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Creation Care and the Christian Hope: A Biblical and Salvific-Historical Perspective

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ABSTRACT: This paper explores the theological relationship between Christian eschatological hope and the human vocation of creation care. It argues that the biblical narrative—from creation through the fall to redemption—reveals that humanity has been entrusted with the stewardship of the earth as part of its priestly and royal calling. The ecological crisis is not merely a scientific or social problem but reflects a spiritual and theological failure. Drawing from Scripture and Christian theology, the study affirms that redemption in Christ encompasses not only humanity but the entire cosmos. The Christian hope for a renewed creation inspires ethical responsibility in the present. Far from encouraging apathy, this hope motivates Christians to bear witness to the coming kingdom by participating in the healing of the earth. Creation care is thus presented not as a marginal concern but as a central expression of the Christian faith and its eschatological vision.

KEYWORDS: Christian hope, creation care, stewardship, ethics, kingdom of God, Christian witness

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the global ecological crisis has raised pressing theological questions. Climate change, environmental degradation, and biodiversity loss challenge the Church to reflect deeply on its role in relation to the created world. At the same time, theological traditions within Christianity have sometimes promoted a passive or dismissive attitude toward the environment, whether by emphasizing heavenly destiny over earthly concern, or by interpreting dominion as license for domination. These misreadings demand critical re-evaluation in the light of the full biblical witness.

This paper proposes that Christian hope, far from promoting disengagement, provides a powerful basis for ecological responsibility. Hope in the biblical sense is not a vague optimism nor an excuse for indifference. Rather, it is a forward-looking trust in the God who creates, redeems, and renews all things. The promise of a new creation calls believers to embody now the justice, peace, and care that characterize God's future reign.

To develop this theological argument, the paper begins by examining the biblical background for the doctrine of creation, emphasizing the Creator's sovereignty over all things and the inherent goodness of the created world. It then explores the biblical foundation for the human vocation as care-keeper of the earth, highlighting the royal and priestly identity of humanity and its implications for faithful stewardship. Following this, the discussion turns to the theme of redemption as the Christian hope, showing how Christ's incarnation, death, and resurrection initiate the redemption of the entire cosmos. The paper then moves to consider the practical applications of this theology, articulating the ethical and tangible responsibilities that flow from Christian belief—particularly in the areas of ecological justice, animal welfare, and economic systems. Finally, the conclusion reaffirms the central role of creation care within the broader Christian narrative and calls for a renewed commitment to humanity's original vocation. By revisiting Scripture with ecological attentiveness, and recovering the eschatological vision of a renewed earth, this paper calls every Christian to live in hopeful responsibility for the world that God so deeply loves.

2. Biblical background for the doctrine of creation

In the Old Testament, God is consistently presented as the sole Creator, whose authority extends over all existence. The Torah introduces this concept by declaring that God is the origin of both the heavens and the earth, establishing divine sovereignty over all that is (Gen. 1:1). The prophetic writings emphasize this further, portraying God as the one who fashioned the universe, stretched out the heavens, and formed the earth with purpose and wisdom (Isa. 42:5, 44:24, 45:12). This portrayal underscores the idea that creation is not accidental but is the result of divine intention and order. Jeremiah reinforces this by describing creation as an act of divine power and wisdom, making clear that the natural world is a manifestation of God's authority (Jer. 10:12-13). The Writings, particularly in Job, Psalms, and Proverbs, highlight God's role as both architect and sustainer of creation, depicting a cosmos established through divine command, where everything operates within the boundaries set by the Creator (Job 38:4-7; Ps. 89:11-12; Prov. 8:27-29). These texts collectively affirm that the world is not self-sustaining but depends entirely on the continued will and power of God.

The understanding of God as Father in relation to creation has deep intertestamental roots. Jewish wisdom literature frequently describes God as the Father of the cosmos, portraying Him as the guiding force behind creation and human history. In texts such as the Wisdom of Solomon and Tobit, God's fatherhood is linked to His role as sustainer and judge, demonstrating a covenantal relationship with creation (Wis. 2:16-18; Tob. 13:4-5). Philo, drawing on this tradition, refers to God as the "Father and Creator of all", indicating an intrinsic connection between divine authority and the order of the world (Spec. Leg. 1.32).

