment upon this land of Canaan, upon the Canaanites who are the devotees of Baal and are obliterating all of the installations of the Baal cult and so on. So their first task then was to cleanse God's temple and then from that point on to maintain its sanctity by keeping Baal worship out of it. Wherever Baal worship raised its ugly head within the land, they were to squelch it. That's in Deuteronomy 13 that prescribes it for them. So this is a central, crucial task for God's people in this raging war that marks the whole course of human history. So that was going on in Israel.

As it's been debated then and in the case of our Lord Jesus he comes on the scene he cleanses the temple and returns it to its Old Testament manifestation there. Then, of course, on the larger scene at the final judgment Christ comes, at the parousia, the final judgment of the world. That's what he is doing. He is functioning as God's great priest and now not just the land of Canaan but whole world is to be taken over as God's holy temple once again. Task number one is get the Baal worshipers out of it, all of the unbelievers out. So he comes in cleansing fire taking vengeance against all of those that know not God and obeyed not the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. At that point Jesus is performing this function he's throwing Satan and all of Satan's hordes out of God's world so that it is sanctified forever as the holy New Jerusalem. So this is a very



fundamental theme that we are talking about and the life of the first Adam. But then, of course, all the more so the ministry of the second Adam. So the guardianship of the sanctuary in Genesis 2:15 takes them in that direction.

**The primacy of priesthood over the royal task: Culture subordinated to cult**

Then as I said the primacy of priesthood over against the royal task. Priesthood is man's primary office. A man's experience began with this priestly function of beholding and endearing God. It's primacy is not just a matter of historical priorities but of the teleological subordination of the kingly occupation to the priestly cultic objectives. What was the purpose of the cultural task? The cultural task was to produce humanity? What is humanity? Humanity is the living temple of God. So the goal of the royal priestly task was to build, yes the city of God. But the city of God is the temple of God especially when you think you have it in terms of humans beings who are God's temples in the Spirit. So the whole function of culture and of priesthood is to provide the holy temple for the priestly worship and adoration of the Lord.

So there is this subordination of cultural to cult in biblical religion. It receives beautiful expression there in 1 Corinthians 15. Again looking at our Lord Jesus, where he subordinates culture to cult because when the whole world has been subdued to him and the kingdom is his then he delivers over the kingdom to the Father that God may be "all in all." So Jesus subordinates his kingly triumphs to the service of the glory of the Lord.

Well I tried to develop that thought and some of its negative opposites both in ancient ritual. The whole Canaanite religion was the opposite of this. Biblical religion subordinates the higher interests to cult. In Canaanite religion, cult subordinated to culture. They engaged in the fertility cult which was what their cult was in order to promote prosperity in the area of culture. They engaged in the religious rights of the fertility cult so that they would be fertile and abundant in field, in flock and in family which is the whole area of culture. Now that's a prostitution of the cult to culture.

Of course, unhappily it is in the warped message that we hear around today in the health and wealth type gospel thing. There's the tendency in that direction to make sure the worship of the Lord served the ends of our being wealthy and happy in the cultural

realm. The biblical order is the culture consecrated in cult, in worship, to the glory of the Lord.

Okay, that's I think sufficient then to analyze the general stipulations of the covenant of creation and along the way at least we have hinted rather strongly at the very specific stipulation of the covenant which actually comes through more in the form of a prohibition, the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil," is related to what we were just saying. This standing on guard against Satan is something to which man is alerted in that negative form as we'll be seeing, the negative form of the prohibition not to eat from "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." We'll be coming to that presently.

### **Curses and the blessings**

Now in chapter 4 we deal with material that would correspond to the ancient treaties to the curses and the blessings. So that was sometimes the last, the sixth of the six divisions in the treaties. We also noted as in Exodus 20 the sanctions, the curses and the blessings, were interspersed among the commandments. But in any case, that's one of the standard sections, the curses and the blessings.

