

EVANGELICAL REVIEW OF THEOLOGY

VOLUME 13

Volume 13 • Number 2 • April 1989

Evangelical Review of Theology



WORLD EVANGELICAL FELLOWSHIP
Theological Commission [p. 99](#)

a thing to be grasped; we children of Adam need to be constantly on our guard against our desires to control our own destinies independent of all else. Again, perhaps it is not entirely coincidental that the rise of the charismatic movement has paralleled the flourishing of the 'Me' decades and the 'Now' generation.

CONCLUSION

We have considered a number of key areas in Christian life and teaching to examine the charismatic understanding of how these come about. In every case they have been seen to be shot through with a strongly anthropocentric, Pelagian emphasis and there seems little doubt that the nearer the charismatic movement veers towards full-blown Pentecostalism, the stronger that emphasis becomes. Yet we have also seen examples of charismatic insistence on more historic Protestant tenets. The bulk of current evangelicalism, too, seems tarred with the Arminian brush. It has been instructive that only Bloesch, Bruner, Packer and Smail have even begun any criticism on these grounds.

Throughout this essay I have criticized the movement's tendency to have mere mortals attempt their own salvation and earn its blessings. We should end by noting that that has largely eventuated through a desire to revitalize a complacent 'once saved, always saved' outlook, and a Christianity which has often seemed to deny the Spirit any real power at all. One must agree thankfully with Packer's enthusiasm:

With radical theology inviting the church into the barren wastes of neo-Unitarianism, it is (dare I say) just like God—the God who uses the weak to confound the mighty—to have raised up, not a new Calvin or John Owen or Abraham Kuyper, but a scratch movement, cheerfully improvising, which proclaims the divine personhood and power of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit not by great theological eloquence, originality, or accuracy, but by the power of renewed lives creating a new, simplified, unconventional and uncomfortably challenging lifestyle. *O sancta simplicitas!*³³

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Creation, Covenant and Work

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The central thesis of this exegetical study is that man basically relates himself to his fellow human beings, and the world around, by work. It is through his work that he becomes aware of God's plan of new creation, and of his own role in it as the agent responsible for bringing harmony into a world full of evil. It makes an excellent alternative to the Marxist anthropology, that man is the product of his producing activity, as it supplies the missing

³³ *Keep in Step* 230–1.

links: the personal blessing of God. It is a necessary reading for those studying the 'integrity of Creation'.

Editor

COVENANT

First, let us examine the detail we have about covenant in the Creation narrative of [Genesis 1–11](#). This examination will lead us back naturally to Creation and the detail of [Genesis 1–3](#). That, in its turn, will speak to us of man's role and purpose in our world.

Since we see man most naturally as the worker, we shall need to note carefully the bearing of the Fall upon this most natural role for mankind. Finally, we shall conclude with brief attention to the question of rest as associated for man with toil, turning our attention at that point to [Genesis 2:1–3](#), in order to ascertain what is the total biblical perspective that the themes of covenant and creation lay before us.

Since biblical eschatology will be progressively associated with a doctrine of a 'New Covenant' it will be important for us to note, summarily at least, the developing features of the Old Testament covenants. The immediate context of [Genesis 6:17–18](#) is the impending flood; but the notion of covenant is before us for the first time biblically. For the first time, we meet the Hebrew word *bef rit* ('covenant') in its some 290 occurrences in the Old Testament. Addressed at [Genesis 6:17–18](#) is Noah, a member of the godly line of Seth, son of Adam, and the context of [Genesis 6:17–18](#) is a promise uttered by God in the very shadow of the impending flood. In the 'but I will establish my covenant with you' of [Genesis 6:18](#) several questions [p. 138](#) are posed for us. What is the precise meaning of the word 'establish' here and why is the verb in the future tense? What is the exact meaning of the term 'covenant'; why is it used here seemingly without introduction and why further is it 'my' covenant? Is the covenant concluded with Noah personally or representatively?

First, the term 'covenant'. Most naturally the English term 'covenant' contains a notion of mutuality. Though some human/human covenants in the Old Testament bear the features of mutuality about them, in the case of Old Testament divine/human covenants there is no element of mutuality. Divine covenants are imposed upon the recipients, as the 'my' of my covenant here suggests. Thus the actual meaning of *bef rit* must be determined from within the context in which it is operating, within the general sense of the background of the word which appears in its basic sense to reflect the notion of 'bond', 'fetter'.

Second, the absence of any direct background for the word *bef rit* in [Genesis 6:18](#) needs to be illuminated from the use of the word within comparable contexts of the period. Instructive here is the use of *bef rit* in the three secular instances of [Genesis 21:22–32](#), [Genesis 26:26–33](#), [Genesis 31:43–54](#) concerning Isaac and Jacob in relationship to others. The point in each case of these three covenants is that the covenant in each incident does not initiate the relationship which is already in each case in existence. What the covenant does is to give to the relationship a quasi-legal backing and guarantee its continuance. The point is an important one for [Genesis 6:17–18](#) since it signifies that we must look elsewhere for the origin of the relationship which is referred to by the term 'covenant'.

Third, the normal term for covenant initiation where the relationship is to be secured in this way is the Hebrew verb *karat*, 'cut'. In every other case of covenant initiation in the Old Testament the covenant is technically begun by having been 'cut'. Undoubtedly the idiom 'to cut a covenant' goes back to some type of pre-biblical curse ritual enacted by covenant making which confirmed existing relationships but that is not important for our

purpose here. Since [Genesis 6:17–18](#) (and the dependent passage in [Genesis 9:9–13](#)) is the one Old Testament context where the verb ‘cut’ is absent, the presumption is that we do not have at [Genesis 6:17–18](#) the actual initiation of the covenant with Noah. But is [Genesis 6:17–18](#) merely an anticipation of the more fundamental context in which the same issues are aired, but more widely, [Genesis 9:9–13](#)? [Genesis 9:9](#) widens the concept of [Genesis 6:18](#) by including Noah’s descendants, making it thus clear that the covenant with Noah was with Noah as representative humanity. [Genesis 9:10](#) takes us further to include the animal species threatened [p. 139](#) by the flood (i.e. every living creature—birds, cattle and beasts of the earth). This seems to make it clear that the stress in the Noachian covenant is upon man, but as guarantor of the created order. It becomes apparent that by [Genesis 9:13](#) the parameters of covenant are even more widely drawn to include everything that was threatened by the Flood, namely the earth as well and to this covenant with Noah is added in [Genesis 9:12](#) the sign of the rainbow to remind the Creator of his undertaken obligation to man and his world.

