

The Inauguration of the Covenant of Grace & the Beginning of God's Mission

By Jeong Koo Jeon

Although we live in an unprecedented age of global missionary endeavor due in part to the development of science and technology, it is hard to find biblical and theological discussions about *the beginning of God's mission on the earth*. The primary reason that we do not see active discussions about the beginning of God's mission is that there is a considerable lack of understanding of *biblical missiology* in the light of redemptive history patterned as Creation, Fall, Redemption, and Consummation. Therefore, in this article I will explore biblical missiology from the perspective of redemptive history.¹

Around the middle of the 20th century, under the influence of Karl Barth's ecumenical theology, some missiologists began to develop the idea of the *missio Dei*. One implication of this development in missiology has been the creation of a missiological playground to promote ecumenical theology which, in turn, led to a missiological ideology for the World Council of the Churches, founded in 1948. David Bosch is one of the major thinkers behind the concept of the *missio Dei*, and he summarizes the birth of the concept as follows:

Throughout, the Barthian influence was crucial. Indeed, Barth may be called the first clear exponent of a new theological paradigm which broke radically with an Enlightenment approach to theology (cf., Küng 1987:229).² His influence on missionary thinking reached a peak at the Willingen Conference of the IMC (1952).³ It was here that the idea (not the exact term) *missio Dei* first surfaced clearly. Mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son was expanded to include yet another "movement": Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. As far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the

doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation (Aagaard 1974:420).⁴ Willingen's image of mission was mission as participating in the sending of God. Our mission has no life of its own: only in the hands of the sending God can it truly be called mission, not least since the missionary initiative comes from God alone (cf., van 't Hof 1972:158f).⁵ Mission was not seen in triumphalist categories, though. Willingen recognized a close relationship between the *missio Dei* and mission as solidarity with the incarnate and crucified Christ.⁶

Similarly, Lesslie Newbigin, a British missionary and missiologist in India, captured the spirit of ecumenical theology and rejected the stable conception of any dogmatic or systematic truth for believers. In doing so, he provided an ecumenical missiological backbone for his followers:

THE AUTHOR: Jeong Koo Jeon, PhD, is Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology at Faith Theological Seminary of Catonsville, Maryland.

1. I will not employ the phrase *missio Dei*. The reason is that the phrase and concept have been used by missiologists and theologians who have generally promoted an ecumenical theology with liberal ethos and leanings. Instead, I will use the phrases "God's mission" and "the mission of God" to exposit the idea and implications of God's mission after the Fall from the perspective of *covenant missiology*. For a recent helpful discussion of God's mission from the perspective of God's covenants, see Paul Wells, Peter A. Lillback, and Henk Stoker, eds., *A Covenantal Vision for Global Mission* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020).

2. Anna Marie Aagaard, "Missio Dei in kathloischer Sicht," *Evangelische Theologie* 34 (1974): 420–433.

3. IMC: International Missionary Conference.

4. Hans Küng, *Theologie im Aufbruch: Eine ökumenische Grundlegung*. Munich: Piper Verlag, 1987), p. 420.

5. I. P. C. Van 't Hof, *Op zoek naar het geheim van de zending: In dialoog met de wereldzendingconferenties 1910–1963* (Wageningen: Veenman, 1972), pp. 158ff.

6. David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), p. 399.

The dogma, the thing given for our acceptance in faith, is not a set of timeless propositions: it is a story. Moreover, it is a story which is not yet finished, a story in which we are still awaiting the end when all becomes clear. Here, I think, is the point at which we may well feel that the eighteenth-century defenders of the faith were most wide of the mark. The Christian religion which they sought to defend was a system of timeless metaphysical truths about God, nature, and man. The Bible was a source of information about such of these eternal truths as could not be discovered by direct observation of nature or by reflection on innate human ideas. Any valid defense of the Christian faith, I believe, must take a quite different route. The Christian faith, rooted in the Bible, is – I am convinced – primarily to be understood as an interpretation of the story – the human story set within the story of nature.⁷

Before the dawn of the 21st century, missiologists and theologians began to discuss and develop the concept of “missional theology.” However, it is the ecumenical missiological ideology, inspired and carried by the missiological tradition of the *missio Dei* influenced by Bosch,

7. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1989), pp. 12–13.

8. John R. Franke, *Missional Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), pp. 69–70. Interestingly, Franke gives credit to Karl Barth as the fountainhead of “missional theology” as Bosch and others went to Barth for the theological inspiration of the idea of *missio Dei*. Moreover, Barth was an existential liberal theologian, but Franke falsely identifies Barth as a “Reformed theologian.” In this, Franke is massively confused: “Reformed theologian Karl Barth has helpfully reflected on this aspect of theology as attempting to trace the movement of God. What the church is called to do is simply to follow attentively the movement of God.... In light of this, Barth concludes there is no element of theological thinking that does not find its ultimate basis in the work and activity of God which always escapes our comprehension and control. This is not the result of doubt or criticism but rather of the God who is the focal point of our theology. Hence, all assertions and conclusions must be questioned in order to demonstrate their temporary and incomplete nature. The God revealed in Jesus Christ determines that in the work of theology, ‘there are no comprehensive views, no final conclusions and results’.... This is a reminder that our best theological work will always fail to do adequate justice to its subject matter and that we must never grow satisfied and complacent with our findings. Instead, in constant dependence on God, we must cultivate the habit of open-ended theology and begin our work again and again at the beginning.” *Ibid.*, pp. 67–68.

9. For my comprehensive and critical engagement and summary against Barth’s Christomonistic grace along with monocovenantalism, see Jeong Koo Jeon, *Calvin and the Federal Vision: Calvin’s Covenant Theology in Light of Contemporary Discussion* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2009), ix–91; *Idem*, *Covenant Theology and Justification by Faith: The Shepherd Controversy and Its Impacts* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006), pp. x–3.

Newbigin, and others, which constituted the foundation. For example, Franke defines “missional theology”:

In keeping with this trajectory I have proposed this definition: Missional theology is an ongoing, second-order, contextual discipline that engages in the task of critical and constructive reflection on the beliefs and practices of the Christian church for the purpose of assisting the community of Christ’s followers in their missional vocation to live as the people of God in the particular social-historical context in which they are situated.⁸

In light of this contemporary missiological and theological movement, I argue that the beginning of God’s mission is closely related to the inauguration of the covenant of grace in Genesis 3:15 and God’s proclamation of the primitive Gospel to Adam and Eve after their fall into sin. Furthermore, it is important to realize that God came to hopeless sinners as *the original missionary*. In other words, *God’s Coming* after the fall of Adam and Eve indicates that He came as the original missionary and counselor. Therefore, *God’s Coming* signifies that God is not only the original missionary but also the sovereign guide and leader of God’s mission. Moreover, *God’s Coming* suggests that not believers or missionaries, but the Triune God is the major actor of God’s mission in the fallen world.

