Old Testament Theology

by

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Transcription

(unedited)

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Chapter 1

Introduction

My name is Paul House. I teach, starting this fall, at Wheaton College in Wheaton, Illinois. , I will mainly have – or be chairing our Department [00:30] of Bible Theology, Archeology and World Religions, May the 1st. There are 23 persons in the department, so most of my work will be administrative.

I taught at Taylor University for a long time, which is an interdenominational liberal arts college like Wheaton. Taught at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary six hours' north of here. , most of the places I've lived, it's hard for me to imagine local being six hours' north of anything, [01:00] , but it certainly is.

And then I've taught at Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry the last two years, which has been a wonderful experience for me, getting to know the Anglican context a lot better, and so had not anticipated leaving that post, but for a variety of reasons, mostly connected with being closer to family and ministry and the kinds of decisions you have and will make in your own life decided to make the transfer to Wheaton.

I'm [01:30] a Baptist by background and conviction. , and but have worked obviously [chuckles] with virtually every other denomination that there is to work with, both in students and as fellow faculty members.

So I have just moved to Wheaton as in they unloaded the truck last Tuesday, we set up household through [02:00] Friday and came here Saturday, recovered a bit Sunday and, well, here we are, and it's almost nice because the Divinity School's put us in-in a nice apartment nearby, and that allows us to rest and recoup or at least my wife is doing so.

I have a wife, Heather, and a daughter, Molly, who is taking third- and fourth-semester Greek this summer at Taylor University, so, and you say, oh, how is that connected to [02:30] what you're doing. , I'm paying for you're helping me pay [laughter] for – at least you have appreciation for this – third- and fourth-semester Greek this summer, so that's – that is the process that I'm going through.

I have taught Old Testament theology at least as a course at all the institutions where I've been, and that's-that's been an interesting experience, [03:00] cuz depending really on your faith commitment, and for some of you, what your denominational statements state, you-you approach Old Testament theology differently.

I've noticed that-that-that Baptists are kind of all over the map on how they treat the Old Testament. Presbyterians have a fairly set way of doing that if they're Westminster Confession Presbyterian. Then the Anglicans, at [03:30] least the conservative ones Article 7 of the 39 articles covers pretty specifically some Old Testament hermeneutical issues.

So one of the things I'll be interested to find out, not so that I can spy on you and attack your position, but so that I can hopefully know where you're coming from, and we can discuss is this-is this notion of-of how you've been used to approaching the Old Testament and [04:00] its theology. And that also is, of course, affected by who your instructions have been and are now, and so I-I'd like to take that into consideration.

If I disagree, I don't think it will affect your grade [laughter], so I hope-I hope that you can be sure of that. So that-that's just me, briefly. One thing that you'll hear me refer [04:30] to, that I'll tell you one other thing is I often refer to literary studies because I did graduate degree in in literature before I went into theology, and it-it did affect my hermeneutical perspective, and more on that later.

Let's look at the syllabus, please, and I hope that the syllabus is clear. If not, we will try to clarify it. We have two weeks [05:00] to introduce you to the basic elements of Old Testament theology so that you may apply it to everything from Alabama law to the Anglican Kenyan church.

I hope that we will cover major [05:00] scholars in the discipline, particularly today, and so if today seems a little heavy on methodology, it is intended to be. It will not be the whole of the course, but we have to set some sort of background for the way people think and for the [05:30] way I'm going to think and teach, and also you'll find yourself somewhere in the streams of tradition that we're going to talk about.

It will also, I hope, help you understand a whole lot of other biblical scholarship, put some things together. But also, you'll be reading some of them. , some of the scholars you'll read will seem very, very relevant to what you're doing. Some will seem a bit technical. Some [06:00] will seem irrelevant to you. That's inevitable when you have an anthology that's covering a variety of topics.

I hope that what this textbook will do will be to reinforce the things I'm saying in class and supplement them. I'm not going to read the textbook back to you. That's just as well.

This text is intended to be more theoretical and devoted to methodology as to how these scholars have approached their subject [06:30] and how they've approached specific subjects. This one is to be more textual in its approach so that you can understand what's going on in the biblical books, at least from one perspective.

This book has been used not just in classes, but also by a lot of pastors, a lot of others, and so it's been very interesting to see who's been using it. I hope it's not a – just a matter of hubris to use this book, but I assume that if they asked me to come and teach [07:00] this course, part of the reason was this book and not "Zephaniah: A Prophetic Drama,"[07:30] one of my other personal favorites [laughter]. So you're welcome to that, and you have the reading list that we'll look at momentarily.

I want to familiarize you with the course goals with main currents and Old Testament theology. There is not one specific way of doing Old Testament theology. I do the best I can to be right, but I also know that the subject [07:30] is so vast and the material diverse enough, and the New Testament's use of the material diverse enough that more than one fruitful approach to Old Testament theology exists, and my goal will be to get you into one of those. I'm not into academic cloning, but I would like for you to have a serious approach that is accurate that you can use.

Second, I want to facilitate your [08:00] ability to formulate and write about major topics in Old Testament theology. To do that, we'll have some writing exercises that I'll describe later. But we'd like you to be able to formulate into clear prose what you've been thinking about and assimilating, and that's hard to do, by the way, if you begin to feel some frustration in two weeks.

One of the problems with a two-week course is that your opportunity to reflect upon it [08:30] and to let certain ideas you've been having, read about, disputing, accepting, whatever, kind of percolate in your mind, it's just not there. So I hope that we can at least begin to do that, but that's a problem, but – so we're going to give you writing exercises.

I want to introduce you, three, to the content of Old Testament theology; that is, what the text says and how we may find theological truths [09:00] there. And fourth, to help you develop a biblical theology for the variety of ministries that you are working with.

Woman: [09:10] [inaudible.]

[09:11] So the fourth course goal is to develop a biblical theology that will inform your ministry.

For instance, at the end of the last class that I had, I had a student who was involved in youth ministry. Wrote a paper on how the Old Testament would give [09:30] him a background, a foundation for teaching youth what are the things the Old Testament would do about educational and youth ministry. Had the same done for people who wanted to go into academic work and pastoral work. But again, you'll need to be turning that over in your own mind, as you will do, as to how this material works.

We have textbooks. The first one, which I'll put on [10:00] reserve, is from a set, though the set can be purchased for about $50 now through Crossway Books: "God, Revelation, and Authority," Carl F. H. Henry. , Henry is a-a-a philosopher and systemic theologian, and I really think the best one Evangelicals have produced, or actually, with Henry, he helped produce evangelical theology [laughter].

So there's six [10:30] volumes of this so this again will be on reserve tomorrow if indeed the library owns it, which I can't imagine they do not. If they do, good. You saw Paul House's "Old Testament Theology," which, – and also Ollenburger, Martins and Hasel, "Flowering of Old Testament Theology," which is now in its second edition.

this book is, as you see, an anthology that includes [11:00] cuttings from major theologians in major eras. The other thing that it does is to give you an orientation chapter at each major section so that as my book does, the first chapter or so is on the background of the discipline.

This book also has similar articles, and particularly those of you here who are interested in academic work, those are articles to master and if you ever go on and have to take comprehensive exams on Old Testament theology of [11:30] any type, those are the kind of articles that become your friend [laughter] because they summarize a lot of material without you necessarily having to read it all, and probably since we'll spend one whole day at least on methodology, those chapters will be your friends when you do your exams.

You do 'em – if-if you're gonna be really good in ministry, notice that – or that, particularly the students, you notice that-that suggestion [laughter] that can bring on low-level guilt if you don't do it. That-that's well-put. I [12:00] would say if you do have these books checked out, you know, it would be good to put them on reserve.

If you tell me that presents some sort of hardship with you, I'll probably direct you to the faculty secretary, ask them to Xerox it, the-the sections that are to be read to be put on reserve.

I'm certain – well, as I say, we'll get to that. I'm – the answer is Volume 6 but let me –

Man: [12:25] Okay.

[12:26] Let me keep what little train of thought I've got. Other – but the textbooks [12:30] will work together.

The other thing is, if you have a particular book you want to work with in your own thinking and reading and it's checked out, you-you would start with the class. I mean we're happy to do that, say, who – does

someone have this? Somebody have Gerhart Von Rod's first volume? I've been wanting to read it at night, I just can't get to it. We'll be grateful for you to say that you have it.

Grading: You have a dual problem or several problems with trying to get a grade in two weeks. One theory would [13:00] be, okay, you assign stuff that's due a long time after the course is over. This creates enduring misery for all involved [laughter].

The other thing is to have it done beforehand. This is blue-sky dreaming. This is just absolute fantasy for the average person though DMin students are having to do it now. So that—that leaves the two-week segment that we've got.

yeah, I could assign you a term paper to be due at the end of time, but that pushes [13:30] me into the enduring misery we've already discussed. It also gives some implication that you'll be able to get up to speed, work with the course, get everything done in two weeks. Thus that, too, seems to be a bit optimistic.

Then there's also the notion of just having in-class exams, which, of course, then eats up what little time you have in class. This leaves my least favorite version of exams, and this is the [14:00] take-home exam. Why do I not like take-home exams? Because I think they work the best students to death, unless there is a page limit.

So I will assign you essay questions. You will limit your answers to no more than four to six typed, double-spaced pages per examination. I will probably give you two essays so [14:30] that you will write shorter answers.

Now how do I guarantee that you just stick to the six pages? I will not read the eighth page. I will not read the eighth page. This is the only way I know to keep it fair for everybody involved. So if you say, but I know a lot [laughter]. I know more than the person over there. In fact, and-and some of you [15:00] say, you know I-I-I want to do this for a living. I want to-I want to go into academics.

In academic work, you are often given a word limit for your writing. When this manuscript came in, they said, "Cut it." [Laughter] So we cut it. Oftentimes you get – I have had – was asked to write an article. "We would like," they said "somewhere between five and ten thousand words of your best." They do not want anything longer than that. Or a book review. [15:30] It will be 1,500 words or we will not print it, something like that, so brevity does have its place.

So I will give you something like probably tomorrow or maybe at the end of the third day since it's not – it's-it's due at, I think, the start of the fourth period – give you essay questions that you will then work on, and it would be to your advantage to review because the exams will in general be [16:00] over what almost the – almost totally over what we cover in class. And if you think what will he ask about, my guess will be the topics of the day.

When you take the exam, you're free to use your textbooks and your class notes, though that is not doing you a specific favor. I will try to ask the questions of which it will require you to use the content of the class, but also to adapt your own mind.

So [16:30] it will not simply be reading back to me my class notes, which I own a set of [laughter], but it will be enough of it that I would expect you to , to work through it.

Usually a take-home examination results in higher class grades. I'm happy with that. I'm not unhappy with that. So there will be three of these, and it will be my goal certainly to turn them back to you in a timely fashion so that you can see.

[17:00] When you type these, do use spell check, do use grammar check. I would penalize the sort of things that you can have fixed by a computer. One of the things you can't have fixed by a computer is contextual errors. You can spell a-a word-a[18:00] word that it is a word and it be in the wrong context. That is forgivable.

You [17:30] will have to teach your computer to spell names of some of these people. That, too, the names, are forgivable, but in general, I do not want to fix your prose. I have taught freshman composition. I'd prefer not to do it again this summer.

If English is not your first language, you're probably ahead of some whose is [laughter], but having said that, you know, you-you also are free [18:00] to ask a-a colleague about the content of it, not the content rather, but is this a clear sentence. , so you're not to copy off someone else's content, but you are free to say, is this a complete sentence, that sort of thing.

So I will grade these, and if there is a Beeson Divinity School scale of sorts, I will use it. Otherwise, I'll just write the grade on your paper and you will see. Each one of these will be a third of your grade. [18:30] So consistency will be a virtue.

I-I assume if you've paid for 10 classes, unless something takes you away that's important, you will attend. I will not email you or mail you the test questions. You must be present to win [laughter].

The assignments, you see the reading for today, which if there was a day that I figured that we would stick pretty close to the textbook, it would be today because I assumed [19:00] that some of you might not have done that work, but if you have, you will be right up to speed.

Then I've picked specific thematic emphases in Old Testament theology that are important to biblical theology that are usually important to a variety of ministries. So we'll start with a method of doing Old Testament theology today, then we'll move [19:30] to the God who creates. The next two days, days three and four, we will deal with God and the law.

You are to do the reading even if I get behind. You're to do the reading especially if I get behind, because that will fill out what we do not cover in class. So your reading is, in my view, is significant, particularly the biblical readings [background cough].

One nice thing [20:00] about having my own book here is that you can fill out what I would have thought on a variety of subjects through the reading, and we can have more class discussion perhaps.

But the next days three and four, God who saves and gives the law and God who is holy, we're going to deal with issues of-of law and its relationship to the whole of scripture, which is a rather important topic throughout the Bible and in [20:30] current life.

Day five, the God who rules history. Salvation history is one of the key ways – key components of biblical theology and it – and how it's been treated. Days six and seven will constitute Messianic thought in the Old Testament. This, of course, is a-a primary topic [background cough] in the New Testament, in liturgical [21:00] seasons and in-in appreciating teaching of the church.

Some people have raised it to the level of being virtually the only Old Testament theological topic they know or discuss. I find this to be unfortunate and very unlike the New Testament church. However [chuckles], it is a vital, vital topic.

When you hear me saying Messianic theology [21:30] is not all the Old Testament does, do not hear me say it is not something the Old Testament does. It is a vital part, but it is not all it does. Or even all that the New Testament seems to indicate that it does.

By day eight. we'll be moving toward the last segment of the Old Testament, the writings, and into an issue that has gotten some attention in a variety of places, that of worship. Some of you are involved in music ministry, some [22:00] of you are involved in planning, you know, not only music but other sorts of worship. Is there a biblical theological approach to worship, day 8.

Day nine, particularly a pastoral issue, one that is covered in some detail in the Old Testament and its theology, God meeting the hurting. Theology of suffering. And finally, some steps toward a whole biblical theology [22:30] and hopefully, that will give you bridges to the New Testament that we haven't gained already.

In my view, Old Testament theology is a subset of biblical theology, that if you were to do your job thoroughly, you would study the scriptures until you were thoroughly acquainted with them, so that if someone said give me four creation – give me creation texts that span the Old and New Testament, [23:00] you would be able to do that on demand, which is sort of like being in ministry, because you have laypeople who think if they ask you that, you can deliver it, as you know.

To quote a friend of mine who is a-a Baptist layman, my church, I asked him how many hours – I was on a curriculum committee, and I said, "How many hours of Bible do you think somebody oughta have?" He said, "I don't know, but they oughta know it backwards and forwards so that if we ask them any biblical question, they would know the answer." Why did he think that? [23:30] , that's what was kind of expected in his profession, what he expects of his doctor [clears throat], his lawyer, his dentist and his – particularly his mechanic [laughter].

So they kind of expect that of ministers and so you would-you would do that. You would start. And then you would do a thorough study of Old Testament theology and New Testament theology and their connections, and from that base, you would-you would do your biblical theology and then take that to a systematic [24:00] theology.

And then you would integrate all of that into a system of preaching, teaching, writing, whatever your ministry would be. That would be an ideal, and probably what we're going to do in heaven is get all that pieced together [laughter].

But that's how I approach Old Testament theology. That is really one of the first stages in a whole biblical and systematic theology. You will [24:30] not hear me pitting Old Testament theology against New Testament theology. You will not hear me pitting biblical theology against systematic theology.

I know that is done other places. The seminary I attended one of the famous comments by a systematic theologian [sniffles] was it – or a-a New Testament scholar, he said, "It makes me nervous every time I see a systematic theologian with a Greek New Testament" [laughter].

I find this sort of combative spirit to be absurd personally. [25:00] If systematic theology is not biblical, eventually at least then there's a problem, and if there is not organization to biblical theology, well, it's hard to study. So this is my approach.

Therefore, though I would like to use some others, on day two we have Carl Henry, which is Volume 6 pages 108 to 119, one of his essays in his Volume [25:30] 6 on creation, and then I believe if the other Henry is day 10, it's God, Revelation, and Authority, Volume 2. And I'm trying to see if there are any others. I think that may be the only two readings [background talking]. I-I may have to to –

Woman: [25:47] [inaudible] articles.

[25:49] And it's on creation.

Woman: [25:50] Oh, it is. Okay.

[25:51] All right.

Woman: [25:52] [inaudible].

[25:54] Yeah, Volume 6, interestingly enough is-is where creation comes in his discussion.

Woman: [26:00] Hmm.

[26:01] The nice thing about Henry is each chapter basically is a self-contained essay, and if you're not careful, you'll think that it's not a systematic approach then, but then if you actually read a whole volume, you will see how connected it all is.

So do that. I'll be referring to the article that's for day 10 today. So we'll start. I have that with me if you – someone needs to take it and Xerox it.

So [26:30] these are the assignments you are to-to read each day, the assignment, and if it looks like the biblical texts are a hodgepodge to you right now, hopefully once we do our methodological discussion, you will see why the biblical assignments are as they are. If it all seems a hodgepodge at the end, either I've not done a good job or you haven't paid attention [laughter], one [27:00] or the other.

So let's begin. If there are any other questions – let me see one other thing in my mind. On day three it tells you the first examination, which covers the first three of – three days of class, is due, is due [laughs] – typo – at the beginning of day four. So at least by day three I will give you the exam questions, and then you will bring [27:30] them day four.

Second exam will be given you at day six, due the next day. I had hoped to be able to do something with the weekend, but it just doesn't go that way. I will give you the final examination at the end of day nine, so it's just three days, three days, three days and the final.

So, again, it-it [28:00] – there'll be a certain rhythm to this. Hopefully, it will be a comfortable rhythm. If not, it'll be over in two weeks [laughter]. So I'd like for you to to get a Bible, and I want to start with a bit of a personal journey description of it to help [28:30] you understand how I came about the study of-of Old Testament theology. And I think these are relevant points for us all.

Like some of you probably, I-I had Christian parents, and dedicated Christian parents, one of whom is with the Lord now and has been for nearly 20 years and one who continues on teaching adult Sunday school for years and years and [29:00] years, who my father committed to-to-to teaching God's word.

So I grew up in a home in which the Bible was important. We attended Baptist church, but my mother had been Methodist before, and all of her people were Methodist. I'm not sure about all of their local practices. They did not practice infant baptism. They were not Wesleyans or Free Methodists. The church [29:30] is still there, but I did not know for many years that Methodists practiced infant baptism because my mother's church did not.

Mother became a Baptist and because at – there were at least denominations represented [background noise – cough] in the family, there was always strong respect for other traditions. So my dad early on would ask one question about other denominations: Are they Bible-believing people? He had no use for the non-Bible-believing [30:00] people, or very little, [30:00] [30:30] except to the extent that he wanted to help reform them [laughter], but that's really where he started.

I was called to ministry when I was 12 years old and at that time my dad gave me two bibles: a Scofield reference Bible, which he always carried, and a New English Bible, which was just come out in Modern Language, Modern Language Edition.

Since then I've – the kind of poles of my theology have been the Anglican church [30:30] and right-wing dispensationalism [laughs] so somewhere-somewhere out there have-have kind of been the boundaries, kind of like this class [laughter][31:00] .

So I began reading the Bible and asking questions about it, and even earlier I remember asking my fourth-grade Sunday school teacher how were people saved in the Old Testament? How did they-how did they get right with God? How were their sins forgiven? And my teacher [31:00] said they kept the Ten Commandments.

Now, that made sense to me until I read more of the Bible. You know, you read something like Romans 3, "none righteous, no, not one can conclude with Paul's comment that all of sin and come short of the glory of God."

And then as I-I read a little bit longer, I realized Paul wasn't – that wasn't Paul's opinion. Romans 3:10 and following there's a whole bunch of quotations from the Old [31:30] Testament itself, so the Old Testament didn't think that people were saved by teaching the Ten Commandments or its testimony about itself was we all went to hell then.

Woman: [31:39] -hmm.

[31:40] So I came to this first scholarly decision that either my Sunday school teacher was wrong or a straightforward reading of the Bible was meaningless, so I had to choose between my teacher and the Bible and-and also I-I said, well, [32:00] I would[32:30] [33:00] [33:30] choose my – choose the Bible.

It was also-it was also helped by the fact that about then he defected to the Church of Christ, so you know it was easy to-to-to write his opinion off [laughter], but at that point, and then you start reading texts like Hebrews 11. What's it say about the people there. Hebrews 11, anybody know what that chapter is about?

Man: [32:22] [inaudible].

[32:22] Right [inaudible] [32:22]. And is that-is that a whole bunch of New Testament people there it's talking about? No. One by one, [32:30] you know, under the theme without faith it's impossible to please God, this person pleased God, this person pleased God, this person pleased God.

That's pretty interesting because it includes some pretty odd folks, particularly in the list at the end. , it was by faith. And then you'd ask questions about the Old Testament and along the way you'd read a text like, you know, Second Timothy 3, you know this one? Second Timothy 3 when Paul writes [33:00] something like, oh, start with Verse 14, Paul having told them that the evil men are going to proceed and get worse and worse and worse and worse and worse.

Says in Verse 14, "You, however, are continuing the things you've learned and become convinced of" – I always read from the New American Standard for better or for worse – "knowing from whom you have

learned them and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings, which [33:30] are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture that God breathed is literal translation and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness."

Now so there's been a qualitative statement about scripture as God breathed and a statement of "usefulness, profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness." Now, eh, what is striking here is that the [34:00] all scripture he's talking about is the Old Testament, correct? And that what's – , a teacher said to me – I forget who or I'd give credit – said really, you know what's-what's astounding is the-the New Testament church did all of its evangelization, discipleship, church growth and everything from the Old Testament.

So I started asking – I remember way back, I started [34:30] asking questions. What if Paul's right? What if he's right? All scripture is God-breathed, which I came to pretty early and never left. If you want to read my – understand where I'm coming – for my doctorate in scripture, read Carl Henry's Volume 4 of "God, Revelation, [35:00] and Authority," which includes the "Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy."

This does not mean I can't deal with others, as I hope my background indicates, but all scripture [35:00] is God-breathed, and there are a whole lot of evangelical Christians that that is not an issue for them. I will stand up and-and-and stand on that and die for that. It's this second part that they really have trouble with particularly, though not exclusively, with the Old Testament: "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness," in other words, for discipleship, for living.

So the question, if you accept the [35:30] first half of that premise of Verse 16, is not whether [exhales] we would find something relevant and important in the Old Testament, but really the question is how is this true.

And our question for the Old Testament should not be how much of this do we have to pay attention to, which is often the question we get, but [36:00] how much of this can I live. How-how will I find out what this says so that I can live it out?

So this is Paul's opinion. Paul's opinion is held in low esteem in some quarters, though it's not what Anne Graham Lotz means by it, but a whole lot of people [chuckles] have taken the phrase "Just give me Jesus" [crosstalk] – she means somethin[37:00] g healthier than that by her "Just give me Jesus," but to give you Jesus, Matthew [36:30] 5.

Woman: [36:31] -hmm. -hmm. Hmm.

[36:32] Matthew 5, you say, well, maybe Paul says this is true. What does Jesus think? Well, you might not even be thinking about the issue the day you stumble upon this topic for the first time, but in my life, you know, I've been thinking about what if – what does Paul mean? In what sense is all scripture profitable?

Going to Matthew 5:17, [37:00] sermon on the mount, essence of Jesus' teaching. Been reading John Stott "Sermon on the Mount." He says there-there are 11 approaches. He's read 11 different approaches to the sermon on the mount, 11 of which tried to get out of doing what's actually in the text.

But Jesus says, [37:30] "Do not think that I came to abolish the law, 5:17. Do not think that I came to abolish the law or the prophets. I did not come to abolish but to fulfill."

A lot of people stop there. Ah, that means once Jesus was raised from the dead, the Old Testament now becomes passé. Is that what he says? Verse 18, "For truly I say to you until heaven and earth pass away..." Oh, we just have a new timeframe, didn't we?

Not solely the ministry of Jesus, the most significant event in the history of the world, the ministry of Jesus, that's not the timeframe for the relevance [38:00] of the Old Testament, also for the new.

"Until heaven and earth pass away," which even though we're taking a class at 8 a.m. and that could be bad, this is not – we – you know, no matter you feel tomorrow in class, heaven and earth have not passed away.

Man: [38:17] -hmm.

[38:18] We're still here. "Not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the law until all is accomplished." You say, well, hasn't it all be accomplished? Well, huh, [38:30] all is accomplished when heaven and earth pass away in the text.

Verse 19, and this-this is one that scares me, "Whoever then annuls one of the least of these commandments and teachers others to do the same..." – I love all these admonitions for teachers, and James, he's got a few of these, you know, in—in this – "... and you teach others to do the same shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever keeps and teaches them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

And then a startling verse: "For I say to you that [39:00] unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven."

Now some of you probably have been taught a low view of the Pharisees cuz Jesus does say some harsh things to them, but unlike the Sadducees, they were certainly concerned that the word of God be lived out and made relevant. Did they interpret it correctly? I think not. Jesus thought not. But were they serious about [39:30] applying the Bible? Yes.

So now we're struck with an even more serious – you know, Paul says it's profitable and we think, okay, how can the Old Testament help us? How can we-how can we learn it? And again, everything I'm saying from the Old Testament I also believe about the New Testament. It's just my task here to teach Old Testament theology.

Then you get to-you get to Jesus and it's even more startling. "How can I keep from being a false teacher? How can I teach people [40:00] to live the word of God and not to set it aside in some manner that will be detrimental to their lives?"

And-and sometimes the-the – if you think through that sort of statement, it's frightening. It brings us into a holy reverence, okay, how-how can I do this? And if you read the sermon on the mount and you read that this heightened sense of commandment, you've heard that the ancients were told [40:30] you shall not commit murder. "Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court."

Now Jesus is dealing with interpretations of the commandments, and these interpretations in some cases in the sermon on the mount sound pretty stern. Other times they sound like somebody's trying to weasel out of the commandment, right?

So you love your neighbor but hate your enemy. Does the Old Testament ever say "hate your enemy"? Not once. [41:00] That was their – the current interpretation of it. But oftentimes when you're through hearing Jesus expound the Ten Commandments, you're saying just give me Moses.

Woman: [41:15] -hmm.

[41:16] If you're trying to avoid a very strenuous faith, Jesus gives you no comfort. If you're trying to avoid the Ten Commandments and other important teachings, [41:30] or if you're trying to misapply the-the law like, oh, 538. You've heard it said, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but I say you don't resist an evil person." "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth" means the punishment fits the crime. That's all it ever means. It is not the right to revenge. Never meant the right to revenge.

Jesus says, look, I'm telling you, you don't even have to have the punishment fit the crime. [42:00] Then you say, wait a minute. I want justice every time. I will have my rights. Like I say, Jesus is – he's a rather stern task master in—in – master in these texts, but back to our original thing – I'm not supposed to be teaching sermon on the mount [laughter] – Jesus is saying the law and the prophets are relevant.

One other Jesus text. If you look at Luke 24:44, [42:30] and so by now in my spiritual journey at some point I'm saying, okay now, all scripture is profitable. It's God-breathed, therefore, it's profitable for these things. And I read Jesus. And he basically tells us you better have a – you better work toward a solid hermeneutic of Old Testament study and teaching so that you will not be a false teacher and lead people astray.

[43:00] At some other point, you know, picking up Luke 24:44 and, you know, Jesus has been raised from the dead, and he's — this is the road to a mass, right, and he's walking with some disciples and they-they don't recognize him.

Apparently one of the benefits of a resurrection body was it could be there and cloak its identity, and Jesus does this. In 24:44, now he said to them, "These are my words [43:30] that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things that are written about me and the law of Moses and prophets and the psalms must be fulfilled."

Well, at some point I said, you know, Jesus is saying that at every segment of scripture, there is a three-fold canon that we're gonna follow that is represented in ancient Judaism and in the Hebrew t[44:00] ext of the scriptures: the law, the prophets – and they were first of all called the other books by Sirach 132 B.C., the book of Syrach or Ecclesiasticus depending on which version of the apocrypha you have.

Right in 132 B.C,, he said we have-we have long had the law of the prophets and the ton alon [foreign], the others. You'll be so glad you went to that two semesters of Greek to have heard ton alon, the-the others. And come [45:00] to be called the writings. Jesus had a three-fold canon. He said they all [44:30] spoke of him, so at the point which I saw Jesus saying all three segments speak about him, you go back and you start reading things like Paul Romans 4.

Remember the subject of Romans 4? Justification by faith. Help me here. I-I mean I-I know you could risk giving a wrong answer, but in Romans 4 talking about justification by faith, who does Paul start with?

Man: [44:55] I think it was Abraham.

[44:58] Abraham, sure. So [45:00] how does Abraham say [crosstalk] —

Man: [45:01] [inaudible].

[45:02] What's the text he cites? I mean you're going great.

Man: [45:05] [inaudible].

[45:06] And the chapter is important in this case as it ends up being, 15:6, which says what?

Man: [45:13] [inaudible].

[45:13] Abraham believed God and it was credited to him or counted. He rewards chashab [foreign]. It's the only-it's the only mathematical term in the Old Testament. It was counted to him as righteousness.