In summary, [Genesis 9:9–13](#) appears to presuppose the context of [6:17–18](#) but to widen it. [Genesis 9:9–13](#) is not the covenant to which [6:17–18](#) looks forward but [9:9–13](#) refers to the covenant of [6:17–18](#). Noah is provided with an assurance in the shape of a covenant before the onset of the flood in [6:17–18](#) and then at the conclusion of the flood, [9:9–13](#) the covenant is confirmed and its implications extended. It seems, then, that we must look for the relationship to which [6:17–18](#) gives confirmatory point in some act prior to [Genesis 6](#). Here the precise language of [6:18](#) helps for the covenant is not ‘made’ with Noah, but ‘established’. In all other Old Testament contexts in which the phrase ‘establish a covenant’, *heqîm bef rît*, occurs ([Gen. 17:7](#), [19](#), [21](#); [Exod. 6:4](#); [Lev. 26:19](#); [Deut. 8:18](#); [2 Kgs. 23:3](#); [Jer. 34:18](#) as well as [Gen. 9:9](#), [11](#), [17](#)), the initial institution of a covenant is not referred to, but its perpetuation and we may thus surmise that the phrase ‘cause my covenant to stand’, i.e. ‘establish my covenant’ of [Genesis 6:18](#) also refers to the perpetuation of some covenant and not to its initiation.

The pledge of divine obligation to creation, as affected by the flood which is the substance of the covenant with Noah ([Gen. 6:18](#), [9:9–13](#)) seems therefore to refer to a basic commitment to maintain the structure of creation, given implicitly by the fact of creation itself. It is important to note that the mandate given to humanity in [Genesis 1:26–28](#) to ‘be fruitful and multiply and to fill the earth and subdue it’ is virtually repeated to Noah in [Genesis 9:1ff.](#), while the further details of the covenant advanced in [9:9–13](#) makes it clear that what is being ‘maintained/established’ is some basic arrangement with the world whereby man, the animal world and the earth itself are assured of continuance. Since, moreover, the detail of [Genesis 1:26–28](#) (to which the promise given to Noah in [9:1–7](#) refers) has in mind a divine purpose to be accomplished by man and his world, it would seem to suggest that the covenant with Noah has not merely the fallen world and man in it in view, but also the purpose of [Genesis 1:1–2:3](#) which will finally be brought into effect. It is in this latter sense that the covenant with Noah can be called eschatological. The latter association [p. 140](#) of the New Covenant with a concept of the New Creation draws together the two notions of creation and redemption and thus by redemption of first man and then his world, by the restitution of all things ([Col. 1:20](#)). As covenant and creation are associated at the beginning of human experience, so they will be at the end.

CREATION

Our review of the use of the term covenant at [Genesis 6:18](#), etc. has led us back to creation itself. For our purposes, what is important for us here will be the definition of man’s role

in our world and man's reaction to creation as presented in [Genesis 2:4–3:24](#). We may present the broad outline of Creation in [Genesis 1–2](#) as follows.

Genesis 1:1–2:3: Creation in Six Days

Within the parallels of introduction (vv. [1–2](#) and conclusion [2:1, 2:3](#)) which 'frame' detail relating to the seventh day) a regular pattern relating to eight acts on six days occurs. The six stages are marked by a conclusion formula ([5b, 8b, 13, 19, 23, 31](#)) and the pattern (with some exceptions) is command, execution of command, act of creation and then valuation. The first three stages have to do with progressive separations (light from darkness, water above from waters below, waters from dry land). The next three stages 'fill' creation with essential life and there is a general parallelism of form to content in days 1 to 4, 2 to 5, 3 to 6. The narrative proceeds as a series of 'begettings' (Hebrew *tôledôt* 'generations' [2:4a](#)) and is told in report form. The setting could be the cult (cf. the interest in sabbath [2:2–3](#)) or the royal court (since man in [Gen. 1:26–27](#) is depicted in 'royal' terms). The intention is to stress that the origin of all things depended upon God. The use of Hebrew *bara*, 'create', in [Genesis 1:1](#) stresses this also.

The structure appears to separate [1:3–31](#) from [1:1–2](#) and then to mark off the sabbath in [2:1–3](#) as important, indeed critical. In these circumstances it seems best to take [1:1](#) as adverbially dependent upon [1:2](#) with [1:2](#) referring in three circumstantial clauses to the primaevial unfitness of the earth for human occupation as a first stage of creation (since it was desolate and dark, but even as such completely controlled by the Spirit). [Genesis 1:3–31](#) then deals with the outfitting of creation for human habitation, climaxing in the creation of mankind, while [2:1–3](#) points to the goal of creation. [Genesis 1:2](#) needs careful attention. The reference to primaevial waters covering the earth and the darkness which covered that seems, in view of [p. 141](#) creation conflict accounts in the later Old Testament, etc. (cf. [Ps. 74:12–14](#); [Isa. 51:9–11](#); [Ps. 93](#); [Isa. 27:1](#)) to point to the threat of disorder. But the Spirit of God which hovers over the waters provides reassurance of divine control. Chapter [1](#) thus may suggest a knowledge of such ancient Near Eastern creation myths but forms a polemic against them!

The Days of Genesis—There are Three Main Views:

1. They refer to a literal six days. This seems to founder on the scientific evidence available and seems also not to take account of the difficulty that [Genesis 2:5](#) raises.

2. The days are eras. Apart from the scientific difficulties (sun, moon created only on the fourth day) which are present for chronology on this view, the eras would have to be unequal, at least then weakening the symmetry of six days plus one.

3. The arrangement is logical rather than chronological and the order is an order of interest. This seems to be preferable. The first section in [1:3–13](#) is of three days, four creative words with a double movement at the climax. The movement is from heavens, to waters to earth. The second part, [1:14–31](#), essentially follows the same scheme: heavens, waters, earth. The eighth action on the sixth day brings us to the creation of man.