In addition, the proper implication and understanding of the inauguration of the covenant of common grace in Genesis 3:16–19 is pertinent for the following activities of God’s mission toward people who live their lives as *diaspora*, peoples scattered to the different regions of the earth after God expelled Adam and Eve from the holy Garden of Eden.

Karl Barth’s ecumenical theology as the theological backbone of the *missio Dei*, does not give to common grace and saving grace their proper places and relations, exclusively emphasizing Christomonistic grace.⁹ However, a proper distinction between common grace and saving grace is vitally important for God’s mission after the Fall. God’s grace and mission are observable in the distinct contexts of the institutions of family, church, and state, all of which were ordained by God. Though distinct, they are organically related institutions that will be maintained and protected by God’s providential care, guidance, and blessings until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE
AND GOD'S MISSION

Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit of the knowledge of good and evil through the temptation of Satan who deceptively entered the Garden of Eden. Adam had the priestly duty to drive away Satan from the Garden of Eden in the name of Yahweh because the Garden was the visible symbol of *the invisible Heaven*. But, Adam failed to do so. Instead, Eve and Adam ate the forbidden fruit, thereby breaking the covenant of works. Afterward, Adam and Eve hid under the trees with fear, shame, and guilt (Gen. 3:1–7). However, the gracious God came to these otherwise hopeless sinners. After God approached Adam and Eve, He initiated a conversation with them and cursed Satan (Gen. 3:8–19).

Significantly, *the Coming of God after the fall of Adam and Eve* was a visible and audible Coming which indicates the historical moment for the dynamic and powerful drama of redemptive history subsequently enacted on the earth. The Garden of Eden was the original holy garden on the earth. And it was *the earthly projection and visible symbol of the invisible Heaven* which is the glorious dwelling place of the Triune God along with the holy angels. Adam and Eve were created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), and shared God's attributes of righteousness, holiness, and wisdom within human limitations (Gen. 1:26–28).

The theophany was a visible Glory which shined beautifully amid the Garden of Eden. The Glory which filled Heaven came down to the original earth and dwelled in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve as the image of God (*imago Dei*) stood in awe, observing the bright and beautiful Glory from the beginning of their existence. Before the Fall, they were able to walk with God daily, enjoying the loving and intimate covenant and spiritual relationship with God as priestly kings, looking forward to the glorious blessings of the eternal Kingdom of God. Moreover, God visibly manifested Himself in the presence of Adam and Eve with beautiful and holy Glory.

From the perspective of God's mission, we see that God's Coming after the Fall was *the Coming as the original missionary*. It suggests that before the Fall there was no concept of God's mission because the idea of God's mission was introduced by God Himself after mankind's fall from original righteousness due to sin. Moreover, God's gracious Coming to Adam and Eve indicates that the origin of missionary endeavors does not belong to believers, but to God. In doing so, God

revealed His sovereignty and initiation in the dramatic history of His mission.

God approached Adam and Eve who desperately hid themselves, covering their anxiety, fear, guilt, and shame. As soon as Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the midst of the Garden of Eden, they forfeited their original righteousness and holiness, engraved in them as the image of God (*imago Dei*) and manifested by their unashamed nakedness. The Fall radically changed everything. All their ethical and spiritual beauty disappeared. Immediately, anxiety, fear, guilt, and shame overshadowed them. They desperately sewed "fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths" (Gen. 3:7). Although the original leafy garments covered the bodies of Adam and Eve, such garb was not adequate to cover the emotional and spiritual wounds our first parents sustained as a consequence of their sin.

The sound and visible glory of the Lord was the pinnacle of the blessings of Immanuel and the objects of praise and worship for Adam and Eve before the Fall. But the voice of the Lord became the voice of thunderous fear and judgment due to the Fall. And the visible glory of the Lord became the object of fear and judgment for the fallen Adam and Eve. So, wearing loincloths, Adam and Eve hid, trying to avoid the visible glory of the Lord. Yet, God found them among the trees of the Garden and began a remarkable conversation with them, leading to healing and restoration through the grace of God (Gen. 3:8–19).¹⁰

10. If we look at biblical counseling from a redemptive historical perspective, God's Coming after the Fall to Adam and Eve was also the beginning of biblical counseling, initiated by God who is *the original Counselor* for hopeless sinners who broke the covenant of works made with God (Gen. 2:15–17). Jay E. Adams pioneered the field of biblical counseling with the publication of his famous book, *Competent to Counsel* in 1970. He coined the term, "nouthetic counseling," which emphasizes the importance of the Word of God and the invisible works of the Holy Spirit in pastoral counseling. Moreover, he emphasizes that his biblical counseling is the practical implication of Van Til's presuppositional apologetics. Nevertheless, I am surprised by the fact that he and his followers do not apply the benefits of God's common grace in the arena of biblical counseling. We need to be reminded that the proper distinction between common grace and special grace is a vitally important principle in Van Til's presuppositional apologetics. Cf., Jay E. Adams, *Competent to Counsel: Introduction to Nouthetic Counseling* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1970); idem, *A Theology of Christian Counseling: More Than Redemption* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1979).

Van Til emphasizes succinctly the proper distinction between common grace and saving grace. He self-consciously applies it in his presuppositional apologetics, biblical worldview, and systematic theology. Cf., Cornelius Van Til, *Common Grace & the Gospel* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1972).

God's conversation with Adam and Eve shows that their faithful covenant bond and loving relationship as husband and wife was broken as sin entered through disobedience and the subsequent breaking of the covenant of works. Although they stayed together after the Fall, their marriage covenant, made in the presence

of Yahweh was over as soon as they ate the forbidden fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. As hostility and hatred grew against each other, they were blaming each other without the recognition and confession of their sins in the presence of God (Gen. 3:8–13).

