SAVIORS OF THE EARTH?
THE BIBLE AND ECOLOGY IN ECCLESIOLOGY

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The Paradox of Dominion

Life in this twenty-first century places demands on the Christian unenvisioned by the writers of Sacred Scripture. One of these is the relationship of the Christian to his environment and his commitment to it through the church of Jesus Christ. The proliferation of the technocracy of the Western world must be filtered by the theology of the Middle-eastern mind of more than twenty centuries ago.

There is a certain paradox (a statement which may seem contradictory to common sense, yet is indeed true) when we consider rule invested with man in Genesis 1:26-28. This paradox is that with which the Creator invested Himself. God the Creator elected to reconcile to Himself that which was foreign to His nature in Genesis 1:2. He further chose to exercise Lordship over that which was foreign to his nature instead of destroying it and beginning all over again. Genesis 1:2 provides us with the statement of how God was going to form the earth in the first three days of creation, and how God was going to fill the earth in the second three days of creation. Mankind was entrusted with rulership over the creation. He, to a lesser degree, would rule like the Messiah (Psalm 110:2). With the entrance of sin into the world, man’s rule would be in the stark reality of a world set in conflict with his desires (Gen. 3:15-19). He, with his sinful desires, would also not always seek the creation’s benefit, but submitted it to a curse from God because of his disobedience.

The Parameters of Dominion

Mankind’s dominion would be circumscribed by God’s punishment of his sin and expulsion from the Garden of Eden. His existence was no longer in humble dependence upon God. His existence would no longer be in a garden that was toil free. The creation itself would suffer, be in subjection to vanity, and be in bondage to corruption. Nature would identify with the curse of the woman, and woman-kind in turn would be so much more in tune with nature than the male of the species. Harmony with God and nature was history. The God who was above nature was still the Lord, and man still his calculating servant, with the earth and its fullness a cautious servant.

The Praxis of Dominion

Mankind’s first test in saving the planet was God’s commission to Noah to preserve life. The model for the practice of ecology and the Christian is found not in Israel of old, or the New Testament Church, but in the family unit. Noah saved the known world of his day,
through simple obedience to God’s command. What follows in the plan of Redemption is God’s working with the Old Testament theocracy, and then the New Testament Church. Of the 613 commands in the Mosaic Law few could be clearly discerned to be ecological or environmental in nature and none directly stipulated to be practiced to the extent of the moral Law of God. There is not a clear mandate given to the Christian Church to practice ecology. Therefore, it would appear that on the surface, the Biblical model established with Noah would be that of the practice of ecological concerns within the context of the family. If this was clearly intended to be a mandate for the nations by human government, it is curiously absent from the re-affirmation of the *Imago Dei* in Genesis 9:6, concerning capital punishment.

**The Practice of Dominion**

The primary task of the nation of Israel was to practice being a people belonging to the Lord, Ex. 19:5. This in the message of the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19-20, is repeated to the New Testament Church as found in 1 Peter 2:9-10; Titus 2:14. The people of God are exhorted not to be like the surrounding nations. Both Old and New Testament peoples of God were to be a witness to the surrounding nations drawing attention to the great covenant of the Redeemer.

Ultimate dominion by man under the Messiah awaits the time of the regeneration (Matt. 19:28), which is understood by some to be a futuristic millennial reign of Christ upon the earth. There is a further renewal of the Heavens and the Earth when the institution of the New Heavens and Earth is consummated after the millennial reign of Christ upon the earth.

Although some may argue that since this world will be renovated once and purged by fire, there is no need to address ecological concerns, such an argument is both fallacious and specious. It is fallacious because by the same reasoning people have argued against witnessing, because Christ is coming back anyway. It is specious because it is reminiscent of the logic used by the Pharisees with the Lord Jesus for the *Corban*.

**The Promise of Dominion in Stewardship**

Rule entrusted to mankind includes but is not exhausted by merely ecological concerns. The paradigm for Christian ecology is found in the humble example of Noah and also that of the benevolent disposition of God in His common grace towards his marred creation since the Fall. Rule is invested in the proper concern of the Christian in his personal stewardship of what God has given to him in his surrounding environment. An individual who takes care of his family is seen as a faithful steward of God. Taking care of our own neighborhood where we live in the global community can become a good testimony, if one recycles in the name of Christ.