Man as the Image

We need first to take up the question of man as the image and relate that to the concept of dominion. The creation account in [Genesis 1](#) indeed climaxes in the account of the creation of man in [1:26–28](#). True, this is not the climax of the account itself; that comes in the material concerning the Sabbath rest in [2:1–3](#).

Basic to the account of the creation of man is the nature of the relationship which is conjured up under the term 'image'. The notion is an important one for the purposes of

our discussion of man's role in his world although the phrase 'image of God' occurs only twice in Scripture ([Gen. 1:26, 9:6](#)). This phrase has been variously handled in the history of Christian thought and we note that Karl Barth (1960) has shown how each age has filled [Genesis 1:26](#) with the philosophical content of its age (i.e. as 'soul', etc.).

Selem, 'image', is an ambiguous word with the possible meanings of 'copy' or 'representation', always with reference to what is externally presented. Only 'representation' fits the theological context of [p. 142 Genesis 1:26](#); and to weaken further the sense of vagueness imported by 'image', *df mût*, 'likeness' is added to indicate that man is only an image, only a representation of the deity and nothing more. Indeed, the context goes on to underscore the point since unlike God but like the other creatures man is endowed in [v. 27b](#) with sexual differentiation. This further distinction anticipates [1:28](#) but does not directly refer to man as the 'image' (Bird, 1981). In regard to the content of the image, we may therefore dismiss earlier Christian internalizations of the term such as rationality, self-consciousness, etc. Of course, Hebrew thought conceived of man as a psycho-somatic whole and thus not merely externality is on view in image, but that emphasis is predominant.

In the Semitic cognate languages this note of visible representation is plain. So Akkadian *salmu*, 'image', refers to a visible symbol, usually representation of the deity set up in a temple as a sign of the authority of the city state deity to whom the image referred. Moreover in Akkadian, when used of the king, 'image' referred to the god-like power of the king in his function as ruler. Consistent with this ancient Near Eastern presentation are Egyptian texts where 'image' language is found frequently. As the image, Pharaoh was the visible representation of the deity, the god incarnate on earth.

Perhaps the Mesopotamian analogies to which we have appealed throw light also upon the royal connotations which are present in the relationship of man to the deity which [Genesis 1](#) offers. In Mesopotamian royal theology, the king was conceived as a servant of the gods; and 'image' language, used of the king in that context, thus described the king in some relationship to the gods. But the image was clearly conceived of in Mesopotamian thought as being different in character and substance from the god who stood behind it. The designation of the king as the image of the god in Mesopotamia referred to his royal function as having a mandate from the god to rule and thus as one possessing divine power. There is a duality, however, in the [Genesis 1–3](#) account for we are introduced to man in royal terms as the image, consistent with the general ancient Near Eastern picture, and yet in creature terms as part of the animate and inanimate creation over which he bears rule.

The nature of this rule now requires attention. The precise word associated with man's rule in [Genesis 1:26–28](#) is Hebrew *radah*. What is signified by the very *radah* is the exercise of authority by a superior over a positionally inferior. This is not necessarily arbitrary or despotic rule, for where this is indicated in the Old Testament, a further predicate is often supplied (cf. [Lev. 25:43](#) 'with rigour', and vv. [46](#), [p. 143 53](#); [Ezek. 34:4](#) 'with force and with rigour', [Isa. 14:6](#) 'in anger'). The verb is thus appropriately used of the rule of kings ([1 Kgs. 5:4](#); [Ezek. 34:4](#); [Ps. 72:8, 110:2](#)) and of the rule over fellow Israelites in a way that resembles foreign domination ([Lev. 25:43, 46, 53](#)). It is thus a peremptory word and by it a state of circumstances normally translated by 'subdue', 'bring into subjugation' is intended. As has been noted, the use here in [Genesis 1](#) refers to Adam's place and role *vis-à-vis* the created world (Bird, 1981). There is however no note within the verb itself of the precise details or type of control or management which dominion in [Genesis 1:26](#) was to assume, but its use is consistent with the extra-biblical royal nuances to which we have referred. They constitute important comments upon

[Genesis 1](#), let alone the further act that [Psalm 8:5](#) in an exposition of man's place in creation adds that he is 'crowned' with glory and honour.

Kabas, 'subdue' ([Gen. 1:28](#)), which is often taken to be a further predicate of 'dominion', relates more narrowly to man's relationship with the ground, and thus to the content of v. [28](#) and blessing (Westermann, 1974).

We may thus sum up our discussion of man's role in [Genesis 1](#) by saying that as the image, man is installed as God's vice-regent over all 'creation with power to control and regulate it, to harness its clear potential, a tremendous concentration of power in the hands of puny man! What authority he thus possesses to regulate the course of nature, to be a bane or a blessing to his world!

Behold, It was Very Good (Gen. 1:31). Was Creation Perfect?

With man created to exert dominion over the world the account of [Genesis 1](#) comes to a close. We need, however, now to relate more precisely to the world over which man was set in control. God expresses himself in [1:31](#) as pronouncing the creation which he beheld 'very good'. The phrase *kî tôb* appears six times in [Genesis 1](#) with reference to various specifics of creation; light (v. [4](#)) on the first day, sea and dry land on the second day, plant life on the third day, celestial bodies, sun, moon and stars on the fourth day, sea creatures and birds on the fifth day, living creatures and beasts on the sixth day climaxing in *kî tôb me' od* on the sixth day as a final evaluation of the total work.

Each time *kî tôb* is used in [Genesis 1](#), God is the speaker and the form refers to divine approval of some specific act of creation. Traditionally, many different views have been offered as to the meaning of the phrase. Those who interpret the phrase in terms of [p. 144](#) 'perfection' understand the term to mean the complete harmony of creation in its integration with all details. On such views both the parts and the whole of creation emerged perfect from God's hand (Cassuto, 1944). However, we do not see such perfection obtaining in our world today. Pain, suffering, natural calamities, and the inevitability of decay mark the world we know. Such a picture of a perfect creation is also at variance with the biological competition within nature which we know to be clearly our present case.