The New Testament continues this theme, particularly in Ephesians, where Paul states that every family in heaven and on earth derives its name from the Father, suggesting that divine fatherhood extends beyond humanity to encompass all creation (Eph. 3:14-15). The New Testament builds upon this foundation but introduces a Christological dimension, presenting Christ as the agent of creation. The Gospel of John affirms that everything came into being through Him, attributing to Christ an active role in the creative process (John 1:3). Paul, in his letters, develops this idea further, particularly in Colossians, where he states that all things – both in heaven and on earth – were created in, through, and for Christ. Moreover, the world is not only created through Him but also sustained by Him, suggesting an ongoing divine involvement in creation (Col. 1:16-17). The use of the Greek phrase *τὰ πάντα*, meaning "all things", underscores the comprehensive scope of Christ's creative and sustaining work, encompassing the entirety of existence. The Christological expansion of this theme is seen in 1 Corinthians, where Paul distinguishes between God the Father, from whom all things exist, and Christ, through whom all things were made (1 Cor. 8:6).

This theological trajectory culminates in the Nicene Creed, which confesses: "We believe in one God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible". This statement reflects the Christian synthesis of Old and New Testament teachings, affirming that creation is both an act of divine power and an expression of God's ongoing relationship with the world through Christ.

3. Biblical background for the human vocation as care-keeper of earth

After discussing the doctrine of universal creation as a sovereign act of God, we are turning now to the human vocation in creation. First, Genesis 1:27 plays a foundational role in establishing the human vocation of universal kingship, as it directly precedes the divine mandate in Genesis 1:28, where God commands humanity to "rule" *(רָדָה)* and "subdue" (*כָּבַשׁ)* the earth. The declaration that humanity is made "in the image of God" (*בְּצֶלֶם אֱלֹהִים*) implies that human beings are designed to function as God's representatives on earth, exercising authority over creation in a manner that reflects divine governance (Măcelaru, 2021, pp. 596-608). The verb רָדָה, often translated as "to rule" or "to have dominion", conveys the concept of sovereign leadership, typically applied to kings who are responsible for ensuring order and justice (Ps. 72:8) and has a clear positive nuance in the Genesis account of creation (Nel, 1997, p. 1056). This ruling function is not about exploitation but about wise stewardship, maintaining the balance and flourishing of the created world. Similarly, כָּבַשׁ, meaning "to subdue", carries the idea of bringing something under control, often in the sense of taming wildness or imposing structure where chaos threatens (Swanson, 1997). These verbs suggest that humanity's kingship is not a passive role but an active participation in cultivating creation, ensuring its proper function, and extending divine order beyond Eden.

Secondly, we can observe that the Garden of Eden should be understood primarily as sacred space rather than merely an agricultural paradise. Drawing from ancient Near Eastern concepts, the assertion is that the garden functioned as a temple-like setting where God's presence dwelled (Walton, 2017, p. 147). Adam's role in the garden was not primarily agricultural but priestly, as suggested by the Hebrew verbs עָבַד "to serve" and שָׁמַר "to keep", which frequently relate to Levitical duties in the Bible (cf. Ex. 3:12, 4:23, 20:9, 23:33, Num. 3:7-10) (Walton, 2015, p. 105). Rather than simply tending the land, Adam was tasked with preserving the divine order, a role that involved guarding the sacred space, ensuring ritual purity, and mediating between God and humanity. In ancient thought, maintaining the sacred space upheld cosmic stability, keeping chaos at bay.

In addition to that, we consider that the priestly role of humanity should not be understood as limited to the mediation between God and humanity alone, but as extending to the entire non-human and non-Edenic creation. This broader perspective is founded on the idea that God created man from the dust (Gen. 2:7), a detail that explicitly links humanity to the material and mortal creation. By forming man from the same substance as the rest of the earth, God establishes a connection between human beings and the created order, suggesting that their priestly function includes not only upholding the sacred space but also mediating the divine order to all of creation. As Christopher Wright affirms: "The earth, then, belongs to God because God made it" (Wright, 2006, p. 397).

This statement reinforces the theological foundation of stewardship by reminding us that the creation is not humanity's possession but God's. Because the earth belongs to the Lord, humans are not free to exploit it for their own gain but are instead called to care for it in ways that honour its Creator. Recognizing this divine ownership should reframe human interactions with the environment, shifting the focus from domination to responsibility, from consumption to conservation, and from neglect to active participation in God's restorative work. By embracing this priestly vocation, humanity serves as a conduit through which divine care and order are extended to all of creation. In the light of the biblical narrative, the role of humanity as both priests and kings is not only evident in Adam and Eve's function in Eden but extends as a defining vocation for all of God's people throughout the Scripture.