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1 Michael A. Bullmore, “The Four Most Important Biblical Passages for A Biblical Environmentalism,” *TRINJ* 19:2 NS (Fall, 1998): 139-162. The passages which he discusses in depth are: Psm. 104:1-35; Gen. 1-2; Gen. 9:8-17; and Romans 8:18-23. In my treatment of the

The following lengthy note illustrates the complexity of using a translation for which subtle nuances of meaning have changed or have been lost in the English language since 1611 A.D. For the sake of convention, the common *dominion* will be used instead of the word *rule*. *Dominion* meant in the time of the Great Bible *domination* according to OED. This word had a more limited semantic domain meaning basically the exercise of sovereignty with the implication of land title. *Rule* has a much wider semantic domain to include: *to control*, *to moderate*, *to administer*, *to exercise sovereign power*, *to hold supreme command*, *to arrange or set in order*, *to lay down authoritatively*, even used of *leading* a choir, according to OED. The Hebrew word רָבָעַ is found 23x in the O.T. The Greek word ἀρχή is its equivalent in the LXX. The Latin word is the one from which the English translation dominion is derived in the Vulgate. It is translated *dominion* in the following versions: Tyndale, Great Bible, Bishop’s Bible, KJV, Darby, ERV, ASV, JPS 1917, Goodspeed, RSV, NRSB, REB, NAB, NKJV. It is translated *rule* in these translations: Geneva Bible, Rheims-Douay, Young’s, Bible In Basic English, Berkley and New Berkley *bear rule*, NASB, NIV, NEB, JPS 1985, New Century Version, *rule*. The New Jerusalem translates: *be masters* as does the New Living Translation. It is translated *master* in Moffat’s translation. Furthermore, it is translated as *take command* in Knox. This word is not the word occurring in Gen. 1:18, or 3:16 where the word *rule* appears, which is יְרֵצָה occurring 83x. The Greek equivalent in the LXX is ἀρχή and the Latin in the Vulgate is the word to *rule*. Although in Gen. 1:18 and 3:16 these translations render יְרֵצָה as *rule*: Geneva Bible, Young’s, New Century Bible, Rheims-Douay translates Gen. 1:18 as *rule*, and Gen. 3:16 as have *dominion*. Other translations adopt other renderings including: The Bible In Basic English, *rule* (1:18) and *be your master* (3:16), NASB, *govern* (1:18) and *rule* (3:16), as also, the NIV, the NEB, *govern* (1:18), *master* (3:16), JPS 1985, *dominate* (1:28) and *rule* in (3:16). In Psm. 8:6[H.7]. It is used instead of יְרֵצָה but this does not automatically mean that the terms are synonymous. Although יְרֵצָה can be used of oppression, Isa, 19:4, it is used of God’s providence in *rule* Psm. 89:10 [H.9]. Robert Duncan Culver in *TWOT* correctly observes: “There is no specific theology to be drawn from the word... Man has no authority at all as man but simply as God’s viceregent.” William White in *TWOT* correctly observes: “... יְרֵצָה does not occur in proximity to the more frequent verb, יְרֵצָה.” The Qal participle is used in Zech. 9:10 in the sense of geographical area of rule beyond mere authority or sovereignty. Since it is not used in that sense in Dan. 11:4 but sovereignty in general, a blanket uniform projection can not be made concerning the verb in all its occurrences. BDB defines יְרֵצָה to *rule*, to have *dominion*, to *reign*, and יְרֵצָה as: *to rule*, to have *dominion*, to *dominate*. The tradition before the KJV was not uniform in rendering יְרֵצָה. The word *dominion* had the nuance of land rule in 1611. It does not in common speech today. For an enlightening discussion on the image of God in man see: Meredith G. Kline, “Creation In The Image of The Glory Spirit,” *WTJ* 39:2 (Spring, 1977) 250-272; “Investiture With The Image of God,” *WTJ* 40:1 (Fall, 1977) 39-62.