Meanwhile, God pronounced a curse against the serpent that Satan used as the means of temptation to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:14–15). From the perspective of God's covenant, it is a process of making the covenant of grace between God and the elect through the mediator, the woman's offspring.¹¹ "I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring" (v. 15a) is, in fact, a prophecy about the constant struggle and holy war between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan throughout human history. Remarkably, God prophesied about the Messiah's crucifixion as He declared "he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel" (v. 15b). God's curse against Satan paradoxically reveals the proclamation of the original Gospel, known as the primitive Gospel (*protoevangelium*).¹²

If viewed from a covenantal perspective, God's announcement to the serpent in Genesis 3:14–15 proclaims the covenant of grace after the Fall. And it is a historical implication of the covenant of redemption (*paetum salutis*), made among the Triune God eternally ago.¹³ God progressively revealed the rich benefits and blessings of the covenant of grace, made in Genesis 3:14–15, through the following covenants: the Noahic covenant, the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant, the Davidic covenant, and the New Covenant. In that sense, the New Covenant is the apex and culmination of the covenant of grace.¹⁴

Listening to God's proclamation of the primitive Gospel, Adam and Eve believed in Him. They were saved by God's grace alone (*sola gratia*) and faith alone (*sola fide*) in the Coming Messiah alone (*solo Christo*). God's action of "making garments of skins" and clothing for Adam and Eve was a symbolic action signifying salvation by God's grace alone through faith in the Coming Messiah (Gen. 3:20–21). In this process, Adam restored the broken marriage relationship with his wife. Adam's calling "his wife's name Eve" symbolizes Adam restoring his relationship with God and also with his wife. Moreover, clothing Adam and Eve with "garments of skins" was God's symbolic action of clothing sinners with God's infinite righteousness and holiness in the milieu of the Son's infinite and meritorious obedience through His future earthly ministry. This symbolism also signifies that the primary focus of *God's mission* is to grant the blessings of salvation for hopeless sinners in Christ.

11. Vos articulates the difference between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace comprehensively. In particular, it is important to emphasize that the principle of the covenant of works is "Do this and you shall live" which is encapsulated in Leviticus 18:5: "a) In the aspect under which God appears in both. In the covenant of works, God appears as creator and Lord; in the covenant of grace, as redeemer and father. In establishing the covenant of works, the motivation was God's love and benevolence toward unfallen man; in establishing the covenant of grace, God's mercy and particular grace toward the fallen creature. b) In the aspect under which the parties appear in their relation to each other. In the covenant of works, there is no mediator; in the covenant of grace, there is ... d) In relation to what man has to perform in this covenant. In the covenant of works, 'Do this and you shall live.' In the covenant of grace, on the other hand, there is only one way, the way of faith. If in the first covenant faith also functioned in the most general sense, it was as a part of merited righteousness. In the second, faith functions as the organ that takes possession. e) In promulgation. The covenant of works was known in part from nature through the nature written in the heart of man. The covenant of grace can only be known through positive revelation." Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, pp. 311–12.

12. For a biblical theological discussion of the inauguration of the covenant of grace in Genesis 3:14–15, see Jeong Koo Jeon, *Biblical Theology: Covenants and the Kingdom of God in Redemptive History* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2017), pp. 21–27.

13. Vos defines the covenant of redemption (*paetum salutis*) as "the counsel of peace." And he connects organically the counsel of peace as the eternal background of "the temporal covenant of grace." This organic relationship reflects the beauty and certainty of God's covenants: "a) The counsel of peace is the eternal pattern for the temporal covenant of grace. Hence many combine these two and make one covenant of them. According to our distinction, the first is eternal and the second temporal. The first is between God and the Surety; the second between the Triune God and the sinner in the Surety. b) The counsel of peace is the secure foundation for the covenant of grace. If God had not from eternity entered into a counsel of peace with Christ the surety, then there could have been no question of a bond between God and sinful man. The counsel of peace makes the covenant of grace possible." Vos, *Reformed Dogmatics*, p. 310.

14. Peter Lillback properly locates the covenant of grace as the covenantal background of "the church's missions mandate." In that regard, "God's decree of election," the covenant of grace, and God's mission are organically related: "This perspective is manifest in the teachings of Scripture. The covenant of grace emerges from within the Trinity as God's saving decree (John 17:1–3; Eph. 1:3–6; 2:8–10; 2 Tim. 1:9) and flows into time and space through the church's missions mandate (Matt. 28:18–20; John 17:18; 20:21–22; Acts 1:8). God's decree of election is realized in time through the covenant of grace with his chosen people, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament." Peter A. Lillback, "The Covenant of Grace as the Paradigm for Mission," in *A Covenantal Vision for Global Mission*, eds., Paul Wells, Peter A. Lillback, and Henk Stoker (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020), p. 54.

In light of the biblical doctrine of church, we can verify that *the visible church* on the earth began outside of the Garden of Eden after Adam and Eve were expelled. To be sure, Adam and Eve were saved by God's grace through faith when God proclaimed the primitive Gospel in Genesis 3:15. But, the Garden of Eden was the visible symbol of invisible Heaven which represented the theocratic Kingdom on the original earth. So, the visible church, when viewed through the lens of redemptive history, began after Adam and Eve were expelled from the holy Garden of Eden.¹⁵

Adam and Eve indeed received the gift of salvation by God's grace through faith when the primitive Gospel was pronounced to the fallen Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:15. At the same time, the grand drama of redemptive history was inaugurated. Moreover, the seed of the visible church was planted by God. However, the visible church was begun not in the Garden of Eden but outside of it because the original Garden of Eden was the visible symbol of invisible Heaven, the center and headquarters of the Kingdom of God.

THE INAUGURATION OF THE COVENANT OF COMMON GRACE AND THE LIFE OF DIASPORA

Charles Kraft as a cultural anthropologist insists that human beings are, from the beginning of existence, "culture-producing beings." But he highlights this claim with the statement that "Neither anthropology nor theology can speak conclusively about when culture began." In this regard, I assert that his theological agnostic stance about the origin and beginning of culture comes from a lack of covenantal and redemptive historical understanding of culture and the Bible:

It is crucial in treating a topic such as this to give attention to just what God's position is with regard to culture. We may safely contend that in some way he is responsible for the presence of culture, for he creates human beings in such a way that they are culture-producing beings. As far as anthropology can tell, there is not now, nor ever has been, a human being who is not totally immersed in and pervasively affected by some culture. Neither anthropology nor theology can speak conclusively about when culture began. But from what we are able to observe about contemporary people we must assume either that the first humans began to produce the first culture the moment they became conscious of the world around them, or that God gave them a culture at or very soon after that time.¹⁶

Most significantly, however, Kraft lacks the idea of common grace after the Fall, which is an essential ingredient for cultural advancement and development in world history outside the Garden of Eden. As briefly explored, the original culture in the holy Garden of Eden before the Fall was the theocratic Kingdom, which was the visible sign of the invisible Heaven. Adam and Eve, as the *imago Dei*, were surrounded by the wondrous combination of general and special revelation from the beginning of their existence in the Garden of Eden. They began their lives for the glory of God, producing a culture in the theocratic Kingdom according to God the Creator's original cultural mandate (Gen. 1:26–31; 2:15–24).