Hebrew *tôb* has a broad range of meanings: pleasant, pleasing, favourable, useful, suitable, proper, right, beautiful, well-shaped, friendly, cheerful, plentiful, Valuable, excellent of its kind, prosperous, benevolent, upright, brave, genuine. Thus the translation of *tôb* will be conditioned by its immediate context. The adjective certainly can mean aesthetic good or ethical good and need not be understood of perfection. Of course to convey absolute perfection the construction which we do have in [Genesis 1:31](#) would serve. Such a concept, however, would be without parallel in the Old Testament, and we agree with Kohler and Baumgartner (1953) that *tôb* in this context is best taken as 'efficient'. We would therefore see creation as good in its correspondence to divine intention, suitable to fulfil that purpose for which it had been brought into being. We would suggest that the further appeal to ethical nuances in regard to the 'good' in [Genesis 1](#) rests upon the general tenor of Scripture as a whole rather than upon the context itself and rests also upon the presuppositions which we generally bring to [Genesis 1](#), namely that a concept of absolute perfection is in view in this narrative.

The Garden—The Ideal World and the Dominion Role of Man Reviewed

We need now to return to the role of man in our world. [Genesis 2](#) treats man in more detail. It is not, as is frequently suggested, a second account of creation. The purpose of the account is to make clear from the perspective of man what was meant to be the relationship of man as exercising dominion to his world under God. The narrative of

[Genesis 2](#) indicates that man was created outside of the garden ([2:8](#)). This seems confirmed by the progressive movement of the action in [Genesis 2–3](#) from outside of the garden, into the garden, to the centre of the garden and then again finally outside of the garden once more. The garden seems a reserve which has been specially set apart from its world and seems to be completely different from it. The noun *gan* occurs 41 times in the Old Testament and the feminine noun *gannah* [p. 145](#) 16 times. It is derived from *ganan* ('cover', 'surround', 'defend'), which occurs 8 times in the Old Testament. The verb is only used with Jerusalem or the people of Yahweh as its object. Yahweh is always the subject ([Isa. 31:5](#), [37:35](#), [38:6](#); [2 Kgs. 20:6](#), [19:34](#); [Zech. 9:15](#), [12:8](#)—see Brown, Driver & Briggs, 1972). The use of these nouns indicates that a garden is a plot of ground protected by a wall or a hedge, a concept which the basic meaning of the verb *ganan* with its notes of 'protect, defend' would support (*TWOT*, 1980). Walls around royal gardens are specifically mentioned in the Old Testament ([2 Kgs. 25:4](#); [Jer. 39:4](#), [52:7](#); [Neh. 3:15](#)). Vineyards also were surrounded by walls (cf. [Prov. 24:30–31](#); [Isa. 5:5](#)) to protect them from ravage by animals, and we are not surprised that the same precautions would be taken generally concerning gardens (cf. [Amos 4:9](#) where 'gardens' and 'vineyards' are parallel).

All of this makes understandable the note of a garden as a special place which is spatially separate and different from its world. It is a valued, fertile, well-watered place which is constantly cared for. These notes are reinforced in the case of [Genesis 2](#) by the Septuagint translation of Hebrew *gan* by *paradeisos*, from Hebrew *pardes*, itself a loan word from Persian. *Pardes* has the basic sense of 'what is walled, what is hedged about' and thus 'a pleasure garden surrounded by a stone or earthen wall' (Keil & Delitzsch, 1975). The Vulgate translates the phrase 'garden of Eden' by *paradisus voluptatis*, 'a delightful paradise' (Westermann, 1974).

In the Old Testament, we find that the garden of Eden becomes a symbol for a particularly luxuriant land. In this connection, the proper name Eden is derived from the Hebrew root *ʿdn* (Jacobs-Hornig, 1978 & 1962), 'to delight'. So, in [Genesis 13:10](#), the well-watered Jordan valley appeared to Lot 'like the garden of the Lord'. Later the fertility of the garden of Eden can be contrasted with the desolation which comes upon Judah as a result of the 586 BC fall of Jerusalem. Isaiah and Ezekiel can thus predict that Judah, though it is desolate, would become like Eden, the garden of the Lord ([Isa. 51:3](#); [Ezek. 36:5](#); cf. [Joel 2:3](#)). The existence of gardens and parks as special places in the ancient Near East outside of Israel is abundantly clear from Mesopotamian literature. Kings planted and boasted of extravagant gardens. Sumerian mythology also reveals a paradise myth which speaks of an extremely fertile land, Dilmun, where beasts do not prey upon each other and where sickness and ageing are unknown. The Gilgamesh epic also speaks of an island garden with trees bearing precious stones. Egyptian literature and art also describe beautiful gardens as places of love and happiness (Jacobs-Hornig, 1969). [p. 146](#)

In the light of all this, the garden of Eden in [Genesis 2](#) is best viewed as a special sanctuary quite unlike the rest of the world. [Genesis 2:5–25](#) describes the position of man before the Fall, existing in that openness in the divine presence which the presentation of the extended seventh day of [2:4a](#) suggests. Some picture of the nature of man's dominion over nature is thus provided as well. Paradoxically, man exercises dominion over his world by service and worship in the divine presence. His service in the garden is denoted by the very *ʿabad* (used 290 times in the Old Testament with the basic meaning of 'work' or 'serve'). In the context of [Genesis 2:15](#) the clear meaning of the verb is 'till' or 'cultivate', but the use of the verb in the later Old Testament as the customary verb for 'worship' imports into the [Genesis 2](#) context the further nature of man's response in what is clearly a sanctuary presence. That the garden of [Genesis 2](#) is a shrine, comes out not only from

Chapter 2, but markedly from the manner in which [Ezekiel 28:11–19](#) describes Eden, the cosmic focus of the—world in the alternate terms of garden/holy mountain of God (cf. vv. [13, 14](#)). Since after man’s expulsion from the garden, he is described in relationship to the earth by the same verb *‘abad* ([3:23](#)), we may take it that by this verb the very fundamental character of man’s dominion over the earth is being described. Service which is divine service is thus his role; a dominion which shows itself first in submission to the Creator is what is required; and we may refer to [Mark 10:45](#) for a Christian analogy. The note emphasized for man’s role in the garden by Hebrew *‘abad* is reinforced by the use of Hebrew *samar* in the same verse (v. [15](#)). This verb has the general meaning of ‘take care of’, ‘to have charge of’. The use of this verb then indicates the nature of the attention devoted to the garden, within the consciousness of the presence of the Creator from whom the mandate has been given. Perhaps also there is latent in the notion of the verb the watchfulness that needs to be exercised over against the serpent who will appear in [Genesis 3](#).