Later, Israel's priesthood, established in Exodus 28–29, is given sacred duties to mediate between God and the people, reflecting a calling that was originally given to all humanity. Although only the Levites formally served as priests, the entire nation was still designated as a priestly kingdom (Ex. 19:6), a calling that pointed toward a broader restoration of the priesthood to all of God's people. The temple, as Christopher Wright notes, was a symbolic microcosm of both the creation's origin and its eschatological renewal: "The temple is a microcosm, both of the primal creation reality and of the new creation reality. In both cases we see God dwelling in the earth as his temple, with human beings serving him and it as his appointed

priesthood" (Wright, 2006, p. 415). This perspective emphasizes that humanity's priestly role is inseparable from the creation itself. Just as the temple represented God's presence in the world, so too does creation function as the broader dwelling place of God, where humans are called to serve as mediators of divine order. The royal priesthood of humanity is rooted in God's original intention and is further developed in the New Testament, where Peter explicitly applies this identity to believers, stating, "You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Pet. 2:9). Here, the priestly function is tied directly to kingship, reinforcing the idea that the people of God are to govern creation in a way that reflects divine holiness.

The culmination of this calling is fully realized in Revelation, where the redeemed are described as "a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10) and again as "priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years" (Rev. 20:6). These passages indicate that God's ultimate purpose for humanity is to restore them to their Edenic vocation, where they reign as vice-regents under God while mediating his presence to all creation However, this royal-priestly vocation is tragically disrupted in Genesis 3, where Adam's failure fundamentally alters the course of creation. Adam stands as the representative of all humanity, and his free decision to partake of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil introduced disorder into God's originally good creation. His sin must be understood as the desire to place himself at the center of the universe, arrogating to himself the role of the ultimate arbiter of good and evil. In this sense, the Fall is not merely an act of disobedience but a usurpation of divine authority, a rejection of humanity's calling as God's vice-regents.

The consequences of this act are profound. The Fall should be envisioned as a catastrophic event akin to a natural disaster – one whose destructive effects extend not only to the one who caused it but also to all those around him. In Adam's case, however, the repercussions extend far beyond his own immediate experience, shaping the condition of every person who came after him. As a result, sin and corruption entered God's world, not merely as external afflictions but as forces that wrought profound and radical devastation upon human nature itself. This initial corruption was not superficial but fundamental, rendering humanity enslaved to sin – not merely weakened but totally depraved, fundamentally twisted inward upon itself (*homo incurvatus in se*).

Moreover, this moral and spiritual corruption had cosmic consequences. The sin of man brought a curse upon the entire created order, subjecting it to futility and decay. The Scriptures affirm that it is God himself who, in response to the primeval couple's disobedience, pronounced this curse upon creation (Gen. 3:17-19; Rom. 8:20-22), thereby establishing that the Fall was not merely a moral failure with individual consequences but an event of cosmic significance, affecting the very fabric of existence. Thus, just as Adam's priestly vocation extended to the entire creation, so

too did his failure bring corruption upon the whole world. However, just as sin and death spread through Adam, so too does redemption extend beyond humanity, encompassing all of creation. The fall introduced disorder and decay, yet the biblical narrative does not leave the world in this state of ruin; instead, it moves toward the promise of renewal and restoration.

4. Redemption – The Christian hope

In considering the scope of redemption, we must turn to the Gospel of John, where the fourth evangelist states that the divine Logos became flesh, Καὶ ὁ λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο (John 1:14). The act of incarnation was not just about assuming human nature but also about taking on the entirety of material, living existence. Jesus' incarnation reveals that God is present in the vulnerability, suffering, and mortality of earthly life. A crucial theological implication is that the Greek term σάρξ, translated usually as "flesh" does not only refer to human life but to all living beings (Arndt et al., 2000, p. 915).

The Incarnation, therefore, signifies that God does not just redeem humans but embraces and sanctifies the whole of creation. If the Incarnation means that God has united himself with all of material life, then creation itself has intrinsic worth and is not merely a resource for human use. As Jürgen Moltmann states in regard to the incarnation of the Logos: "The incarnated God, Jesus Christ, is not only the saviour of humans, but he is also the saviour of all living creatures and the saviour of the earth" (Moltmann, 2021, p. 189). This challenges exploitative attitudes toward nature and suggests an ethical responsibility to care for and respect the natural world as something touched and redeemed by God's presence in Christ. Thus, the Incarnation is not only a theological doctrine about Jesus' divinity and humanity but also an affirmation that all life—human and non-human—is drawn into God's redemptive work, calling for a renewed relationship with the natural world. Yet, while the Incarnation signifies God's presence within creation, Paul's writings further develop the eschatological dimension of this redemption, emphasizing that creation itself eagerly awaits its ultimate renewal.