Also consider these discussions with note 15. See Allan A. MacRae, *Biblical*


The point of man’s rule being contrasted to that of the Messiah is in Psalm 8, where Christ is
the Son of Man in verses four through six, cf. Hebrews 2:6-8. See end of note nine. Of the 23x
the word ʿārā ʿārā ʿārā occurs it is used once in Joel 4:13 meaning to tread. The remaining 22x to rule. It
is used of the Messiah in Psm. 110:2. The world is in conflict with Adam’s seed: pain in
childbirth and a desire to dominate the male, v. 16, for the male, toil, v. 17, sweat, v. 19, and
dust, v. 19, the latter like the judgment on the serpent, cf. 3:14. See for the desire of the woman:
Susan T. Foe, ‘What is The Desire of The Woman?’ WTJ 37:3 (Spring, 1975) 373-384; and
Susan T. Foe, Woman and The Word of God, Phillipsburg, N.J.; Presbyterian and Reformed,
1977. Michael F. Sitzinger, “Genesis 1-3 and The Male/Female Role Relationship,” GTJ 2:1 NS
(Spring, 1981) 23-44, had interacted with her material but his final objections to her view are not
that compelling. Irwin A. Busenitz, “Woman’s Desire For Man: Gen. 3:16 Reconsidered,” GTJ
7:2 NS (Fall, 1986) 203-212, contends that the desire is the female desire for intimacy in the
place of sexual desire. He rules out the immediate context of Gen. 4:7 in favor of Song of
Solomon 7:10. Despite his contentions, it is best to view the desire in the context of Genesis
with linguistic parallelism instead of using analogy of faith and remote genre questions, ignoring
genre within a close proximity of immediate context.

Just as Satan submitted the serpent to the curse of God, in v. 14., so also Man submitted the
whole of creation on the earth to God’s curse, vv. 16-19, and thus also the Seed of the Woman,
the Messiah, to having to bear the curse of the broken covenant, cf. Romans 8:18-22, note 7, and
Galatians 3:13 concerning the curse of the broken Mosaic law: Ardell Caneday, “Redeemed
From The Curse of The Law: The Use of Deut. 21:22-23 in Gal. 3:13” TRINJ 10:2 NS (Fall,
Abraham” Versus ‘The Currse of The Law:’ Another Look At Gal. 3:10-13” WTJ 53:1 (Spring,

There are at least 50 Hebrew words in the semantic domain of the concept of the wrath of
God in the Old Testament. The word ʿārā ʿārā occurs in Gen. 3:14-17 “to curse with a binding oath”
Victor P. Hamilton in TWOT notes: ‘On the basis of Akkadian arau ‘to snare, bind,’ and the
noun irritu ‘noose, sling’ Brichto following Speiser, advocates the interpretation that Hebrew
‘arar means ‘ to bind (with a spell), hem in with obstacles, render powerless to resist.’ Thus the
original curse in Gen. 3:14, 17, ‘cursed are you above all cattle’ and cursed is the ground for
your sake’ means ‘you are banned/anethmetized from all the other animals’ and condemned by
the soil (i.e. fertility to man is banned) on your account.’ Similarly, God’s word to Cain, ‘you
are cursed from the earth’ means Cain is banned from the soil, or more specifically, he is banned
from enjoying its productivity...'

The word ʿārā ʿārā defined in TWOT is derived from the verb to sorrow and to labor. In the Niphal
stem seven times and usually mental and spiritual anguish, e.g., Gen. 45:5. In the Piel it is used
of the Holy Spirit in Isa. 63;10, cf. Eph. 4:30. It is used of God in Gen. 6:6. In the Qal it is used
of a wife grieved in spirit Isa. 54:6. For the far reaching ramifications of the curse in the Fall,
John Barton Payne, The Theology of The Older Testament, (Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 1962),
pp. 218-220. Walter Kaiser, Toward Old Testament Ethics, (Grand Rapids; Zondervan, 1983),
Interpretation and History: Essays in Honor of Allan A. MacRae, eds. R. Laird Harris, Swee-

Michael A. Bullmore, “The Four Most Important Biblical Passages for A Biblical
Environmentalism,” TRINJ 19:2 NS (Fall, 1998):159-161. For contextual overview see: D. B.
Garlington, “Romans 7:14-25 And The Creation Theology of Paul” TRINJ 11:2 NS (Fall, 1990) 197-235; paying particular attention to 202-206. The creation was to pay the price also, temporarily for Adam’s sin in Gen. 3:17. Creation was subjected to frustration. Rom. 8:20. Creation was in bondage to decay, Rom. 8:21. Creation is in child-labor in pain waiting to be delivered, Rom. 8:22. [Holman Christian Standard Bible New Testament, (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2000). Note: ‘futility’ in verse twenty, and The ESV of 2001, insert mine]. Hope that the creation will be set free in verse twenty-one.