But we may sum up this section by suggesting that the garden episode displays, as a paradigm, admittedly under ideal circumstances, the harmony of created orders that the dominion role was to secure in the world at large. At the same time [Genesis 2](#) indicates what dominion as such is and how it was to be exercised. Dominion is the service which takes its motivation from the intimate relationship with the Lord God on behalf of whom dominion is exercised. The possibility exists, even within the garden, for man to exercise his God-given authority independently ([Gen. 2:16–17](#)). We know this will happen in [Genesis 3](#) and expect that it will have disastrous effects for [p. 147](#) man’s mandate and role. The Fall will deny to man the further possibility that the garden also holds out to him, that immortal by relationship to God, he might develop and deepen that relationship by which alone life in God’s presence would be retained. We now turn to the Fall account itself.

THE EFFECTS OF THE FALL

The harmony of created orders under man, for which [Genesis 2](#) speaks, is fractured by the Fall, by which the order of [Genesis 2](#) is reversed in Chapter 3. Man’s acquisition by the Fall of the knowledge of good and evil is to be understood in terms of the legal background of the ancient Near East which underlies the phrase ‘good and evil’ as W. M. Clark (1969) has made clear. This phrase is not simply a merism for total knowledge. It is legal language denoting the authority to decide an issue (cf. [1 Kings 3:4–28](#), especially vv. [9, 28](#)). In [Genesis 3](#) by eating of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, man claims for himself the moral autonomy and the right to decide for himself apart from God (to whom these decisions properly belong) what is good or non-good.

The consequences which ensue from all this are recorded in [3:14ff](#). Of primary interest for us in all of this is the curse which is placed upon the ground in v. [17](#) and the description which then follows. What, however, is meant by the fact that in the post-Fall situation, the ground is cursed? In what sense is it cursed, and how are we to understand the prepositional phrase ‘because of you’, ‘on account of you’? What has changed in all this, the ground or man? Or have both undergone a change as a result of the Fall? Has creation been brought into bondage (cf. [Rom. 8:20](#)) by man’s Fall, and if so, in what sense are we to understand [Romans 8:18–23](#) which speaks of creation’s bondage and the prospect of its deliverance?

The verb ‘curse’ in [3:17](#) is Hebrew *‘arar*. The passive particle *Qal* which is used here accounts for 40 of the 63 Old Testament occurrences of the verb. Most curse sayings in the Old Testament are found in declarations of punishment, threat utterances, or accompanying legal proclamations (as in the extended treatment of covenant curses,

[Deut. 27–28](#)). In each case, they come as a response to the violation of one's relationship with God (*TWOT*, 1980). The verb *'arar* is an antonym of the Hebrew *barak*, 'bless.' It is used in opposition to *barak* 12 times (cf. Gert. 9:25–26, 12:3, [27:29](#)). To 'bless' means to endow with potential for life, to give the power to succeed, prosper, reproduce. It is always the gift of God, even where a human mediator [p. 148](#) intervenes. As opposed to 'bless', to 'curse' is to alienate, to remove from a benign sphere, to subject to deprivation (cf. the Akkadian cognate *araru*, 'snare', 'bind' [Hamilton, *TWOT*]). Thus Joshua's curse upon the Gibeonites means their deprivation of freedom ([Josh. 9:23](#)). Contrariwise, when the ground is blessed, it yields an abundance ([Gen. 27:27–28](#); [Deut. 28:11](#)); while when cursed, the ground ceases to yield its natural fruit ([Deut. 11:17](#), [28:23–24](#); [Jer. 23:10](#)).

The curse of [Genesis 3:17](#) breaks the former natural relationship between man and the earth. What will be involved in man's future relationship with his world is conveyed in v. [17](#) by the noun *'issabôn*, 'hardship', 'pain', 'distress'. It is derived from the Hebrew root *'sb*, 'to find fault with, to hurt, to trouble'. The root signifies both physical and emotional suffering, i.e. pain and sorrow, and these two concepts are reflected in the six nouns derived from the root (*TWOT*, 1980). Prior to his sin, Adam was to work; now he must 'toil'. The same noun is used of Eve's travail in childbirth (v. [16](#)) and Lamech's statement where rest from toil over the ground is hoped for ([Gen. 5:29](#)). We must see in this the element of pain, sorrow and agonizing effort. This is emphasized in vv. [18–19](#) by the reference to thorns and thistles which will be reaped when edible plants are desired, and by the note of the sweat on Adam's face as effort is expended. In the garden, however, before the Fall, man's work was evidently free of grief or pain whether physical or psychological.

After the Fall, man will find that his effort to cultivate the ground, and generally to relate to it, will be painful and disappointing. But what has changed here? Has the change occurred in man or in the environment, or in both? It is often suggested or implied that the change has occurred both in man and his environment. The Fall, it is suggested, had caused the ground to become recalcitrant in a way which had not previously been the case. From this point onwards, pain, suffering and struggle penetrated the natural order as well as the human order. The lion began to prey on the lamb and the pestiferous entered the human sphere! Yet scientific opinion indicates that the qualities of suffering and struggle were part of the natural process from the very beginning. Nowhere in the Fall account is it implied that the animal world as well as the ground was cursed. Certainly death now comes upon man as he is identified with the ground from which he came. But death comes explicitly because of man's sin and the expulsion from the garden ([Gen. 3:22–24](#)) seems intended as an act of grace. God will not let man live forever (with access in the garden still, it would seem, to the tree of life!) in a fallen state.

It seems therefore preferable to suggest that what is impaired as a [p. 149](#) result of the fall is man's *control* of the ground. In this connection, Hebrew *ba'abûrf ka* ([Gen. 3:17](#), 'for your sake') is ambiguous. 'For the sake of', the basic meaning of this preposition has the built-in ambiguity of either 'on account of' and 'for the benefit of'. The sense most suited to this [Genesis 3:17](#) context is 'because of', i.e. the ground yields a curse because of man's inappropriate use in future of the ground. We may cite here [Genesis 8:21](#) where 'for the sake of' seems best rendered as 'on account of' since what follows in the post-flood world is the preserved stability of nature, in spite of the fact that 'the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth'.