Now Paul picks [45:30] Genesis 15:6 perhaps because there was a controversy going on at that time. Some said you were saved not by faith alone, but by faith alone and-and undergoing what? What ritual? Circumcision. Because of Genesis 17, where the covenant of circumcision [46:00] is instituted and, you know, if you're in-if you're in-in the infant baptism tradition, it's not a small issue to talk about the role of circumcision in biblical theology, is it?

That should be an important one, but putting that aside, Paul said, look, if you're arguing that circumcision and faith is the primary text, remember before Genesis 17, there was Genesis 15. He believed [46:30] God and it was counted to him as righteousness.

Who's Paul's second case study? Who's he pick in Romans 4? He picks another text and its Psalm 32, 1 and 2, David, and names him, doesn't he? I forget, but I think so. So, okay, as the law in the writings, maybe also the prophets because David was considered a prophet, spoke by revelation of God, so he-he — and he cites Psalm 32, which is in the writings, the first book of the third section of the scripture, [47:00] remember Jesus said the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalm.

And then you say didn't Paul leave out the prophets? When Paul starts his book in Romans 1:16 and 17 – you remember that, Romans 1:16, famous verse – "for I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God unto all who believe, to the Jew first and also to the gentiles."

Then at 1:17 he cites [47:30] Habakkuk 2:4, "The just shall live..." how?

Man: [47:35] By faith.

[47:36] By faith. Paul's already – he's already got Habakkuk, the prophets going on this one [background noise - squeaking sound]. That's one of his favorite versus [sniffling sound]. But in Roman's 4 when he argues, Paul argues from the start of the canon to the end of the can[48:30] on that it has always been true that justification is by faith. We are righteous [48:00] by faith. God makes us righteous through faith. And that this has been a – always been apart from circumcision or apart from any other act.

Does not mean that there will not be works as a result, but Paul says there is no merit in your works. Your salvation is a gift of God and it is the basis of your faith.

How does Paul know [48:30] this? Was this something he learned in the revelation, revelatory time that he spent that he talks about in-in-in Galatians, how he didn't receive his doctrine from another apostle but was gotten from God?

No, he's just citing scripture here and when you notice in Hebrews 11, when the author wants to talk about those who believed, we start with Genesis and go [49:00] down the canon. Or when Jesus is criticizing his opponents – remember this when he says, "You have killed the righteous people and the prophets," starting with whom, do you remember? What's the first murder in the Bible?

Man: [49:17] [inaudible].

[49:18] Cain killed Able. He starts with Abel and he ends with Zachariah.

Man: [49:23] Yup.

[49:27] Who is talked about in [49:30] Second Chronicles. Jesus' Bible, the law, prophets and the writing start with Genesis and ended with Chronicles, see. So what Jesus is saying, from the first murder to the last, so though not the only way, though not the only way, one of the ways that the New Testament interprets the Old is from [50:00] start to finish from the law, the prophets and the writings.

And in order to get into the mindset of the New Testament writers as they think from law, prophets and writings it is helpful for us to at least for these two weeks adopt the Hebrew canon. There has been more than one Hebrew canon as far as the order goes. It's always been the same books and always in law, prophets, writings order.

[50:30] So one of the things I would argue is what you're going to be introduced in a few minutes after-after some break I hope as canonical. A canonical approach to Old Testament theology is simply this: the New Testament itself, it is a biblical method of interpretation to start at the beginning, go to the end, utilizing law, prophets, writings.

It [51:00] is not the only thing you can do, but it is a legitimate thing to do, and it is one of the ways you can get into the mind of the New Testament writers. The other way you can get into their mind, as I've said, is to have virtually any subject at hand, any subject, and have scripture at hand to bear-to bear on the issue.

That-that's another way of getting into the New Testament mindset, because oftentimes when they talk about the Old Testament, they're able [51:30] to recall [snapping sound] or maybe they look them up for all I know, but they're there in the text. Yup.

Student: [51:36] [inaudible].

[51:37] Let us take a break. And what I've been trying to say then is, as you study the text itself, you'll come to certain things. The inspiration of the scripture and its usefulness come together. If you want to understand the importance of the Old Testament and you read the New Testament to do so, [52:00] you will see a pattern of interpretation.

So I've introduced that, and we'll introduce a variety of ways of approaching the Old Testament theology then. This has been certainly – this has been just basically a way of telling you my own curiosity led me this far, and many of you probably the same, and then into the academic study of it. Thank you.

Chapter 2

Approaches to Old Testament Theology

I want us to talk about methodology for Old Testament Theology. At least the rest of the day and part of tomorrow, probably, as it turns out. [00:30] You see there is a biblical need to have a methodology for Old Testament Theology. This is clear. We see the New Testament writers had one or more. And, um, I want to get started with this topic.

I have put the first several names on the board and, I think, about page 25 of Old Testament Theology, you could pick up the subsequent names when we get there. Though Old Testament Theology [1:00] – that is an analysis of what the Old Testament says about God – has existed since the Old Testament itself because we see Old Testament writers interpreting previous Old Testament writers. Though it has existed from the oldest times and you can trace it into the [01:30] New Testament and into the church father's and into Calvin and Luther and the reformers. The reformers of your choice.

It was in 1787 that most people date the beginning of Old Testament in biblical theology as we know it now. In 1787, Johann Gabler gave an oration [02:01]. You can find it on page 492 of your "The [unclear] [02:04] of Old Testament Theology" textbook. I will not read it to you, I just wanted you to know that this foundational lecture is in translation for you in your own resource.

The oration was entitled on "The Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology" and the specific objectives of each. This was [02:31] his first lecture as a professor. Notice the title, he is asking for a proper distinction between biblical and systematic theology. It is his opinion that in his time, 1787, dogmatic theology, which is synonymous with systematic theology, was a treatment of the creeds, a treatment of traditional beliefs, a treatment of philosophical understanding, but not necessarily biblical in its orientation. Now, of course, church historians would dispute the beginning premises that we have just stated, but this is Gabler's premise. [03:30] And that this systematic theology basically knew what it would find before it ever got there.

What does the Bible teach about election, or about the church, or about salvation, or about the second coming of Christ? No need to read the Bible. We know already what the truth is [04:00]. So, on the one end, Gabler with the dogmatic theology, had already decided what it was going to find in the Bible before it got there. And whether or not it was true during Gabler's time, certainly we know that can

happen. And it's happened to the best of us because we've studied some, or we've heard preaching, or we've been taught or...that's not all bad, is it? [04:31]

We know what we may find before we start. We've made some decisions already. Some things are not up for grabs with you anymore. But, if taken to an extreme, you are absolutely closed to further explication of even the truth you have, or to having your ideas corrected. And though we can be kind to one another and must be as Christians, [05:01] and we can love one another, some of us are wrong in what we believe, right? We can't hold at the same time, not even a post modern world, certain things that we hold and both of us be right.

For instance, if we hold that congregational government is biblical and we hold that Episcopal government is biblical, we have a problem. My solution is to say that the Bible [05:30] is always true, we can misinterpret it, but the Bible is always true. But, certainly, one of us is wrong. Arminians and Calvinists cannot both be right on election. They can both have certain things down right, they can love one another, and they're certainly both Christians because they find salvation in Christ, but the can't both be right. So, we need to have [06:00] a way of not always having our answers before we start. And, that way, according to Gabler – and this is one place he was right – was to have biblical theology. Let us search the scriptures.

Now, here was Gabler's method. He says put biblical theology before systematic theology. Systematic theology should grow out of biblical theology. That was his first point. Second point, what we need to do is to look at each biblical text [06:31] and examine it historically. When was it written? By whom? For whom? All the sorts of things that you have become used to doing, and become used to doing in theology courses and exegesis courses. Do that, he said. Then he said, having done that, compare one biblical text [07:00] to others to see where the Bible agrees and disagrees. So that you're already going to see that Gabler believed that the Bible was not always consistent with itself, which would separate him, of course, from people like Luther and Calvin and the English reformers and the radical reformation and all of the rest. [07:30]

So, he said, put biblical theology first. Do the historical analysis of text. Compare the text, one another to see where they agree and disagree and then he said, find out what the universal abiding principles are. And, when you read what he says about the Old Testament, it's hard to tell how much would be left. That mostly moral commands – particularly the Ten Commandments – but find the abiding principles and, typically, unless [08:00] an Old Testament principle was repeated in the New, it could not be an abiding principle and, even then, Gabler would filter others out. So, this was his method.

Gabler also found many historical inaccuracies in the text. His opinion was that the, the scripture was often [inherent][Phonetic][08:27] and historical and even theological statements. Gabler's philosophical viewpoint was out of rationalism, and I would say he is a liberal rationalist. So, Gabler was saying we have lots of contradiction in scripture. We have many difficult passages. We would like to get the true separated from the untrue, and then find abiding principles.

So, Gabler's a mixed bag in my opinion. [09:00] I think he is correct to say that systematic theology needs to be built on biblical theology. There would also be other elements, in my opinion. But, I think biblical theology should be the foundation.

I agree the historical analysis ought to be done on a passage. It does make a difference who wrote it and to whom if we're to understand it correctly. I agree that we should compare one text to the next to make our [09:30] theological summaries. But, I would disagree with many of his conclusions particularly about the disagreements of scripture. But, Gabler is indeed a pioneer.

The second person G.L. Bauer, wrote an Old Testament theology, really the first that there was, in 1796. Bauer was also a liberal [10:00] rationalist. He also found many aspects of the Bible to be unscientific and incorrect. Particularly, miracles, because they are unverifiable, in his opinion. He also looked for universal moral principles from the Old Testament. Repeated in the New that would be relevant for today.

It is also important to notice how he set up his study. In other words, how he presented his [10:31] material in his book. Bauer discussed his method and then he divided all of the material he was going to

cover on Old Testament theology into three categories. Theology, Anthropology, Christology. Standard, systematic theology categories. Theology. Anthropology. Christology. God, human beings, Christ.

And I say that [11:00], and only to continue to wet your appetite for George Lauren's Bauer's work. Because, after all, how many liberal rationalists can you read in one week. I say this because it is never easy to write an Old Testament theology for many reasons, but one of the reasons is there is so much material, how do you present it in a coherent way?

Bauer's way was to use [11:32] traditional, systematic theology categories. Theology. Anthropology. Christology. He will not be the last to do so, and I don't find that an illegitimate way of approaching it, but approaching the difficulty of the subject, but I do find it less attractive than allowing the scriptures to unfold as they...as a cannon. As you'll, as you'll see.

[12:00] Now, these two pioneers pretty much set the early stage for Old Testament theology. Bauer wrote the first book entitled "Old Testament Theology". And, they had established the discipline on rationalistic principles that were skeptical of Old Testament history and

miracles, that were skeptical of divine inspiration of the scriptures, and it was determined [12:30] to separate the true from the untrue.

Now, then, the next name, diVita, who wrote his Old Testament theology in 1813, and then a third edition by 1831, diVita shifted the ground from liberal rationalism to a brand of liberal romanticism. [13:00]. His main influence was Immanuel Kant. You remember dear old Kant from categorical imperative. And though he deserves a better treatment than what I am about to give him, you know, there's, there's, he, he argued that within the human soul there's a sense of ought. I ought to do certain things.

And diVita argued, we shouldn't so much try to separate the true from the untrue [13:38] the way a liberal rationalist would. But, we need to understand that in the ancient world myths and legends are standard literary faire and that those myths and legends – and he would include the miraculous pretty much in those – the myths and the legends carry religious feelings and universal [14:00] spirit to them so that diVita would be one of the early persons who would say things like, well it doesn't matter so much if it's factually accurate.

Does it heighten your consciousness of God? Does it inspire in you religious feelings? Does it inspire in you a desire for higher [14:30] standards of living. And, of course, his view of scripture was to treat it as an inspired book, but probably inspired in the same way that I find a great deal of literature inspired, goes something like this: By inspired we mean a higher ability to move human emotions or wills [15:00]. So that I've written a poem or two, but I cannot move the human will and emotions say the way Shakespeare, Chauncer, Milton, on down to your favorites to the poets of high quality Robert Penn Warren that you would find can move your emotions and your will.

And, so, in the way that those sorts of writers are inspired, [15:30] so is the Bible – but diVita's shifted the ground now. Old Testament theology is not so much about truth and error, but it is about universal principles. More than that, about a universal spirit that encourages you toward higher living. So, that's why I would say, really, [16:00] diVita's not a liberal rationalist, but a liberal romanticist who believes that human beings have these thoughts. That human beings desire to do what they ought.

So, that's the standpoint...diVita's also, if you've heard of JED&P in Pentateuchal studies [phonetic][16:19], he's the first to separate the D-source. He's the father of the D-source. So, that's kind...he was working with the Pentateuchal [phonetic] Word with the Old Testament theology.

The fourth, Vodke. Wilhelm Vatke. Arrived in 1835. He, too, believed that there was a lack of historical acts in the Old Testament, but he moved away a bit from liberal romanticism to a certain [16:49] version of Hegel – you remember Hegel, of Hegel's views. You remember Hegel. He says that history is a series of collisions between thesis –

someone says something is true or something occurs, then antithesis, the opposite of it, which then moves to synthesis[unclear][17:14], which in a very, again, if we want to get Hegel spinning in his grave we could really boil Hegel down to this. If you've ever had a discussion, some of you said you were married [background chuckle], there was [inaudible][17:29] and finally, a synthesis. This happens on a daily basis in some homes. Though in some homes, it's more like thesis, antithesis, thesis, antithesis, it is a long [17:46] time getting the synthesis.

So, we know that what Vatke said...rather what occurs is, one thing happens in history then another and finally a synthesis and we move forward. This was his view.

Also in Hegel, there is this sense that there is through this series of collisions of thesis, antithesis, synthesis, there is constant [18:15] development upward, forward in human existence. In other words, before there was Darwinian evolution, there was a sense of Hegelian evolution. And Vatke believed that the way history works is that you start with something primative and you move to something more involved. Darwinism, in not even a [18:45] nutshell, but in a speck of a nutshell [chuckle], is the movement from something simple to something complex. If you move from one cell to us, you have mo...you have done a lot of things, but you have moved from the simple to the complex.

How this played out in Old Testament theology for Vatke was he reconfigured the Old Testament along lines that you know best, probably if you studied the Pentateuchal [phonetic][19:14] is JED&P. He believed since the complicated materials should come last. All right, we are going to go from simple to complex. Complex liturgical text, like Leviticus, must come later, right? Must come last. This was determined by his philosophical presupposition not by the [19:44] text itself, necessarily. But he believed, therefore, that the Israelite religion started as a simple matter of worship, say, with Abraham offering an alter sacrifice way back there.

And, probably, Abraham didn't believe that there was only one God. He was probably a polyatheist and then that eventually resulted in the prophets saying [20:15] first there is ethical monotheism. There is only one God and we must live for him. And that as living for him got played out by the post-exilic times, in the 400's, B.C., you then had all these complicated rules and regulations for worship. But, it moved from simple to complex because that's just the way history happens.

So, then [20:45] Vatke is really putting us in a position where you would say what Old Testament theology amounts to is figuring out the evolution of Israelite religion. Old Testament theology to Vatke is figuring out the evolution of Israelite religion. How did it move from simple to complex? [21:16]

And, I have never understood how monotheism is more complex than polytheism. I just, just for starters – I'm not going to go very far with this – I would have thought that if we ended up with monotheism, we are not moving from the simple to the complex, but that's another...the way Vatke would have answered that, we're moving from the primative [21:45] to the advanced. And, it's an advanced notion to believe in one God rather than many. That assertion would be disputed by a...well, in excess of a billion people today worldwide.

So, I start here. Now, these are the roots of Old Testament theology and as you read summaries of it, you'll see that these roots remain. Particularly, in the [22:16] non-conservative strains of Old Testament theology.

Now, there came reaction. If you're saying that in this point in time wasn't the majority of Old Testament scholars up to 1835 pretty conservative folks, the answer is yes. Did they agree with that view of Old Testament theology? The answer was [22:46], no [emphasis added]. But, they weren't writing Old Testament theology. They were still working, primarily, in systematic theology. They had not yet engaged in the new discipline until the second half of the board, here. And the way they responded remains some of the same way conservatives respond today. Not solely, but this is why I go [23:15] over all our forefathers...why I go over the forefathers at this point.

The first is E.W. Hanksteinberg [phonetic][23:33] writing between 1829 and 1835. Hanksteinberg stressed Messianic theology in the Old Testament. As he read the rationalist, Gabler and Bauer and romanticists, diVita and the Heglian, Vatke, he argued that they don't see much value in the Old Testament. They're looking for a few universal principles, but that leaves most of the Old Testament untapped, right? We could agree with that. [24:00] So, he said, for the Church, and for theology, we need to remember that Christology is the key to biblical unity and the key to theology. Christology is the key to biblical unity and biblical theology.

Thus, basically, over a six year period, Hanksteinberg [phonetic][24:29] was writing about Messianic theology in the Old Testatment. He found no dispute between biblical theology and systematic theology. He said they should be identical in their conclusions. He argued that Moses was the author of the Pentateuch. He argued for the rational belief in the history, history of the Old Testament and so, in a way, Hanksteinberg [phonetic][25:00] was a conservative rationalist. He said it is rationale to believe in miracles. It is rationale to, to argue for the history, history of the Old Testament. It is rational to make a...that you can make a legitimate rational argument for Mosaic authorship. That if you don't accept Gabler and Bauer's presuppositions and their conclusions, you can find for and in favor of [25:30] biblical unity, biblical accuracy and the importance of the Old Testatment because of its emphasis on Christ.

So, Hanksteinberg was really [emphasis] the first conservative voice to be raised, and you can still get his books in...ah...translation through Kregel Reprint. I mean, I think if you run it and I, I don't know if it's in print, but it's been printed and isn't the internet wonderful, we can find nearly anything if it's for sale [26:01] [audience chuckling] in the United States.

I only mention in passing the next name, Hävernick, who died and his work was published posthumously in 1848. There are a lot of Old Testament theologies published after someone dies. One of the things I've been criticized for was for publishing Old Testament theology too early in my career [student chuckling][26:33]. I thanked them for noticing.

But, there is some wisdom in waiting until you know something. This isn't needed, but Hävernick said Christ is the climax of history. We are entering in the eight, post 1835 and you see with Vatke and others, history is the most important subject. Is something historical? What about [27:00] historical method? Hävernick said Christ is the climax of history. You want to talk about history, there's nothing more important. No more important historical event than Christ's death and resurrection. And, he argued, history is God's vehicle for revelation.

Unlike the rationalists, who...you know, the liberal rationalists who said God doesn't break into history, Hävernick said God must break into history if he's going to explain anything to human beings. What else can he do? [27:30] History is God's way of speaking to us. And, so, I've mentioned him because he is the first really to argue, not in print, but in his lectures, that history is God's vehicle, revelation.

We'll then go to J.C.K. von Hofman,1841 to 1844 and his writing. Von Hofman was the first to use the [28:00] term salvation history that you may have heard in your theological studies, if not, you will. Salvation history. He said that the Old Testament records God's efforts to save the human race. In other words, he was basically a conservative Hegelian. He said that in history you find God's efforts to save [28:31] the human race and in scripture, you find recorded God's efforts to save the human race.

And then, of course, the Old Testament is valuable because it talks about Messianic theology. But, it does more than that for von Hofman. It expresses the need for salvation. The law expresses our sinfulness. And the Messianic theology gives the answer to our sinfulness. And the Old Testament narratives explain how God has been delivering his people from the beginning [29:00]. And that, therefore, his view of Old Testament theology revolved around the single principle of salvation history.

This will become important later on in Old Testament theology for two reasons. One, it focuses on a single theme; tries to find the unifying principle to hang everything on. A hook, if you will, to hang all of the coats of theology and [29:30] because it emphasizes the accuracy of the Old Testament in telling God's historical work. And, for another reason, it is important because Evangelical Old Testament theologians in the next, after this, the next 150 years tended to stress that the most important thing in biblical theology, including the Old Testament, was salvation [30:00] and how God did it.

Now that we have some clear differences between the four above the line on the board, and the four below the line on the board. Gabler, Bauer, diVita, Vatke, all of them believed that the Bible contains inaccuracies, mistakes, though diVita does not find that to be as big a problem religiously [30:31] as Bauer and Vatke and Gabler do. Gabler and Bauer argue the universal principles...discovering universal principles, that's the purpose of Old Testament theology. Vatke disagrees. He says the process of Old Testament theology is uncovering the history of the evolution of the Israelite religion.

DiVita talks more in terms [31:01] of religious principles. The four we just described, disagree with the presuppositions of the first four. They disagree that it's necessarily rational to argue for errors in the Bible for the lack of miracles. They argue rather that it is essentially rational to believe so. Hävernik, von Hofman and then [31:31] Gustaf Oiler [phonetic], one that I'm going to pass over rather quickly, I'm afraid, all argue that the important thing about the Old Testament is salvation history particularly, Messianic theology, and Oiler even sets up his study of the Old Testament as law, prophets and writings. Whereas, both above the line – Bauer, diVita and Vatke – they make [32:02] theological principles. It's usually systematic theology categories – God, human race, Christology. And, Hanksteinberg [phonetic], Hävernik and von Hofman tend to focus on Christology in the Old Testament. Oiler [phonetic] is saying the law, prophets and writings are a way of describing, or means of describing, what the Old Testament teaches. [32:30]

So, in effect, the people at the top, Gabler, Bauer are going to argue the Old Testament is only valuable for some universal moral principles. Whereas, [unclear][32:40] would say, no, no, no, it's important to see biblical unity and what we can find out about Christ in the Old Testament and how God saves.

This takes us up to a watershed moment. But, ah, basically this is up to 1875. Well, a second thing is, um, that conservatives take, ah, not just a single thing conservatives and non-conservatives are going to pick up later. That was for the whole discipline.

A second thing that happens, [33:15] at least a second thing, is that conservative scholars are going to pick up this theme of salvation

history almost exclusively, though some non-conservative scholars do as well. And, a third point is this, this notion of salvation history being God's efforts to save the human race, is a much discussed topic.

I don't know if that's two things or three, but those are the things that I was thinking of. [33:45] And, von Hofman, von Hofman agrees with Vatke that history is very important. He agrees that there is a development in history, only he would say the peak...yeah, he, he agreed that history really was getting more and more important and it was growing toward a specific point.

What do you suppose that point would be if you were von Hoffman? What would be the climax of history? [34:15] Christ, sure. Now then, you're going to find out in any discussion when people share presuppositions and disagree on results, it's often tough to see how they can come together.

It is also true if you share someone's presupposition in an argument, they can use that presupposition – lack of a better term – [34:45] to beat you with it. So, that the very fact that the early conservatives in many cases accepted the Hegelian view of history, became the very reason they could not dispute in the next hundred years, they could not dispute people...dispute the conclusions of people they disagreed with.

In my view, [35:15] and the view of a lot of conservative and non-conservative scholars alike, history doesn't necessarily always grow to a point. The fact that Christ is the most important view of history, does not mean that there had to be all of these little steps along the way. But, in salvation history, they argued there was this step, then this step, then this step and this prophesy and this prophesy and, finally, Christ. But that, that's just the way history happens. [35:46]

So they shared some presuppositions, they disputed some presuppositions such as the authority and the nature and inspiration of scripture. They shared some conclusions, they disputed about some conclusions. The main difference in the presuppositions of the first four scholars and last four scholars had to do with the nature of scripture itself. With its authority and with its inspiration. They started from different places, they ended up at different places. [36:15] on that issue. But, I didn't want to leave the notion that there were no agreements, though there are substantive disagreements.

But, at this point in history, one book was written that changed the whole field. And note there on page 25, Julius Wellhausen in 1878, Wellhausen, wrote [36:45] a volume entitled "Prolegomena to the History of Israel". Prolegomena is what you have to say before you can get started. Today is a prolegomena to Old Testament theology. Maybe you say it's things you think you have to say before you get started, but Wellhausen was not as much an original thinker as he was a master at synthesizing, bringing things together. [37:18]

He was great at synthesis. He was a clear writer. He was an effective writer. I've heard this phrase before and I could apply it to Wellhausen. He wrote like an angel. He was a great stylist. And he wrote at a point in time in which his views were most likely to be well received. [37:48]

So, if you want to make an impact, if you want to be the person who writes the book in your field, just remember, you will need these things. You will need to be a brilliant writer. You will need to be a great synthesizer. You will need to have a few original ideas of your own, which he had, and you will need to have history on your side.

What were Wellhausen's views? The same as Vatke's, basically. [38:14] Who, 40 years before had written that Old Testament theology is a description of the evolution of Israelite religion. That the prophets came first and wrote about ethical monotheism. Wrote about covenant thinking. That Israel has a covenant with

God. Then, later came the deuteronomistic literature which talked about covenant theology again.[38:45] And, finally, the priestly writing.

What of Moses, you would ask. Wehllhausen, from his view of history, did not believe that human beings were able to read and write at that the time in which Moses existed, 1400 B.C. He did not have the benefit of archeology at the time. Archeology. One of the baby sciences of all time. Really, only now learning how to do its work. [39:15]. To be honest.

So, Wellhausen didn't know of all of the Egyptian text that predated Moses by far, or the Babylonian texts, or whatever. So, we give him a break here. But, he just would have said Moses would not have known how to write if he existed and as far a historical Moses, that's like asking for historical King Arthur. There may have been a king like that, but there have been so many legends built up around him that we could not know fact from fiction [39:45] now.

And it was the priests of Israel, after the Temple was destroyed and rebuilt in the late 500's and the early 400's and down to the time of Ezra and clear on down to the time of Christ, that were writing these laws and rules and regulations. And, Wellhausen said one of the great things about Jesus was that he set us free from the rules and regulations, not just that had grown up around the Bible, but that were in the Bible itself. [40:20]. His view of history was evolutionary and Hegelian. It was not so much rationalistic as it was like diVita, romantic in its view of human beings, growing and becoming greater and having the sense of ought. What they ought to do.

Now, simply stated, Wellhausen swept the field. There are a lot of historical reasons for this, that I won't go into. But, I can tell you that by the end of the twe...by the beginning of the 20th Century, there was hardly, there were exceptions that'll prove the following rule, [40:56] but there was hardly a chair in Old Testament in Europe that did not agree with Wellhausen's views.

It was one of those quirks in history in which most of the conservative scholars were older and, as we get older, we either retire or die. And they were not replaced with conservative scholars, but those who were in the Wellhausen vein. And, in fact, for a long time, there were people who saw no difference between. Saw no dichotomy between a reverence for religious truth [41:31] and Wellhausen's views because, after all, since 1813, we've been hearing simply because something isn't accurate, does not mean there's no truth in it. Though there is a strong conservative disagreement to that position.

In the United States, the Southern Baptist convention [not clear][41:56] basically became true there by post-World War II era. This viewpoint had swept the field. There was hardly an Old Testament scholar writing. Why, I shouldn't say writing, being published and writing are two different things. And teaching and being heard are two different things, as you know. But, certainly, Wellhausen's view was the dominant viewpoint whether you are talking about pentateuchal studies or Gospel studies, which he then influenced after pentateuchal studies.

But, back to my subject matter [42:30], in Old Testament theology. What did Wellhausen say Old Testament theology was? It was a description of the history of the evolution of the Israelite religion and it moved from a primitive to a more developed notion. The scriptures. He would say they were inspired, but not inspired in a way that would make sure that they were historically and theologically accurate. [42:59]

[42:59-43:05][pause] Now, then, between 1878 and 1920, as I state in the textbook, this viewpoint was the dominant viewpoint. And, not to read the book to you, but just as a time saving device in a class like this, I would say if you look at page 26 and 27, second main paragraph, as [unclear][43:38] suggests, “Books

that appeared under the title, Old Testament theology were often really history of Israelite religion". So that, Schtaden and Cousch [phonetic][43:52] [pause][43:52-43:55] basically are history of Israelite religion.

And you say, what's the difference between that and the Old testament? Well, history of Israelite religion would include all sorts of things, wouldn't it? It would include an inherence to God's law and God's principles and to the Lord himself. But, it would also include polytheism, including bailism. Right?

A history of Israelite religion would be any religious thing that the Israelites practiced. Whereas, an Old Testament theology...admit it, yes, that's what was going on. But, we disagreed with it. [44:31] So, whereas prior to Wellhausen and Vatke, whether they were conservative or liberal, the authors tended to focus on Old Testament theology. That is, what the Old Testament writers themselves thought

was true and false, right and wrong. Wellhausen and Vatke said, no, you mix it all together and just describe the history of it.

The next paragraph on page 27, I've noted, that Herman Schultz [phonetic] August Diehlman [phonetic] [45:04] dialogued with Wellhausen. Diehlman, dis...in 1895, he disputed all of Wellhausen's conclusions. He was pretty much a lone voice. Herman Schultz was writing the most popular Old Testament in theology and the first, ah, one of the first to be translated into English. He does two things, though he accepts all of Wellhausen's presuppositions, he disagrees with him in two points.