Now we ask ourselves: was there in God's administration of his covenant relationship to Adam at the beginning curses and blessings? What were the promised blessings and what were the threatened curses? Well there were both. The curses were verbalized we'll come to them in a minute. It was here that "the day you eat of them you will die" came to verbal expression. I think primarily the blessings were symbolized. We're talking about symbolism from the beginning a moment ago and among the symbols we said was the symbolism of the Sabbath. There was also the symbolism of the "tree of life." Right there in those two symbols God gave expression to his promise of blessing. What would be the reward of obedience performing particularly the key probationary task of guarding the sanctuary? It would have been the obtainment of heaven. Heaven, God's Sabbath and sharing with him in that.

So on page 57, I have a little section where I try to develop the presence of that prospect of ultimate glorification. So on the very day in which man had been made in the image of God he in the beginning had two aspects of that glory. We said he had the

dominion and moral excellence but didn't have a third one. So that right in the way he was made in the likeness, in this glory-Spirit, there is this virtual promise that your future and the way of obedience is to be like this glory spirit in terms of physical glorification as well. So that was one way in which this promise might have been conveyed.

### **The tree of life**

But secondly, and perhaps more obviously, there is the tree of life and you can read if you would the discussion of that on the next 2 or 3 pages. But the main point here is that here was a "tree of life." It was not the tree of forbidden fruit, the other tree was that. But it is the tree at least we might say of the reserved fruit. Access to this tree was reserved. It wasn't valued as forbidden completely but it was reserved until they could of eat of it in a worthy manner and not eat the damnation to themselves here at the Lord's sacramental tree. The tree of life would have served as sort of a sacramental symbol of the confirmation of the covenant relationship if there had been this successful probation. Meanwhile it was reserved for that time.

Now the fact that the "tree of life" has to do with not just life as man enjoyed it from the beginning, but life as it would have been in that higher level had he passed that probation involving confirmation in righteousness, confirmation in eternal life and the destination of glorification. That is what the tree of life had in view that beyond the probation type of experience is indicated by the way in which the "tree of life" is associated with the "probation tree." In the text, in your biblical account of it, but also just physically the two of them are together in the midst of the garden. They belong together so the association of the "tree of life" with the "probation tree" is one signal the tree of life has to do with the outcome of this probationary task.

Then one other indication along that line, of course, is that elsewhere in the Bible and the redemptive history as heaven is achieved by the Lord Jesus for his people and paradise is restored and consummated. Here again the tree of life reemerged. So the tree of life has its place in the consummation state of heaven. So the tree of life then along with the Sabbath was pointing to this ultimate goal of heaven including glorification and so forth.

### **The threatened curse**

Let me just mention the threatened curse and I'll come back maybe and throw a little chart on the board trying to sum up this whole covenant of creation for us on page 63. The other sanction then along with the promise of everlasting life, heavenly life, glorified life is the curse: "In the day you eat thereof you will die." The language of "in the day" or you're going to do such and such I take is just to be not so much a temporal, chronological idea as the idea of certainty. As surely as you sin, so surely shall death overtake you. The ways of sin are certainly going to be death. In the day you sin you will certainly die is the thought.

### **What kind of death?**

Now what do you think, what kind of death was that? Physical death? Was Adam threatened with physical death at that point? What function would physical death have performed? Hell is what God has prepared for the devil and his angels and for reprobate men. Hell is not a place of physical death. In fact, in order to go to hell the reprobate would have to experience physical resurrection. That's an amazing thing isn't it. There is a final resurrection both of the wicked and of the righteous, it's amazing isn't it? But nevertheless in order to pass from the intermediate state whatever it is for the reprobate, they have to experience physical resurrection. It is as though in the body, not experiencing physical death, but in the body that they experience hell. That is what Adam was threatened with from the beginning. Apart from what we know it worked out otherwise, Adam fell and God institutes a whole program of redemption at the end of which, of course, will be hell for the unbelievers.

But meanwhile there is now a place for physical death. So that the kind of death that Adam was threatened with at the beginning now becomes the second death. In the description of things where, for example, in the book of Revelation, the second death is hell. It is the second one because now after the fall as I say in terms of the redemptive program, there is physical death which is the first death. Now within this new context physical death does have some point.