After the Fall, God as the Creator adjusted the outlook of cultural advancement and development outside of the Garden of Eden. That is one of the reasons why God sovereignly announced the blessings of the covenant of common grace to guide future cultural vision (Gen. 3:16–19). Thus, cultural advancement after the Fall was no longer theocratic but common grace culture, which requires viewing it in light of *the adjusted original cultural mandate* in the common grace historical context. Likewise, cultural advancement after the Fall arose from the benefits of the covenant of common grace, which is bestowed on both believers and unbelievers.

God *unilaterally* declared the covenant of common grace after He proclaimed the primitive Gospel to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:16–19). Significantly, the essence of the covenant of grace inaugurated in Genesis 3:15 displays and applies God's sovereign saving grace to the elect throughout all history after the Fall to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, the covenant of grace is *bilateral*, which requires an intimate covenantal relationship so that believers may manifest holiness amid pilgrimage in a broken and fallen world. God's special word of revelation of "I will be your God, and you shall be my people" (Ex. 6:7; Jer. 7:23; Eze. 36:28) is the best summary of the bilateral aspect of the covenant of grace. The rich promises of the covenant of grace will be consummated in "the holy city, new Jerusalem" after the final judgment (Rev. 21:3, 7).¹⁷

15. In general, Dispensationalists understand the beginning of church with the Pentecost event, recorded in Acts 2:1–13. This is because they do not read the biblical doctrine of the church from the perspective of redemptive history.

16. Charles H. Kraft, *Christianity in Culture: A Study in Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective* (NY, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2005), p. 81.

17. For a biblical theological exploration of covenant eschatology

The covenant of common grace is God's sovereign means to preserve world history until the Second Coming of Christ, which will be the day of final judgment. In light of final judgment, God's unilateral declaration of the covenant of common grace is a covenantal means of its delay. Sinners who violated God's holy and righteous law, breaking the covenant of works, given in Genesis 2:15–17, do not deserve anything except death and eternal punishment in Hell. Nevertheless, God graciously announced the benefits of the covenant of common grace, which are shared by believers and unbelievers as long as world history continues on the earth.¹⁸

The original Garden of Eden was the earthly symbol of the invisible Heaven. In other words, the theocratic Kingdom of God was visibly administered in the Garden of Eden. Later, the covenant community of Israel was delivered into the Babylonian exile for 70 years when they broke the Mosaic covenant of law (2 Kings 25:30; 2 Chr. 36:11–23; Jer. 52:1–34). As a result, God banished them from the Promised Land because it was *a type of the eternal Kingdom of God*. In that sense, sinners lost the God-given right to dwell in the Garden of Eden, although Adam and Eve were saved by the grace of God.

So, God banished Adam and Eve from the Garden. Nevertheless, Adam and Eve's expulsion from the holy

Garden of Eden was *the beginning of diaspora* in human history if looked at from a redemptive historical perspective. The concept of *diaspora* is related to God's mission after the Fall. Before the Fall the idea of diaspora did not exist. In fact, diaspora relates to pilgrimage in the wilderness outside the original Garden of Eden.

God's making "garments of skins" for Adam and Eve prepares them for their expulsion from the Garden of Eden (v. 21). It was a visible symbol that Adam and Eve's broken relationship with God was graciously restored. At the same time, Adam's broken relationship with Eve as a husband was restored. Thus, the covenant of grace announced in Genesis 3:15 is a marriage covenant that restores the broken relationship between sinners and God.¹⁹ "Garments of skins" covering Adam and Eve symbolizes their salvation by God's grace, although they were about to be ousted from the Garden of Eden:

¹⁸And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. ¹⁹Then the LORD God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" ²⁰therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²¹He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life (Gen. 3:21–24).

"He drove out the man" (v. 24a) highlights God's sovereign action of expulsion against Adam along with Eve who broke the covenant of works through the temptation of Satan. Because Adam and Eve lost their precious privilege and right to take care of and guard the Garden of Eden, God instead placed "the cherubim and a flaming sword" to guard it (v. 24b). Adam and Eve were not allowed to return to the Garden of Eden because it was the holy Garden, representing the glorious Heaven on the original earth. They were not able to come back to the Garden of Eden although they were saved by God's grace under the principle of the covenant of grace. It is a visible lesson that no one can enter the heavenly Kingdom of God with a sinful nature. So, Adam and Eve began their life of pilgrimage in the wilderness as the diaspora. In that sense, Adam and Eve outside of the Garden of Eden were *the original diaspora*. Nevertheless, Adam and Eve's original diaspora was the result of their sin, and God orchestrated this diaspora as a consequence of their breaking the covenant of works.²⁰

After God expelled Adam and Eve from the holy

in light of the progressive character of God's special revelation in the Bible, see Jeong Koo Jeon, *Biblical Eschatology: Covenant Eschatology for the Global Mission Age* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2021).

18. To understand God's mission properly from the beginning, a proper distinction between the covenant of grace and the covenant of common grace is vitally important. For a biblical theological interpretation of the distinction between these two types of grace in the interpretation of Genesis 3:14–19, see Jeon, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 20–32; Meredith G. Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview* (Overland Park, KS: Two Age Press, 2000), pp. 143–60.

19. Interpreting Genesis 3:21, Kline uses a marriage metaphor as God symbolically demonstrates the gracious restoration of the broken relationship under the blessings of the covenant of grace, inaugurated in Genesis 3:15: "Clothed them" (v. 21). Spreading a garment over another was a pledging of troth (cf. Ruth 3:9). The Lord symbolically sealed his promise to renew his (marriage) covenant with the woman and her seed (cf. v. 15), and by the same token reunited Adam and Eve in their earthly marriage. **Garments of skin.** A sacrificed animal provided the covering-remedy for the nakedness of divorce, symbolic of the atoning suffering of the woman's messianic seed." Meredith G. Kline, *Genesis: A New Commentary*, ed. Jonathan G. Kline (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2016), p. 24.