One, he affirms divine revelation. The Bible comes, he says, from God, not solely from human beings who are trying to the best they can to understand. He affirms [45:36] revelation. The second thing he does is affirms biblical unity. Wellhausen would not be a high proponent of biblical unity. And Schultz says the single theme we need to note is God's reign on earth. God's kingdom is the single theme that holds Old Testament theology together.

So far we have a couple of themes now, don't we, single themes. Von Hofman. Salvation history. Schultz, God's kingdom. You'll see these later in Old Testament theology and the history of it. So, even though Schultz agrees with Wellhausen [46:30] in the main, he stresses divine revelation and the unity of scripture based on a single theme.

1920 to 1957. If there's ever a second edition of the book, that's the date I would put on it instead of 1920 and 1960. 1920 and 1957. In a way, if you say it...how...how did Old Testament theology break away from a history of religion's approach of [07:04] an evolutionary approach that human beings are growing into a greater and greater entity. An improved entity. What did the most to explode that notion at least for a time? World War I. World War I.

When you say, oh...in the late 19th Century a lot of liberals, and I mean capital "L" liberals, would argue that human beings were progressing and getting better and better, and look at our [47:30] technology, they would say. In the early 19th Century nothing moved faster than horseback in North America. Maybe camels are faster, I don't know, but you couldn't move any faster than some beast could get you. And look, by the end of the 19th century we have trains, we have all sor...we have automobiles in the making. We can move faster than we've ever moved before.

It was you used to...you had to send a message over land and see, whatever else, right? [48:02] By the late 19th century you had telegraph. Transatlantic telegraph. The first internet. There it goes. We have electric lights, we have all of these technological advances. And, in World War I, they were all put to use. To kill people.

So, with the same science that could...came up with anesthetics, ri...that's a good thing for most of us, right? If you're going to have your leg amputated [48:35] you'd prefer to have an anesthetic. If you're going to have your teeth pulled, you'd prefer that you have the pain deadened somehow. If you're going to have your appendix out, you'd, you'd prefer a little something to take the edge off. The same science that can do that can produce poison gas – mustard gas.

Did you ever read about that? Or, or...I mean, I won't go int...mustard gas. I, I saw an interview once with a World War I [49:00] veteran –

I used to know some, they're about all gone now. They talked about men who had mustard gas on their face. That they literally clawed the skin off their own face trying to get it off of them. I mean, you know, it's basically banned now. I mean even...[chuckle] you can have nuclear weapons, but be faster at least. But, the same technology that could produce an airplane for human travel, could produce an airplane that'll drop bombs on you. You get my point. And World War I was [49:30] one of those horrible wars where the battlefield techniques were lagging behind the weaponry.

The United States Civil War was like that too. You know, they still had these methods of bunching up together and standing fairly close and firing rifles that could kill somebody from four times the distance. You know, you've got trench warfare. We're going to come over and get you. Well, we have machine guns. [50:00]

In World War I, Karl Bart, who was a systematic theologian and Walter Eichrodt, who was an Old Testament theologian, both of whom came together and taught at...in Switzerland and several other writers and thinkers said, you know, if the human race is progressing, this is one of these things of, of two steps forward and three steps back, it's not an inevitable progression. Sin became a topic again [50:31].

Bart wrote in his Romans commentary, First Edition, 1919, about sin and the need for God. That human beings, if they did not have God, were lost. Wrote articles on the strange world of the Bible, emphasized the necessity of preaching and went to war with liberalism. He was not a conservative evangelical. He was what came to be known as Neoorthodox. [51:01] But, Bart valued revelation as Schultz had done and said there were unifying things in the Bible such as reconciliation and creation, doctrines that came out in his massive church dogmatics. But, Bart set a tone that said that we need a day in theology, and others agreed.

In your [unclear][51:32] of Old Testament theology, the first two or three articles you have on page 20 [silence, flipping pages] through page 29, an article by Otto Eisfelt [phonetic][silence][51:45]. This article was written in 1926. Eisfelt [phonetic] was in the old school of theology. Willhausen, Vaine [phonetic] [51:56] and Eisfelt [phonetic] argued you must keep theology and history separate.

History, he said, is an objective discipline that just gives us the facts. Whereas, theology is talking about values and talking about truth and talking about morals, and talking about God. And it is very hard, he says, to historically verify God. It's a faith exercise, he says. So, we must keep them separate. [52:30]

Following his article on page 30, you have what amounts to a rejoinder written in 1929 by Walter Eichrodt [phonetic][52:41] who is, in his own way, as significant as Willhausen is to Old Testament theology. Eichrodt argued the following: There is no reason to separate theology and history because both inform the other. As for Eisfelt's [phonetic][53:05] claim that history is an objective discipline that gives us only the facts, Eichrodt said, nonsense. History – written history –, requires selections, doesn't it? No historian tells you everything that a person did.

A historian...I'm reading a biography of John Adams, the second president of the United States right now. There are about 500 pages right in this book. [53:42] Adams himself wrote many, many hundreds of pages more than that of letters that we possess, and diaries that are in...you know, historians possess. To choose what to include, right? History's not totally objective. We hope it tells the truth. We hope it has the facts in it, but somebody's got to organize those facts.

So that I am not a marxist historian, [54:16] but a marxist historian does what every historian must do – choose a unifying principle for the history. I'm not a Nazi historian either, but Nazi historians chose, chose what elements of history they would include. So, remember, for good or bad, history is not just there, it requires principles behind it. You know that from reading history of your own homeland. [54:47]

And there's quite a dispute, isn't there? On how to write history and who ought to be included and what oughta go. That's another subject, but Eichrodt said don't tell me that history is just there, it's just objective. History must have an underlying organizing principle. He says theology is one such underlying principle.

Someday, if it's not already happened to you, somebody will say to you, the Bible's not really history, it's theological history. Well, what are we to say to that? Yes, it is, [55:30] but every history has governing principles. Theological or otherwise, and I don't think I'm ready to say solely because something is from a certain perspective that we know from the start that it's wrong, or would have known from the start when it was written that it was wrong. We would know now the dangers of the Nazi view of history. [56:00] It's a little tougher to read the German history. It's a little bit tougher to have picked that out in 1925 than it was in 1945. But the principles were already there. The principles were already there to be seen.

And so, you know, I...there's a certain perspective...David McCullough of the biography I am reading now on John Adams, he says in the introduction that he has come to love John Adams and appreciate him, and he writes he hopes he's as critical as he needs to be, but he's impressed with [56:30] Adams. I might of then shut the book and say, well, McCullough obviously can't be objective here. I can't trust what he says. He likes Adams, and I know he shouldn't like him, or whatever.

Or, you know, he's pro-American Revolution. He's glad it happened. He has a perspective. Should we set his book aside, no. Everybody has a perspective, they must be judged against a standard. That was Eichrodt point. And, Eichrodt is really now the Godfather of the single theme approach because he said theme and he picked that is historical and theological. That is not as tied to theology as, say, salvation is, and the salvation historians, but that is yet theological. And that theme, that single them, was the covenant.

Eichrodt said if you want to understand biblical theology, start with the concept of covenant. Why? He said, the very notion that you have the Old Testament and the New Testament is to say there is an old covenant and a new covenant according to Jeremiah 31. Covenantal theology that says...is absolutely essential.

And so, between 1933 and 1939, Eichrodt published three volumes on Old Testament theology [58:03] dedicated to the single unifying theme of covenant. His first volume was “God and the Covenant People”. God's relationship to Israel. If you would understand God's relationship to Israel, you must understand he entered into a covenant with Israel.

His second book, which was the most...which was more controversial, was “God in the World”, had to do with God and creation. That God is in a covenant relationship with the entire creation. [58:35] Why was

this controversial in 1935? Because, by 1935 Eichrodt lived in Switzerland, next door to Germany. A lot of contact with Germany. By 1935, Nazi theologians were using creation theology to argue for the superiority of the Aryan peoples. And the inferiority of not only [59:01] non-caucasion, but non-Germans, non-Aryan's, so creation theology was quite a hot topic.

And then, in 1939, writing about God and the human race. Now, Eichrodt talked about the importance of salvation in Christ and of salvation history, of course, but always through a covenant lense. He argued that [59:31] God was the creator of all and loved all equally. That non-Aryan's were not somehow sub...sub-par humans and then certain other races sub-human. I mean, part of the Nazi activity, and you say this is hard to believe didn't they have theologian's who [inaudible][59:51]. Yes. They had theologian's who, basically said for instance, Slavic peoples were sub-human. They weren't quite human. Therefore, when the Slavic holocust occurred, basically that's what it was, it was...you were not really...you would tell a soldier you are not

really killing a human being. You are killing something not quite human.

So, Eichrodt found it important to talk about God and the human race while at the same time maintaining the privacy of Jewish...the Jewish [60:30] nature of the Old Testament. And that, that was not a bad thing, but a good thing. And that the unity of the scriptures showed that the Old Testament was not some negative Jewish book, but just as much Christian scripture as the New Testament.

It is hard to imagine and I cannot imagine, I cannot teach it effectively, how countercultural to the [61:03] European scene that, and particularly, the German, Swiss, Czech, German scene, European scene of the 1930's that Eichrodt was. To state a positive view of the Old Testament, to state a positive view of the Jewish nature of it, to state the unity of the scripture was to go against many of the streams, not only of [61:31] culture, but of the background of Old Testament theology. Some of the things that we've already talked about.

And, after Eichrodt, conservative and non-conservative scholars alike, argued for a single theme approach to the Old Testament. They didn't always agree on the theme. That was always part of the argument. There is a single theme, and it is this. No, it is this. No, it is this.

So, we're going to, ah, just summarize now as you go on your reading, you'll find that some argue [62:04] that the single theme is the nature of God, and I would agree. Some people argue the single theme is God's communion with the human race, or God's presence.

When you got to the 1960's, God's absence [chuckle]. Now, I believe it's important to have a single theme, or something like a single theme [62:33] to keep your study focused. Covenant is a good single theme because there is much that covenant, that's a peg you can hang. Our relationship with God, our duties to God, etc. You can hang them on the peg of covenant. But, there are some texts that's hard to hang on that peg. [63:00]

The wisdom literature it's...it's...pretty hard to see exactly how Job is specifically related to covenantal theology, for instance. “Song of Solomon” is another one. There are several texts that it becomes difficulty to hang on that peg. And having said that, I'm going to say, you know, I think the Bible's main focus in a polytheistic culture from which it came from and in which we live in, is...oh, it sounds safe, doesn't it? Hmm mm. [student response].

The problem is there are two books of the Bible that never mention the name of God. [63:33] "Song of Solomon" and "Esther". So, to quote a friend of mine's grandmother, "There's always something to take the joy out of living". [laughter].

Eichrodt agreed with many of Willhausen's presuppositions about authorship and date, but he did not share Willhausen's negative view of the Old Testament's history. He did not believe that every word of it was accurate or that everything seen there did occur, but he thought that it was in the main. [64:05] Generally, historically reliable, and that the covenant was a historical event. That God made a covenant with Israel at Sinai. And that the rest of the Bible flows from that fact.

And, through the 30's, 40's and 50's, there were single theme approaches written. You can read about those. But, again, you'll find God the living Lord. God's communion with human beings. [64:35] God's presence. These became single theme approaches to Old Testament theology.

From 1957 to 1993...what do I have in my notes that I can't do? Oh, I have about 12 scholars listed. I'm going to start with one [65:02], and that is Gerhard von Rad [phonetic][65:09] who is treated on page 36. Von Rad starts the section where it says 1960 to 1993. Here are his elements.

He agreed with many of Wellhausen's historical conclusions about authorship and date, but when he did his Old Testament theology, much of that was irrelevant because he stressed the unity [65:39] of the Old Testament in the following manner: He said throughout the Old Testament you have traditions, old traditions that are preached and repreached. That what the Old Testament theologian must find is the kerugma, the preaching that goes on in the Old Testament.

So that not only von Rad, but an Old Testament theologian like G. Ernest Wright says that what happens in Old Testament theology is that each successive book [66:20] of the Old Testament recites God's great acts. Recites God's great deeds. Theology is preaching. Theology is recital. So that von Rad believes there were certain historical events like Israel went into Egypt and came out, and that the text preached and repreached that theme the rest of the Bible. Believed there would be a Messiah. The text preached and repreached those themes throughout [66:53] the Bible. Then, generally, he followed the Hebrew order of books in his message.

More on the implications of that tomorrow so I...I'll...bring a few things together for you. At this point, in Old Testament theology, they've moved away from the old rationalistic...though some of [inaudible] [67:19] to there. And, conservative and liberals both, though the conservatives are going to enter the picture again in the 1960's, are adopting the idea that if we can find a single theme for our Old Testatment theology we can have some unity to our approach. Right?

Second, they are stressing God's work in history. Both sides of the Old Testament theology, conservative and liberal. [67:50] And, with von Rad, you're going to start an emphasis on how subsequent text reuse

earlier text. Now, that's going to be very important to our study, because I believe that as the Bible unfolds from law, to prophets, to writings, there's certain themes that are in all [68:15] three sections. Creation's one of them. So that you're going to find in Genesis I and II ideas that are then picked up in Isaiah 40 to 48 and then used again in a different way in Saul 93 to 99. That's why you have your readings the way they are. And von Rad said they're preaching the tradition. I would say they're doing something else as well, but that's why it's set up the way it is.

Tomorrow I'll conclude this [68:46] discussion of methodology, ah, with a couple of scholars in my own viewpoint that you'll be reading, but I believe von Rad is right in the sense he's right about saying the text

preaches and repreaches. I say that because there's a way in which, if when you preach or teach a text, or you write about a text, what we often do is we go get a commentary to see how somebody wrote [69:16] about it. We might go get a sermon to see how somebody preached about it. Hopefully, preached it.

Well, one of the things to follow along that principle it's...a lot of us haven't thought about, but it might be interesting to see how Isaiah wrote and preached about principles that were already in the Bible. I'd argue there already scripture.

The interesting thing is to go to the New Testament and see, having seen what the law of prophets and writing say about creation. See what the apostle, John, says about creation in John I [confirm][69:52] or the Apostle Paul says about creation in Colossians 1. To see how the Book of Revelation basically is, is a new way of describing what's already in the book of Isaiah.

You see, you're going to see the use, reuse, preaching and repreaching of these texts. And, as we follow that process, we're going to go through that and then we're going to draw a theological summary. An ecumenical [unclear][70:20] approach to Old Testament theology is going to say if you give me a topic, – hopefully it emerges from the text itself – but if you give me a topic, and if we can study the scriptures together, from law to prophets to writings, to Gospels, [inaudible][70:33] and general epistles, I will have an Old Testament theology that will lead to a biblical theology that would inform a systematic theology. And, if I do that, I'll know how to be a preacher, teacher, writer, student worker, whatever else you want to be.

You might even be able to ask the question, if I don't know what I want to be, and people are bugging me about it [71:03], is there anything about calling and the discerning of calling in biblical theology that might give me something to chew on? Well already, you know what, to me is a rhetorical question whose answer is yes. But, part of the joy is to say, okay, we know that this is profitable for doctrine for correction, for discipleship, etc., if we have this method of going from beginning to end, if we see the use [71:33] and the reuse and if we

summarize and pull things together, will we not find out what God has done in history and what we ought to do in our own history.

So, that's kind of my closing exortation. We've moved a long way from 1787 till about 1957. We'll come along a bit faster tomorrow and we will deal with creation [72:01] in biblical theology.

Chapter 3

Methodology of OT Theology

Father we are grateful for today. We are thankful that you have given us the strength to be here and to do this work that you called us to do. We ask you that you would forgive us of our sins and that we would receive and accept your pardon. [00:30] We thank you for Christ who had died to secure our forgiveness of sins and we thank you for Holy Spirit who lives within us and for your watching care over us. I ask that you will be with those in Romania now that is doing the mission work and I ask that you would bless and guide and strengthen for these several weeks, that your will, will be done and the cause of Christ will be furthered by this another work that you will remember [01:00] our missionaries around the world. We know that they come in many different ages and we know that they come from many different groups; we ask that each one will be committed to you and that you would bless their work. We pray that you will be with this new pastor and family as they make this transition. Be with the church as they also make their transition and make this a good and acceptable time in your sight [01:30] as they serve you together. We ask for Jane that you would help him with his visit with the bishop. You will help his ministry to be sorted out and the things that he should do. Be made plain for those who need to know it and I ask that you would bless these efforts. Be with the other classes that are with me this summer. Give the professors and the students' insight and endurance and give them the grace that they need [02:00] during this time, in Christ's name. Amen.

A bit more background and then we will be working on creation and biblical theology. We had gone through right up to about 1957 to 1960 with Gerhard von Rod and if my new drier raise marker that Mark has procured for us works, I will write a [02:30] couple of names on the board. And if it does not we will continue our other method. So there was running alongside the works on the Old Testament theology in the 1960s, the 1970s and the 1980s and it came to be known in the Biblical Theology movement. And the Biblical Theology Movement [03:00] was not solely interested in the Old Testament Theology as its name indicate. However many of the persons who wrote in this movement were Old Testament theologians and they influenced a lot of the writing in the Old Testament theology later, just a few names [03:30]. The first was a British scholar, H. H. Rally and he wrote a variety of books but the first was 1942 and the titles of the book, the books that are to be mentioned here, give you the essence of the movement of what it had emphasised. For instance, Rally's first significant book, the [04:00] Relevant of the Bible 1942, what the Biblical movement theology sought to do was to re capture the importance of the Scriptures for the church and for his ministry, and for his discipleship and for his teaching.

Now of course during the era of the 20s and 30s, as European [04:30] Liberalism caught up to the United States, Britain, there came lessening emphasis in the churches and in the pulpits on the importance of Scripture and which is full blown social Gospel really was the order of the day in many places. And so though Rally was far from a fundamentalist conservative whatever is more in vain in someone who emphasis Scripture the way a bard did, it's irrelevant the Bible for the church needs [05:00] to be stressed again. He also later in 1967, I believe pinned a volume called, The Unity of the Bible and this is the emphasis of biblical theology movement made that perhaps caused the most controversy and yet at the same time the most interest, because as you know Old Testament theology often [05:30] stands apart and

separates from the New Testament theology. My hunch is, the problem is getting people who are; a. interested, b. knowledgeable in both testaments and it's not, even you want to do both. And you have come to understand that all you have to take is survey of the Bible, like take Old Testament survey, you see all the book in the list, you see all and say, what if I try to master all these materials? What would I do? But then there are those [06:00] who would say, the Testament really can't be reconciled very well. The Biblical theology movement rejected that notion and not only Rally but others would write on the unity of the Bible.

Next name also from the United Kingdom, Norman Henry Snaith. [phonetic] Right in 1944, wrote a volume called, The Distinctive Ideas [06:30] of the Old Testament. The reason this work was significant and this emphasis on the biblical theology movement was significant was remembered much of the Old Testament scholarship from Bell Havenstein [foreign] of 1878 till 1920 that we looked at yesterday, was talking about the similarity between Israelite religion and other ancient near Eastern [07:00] cultures. Another word, Israelite religion was a religion liked. Other religions of its time and place that evolved in a certain way, act at a certain way and had principle that was similar to other ancient near Eastern religion. So when Snaith [phonetic] said they are distinctive ideas to the Old Testament including issues like ethics. Ethics that would oppose the [07:30] oppression of the poor, ethics that would call kings into account. Theological matters such as God being the only God and been the creator. So Snaith [phonetic] said, the time has come, having done all these historical background to show that Israelite religion did have some similarities in other cultures. In times distress, it also [08:00] has its own distinctive that sets it apart as God reveals religion, so you can differences between some of the authors that we looked at yesterday, Relevance Bible, Unity of the Bible, Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament.

And then a one, the last one that I mentioned yesterday, George Ernest Wright in 1950s, writes the volume of Old [08:30] Testament against its environment. The Old Testament Against Its Environment. So even more boldly than Snaith [phonetic] whose talking about distinctive ideas, Wright says the Old Testament religion is really counter cultural in its environment. It's stressing of one God. In its stressing of history, [09:00] it's not cynical, always going in a circle, always coming back to the place it began but that history is leaner, it's going somewhere. It had a beginning and it will have an end. And thus sets the possibility of Biblical view of Eschatology headed towards something and it is not the same old something. So Wright pit that volume in 1952 [09:30] perhaps his most famous book, God Who Acts. God's actions are evident in history, Wright said. So again he was stressing that unlike the other gods which tended to be settled from the human race, [10:00] the other ancient religions or when they got involved, it was for selfish reasons often, that the God of the Old Testament God acted on behalf of those He loved and those whom He had in common.

So the Biblical theology movement was coming out of, really the sorts of emphasis that Baach [phonetic] and Eichrodt [foreign] were making. And [10:30] were really more conservative than those, were very set on the unity of the Bible, very set on the history of the Bible, very interested in the distinctive nature of the Bible and very interested in recapturing of the Bible for the church. And so, these were emphasis that you would then find [11:00] in American Old Testament Theologies in the 70s and the 80s, even in the 90s. Great Britain really, this was kind of a golden age for them of Old Testament Theology because they never got involve. It's basically having been an American or a German endeavour to Old Testament or Biblical Theology with this assession.

Now [11:30] these movement then is running alongside the Old Testament Theology, strange that we were talking about it yesterday, but as time went on it was influencing Old Testament theologians, particularly

in America more and more. And it has only been really till recently in the last ten or fifteen years [12:00] that that strain has gotten lighter. You have to be somewhat younger than I am to have missed that influence. Simply because of the teachers that I had in seminary in the 1980s who were still, they were older persons, who were influenced people like G. Ernest Wright and so whereas they, these sort of scholars who will not hold the full truth of the Scripture. [12:30] They did talk about biblical authority now, and of course one of them is Kelly Heels, not just were they bitten on the heel by the conservatives but by people more liberal themselves. How do you hold such a thing in balance, was always a problem. But they made a very strong run and continued, I think to bring Old Testament theology out a history of religions descriptive [13:00] mode. You know what I mean, we just kind of describing religion how it got there.

To a Old Testament theology, that frankly with the Biblical Theology Movement who were interested in the church were prescriptive. Not prescriptive in the sense that you have to believe, you have to conduct Old Testament theology the way we do but prescriptive in the Bible is the Word of God and it is speaking to us. [13:30] It calls us to do something. So we don't do Old Testament theology from Biblical Theology Movement standpoint by, you know, let's describe what is happening in Israel and Israelite religion in the eighth century to the sixth century B. C. They would press the claims of Scripture, how the New Testament and the Old Testament are a whole and press the claims of the text into the lives of the church. [14:00] You know, certainly this has something to do with Barth systematic theology in his own way and the other systematic theologians were as well but it was very different from what Wilhuisen [phonetic] and company had been conducting up to 1920s. I don't know how to answer the question exactly, I mean, let me remind you of what I've think was going on with Wilhuisen [phonetic] and maybe to answer the question, [14:30] you can follow up.

Wilhuisen [phonetic] basically, to what we have called it, a dynamic view of inspiration. He believed that human beings has wrote it as they best understood God and some people have heighten awareness of God, just like I was talking about yesterday. You know Shakespeare, yeah Shakespeare had heighten awareness in poetry that I don't possess or somebody… you said you do the same as with music. Or as far as I am concerned with virtually [15:00] anything, with anyone can do, George was talking about a mechanic that cost seventy five dollar and hour, you know just for starters. Some of them have a better field for ability than others. I mean I just say that's the way it is at cross board.

So what he thought the Old Testament was, a group of people, some of whom were more in tune with God, he did believe in God, than others and they were [15:30] writing about their views of God of what happened and a lot of it, though it might have some moral value, a lot of it didn't. And what it was when you do, you have to try to figure out when they wrote what they did and what seems to be truth in the Old Testament isn't, as far as authorship date etcetera. And that he thought then, since this was a situation how it was written as time went on, there came [16:00] in the Old Testament and then in Judaism, not a creeping but it was started as creepy and then rampant legalism that, you know, the Pharisees were the embodiment of. Then Jesus free people when thousands thought about Jesus freeing people from the law, He didn't mean of the penalty of the law, He mean from what the Old Testament really taught [16:30] in the legalism that has grown up around it. So he saw Jesus in the New Testament religion as the kind of evolutionary, it go higher than it is down here. It was greater than the religion in the Old Testament and the Old Testament needs to be set aside, as far as the rules and regulations came a great relieve. Jesus was seen as a Liberator. Jesus was seen as the climax of religion. He was seen as one who sets people free. [17:00] So Nohuizen [phonetic] saw that in the progression of history something lower than the seventh grader, Jesus was the greatest that could come.

[Background noise]

I can't tell whether Nohuizen [phonetic] believe that Jesus is the Son of God. So it is a very interesting thing, I'm grateful to say that it is impossible to have Christianity without Jesus but [17:30] it's very interesting that when you come to, whether it is Old Testament or New Testament scholar who has a hard times with miracles, it's amazing how often that Jesus becomes the exception and not everything about Jesus now but particularly the incarnation, even if they don't believe in the virgin birth, in some manner the incarnation that Jesus is God in the flesh, how I really believe that occurred. [18:00] And that, the Resurrection. Something happened at the Resurrection.

Now we don't often work back that if this miracle is true, why isn't this one? Now if I was in their shoes, I'll start with well, Elijah, he isn't Son of God, there are different ways to work with it. But Wilhuizen [phonetic] was initially felt since that he never intended, he did say and write and thought [18:30] that his work would create better faith. When he found out that was not the case by large, he quit teaching ministerial candidates. He was not in his desire to wreak faith and so he went into semantics in ancient history. But Wilhuizen [phonetic] again, like I think a lot of persons, he did not want to wreck faith but he found that his teachings did. [19:00]It is also interesting what the biblical theology moved people, virtually all of them were raised in conservative Bible believing traditions and then, they kind of, they didn't go as far as Wilhuizen [phonetic] but then they left before they had been.

Of course some of us are raised but not some of them aright, you know. At the same time the biblical theology movement people would have said, I think, all the ones were born that Jesus is the virgin born Son of God incarnated [19:30] explained by the virgin birth, miracles occurred, Jesus raised from the death doesn't mean that every word of the Gospel is absolutely accurate but we have, we have in the main a solid picture of Jesus Christ who is the Son of God who was promised in the Old Testament. And what more, God actually gave those commandments at Sinai; God actually took the Israelites out of Egypt. They doubt that an axe head floated [20:00] when Elisha needed it to but you know certain things, but in the main sea.

I think for many kind of fair conservative reading, there's much that serves in biblical theology movement, less than Wilhuizen. [phonetic] I have some sympathy for Wilhuizen [phonetic] after all these years of teachings because I honestly don't think he held many of his views given the kind of scholarship he tried to embodied had lived during the time [20:30] of the archaeology scale discoveries. I just don't think he would come into the same conclusions. But through time, Wilhuizen's [phonetic] view wasn't in any question that descriptive history religions approached to the Old Testament theology basically killed any interest in the Old Testament for the church. And as time went on, Wilhuizen [phonetic] has probably been the most famous [21:00] scholar in his days and followed in the early 1920th century up to 1930s where I believe, let's see.

I forget when Anoch van Helven died but he was church historian, a history of dogma and all his volumes are in your library I saw yesterday. He's more famous scholars in his days and he basically wrote, you know, in University of Berlin, what he did write that it was high time that we [21:30] realised that the Old Testament is not Christian Scriptures. It's about 1910, we need a new canon. He wasn't alone in this and that's so, how far that sole history religions descriptive approach that basically emphasis what I said that Wilhuizen [phonetic] emphasis when he get to the New Testament. That's one large conclusion that you can take and another logical conclusion is [22:00] if we don't agree with that, then we better revive interest in the Old Testament. And that doesn't get done in Germany until post World War II really

was Von Rod and others. Over in Switzerland, Eichdort [phonetic] was making a strong effort to do that. And in Britain, you know, in World War II and after the biblical theology were doing some of these things.

And for Chris Sihernock [phonetic] too much, certainly [22:30] I have been around to see and maybe you have not and I'm very grateful for you, but I have been around to see that if they would not say what Gorcum [phonetic] had said, I have been in churches for all practical purposes that it was true. So at some point, we have to say, even they have never heard of Van Gorcum, [phonetic] at what point, what methodology, what hermeneutic, what manner of thinking [23:00] literature led Christians, led a minister, led a believer to basically operate like that. In some cases, it's simply, we don't have enough time to do everything, it other cases like a friend of mine is the big pastors, I don't know. I consider over a thousand of big church. He says you can't grow a church preaching only from the Old Testament, that's just his attitude. [23:30] And I laughed and said; no I don't think you could.

[Laughing]

But some have given it a shot. I mean that's just insanity. So the bible theological movement said, let's recapture the bible for the church and through the force of the bible. And von Rod was trying to do that. We ended the day yesterday with Gerhard Von Rod, he was certainly trying. He was a preacher. I can't recall whether he served in the German Army [24:00] at World War II but I do know that he spent time in prison for his views as some others did, like Dmitri von Hoffe, the most famous I suppose so. Obviously von Rod was not martyred. But Von rod had a strong interest in preaching and reused some vitals traditions. Again the Achilles hell of Von rod work was when more conservative or more liberal scholars [24:30] asked at what point can you hold on to authority if you find so many mistakes various in the Scriptures and Von Rad would say, we hold on to the traditions that we are preached and re-preached, and stated and re-stated.