Finally, applying constructive application to this situation we find human existence in the midst of corruption and curse since the fall of mankind, see: Kenneth O. Gangel, “Leadership Coping With Cultural Corruption,” BS 144:576 (October-December, 1987) 450-460.


Man vacillates on his exercise of his dominion. Part of God’s ongoing judgment of man’s lack of exercising his judgment is the occasional sending of signs, e.g., Tremper Longman III, “1 Samuel 12:16-18: Divine Omnipotence or Covenant Curse?” WTJ 45:1 (Spring, 1994)168-171, as a part of covenant curse, cf. Jno. 3:36; 1 Cor. 14:20-22. For God’s restoration of Man’s original dominion see Psalm 8. In the eschaton see: Dan G. McCartney, “Ecce Homo: The Coming Of The Kingdom As The Restoration of Human Vice Regency” WTJ 56:1 (Spring, 1994) 1-20.

Genesis 6:8,13-ff.; 2 Pet. 2:5; Hebrews 11:7. Noah’s faith condemned the then known world, but also ironically and paradoxically preserved or saved his family and two of every kind from perishing.

It is by a family unit that the world is plunged into the curse. It is by the family unit that the world is initially preserved from destruction by water. It is by the reversal of the Messiah in the family of mankind (Gen. 3:15) that Satan will shortly be crushed (Rom. 16:20,25-26). Here the contrast between the earthly and the heavenly, as per, physical and spiritual birth in John 3:5-12.

We believe in the unity of God’s elect as one household of God. This is as per WCF Chapter 25:1. Martin H. Woudstra, ‘Israel and The Church: A Case for Continuity,’ pp. 221-238 in John H. Feinberg, ed. Continuity and Discontinuity: Essays in Honor of S. Lewis Johnson, (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1988). At the same time differing family members develop unique characteristics to and of themselves. This is as per WCF Chapter 25:2. Robert L. Saucy, ‘Israel and The Church: A Case For Dis-continuity,’ pp. 239-59 in Feinberg, ed. Continuity and Discontinuity. See how MacRae simply addresses the issue in Biblical Christianity, Letter #74, 1976, pp. 180-181. We believe in the diversity of expression between the Old Testament Assembly and the New Testament Church. A modern dispensationalism which despairingly stresses mere discontinuity is to be as much disdained as a modern covenantal theology which depreciates any future for national Israel and the land promises to it which are yet to be fulfilled in the millennium and the eternal state. The literature on this debated issue is voluminous. I would refer the reader to John Feinberg ed. Continuity and Discontinuity, and also to further illustrate: Harold O. J. Brown, TXN NS 2:1 (Spring, 1981)69-70. See: Wilbur B. Wallis, “The Pauline Conception of The Old Covenant,” Pres 4:1 (Fall, 1978) 71-82, outworking Dr. Buswell’s suggestion that old covenant being a “legalistic, self-righteous attitude.” See: James Oliver Buswell Jr., A Systematic Theology of The Christian Religion, two volumes in one, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 1:307-308, and note his charge of dispensationalism in Hodge
Herbert S. Goldstein, *Between The Lines of The Bible: A Modern Commentary on The 613 Commandments*, (New York; Crown Publisher, 1959). After perusal of this weighty volume, although one may apply some of the commands to ecological concerns, few if any can be seriously maintained to have a primary ecological *telos* in view.

The Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20 is not in conflict with the Creation Mandate, and nor should we juxtapose them as none should radically juxtapose law and grace in Scripture. We take issue with the Cultural Mandate doctrine which in reality is not a command from the Creator but an ultimatum from some of the Creator’s servants. For a Reformed exposition of Covenantal Theology, see: Mark W. Karlberg, *Covenant Theology in Reformed Perspective*, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2000). This writer would only take exception to Karlberg’s assessments of premillennialism, and certain remarks of his concerning Modern Dispensationalism.