20. Examining Genesis 3:23–24 from the perspective of redemptive history, Kline identifies Adam and Eve's expulsion by God from the holy Garden of Eden as *the origin of diaspora as God's judgment due to Adam's breaking of the covenant of works*: "Driven from his native homeland, the holy and blessed land, into a world profane and cursed, man is in exile on the face of the earth. His historical existence is a wandering east of Eden, a diaspora. Until the restoration of all things,

Garden of Eden, they began a pilgrimage under God's grace. They were clothed with the infinite righteousness of God and saved by the grace of God (Gen. 3:20). Similarly, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in his epistle to the Romans, encourages them to clothe themselves with Jesus Christ in their daily lives. In doing so, he uses the metaphorical language of wearing clothes (Rom. 13:12–14). It signifies that believers under the New Covenant live their lives clothed with the righteousness and holiness of Jesus Christ; they are united with Him in His death and resurrection in their pilgrimage through the works of the Holy Spirit while they are waiting for the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Adam and Eve began their pilgrimage outside of the Garden of Eden as a covenant family, worshipping the living God amid life in the rough wilderness. In the diaspora process, Eve gave birth to Cain and Abel. Cain was "a worker of the ground" while his brother Abel was "a keeper of sheep." One day, Cain brought to Yahweh "the fruit of the ground" as an offering. Abel gave "the firstborn of his flock and of their fat portions" to Yahweh. Surprisingly, Yahweh accepted Abel's offering while he rejected Cain's offering (Gen. 4:1–7). Moreover, the Bible reveals that Cain was not a member of the elect but the reprobate (Heb. 11:4; 1 John 3:12). Yahweh's rejection of Cain's offering is the first historical and visible revelation of the biblical doctrine of double predestination: dividing the elect and the reprobate.²¹

Tragically, Cain killed his brother when they were in the field. This episode marks Cain as the first murderer in human history. After Cain killed Abel, Yahweh came and spoke with Cain (Gen. 4:8–16). "Then Cain went away from the presence of the Lord and settled in the land of Nod, east of Eden" (v. 16) suggests that Cain after his conversation with Yahweh moved away from not only "from the presence of the Lord" but also his parents Adam and Eve, who had nurtured their children both physically and spiritually. This is an important turning point in human history: Cain became the father of pagan culture and community outside of the Garden of Eden as he departed from his parents and the presence of Yahweh. As Cain departed he became *the father of the non-covenant community*. From that point on, he became an idol worshipper, creating pagan culture. From a diaspora perspective, Cain's departure inaugurated the non-covenant community diaspora. Ever since, diaspora has been characterized by either covenant community diaspora or non-covenant community diaspora.

Although Cain was not a member of the elect, he was able to build a city—Enoch—which was the city

of God's common grace, described in Genesis 3:16–19. Cain, the father of non-covenant community diaspora, led the building of the first city outside the Garden of Eden. Although he built the city through the benefits of the covenant of common grace, the Enoch community did not glorify God. Instead, the city became the symbol of human pride and arrogance, representing the Kingdom of Satan on the earth.

Nevertheless, Yahweh blessed Cain's family with prosperity, although they were idol worshippers as a non-covenant community. As Cain's community built the city of Enoch, they invented tents to dwell in, musical instruments, and mechanical instruments:

¹⁷Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch. ¹⁸To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad fathered Mehujael, and Mehujael fathered Methushael, and Methushael fathered Lamech. ¹⁹And Lamech took two wives. The name of the one was Adah, and the name of the other Zillah. ²⁰Adah bore Jabal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. ²¹His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. ²²Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah (Gen. 7:17–22).

"Cain knew his wife, and she conceived and bore Enoch. When he built a city, he called the name of the city after the name of his son, Enoch." (v.17). Cain's community was the first city built under God's covenant of common grace. But Cain named the city Enoch, using his son's name. This showed that Cain as the father of the non-covenant community did not believe in God but became an idol worshipper. His primary focus was to glorify humans and their achievements, who were following the spirit of the Kingdom of Satan rather than the spirit of the Kingdom of God. Nevertheless, God is a gracious and long-enduring God who allowed dwelling places in different places of the earth although the people fell into idol worship.

The material blessings given to Cain's family indicate

the earth has taken on the character of a wilderness, lying outside the holy land of promise. It is a realm under the shadow of death. When the model of paradise and exile-wilderness is later applied to the typological history of Israel, the prophet Ezekiel depicts the Israelite diaspora under the image of a valley full of skeletons and he sees restoration from exile as a resurrection from the dead." Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, p. 137.

21. For a biblical theological discussion about Cain as the first historical example of a reprobate, see Jeon, *Biblical Theology*, p. 29.

that God not only materially blesses unbelievers but also uses them to develop divergent cultures, science, and technology through the covenant of common grace. This is seen in verses 20–22: “20 Adah bore Jubal; he was the father of those who dwell in tents and have livestock. 21 His brother’s name was Jubal; he was the father of all those who play the lyre and pipe. 22 Zillah also bore Tubal-cain; he was the forger of all instruments of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-cain was Naamah.” It is ironic that the non-covenant community began to develop tents, musical instruments, and “all instruments of bronze and iron” after Adam and Eve were expelled from the holy Garden of Eden, due to the breaking of the covenant of works. This reminds believers that it is God’s will that believers may use and share cultural benefits, science, and technology developed by unbelievers. Moreover, believers may use them effectively and wisely *for evangelism and mission* by filtering such advancements through the lens of the gospel. Moreover, the benefits of culture, science, and technology are *temporary benefits and blessings* that can be shared between believers and unbelievers without any discrimination. In other words, no matter how good and beneficial such developments may be, they are not heavenly but earthly, so that when the day of final judgment arrives, they will all be terminated.²²

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve exercised their servanthood, having dominion over the wonderful creatures in the Garden of Eden. Of course, this dominion glorified God the Creator as the Great King who created the heavens and the earth. They understood that they were created as the image of God (*imago Dei*). Moreover, they had “a sense of divinity” (*sensus Divinitas*) from the beginning and praised and worshipped God with their joyful hearts, minds, and souls.²³ As soon as God created them, He issued *the original cultural mandate*:

“Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and

over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. ²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Gen. 1:26–28).

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (v. 28b) is God’s original cultural mandate to Adam and Eve. In fact, the daily exercise of the cultural mandate was a joyful and productive one. So, there was no frustration and despair in carrying out this mandate in the Garden of Eden. Their cultural exercise was to glorify the name of God whatever they did. Adam’s daily work along with his wife Eve was beautiful, creating holy culture consecrated to God. And God blessed their daily work in the Garden of Eden before the Fall.

Later, after the Noahic Flood judgment, God adjusted the original cultural mandate and commanded *the new cultural mandate* in Genesis 9:1–7. Moreover, the new cultural mandate was given in the historical context of the renewal or recovery of the covenant of common grace (Gen. 8:20–9:17). In doing so, God provided the wondrous historical playground to save His elect through evangelism and mission.