Why hold on to the Exodus traditions because it's so pervasive in the Scriptures. He believed in an exodus that took place [25:00] Why hold on to ethical modalism but there is one God and that God has ordered in the universe, holds us accountable for it because it is pervasive in the prophetic literature in the New Testament. In a way it's almost like a freedom of speech where we started, wasn't it? How do we know what the universal principals of the Old Testament of the Bible are? Well, those that were repeated over and over again would be a start. And some of them were the only way we can learn them right and here so often we [25:30] evaluate them. Well we have seen now then, you have biblical theology movement services.

We have Von Rad now for coming along wanting to emphasis preaching and re-preaching of traditions of Old Testament theology amounts to working with the ongoing tradition in the Scriptures. And then we have a single theme [26:00] people right, remember that? Even before I quote but I quote being the person with covenant being his main thing. I want to note kind of how some of these emphases lessened; thought take 1978, Walther Zimmerli [phonetic] [26:30] took a single theme approach to theology rather nice concise book a couple hundreds of pages. He says the primary theme of the Old Testament is what it teaches about God. He said that the first command is primary throughout Scripture. I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt and you shall have no other gods before me. [27:00] Earlier, Von Rad had said the whole of Old Testament theology is a referendum on the first commandment. And the way our lives as a Christian is a referendum first commandment.

Also 1978, Walter Kaiser Junior, now he is president of Gordon Cornwell Seminary [27:30] written many works but in his book towards the end of Old Testament theology, Kaiser is pretty bright. He's always

had several books towards in it. Hard to blame, how do you criticise books that he makes no progress whatever towards his subjects, I mean, it's hard to get a zero in all his essays. Kaiser is very much in the old salvation history, remember van Hoffman? [28:00] Gustof Oiler [phonetic] in that tradition and he stresses Messianic theology took a page right out of Van Hoffman and Heinstein [phonetic] Berg. I was pleased to see off your library of four volumes of Heinstein [phonetic] Berg's Christology translated in English up there. I didn't want to know how often it has been checked out. I thought I will check it out if nobody has, just to say it had been but…

Male Speaker 2: [28:26] Did you seen a one volume edition of that?

[28:27] I have, that's the creed that I was talking about yesterday and I don't know whether it's condensed or what.

Male Speaker 2: [00:28:33] [Mumbling]

[28:35] This I don't know. But I was happy to see… it's always fun to go to the new library because books you didn't know existed in certain versions and I'm in expectancy to see four German volumes but I didn't know at all at one point it has been translated into English. But Van Hoffman and Heinstein [phonetic] Berg traditions that the Bible is a series of promises according to Kaiser. The chief promise is of the Messiah the King coming and therefore he was very much involves salvation [29:05] history. He will try to fit every book in the Old Testament into history settings and then show how it leads to the Messiah. At times, it's like other single theme approaches, you'll find some point and you'll say, I believe that is a bit forced, as you know, that I often found it difficult for him to stress the book of Proverbs and how that all fit directly into [29:35] Messianic prophecy. He has the tie of Solomon which is tied to David, which you know, with three or four steps move but still if you want an Old Testament volume stressed Messianic theology and he has a smaller book, something like the Messianic theology in the Old Testament.

It's harder to do better than Kaiser. He is the digestive of Heinstein [phonetic] Berg, Von Hoffman and several others, really. [30:05] And so these works do not bring an end to but again single theme approach now has offered to us many different possible single themes. And any time you start to read the volume books and at a certain era in every prefaces, it says why another book on Old Testament theology. [30:35] We have to justify what we were doing, there's so many of them and so many from single theme, you can begin to think that at least for a while the topic may be exhausted or the method.

We had a single theme. We have the biblical theology movement thing going on. 1970s, you have Brevard Childs he will become prominent Brevard [31:05] Child write a volume of biblical Theology in Crisis. There is another sign of the movement maybe having some difficulties as if there is a major proponent of the view says we are in crisis. It just maybe someone calling fire or was it crying wolf. But actually here he was saying, we have run in with some difficulties. We have not established the immunity of the Bible. We haven't been able to established the Bible and the church [31:35] because our view of authority never gives it enough authority, never gives the Bible enough authority and several other things but he was saying by now the biblical theology is in a bit of crisis.

And as far as Von Rad and his tradition theology, here is another difficulty that I am sure you would want to leave for people. It was so to do traditional orientated theology and preaching orient [32:05] theology as well as Von Rod had done it and lots of people didn't try, articles and some other things but very difficult. So now, this is kind of where we are. These ideas, I won't' give you but I can hide you a several for examples, these ideas continued on but starting about 1978 to 1981, you have a different movement.

And [32:35] 1978 Ronald Clements begins to stress theology as it unfolds in the canon the list of books, except the Scripture and he wrote about Old Testament theology and it is a brief book, lovely two hundred page book of the theology in the law and the theology in the prophets. And promised to write about the writings later, he did in the wisdom [33:05] of literature. But what he is saying it is not a matter to find a single theme, it's not a matter of simply talking about God's acts and history though they didn't deny those. They didn't say those were just useless, hopeless or worthless way. But he said that we need to take the canons as it unfolds and find the theme and emphasis there. And he gently suggested that Messianic theology is not all the [33:35] theology is there and also gently suggested that ethical modalism is not all there is in Old Testament theology either. So what he is looking for was a fuller approach to the whole canon of Scripture.

And then a very interesting book, Elma Martins, a delightful guy, Ronald Clements is nice too but Elma Martens life was of a Mennonite. [34:05] A little embarrassing talks to the Mennonites, when you talk reformation theology with them for instance, they don't talk about Lither and Calvin. They talk about Menno Simons; they talk about people of their heritage who got drowned and that kind. And if you read Doctor George's theology of the reformers could be eschatologist [phonetic] you all note that whole strength. [34:35] Also Mennonites tend to be, not all, pessimist, they tend to be in stewardship and Martins write about Old Testament theology from a standpoint of key themes but more than one that he finds in Exodus chapter 25:22-26 say, among them are community and [35:05] land, and the nature of God.

But again a very readable book that last about 240 pages, he takes this text, from this text you can find themes, four or five themes that the whole Old Testament can hold together. So he takes a theme at his approach but he says one but he doesn't know of one would do all the work. So what we are [35:35] beginning to see from this based single theme Biblical theology and traditional theology, he started to emphasis on canon on multiple themes but trying to hold to these things are together. Elma Martens is one of the editors of your Flowering Old Testament theology of textbook and one of his articles on land is very interesting, very helpful in the volume that you've got. [36:05] Now I want to introduce you to or reintroduce you to Brevard Childs. I have already mentioned his work in the 1970s, Biblical Theology in Crisis. It's pretty to write a crisis book, in a way. I mean If you have a mind and an eye to see, you can write a book be it in the school of crisis and find out all the things that are wrong in it. And if it was truly in crisis then it would [36:35] be easier to write books. And there are many books writing about crises that never offers a solution. I tend not to buy these anymore unless I really feel good about saying it, yeah, it's crummy. Yeah that's bad, yeah, yeah.

Well I already have a solution. Childs wasn't the kind of person who writes an awful book and has no option for the future. Like Clements, he thought [37:05] that if he was going to restore authority to the Old Testament then we must start with the text. We must say the text of Scripture is the most important thing that we can study. History is not irrelevant but the text matters more. The church is certain not irrelevant but we can't do anything with the church till we start with the text. [37:35] And the text of Scripture has been considered Scripture for thousands of years. He argues therefore in the 1980s volume, the Old Testament is the introduction to the Old Testament of the Scripture. And if we would take the Old Testament seriously, we would take the canonical order law, proverbs and writing that we would know how each book is shaped theologically.

Each book [38:05] has its own distinct theological witness and then we would know how the ongoing witness of the Old Testament also has. They witness to God. He follows this up in 1984 with a New

Testament as canon. Introduction to the New Testament canons He is an Old Testament scholar and this is out of his view, but has brought considerable [38:35] reading to it. In 1985, he writes an Old Testament theology very brief and I think inferior to his Old Testament intro and then in 1922, he wrote biblical theology.

So you see we are on the 20 some year old quest to try to show that you can have the Old Testament treated as Scripture in canonical order and the New Testament treated as Scripture, [39:05] biblical theology coming from it, arguing in its own way to its unity of the Scripture, so it can be recaptured for the church. It is a very interesting thing to read the introduction. It's just four or five pages. Sometimes read the introduction in Child's biblical theology, which published in 1992. In this he writes about how difficult it was, [39:35] as an Old Testament scholar to engage in dialogue with New Testament theologians and with systematic theologians. How often it was not a conversation that it could be had. It is true that Childs has been embraced by some of his colleagues including Christopher Seitz who taught him for a while and now teaching in University of St. Andrews in Scotland. [40:05] And it is true that he has influenced other people more of this own tradition but Childs has a stronger influence probably amongst evangelicals. The reason being, in the last twenty years evangelicals has been trying to figure out a way to do Old [40:35] Testament theology that would be true to the Scripture which holds in a high authority of the Scriptures and at the same time not cast off the gains that has been made in historical analysis and that would do theology, and that would benefit the church.

Now with the people that we work with could then [41:05] do something with theology on the pulpit pew. So when Childs began stressing the canon of Scripture that the Bible itself is God's word or he would say it contains God's word and using the inner structure devise. In other words, how do I approach the study of Old Testament theology, the law, the prophets and the writings, distinct sections but related sections; [41:30] sections that Jesus, Himself talks about, sections that Paul, himself reflects., sections etcetera that we talked about yesterday. So the canon became a structuring devise, notions of the Scriptures being structure devise. Also the theology of the church became helpful.

And so in 1995, [42:05] John Sailhamer, [phonetic] he teaches at South Eastern Seminary in Lake Forest. He taught for many, many years at Trinity Evangelical Breny [phonetic] School brought along the introduction of New Testament theology. And what it was, was a very technical conservative treatment of how you would do canonical theology. The way Childs talk about doing it. And in 1998, I [42:35] published a book that you have which really was the first, it doesn't make it great or anything, it was the first kind of Old Testament theology that attempted to be a full Old Testament theology written by and evangelical of twenty years, so we come out of this long period. And there will be others Bruce Walking working on one and John Sailhamer says he is working on one, but there are other things he just getting the move ahead of it.

But I can tell you as an Evangelical [43:05] Old Testament person, when you try to do Old Testament theology, you do not have that many evangelical partners to read as you go. Other than Jay Barton Paine, I mentioned most of them that exist, Gerhard Hasle [phonetic] and Snow bun it's not a whole lot that I can dialogue with from my own perspective as they did the work but this is basically my volume is, much [43:35] indebted to Childs who are not agreeing with his view of inspiration of authority, though I think Childs is certainly a vast vast improvement of the Wilhuizen [phonetic] era, I mean. Childs has been most bitterly criticised by his own constituency. He had hoped to move the adherence of historical critical method posted through the text and [44:05] instead he's been attacked basically by fundamentalist because he talked about Scriptures too much. He's even called anti-Semitism of all things because he

argued that Old Testament theology is done by the church and he emphasises Christ as a mean of salvation. Now, he never said that the synagogues never do theology. He never said any such thing [44:35] but already was moving into a different era and the last Old Testament theology I mentioned is Walter Bruegemann. [phonetic]

Bruegemann [phonetic] wrote, what I would say, first early post-modern Old Testament theology in 1997 Bruegemann's [phonetic] volume and first of all [45:05] Bruegemann [phonetic] is like Wilhuizen. [phonetic] Bruegemann [phonetic] is a bright bright man, a creative man and an outstanding writer. And I suppose that for many years, he and Childs would have share similar theology basically being Bardians. [phonetic] [phonetic] Bruegemann had already shift astroly [phonetic] to post-modern view that goes something like this, In the [45:35] first part of his book about a hundred and twenty pages of survey of discipline. Then he writes, as I recall it, a 120 or 125 to 250 pages, a section he calls, Unifying Forces in the Old Testament and he writes as good an essay on the unity of the Old Testament as anyone would want to read anywhere.

If I didn't know what came next, [46:05] you know the book could just stop there prior to lot s and lots of people reading it. He then goes into the section which what he calls, Competing Voices. Rather than seeing different emphasis in Scripture, he calls them competitors and he pits them against the other, so he finds the Old Testament is the voice of the poor fighting against the rich. Sometimes in the same book but he is saying, [46:35] not that you have divinely inspired were emphasis in different things and different times, these are competing voices and doesn't necessarily preferred one over the other. He lays them out there so you can see them.

So what are the post-modern ideals supposedly? That you would have thirteen of us here at the table, now how lucky can we get? That if we all have a different viewpoint, [47:05] a different voice, we would all sit down at the table as equals with our view point and our voice. Now of course somebody like me or maybe many like you, I'm a fourth child, fourth of six. I note that when you sit down at the table, we were often competing voices and no matter how much mum tells us to speak at our turns, [47:35] dad is being that bad as anybody, so he can trampled on all of us I guess. We weren't' just trying to have all of our say, we were trying to have our way. I don't mean it in a bad sense.

Start by saying, we just want everybody to have a voice, but if you bring your voice to the table to try to convince someone else to your side that's when we blow a whistle, throw a penalty flag, [48:05] tee you up, throw you out, ask you off the grounds, whatever, that is not acceptable. Actually… but no one… I actually know very few people really able to play by the rules even if you want that to be so because eventually if the white supremacies tries to sits you down, some people is not going to like your view point. Don't they have their say? Don't they have the [48:35] right at the table? Well you would say only the most begrudging way but if we let them talk too much at the table, you can pick out whoever you want. Oh, you say, what if that person is sweet but they are insipid. They really have nothing to contribute and after a while, you say, there got to be some standards here, it's not enough.

It's not enough to just have everybody at the table to have their say… So Bruegemann, [phonetic] though [49:05]he sets up the rule of post-modern, of course he's breaks his own rule because he has a list of people who just don't belong at the table. And you know what I say, I say he is right. They are people who, even if they sit at the table, you bring them there to help them understand that they are mistaken. I am often weary of people when they say, oh you know, I'm really post-modernist, what does that mean in this context? I never know a really thoroughly post-modern people because eventually, they will make

decisions, they [49:35] will make qualitied decisions. This is right and this is wrong, even if it is just the yuck factor.

You know in other words is that they see, Ah, that's abhorrent, that' terrible, that just didn't happened. Why? Why? That's the issue and then we will get to the authority base. Alright, look, talking about people. I am very simplistic, you all noticed that. People deserved better, better than this that I am just ranting now. I always love guys who… all well, I believe all truth, and [50:05] we all do. You know what I say now? I used to talk aggressive, no, you don't. I mean you really don't. See that guy George is going to pay 75 bucks and hour; he really did want, how much? 75 bucks and hour, didn't he? Is that a relative amount? Peasants are going to pay me for this experience. I don't want that to be, you know I don't want them to be relatively to pay me but I do want to get paid. [50:35] Fidelity in marriage, how relative do we want that to be? So, what… no you really don't. Some things are important enough for you to say this is true and this is false and this is the way I will have it. What is important to you?

Bergamon [phonetic] has some of that, but in his volume if you want to read what amounts to a post-modern, it's almost like saying, well I pick this party and say this is fine. That's one voice that got you going. And there are [51:05] times, of course if you ever been abused by some sort of head thumping kind of work, you know, you can say, well I might appreciate if somebody says, well there is more than one way. But Bruegemann [phonetic] is at some of the time, a fabulous scholarship, extraordinary bibliolatry; he dialogues strenuously with people like Childs, who simply reductionist if he thinks Christian theology is [51:35] what we are doing. Why don't I understand the Muslim theology? Why don't I understand, you know, why not say poliastic [phonetic] theology, you know, why not?

But he also writes, it is a voice that cannot be neglected or mistaken because Bruegemann [phonetic] is a major scholar to a major book and it reflects a major way that people think today or believe they think today. So [52:05] the method that I tried to work with that you are seeing would go something like this. It has certain presuppositions and I will try to tell you what they are. However poorly is this class and this text book that I carry this out, well first presupposition is that the Bible text is God's Word and carries God's character. [52:35] The Bible as we have it is God's word and carries God's character. The same way your word carries your character. It has to, you can't do anything else. Now second presupposition and presupposition by the way is not a need reaction hopefully.

Hopefully it is a study conclusion that you based your thoughts on. A pre supposition is a study conclusion you based your thoughts on. The first one is the biblical texts [53:05] are God's Word and carries God's character. The second one is the bible unfolds canonically in the ways that I have described it, the law, prophets, writings, etcetera. And it reflects God's Word in history. Sometimes when a canon unfolds it repeats some of God's same acts in history from a different perspective but it repeats of the same [53:35] acts, so that we can see the bible unfolds canonically and reflects God's works in history. Those two things are not in opposition of one another.

But they both need to be said. Third, the Bible viewpoint, a view point of the Bible writer's conflicts quite often with how people acted in history. [54:05] The Bible's view point conflicts without people acting in history. This is in opposition saying that Old Testament theology should be seen as a history of religions. I go Old Testament theology understands what the New Testament thought it was true. Boy that is important. How many people have you hear in the church in the Old Testament says thus and so? And what they are doing is relating an account that in [54:35] the Bible that the author is giving you in showing you how horrible something is.

Take the last several chapters in Judges. It starts chapter 17 verse 6 tells you, there is no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes. That's a marker for you. And the last verse of the book says the same thing. You got a self-contain action of which you have horrible things, not just civil war, not just killing but a civil war and killing [55:05] that was sparked by a woman being raped to death by a group of men and then her, not even her husband cuts her in pieces and mails her to the various tribes of Israel. Now then, does the text approve of that activity? The book ends to the stories are, this is what happens to people who do whatever is right in their own eyes. [55:35]

But if you did say, well you know, the Old Testament has this. Well, it is true. It has it but it doesn't prove of it or you know, Jephthah sacrifices his own daughter, it was all right. Well was it all right? If you read the Pentateuch that sort of things already said that it is not right. Rash vows that can't be redeemed, you don't have to do that. In other words, if you read the first five books of the Bible and you ask the question was it all right what he did, the answer is [56:05] no. Or pick your favourite. Atrocity that is no more right than to say, well you in the New Testament, Herod kills the babies. So understand that the Bible its view point conflicts how people acted in history.

The fourth pre supposition interprets itself canonically that is Jesus says what is true being [56:35] the law, prophets and psalms. That's one way the Bible interprets itself. That gives us an order in which to operate. Fifth the Bible interprets itself historically. In other words, it will tell you what happened in history so that later on, whereas Paul has interpret what happened when Adam and Eve sinned and tell you what that meant historically, [57:05] you know, or Paul would talk about the book of Numbers and what that teaches us. When I say the Bible interprets itself historically, that helps me to understand some things about accuracy. It is possible for us to say that the New Testament writers were wrong to consider what happened in the Old Testament un-accurate account. But it would be hard to argue with that wasn't what they thought.

[57:35] Six, the Bible interprets itself thematically that gives us unity. For instance Romans four, Paul says I want to talk about justification by faith. We talked about that yesterday. That's a mighty theme he is talking about, that's a theme he is tracing. So having said that the bible interprets itself canonically, that gives me an order for my study, having said that the Bible itself interprets historically that gives me some accuracy of my study, having said, the Bible itself interprets [58:05] thematically, that gives me some unity to my study and that didn't leave me without problems. How lightly I have been treating some of the moments ago but it does gives me a chance to get it started which I am anxious to do despite it has been a day and a half on method.

So how do I proceed? Those were my presuppositions that's what I believe to get started. That's my prolegomena [phonetic], [58:35] five method logical points in. What do you do? First you start with the text in canonical order. We will go from genesis to Revelation if we are doing biblical theology. We are going Genesis to Chronicles if we are doing and Old Testament theology. The longer I teach, the more I say even say things like well if you want to do the English Bible, just do that, if that's what you … run along and do that, if that's what you want to do. Let's get started but start with the text [59:05] in canonically order. The second discern subjects in the text. Discern subjects in the text. It's hard to miss creation if you start with Genesis 1:1. Third, trace the subject in canonical order. Find out about anything each books talks about in the [59:35] subject and what the whole says about the subject. In other words, you are building data. You are tracing a subject in canonical order, not every book says something about every subject.

Fourth, note connections between your subjects and other related subjects. For instance, you will be dealing [60:05] with creation and you will find that Isaiah connects creation with the Exodus does it? You read Isaiah 40 to 48 for that or you get to the Psalms and you will find out, the Psalms will basically say that it God is the Creator, he is also the King and if He is the King He is the one that blesses and judges. So you see creation has to be [60:35] related things and after a while you have to limit them because you can't do them all. But note connections and five draw thematic conclusions. Bring your studies together so that you can have, if nothing else is evens up in this simplistic, I came up with five or six major themes, major emphasis about creation in the Old Testament.

[61:05] So again start with the text in canonical order, discern subject in the text, trace the subject in canonical order, note connections between the subjects and the others and draw a thematic conclusions. Now I guess the post script to this, I guess there is another way to start, that's what most of us do, you start. We have a legitimate question about what the Bible says about a certain subject. It's ideal to say, okay we won't deal with New Testament theology, let's start from the beginning [61:35] and do what I just said. However it is just as likely you are going to start the way I did, as I did give a little testimony yesterday, I started by how people were saved in the Old Testament. How did they come to know God and know that their sins has been forgiven and spends eternity with Him?

Well if you have a subject like that I would say, the method is still relevant. Start with the text, discern the subject, trace it in canonical order, and draw your summaries. So it is possible to bring your [62:05] questions to the text. And eventually any questions can be answered and you can get a start and you can work on it. I have found as I have studied the Scriptures historically, theologically, I am going to give you one result and that's quite simply as it is not only the theology that is primary goal study of God. The Old Testaments [62:35] emphasis, its main emphasis is on God and that He is the only God. That was a revolutionary concept in the ancient world, the very notion that you would tell a Canaanite or an Egyptian or a Babylonian, there is only one God and if Israel serves Him, I bet you lots of laughs.

[63:05] Perhaps of all the biblical writers, I shouldn't say writers, all the major biblical characters, perhaps only Jesus basically ministers to people who hold to a one God thesis. Think about it. In the old Testament, Moses, prophets, the others weren't' they were dealing with people who were constantly being tempted to [63:35] believe in more than one God and to serve them? There is polyester contacts, think of the apostle Paul, where the Greek, the first century Greeks world was that a real strong model theistic outfit? No. Paul has taken time to tell the Corinthians, we know that there is only one God but other people, he's talking about the metophidialtle, [phonetic] but other people recognize he is God. Plus its' great to walk through this mission [64:05] centre in the See of Ephesus, perhaps some of you who were world Christians and interested in missions walked by a clock out there and tells me how many billions of people who live in the world, you have done that yet?

I stood there and blink and eighteen babies were born. Now how many of those billions are basically in a world that adheres to the [64:35] polytheistic context, what would oppose? I don't know the answer but I can tell about a billion people in India, although there are many many Christians there and some Muslim, just talking about poly theism and mono theism, I say the mass majority are in the polytheistic context and we just go on. So the last I checked people moving [65:05] around and moving here. So all I am trying to say is, maybe at one time in human history, maybe it's just a Euro centric view of the world, I don't know.

Maybe we could have said basically polytheism is not an issue but boy, be hard to make that point in a global view now. And to speak of Asia, African and all the other places to say nothing to fact basically

secularism is a different god. [65:35] So it's pretty relevant point to say the Lord is God and there is no other and the Scriptures has revealed here and we need to proclaim Him. So I didn't think people will state the obvious point that bible is about God. I think the point is so important that we could miss it if it is too obvious. This is the kind of methodology that I employ. I think it is valuable [66:05] for you because as you do your ministry or as you do your own Bible studies for your purpose or for your own lives, if you will bring a relevant biblical subject to the text and do the hard work of following through the canon, you will learn more, you will have and a lot ask this question after class, you won't' be able to just pick and choose them. You will be [66:35] confronted, say about seven items about creation, two of which troubles you because they called you up short, or they call, you know, but as long as I can stick to my pre conceived notions or what I have always heard about Genesis 1 and 2, I won't be troubled by what Solomon says about creation.

As important as some of the issues that had been battled out, persons that battled out about creation [67:05] over the last seven years, we hardly battled out over creation theology of what it means about God's judgement, usually that's what affects us. Or what it says about worship or what it says about a host lot of subjects that is not to say that the discussions had been unimportant, I don't mean that. What I mean is would we get the full flavour of what creation in theology would have to say to us in the Scriptures and [67:35] we don't want to get started on that. And we will do that.

Chapter 4

The Theme of the Old Testament

Samuel asked a question, do you have the same description of what the Old Testament does that would anyway approximate say John's statement, you know John makes a statement in chapter 20 verses 30-31.

[00:30] In many other things, Jesus did that aren't written in this book but I've written this that you might have life, that you might believe in Him and have life in His Name. If I weren't, I mean I'd be happy to do it either now or later. But if I were to say okay, a chronological [phonetics] theology of scripture, where would you start? If I started with Genesis

[01:00] and on, I would eventually come to what I think are the strongest statements about scripture maybe in the Bible, but at least the Old Testament. We looked at what the New Testament said about itself, you know all scripture. But if I were to do that with the Old Testament, the two major text would be Psalm 19 and Psalm 119.

[01:30] In Psalm 19:1-6 you have what we typically call general revelation. That is God revealing Himself in the created world. Certainly Romans 1 makes similar point. But then Psalm 19:7-14

[02:00] the law of the Lord is perfect, restoring the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.The precepts of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart. The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. So far we've been given a variety of genres of literate [phonetics] types that you find in the Bible, law, testimony which I think is narrative description.

[02:30] Precepts, being case laws, if you do this then this will occur. Commandments of the Lord, then probably in the wisdom is the fear of the Lord is clean and enduring forever. The judgements of the Lord are true. They are righteous altogether. So in those verses you have a type of literature found in scripture. Then what it does. I'm sorry, type assessment value.

[03:00] Law of the Lord, perfect. What's it do? Restores the soul. Testimonies of the Lord, pure or certain. They will make wise the simple. In other words, when Paul talked about the Book of Numbers, which I think it was a testimony. In other words, a narrative. He said these things are written for our examples. Basically he said some negative examples so we won't sin as they're sinned.

[03:30] Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes. Fear of the Lord is clean and endures forever. Then it goes on, verse ten, they are more desirable then gold, yea, and much fine gold. Verse 11 by them Your servant is warned, in keeping them there is great reward. Verse 12 who can discern his errors? Acquit me of hidden faults. It goes on to include with that great prayer. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, oh Lord, my Rock and my Redeemer.

[04:00] Having done the law and the prophets of the writings, we want to come up with this statement about scripture. And Psalm 119 as you know the longest chapter in the Bible, the 176 verses about the worth of God's Word and what it does for the individual who lives by it.

[04:30] So I won't take time to do all 176 verses. But I can say about the Word of God, there is a place that gives a strong summary in a manner similar said in fact. If you lay Psalm 19 and II Timothy 3:16 side by side, you have to wonder if Paul doesn't have Psalm 19 in mind because

[05:00] he's saying the Bible is God breathed. In other words, he talks about the scripture, its quality and then its usefulness and profitable for doctrine and for correction. Same sort of formula you get in Psalm 19. So as I said, I think this and other text, I would begin having studied the Old Testament with presupposition of this being God's Word written

[05:30] and finding evidence of that in the Psalms themselves. Going back to the Prophets, you could do similar work, way back then even in Deuteronomy where in chapter 32, Moses says to the people, the text in 31 says Moses wrote down the law. In Deuteronomy 32, Moses said these are not idle words to you, this is your life, in 32:47.

[06:00] So he wasn't just talking about oral Word of God or oral tradition. They are committing these words to writing already. How important are these words coming out of the Pentateuch. You know Joshua one, how is Joshua to be successful in his path? By meditating day and night on the law of Moses. You get to the later on, First Kings two, how does David tell

[06:30] Solomon to succeed as a king by meditating on the law of Moses. He uses that phrase. So in the law itself, these words are your life. In the former prophets beginning with Joshua one, meditate on this law, the writings we looked at first, Psalm 19 and Psalm 119.

[07:00] If I go to the Gospels, what does Jesus say about the scriptures. He says in John 5:39 that they are about Him. Search the scriptures that Moses wrote of Me. Chapter 17 in verse 17, He prays with the disciples, keep them in Thy Word. Thy Word is truth. I read King James on it, didn't I.