### **Functions of death**

I guess that you should be thinking through, certainly in a pastoral sense or just thinking of our own death, as well as trying comfort and console and give meaning to God's people that are facing death. What are the purposes of physical death now within this range of human experience? Well for one thing without the shedding of blood there's no remission of sins. So in order for redemption to be achieved now there was going to have to be physical death and the shedding of blood. So now there is a need for physical death at that very basic level. That was the way in which there could be hope after the fall both through the hope of everlasting life through death and through the atoning death of the Savior.

But then of course, death serves, and you as pastors and teachers probably thought this thing through and made these points and many others, but you know for sure one thing that the immanence of death gives urgency to the preaching of the gospel doesn't it? The people have to realize that they don't have forever to doubt here and to reflect on whether we will or will not accept this gospel. There is a sense of urgency because of the reality of death. In the experience of the saints we grow old and with age then there are the afflictions--old saints suffering for years hopelessly with cancer or so on. It's a deliverance to them. They long to be delivered and to be with the Lord which is better. Physical death makes this possible. It becomes a blessing in the life of God's people. We would rather be with the Lord. So there are all kinds of rationales and reasons for the presence of physical death in this history after the fall and in terms of God's redemptive purposes.

Now apart from all of that, physical death just served no purpose whatsoever at all if what God had in view was, in the simple terms, creation, they fail and that will be the end. That I submit is what the options were? So summing up: the sanctions of the covenant were the blessings and the curses that were nothing less than heaven and hell. That is what Adam was confronted with from the beginning. Heaven, the blessing, if he passes probation. Hell if he should fail in terms of the covenant of creation. Of course, God has this other thing in view from the beginning but that's not involved in the terms

of the Covenant of Creation with Adam. At the appropriate point God enters in and he reveals this redemptive program and he proceeds to administer it and so forth.

### **The two phases of the Creation Covenant: Probation and Conferral**

Well, just trying to set out now quickly a little summarizing overview what we just have been trying to say. Here then is God's Covenant of Creation with Adam and it has two phases. The first phase is the **probation phase**. The probation phase and the next phase we can call the **conferral phase**. In *Kingdom Prologue* I actually make two separate covenants out of that. It doesn't matter, that's a matter of formal difference, the ideas are the same. Here I'm just speaking terms of one covenant with two stages. There's a conferral phase. The conferral phase will be subdivided into two stages. We'll call it two stages: the **confirmation** and then there is the **consummation** stage.

Now, under the first phase, the probation phase, we see in that things had a cultic focus, especially the probationary test itself. There was that sanctification, the guardianship of the guarding function. The idea there is Armageddon. It's the holy garden of God and that they must guard the sanctity of it as we were saying. That cultic task that priestly task is theirs. Although we haven't quite come to it yet, then there the tree of knowledge comes in and that connection.

### **The tree of knowledge of good and evil**

We might as well say something about that right away then since I'm there now. What was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? Here was the tree then that told man that he was going to have to do with a knowing of good and evil, a discerning between good and evil. This was not some new knowledge that he was going to acquire, that he didn't have before. He already knew the difference between good and evil and so on. What this tree was telling him was that as the guardian of God's garden he was going to be confronted with the necessity of knowing good and evil. This is the kind of function that this tree by its name called its attention to. It's the language, and the particular verses that you will find there in the *Kingdom Prologue*. It's the language which elsewhere describes kings and judges when they are confronted with having to give a verdict to make a decision between good and evil. So the tree of the knowing of good and evil was

telling Adam that you are going to be confronted by Satan. It will be your task to discern evil from him and to pronounce him evil and to throw him out of the good garden of God. Of course, Adam does the opposite but nevertheless that's what this tree of knowledge was calling him to do. It was this very high and solemn function and obligation where this human creature is going to find himself involved with the realities of a warfare that already has broken out in heaven and where he must play his part on the behalf of God over against the adversary above the human level region. Adam was going to get caught up in its task as a judge even of superhuman beings, of angels.

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