Meanwhile, Adam’s son, Abel was not only a true believer but also a sincere worshipper amid his pilgrimage outside of the Garden of Eden with his parents. Nevertheless, his life ended tragically by his brother Cain’s hand. So, God provided Adam and Eve with another son Seth “instead of Abel.” Seth’s son Enosh began “to call upon the name of the Lord” (Gen. 4:25–26). By comparison, Cain’s non-covenant community did not call upon the name of Yahweh when they built a city, naming it instead the city of Enoch. But Enosh as the son of the Adamic covenant community worshipped Yahweh, honoring and glorifying His name above all the names of the earth.

God’s providing another son, Seth, and Seth’s son Enosh then calling upon the name of Yahweh show God’s post-will after the Fall to provide faithful covenant communities without any discontinuity in His providence. It signifies that God in His providence always preserves *the remnant of the covenant community* in a fallen and broken world, although sinners lost the

22. For example, the *Kimchi* food culture was developed and adapted by the people in the Korean Peninsula. Today, people in the global community enjoy the hot and sour Kimchi, transcending culture and religion. Likewise, believers living in the age of global missionary endeavor need to have a proper and healthy perspective on different cultures in the process of sharing and adaptation.

23. Calvin properly indicates that all human beings are *religious* from the beginning of world history. It is because God implanted “a sense of deity” into “the hearts of all” without any exception. Cf., John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, in *Library of Christian Classics*, vols. 20–21 (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975).

original paradise in the Garden of Eden. So, the covenant community members may continually worship the living God throughout their lives, manifesting and extending the spiritual Kingdom of God on the earth.

When God created Adam and Eve, He created them as the image of God (*imago Dei*) as previously explored. Man as the image of God separated him from all other animals that God created (Gen. 1:26–28). Because of this unique aspect, Adam and Eve enjoyed their intimate loving and covenantal relationship with the living God in the Garden of Eden. The Garden of Eden was *the holy temple* on the original earth, and Adam and Eve marveled in the visible presence of Yahweh which was manifested with the mysterious form of the theophanic Glory. The Garden of Eden as the holy temple was an earthly projection of the glorious temple of Heaven, which is invisible. The Garden of Eden was beautifully shining not only due to the sunlight but also the visible beauty of the theophanic Glory. As such, God was enthroned in the center of the Garden of Eden as the Great King of the Kingdom of God.²⁴

After the Fall, Adam and Eve restored their relationship with God under the blessings of the covenant of grace. Adam as head of the covenant family nurtured and raised Seth to glorify God, using all his heart, mind, and soul (Gen. 5:1–5). When Adam was 130 years old, God provided Seth in the place of Abel: “when Adam had lived 130 years, he fathered a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth” (v. 3). Adam’s fathering Seth “in his own likeness, after his image” indicates that Adam raised Seth as a covenant child, guiding and teaching him how to worship Yahweh in their pilgrimage *as covenant diaspora*. The indwelling work of the Holy Spirit was constantly working in Seth so that he demonstrated himself as a child of God in his daily life. In that manner, God’s mission was continued through Adam’s covenant family, granting the gift of salvation to them through the powerful work of the Holy Spirit.

After Seth, God provided a covenant family to Noah (Gen. 5:6–32). God sovereignly provided *the remnant community of believing diaspora*. Of special note is the brief description of the life of Enoch who was a recipient of the blessings of saving grace:

¹⁸When Jared had lived 162 years he fathered Enoch.

¹⁹Jared lived after he fathered Enoch 800 years and had other sons and daughters. ²⁰Thus all the days of Jared were 962 years, and he died. ²¹When Enoch had lived 65 years, he fathered Methuselah. ²²Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah 300 years and had other sons and daughters. ²³Thus all the days of Enoch

were 365 years. ²⁴Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him (Gen. 5:18–24).

Moses as the inspired human author of Genesis highlights Enoch’s life when he writes, “Enoch walked with God” (v. 22a). An important indicator that God enormously blessed Enoch’s spiritual life is God’s intimate personal and covenantal relationship He had with Enoch. It suggests that God guided Enoch’s spiritual life through direct special revelation, granting him the gift of salvation. Furthermore, Enoch’s entire life culminated with a brief statement of “Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him” (v. 24).²⁵ Especially, “and he was not, for God took him” (v. 24b) is the epilogue of the life of Enoch on the earth. One day, God took Enoch so that people were not able to see him again on the earth. Surprisingly, that means Enoch did not experience physical death. Instead, God took his living body to the glorious Heaven where God’s beautiful Glory was dwelling permanently. In doing so, God shows that the souls of believers upon physical death go directly to the invisible Heaven through the supernatural and gracious works of God. In addition, Enoch’s ascension reveals that the invisible realm of Heaven indeed exists. It signifies that *the primary focus of the missionary endeavors of the believing community* should lie in saving souls, proclaiming the good news of the Gospel to lost souls.

Through the Noachic Flood judgment, God wiped out the original Garden of Eden along with the surface of the earth and recreated the earth as we see it now. All the visible cultural accomplishments developed under the blessings of the covenant of common grace were completely destroyed as well (Gen. 6:5–8:19). Additionally, God demonstrated that the invisible Heaven exists as He removed Enoch without experiencing physical death. After the Noachic Flood judgment, God once

24. For divergent understandings of biblical theological discussions of the Garden of Eden as God’s temple, see G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church’s Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*; Jeon, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 2–12; Kline, *Kingdom Prologue*, pp. 42–61.

25. The expression of “walked with God,” according to Kline, is an indicator that the covenant people received God’s special word of revelation in the Spirit as prophets: “To address warnings to the apostates from within and the ungodly without, God raised up prophets among his people, like Enoch (vv. 21–24; cf., Jude 14, 15) and Noah (2 Pet 2:5). Each of these walked with God (vv. 22, 24; cf., 6:9), that is, they received special revelation, caught up in the Spirit, and were associated with the Lord in His judicial confrontation with mankind (cf., the use of this verb in Gen 3:8; Job 1:7; 22:14; Zech 1:11).” Kline, *Genesis*, 30.

again revealed that Heaven exists through Elijah's supernatural ascension. The prophet Elijah ascended to Heaven while his disciple Elisha witnessed the marvelous scene. Elisha shouted "My father, my father! The chariots of Israel and its horsemen" (v. 12b) because he was so captivated by the miraculous visible event which he witnessed (2 Kings 2:9–14).

Such biblical events demonstrate Heaven as the invisible realm and is *the central realm of the Kingdom of God*. In other words, without the recognition of the existence of Heaven, any idea or discussion of the Kingdom of God is meaningless. Furthermore, under the New Covenant, God visibly manifested that Heaven exists through the ascension of the resurrected Jesus Christ. Forty days after His bodily resurrection, Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven while His disciples watched in awe the supernatural scene at the Mount of Olives (Acts 1:6–11). Thus, God revealed the existence of Heaven with the episode of Enoch's ascension. God already showed the existence of Heaven to Adam and Eve with the creation of the Garden of Eden, which was the visible sign of the invisible Heaven. Likewise, Enoch's ascension was a visible warrant that Heaven exists after Adam and Eve were expelled from the holy Garden of Eden. Believers in the line of the Adamic covenant community had not only the blessings of salvation by God's grace but also the hope of Heaven while they lived *the godly life of diaspora* outside of the Garden of Eden.