[07:30] It's shown on the background there. So the Gospels call the written Word that Moses wrote about Me, Jesus says, these words are truth. Paul, we've already looked at. And certainly if the quotations of the scriptures as authority mean a whole lot, then a book like Hebrews, though it never says necessarily the Bible is pure, that enlightens the eyes,

[08:00] that the Bible is God breathed or whatever. This one quotation after another, it's expounding the Word in the same thing onto Revelation. So I supposed one of the reasons I don't start with a theology of the Word is because it's not the first thing the

[08:30] Bible says about itself. So you know you make a decision. It's not the first thing the Bible says about itself, but it is a primary question. Why would we study the Bible and what does it say about itself? It speaks of itself in the highest terms of purity, surety, etc. On down to the New Testament, truth and God breathed. This is why, you know I say, I'm,

[09:00] my personal beliefs is best expounded in much thoroughly in God Revelation Authority volume four. That doesn't mean I don't have respect for people who disagree with me, and I hope I've shown you in my survey of scholarship. Though I would disagree with certain ones of these fundamentally, does not mean I have nothing to learn or show no value, see no value in people who disagree with me. By the time the Psalmist writes,

[09:30] he's certain that if you come to Genesis 1:1 and start with creation, you will find a perfect, sure and valuable and enlightening word. Now when you come to Genesis one and two, there are a lot of summaries you can draw, though I know that the Bible itself is perfect and pure and God breathed, I don't

[10:00] claim that from my, my own theological summary. You might make a better one. So what I offer is, is certainly my own findings and I am, am willing to discuss them. I suppose in recent times, few passages of scripture, like to refer to something I'm working on now, I suppose few

[10:30] passages of scripture have generate as much heated discussions Genesis one and two. So on the one side, if you want kind of the, the boundaries of the discussion. On the one hand, you have naturalistic evolutionists. Was it Carl Sagan who said, the Universe is all there is, and all there that will ever be? That's pretty strong statement of a naturalistic evolutionist. And on the other hand, you would have young Earth

[11:00] six day literal creationist. I mean that would be the opposite camp, wouldn't it? And in between those two camps stood theistic evolutionist, framework theory, proponents, non-young Earth literal six day creationist, and others. Basically what these folks are discussing are,

[11:30] where did the world come from? How long has it been here? And in what form? Of course, these aren't irrelevant discussions, you know, what little television I've seen recently. Yesterday it was announced that the T. rex dinosaur had a cousin who only ate plants. Body's big, body's fearsome, thank goodness, only ate plant. 90 million years ago is the date.

[12:00] Why not 85, I don't know. I'm not a scientist, and I don't know science really, but I've always been struck by how they toss this. Sometimes science is seen to toss around numbers and dates the way some politicians toss around numbers. There's one famous politician said, you know few more billion dollars and we'll be talking about real money here. So these are issues that are important partly because I'm not qualified to

[12:30] discuss science. I don't mean that because I'm a theologian. I know theologians who have science degrees. But I'm not going to pretend with my C minus work literally in high school, in biology and C work, all had C in college. Don't know a whole lot about biology, and I know nothing of chemistry. I'm not proud of that anymore than I'm proud that I don't play a musical instrument.

[13:00] Again, I take no pride in that, but I'm not, I'm not going to kid a group of people into thinking that I know something I don't, at least not this time. But there's been a lot of games made I think. I think this dialogue though it has been in many ways at time striding, at other times. I mean I was involved in a panel discussion once in the University of Idaho [phonetics]. I just tried to say to him, you don't understand a Christian because we believe in integration of faith and learning.

[13:30] We can't leave God out of any discussion really and feel like we've had a whole discussion, whether that's science or history or theology or what it is, English lit. whatever. Well, I see it's unacceptable to some people. But to others they say, well, sure. I mean we see that. But there has been a lot of discussion about Creation theology lately as well. And there has been some gains there. The discussion continues

[14:00] that a new anthology 2,000 really a God that creates. And a lot of contributors but all on Creation theology, Leo Perdue has recently written about wisdom in creation. Creation in theology is getting air time. So I'm not, I'm not going to try to cover all the variety of disputes of Genesis one and two. I just encourage you to read

[14:30] Dr. Matthew's Commentary and then ask him any questions along these lines. But I want to talk about creation along the following lines. Genesis one and two, I think stress God's person in creation, who God is and how He acts? What he does? So when you come to Genesis, you're going to find the

[15:00] beginning points of some important themes such as God's personal involvement with human beings. God is personally involved with people. He doesn't just make them, but He's involved with them. God is sovereign. God is powerful. God is the One giving standards in Genesis one and two. And if we creep forward to Genesis [15:30] three, God is the One who is wiling to forgive erring human beings. All of this is the beginning. In fact, God is the only Creator, in the case that he's the only God. I want to say right from the beginning, that believing what the Bible says, obviously requires faith. And the Church has long confessed

[16:00] the fact that God is the Creator as a key article of faith. The Apostles' Creed carved up in the chapel, I think here. I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. The Nicene Creed, I believe in God and it goes on to say, He is the Creator of all things seen and unseen, right? I don't have the Nicene Creed memorized but that phrase is

[16:30] firmly right. And were the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed written today, we might include more data, more statements of faith because it was radical enough at that point to say He was the Creator of all things seen and unseen. But this is a statement of faith. You must receive these things through the normal reception of

[17:00] of thought and reason and believe them by faith. So two different sorts of theologians, Carl Henry and Karl Barth say the following, Henry asserts the question of the ultimate source of the Universe brings human experience and reasoning to a standstill. How we got here? It brings our reasoning to a standstill.

[17:30] And he says, only revelation from above can overcome this standstill. In other words, if we don't have revelation, we are a bit in a muddle as to how we got here and why we're here? And Henry argued that God has revealed how we got here and why we're here. Karl Barth argues that the doctrine of the Creation,

[18:00] no less than the remaining content of Christian confession is an article of faith and must be believed by those who accept God's revelation. Barth, though he believes revelation got here differently than Henry does. They disagree on certain things qualitatively but both conclude that Hebrews 11:3 summarizes the necessity for faith. Remember Hebrews 11:3, by faith we understand that the worlds were

[18:30] prepared by the Word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things which are visible. God made it out of things that are not visible by His Word. So one thing that we must keep in mind is that Creation itself is a confessional faith based doctrine like all the rest.

[19:00] And that it's fundamental to your faith and commitments as the Bible unfolds. Because eventually, so this again just give me Jesus well, John one is going to claim, that all things came into being through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. And Paul's going to confess in Colossians one

[19:30] that in Him all things were made and in Him all things hold together. We cannot bypass creation theology if we want to be Christians. So kind of with these things in mind, you come to Genesis one and two, and say, what does it teach us? What does it teach us? As I said, I think it emphasizes that God and His person, quotation from Kid Matthews [phonetics], Genesis one and two teaches God is not merely an idea.

[20:00] He is Eternal Being who we can know and experience personally. Now once we understand, let's first things first. Once we understand the importance of God's person, we can input human beings into

proper perspective. In his interpretation commentary, Walther Bugermon [phonetics] says Genesis one and two stresses the Creator created creation.

[20:30] Now we started. Stresses with the Creator created creation. And he says, if we get the subject, the verb or the object out of order, that's where trouble starts. Just start flipping those three ideas. Creator created creation. Take the Creator created out, you've got a problem. If you make the object, the creation the subject of that sentence, you've got problems. So I mean it's a

[21:00] simple but deep insight. And I think Matthews is exactly right too. What do you learn about God's person? Genesis 1:1 in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. According to this verse, the Lord is the sole source and cause of things seen and unseen. Sole source, sole cause. What's the source of all things? God, in the beginning God

[21:30] created them. He made them happen and they came from Him. And He is directly and personally involved in creation. That's important but it's also important to see He is not the same thing as creation. He's not part of it. The Creator created creation. Cause a lot of theology tries to tie God to the world, that somehow He gains His existence from the world,

[22:00] or He is evolving with and like the world, process theology. But the biblical evidence would be that God though actively intimately involved with creation is not dependent upon creation, nor the same as creation. To say that God is other than creation is not to say He's not involved with creation. But let's not tie God to the world.

[22:30] So God is the source, cause of creation, yet is other than creation. Let us also notice in verse 1:1 that God is acting alone. There's only one God operative, operating here. Now this separates the Genesis account from

[23:00] virtually all other, maybe one exception in Egyptian writings but virtually all other ancient near eastern accounts. All of which have multiple gods involved in creation. And if you're a polytheist, that's what you would need to believe. But here is one God acting unaided by other deities, created the heavens and the earth. But even though God is unique

[23:30] and acting alone, He is not alone because verse two says, a Spirit of Himself yet separate from Himself is hovering over the waters. I think Josh was asking yesterday about you know, a notion of theology of the Spirit in the Old Testament, you get all the way to the second verse but you would have to deal with that subject. The Lord is working personally

[24:00] in creation through His Spirit. The earth is formless and void but the Spirit of God is moving over the face of the waters hovering. It is possible for Spirit to remain wind, you heard this woah, wind or spirit. But there are several text, you know the Karl and Delitzsch commentary series, Karl correctly comments, I think that the Spirit is quote,

[24:30] the creative Spirit of God, the principle of all life and he said, that's true in several passages including several Psalms. S. R. Driver [phonetics] adds the chaos verse two is not left in hopelessness. Even before God speaks, the Spirit of God with Its life giving energy is brooding over the waters like a bird on its nest. I like that emphasis.

[25:00] Even before God speaks, the Spirit is prepared to act. Then God will speak. I do not believe the Spirit of God would indicate two gods here, because again the Spirit is of this God. We are talking about two parts or two persons of the same God acting purposefully in creation.

[25:30] This is not obviously a full blown doctrine of the Trinity by any means, but it is a beginning point. How many speak of God and the Spirit of God intelligently? Well the scriptures begin to unfold. We begin to see a problem with doing canonical theology in Genesis. There is a sense in which you can do all of theology starting with Genesis and working the whole of it out of Genesis.

[26:00] I happen to think if not the weakest chapter in my book, Genesis is one of them because it's hard to decide how many connections to make from Genesis to the rest of the scripture. But God is solitary. He is unique. He is the source. He is the cause. And He operates in concert with His Spirit of Himself in verse two. In verse three, God speaks.

[26:30] God said, let there be light and there was light. Notice that God speaks and communicates. As Francis Xavier wrote He is there and He is not silent. He reveals Himself. God not only creates, He communicates. And notice the power of His Word. He says,

[27:00] let there be light and there is light. And on down the line, when God speaks, things happen. Human words are given extraordinary emphasis in power in the Old Testament. They have a life of their own, much less the Divine Word. If the human word has power, how much more power would a Divine Word have? He communicates

[27:30] and He creates. And notice that the word for create that's in verse one, 'bara', God is the only subject of that verb in the Old Testament. Both God and human beings can make things. 'Asa', that means, you know I can take the stuff. That's one of the fun things of watching Apollo 13 you know the movie, where you know you got this crippled spaceship up there and they only have so many things

[28:00] on the ship. And I like this one part where they give some engineer the stuff that the guys in the ship have, and say this is what they need. Make this out of this stuff and show once that how it is that Cuban mechanics keep that old, old, old American cars running. Some make a vendor out of card board and some make a fuel pump out of a lawn sprinkler. This is

[28:30] extraordinary stuff. So human beings can 'asa' nearly anything, but they cannot 'bara' anything. Only God can create. So you get to a text, you know it's what said eventually said, you get to a text like Psalm 51 that says create in me a clean heart, oh God. Only God can do that thing. So God creates, but notice already even in verse three to five, He is assessing.

[29:00] He names, He has the power to name things. And God saw the light was good. We prefer God to assess and say it is good. However, we will find out in biblical theology, He can also assess in another manner, can He? So by chapter six, and God saw the intention of the human heart was only evil always.

[29:30] That God assesses. We see in the reading we did for today in the Psalms, God is the Creator and He is the Judge. That's another way of saying, a judge assesses the situation, right? And puts out either penalties or blessings. So I would also say in verse three and four, don't you have an ordered intelligence? Things are in an orderly

[30:00] fashion here. And they seem to be created with some purpose. Orderly how? One thing follow another, one day following another. And so one thing you can say about this brief account of Creation is that you can say it's ordered and intelligent. This doesn't mean there's scientific questions even someone like me can ask and not have answers, sure.

[30:30] I don't know how bright the light was. I don't know how hot the water was. That about exhaust my knowledge. But I mean you know you could ask certain questions. They are also theological questions you can ask that are not fully answered in this text, but that does not take away from the fact that you

have an ordered intelligent statement here that is also theologically ordered and intelligent. It may not answer every question you want but it does specific questions like did the world just happen?

[31:00] Or did God do it on purpose? Was the world created in some specific organized fashion or not? Notice that God possesses all the power there is to possess here. And that the only word used for what God makes is good. We look around and even on the best days, everything is not good.

[31:30] But we are not yet to Genesis three yet, are we? God possesses all power for good. Now that you come to chapter one verses 26-31, we find that God is not only personally involved with Creation as a whole. He is going to make man and woman in His Image, [32:00] blessed them and commanded them to care for the earth. This is a crucial point. We were talking about this after class yesterday. Genesis 1:26 is a crucial point for the rest of the Bible's view of individuals, communities and of justice, etc. 1:26 God said, let Us make man in Our Image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle

[32:30] and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps. God created Adam in His Image. In the Image of God He created him, male and female, He created them. God bless them and said be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth. We go on to 31. So the charter of the human race is responsibilities and privileges are found in Genesis 1:26-31. But those privileges and responsibilities begin with the fact that unlike anything else we've seen in the first

[33:00] 25 verses, human begins alone are made in God's Image. Animals aren't made in God's Image. Plants aren't made in God's Image. Planet's aren't made in God's Image. Human begins are. And as the text unfolds, only human beings can relate to God through spoken communication, right? Only human beings receive God's personal blessing and God's personal

[33:30] specific command to be stewards of the earth, to take care of it. Now then, on the one hand we can say, my what privileges. For instance, Karl Barth comments, it is in consequence of their Divine likeness that man are distinguished from all other creatures with autonomous life.

[34:00] They are distinguished by a superior position by higher dignity and might and by greater power of disposal and control. So human beings have more power privileges, but they have more responsibilities. In this God who creates volume by Marshall Willfong [phonetics] notes that if humankind is to carry out the task of dominion as God's representatives on earth, then the exercise of human dominion should imitate God's own dominion over creation, and should have as its goal,

[34:30] the fulfillment of God's good purpose for creation. Exploitation of animals on the earth is not appropriate. Autonomous dominion that ignores or seeks to overthrow God's ultimate dominos over creation is not appropriate. I would add to that what many have added, if we take this seriously, what reason do we have to be fair with all human beings regardless of gender, or race or location?

[35:00] Equality before God is based on the fact that human beings are made in God's Image. In my view, any other basis for feminist [phonetics] can falter. Any other basis for equality and kindness can falter because let's face it.

[35:30] If you tell a child, be nice to kids at school, or they may not be nice to you. Self interest is involved. It's not so bad. And there is a sense in which there is little self interest in saying, do to others what you'd have them do to you. There's something positive in that. But ultimately if you say, why should I

[36:00] treat person X with dignity? Because they are made in God's Image. Though I forget the text, I'm sorry, say when I get to Proverbs I read, those who despise the poor, despise the one who made them.

Well Jesus says in Matthew 25:31-46, what's His principle for saying, if you didn't visit Me, or clothe Me. In other words, when did we see you and we didn't do that, when we did or did not do it

[36:30] for the least of these My brothers. The principle of human beings made in God's Image is important throughout scripture. And it begins with Creation theology. And I think if I were going into biblical ethics which I'm probably not, I would begin with Genesis 1:26-31 and just simply ask. I've asked a simple question as many manifestation and different. What does it mean

[37:00] in scripture to treat people as if they are made in the Image of God? What would that mean? What would that look like? What would a community founded on that principle look like? Well I think in many cases, we see that in scripture. What would it look like? Justice, and fairness, and kindness based on this principle, and human responsibilities and privilege. Now I want to keep those in tangent [phonetics] because it's true. It is true as any decent

[37:30] farmer would now, if you abuse the land long enough, it won't serve you well. If you mistreat animals, they won't grow. I mean there's the whole host of things, basically you would understand. So I want to see our responsibilities not to rape the earth and not, but I also want to understand that human beings have the privilege of being made in God's Image, so that my dog, my pug is not my equal. I once said in seminary class,

[38:00] ask seriously and after that became a two year joke, do dogs go to heaven? I said based on what would they go? They are not made in God's Image. They are not moral beings. If my dog disobeys me, it is hardly a moral fault. The best I can tell. Seems that way to me. And this pug is interesting because they can know exactly what you want and not do it,

[38:30] more so than other dogs I've seen, who are more eager to please. Pugs are eager to be your equal. They are not necessary eager to please. And I used to think cats are very independent. Now I just don't think they know much of anything. But when it's all said and done, though animals are not to be mistreated by the stewards of Creation, let's not forget that they are not people.

[39:00] And you can work the implications of that out. Now what else does God do here? He starts as early having made human beings in chapter two verses one to three, as a personal God, He starts saying example for them. Now as He starts instructing human beings right after He has them. Someone once asked me how do you, I just have the one child, maybe retired and defeated.

[39:30] I don't know. But I just have the one child, and some people think she's a good person that I have something to do with this. They say, when did you start training her to do this and so on? And I thought for a minute and I said, I think when we brought her home, actually in that case, very early on. And it's very much like this here. The seventh day is a day of example where God rests and makes holy a day of rest.

[40:00] If we want to set aside the Sabbath principle, you got to go farther back than the Ten Commandments. You got to go back to Creation. And the older I get, the more I say, not do I have to keep the Sabbath, but when is the Sabbath coming [giggles]. I have one day in seven the Bible says so. And for ministers, you mean it's almost you get the pragmatics pretty soon. You better

[40:30] be some day besides Sunday, because even though in particularly the reformed traditions say, you can do good works on Sabbath and that the Calvin talked about preaching, teachings a good work. You're not breaking the Sabbath if you do. But does not mean it's a healthy thing nor even a Godly thing to do,

to work seven days a week. There must be some Sabbath that gets to be, so that Jesus said, the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.

[41:00] Which means you get it out [phonetics] of Sabbath but you're not supposed to be its servant. That's what's God is driving at here. Yeah you can slap enough rules and regulations, it's just one more job to do. But He says the Sabbath is given to you as a gift. So I embrace this. So God sets the example and then as He begins to put people to work doing what He commanded them to do in Genesis 1:26-31 puts

[41:30] some in their place that we are supposed to work and keep being stewards. Notice another important point in chapter two verses 15-17, God is the one who sets standards for human beings. He says to them, now you may eat of anything except for the tree, these trees. I think this shows not only that He is the one who gives standards but that He is concern about human beings.

[42:00] He wants them to be sustain, but He also wants to have an ongoing relationship with them. And He walks with them and allows them total freedom with one exception, you may not eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. And breaking this command will mean death. So the man and woman may not do as they please maintaining a good relationship with the Creator, right? Reformed theology talks somewhat about this being a covenant of works,

[42:30] which I don't believe is true. The fact is to abide by this prohibition they have to trust the Creator's Word. Whether they are going to believe this command or not when Genesis three comes up. What of they do? The woman knows what God has said. She hears what the serpent says. She believes what the serpent says, and apparently her husband does as well because he also eats. John Milton's

[43:00] noticed [phonetics] reconstruction notwithstanding. Faith is required, so they entered into a faith based agreement with God. Keeping the commandment is no meritorious work, cause they wouldn't even know they were in danger unless God had told them. What merit could you have when you're totally ignorant of something? You know meritorious work in believing God ever.

[43:30] I don't like the terminology of covert [phonetics] works but the situation comes unraveled in Genesis three. Daniel Fuller writes in his book the unity of the Bible, excellent volume. By disbelieving in God's mercy even Adam utterly scorned His Glory, whose apex is his disposition to be merciful benevolent and to tell them how they may be protected.

[44:00] There are many consequences to their lack of faith as a sin. The personal consequences that their relationship which according to Genesis 2:25 was naked, not ashamed. There is absolutely no barriers between them. I have often heard going up hear these things, Adam and Eve, they were good looking. Adam was buffing.

[44:30] And Eve was really attractive. For all I know, they were throughly ugly persons. It did not matter and there's a difference. It's hardly a virtue, it's just a matter of intelligence to say someone is or maybe personal taste to say somebody is attractive. But for that not to matter is a whole separate issue. It didn't matter in Genesis two whatever they looked like. It isn't stated, it didn't matter. They were naked not ashamed.

[45:00] But the personal relationship is now at a strain. Their relationship with God more importantly is at a strain. Genesis 3:15 which is related, is a related thing to Creation and Fall is that either one always triumph. There's someone coming from the woman who will crush the serpent's head. This is hardly a full blown doctrine of the Messiah but it start. We'll be talking about that on Day six and seven or something. But God has set standards.

[45:30] And they have broken them. God has provided for them. He has initiated relationship with them, and yet there has been sin. So we've said a variety of things, God is the only God. He is the source and the cause of Creation. His Spirit operates separately from Himself at times. He is the Creator. He speaks, He communicates, He assesses.

[46:00] His is an ordered intelligence. He relates to human beings. He creates them in His Image. He sets examples for them. He initiates relationships with them. He sets standards for them. And in Genesis three, forgives them. So you kind of have many theology of the scriptures here. All these flowing from the fact that God is the Creator. No wonder at the end that is it,

[46:30] Psalm 95 and Psalm 100 that both say, Bow down and worship the Lord for He is the Maker and not we ourselves. And so whatever fault one could find, it would be hard to find with God unless you say He created a world in which sin was a possibility. And I think those who have in a variety of different ways,

[47:00] and formats and whatever, those who have said, there is something necessary, it is necessary for that possibility to exist for relationship to exist. In other words, for a true and deep relationship to exist there has to be the possibility for someone of rejecting that relationship. It's another way of saying, all relationships are by grace.

[47:30] We cannot make someone love you. But the fact that that is true somehow enriches a relationship that is done by choice, right? I don't know. I can't begin to answer all the issues of evil and suffering. The Bible is clear that God did not create evil. He did create a world in which though that choice was possible.

[48:00] But there is something about that choice being possible that makes the relationship what it is. And I know we really kind of stepped into a land mine there but the fact is human beings was offered by grace. I don't think sin is always necessary for grace to be in. Cause to me, grace is someone extending a kindness that is

[48:30] not required. And God extends the kindness of His company and enter a relationship with him in the garden when He doesn't need people. He existed before the world did, right? In the beginning, God, He was already there. There is no evidence in scripture that unless He had made the world, He would have been in trouble, somehow. So He by grace

[49:00] has His relationship with people. And they sinned against that grace and needed further grace for the forgiveness of their sin. So we learn a bit about God's Person that flows from the fact that He is the Creator. And the next step would be to work with some of these same principles in Isaiah 40-48, some parts at least.

[49:30] And because this is so foundational for what we'll do for the rest of the day and part of tomorrow, maybe there are other items that you want to add to the list, I would end up with summary there of God with about 15 parts all of which could be vital to the whole of biblical theology and to your Christian life. If someone ever wondered why would God send Jesus to have relationship with us? God has been working for relationship

[50:00] with human beings since Genesis 1:26-31. Any points of agreement or disagreement here? We're going to discuss that more in the next section, Isaiah 40-48 because it is a more relevant place. But the openness of God as articulated.

[50:30] First of all, we start with process theology. It's differently openness of God. Process theology says God is in someway dependent and connected to His own Creation and that He is developing and getting

greater as time goes on. So if you're going to talk, usually the issue starts with evil and suffering. How do we explain evil and suffering? Well process theologians say, well God cannot yet come up with an antidote for certain illnesses for instance.

[51:00] But He's been able to overcome some that used to. Now God is getting greater. He's more knowledgeable today than He ever was. He's learning and growing and evolving and gratefully at a faster rate than we are. And He is connected to His Creation. Now openness of God, people as we used to describe it, first of all believe that God is the Creator. They believe that He knows some

[51:30] future events both by intuition experience that we don't have, that He has fixed some future events and that they are unchangeable. But that He is open to a variety of possibilities, so that human freedom can occur. They would believe that if God knows

[52:00] every future contingent event, if He knows them, He has caused them and you are not free. So that though God has forth a day for Jesus to return, to use personal example from yesterday, Lake [phonetics] said, you know not merit but taken application. A friend of mine says her life verse now

[52:30] if any man will come let him. God may not know how that's going to turn out. To give you complete freedom, He may not know how that turns out. That would be the openness type [phonetics] of person. To give you freedom, what I want to do now is critique, it's not critiquing. We're going to get to that, it's an important issue in current theology.

[53:00] And a lot of people, it makes sense to them. Why didn't God do something about thing X? He really liked to but in order for us to be free, He's got to let it go. Or you know well, I guess He doesn't. It makes sense to me that God's unable at this point in time to do something but as time goes on. I mean it makes sense to a variety, to a variety of people. Yes ma'am.

[53:30] That's right and even whether you made a good choice, we'll make a good choice or not, right, right, that's correct. See at first glance, you think this is Calvinism versus Arminianism thing. That's what a lot of people, or theological littered first thing they say is, well, there we go again, no. Wesley, read his 1788 sermons, Wesley of course believed that God knew everything, the end from the beginning.

[54:00] Every that was going to happen or ever would. But that because He sees them in a moment of time, He is not necessarily causing them. So it's not a traditional Arminian view or Wesleyan view. Some Arminians and Wesleys don't want to be lumped together. To say that God somehow for you to be free and totally free, they would not argue that God, the fact that God knows everything means He causes them.

[54:30] Now but the issue is on nations [phonetics] and the kind of a joking way, maybe it's a water gate thing for when I was a kid. What did the President know and when did he know it is the questions asked about God. What does God know? And when does He know it? And why does He need to know it? And if He knows it, are you free? I would argue since the openness of God people do believe some things are fixed and final, I have to have reason why other things are not. Well they say, they are more important, are they?

[55:00] How important is her five choices over here she just talked about? That's fairly significant to her. And if we believe what the Bible teaches about a connected human race, I'd said fairly important to some of the rest of us too, whether are aware of it currently or not. Oh well, it started here. But the question is if I'm going to answer an openness of God person, I will start with Creation theology.

[55:30] Does not the Creator know everything including, now they agree that He knows everything going on now. I would say, He knew. He knew that they had sinned and all these other things. He knows the heart. He knows everything going on now. He's fully aware now and He's fixed some things in the future but some of these other things are open.

[56:00] Well and I think I'm trying not to say too much from Genesis chapter one and two. I mean you can run with these things but again this is what we know now. What does Isaiah make? Just at the very beginning of Creation theology. Isaiah 40 one of the text that is ever used

[56:30] by Christians that are in the Old Testament, starts with comfort My people. There are two reasons they need comfort in Isaiah one is the country has just been shot to bits by the Assyrians. According to chapters 36-39, there has been Assyrian invasion. According to ancient history, every city in Judah, 53 in all,

[57:00] were captured, looted, plundered, people murdered and paled, burned in oil, tortured The Assyrians made artwork of it. And there's even one of what happened in Judah at this time. The Lachish inscription, the Lachish reliefs that are in all [phonetics] in the British Museum, replicas in Jerusalem.

[57:30] But it's really interesting. It's what I was watching last night a bit on the History Channel. The Nazis filmed all sorts of atrocities that they themselves were doing, extraordinary. So the Assyrians had just sacked 53 cities. Jerusalem had been laid under siege and had barely escaped. That was one reason they needed comfort.

[58:00] Second reason they needed comfort was God had predicted through Isaiah at the end of chapter 39 that long term, Babylon would come and capture Jerusalem and Judah. The short term problem was we just went through a horrible devastating nation numbing war that we lost. We were never in the game and it took a Divine miracle to free us even in Jerusalem. That's one thing.

[58:30] And that in the future, that miracle won't occur. There's coming a time when the same thing will happen, only Jerusalem will fall too. So comfort my people. Tell them short term, long term, their sin has been forgiven. But based on what theology because these people are weary and tired, so they say things like, verse six, a voice says, call out. Then he said, what shall I call out? All flesh is grass.

[59:00] And all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows on it. Surely the people are nothing but grass. On a hot day in Alabama, without watering, without a breeze, that's what people are like. Now sounds like my grandmother could have said that. I have two grandmothers, one totally optimistic and kind, happy everyday, and the other one who really understood the human race.

[59:30] That's what people are, we're here a little while, [blowing] gone, that's it. The grass withers, the flower fades but the Word of our God stands forever. And here comes the Word of God. Proclaim this, God's going to carry His people, verse 11, like a shepherd tenders flock. This is [phonetics] the Creation theology. Verse 12, who's measured out the waters in the hollow of His Hand?

[60:00] Who's marked off the heavens by the span? Who's calculated the dust of the earth by the measure? There's got to be a bigger way to that. That's kind of like an artisan, somebody making a, you know an item. Thinks [phonetics] God in the shop making oil. But He is the Creator. Now to Him, verse 15, the nations are like a drop from a bucket, they are like the speck of dust on the scales.

[60:30] So verse 18, how are you going to compare God to. If these things are true, can you compare God to an idol? See the people and options. Should we worship the God of the scriptures? Should we worship

the gods of the Assyrians since the Assyrians are so powerful? Should we worship the gods of Egypt since Egypt has avoided the power of gods of the Assyrians? Should we worship the gods of Babylonians, after all they seem to be the winners in the future?