We take therefore the meaning of the preposition in [Genesis 3:17](#) to signify that man's use of the ground had become impaired as a result of the Fall. The problem then, after the Fall, and our problem, is man's inability to use natural resources. The Fall has left him 'like God', i.e. he has the power to make decisions by which the course of his own life and his

world are controlled. He has not the ability, however, to be sure that the decisions taken are right in themselves, nor the assurance that such decisions once taken will promote the desired consequences. That is to say, man lives in his world unable to exercise proper dominion over nature. So far from man's dominion over the world producing the ecological problems of our world, *the very opposite is the case*. It has been the *failure* by man to exercise dominion, in the sense in which this concept is understood by [Genesis 1–3](#), which has caused the problem. It has been man's failure to serve his environment, his failure to exercise dominion in this way by proper management, his failure as a worker to understand the nature of his relationship to creation, which has furnished our world with its present spate of problems. Man lives out of harmony with nature and himself. In a world after the Fall in which testing difficulties abound, man therefore is found continually deficient and humbled. Unable to administer his charge, his mismanagement and neglect and exploitation only served to accentuate, to increase and to sharpen the inbuilt problems of the natural world, on which it seems that he was charged to expend his energies as steward of creation. Created to rule, man has found that the crown has fallen from his brow.

WORK

In view of our exegesis of [Genesis 3:17](#), how does the issue of work in our world relate to all this? Is work simply the monotonous, routine, daily expenditure of energy whose final result is that nothing remains after a lifetime of toil? Is the writer to Ecclesiastes correct and life must **P. 150** be 'hated because the work that is wrought under the sun was grievous unto me: for all is vanity and a striving after wind' ([Eccl. 2:17](#))? Should toil and labour, as an accursed thing, commanding the sweat of our brow, be left as Athenians left it to slaves and manual workers, as they claimed that the intellectual and the philosopher must give himself to something better, to the *Bios Theoretikos* and not degrade himself by working? Is work therefore beneath the dignity of a gentleman as the Greeks believed?

It is true that the Old Testament generally presupposes the fact of work and the New Testament parables and teachings of Jesus assume that secular labour of all sorts and kinds belong to the lot of man and must be undertaken by him. On the other hand, there is the plain fact that Jesus never called anyone to a particular occupation. Even if Jesus were a carpenter ([Mark 6:3](#)), there is not evidence that he continued with his craft after his call to ministry. True again, St. Paul was a tent maker, to take another New Testament example. He worked with Aquila in Corinth at this trade, but this does not provide the type of legitimization for work generally that we need; for Paul was above all a minister of the gospel who happened to be a tent maker and who, for the strategic reasons of his own mission, preferred to keep himself (cf. [2 Thess. 3:18](#); [1 Cor. 4:12](#), [9:4](#); [2 Cor. 11:7](#)). He tells us that it was his practice to work so as not to be a burden on others and so that his ministry might not be blamed. At several places, he urges Christians to do the same ([1 Thess. 4:11](#); [2 Thess. 3:10ff.](#); [Eph. 4:28](#)) but such instructions are peripheral to the thrust of his message. This type of instruction, moreover, is not vigorously pursued by him and it is obvious that while he is concerned with social harmony between classes and the preservation of the *status quo* after Christian conversion, and urges a doctrine of submission to authority ([Rom. 13](#)), Paul himself has no positive interest in work. We search in vain for the evidence in the Bible generally to support the vigorous way in which the mandate to subdue the earth has been applied since the Reformation with all the vigour of the Protestant work ethic: behind it (Brunner, 1957).

While presumably under Greek influence, the monastic movement, which thought it reckoned with work as an able means of self discipline and necessary to support human

existence as such, strongly propounded the excellence of the contemplative life as the chief end of man. All this was combated vigorously at the Protestant Reformation particularly by Martin Luther who attempted to undergird the labours of field and worship, the home and the nursery, with the dignity of worship. Luther was therefore a prime mover in generating the [p. 151](#) Protestant work ethic. Civilization and thus work was recognized as God's will for man. Encounter with the world and not withdrawal from it was henceforth in Protestant circles to mark the Christian man. The Reformation emphasized the truth that it had been the command to subdue the world which had preceded the Fall as man in [Genesis 2](#) had been charged with the care and oversight of the garden with the mandate to till it and to keep it. Man was to control creation and to use it wisely. As Wolff points out, it is important to note that man's charge to till the ground in [Genesis 2:5](#) is the only definition of the way in which man is to relate himself in the world, and the only measure of man's significance (Wolff, 1974). Man as created was removed from the general world outside and given this role in the garden. All the gifts of creation are then made over to man and his duty is now to exercise the innate capacity for toil that God had given him. As the writer continues with his account of the early period, it is of maximum importance to him as the genealogy of Cain is presented to indicate how quickly in the world the ingenuity of man devoted itself to the task of specialization of labour, the tiller of the soil joined by the breeder of the herds, the tent dweller and the musician, the technicians and workers in bronze and iron (Wolff, 1974) came into existence. Man is met by the challenge of his world and by the time we get to [Genesis 11](#), we find that even the construction of a tower whose top may reach to heaven is now not beyond the range of man who has begun at that stage to commit himself to the task of investigation of worlds beyond his own.

In our world, it is the will of God for us that we receive nothing which does not come as a shared blessing. Jesus taught us to pray, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' Daily bread is the gift of God to us through the service of others. The dignity of labour does not consist in what is done, but in the spirit in which it is done; and to this degree Luther was right at the Reformation. But it is in this matter of mutual relationships, in the world of organized labour, that the curse of the Fall manifests itself in broken relationships, rivalries, jealousies, sordid self seeking, cut throat economic rivalries, and fratricidal quarrelling. So far from being the happy workplace where regard is had brother for brother in mutual service, the happy workshop of the commonwealth of man is disarranged as a result of man's rebellion (Richardson, 1958). We continue to be fired with the technological illusion that through the ingenuity of man, we can build a better world, the dream which has inspired humanistic thinking since the Fall.