A brief history of the covenant family line from Adam to Noah revealed in Genesis 5:1–32 signifies that *God's mission to save sinners* was focused on the line of covenant family through God's special word revelation. Through the guidance of God's special word revelation, the father, as the covenant head of his family, leads them to worship Yahweh and to set themselves apart from the fallen world, honoring and glorifying the name of Yahweh. In that sense, from the perspective of God's

mission, God was not only the original missionary to Adam and Eve, but also continued to save the elect through the covenant family line from Adam to Noah without sending any missionary to the non-covenant community.

A PROPER DISTINCTION BETWEEN COMMON GRACE AND SAVING GRACE

Around the end of the 19th century, Herman Bavinck was deeply moved by Calvin's doctrine of the distinction between common grace and saving grace while he was reading through Calvin's *magnum opus*, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, the final version being published in 1559. Bavinck thought that the theological and practical implications of the distinction between common and saving grace was a powerful way for believers to bolster their biblical worldview against secular liberal and other religious worldviews. Bavinck wrote his landmark article on *Common Grace* in 1894 and brilliantly captured a proper distinction between "general and special grace," which is essential doctrine not only for biblical worldview but also for biblical missiology as well:

Thus it is that Calvin, in dependence upon and with an appeal to Scripture, comes to distinguish between general and special grace, between the working of the Spirit in all creation and the work of sanctification that belongs only to those who believe. God did not leave sin alone to do its destructive work. He had and, after the fall, continued to have a purpose for his creation; he interposed common grace between sin and the creation—a grace that, while it does not inwardly renew, nevertheless restrains and compels. All that is good and true has its origin in this grace, including the good we see in fallen man. The light still does shine in the darkness. The spirit of God makes its home and works in all the creation.²⁶

As Bavinck brilliantly envisioned, for the comprehensive vision and outlook of *God's mission in redemptive history*, a proper distinction between common grace and saving grace is vitally important. God never separated common grace from saving grace. Rather, common grace and saving grace have never been disjointed but always organically related after the inauguration of the covenants of grace and common grace (Gen. 3:15–19). In that sense, the delicate nuance of a proper distinction between common grace and saving grace should be captured while safeguarding against a complete separation between common grace and saving grace

26. Herman Bavinck, "Common Grace," trans. Raymond C. Van Leeuwen, *Calvin Theological Journal* 24/1 (1989): 51. Bavinck was a pioneer of Neo-Calvinism along with Abraham Kuyper, applying the proper distinction between common grace and saving grace into the arena of Christian worldview. For the most recent comprehensive analysis of Neo-Calvinism, see Cory C. Brock and N. Gray Sutanto, *Neo-Calvinism: A Theological Introduction* (WA, Bellingham: Lexham Academic, 2022).

Surprisingly, we don't see the missiological vision in light of the proper distinction between common grace and saving grace although J.H. Bavinck was one of the pioneers in the arena of missiology in the 20th century as the nephew of Herman Bavinck. See J. H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions*, trans. David Hugh Freeman (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1960).

or an improper mixture between common grace and saving grace.

God instituted three different entities on the earth, namely *family*, *church*, and *state*. He formed the family as a primary creation ordinance in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. Later, God instituted the church and state after He expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden. Importantly, God formed the church as an institution of saving grace while He instituted the state as an institution of common grace. In that sense, a proper distinction between church and state is warranted. Moreover, the organic nature and relationship between family, church, and state are vitally important for the comprehensive and coherent understanding of *God's mission* in redemptive history.

After the beautiful and wondrous creation of the heavens and the earth through the supernatural works of God, He created Adam and Eve as the image of God (*imago Dei*). In doing so, God, as the Creator, made Adam and Eve covenantal, personal, and spiritual beings who could have intimate covenantal, personal, and spiritual relationships not only with God but also with other people (Gen. 1:26–28). As God formed the original family, He used a covenantal marriage between male and female as a means to form the family (Gen. 2:19–25). God defined the divine meaning of family and marriage. The summary description of “And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man” (v. 22) suggests that God created Eve, using Adam's rib, and conducted the wedding ceremony. In particular, the compact description of “and brought her to the man” (v. 22 b) is the pictorial description of God's sovereign action in the process of *the first wedding ceremony* on the earth. As God brought the lovely bride Eve, Adam was so happy and joyful that he sang the love song to his beautiful and elegant bride in the presence of God: “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man” (v. 23). Indeed, this was the first ever love song, sung by the original earthly bridegroom with a poetic expression.²⁷

In doing so, God set the pattern of marriage *only between a male and a female*. In that sense, the legalization of gay marriage in both the church and state is not only the visible apostasy of the church but also rebellion against God's creation ordinance in the age of global missionary endeavor. God as the Creator of the family conducted the first wedding ceremony of Adam and Eve. Moreover, He was the divine eyewitness of the covenantal wedding ceremony between Adam and

Eve. In that sense, God defined the divine meaning of marriage and family in the Garden of Eden.

Meanwhile, God instituted the church and state outside of the Garden of Eden because He formed the holy Garden of Eden as the earthly projection of *the invisible Heaven*. So, the Garden of Eden was not the beginning of the state but instead the theocratic kingdom, which was a visible representation of the invisible Heaven on earth. Meanwhile, the church is a living organism of saving grace after the Fall while the state, the institution of common grace, is the visible institution, composed of its people and land.

A proper distinction between church and state is God's sovereign plan to execute His mission in the fallen world until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Nevertheless, church and state should never be separated because the institutions of church and state are closely and organically related in world history.