This is in contrast to the same data being used by Michael A. Bullmore, “The Four Most Important Biblical Passages for A Biblical Environmentalism,” *TRINJ* 19:2 NS (Fall, 1998): 157-59. who concludes: “Clearly God is communicating through the covenant that all creation matters to him and that it is his determination to promote it without diminution. And as the covenant speaks of God’s solemn intention to preserve creation, it also begins to communicate, in an anticipatory way, his intention to redeem creation. Here someone may protest and accuse me of over-interpretation. After all, the covenant merely promises that there will never again be destruction by flood. Further extrapolation is unwarranted. But the covenant does speak beyond its own explicit promise. At minimum it says that God sees bird and beast as worthy of covenantal protection. He is not reluctant to group them with humans under one covenant. This itself speaks more broadly than the limits of the specific promise might at first suggest. But, more than that, it can be legitimately inferred that this covenant is representative of God’s long-term intention ultimately and finally to redeem all of creation. This is an ’everlasting covenant’ (םִיבְּגָּד הָאָדָם) — like the ones made with Abraham and with Israel — a ‘covenant for all generations to come.’ It would seem strange for God to make such a covenant to preserve creatures from destruction by water and to express that covenant so poignantly, only to let them be destroyed by some other means. If it tells us anything, Gen. 9:8-17 tells us that in God’s covenantal economy, the destiny of every living creature is somehow linked with ours. ...” pp. 158-159. The obvious implication omitted by Bullmore is that when the institution of Capital Punishment occurs there is not simultaneously given a command to subdue the environment as per Gen. 1:26-28. Imageo Dei is discussed in the population debate in C. Calvin Beisner, “Imageo Dei in the Population Debate” *TRINJ* 18:2 NS (Fall, 1997) 173-197. He argues from the Cultural Mandate position. This writer concurs with his conclusions but not with the method whereby he achieves his conclusions in the whole concept of the Cultural Mandate. Paul R. House, Old Testament Theology, Downer’s Grove, Illinois, Inter Varsity Press, 1998, pp. 60-61 on the interpretations of *imageo dei*. See: Payne, pp. 226-228; Buswell, 1:231-254; Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), pp. 442-450; Robert L. Reymond, *A New Systematic Theology of The Christian Faith*, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson, 1998), pp. 425-429; and Robert Chapman Newman, “Some Perspectives on the Image of God in Man from Biblical Theology,” *IBRI Research Report #21*, (Hatfield, Pa., 1984), pp. 20. The KJV uses the term peculiar seven times. Five times in the Old Testament the Hebrew יִכְּלָל is rendered by the Latin Vulgate peculium. Four of those occasions that are germane to our discussion are: Ex. 19:5; Deut. 14:2; 26:18; Psm. 135:4. In addition יִכְּלָל is found 1 Chron. 29:3 and Mal. 3:17, KJV translates the former as proper good and the latter as jewels. *TWOT* defines...
πίστεως as property or possession. The two occurrences in the New Testament of Titus 2:14 and 1 Peter 2:9. The Greek περιποίησιν occurs in 1 Thes. 5:9; 2 Thes. 2:14; Heb. 10:29; and 1 Pet. 2:9. Louw-Nida lexicon defines περιποίησιν as either: possession for 1 Pet. 2:9 and 1 Thes. 5:9; or as experience in 1 Thes. 5:9. The Greek periousion is found in Titus 2:14. This is the term translating ἡλγος in the LXX in Deut. 7:6; 14:2; 26:28, where in the English text the KJV renders special. Note: Melvin E. Elliot, The Language of The King James Bible, Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1967, p. 139, defines peculiar as “owned, belonging exclusively,” but does not carry an entry for special on p. 183. Ronald A. Bridges and Luther A. Weigle, eds., The King James Bible: Word Book, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1960, 1994), pp.254-255. Peculiar is cross-referenced to special on p. 317. Carefully note how this reference work pushes the RSV because Luther A. Weigle was the head of its translation committee.

17 God is unique, Isa. 40:18; 46:5. From the previous note His people are unique. It is because of God’s zeal for His house that He requires separation from the world, cf. Ex. 34:6-14. God’s zeal is categorically stated by κατεχω in Ex. 20:5; 34:14; Deut. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; by γενεσις in Ex. 20:5; Deut. 5:9; 6:15; and in Ex. 34:14 and Deut. 4:24. TWOT defines κατεχω as: be jealous. God is depicted as a jealous husband. The root appears 87 times in the Piel and the Hiphil only. Liddell and Scott define γενεσις as: a zealous admirer. For an elaborate discussion of God as husband see: Dictionary of Biblical Imagery, eds. Leland Ryken, James C. Wilhoit, Tremper Longman III, (Downer’s Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1998), p. 414. God is the lover, Ezek. 16:8; the jilted husband, idolatry is depicted as adultery, Ex. 34:15-16, Lev. 17:7, etc., and the faithful restoring husband, Isa. 54:6-7. The New Testament is Christocentric, Ephesians 5:21-32; Rev. 19:7-9; and 21:2.