The Bible itself, however, commends industry and conscientiousness in work. The book of Proverbs understands work as an axiomatic [p. 152](#) claim on man's time and sees success as resulting from application and industry. 'A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of a diligent man makes rich' ([Prov. 10:4](#)). Riches are not seen as part of man's heritage but something which comes to him by the application of ingenuity and diligence. One has only to note the personal experience of the wisdom writer as he relates real life incidents in [Proverbs 24:30-34](#). Laziness is condemned by the book and poverty is one of its expected rewards (cf. [Prov. 13:4](#), and on the general theme cf. [Prov. 6:6-11](#)). And yet, for all this, Proverbs sees that there is no automatic connection between industry and success, for the hidden factor in personal blessing is the intervention of God (cf. [Prov. 10:22](#)). The blessing of Yahweh alone makes rich and man's own toil adds nothing to it. Yahweh also intervenes to arbitrate between man's desires and the reality which results so 'the plans of the will belong to man, but the answer from the tongue is from Yahweh'

(cf. [Prov. 16:1](#)). Riches and success remain ambiguities and thus 'Better is a little with the fear of Yahweh than great treasure and trouble with it' (cf. [Prov. 15:16](#) [Wolff, 1974]).

The Bible thus sees man as one who goes forth to his work and to his labour until the evening ([Ps. 104:19-23](#)). Labour is the common lot of man which should be accepted cheerfully. Work is part of the divine ordering for man in this world.

There is nothing to support the Greek or Stoic view, then, according to which the higher class person has to have the leisure to fashion himself physically, intellectually and aesthetically into a harmonious being (Brunner, 1957) with the real working classes existing to provide for the gentleman who is occupied with his own concerns and thus with real living. So the writer of Ecclesiastes, who accepts this under Greek influence, asserted that manual labour and the study of the law were fundamentally incompatible. But the Rabbis of the New Testament period did not accept this view; for it was their rule that no Rabbi should accept payment for his teaching or other professional activities. Each must acquire a trade and support himself with honest toil. Happy is thus the man whose labour is blessed by the Lord ([Ps. 128:2](#)) and how wretched are those whose toil is not blessed and whose labour is in vain ([Isa. 62:8](#)).

For all this, however, there is no biblical indication that work is a *vocational* call. There is no biblical example of any man being called to a particular trade. Paul thus was *called* to be an apostle and *supported* himself by tent making. The Bible is seemingly uninterested in the various trades and livelihoods and professions in which humans engage. We cannot speak with assurance about God calling a person [p. 153](#) to be a medical practitioner, a lawyer or a plumber. God calls lawyers and doctors and plumbers to be evangelists, if we are to speak of a biblical calling. First Corinthians is not advice to remain within the secular occupation in which one was engaged prior to conversion; rather it means to be faithful to the spiritual call by which the life-changing experience was had. The biblical terms *klesis*, *ekklektoi*, *ekklesia* have nothing at all to do with description of secular occupations. God calls upon us to work honestly in whatever calling we choose and to give good value for our labour (cf. the advice that John the Baptist gave to tax gatherers and soldiers in [Luke 3:13ff.](#)). Christians, of course, should be concerned on the score of what occupation is chosen. But work is not an end in itself but the means to an end which is our wider participation in the activities of the Kingdom of God.

Finally, God is at work. God is at work promoting among the lives of individuals, at this point in time, the nature and significance of the Kingdom of God. Particularly in John's Gospel we see God at work in salvation and grace, and Jesus may sum up his ministry in terms of the works that God had given him to do. At the conclusion of his ministry, Jesus could say in [John 17:4](#): 'I glorified thee on earth, having accomplished the work which thou hast given me to do', as prospectively he prayed in the shadow of the cross. He prays there for his disciples whom he had sent into the world as God had sent him into the world. This is above all the work that God has committed to us, that of labouring in his field which is the world, or in his vineyard which is the church. No other task is so urgent as the spreading of the gospel on earth.

We turn now to a new and final area for work as part of the divinely ordered structure of the world, the only command relating to our topic in the decalogue and not one related to an admonition to work or a warning against idleness, but one which endorses the need to set aside one day in seven. Though work is presupposed by the Sabbath commandment, what is important for the worker is that the Sabbath be observed and that its nature be understood.

SABBATH

Genesis 2:1–3—The Sabbath

Structure: Verse 1 is introductory and concludes the creation account while verses 2–3 combine creation with the seven-day scheme. God had completed his work and then rested. This rest is the rest of [p. 154](#) completion, not of exhaustion. The creation sabbath (the verb, however, and not the noun for ‘sabbath’ occurs) is meant to provide the context within which man is to operate. After the fall, the idea of sabbath as ‘completion’ is modelled upon God’s action of entering into his rest on the Sabbath day. [Genesis 2:1–3](#) provide the pattern of seven lines which rise to a crescendo in [3a](#), with [3b](#) emphasizing as a close, the matter of [2b](#). Verse [2:4a](#) begins what follows. Verse [1](#) is attached to [2a](#) by a common verb; [2b](#) is attached to [2a](#) because of similar conclusions; [3b](#) provides the reason for [3a](#) but is connected with [2b](#). No morning or evening is provided for the seventh day, which is thus unending. No light is able to be shed on the origins of the day from extra-biblical sources. Akkadian has the word *shabattu* which perhaps refers to a festival day, but this is uncertain. There is some evidence for the link between the day and the day of the full moon, and some biblical support for this; but a regular seventh day cannot be obtained from the lunar month. Some suggest that, in the ancient world, there were regularly-occurring market days; but there is no evidence for this in the Old Testament. Others conceive that the day derived from the Kenites who were smiths, since firemaking was prohibited on the seventh day. But these and other proposals are too tenuous to be helpful.

The verb *shabat* means ‘stop’ or ‘cease’. Sometimes it is translated ‘keep sabbath’ but this is a later derived use. The Hebrew root occurs 73 times in various themes in the Old Testament and is generally used of persons, habits, customs, coming to an end (*Qal*) or being brought to an end (*Niphal* and *Hiphil*). In none of these basic usages is the notion of ‘rest’, or desisting from work, given prominence. The seventh day is that which causes the week to stop and thus completes it. The note of ‘completion’ or ‘perfection’ is thus implicitly there, particularly by the sequence of [Genesis 2:2–3](#), and this idea of a creation rest for the creating deity is found in all creation texts of the ancient world.