[61:00] Now Isaiah says, you can compare God to an idol. He is the Creator. He's all there is. He is God and there is no other. No, there is no one like Him. There is no other. This is out of Creation theology. And so it says the One who sits above the circle of the earth. The Creator, the Sustainer of the world, He rules rulers. Verse 23,

[61:30] He reduces rulers to nothing. He makes the judges of the earth meaningless. Scarcely have they been planted, scarcely have they been sown and He takes kids [phonetics] so are you afraid of the Assyrians? Are you afraid of the Egyptians? Are you afraid of the bishop? Are you afraid of the deacons? Are you afraid of the elders? Who are you afraid of? God made them all. God rules them all. They are all accountable to God whether they know it or not because the Creator is also the Assessor, remember?

[62:00] And the One who can sustain the world, verse 26, He created the stars and put them all out there, kept track of them all. Do you think He hasn't kept track of you? So with all that Creation theology in mind, he says the Everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, has not become weary or tired. And He gives strength to the weary.

[62:30] The Creator who made you can give you strength. Therefore though youths grow tired and weary, and vigorous young men stumble badly. Now we get the verse everyone remembers. Those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength, mount up with wings like eagles, run and not get weary, walk and not faint. When you first hear that, those that wait upon the Lord shall lets you take rest for a while. The Lord will empower you again, no. We're talking about the Creator of all heavens

[63:00] and earth giving you some of His strength. So what does Isaiah 40 use Creation theology to do? What is Isaiah 40 trying to do for the hearers and the readers in simple term? Comfort, establish faith, to assure them of His presence, His Love and their place in His Life.

[63:30] So Creation theology is here put to use to try to help people know who God is take faith in Him and take comfort in the midst of a horrible situation, that long term is not going to get better. Now I emphasize that because sometimes God talks about delivering people from a situation. Other times, He talks about sustaining them in a situation.

[64:00] We all prefer the former, do we not? We just do. We want to be delivered but sometimes that is not what's going to occur, at least not soon. And so God, we would, yes, want God to sustain. Now as this text go on, particularly God says chapter 43 verse one, just a couple of minutes we got left.

[64:30] God says they've suffer greatly. And He says He has punished them. Chapter 43 verse one, but now says the Lord, your Creator, o Jacob and He who formed you, o Israel, do not fear for I have redeemed you. I have made you. I have formed you. I have now redeemed you and called you by name, Creation theology. Making, naming, purposing [phonetics].

[65:00] When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. The One who made you is not going to forsake you, abandon you. The last day of class and so we are going to talk about theology. What happens when you suffer and feels like you've been abandoned? But understanding cause I have not abandoned you, I, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior I'm with you. So again the Creator.

[65:30] Now another thing He is not just now trying to, to assure them. In chapter 43 verse ten, He wants to protect them from false theology that will being them no hope. Verse ten, you are My witnesses, declares the Lord, and My servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe Me and understand that I am He. Before me there was no God formed, and there will be none after Me. There's no God out there but Me.

[66:00] I, even I am the Lord, and there is no savior besides Me. Even from eternity I am He. So God is trying to reassure them through the theology of Creation and through the notion that there is no other God. See in biblical theology, it is not a kindness to let people continue to believe in false god. If there is no hope in those gods, it is not a kindness

[66:30] to continue, or to do nothing about idolatry. I think I will leave you with and this will maybe sack [phonetics] away and tomorrow we talk about some of the ideas of openness of God. God says, let Me prove to you that I am the God and there is no other. I'm about to declare the future to you. In Bruce Ware's recent book, God's lesser glory, which is a critique of openness of God theology.

[67:00] He makes a big point about Isaiah 40-48 rightfully so. There are some other text that ought to be handled as well. But he says that in Isaiah 40-48, in the midst of all this Creation theology having said that God is the Creator, He's the Savior, there's no other, He says, let Me prove this to you. I want to tell you the future. Go find an idol that will tell you the future. But in Isaiah, the argument is geared to make in sure people don't believe in idols, or in other gods, or in other religions.

[67:30] So it's not a one for one correspondence. But you say, okay. One of the things the Bible does is to predict future contingent events. For instance, Cyrus, he was eighth centuries Isaiah, I think it is. You have Cyrus in the future, not even born yet. You have a similar text in I Kings 13, before Josiah's born,

[68:00] the text says, God predicted that a king named Josiah would come here and do such and such to this altar. I want to suggest to you that are several future contingent events that God is taking into account. At the very least, Josiah's parents getting together, having a baby and naming him Josiah. There are some future contingent events involved in that, or when Cyrus has been born.

[68:30] Or even if you take a later date for Isaiah, the future contingent event is that Cyrus would deliver the people. That he would care enough about Israel to do it, that he would defeat the Babylonians, that he would set them free, that there would be a decree of Cyrus all sorts of political and personal future contingent events. Now the Bible, no place that I know says, well God knows all future contingent events and this means doesn't so.

[69:00] But over and over again, He predicts or knows future contingent events, such as who people are going to marry and what sort of child they are going to have, and these certain events. It's a little bit like in the New Testament. Now Jesus never stands up and says, hey I am God. One derives that from all the things that would lead you to that conclusion. I would say the same thing about God knowing

[69:30] all future events. So we are going to be left with a mystery, how God's knowledge of those dictated doesn't dictate the outcome. And I think until Jesus comes, Wesleyans and Calvinists will discuss how that is the case. I think it's an important discussion because human responsibilities is involved. So I see it's an important discussion. But whatever you decide,

[70:00] I don't think God's lack of knowledge is going to help at all. So that God knows these future contingent events and part of the evidence He gives that you should trust Him and not in an idols but He

does know these things. So, we'll kind of leave with that, but Creation theology, Isaiah flows from Creation theology to God being the Judge and Comforter and also the One who knows all things,

[70:30] directly out of Creation theology. So I wouldn't make that point, you know you asked that question, I wouldn't give the answer I gave right now form Genesis one and two, but I would say as you come to Isaiah, and Isaiah appropriates Creation theology. Isaiah makes that point. Now by the way, if by God never changes, you mean God is dull and interesting and has no character, no flavor, I certainly don't believe that.

[71:00] I would argue God doesn't change because He doesn't need to change. He's inherently perfect. And that's very difficult for me to describe. Because I hope to come to love You Lord more but so far I see no inherently perfect people, and I'm certainly not. Why can I only conceive a change? Because I need to change. What if there is a being described in the scripture who doesn't need to change because he is infinitely and inherently,

[71:30] perfectly, but among other things mean he's infinitely interesting? So we'll pick up that and finish some stuff on Creation and begin the days we are going to do on God's law. I appreciate your help today and do interrupt me when you need to. Thanks a lot. See you bright and early tomorrow.

Chapter 5

The Doctrine of Creation

I'd like to begin at Isaiah 43 today. Isaiah 43. And yesterday we had been talking about creation and God's person [00:30] in genesis 1 and 2, and in Isaiah 40-48 I would just use the category of creation and God's people, because God has been speaking to them through Isaiah, through creation theology to bring comfort and strength and hope and admonition really, to his people, [01:00] and we have been noting through chapter 40, and all this was rather kinda rapid at the end, but if nothing else we could say in Isaiah 40, that God is powerful, he is the creator and can do all things, and in comparison to him the nations are but a drop in the bucket, they're dust on the scales in comparison to God. That's what this is, a comparison. [01:30] Not "Well God can't stand the nations, doesn't think anything about the nations," but in comparison to God, the nations are as dust on the scales, and the only people I ever really noted who are concerned about the weight of dust on the scales are people very concerned about their weight. The only time I've ever seen anyone sweep dust off the scale was when I saw high school wrestlers trying to make weight.

[02:00] It just doesn't amount to much in comparison to God. The text says that from where God sits, in throne in the heavens, everything down here looks like grasshoppers. You know, the people are just small in comparison to God. It's like if you have ever been to Chicago and gone up the Sears tower, the fast elevator in it. And you get up there and the thing's swaying a little bit, and the breeze. [02:30] And you say "Why is the thing moving? Why is the floor..." Well, they say if it didn't do that, it would snap off in the wind. We'd rather not have that happen. And you look down and city buses, little bitty things going through there. In comparison to God and where he sits, this is how small things are. So God's power. As creator he is powerful, and the text says he has sustained

[03:00] Israel all these years. Whether it was the exodus, or whether it was while they were in trouble, or in the bringing them out of bondage, God has sustained the people he created and called. And he is as the creator, the comforter who can comfort more than the one who has made them. [03:30] Also I think you have a strong sense that the creator is honest here. He is honest about their sins and the cost these sins have incurred. He is also honest that the faithful are currently suffering. You don't find God saying in the bible "Oh, you know, things aren't that bad. Things could always get worse." [04:00] That's always, that's a strong biblical phrase, isn't it? Hey, things could always get worse, or lots of people have suffered worse than you have. Now on occasion, as in Hebrews, the writer said you have not yet struggled against saying to the point of shedding of blood. They haven't put you to death yet, so there is some of that, but the point is God says yes, you are suffering. Yes, you are hurting. Yes, you have gone through deep waters, even though I've been with you. Yes, you have gone through the fire. [04:30] Yes, I have refined you. So there is a stance in which the honesty of God is certainly palpable in chapter 41. And we had at least gone to chapter 43, and in 43-1 we had found that he is the creator of Israel. That is a little bit different than saying God has created all persons [05:00] everywhere. God created Israel to be a people for himself. A holy nation, a kingdom of priests, witness to the nations. Why did God do this? Well, back before, in Deuteronomy 7, God says it was not because you were stronger, more numerous or righteous, but you were small and week and hard hearted, [05:30] and still necked.

What is the answer then? Because I loved you. And because he had made promises to his friend, Abraham. But if election means anything, it means there is no merit in the person elected in this case, or I think in any other case. No overwhelming merit. So God has created Israel. Verse 2 then, because he created them he will [06:00] redeem them. And in verses 1 through 7, for what purpose? For his glory. Verse 7: "Everyone who is called by my name and whom I created for my own glory, whom I have formed, even whom I have made." And it is, I think it's Jon Piper who makes a point. You know, it's very interesting about God. God, because he is the creator and because he is good, and because he is the redeemer, he is the one person [06:30] that it can be said truthfully, it is best that for everyone, that he be glorified. He be made great. He be the one that people bow down to. And so he's also the only person for whom it is not a sin to say "What is best for all, is for me to be glorified." If we don't understand the true nature of God, it just sounds like the worst sort of egomania.

[07:00] Well let's unpackage just for a moment. Remember, for me to say what's best for all of you is for me to be glorified, for everyone to know... Well, we know that's not true because I can't save you. I haven't made you, I can't answer your prayers. I can't take care of you, I can't sustain you even on my best days with my best efforts. But it is true of God. For him to say for me to be glorified, for my glory to be most important is what is best for what is best for all of us. It's often true of God that what is true of him cannot be said of human beings, and this is just another case. So he has created human beings for his glory. He has worked and created Israel for his glory. He will redeem Israel for his glory. Why? As Isaiah 48 goes on, so that all nations might see his glory.

[08:00] Isaiah has a strong multi-national concern. So we see these aspects so far, and as we go on to 43-8 and following, God says "Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes and the deaf, even though they have ears." Already, God has called Israel a blind servant in 41-8. [08:30] A blind servant that can't see and is stumbling about. All the nations have gathered together, so the people may be assembled. Who among them can declare this and proclaim to us the former things? Here's an interesting point it's going to make about God. God knows the past. God knows everything about the past. Now that, I hadn't really thought about that because I used to think well that's no big deal. Anybody can know the past. Then I began to realize, oh, can we? [09:00] We can't collect all of the past. We couldn't write a full orbed history of everything. We couldn't even collect the data. So when we think about God's omniscience, the time honored term for God being all knowing, we have to start to say it's no small trick to know the entire past. Or it's no small trick to know the current present, to know everything now. So who can proclaim to us the former things? [09:30] "Let them present their witnesses, that they may be justified, or that they might be declared correct. We'll let them hear and say it is true. You are my witnesses, declares the lord, and my servant whom I have chosen so that you may know and believe me, and understand that I am he." It's the same for several times in Isaiah 40-48 that you get the same language for God as you got for exodus 3-14. I am, or I am he. "Before me there was no God [10:00] formed, and there will be none after me.

The creator is the only God. I am, and I am the lord and there's no savior beside me. It is I who have declared and saved and proclaimed." And in this context as we're going to see, declared means the past. Saved also could be the past, present but proclaimed is going to come to mean in this text the future. God proclaims the future. "And there was no strange God among you, so you're my witnesses and I am God. [10:30] Even from eternity, I am he." The creator has no beginning point here or in Sam 90 or in Genesis 1 and 2. "From eternity I am he" is the statement here. In genesis 1-2, you know, in the beginning, God. In Sam 90, 1 and 2 the text says "Before the mountains, wherever brought forth [11:00] are you made them. From everlasting to everlasting you are God." And of course, philosophers get into an important and

detailed discussion about God and time. I can only say as far as the biblical record goes, there is no way in which time defines God. He is not bound by it. He enters into it, and he enters into human history but he is not bound by it.

[11:30] God knows what time it is, but he's not pressed. This is the interesting thing throughout the scriptures. There's a sense at which there's a personal ease about God that comes from having all the time there is to have. Frustrates me a bit, and the Israelites at times seem to forget that even though God has made promises to his chosen people and that they cannot be revoked, they do not have to be the recipients. That generation of them. [12:00] God will be around when they are gone. So he is the eternal one. "There is none who can deliver out of my hand." I act, and who can reverse it? How do you undo what the creator does? Then in 43-14, "Thus says the lord, your redeemer, the holy one of Israel. For your sake I have sent to Babylon and will bring them all down as fugitives.

[12:30] Even the Chaldeans, into the ships in which they rejoice." God is saying that in the future, something is going to happen in the future. He's already set it in motion, but he's going to punish Babylon. Now again, yesterday, and this will kind of begin the discussion because a couple of you asked me about openness in God theology, and Josh put me onto Gerald Bray's old book, The Personal God, which deals with some of the issues. [13:00] 13 dollars, you gotta love British. Publisher is Paternoster. Give me 76 pages of Bray for 13 dollars. Well worth it, probably, but I've been working on that. Also, on openness of God theology, a response to Bruce Ware's God's Lesser Glory is the title of it. But, the question is, does God know future events that are contingent? Contingent upon human action, human decision, that sort of thing. [13:30] Well, if God for instance is going to bring down Babylonians as fugitives. Let's pick a number of Babylonians. Let's say it's 2000 Babylonians he's talking about, just for argument's sake. How many people's future is affected by that? [14:00] For these 2000 Babylonians to go as fugitives. How many specific future contingent events must be known and accounted for beforehand? I have no idea. Let's say each one affects four people. So my point, I think one thing that's not taken into account often enough by openness.

[14:30] I will say some things about the openness, that as we go with it that I think they have some legitimate, some serious legitimate questions. But for God not to know future contingent events basically makes it impossible for him to say something will specifically be done in the future, because if you make a future, I mean just as simplistic as it could possibly be. If God had determined ahead [15:00] of time, and again, openness people say God did determine some things ahead of time. It was determined ahead of time that I would be here. That has affected all of you. and I suppose some time, somewhere, either last night or in these two weeks somebody will say "I can't do that, I have to read for this class that house assigned." And depends on your personal theology, but you know when I agreed to do this class, [15:30] it was very convenient to do so. Not just to accept, but to come. But by the time it was time to come, I had decided to take a new job.

We had to move and set up household best we could in order then, having finished that task on Friday, to come here on Saturday. And because at some point in time I had decided to take on a dog 3 years ago for my daughter whom I thought would [16:00] be at home all this time but has instead gone to college early, leaving me with her dog, we could not fly because of the dog. Because a pug is a specialty dog. They were bred to be lap dogs for Chinese emperors, and bred to look as much like very sad people as possible, so they have no nose. And dogs use their nasal capacity to do things like cool off, [16:30] and the thing is air pressure can kill him. So could, I mean, he just can't be out in this weather very long, or very cold weather. It's not his fault, this is the way he has been made.

There you go, so we're driving the 700 miles. And we're doing it today, and again, how many people are affected? Suddenly our friend says "Could you please stop at Louisville and visit?" They got in the act. I'm just saying, [17:00] how many future contingent events must someone know to put you at point A or B at any point in time? Way too many. It's not a simple fact of saying "Well all you had to do was say Jesus will be born in Bethlehem." That doesn't entail many future events. Or that there are going to be Babylonian fugitives. That's just a prediction requires, is my point for the hundredth [17:30] time today. It requires extensive planning, not unlike... I have been reading Ambrose's biography of Eisenhower. You read about the D-day invasion, and there had to be so much planning to try to get the people on the beach, and the real planning took place once they had a beachhead. Because they were going to turn that thing into the port of entry for every armament that went into Europe. [18:00] So understanding to just say that God knows any part of the future is going to make the necessity of knowing, if not the whole future, virtually the whole. So the text goes on to say, having said about the Chaldeans, verse 15 "I am the lord, your holy one, the creator of Israel, your king. Thus says [18:30] the lord who makes a way through the sea and a path through the mighty waters."

Again, exodus imagery. "Who brings forth a chariot and a horse, the army and the mighty man." He says in verse 18 "Do not call to mind the former thing, or ponder things of the past. Behold, I will do something new, Now it will spring forth; Will you not be aware of it? I will even make a roadway in the wilderness, Rivers in the desert." He talks about in verse 20 that he's going to get waters in the desert. [19:00] Verse 21, "The people whom I formed for myself will declare my praise." He's going to effect what amounts to a new exodus for the exiled. Now if we go on, it's hard to leave anything out in Isaiah because it's such an intricate, there are several themes that have been intricately woven through here. But you go to 44-6. "Thus says the lord, the king of Israel and his redeemer, the lord of hosts." [19:30] It'll be interesting just to get all the names for God here.

He's the king of Israel, the redeemer, he's the savior, he's the creator. "I am the first and I am the last, and there is no God besides me." A fairly stout monotheistic statement. "Who is like me? Let him proclaim it. Yes, let him recount it to me in order. From the time that I established the ancient nation, let him declare to me the things that are coming and the events that are going to take place." [20:00] One of his proofs to a discouraged people that he is God is the fact that he knows the things that are coming, the events that are going to take place. "Do not tremble and do not be afraid," Now this is interesting. God's omniscience as our creator, savior, redeemer should be a meaning of comfort to us. If he is our savior and redeemer, [20:30] we have the opportunity not to tremble and not be afraid.

"Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are my witnesses. Is there any God besides me, or is there any rock? I know of none." So again, part of the proof that he is God is the ability to know the future. Now, the famous satire in 44-9 to 20, he says okay, now this is who I am, let me tell you what an idol he is. [21:00] It is really satire, it doesn't take into account that some people might have thought an idol was a representation of a God, not the God itself. But it basically says, you know, an individual seemingly doesn't think about the following. He chops up wood for the day, he burns some of it in the fire, he makes... He warms himself, takes some of the same wood, makes himself a God and bows down to it. And doesn't seem to think "Well, I made it. I made this God." [21:30] So that what idolatry amounts to is what Bruggeman said was dangerous. It is the reversal of the creator creates creation. And that we worship the creator. What has happened is the creation has created its own God and worshiped it. So he says, now, this idol if you hold it up, it can't answer prayer, it can't feel, [22:00] it can't do anything. And remember you made it. So in the rest of chapter 44, God reminds him that he has forgiven him, and will give joy, and then in 44-28 and 45-1, the promises that Cyrus will be subduing nations and

setting Israel free. Now as I said, [22:30] this is quite an impressive promise if, as I think, it's an 18th century prophecy. But even if it is a 6th century prophecy, I remember my Isaiah teacher in seminary saying well, you know, he believed in second Isaiah and he said, well, he said some people accuse us who believe in second Isaiah of not believing in predictive prophecies. It's not true, he says five years prior to Cyrus the priest is able to predict accurately what Cyrus [23:00] is going to do.

He said that's not bad, because there's so much that could happen in the interim. Well, I took his point. If this is, I think it's an older prophecy but even if it's only a 5 year prior prophecy, give that a shot sometime. Cyrus will subdue nations and he will, and here was the funny one, set Israel free. This is saying he must have a conquest policy that would allow for such a possibility. [23:30] And so this is what happens. 539 B.C., Cyrus defeats Babylon. 538, he offers a decree that says to the Jews... It's not just to the Jews, it's his conquest policy: Go home. In 539 he's a victor, 538 he says to Israel you're allowed to go back, and with a government grant reconstruct your temple. Because of course the [24:00] Assyrians ruled through sheer terror, the Babylonians pretty much the same, but the Persians said "you know, we're not going to get much tax money for our empire with all these little devastated, torn up kingdoms.

Look, we need to send these people back. They're nationalistic, they want their homeland. Let them rebuild their land, as long as they pay taxes we're happy. Let's set up a flourishing empire." And so regardless of the viewpoint, it lets you just believe there is no such thing as predictive prophecy, which some folks [24:30] holding the argument would have no weight at all. But he then goes on in verse 6, speaking to Cyrus back in verse 5 "I will gird you, though you have not known me, that men may know from the rising to the setting of the sun, there's no one beside me. I am the lord, there is no other." God's work with Cyrus was to show that he's the only God. [25:00] And what, verse 7, back to the creation theology. "The one forming light and creating darkness. Causing wellbeing and creating calamity, I am the lord who does all these things."

It's an interesting verse in Hebrew, it's lots of creation imagery. The word for forming light is the same word that's used for forming the human being, you know, out of the dust in genesis 2. Creating dark, that's the Bara, [25:30] that's the God word for creation. Making shalom, peace or wholeness. It's the word for, you know, God making things all saw, and creating. And here is an important word, Rah. Some translations will always translate rah evil. So that you have a variety of translations, have God doing evil in English translation. [26:00] Well, the problem with that is the word Rah is a generic word. I forget how many hundreds of times it's used in the Old Testament, but it's used from everything for a person to food. So it is a word that in my opinion has to be interpreted contextually, and it is often translated by all translations as calamity or disaster. [26:30] In the older translations, way back to Tyndale in English, the 1500s, whenever they would translate evil, they either would make a note that it's in a generic sense, or that this was an anthropomorphism. That is a human trait attributed to God. I think it's simpler than that. You have a generic word for everything that's bad. From a bad event, to bad food to whatever. [27:00] The bible is very clear that there are times when God sends natural disasters, calamities, right? You remember the exodus. God was sending those things as a punishment. Read the book of Amos. There are times when God has sent a famine for instance as a punishment.

The bible does not say every famine is a punishment, does not say that every disaster is a punishment, it just [27:30] says it's possible that that's what God has done. We are not always let in, it's not always revealed to us when it is such. So God is creating wholeness, wellbeing, creating calamity, "I do all these things." This is his power, and about now just as the Apostle Paul anticipated in Romans 9 through 11, see verse 9: "Woe to the one who quarrels with his maker." Because you're about to say, [28:00] wait a minute.

What do we make of this? How do we know when it's good, how do we know when it's a calamity, how do we know when it's a punishment? And it is often that we are left with a mystery, a lack of knowledge which I call mystery.

Don't quarrel with your maker, in the sense that you're only an earthenware vessel. Will the clay say to the potter "What are you doing?" Or the thing that you're making say "Hey!" He has no hands. [28:30] Woe to him who says to his father "What are you begetting?" Or to a woman "To what are you giving birth?" They have this kinda notion of a baby in a womb pounding on the side "Hey wait a minute!" So God continues, says the proper response before God apparently is God has revealed so much to us that it needs to be enough for us to trust him. [29:00] There are secret things that belong to God according to Deuteronomy 29-29, is it? "The revealed things belong to us, the secret things belong to God, but God has revealed so much." And this also by the way is sort of how the book of Job ends. God personally responds to Job, explains to him that he is the creator, explains to him how detailed his knowledge has to be, and all he has to account for, and that Job has no idea how to do all this.

[29:30] He's seen things only from one perspective, and that what God has revealed needs to be enough for Job to trust God. But let's be clear, and we're talking a little bit about this after class, that's a faith decision you must make, right? God does not leave us in the dark about everything. He has revealed himself in a variety of ways at a variety of times, and about a variety of things. It's as if God [30:00] is saying, look, if you're worried about your situation, look at all that has been revealed. Look at the truth that is there, look at the greater picture, put yourself within that picture, but that is a faith commitment that one makes. Because the bible does not promise to explain the why of every situation. The details of the why. [30:30] We know that the big picture is what I've described and what God is describing here, and as best as... We're going to look at this on the last day of class, but it's best described in Genesis 50, verses 19 and 20. Remember Genies 50, 19 and 20 where Joseph is talking to his brothers, and they just assume that as long as their father is alive he wouldn't take revenge out of respect for their father. So when he's dead, they concoct a story [31:00] that he said "Let us live. Our father said let us live." Joseph says "You made it for evil, but God made it for good." He has said as early as chapter 45, "I've been sent ahead to preserve light." He realizes why this has occurred. Or you have the New Testament equivalent of Genesis 50 in Romans 8-28: "All things work together for the good, for those who love God. For those who are the called according to his purpose."

[31:30] And in the bible, we are given many examples of how this was true in the past. That was true for Joseph. That was true for Israel and their suffering period in the exodus. This was true for Ruth and Naomi. This was true for... And you can just fill in the blanks. This was true for the Apostle Paul, this was true for Jeremiah. But it still requires this faith [32:00] statement to the... From us to the creator. And sometimes this faith is hard earned. Let's not kid ourselves. You can suffer in a way that will make the best people wonder what's going on. Does it mean that we're justified in sinning against God in any sort of way? But remember, in 45 9 [32:30] through 10, it is required for us to believe, and the same God who in verse 11 chapter 45 says "I have told the future and the past, I made the heaven and the earth in the past, I have stretched out the heavens in the past." He is predicting the future.

God knows the future. Now again, there is enough revealed to us that it is not counter-intuitive. It is not counter to our reason. [33:00] When I say it requires a faith statement, I used to hear growing up all the time, you know, [inaudible][33:09] Faith is a leap in the dark. Just a leap in the dark. And they use all kinds of illustrations, like "It's like when you throw your kid in the swimming pool the first time. They just have to trust you that you'll fish them out." I'm thinking, sheesh, is that the only way we can learn

swimming? [33:30] Or you know, there's some illustration I get. So I finally realize, I decide faith is a shot in the dark, is a leap in the dark if leaping into the arms of the one who created, sustained, redeemed, carried, revealed, predicts, well then that's a leap in the dark.

The longer you go on in Christian life, the more you may say, well, leaping toward God is the only [34:00] rational thing I've done. The rest of it has been a mess. But again, I want to stress that this is the biblical perspective about belief, because otherwise we can just stat swapping stories. "Well I've suffered this, well I've suffered that. Well I suffered this and believed in God, but I suffered this, and because of it quit believing in God." [34:30] We need to remember that the text is put before us for such times as the horrible suffering. And it is at that time that we remember what God has done in the past, what God has promised to do in the future, what God said in his word. And at that moment it's the faith commitment, and that's what Isaiah was asking him to do. Believe in the creator. So he continues [35:00] on with his statements about the future, and one of the final ones, verse 23 of chapter 45 "I've sworn by myself, the word has gone forth from my mouth and righteous will not turn back. To me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. Let us speak of the future." And if you really want to see, well, we'll see it in a moment. If you really want to see the future, [35:30] it's in Isaiah 65 where God renews the heavens and the earth, and has his people with him forever. So God, as a creator sustains. He is the only God, he will redeem, he will forgive, he will send Cyrus, he calls him out as a faith commitment. In other words, he rules the past, present and future. This is the creator God. [36:00] And I would urge you that when you're trying to instill comfort in people by teaching or preaching about comfort ahead of time, which we need to do, they talk a lot now about wholeness. Whole health and lifelong health.

They want you to exercise your heart now so they'll be doing less open heart surgery later. When they're about to put us on the respirator [36:30] and give us the shock treatment to our heart to keep us alive, it's a tad late to talk to us about walking, jogging, exercising, whatever else. I talked to my daughter last night, and she was glad to hear that I was getting some more aerobic exercise, because you know, she's worried about my heart. And I was getting more exercise because she's always reminding me "You know you have to walk into the best nursing homes. [37:00] You gotta be able to walk in there and feed yourself." She's concerned that I keep my legs under me, but if you're going to administer, help people and comfort people, you need to lay a foundation in your preaching and teaching.

Not just wait until somebody is at a funeral home, looking at a loved one that's died tragically and her whole world is kind of... Or not just wait until somebody's business fails to tell [37:30] them the lord is with them. So one of the things you can do is lay a foundation from some of these chapters based on creation theology. And what Isaiah spins out of the creation theology. I think it would be helpful to people, but remember you'll call from them a reasoned faith response. By that I mean there's all sorts of evidence in this text that God [38:00] is faithful and dependable, but it still remains a faith commitment. So I find Isaiah to deal very strongly with God's people, their need for comfort, their need for a creator, their need to understand there's only one God. I think it deals with contemporary issues such as the openness of God or even helping us construct a solid theology of who the lord is, [38:30] but you have allowed me to ramble on. What sort of question or comments are you wanting to work through?