18 Israel was to be a witness, Isa. 43:10. The Church is a witness, Acts 1:8. I believe that a Christocentric approach to Redemptive History solves the problem of the one and many. The Covenants of Redemption, and then Restitution (Works), and finally the Redeemer (Grace). The Covenant of the Redeemer is then subdivided into the following:


e. Covenant of The Scion of David. 2 Sam. 7:14-ff: Ps. 89. Messiah’s Torah for Israel and the Nations.

f. Covenant of The Renewal. Isa. 42, 49, and all other O.T. and NT passages on The New Covenant. The problem is that not one single New Covenant passage presents all of its provisions. The parties include: Israel, the nations, and a people in contrast to Israel ‘yet to be born,’ i.e., the New Testament Church. This writer does not regard the Scofield “Palestinian Covenant” to be a separately warranted covenant apart from the Mosaic Covenant. The same is true by this writer concerning J. Barton Payne’s “Covenant of Peace” with regard to the New Covenant, cf. Payne, Theology of The Older Testament, p. 95-ff.

This is a revision of what I had originally presented in Earl L. Brown Jr., “The Hermeneutics of Premillennialism: Help or Hinderance?” A paper delivered at the Thirty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Moody Bible Institute, 12/12/84, pp. 30. Note: pp.22-22a.

19 παλινγενεσις occurs twice in the Greek New Testament, here and Titus 3:5. I take this to mean the millennium in a premillennial construct and the phrase of χρόνον ἀποκαταστάσεως πάντων in Acts 3:21 as a reference to the eternal state. The order in 1 Cor. 15:28: οταν δὲ
When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.” Christ does reign from Jerusalem during the millennium, but could not this be as a reign above the earth like a suspended chandelier from the New Jerusalem? If the promises to David’s seed have been inaugurated with the present session of Christ on His heavenly throne, how much more when He reigns from the heavenly city suspended above Jerusalem during the millennium, and his final descent to the renewed earth after the millennium? Craig A. Blaising and Darrell L. Bock, Progressive Dispensationalism, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993, paper, 2000), pp 175-87. See: James Oliver Buswell Jr., A Systematic Theology of The Christian Religion, two volumes in one, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), p. 2:409, for his “cosmic lens perspective” on biblical prophecy.