The seventh day is the goal of creation in [Genesis 1–2](#), and is that for which creation exists. Such a goal cannot be gained by toil or trial but is given. Man’s fellowship with God is to be conducted on this ‘day’. There is no question of a rest from a work already done in [Genesis 2](#). The seventh day merely provides the context in which the ongoing relationship is to take place. Man is thus invited to ‘rest’ from his works and enter God’s rest! The Sabbath in Chapter [2](#) is God’s acceptance of his creation and indicates his desire for fellowship with man.

‘Sabbath’ and ‘rest’ are first brought together as concepts in [p. 155](#) [Exodus 20:8–11](#) (especially verse [11](#)) in connection with creation. Israel’s condition as resident in the promised land is in mind (cf. verse [10](#)). It is important here to note the meaning of the Hebrew *nuah* (‘to rest’) as joined with ‘sabbath’. No notion of rest from labour is implied by this verb (cf. [Gen. 49:15](#)). Rather, the verb implies movement from an unsettled condition to a fixed or settled condition. There are some few occurrences in the Old Testament meaning of relief from weariness or pain ([Prov. 29:17](#); [Isa. 28:12](#)) but these seem to be secondary extensions of the verbal idea.

It is important to note that in the early period, the ideas of sabbath and ‘rest’ are quickly brought into close connection with the sanctuary. We note that the promised land, viewed as a sanctuary, is the goal of the Exodus in the old hymnic/credal statement of [Exodus 15:17](#) and that the sabbath and the sanctuary/tabernacle are brought into close connection in [Exodus 31:12–17](#) and [35:1–3](#). Indeed, Tabernacle and sabbath are two sides of one reality. The logic seems to be that the building of the sanctuary gives expression to the principle of the Sabbath. Note also that the promised land, rest and sanctuary are

brought into connection (cf. [Deut. 12](#)). The gift of rest makes the building of the sanctuary possible and this, in its turn, documents the promised land as a *promised* land.

So a 'rest' of God ([Gen. 2:1-3](#)) indicates that creation is now settled and fixed. We note also that in the ancient world, the creation of the world is connected with the building of a temple/sanctuary and that thus man in [Genesis 2](#) is depicted as a king/priest (cf. [Ezek. 28:11-14](#)) offering worship in the sanctuary garden, the centre of the world, which is Eden.

The sabbath was made for man and not man for the sabbath! Man, created to enter in and to enjoy divine rest, still has not enjoyed divine rest! There still remains a rest for the people of God ([Heb. 4:4-11](#), where [Ps. 95](#), which speaks of Israel's failure to enter that rest, and [Gen. 2:2](#) are brought together). Israel in the Old Testament never possessed its possessions! God's cessation from his work has now become the ceaseless endeavour of Jesus ([John 5:19](#)) in providing salvation which brings rest (cf. [Matt. 11:28](#)). As a consequence of all this, the shape of the Christian Sunday is given. It is, above all, a time when we reflect upon the blessing of creation and remind ourselves that God's work to bring in the New Creation is unceasing. We further reflect, also, that whatever may be the nature of our secular occupation, God has called us in whatever we do to be faithful to the new light which has shone in our hearts. p. 156

CONCLUSION

The [Genesis 6:18](#) notion of covenant drives us back upon creation and calls upon us to understand the purpose of God for man in [Genesis 1-2](#). Man, as we noted, created to bring harmony into a world which had to be subdued, forfeited his responsibility. As a result, he was expelled from the garden and his basic relationship with God, his fellow creatures and with the soil was broken and has remained so. Yet, for all this, man is aware that there is a dignity still about his relationship with his world and his fellows. Basically, he relates himself to his fellows and to his world by 'work'. The working week culminates in his use of the seventh day to recall to himself the purpose for which the world was created. In this way, he becomes aware of God's intention through ceaseless endeavour to bring in the new creation to which the misuse of the blessings of this present evil age points.

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Contextualizing Roman Catholicism

Jerry L. Sandidge

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This paper was presented at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society and Association of Evangelical Professors of Missions last year at Philadelphia College of Bible. Though some may not agree with all the insights of the paper, it makes a good supplement to the Evangelical Perspective on Roman Catholicism produced by the Task Force of the WEF Theological Commission and published in these pages in an earlier issue.

Editor

John said to him, 'Master, we saw a man driving out devils in your name, and as he was not one of us, we tried to stop him.' Jesus said, 'Do not stop him; no one who does a work of divine power in my name will be able the next moment to speak evil of me. For he who is not against us is on our side. I tell you this: if anyone gives you a cup of water to drink because you are followers of the Messiah, that man assuredly will not go unrewarded' ([Mark 9:38–41](#), NEB).¹

The history of Pentecostal and Evangelical mission work in predominantly Roman Catholic countries has been in the tradition of Joshua ([Num. 11:29](#)) and John ([Mk. 9:38](#)). Joshua wanted to silence Eldad and Medad. They were a part of the Seventy but were not with Moses in the tabernacle at the time the Spirit was conferred upon them. Nonetheless, the Lord moved upon Eldad and Medad 'in the camp' even though they were not with the others 'round the tent'. One commentary from an Evangelical publisher calls Joshua's jealousy for [p. 158](#) Moses' authority and leadership a 'sanctuary clericalism'.² John tries to stop a man from casting out devils because 'he was not one of us ...' John wanted to defend his Lord by denying someone outside the circle of the Twelve the right to do the works of God.

¹ There is a similar passage in the Old Testament. In [Numbers 11:16–30](#) is the account of God directing Moses to call 70 elders to the 'Tent of the Presence'. God said: 'I will take back part of that same spirit which has been conferred on you and confer it on them....' The account goes on to say that 'as the spirit alighted on them, they fell into a prophetic ecstasy....' But two men, Eldad and Medad, continued to be in ecstasy (or to prophesy). Joshua, upon hearing them, went to Moses and pleaded: 'My lord Moses, stop them!' Moses refused, saying: 'I wish that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would confer his spirit on them all!'

² Philip J. Budd, *Word Biblical Commentary*. Numbers, Vol. 5 (Waco: Word Books, 1984), p. 130.