Audience: A problem with [inaudible][38:40]

The issue is, as the openness for God, people see it, yes. Here are some of the issues. Issue number one, in the order at which they come to my mind, not necessarily in the order of importance. But issue number one is, is it true [39:00] that if God knows, that means he causes? The traditional, depending on which Calvinist you talk to, see, this is... There isn't a one for one, but depending on which Calvinist you talk to,

some of them have said yes, that's exactly what it means. The fact that God knows means that God caused. Others have said no, [39:30] God has human beings be responsible, but the fact that he has elected some to salvation does not mean that their responsibility has been taken away, or that everything has been caused. It depends. So that's one. The traditional [phonetic] Western Arminian response has been "God knows everything, the beginning from the end, but he sees it from eternity." It's almost like God... They don't say this, but to me it's like God has eternity up here on a shelf, he knows it all [40:00] and it's all very clear to him, but the fact that he knows it does not mean he's causing it. That's been the human freedom. That God knew as the creator what would happen once this thing started. He knew it all, the end from the beginning, but he does not cause you simply because he knows it, any more than I could know what you're going to do and can't stop it, and be terrible but I would know where you're going.

[40:30] That's been the traditional answer. Now what is interesting, most of the openness of God people are more Arminian than Wesleyan. But oddly enough, they agree with the Calvinists who say "To know is to cause." It's an interesting hybrid theology. When you try to use useful categories to bring to bear, to understand where they're coming from, that's where it mixes. So they think if God causes it, you're not totally free. [41:00] Second question then, does prayer matter? Gerald Bray picks up on this when he says, you know, that's one other question. Does it make any difference at all? Does your prayer change anything, or are you only getting in touch with that which God wants to do anyway? Or more so what God will do anyway.

Now, I've wondered for years regarding this discussion. I have to confess that prayer baffles me. [41:30] It does not baffle me the way biology does, but it baffles me nonetheless. But when you go back to the biblical record and you look at the biblical prayers, I can honestly say that some of the notions I grew up with, having heard that, you know, if we'll pray, God will do something that God wouldn't do anyway. In my view that's a pretty thin thread in the scriptures. [42:00] Doesn't mean that it isn't important, but I can just say that most prayers are asking God to change. You know, praise and lament. It's either thanking God for who he is, glorifying God for who he is, putting your trust in him as a creator and sustainer, or it's saying "I know you're a creator and sustainer, but currently life stinks.

Change this, and I know you will change it the way you have changed it in the past." So again, it's back to faith. A lament is a faith statement that the God who loves me is the God who has brought me these circumstances, [42:30] and is the one who will bring me out of them. But it's fairly rare that... I mean for instance it doesn't mean we shouldn't pray for the lost, what I'm about to say, but a friend of mine called me once and he was preaching a series on prayer or evangelism, I can't remember, and he says "Can you think of a single example where anybody in the bible prayed for the lost?" I couldn't think of one. I still can't. Does that mean that we shouldn't pray for the lost? [43:00] No, but I'm just saying once you start looking at prayer, the first question I had to ask, "Is prayer what I thought it was?" I mean it's a fair question, but the openness of God people say "Does prayer really make any difference, or are you just connecting with..." an accord without limiting the importance of you connecting with God's will and things. So that's what they're asking. And they're also asking what about some other passages? And I think we'll deal with them in due time, [43:30] which it seems that God has changed his mind. Now we have to say there are only four or five of these, first of all. So an ongoing hermeneutical principle that the openness of God people being Wesleyan Arminians, most of them employ all the time on other doctrines, which is we take the problem passages, and lay them up against the preponderance of passages. Right? I mean, a Calvinist would argue that they do that every time [44:00] they come to the doctrine of election, or whatever. It's just a principle.

So I have to say, I think isn't even the phrase "And God changed his mind" is an interpretation of a very hard Hebrew word. Now I can talk about that later, but it by no means is straight forward translation, word-for-word. That there's a word for "God changed his mind." It's one Hebrew word, Naham, [44:30] from the rarest of the seven stems. And it's reflexive to boot, so whatever was going on was going on within God. We could just say, well, it could be changed because that goes on with this. Yes, but saying, on the passages where it says God repented, you know the old King James. He started learning a little bit of Hebrew, he figured the verb Shuv, which is the word used, you know, who knows, 700-800 times for repent.

That's got to be what it is! It's not. [45:00] We're back to our old friend Naham, the word for repent that's used for humans repenting is not there. But it would be a logical English bible reading mistake to make, you'd think. What else? So at some point in time you have to say, okay, they're asking some questions about some problem passages. And fourth issue they're raising is, is a pastoral one. Don't we have to comfort people [45:30] in their struggles, and does it comfort them to say, and here's the caricature, though I've heard it. "It was just God's will." So that... And you always start with your most tragic. You don't start with normal life, we start with the most tragic, and to me it was this little boy in Hartford City, Indiana.

9-10 years old, seemed to have beat leukemia at 10, and at 11 was killed in an accident with another kid playing with a gun. [46:00] Well of course it moved the community. It was... And so you say, well, so somebody just say, probably said to the people "Well you know, it's just God's will." What's amazing to some who use this as a negative example, it satisfies all sorts of people. "Well if it was God's will, I can live with it, because I know and trust God, but anything else would just be terrible." But they ask a pastoral question. But you have to ask yourself, is telling people that there was [46:30] nothing God could do, or that God wasn't able to do that at that time, is that a strong, comforting statement either? So we're already getting into the fifth issue, which is, is it as important to try to account for evil and suffering in the world? This is what they're trying to deal with. So in effect, they're trying to answer a mystery. They're trying to answer the issue of evil and suffering, and of prayer, which are two of the greatest mysteries the bible gives as to how the work [47:00] and why they work the way they do.

Audience: Is it that passages like this, and what we did in Job, some of the [inaudible][47:07]

I agree. Bray talks about the mystery side of it, and that's important. What I have to say is the more I read Job 38-41, it's where God comes, gives the all the answers God's going to give, in book of Job. Though it does not satisfy all sorts of commentators, it satisfies Job. [47:30] I found that fascinating. Satisfies the guy that was affected the most. Now what it seems to say is "If you take all that I have revealed about how I run the world, you would know enough to be able to trust me for the part you don't know about." That seems to be the decision we have before us. In Job, and here. Of course, in the Old Testament and in the new, the resurrection seems to make a great deal of difference too, [48:00] and the final judgment.

And the Old Testament says if you're worried about the wicked, let me promise you they are going to be judged. But then the question is asked in the Old Testament and the New Testament, how long? And then we get to the point of we don't like the timing of it. Even when we're willing to trust God, often, we don't like the [48:30] timing of it. We did not like the timing of our mother's death. I was old enough, but there were two teenage daughters in the home. We thought it would be good if she'd remained. We didn't like the timing. Now, were we silly enough to think there would never come a day when our mother would die? No, my daughter and I talked about this serious fact, that one of us, barring a freak accident, one of us is going to bury the other.

[49:00] That conversation needs to be had. Because I don't want my death, which is probably going to be fist, I don't want that to so floor her that she would see it as unnatural. It's not unnatural. The soul and its sins will die. I am on the way of deteriorating as we speak, and it's going to happen. And our family, we have three generations [49:30] of cancer now. The same cancer, about the same age, so we have some idea. If we beat that, we have a chance to live a very long time. That's the way our genetic code runs. One of us will bury the other, so let's not be hard about it, but the timing is what... It just... I know that I could bury my daughter, but the fact of that really is tough, tough, tough for me to handle, and any timing is unsatisfactory to me.

Now something people see a loved one suffer and struggle and suffer and struggle, [50:00] so they'll finally say something like a good friend to our family is recently did. The wife said "I'm ready to let him go." She began to sense that he struggled so hard for life, because she wanted him to. Oh, and he'd manage to live an extra 7-8 years, probably. I mean, how long can a guy live on dialysis and this and that and the other, and look 20 years older than he was and just say "I'm still here." But it usually takes something like that. We don't like the timing of it. [50:30] How long, oh lord, is a reasonable question. But it's not one that God is going to answer, usually. Why do I think this? Because God is the creator and the sustainer us all. And when I die, it could have some effect on others. See, this is God takes all this into account. I'm not given a timing, there are other things I'm not given, but it required [51:00] a faith statement that what I know about God is enough to sustain me. And there comes a time where you almost have to say, if we're in line with what Isaiah says here about faith, say okay, what if I found out that a straight Calvinist or a straight Arminian were right about God? I would be required to have faith in him, right? If you're a monotheist, what is your other option? There's one God. [51:30] You have to deal with this one God. And Job early on said "I don't like the sound of that, because right now it looks to me like this one God is judge, jury and executioner and he ain't always just."

But he said "I'm going to deal with this God. I'm going to struggle with my faith, with a way to deal effectively with this God. And he says "Even if he kills me, I'll believe in him." That's Job's faith. But to me, the openness of God people have brought up good issues. [52:00] We need to deal pastorally, and not glibly if we've been doing so with pain, and with people's suffering. We must deal seriously with what prayer does and doesn't do in our churches. We must do that. I don't think they have the right answer, but I do believe that that's a legitimate concern, and that we must deal with problem passages of the bible. [52:30] I think it's correct. And they've asked, if we say God doesn't change, what does that mean?

Because some language I've heard about God makes it sound like a great big rock in the field, that you can't move. And so if, in English, a phrase like "Never changes," does it mean what it used to mean? Then we need to find terms that do communicate the same truth to people. [53:00] Because if you say to the average person "You better say God never changes because he doesn't need to change." We're saying after class, if James is honest, do we want him to change? We don't, really. Do we? If George is kind, do we want George to change? Would we like that? No. Said "Oh, if it were Oggy." If Chuck has a good reputation. I talked to a freshman last night, [53:30] she said "Chuck is a nice guy." She forgot his name, but she described him. She said yes, he's a nice guy.

Do we want that to change? Of course not. So let's just say collectively, if somebody was a whole perfect personality, we wouldn't want them to change, but we would say we need to take into account what it means to be a whole, perfect personality first. Not have some view of God way out there, "He'll save you but he's a hardcore case." [54:00] And the psychologists are right, a lot of us get our view of God out of the first authority figure we can remember. Then yeah, you'd want that to change. And when you say "Never

change," it makes it sound like unaffected. Never grieves, never happy, never praise. Sure, you'd want that to change.

That's not an effective way to describe God to people. You describe God as one who doesn't need to change, because inherently perfect, [54:30] inherently compassionate, inherently tough enough, inherently whatever. And you say, look, you wouldn't want that God to change, would you? What do you want him to change into? If he's perfectly good, all they can change into is worse. We don't even want a bad person to get worse. So I'm just saying we... I think Bray's approach to saying if, basically if you know the personal God, will that be a satisfactory God, [55:00] and then a God that you don't want to change? The answer I think would be yes. But remember, pastorally, if someone has had foisted upon them or they've on their own got a negative view of God, then you need to help them understand the truth about God before you tell them he doesn't change. They think God's mean and you tell them he doesn't change, that's not a great comfort. We just had fathers' day, surely for a long time [55:30] we realized that simply using the word father, unexplained, is not a comforting word thereby in a room.

I want to encourage, before you preach one of these idolatrous mother's day sermons too, remember the same is true for some people there. Mine started a mother's day sermon a few years ago with the notion that mothers are sinners. Like everybody else. Oh yes, he, you know, he got flayed. People got so mad. On a mother's day, how in the world can you say [56:00] that mothers are sinners in need of grace, and the best mothers are ones who are redeemed by God, and who are serious disciples are God, and that mothers are not great by definition. They're not ontologically wonderful, necessarily.

If you knew his mother, you'd know why he knew this wasn't true. And you would also know why it was amazing that he even believed that they were redeemable. That's the kind of mother he had. So since we know that such things are true, let us [56:30] start and give a biblical definition of God. I think we had at least had some good parts of that in Isaiah 40 to 48, and you know, we're beginning to see that you can do a whole class on God as a creator, at least if I just keep talking. But we'll try to conclude that and go on to the law.

Chapter 6

The Purpose of the Law

It is worthwhile for you to continue on with this creation theme. For instance, in Amos, where there are three passages that make overt reference to God being the creator: 4:13, 5, 8 and 9; and 9, 5 and 6. The emphasis in these [00:46] passages is on the fact that Israel and the nations have sinned against the creator and the creator is also the judge.

So that we would say as a whole biblical theology, the very one who looked at creation and said it is good. This very one who said to Adam and Eve, basically, you have sinned. Is the same one who will look [01:16] Israel and the surrounding nations and declare them guilty and judge them. So he says, you need to expect a day of the Lord, which is the prophetic term for the Day of Judgment. And we want you to know that this Day of Judgment will be brought to you by the very one who made everything.

So the logic seems to go something like this: The same God who made [01:46] the heavens and the earth, brought it into being, can take it out. It's like the old Bill Cosby joke, "I brought you into this world," he said to his son, "I can take you out." But it is a serious warning, these texts punctuate God's wrath against sin.

They also punctuate God's use of nature to warn. For instance, God says, [02:16] "Look, I brought you famine, yet you did not return to me. I brought you cleanliness of teeth," in other words you didn't have enough to eat, "and yet you did not turn to me. I let it rain some places but not others, yet you did not return to me." In other words, I had nature at my disposal and used it to warn you, and yet you did not return to me.

So it punctuates his use of nature in 4:13, and then in 5, 8, and 9 it punctuates God's wrath [02:46] about injustice. In a book in which God's is the poor have been sold for a pair of sandals, sold into slavery for a debt that small. You have trampled ahead of the poor as if it were nothing but dust. You are sinning against the creator. And in 9, 5 through 6 it punctuates the end of God's patience with sin. [03:17] Though his use of nature to warn them, his wrath and injustice, and finally to announce that his patience is over, these three creation text warn people that you should not sin against the creator by sinning against the creatures, [03:46] the creatures being other human beings.

Now in one, in some text it, perhaps, we could stop and analysis, if you wish. They are a whole set of Psalms that are rightfully called "creation Psalms" in which God's role as creator is primary to why [04:16] you should praise him as in Psalms 8. You remember Psalms 8? "Oh, Lord how majestic is your name?" And the Psalms is marvels, saying what is man that you are mindful of him. That you've made human beings just a little lower than the angels and giving them stewardship of the earth, remember Genesis 1:26 to 31? The marveling and the praise of God is [04:46] based on the fact of the living out of Genesis 1:26 and following. But it is God is creator.

In Psalms 90, the people are praying that their difficult days would end, and begins with "before the earth was made or the mountains were brought forth, from everlasting to everlasting, you are God." But it prays. Remember that we are but dust. [05:16] And so a prayer for renewal and forgiveness is based on

creation theology. And then 93 to 99 are, um, famous passages, particularly prominent, in my experience, in the Book of Common Prayer.

I'm not sure how much of it is made, say in Kenyan celebration, but let us bow down and worship the Lord as our maker. Let's bow down and worship. We are the sheep of his [05:46] pasture, phrases like that. That he is our maker and not we, ourselves, phrases like that that are probably also in, in other call to worship, sort of, phraseology and others.

But, again, we worship the one who has made us; we do not worship what we have made ourselves. And this is a useful distinction in calling people to worship. Because so often whether we like it or not [06:16] we are in worship calling ourselves away from that which we are too prone to worship, whether it's our money or Job or family or whatever and reminded that the Lord is our maker. We are the sheep of his pasture. He has made us, and not we, ourselves.

And also along the way in this text says there is no other God. It says the Gods of the nations are but idols. So some of the same themes from Isaiah brought [06:46] from a setting of comfort to a setting of worship. So that if Joseph 1 and 2 deals with God as the personal God and Isaiah 40 to 48 deals with God and the people of God, deals with creation and God. Then here in Amos it's creation and the coming judgment. And [07:16] in Psalms it's creation and God's majesty.

So we have creation and God's person in Genesis 1 and 2. We have creation in God's people in Isaiah 40 to 48. We have creation to God's judgment in Amos. We have creation in God's majesty, his uniqueness in the Psalms, as far as I'm concerned, the message of the Psalms is come worship the God who [07:46] merits worship. And worship of this God in the Psalms does not just consist of praise, but also of lament. And I know many churches that have a praise band. I know none that have a lament band. I know some who have a lamentable praise band.

[08:08][audience laughs]

[08:10] But none, of course, I say that as somebody who, you know, that's about like me being up. That's a terrible insult. But laments are as legitimate a worship expression in the bible as praise, and as needful, probably. And, certainly, there are traditions in which lament, either from the bible or written as spiritual, they're absolutely essential.

But, [08:40] this is the God who has created, and it's interesting in Psalms 104 to 106 then, these three Psalms go together. It starts with God creating the heavens and the earth, and it ends with God judging Israel. So it is really the whole sweep from Genesis through 2nd Kings in Psalmic fashion here. So you really need to read those three together. Begins with creation, ends with [09:10] judgment, and a call to the Lord to bring them out of judgment and Psalms 107, does what? Praises the Lord for bringing them out of judgment. The Psalms are much more connected whole than maybe been given credit for.

So here you have the creator that's praised for making Genesis 126 the rule. Here you have a God who is from everlasting to everlasting that you pray for his compassion. Here you have the God who is the maker, our shepherd. We are the sheep [09:40] of his pasture. He is our king. He has made us and not we, ourselves. Let us worship him. And here is the God of history from the creation on, worthy of our praise. These Psalms give substance and specifics to praise.

There is something that lifts spirits to say Lord we have [10:10] come to praise you, multiple times, if the music's good. However, there's no reason why a praise or lament chorus cannot have the specific reasons

why we praise that are already in the Psalms. Just like the hymn traditions run in cycles and grow and develop and move forward and fall back.

I expect that's what's going to happen with the praise choruses. [10:40] Some of them will be good; some of them will be poor. Some of them will be substantive; some of them will be not. Some of them will be well-written; some of them will be not. So of them will be well-played; some of them will be not. So the jury will probably still be out. I try, when I hear praise music, to not like it or dislike it simply on my taste for music, which runs somewhat more shallow than that coffee cup.

[11:11][audience laughs]

[11:13] But on the substance of what we are saying about God, and that should also be the judgment hint. Every now and then, I just love this whole hymn; but it either has zero theology or I love this, this whole song, we have a story to tell to the nations. It's a real tub thumper. You know, the darkness shall turn to dawning and dawning to the noonday, you know, and then you realize that's post-millennialism. [11:43] Now, I don't believe that things are going fall out that way, [laughs] but I just love to sing it.

So every, so it's, what you could say about a praise chorus is also true of a whole lot of hymns. But there are hymns and others that have substance, and I happen to think are going to be a lot of songs written in the future. There always have been, and there always, there will be, because it's not hard to publish a song anymore. You could, if you have an overhead projector, you can do it. And so what I would encourage people is to have substantive [12:13] music.

And also I don't know, I know in the Anglican tradition, it is typical for Psalms to be read or done responsibly; is that true in, ok, in Kenya? A Methodist worship, or you, do you, you do the Psalms? Presbyterian? Anybody's? But do they also just read a Psalms and recite at, or... That's not necessarily part of Presbyterian worship, [12:43] is it, to read a Psalms?

Unknown: [12:44] [audience member speaks - inaudible]

[12:46] Right. PCUSA does, may or may not, it depends. I mean, they will have set readings, but does your...

Unknown: [12:52] [audience member speaks - inaudible]

[12:54] All right. Vineyard Baptist, Southern Baptist, American Baptist, National Baptist, any other Baptists?

[13:01][audience laughs]

See, it was one of the big shocks to my Anglican friends when, or Episcopal friends, when they found out, they said, so where do Baptist read the Psalms in their service? Well, quietly, if the sermon goes bad. [Laughs]

[13:15] [audience laughs]

[13:17] That's when you read the Psalms. But, it's just not a part, and, and so it's, you know, God bless my father. He, he was reading all the way through my Old Testament of theology, and he said, after he got out of the first chapter he enjoyed it more, but when he got to the section on Psalms, he said, "I had to do admit, I don't know enough about the Psalms to assess the chapter.

We have a few favorites that we know from funerals and that, he's Baptist, and that sort of thing, but I don't know anything about the Psalms [13:47] per se. And didn't really have very many of them that he

said, you know, it's a great big book that I could, I'm only fairly familiar with just, just a few of them. Which would not be true of virtually the rest of the bible for him.

So there's another sense in which we might want to recapture just the, which Psalms we would read and actually read them, if it's not a part of your worship. But in your preaching and your theology, remember, [14:17] if you want to put it this way, the negative parts of the creation theology, that is the judgment side, and positive and the negative are in the Psalms for calling God's judgment a negative. Couple of other passages Job 38:1 to 42:6, God, as the creator, as I've already said today so I won't spend a lot of time with that.

God's answer to Job, the first time you read it seems surpassingly strange, doesn't it? [14:47] Job's been asking all these questions, suffering. So God comes along and says, "Well, Job, do you know how to take care of a hippo? You know how to feed the sparrows? Do you know how to call the dawn every day? Do you know how to make the sun come and go? Do you know, he was saying, what, this doesn't seem to be a pack of relevant question. But it keeps satisfying Job.

And what seems to satisfy Job is two things: One, that God did respond. And second, [15:17] that when he saw that the Lord didn't know what was going on in creation, he seems to come to the conclusion that he spoke too much, that is, he spoke as if God didn't know what he was doing in his life.

So Job takes God's evidence that he does know what's going on in creation and that he is an able ruler, to accept that God knows what's going on in his life. [15:47] Again, it's an argument from the greater to the lessor. But, again, Job seems, this emphasis on the creation, seems to indicate that God is a capable, decent creator.

And then in Proverbs, there's one particular passage, it's pretty fascinating, really, 8:22 to 31. [16:17] In the first nine chapters of Proverbs, there are personifications of wisdom. On the one hand, wisdom, foolishness is a woman crying out, "come in here and I'll ruin your life." Wisdom is a woman calling out "come in here and I'll make your life good." See how there personifications of wisdom.

And in Proverbs 8:22 to 31, verse 22 says that God either possessed, acquired, or created, depending on how you translate the Hebrew word kanah, [16:47] at the very beginning it reads like the first thing God made was wisdom and then he used wisdom to make everything else. And by versus 30 and 31, wisdom is like a child whose always beside God, frolicking and playing through creation, just having a ball with creation.

Now, what I think this text indicates is that, that God is wise as the [17:17] creator and as the creator he uses wisdom throughout. That explains the intelligence in the design etc., of creation. It also indicates that God has joy in creation. He actually enjoys what he has made. He doesn't just frown over it all the time. Hum, three more dead squirrels. But he actually enjoys the whole of it.

[17:47] And it is this passage that some early church writers, perhaps, but I don't think so, the Apostle Paul in a couple of passages to say that Christ is the wisdom of God and that this passage shows that Christ was with God from creation. The problem with arguing that from this text is verse 22. If God acquired or created what is with him there, that's hardly a typical [18:17] Trinitarian statement. God, the father, the first thing he did was create God, the son, and then he went on. I think it's much likely to give a biblical theology than it is wisdom itself. It's a personification of wisdom itself. He used wisdom. Wisdom was always with him. Wisdom was his constant companion. Everything was made, was made with wisdom. We have a wise creator. I believe that's probably biblically better answer.

But, again, Proverbs is using creation theology to say the Lord is the source of [18:47] wisdom. If you want wisdom, the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and God reveals wisdom to you. You must come to him for it. And, as you know, the book of James has a lot of wisdom characteristics. At one point, says if anyone is lacking wisdom, ask the Lord. Well, that would be very much in line with Proverbs and Job.

Now these are texts, again, that develop creation theology in specific ways for [19:17] specific audiences. I don't know, I mean, Amos, his audience is 760 to 750 BC trying to bring a people who are worshipping money and sex and power back to the creator. Psalms, Job, and Proverbs, however, it's a whole lot harder to pin those audiences down exactly. They're good efforts made by good scholars, but it's difficult, as you know, and they admit from the very beginning.

[19:47] But still the truths are universal to, to who we are, as far as our worship, our comfort, and our need for wisdom. The creator has wisdom. The creator can be trusted. The creator merits worship, and it's for specific reasons. Someday, I'm going to tie all this together. I'm writing an article on creation in [20:17] Old Testament theology, and I'd hope that I could have the time and the pages to write in biblical theology so that you could deal with easy text like John 1:1 and following, and Colossians 1:15 to 20. Both of these are text about Jesus being the creator. In biblical theology, you have one simple task, that is if you're going to worship Jesus, [20:47] he must be the creator, right? But he has to be God. These text tie him to the creation and it's quite complicated, but I think worthwhile.

And then one last one in the New Testament, Revelation 21, which is absolutely parallel to a text that I didn't have time to go over, and that's Isaiah 65:17 to 25. In Isaiah 65 it says God's creating a new heaven and a new earth. [21:17] Revelation 21 picks up on that imagery. Isaiah says There're not going to be old people there. There's not going to be sickness there. Revelation said there will be no more sorrow, suffering or death.

But in Isaiah 65 and at the, in Revelation 21, at the end of the New Testament can an, the issue is a new creation. So that William Dumbrell writes a biblical theology, a short readable one [21:47] entitled "From Creation to New Creation." That's biblical theology. In Genesis 1, Revelation 21, from creation to new creation. But Isaiah's already said there's going to be a new creation. Revelation re-preaches that truth for people who need to hear it, who are under pressure in a similar way that the people of Isaiah's day were.

So remember that there are some specific [22:17] important New Testament passages and that they're connecting back. They don't always simply cite an Old Testament passage, but quite often they do as in the case of Revelation 21 and Isaiah 65. So the issue of God being the creator does not stop at the Old Testament writings. The New Testament writers absolutely aware that if [22:47] Jesus is to be worships as God, it is vital that Jesus be connected to creation. Now, of course, this is divine revelation, divine, by divine inspiration it is done, but I'd say even if you were just going to create a religion, you'd want, that was going to worship Jesus, you would need to connect him to creation.

The New Testament writers, John and Paul, and then again the Apostle John again, in the gospels, Paulines and general [23:17] epistles, which I put Revelation really, so in other words, throughout the New Testament Canaan creation theology remains relevant. So you would have a good bit to do if you just said we're going to talk about creation and God's incarnation and John and creation in Christ's work in Colossians and creation in the future in Revelation; you'd have enough to do. The reason you don't want my notes, Valerie, is so you could flush out all this in an effective way for the people you know.

But when you get right down to it, I think God, the creator, has been a neglected topic at least in the circles I have moved in. You may have run in some circles where that was all they talked about, or they talked about it regularly, or they talked about it in certain ways. But the full theological [24:17] implication of God the creator, I think is one that could stand emphasis for reasons of comfort, wisdom, discipleship, etc., some of the things we've talked about.

I will go on to law. After, are there are any questions or comments? As I understand the question, Genesis 1:26 to 31, do you mean at that point or in the rest of the scriptures, [24:47] how does he evaluate their success?

Unknown: [24:49] [audience member speaks - inaudible]

[24:55] I think that's a great bridge question into the next topic, actually. If we had nothing but Genesis the 50 chapters, we would certainly, in my view, be left with no idea of how God did that, other than that he has standards of his own, right? He must have some standard, but we wouldn't know what is.

But, to my way of thinking the standards God gives in Exodus 19 [24:22] and following, which is our next subject, helps us answer that question. And it's an important question, the way you put it, because if we're not careful and we don't follow along canonically, we could think that Exodus 19 and following has only to do with Israel at a specific point in time. But in my view, since Exodus follows Genesis, it is more than what Israel should do; it is the way God judges [25:52] how successful they are. Because much of the laws, many of the laws that are in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy relate to the issue of stewardship of the land and of relationship, etc. I think it's important to see that.

So, for instance, there are lots of laws connected to how you treat the land. How you care for animals. How you set up social structures. [26:22] How a community is to be carried out. And so I think we'll see some of those things. I hope. But I think it's right to say that the law is not just a response of Israel of Sinai, but it is they're working out of Genesis 1:26 to 31, and ours.

Other questions, formative or pursuing something in the future pulling us back? Well, what about the law, then. If you're wondering, [26:52] well, what happened to Abraham and all that, we will pick that up with the Messianic thrust. We will pick up the Abraham thread later. But the law that is given at Sinai is and, and really you have to say also restated, reinterpreted in Deuteronomy when they're not at Sinai at all but in the plains of Moab. If it is nothing else, it's a covenant, right?

[27:22] God made covenants earlier than Sinai, as you know, the first time the word is actually used is in God's covenant with Noah, which is a covenant with the human race, that the whole world will not be destroyed by water again. He makes a covenant with Abraham, that all nation's will be blessed through Abraham, that covenant is sealed through the ritual of circumcision. [27:52] So covenant is not an absolutely new term when you get to Exodus. So that's one thing.

Another thing we need to note is that currently there is no evidence that any other nation in the ancient new near eastern world claim to make a covenant with God, or with their God. We have no evidence that [28:22] anybody else conceived of their relationship to their deity in this manner.

It's a unique thing. Partly because, I think, God entering into a covenant with human beings would give human beings way too much standing in the eyes of deity, in the ancient near Eastern mind set. Because if you enter into a covenant with somebody, that you obligate yourself [28:52] to them in some way, right? At least the way the covenants unfold in the Old Testament.

So God is willing to make firm commitments to Noah, Abraham, and now, to Israel as a whole with Moses as the covenant mediator.