There is much debate as to the meaning of 2 Peter 3:10 because of the textual reading. Those who are predisposed to view eternity as timelessness almost uniformly hold to an obliteration position. Those who view eternity as infinite time favor renovation. e.g. Buswell, 2:532; and compare 1:42-47. Traditionally, most Lutheran scholars have understood the text to mean a complete obliteration of the Old Heavens and Earth. Most Reformed scholars have understood the text to mean a purging of the Old Heavens and Earth. Although most Dispensational teachers would also see an obliteration, there are probably exceptions to the rule. Note: Gale Z. Heide, “What is New About The New Heaven and The New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Rev. 21 and 2 Peter 3” JETS 40:1 (March, 1997) 37-56. See: Al Wolters, “World View and Text Criticism of 2 Peter 3:10,” WTJ 49:2 (Fall, 1987) 405-413. The difference is between the reading of κατακράτησαν in the Textus Receptus and that of εὑρεθησεται in both UBS third and fourth editions. Bruce Manning Metzger, A Textual Commentary On The Greek New Testament, 1st edition, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1971), pp. 705-706; 2nd edition, (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), pp. 636-637; both give this textual problem a [D] rating. Wolters notes that with the discovery of Codices Sinaiticus and Vaticanus (both fourth century uncial since the time of Tischendorf, 1871), all the critical Greek texts read εὑρεθησεται. (For the fascinating story behind the discoveries of these two documents see: Bruce Manning Metzger, The Text of The New Testament, Second Edition, (New York; Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 42-48.) [Two recent exceptions are the Zane Hodges and Arthur Farstad, Majority Text Greek NT, (Nashville, Thomas Nelson), and the Robinson-Pierpoint Majority Text GNT 1995 in Hermeneutika: Bible Works 4.0.] These discoveries did not settle the issue with the proliferation of Bible translations since the 1870s: ERV 1881, ASV 1901, NASB, 1971, 1977, 1995, text burnt up, note discovered, NKJV, burned up, note will be discovered. The following read burnt up without footnote: Montgomery, 1924, Williams, 1937, Hooke, 1941, RSV various editions, Amplified Bible, and its revision, Beckley, and New Beckley, J. B. Phillips, Jerusalem Bible, Taylor, 1971. Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and Metzger, believe that the text was corrupted very early, cf. Wolters, p.,406. Metzger notes a variety of proposals, pp. 636-37. Space does not permit Wolters full elaboration. We believe his solution to the problem poses fewer contextual and semantic problems. Very simply, taking the synonyms for burning in the context of 2 Peter 3:3-10, and noting that there are three phases to the same world rather than two distinct worlds in view, that the use of eureqhsesetai has a close parallel to the Hebrew ἔσχις which came to mean ‘to come out of a smelting process’ with the translation in English found in the sense of smelting, cf. R. C. Van Leeuwen, “A Technical Metallurgical Use of [₤],” ZAW 98 (1986) 113, cited in Wolters, p. 412. Wolters notes that in British English there is an idiom: ‘to
show one’s metal’ which accurately paraphrases what is found in 2 Peter 3:10. With this understanding in mind, renderings: will be found are understood not in a mere search but in a metallurgist’s refinement of the earth by fire. NAB, REB brought into judgment note, lit. it will be found, New Century Version, note, disclosed is a paraphrase trying to retain a more neutral finding of fact., cf. NRSCB., and New Holman Christian Standard New Testament, 2000, Beck , 1964, it will be shown. CEV reads: “will be seen for what they are.” NEB, NIV laid bare as does NKJV note in Precise Parallel NT. A paraphrase of a paraphrase is found in The Message, “exposed to the scrutiny of judgment.”

21 Corban was a Hebrew and Aramaic word meaning ‘offering.’ The note on the NIV Study Bible is enlightening: ‘... By using this word in a religious vow an irresponsible Jewish son could formally declare to God (i.e. to the temple) his earnings that would otherwise would have gone for the support of his parents. The money, however, did not necessarily have to go for religious purposes. The Corban formula was simply a means of circumventing the clear responsibility of children toward their parents as prescribed in the law...’ so also: NSCRB, Ryrie Study Bible, and Geneva Bible as found in the notes on Mark 7:11.

22 Review note 15 carefully and compare this with the beginning of note one. Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 6:26-30 affirms God’s providential care in common grace for his creatures. WCF 1:1 states: “Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable....” (Rom. 2:14,15; Rom. 1;19;20; Psm. 19;1,2,3; Rom. 1;32). The Fifth Chapter “On The Providence of God” should be read in conjunction with this discussion.

23 C. Calvin Beisner, “Imageo Dei in The Population Debate,” TRINJ 18:2 NS (Fall, 1997): 183-185. He speaks of Christian Stewardship as the Cultural Mandate. Four areas include: fellowship, fruitfulness, faithful subjugation and maximizing God’s earthly franchise (alliteration mine). If the terminology of Creation Mandate is utilized I concur. This writer disagrees that the derived concept of Cultural Mandate as an application of the text is the primary meaning of the text.

24 This writer wholeheartedly concurs with C. Calvin Beisner’s comment: ‘Far from justifying a careless attitude toward creation, the vision I have sketched calls precisely for the pursuit of ever-improving care of creation — care, however, that differs significantly from the subservience to nature that characterizes much of the environmental movement. We are not the earth’s servants, but God’s, and he has called us to serve him, insofar as our relationship with the earth is concerned, by wise and righteous and creative dominion. This entails our fulfilling his command to multiply and fill up the earth, to subdue and rule (Gen. 1:28), and to cultivate and guard it (Gen. 2:15).’ C. Calvin Beisner, “Imageo Dei in The Population Debate,” TRINJ 18:2 NS (Fall,1997):190. Francis August Schaeffer, Pollution and The Death of Man, (Downer’s Grove, Illinois: The Inter-Varsity Press, 1970), makes certain applications for the Christian and his practicing ecology in today’s world. Francis Schaeffer has received unjust criticism by Mark Edwards, “How Shall We Then Think?: A Study of Francis Schaeffer’s Lordship Principle,” WTJ 60:2 (Fall, 1998);193-223.