Expanding upon this cosmic vision of redemption, Paul's discussion in Romans 8:19-22 provides a profound eschatological perspective on creation's longing for restoration. He portrays creation, *ἡ κτίσις,* as eagerly awaiting its own liberation. The term *ἀποκαραδοκία,* translated "eager expectation", conveys a vivid image of creation craning its neck, straining forward in anticipation of the fulfilment of God's redemptive plan (Peterson, 2021, p. 324). This expectation is rooted in the Christian hope, an eschatological certainty rather than mere wishful thinking, affirming that the suffering of the present age is not final.

Paul, alluding to Genesis 3:17-19, underscores that the entire creation was subjected to *ματαιότης,* futility, not by its own will but by divine decree in response to human disobedience. This aligns with David G. Peterson's citation of Cranfield, who

explains that *ἡ κτίσις* refers to "the sum total of sub-human nature both animate and inanimate" (Peterson, 2021, p. 324). The curse upon creation, then, is not an arbitrary punishment but a direct consequence of Adam's fall, demonstrating that human sin has cosmic ramifications. However, Paul does not present this subjugation to decay as a final state. Instead, he describes creation as "groaning" in anticipation of its liberation (Rom 8:22), paralleling the longing of humanity itself. Just as believers await the redemption of their bodies, so too does creation long for renewal, a renewal that will come with the full realization of God's redemptive work. This eschatological vision reinforces the interconnectedness of human and cosmic redemption, affirming that God's salvific plan encompasses not only humanity but the entirety of creation. As Brendan Byrne states,

Paul's discussion of sin in Romans 8:19-22 must be understood within the broader context of his theology, where sin is portrayed as an enslaving force affecting all creation. Rooted in the Adamic narrative (Rom. 5:12-21), Paul depicts humanity as trapped in a cycle of selfishness and alienation from both God and the created world. This narrative of the fall extends beyond personal transgression, influencing the entire cosmos. Given this framework, ecological degradation can be interpreted as a consequence of humanity's bondage to sin, demonstrating how Paul's vision of redemption encompasses not only human salvation but also the restoration of creation (Byrne, 1988, pp. 83-93). Therefore, Paul's vision thus extends beyond personal salvation, revealing that redemption encompasses not only humanity but the entirety of creation, which awaits its transformation in the new heavens and new earth. In this regard, Brendan Byrne continues:

> Historically, particularly in the aftermath of the Reformation, interpretations of Paul's writings have largely focused on individual human salvation through divine grace, often overlooking the broader implications of redemption. This perspective has frequently disregarded Paul's emphasis on embodied existence, which, as he asserts in 1 Corinthians 15, persists beyond death. Since human bodily existence inherently depends on the material world, it follows that salvation, as articulated in the Gospel, must extend beyond humanity to encompass the non-human creation as well. This understanding aligns with Paul's eschatological vision, which reinterprets post-biblical Jewish thought to present a redemptive framework that is cosmic in scope rather than exclusively anthropocentric (Byrne, 1988, pp. 83-93).

Paul's vision in Romans 8:19-22 affirms that redemption extends beyond humanity to all creation, which longs for renewal. This hope calls Christians not to passive expectation but to active stewardship, anticipating the fulfilment of God's promise: "Behold, I am doing a new thing" (Is. 43:19). Just as God declares, "I create new heavens and a new earth" (Is. 65:17), believers are called to reflect this coming renewal through care for creation. Environmental responsibility is not secondary but integral to the Gospel's cosmic scope, bearing witness to God's redemptive plan until all things are made new.

The foundation of this hope lies in the person of Christ, through whom all things were created and in whom all things hold together (Col. 1:16-17). If Paul's discussion in Romans highlights the eschatological longing of creation for renewal, his vision in Colossians and Ephesians provides the theological framework for understanding how this renewal is achieved. In these epistles, Christ is not only the redeemer of humanity but the cosmic Lord who reconciles all things to Himself.