The first visible church was composed of Adam's family which was the direct fruit of God's mission, carried out by God Himself without using a human medium. It is significant because God is sovereign in the plan and execution of the mission to save the elect on earth. As He saved His people through His grace, God was glorified through the original believers' worship and life. Moreover, Adam's family, the covenant community, enjoyed the blessings and benefits of common grace while they were worshipping and praising the living God amid their rough pilgrimage.²⁸

God's mission was the harmonious Trinitarian work from the beginning. Adam's covenant family was saved by God the Father through the special operations of the Holy Spirit in Christ. The Triune God harmoniously worked together in bestowing saving grace to His people. God proclaimed His special word revelation to Adam and his family as the original missionary. And

27. Interpreting Genesis 2:22, Calvin highlights that marriage is “the lawful and pure ordinance of God,” originally instituted by God in the Garden of Eden. In that sense, Calvin argues that we need to recognize God as the author of wedding: “Moses now relates that marriage was divinely instituted, which is especially useful to be known; for since Adam did not take a wife to himself at his own will, but received her as offered and appropriated to him by God, the sanctity of marriage hence more clearly appears, because we recognize God as its Author. The more Satan has endeavoured to dishonour marriage, the more should we vindicate it from all reproach and abuse, that it may receive its due reverence. Thence it will follow that the children of God may embrace a conjugal life with a good and tranquil conscience, and husbands and wives may live together in chastity and honour.” Calvin, *Genesis*, 2:22.

28. A proper distinction between the visible and invisible church is a vitally important concept, as well, for the balanced view of God's mission in redemptive history.

Adam and Eve along with their covenant child Abel believed Him. They were regenerated, justified, and sanctified by God through the special operations of the Holy Spirit in Christ. However, Cain, the reprobate, did not receive the gift of salvation from God although he participated in the worship as a member of the original visible church, which was composed of Adam's family outside of the Garden of Eden. In that sense, Cain was merely the recipient of the blessings of the common operations of the Holy Spirit, which are not the benefits of saving grace but of common grace.²⁹

God is such a gracious God. God's grace manifested abundantly to the life of Cain although His grace was limited to the sphere of common grace. As he departed his parents' home, Cain became independent, and his family no longer worshipped the living God and became idol worshippers. Nevertheless, the gracious God bestowed abundant blessings in the sphere of common grace to his family: they were able to build the city named Enoch. In many ways, Enoch, as the first city, developed under the blessings of common grace.

29. It is crucial to recognize that God the Father bestows the blessings of common grace to believers and unbelievers alike without any discrimination through the general operation of the Holy Spirit. Berkhof captures the importance of the proper distinction between "the general and the special operations of the Holy Spirit" as follows: "There is a certain similarity between the general and the special operations of the Holy Spirit. By His general operations He originates, maintains, strengthens, and guides all life, organic, intellectual, and moral. He does this in different ways and in harmony with the objects concerned. Something similar may be said of His special operation. In the redemptive sphere He also originates the new life, fructifies it, guides it in its development, and leads it to its destiny. But in spite of this similarity, there is nevertheless an essential difference between the operations of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of creation and those in the sphere of redemption or re-creation. In the former He originates, maintains, develops and guides *the life of the natural creation*, restrains for the present the deteriorating influence of sin in the lives of men and of society, and enables men to maintain a certain order and decorum in their communal life, to do what is outwardly good and right in their relations to each other, and to develop the talents with which they were endowed at creation. In the latter, on the other hand, He originates, maintains, develops, and guides *the new life* that is born from above, is nourished from above, and will be perfected above, - a life that is heavenly in principle, though lived on earth." Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988), p. 426.

30. Karl Barth, as an existential liberal theologian, rejects a distinction between general and special revelation. In doing so, he outrightly denies the proper place of natural theology, which is pertinent for biblical apologetics, evangelism, and mission. In his famous debate against Emil Brunner, Barth plainly dismisses the legitimacy of general revelation, which is a cornerstone of natural theology. Cf., Emil Brunner and Karl Barth, *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace" by Professor Emil Brunner and the Reply "No" by Dr. Karl Barth*, trans. Peter Fraenkel (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002).

Moreover, it was *the origin of state*, which was built in the land of Nod, east of the Garden of Eden (Gen. 4:16-17). Enoch, the city, had its dwellers and the land within its borders.

Cain's family not only built Enoch but also developed the common grace culture, which included the invention of tents, musical instruments, and "all instruments of bronze and iron" (Gen. 4:20-22). God providentially allowed Cain's family and their descendants to develop a *common grace culture* that might be shared by believers and unbelievers. Of course, a difference lies in the fact that believers might use the benefits of common grace culture for the glory of God, filtering it through God's special revelation while unbelievers use such grace for their own glory.

God bestowed knowledge, skill, understanding, and wisdom through the blessings of general revelation so that Cain's family developed a common grace culture through the common operation of the Holy Spirit. Certainly, they were idol worshippers, serving the Kingdom of Satan in their hearts, minds, and souls. Nevertheless, Cain's community developed the common grace culture through the lens and light of general revelation without God's special word revelation. Meanwhile, God provided His special word revelation to Adam's covenant line so that they were able to use the common grace culture, discerning it in light of special revelation, for God's glory.³⁰

SUMMARY

I examined God's Coming to Adam and Eve after the Fall from the perspective of God's mission. In addition, I identified that God's Coming after the Fall was *the visible and audible sign of the beginning of God's mission* in redemptive history outside of the Garden of Eden. In that sense, God came to Adam and Eve as the original counselor and missionary, proclaiming the primitive Gospel (Gen. 3:14-15). This signifies that God's mission after the Fall always centers around the proclamation of the Gospel to sinners. Furthermore, I discussed that God's pronouncement of the curse against the serpent was a process of making the covenant of grace between God and the elect through the mediator, Messiah, who will be coming as the woman's offspring.

I identified that the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden was indeed *the origin of diaspora after the Fall* (Gen. 3:21-24). And it was the beginning of world history outside of the Garden of Eden. Cain's departure from the presence of Yahweh and settling "in the land of Nod, east of Eden" (Gen. 4:16) was the

beginning of a dividing watershed between covenant diaspora and non-covenant diaspora.

God's mission to save sinners from Adam to Noah was limited to the covenant family lines (Gen 4:1-26). At that time, God did not send missionaries to the non-covenant community. Rather, God's mission was focused on the covenant community through direct special word revelation. And the members of the covenant community called on the name of Yahweh, honoring and glorifying Him amid pilgrimage outside of the Garden of Eden as covenant diaspora.

I explored that God distinguished between common grace and saving grace although He never separated

them. Moreover, I examined a proper distinction between common grace and saving grace in light of the inauguration of the covenant of grace (Gen. 3:15) and the covenant of common grace (Gen. 3:16-19). I highlighted the importance of an adequate understanding of family, church, and state, instituted by God. God formed family *as a creation ordinance* in the Garden of Eden before the Fall. Later, He instituted church and state outside the Garden of Eden after the Fall. I identified that the city of Enoch, built by Cain's community, is the origin of state. In doing so, I emphasized that the closely related organic relationship between family, church, and state is necessary for God's mission. ■



Herman Bavinck (1854-1921), by Mike Mahon, *The Confessional Presbyterian* 17