The Cosmic Christ in Colossians and Ephesians is central to Paul's realized eschatology, affirming that Christ's reign is both a present reality and a future hope. Colossians 1:15-20 presents Christ as the image of the invisible God, the one through whom all things were created, sustained, and reconciled. His work on the cross initiates the restoration of all creation, not solely humanity, indicating that redemption is cosmic in scope. Similarly, Ephesians 1:10 articulates God's purpose to unite all things in heaven and on earth under Christ, underscoring His universal lordship. Ephesians 4:10 further affirms that Christ has ascended above all things to fill all things, emphasizing His authority over all aspects of creation.

This cosmic Christology necessarily challenges any dualistic notion that separates the material world from spiritual significance. As Vicky S. Balabanski argues, "if one holds a cosmic Christology, the fabric of the material world cannot be viewed as spiritually irrelevant" (Balabanski, 1988, p. 104). This perspective affirms that creation itself is implicated in the redemptive work of Christ, requiring a theological framework that acknowledges its intrinsic value. The interconnectedness of all things further supports this view, as noted in the assertion that "if all things are connected, and there is a unifying wisdom which binds the visible world and the invisible world together, each action is potentially significant" (Balabanski, 1988, p. 104). This theological principle suggests that human engagement with the created order is not neutral but has profound moral and spiritual implications.

Such an understanding aligns with Kuyper's well-known assertion that "there is not an inch of this universe over which Jesus Christ does not say, 'It is Mine!'" This statement underscores the comprehensive scope of Christ's authority, extending beyond personal salvation to include the entirety of creation. Consequently, Paul's vision in Colossians and Ephesians calls believers not only to recognize Christ's universal reign but also to live in accordance with this reality. This has direct implications for creation care, as Colossians 1:20 affirms that Christ's reconciliation encompasses all things. If redemption involves the renewal of the entire cosmos, then the responsible stewardship of the earth is not incidental but theologically imperative. By participating in the care of creation, believers align themselves with God's redemptive purpose, anticipating the full realization of the new creation in which all things are restored under Christ's rule.

5. The Christian call to ecological justice

Turning back to the biblical vision of humanity as kings and priests, we observe that Christ's cosmic lordship, as the paradigmatical king and priest, entails not only

spiritual leadership but also a sacred duty to care for creation (Măcelaru, 2022, pp. 118–137). As kings, humans are called to rule in a manner that reflects the just and loving dominion of Christ, exercising authority with responsibility rather than exploitation. As priests, they mediate between God and creation, offering the natural world back to its Creator in reverence and care. This responsibility aligns with the broader Christian hope – a hope not for an escape from creation but for its renewal and redemption. As the New Testament affirms, God's ultimate plan is a new creation in which righteousness dwells (2 Pet. 3:10-13), where the corruption of the present world is reversed, and God dwells with His people (Rev. 21:1-4). If the final hope includes a redeemed creation, then the present calling of Christians is to live in ways that anticipate this future reality (Măcelaru, 2017, pp. 49–56; Măcelaru, 2014, pp. 233–236).

Christian environmental stewardship is rooted in the conviction that God values His creation and intends for it to flourish. The biblical testimony is clear: God's creation reflects His goodness, and to harm it is to trample upon His handiwork. Christopher Wright affirms this when he states: "Conversely, therefore, to contribute to or collude in the abuse, pollution and destruction of the natural order is to trample on the goodness of God reflected in creation" (Wright, 2006, p. 403). This underscores the moral weight of environmental degradation; it is not merely an economic or social issue but a theological offense against the Creator. Furthermore, the hope of redemption does not entail the abandonment of the physical world but rather its transformation, as Paul writes in Romans 8:18-21, where creation itself longs for liberation from its present decay. The Christian mission, therefore, includes working toward a world that foreshadows this future renewal.

Willis Jenkins expands on this by explaining that Christian stewardship is not merely about resource management but about reflecting God's way of ruling through Christ:

> As vice-regents or deputies, stewards may care for creation as agents of God's providence and managing participants in the divine economy, but the economy of Christ reveals God's way of ruling and giving. The redemptive action of Jesus Christ illuminates the significance of environmental problems and determines the character of Christian stewardship (Jenkins, 2008, p. 82).

If Christ's rule is characterized by sacrificial love and restoration, then dominion over creation must reflect these same values. Stewardship is thus an act of discipleship, mirroring the redemptive love of Christ in practical care for the environment.

One of the key obstacles to faithful stewardship is an economic system that prioritizes profit over ethical responsibility (Rotaru, 2024, pp. 301-318). Unchecked capitalism and extreme libertarianism often promote a view of the world as a mere resource for human consumption rather than a gift entrusted to humanity by God. This results in environmental destruction, social injustice, and exploitation of the vulnerable. A Christian approach to economics must reject the idolatry of market

forces and instead advocate for policies that balance economic development with ecological sustainability and justice. The biblical vision of stewardship is not one of reckless consumption but of responsible care, ensuring that creation is preserved for future generations.

The rise of industrial livestock farming presents a pressing ethical and environmental concern that directly conflicts with biblical principles of compassion and stewardship. Factory farming often subjects animals to extreme confinement, unnatural feeding regimens, and inhumane treatment, reducing God's creatures to mere commodities. Proverbs 12:10 states, "The righteous care for the needs of their animals, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel." The widespread suffering imposed on animals in these systems violates this ethical standard and distorts humanity's dominion over creation into an act of exploitation rather than stewardship. Moreover, Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount, affirms God's care for animals: "Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them" (Matt. 6:26). If God values His creatures, Christians should likewise reflect this concern in their treatment of animals. The industrial farming model, which prioritizes efficiency and profit at the expense of animal welfare, contradicts this biblical ethos and contributes to environmental destruction through deforestation, excessive water use, and pollution.

The environmental impact of industrial farming also poses a significant moral challenge. It is a leading contributor to deforestation, water pollution, and climate change, disproportionately affecting the world's poorest communities. Jenkins rightly asserts: "The Christian mission to all the earth means becoming physician and healer to the earth, priests and ministers to all creation" (Jenkins, 2008, p. 89). If Christians are called to be healers, they cannot remain indifferent to an industry that inflicts harm on both animals and ecosystems. Ethical alternatives, such as sustainable farming and plant-based diets, offer ways to live in greater harmony with God's creation. Environmental pollution, particularly in the developing world, is a form of systemic injustice that disproportionately harms the poor and marginalized. Many multinational corporations outsource their most environmentally harmful practices to nations with weaker regulations, leading to widespread air and water pollution, deforestation, and health crises among impoverished populations. Such actions contradict the biblical mandate for justice and mercy.

The prophet Isaiah warns against economic systems that exploit the poor for personal gain: "Woe to those who add house to house and join field to field till no space is left, and you live alone in the land" (Is. 5:8). The same principle applies to environmental ethics: hoarding resources and externalizing costs onto vulnerable populations is a direct violation of God's concern for the least among us. Christians must therefore advocate for cleaner energy policies, corporate accountability, and international environmental justice initiatives.

The Christian hope is not in an escape from the world but in its redemption. The scriptural vision of the new creation does not depict believers floating to a distant

heaven but rather a renewed earth where God dwells with His people. As Wright reminds us: "Our action in the present anticipates and points prophetically toward that final goal" (Wright, 2006, p. 415). Christian environmental action, therefore, is not a futile endeavour but a sign of the coming kingdom. When believers engage in creation care, they embody the hope of resurrection, a world where all things are made new. To live in disregard for creation is to contradict this hope; to care for it is to participate in God's redemptive plan.

6. Conclusion

The present ecological crisis compels Christians to revisit their theological foundations and rediscover the depth of their calling within creation (Măcelaru, 2023, pp. 649–662). From the beginning, Scripture affirms that the earth is God's creation, declared good and entrusted to human beings made in His image. This foundational truth gives rise to a royal and priestly vocation – a calling to govern creation in justice and to mediate God's care and presence within it (Rotaru, 2015, pp. 318-322). The Fall introduced a rupture not only between humanity and God, but between humanity and the earth. The ground was cursed because of sin, and creation began to suffer the consequences of human disobedience. Yet the biblical story does not end in brokenness. In Christ, God has inaugurated a cosmic redemption that embraces all creation. The Incarnation, death, and resurrection of Christ restore the possibility of a renewed relationship between Creator, humanity, and the earth. Creation groans in anticipation of this renewal, longing for the day when it too will be set free from corruption.

Christian hope does not lead to apathy, but to action. It is a forward-looking trust that anticipates the reconciliation of all things in Christ and motivates faithful living in the present. This includes living in ways that honour God's creation, resist exploitation, and reflect the peace and justice of the coming kingdom. As such, creation care is not an optional task for a few concerned believers; it is an integral expression of Christian discipleship and eschatological faith. To live faithfully in the light of this hope is to recover humanity's original vocation: to serve and guard the earth as stewards under God's reign. It is to embody the priestly and royal identity conferred upon the people of God from Eden to the eschaton. Through acts of care, restraint, justice, and reverence, Christians bear witness to the God who is making all things new.

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