What is a covenant? It is a binding agreement between parties [29:22] that has stipulations that keeping of which would result in blessing. It's a binding agreement between parties in which there are stipulations, the keeping of which would result in blessing. And we could also say, the not keeping of which results in punishment. Covenant is almost made between a greater and a lessor, that is, if it's a national covenant, a greater nation and a [29:52] smaller one. And in the case of God and Israel, of course, the God whose made all the nations is making a covenant with only one nation, a greater and a lesser.

In this covenant God commits himself to blessing Israel as they're faithful to him. He promises judgment if they are not covenant keepers. [30:22] The expectation in this covenant, as it unfolds, is that it will be broken. How do we know this? Because there are, is a sacrificial system, right? We just want to be simplistic. You have a covenant, and what's in the covenant?

Well, laws, commands, you should have no other gods before me, you shall not covet, etc. Case laws, if you do such-in-such or such-in-such happens, [30:52] then do this. So, you know, some, pick out your favorite. If somebody digs a pit, doesn't cover it up and somebody's animal falls in it, this is the payments to be made. Lot of these are agricultural. It makes good sense to me, at least coming out of my past.

So you have commands; you have case laws. Now, I heard it said, you know, that the only way Israel could ever be right with God was be to keep those commands and case laws straight out. [31:22] Perfection was the expectation. The fact that there is a, simple in the ancient world, but seemingly complicated to us in ours, sacrificial system, indicates that that's not the case. The fact that there is a built in sacrificial system indicates that the expectation that the commandments will be broken and forgiveness will need to be offered and the relationship restored.

[31:52] So if you will, there's a fallback plan in this covenant that there is the expectation of sin and the constant offer of forgiveness. So we should also keep in mind where this law comes; it comes after Genesis, after God has said, as we discussed in class the other day or at least mentioned in passing, we'll get back to it, that Abraham believed God [32:22] and it was counted to him as righteousness. That before there was ever a law the text is clear that it is faith that is required for relationship with God.

So we have a list of questions that we should ask, what's this law for, then? It is to show how one may fulfill Genesis 1:26 to 31. [32:52] What is the law for? And then we have to ask, as was also asked, in what way does the law remain relevant? In our, back to our survey of opinions at the beginning, the liberal rationalist would say there are some universal principles, moral principles, still abiding.

Unknown: [33:19] [audience member speaks - inaudible]

[33:22] Yes, what is it for? Genesis 1:26 to 31. Samuel had asked the question, well, how would we know whether we were a success or a failure in being the stewards and ruling over the earth? One answer is it the law gives us standards, whereby, we would know that. That would be one response. There would be others that we'll come up with. So we should say, then, what is it doing and how is it relevant today?

[33:52] Some of the people surveyed earlier said, well, they're universal principle. Others would have said, right, in our whole survey, there's Messianic theology in it remains relevant because there's Messianic theology in it, particularly through the sacrifice in Christ being everything in the Old Testament, or in the New Testament, from the Passover lamb.

You read somebody, like Bauer and Gabler, they're going to say, [34:22] universal principles; that's why the law's important. If you read Hengstenberg, von Hofmann, they'll say because of Messianic theology within salvation history. Those or possible answers. And if you look for other possible answers as to what the relevancy is, West Minister Confession of Faith, gives an answer. Thirty-nine articles of the Anglican Communion, [34:52] offer an answer.

Very similar, by the way, in many respects to the West Minister Confession, which is that it's not the ceremonies of the law that are followed, but the moral truths, the moral laws that are there. That hardly solves all your problems, but at least a start. I don't remember what the Baptist faith in message says about this. But I think the average, probably, the average Baptist pastor [35:22] at least would say, well, you know, the Old Testament would, laws would tell us that we are sinners and how we have sinned and would give us moral standards similar to what the Anglicans and Presbyterians would say were necessary for Godly living.

I mean, maybe I'm way off on that. There have been a variety of options offered. Now, I've stated this positively so far. Some people would give the answer, [35:52] it is absolutely set aside, and if you say, well, what about, you know, gee, even Gabler and Bauer liked the 10 Commandments. [laughs] They would say 'that's already stated in the New Testament. So you don't need the duplication. It's been set aside. Christ in the fulfillment of it all. And he's restated his own laws, so you wouldn't need that.

Unknown: [36:18][audience member speaks - inaudible]

[36:20] There are those that would argue that, yes. And the positive ones would say because Christ restates what we need to know. The negatives ones would be because it really is not near back to Hardock [sounds like] [36:33] now, it's not Christian scripture. It's, there's a different spirit to the Old Testament than to the New.

Whereas, one you have a spirit of wrath and judgment; the New Testament you have a spirit of love in Christ. Now what's interesting to me is [36:50] I could disagree with someone that doesn't have a high view of scripture at that point, and we could discuss it. What's interesting to me is that sometimes people with a high view of scripture that basically says what I just said. The same people who would say, well, you know, the Old Testament God, I mean, they always start, you always know you're in trouble when they start with a, a phrase, well, you know, the Old Testament God.

Then the New Testament God and then these same people say, yeah, it's true, [37:20] God's the same yesterday, today and forever. So you have work to do to try to bring some order to the mind of the person. So the question of relevance there is even a more severe one for folks who would say, well, you know it's set aside and Christ has explained all we need to know.

Now then this leads to some interesting problems that, I think, [37:50] a bible believing Christian hadn't anticipated when they made that statement about the Old Testament being set aside. It is a hermeneutical problem and a discussion in the denomination where I was a teacher in one of their denominational colleges the last two years: The Episcopal Church, United States of America; and in the church where I was attending and teaching Sunday school, the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., [38:20] last two years.

The issue of homosexual lifestyle, and or ordination, this has been an issue in both churches. I've now heard both of those, the institution I taught and did not, and the church I attend, did not condone homosexual lifestyle or ordination while seeking love and work with people. But in different places, I heard the same hermeneutical [38:50] move made; here's how it goes. In a sermon, topic of the sermon,

"homosexuality." And a Peace U.S.A. pastor heard preach the following sermon. I suppose a Methodist could do the same. Vineyard, probably not. At Southern Baptist, maybe, but it would be tough.

But here's how it went. The title of the sermon was "God Doesn't Care." I find it to be an interesting topic. I wasn't sure, given our discussion, what it is God doesn't care about. But anyway, and if I were gay I would [39:20] want God to care that I was. But anyway, here's how the sermon went, most of the passages about homosexuality are in the Old Testament, particularly in Leviticus. We know that's been set aside. In the New Testament, that didn't take long, did it?

[39:42][audience laughs]

[39:43] But that was point one. Point two, in the New Testament it may or may not be that Paul is talking say in Romans 1 about actual homosexual activity. Even if he is, he's talking about a type of homosexual activity that good homosexual people would not approve of. In other words, there are those who would say, yes, I think a gay marriage ought to be monogamous. [40:13] I think it ought to be committed. I think it ought to be these things. It should not be the kind of activity Paul's talking about in Roman 1. It doesn't say anything at all about the subject at hand. And then the clincher is, so, OK, we're not sure what's going on there.

Third point, Jesus says nothing about it. Therefore, the title God Doesn't Care. So this left the pastor with certain conclusion. But you see, a couple of friends of mine, [40:43] including one who was sitting there, it was, well, it was one of those interesting times where my daughter and another guy from the community's daughter were guests in this church to do music, so we're there.

And, see, at least I had heard this argumentation before. The plumber's daughter, I mean, my plumber friend who was, who came as a guest of the church to hear his daughter play music and heard this sermon. His eyes were getting bigger for a while, then they'd narrow for a while, [41:33] and then his arm developed this twitch, you know, because. . .

[41:15] [audience laughs]

[41:18] ...he was fit to be tied. But you see what was very interesting is, he had the same permanuity [sounds like] at least in the first part as the preacher did. He was going to work a lot harder on Romans than that person was doing at the pulpit. But, you see, he believed those passages had been set aside. See you really couldn't use them in an argument. Leviticus doesn't count, and some of these others.

So that's all been set aside, and Jesus has told us [41:48] all we need to know about the law. If that's your hermanuity, Jesus doesn't say anything specifically, does he? About homosexuality? He's all the time talking about things that matter more, like money and your relationship. So you begin to see a whole bible theology does matter in a variety of issues.

Here is the problem, if then you're going to stand on the morals of the Old Testament, you're going to ask which ones, how and what's my [42:18] Hermeneuity, right? I would start by saying let's talk about the God who gives a law and let's see what it's about. Now you started by reading Exodus, if I just look at the class syllabus, I'm going to say that you have Exodus. In Jerimiah 7, you find Jerimiah preaching the 10 Commandments to his people, don't ya? There are other things he's saying, but he's saying will you kill and steal and do these things and come to this house like it's some sanctuary [42:48] for robbers and thugs and thieves.

A really poplar sermon, he preaches the same one in chapter 26, in the overrated killing [sounds like] [42:58], but he's preaching the 10 Commandments, really, in this situation. We already talked yesterday a

bit about Psalms 19 and 119 where the law is held up as Godly and pure. We are already talked about Matthew 5:17 to 20, and what Jesus says "not a dot or a tiddle going to pathways to all be fulfilled. [43:18] Roman's 7, Paul talks about the law being good.

In a passage I think bears a lot more examination, 1st Timothy 1:8. Paul says there are a lot of crazy teachers out there wanting to be teachers of the law. You know, he says they're disputed about laws and genealogies and things. And he says we know that the law is good [43:48] if used lawfully and it's for the lists, 'give us advice' list.

So Paul says the law remains relevant, at least to identify and inhibit sin, doesn't he? So the biblical record is that the law remains relevant in the profits, the writings, the gospels, the Pauline Epistles [44:18] and it's hard to read James without thinking, he thinks the laws somehow relevant. By the time James is through with me, usually I'm ready for a break.

[44:30] [audience laughs]

[44:31] I either know I'm in rebellion, or I'm ready to get right with God, usually. So we see that it remains relevant when the issue is how old is it. Let's start with Exodus and make some principle decision. In Exodus 19:5 and 6 as a prelude to the law, God gives us a first principle. The purpose of the law is to create a wholly people [45:01] and a kingdom of priests.

Now the law is not the only way God's going to do that. We know that from prior text, but Exodus 19:5 and 6, now, then, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then you'll be my own possession among all the people for the earth is mine. We know that 'cuz he's a creator. And you shall be to me a kingdom of priests in a wholly nation.

My judgment is [45:31] if you're going to have a kingdom of priests you have to ask a simple question: Who are they ministering to? Well, certainly, somewhat to one another, but the indication seems to be to the world. All the earth is mine. A kingdom of priests would then be a nation of God's own possession that would help fulfill God's promise to Abraham that all nations would be blessed through him.

And throughout the [46:01] Old Testament you find Israelites ministering to non-Israelites. It's a muted mission, but it's a mission nonetheless. A king or priest said, "What's the purpose of the law?" One of the purposes of the law is to create a kingdom of priests, a wholly nation. And is it 1 Peter 2:5 where that's repeated? I'm depending on a faulty memory, and the help of a source reference, Peter preaching to, [46:31] in the general epistles, he says, "You are coming to him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men but as choice and precious in the site of God. You also as living stones are being built up at the spiritual house for a wholly priesthood. To offer up spiritual sacrifices accepted to God through Christ."

Verse 9, “but you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a wholly nation of people for God's own possession.” [47:01] So what is God trying to do with the law? Create a kingdom of priests, a wholly nation, a ministering body. Peter says that's what God's trying to do with the church. We're eventually going to see that, basically, well, we already see it, if we were a wholly nation, whollyness means in the Old Testament, as you know, set apart, but it also depicts a moral quality. Never forget it. It means we are set apart for a different purpose, but it also depicts a [47:31] moral quality.

And in the, by the way, the New Testament, what does that word, the 'Saints' literally mean? The whole Hagios, the wholly ones. So the purpose for the law remains the same. And, see, [48:01] I would argue keeping the law is never given as a means of salvation in either testament. It is given as a document to

people who are supposed to already be in covenant faith-based relationship with God. It's a discipleship document, [48:31] not a salvation document.

In other words, it's not a charter of how you become a believer. It's a charter for how believers act. The apostle Paul does not teach, nor does Jesus teach that you are saved by keeping the law, because they would have said the bible doesn't teach that. It's a fundamental, our whole attitude toward the law's going to change [49:01] if we understand that its purpose at the beginning is a discipleship documented to help us walk with God. Not as a salvation document.

Unknown: [49:11] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[49:15] Well, I think it goes perfectly for the following reason: First, Romans 1 precedes Romans 2. How does Romans 1 say "we come in a relationship with God? The just shall live by faith." But Romans 2, I think he's about, and you'd have to read the literature on this, and there excellent commentaries, whether you're talking about James Dunn and the Word Biblical Commentary or Doug Moo, got to get my colleague Moo, out there, I mean, the international commentary of the New Testament. [49:45] Still going to argue that the reason the people that talks about them keeping the law in Romans 2, cuz they already have a faith-based relationship from Romans 1. That would be my answer to it.

So that if we just picked up Romans 2 and we don't take Romans 1 into account, with James Dunn's has convinced me that that's often what happens to people and that it's, it's a mistake. I made in the past. I'd just pick up and ask a question about the law in [50:15] Romans 2 and forget that Paul's already given the basis in Romans 1. And that I think Paul teaches, even in Romans, well, there is an interesting dispute going on these days; James certainly teaches it. That you will work because you have faith. You will keep the law because you have faith.

See, I happen to believe that Christians keep the law because they're saved by grace, by faith, [50:45] and God changes you into a new creation. Read Johns, if we don't believe that when you are born again, you are a new creature, and that God enables you then to keep the law. He doesn't mean perfect, but keeping the law is not a phrase that means sinless obedience in the bible. A covenant keeper, a law keeper, would be one, who [51:15] had to appropriate sacrifices. That means they're sinners, right?

So if you don't believe that, that could be a problem text. But, boy, read 1 John; you got worse problems there. You don't practice sin if you're a Christian. What it says, you're not a slave to sin. You don't practice it. A Christian's not in the habit of making sin the way you do business. How can that [51:45] be so? God has changed you.

But Romans 1:16 through 17, I think is the charter for everything else in Paul so, and he's admonishing people who say, well, I could be saved by keeping the law. What he says in Romans 2 I think to Jewish believers is, we got people who never heard of the 10 Commandments who are as moral as you are. You either keep the law by first being saved by faith, or frankly it's, [52:15] there's no qualitative difference between you and a whole bunch of other people who have never heard of Moses.

So it must be faith when leading to, or, or really you don't have anything. That, that would be my response. I don't know how accurate it is.

Unknown: [52:28] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[52:33] PNP. [sounds like][52:34] It's imputed back to them, yeah.

Unknown: [52:35] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[52:36] Yeah, see that's, an ongoing discussion, it is ongoing, it seems new amongst evangelicals right now, but it isn't new. It's as old as how Paul and James express it, or, like, forget Paul now, let's stick with James. He's got people who were saying, works have nothing to do with Christianity. So he's, he's dialoguing with that.

[53:06] And when you're saved, what exactly happens to you? Are you changed? Or is there a moment at which it's sheer Christ imputation? Now, it's an ongoing and complicated discussion, but my opinion is, that as long as we understand there is no merit, no saving merit in any work we do, that's where the discussion ought to be.

[53:36] Right now we're having an ongoing discussion, and it's included amongst some folks who do point back to what you just said, that's it's, it's all on Christ at that point. That's not the point of disagreement. Right now people are disagreeing with how the inevitable keeping of God's standards occurs.

See, here's how I put it, I have friends who are saying right now, look, [54:06] God judges you, read 1 John, read other passages. God will judge you by whether you practice sin or not. Therefore, that when you are saved, God empowers you to keep the law. But that don't have anything to do with your salvation. The fact that God saves you and then empowers you do keep the law, the part of you keeping the law has nothing to do with your salvation. That has no merit. You weren't able to do it. God did it in you. So that would be one side.

But there are people [54:36] who are saying if you say that someone who is born again will indeed, even by the power of Christ, keep the law; you're adding works. My argument would be not unless you put merit on them. There's no merit to them. Saving merit, Christ, Christ made it so that you would be able to do it, changed your nature, made you a new creation, put the wholly spirit within you, [55:06] so I'm not sure what merit I've got that I walk in the good works of God prepared beforehand for me to do if I use Ephesians 2 imagery.

The other danger, though, is, see, again it's one of these things where you happen to decide how we're going to deal with the danger. So some people say yeah, that's all fine and good, but you're in danger of people thinking their works have something to do with their salvation. What's the other danger? If you say works have not-, there will not necessarily be any [55:36] works following Salvation, what's the other danger?

Unknown: [55:39] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[55:43] That's right. Then you get questions like I used to hear, you know, when I was a kid the Methodist and Baptist were often doing battle over security, the believer, perseverance, whatever you want to call it, so you would hear preachers go to this extreme, why you could be saved tonight and truly saved and trust in Jesus and then from this moment forward, live like [laughs] the devil almost. And you would still be saved. Yeah, [56:13] that's dangerous too.

So in my view, the issue is not so much imputation, but it's the reformers, whether they were the radical reformation who said, look, if you're not radically saved, then you're living radically for Jesus, you're not saved. Go back, again. There's a battle which reformer you want to talk about.

Or Luther who had sa-, misunderstood the law for so long, [56:43] I don't know any way to put it, that he thought that the law, you had to keep, so if you'd go overboard on grace, I think he did. I don't know if

that's possible, but, I know, it's, or the Methodist, Wesley was fairly concerned with personal whollyness, was he not? Or Calvin or whoever else.

What they all agreed on was, whatever works you do have [57:13] no saving merit. God gets all the glory all the credit. See that's where I think the discussion ought to be. But, I, you know, I do know that this debate is going on.

And then there are some days I am saying without giving up I would say well, I want to know how it is tell me how it is that you believe that the law, 'cuz that's what Peters talking about, what else can he be talking about, it is Peter and [57:43] James. And Paul has a very strong ethical concern.

Explain to me how it is that the law helps us be a wholly people; that's all I'm concerned about. But I don't believe the law ever had any saving merit. Jesus kept the law perfectly, but if from Genesis 15 on, human beings [58:13] are saved by faith, and that Paul's commitment, handed from Exodus on clear through 1 Peter and says that we are to be wholly before God and that the law has a part in that.

Again, I'm, I'm to where we need to discuss how that's so, not if it's so, both parts. Without going to the extreme to saying that you could live like the devil and still be saved, or without saying well, we've been noticing lately, [58:45] and this is dangerous, some people will get involved in church discipline.

We've been noticing lately that the, we were concerned about your works here. You know, the evidence of you being a believer? Ah, uh, uh, uh, uh. Man. And it could be anything from card playing to multiple murder. So if you're not careful you could go either way. But as long, what I want to talk about how it, you know, how you hold that in [59:13] balance. It's, I've been with the Anglicans too long. I just want to find a middle [laughs]. . .

[59:15][audience laughs]

[59:16] ... middle ground. I got to get us out of here. As long as we understand that the salvation is by grace through faith and that of yourself, Thesians 2:8 to 10, but that then you are going to do the good works that you are created in Christ to do. To put right there together in that text, and I think that the Old Testament reflects that. Genesis 15 precedes Exodus 19 and Exodus 19 is to have a kingdom of priests.

[59:46] I've often thought about writing a book that would be, wouldn't sell, but it would be something along the lines the bible discusses more topics than salvation. How we get there? [laughs] But I think there's a covenant made with people who are supposed to already have a commitment. Now all of them did, that's clear.

But it's pretty clear that not all of our people in our churches who are supposed and say they do, do either. But there's no saving merit in keeping these, [1:00:16] in these law, not in the law, I mean, there's no discussion about whatsoever. So as far as we're concerned, I don't think it, it is a saving factor. But it is to create whollyness.

One thing very quickly that we should chew on and go, 'cuz I got to give you your test, Exodus 20 in verse 1 and 2, how do the 10 Commandments start? I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt. The laws purpose [1:00:46] is not only to create a wholly people king of priests; it's based on a prior relationship, right? They already knew what God had done for them. They could already seen who God was.

So, again, there's a prior relationship assumed. And any time they sinned or we sin, we sin against a God who has proven himself to us. See that's what hurts so much when you think about it, right? [1:01:16] If

you had good parents growing up or good grandparents, somebody good to raise you, and at some point in your life, it finally hit you; you had sinned against somebody that you had a prior, strong relationship to and that you should have obeyed them.

That's a watershed moment in somebody's life. I swear some people never have it. And that's what when I'm at my best. [1:01:46] I realize that I'm a miserable offender because I have sinned against a God who has loved me and done all the things that we saw in Isaiah. That's why I'm a miserable offender.

But, so there's a prior relationship. So let's understand that the law is relational, it is personal, and it is to create a wholly people. That, from the start, so, [1:02:16] however that helps us; we'll get started. And tomorrow you'll read about a God who is wholly, and I think, except for the Leviticus reading, which I think you will diligently skim. . .

Unknown: [1:02:25] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:02:27] Read it all the way through; that's good.

[1:02:29] [audience laughs]

[1:02:30] We'll see God is wholly, but we'll be dealing with the law and God whollyness. Questions or comments?

Unknown: [1:02:36] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:02:45] An old pharaohcy [sic], the Apostle Paul said, in Romans 9:30 to 32, it's an important, important passage. He says, how is it that the Jews stumbled he said they acted as if salvation came by works. That's how they stumbled. And what he's saying is they misinterpreted the bible, 'cuz he's already, he's gone to great lengths already to say [1:03:15] the Old Testament doesn't teach that.

Well, I know Valerie has work assignment. On this exam, very quickly, you have four questions. You must do either number one or number two. They're both methods questions from our survey. The last two are creation theology in Genesis 1 through 2 or in Isaiah 40 to 48. You pick one. I will only grade two. [1:03:45] And you must pick one of the first two and one of the second two.

You may use your textbooks, the bible, other books; however, see, cuz here's by point, this is going to be a typed document. I'm going to grade it and that sort of thing. Read it, okay. But it should be a document you would want to keep filed somehow to where it would be your starting point, not the methodology so much, I know as time goes on that'll be for me, but the creation [1:04:15] ought to be in your file as to here's what I came up with.

So you make that as thorough as you want to, and I'll grade it. I won't read the eighth page, but, you know, really think about this as your document. I gave you ground rules and this sort of thing, but it's just not to please me, but it's for you to have something to keep and that's what I hope the next two will be as well. And by the second and third exam, I'm going to ask you to pick a topic that's relevant, and develop it [1:04:45] from the way we've been doing it.

So, again, it's going to become even more personal. I'm not as concerned about the grades in this class as I am about you getting some work done and using the materials we've been studying to get some good work done. That's what I'm trying to do.

So I have one for everybody. Just pass around fast and then we'll, I'll get mine back. So in your textbook, you know, you could use it, you could use the scholars there, if you cite other people, I mean, if you use

other people's ideas, do cite them, [1:05:15] parenthetically's enough: House, page 66; Bray, page 13; Isaiah 40 verse 5 [laughs], that'd be helpful. But you certainly have a big enough question to deal with, so you'll have to select what you want to include.

Unknown: [1:05:35] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:05:38] I want no fewer than four, no, and, and I'm, I'm looking for four to six pages, not 46, 4 to 6, and this means you will have to choose how you're going to do it. There won't be a lot of flabbily prose, probably. If you said, boy, I just barely got started. Well, I hope it's substantive, how you vary it, yeah, you could write lots.

But, again, I want you to select and be thorough in what you select, not just for [1:06:08] my purpose but for yours. The first one or two, first one can be very, kind of, general because you have eight or ten or twelve people. So you say, well, I don't know much I'm going, I'm going to cover those. I'm going to put them into categories, the rationalists, the liberal rationalist, the conservative rationalist, the whatever, and we'll pick a category and we'll write like that.

I gave you three people you could deal with in the second question. So that just means, you know, that would give you more structure, if you wanted it. But you'd have to say more about those people. [1:06:38] The other one is pretty obvious. You're going to have to include major text, concepts and themes. You're going to have to decide what those are. We suggest, you could use the ones in class, you can synthesize those.

You could say, Hall said this but I found this to be more important. Hey, I can live with that. So I'm giving you enough lee way, I hope, to salute me as you go by, [laughs] but not be required to say [1:07:08] everything I said. If you reproduce that, I will, I'm, I'm not, again, not worried about, I'm not worried about how many A's and B's and F's are in here. I'm willing to give you a low grade if you earn it. I have nothing in mind that says there can't be a lot of high grades.

Again, my goal is for you to have a method to learn and to have something to keep more than it is to play stump the band with the exam.

Unknown: [1:07:33] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:07:37] Yes.

Unknown: [1:07:38] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:07:39] Yep.

Unknown: [1:07:40] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:07:41] No, I do not.

Unknown: [1:07:42] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:07:43][audience laughs]

[1:07:43] Nope. Because the sufficient grace, the next sufficient grace question would be, well, I don't know, I might be able to do something for you. When will you have them graded? That will be the next sufficient grace, so that we can, so that we can see how you graded them so we can do the next one.

[1:07:58] [audience laughs]

Unknown: [1:07:58] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:08:00] Oh, I don't know.

Unknown: [1:08:01] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:08:03] I can have sufficient grace, sure. That if you all come to class, that's always one, you know, gee, I would have come to class, but I was doing the exam. Insufficient grace. Yes, I have sufficient grace to make them due at 4:30 tomorrow. I want to take them home and start grading them. I have sufficient grace to have them due at 4:30 tomorrow, if you have sufficient law to come to class and to turn them in at 4:30; is that the OK? Or better?

Unknown: [1:08:34] [audience member speaks — inaudible]

[1:08:36] All right.

[1:08:38] [audience laughs]

[1:08:39] I'm happy with that because I will not grade them tomorrow afternoon anyway, but I will start grading them tomorrow night. I'm happy. Good questions.

Chapter 7

Law and the Sacrificial System

We saw that the law, among other things, is based on a prior relationship [00:30]. According to Exodus Chapter 20, we know that it intended to create a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. According to Exodus 19:5 and 6 and according to First Peter 2, 5, and 9, we understand that from our reading today and the book [01:00] of Leviticus, if you didn't get anything else out of our reading of Leviticus, surely we would have seen that this law is offered, revealed by a Holy God. The theme of Leviticus is Holiness, its centerpiece verse is, "Be Holy for I am Holy." Leviticus 11:44 and elsewhere. [01:30] So we have a Holy God giving law to help create a Holy people who will be a kingdom of priests for the whole earth. This law is made by the personal God, based on relationship that he has with Israel. Certainly in the time of Exodus, but going even farther back. In [02:00] Exodus 20, when we come to the 10 Commandments, it's pretty clear that God's law, at the very outset, intends to do two very basic things. And this is certainly not new to you, you know that the 10 Commandments, the first 4 or so stress our relationship with God. [02:30] And the others emphasize relationship with other people. So, the [phonetic] Ellogians and others talk a lot about God's word being both vertical, between us and God, and horizontal, between us and other people.

[02:53] So, this attitude will keep us focused in the right direction. First on God, [03:00] and then on other people in the midst of considering these things for ourselves. In Exodus 20 to 24, again among other things that we can certainly discuss, the law intends to create a just and fair community. So it does deal with individuals, but it deals with individuals [03:30] in a way that helps them create a Holy community. It is not a solely individualistic law, nor is it only communitarian without any regard for the individual. So that, for instance, there is such a thing as property-rights. [04:00] You can certainly have your own property, but there's also a sense across the board that your property is to be used not only for your own use and for your family's use though it is that, but also to benefit the community. For instance, for the laws that come up particularly in the book of numbers and most are reflected- most readily reflected in the book of Ruth, if you own a field and there are the poor to be considered, you will not glean clear to the edge of your field but [04:30] you will leave some for the poor to glean and to be able therefore to meet their own needs and to meet it with dignity and industry.

[04:42] So, there are personal rights and family rights, but there are also the sense that these personal rights are flowing from the person to the whole. And in Exodus 20 to 24, [05:00] Where as I say I'm just ki- I'm just kind of walking through section by section and making some basic points about the law. How you treat others is fleshed out, so that the Commands such as, "You shall not steal," and, "Commit murder," and, "Commit adultery," and that sort of thing. It becomes spelled out through case-studies, through case-laws. What amounts to stealing, well we have [05:30] case-laws. These, I don't think, can possibly be exhaustive. I'm not sure, this is the difficulty with any law- right, with any case-law system or president-based law. It would be impossible ahead of time to write down every conceivable situation. So that if there is a seminary class with 12 students and a professor, and thus and so happens. No [06:00] case-law means there must be enough basic ones for us to see and to act upon that would give principles- yield principles for further action. This becomes perhaps on the one end, the most fun part of scripture

and of law, which is to try to build principles from existing statements that will service in good-stead now. [06:30] But it is also one of the most maddening and easily abused.

[06:39] So as the bible goes on, we're going to find out we need revelation certainly and God provides it. We also need wisdom, God provides that too but it's going to take both. God does not reveal to us every conceivable situation. [07:00] But he reveals principles and standards and promises to give wisdom and leadership structures whereby leadership principles can be applied. But, for instance how they can be misapplied, in this section of scripture, the bible talks about servants. And often times, it's- the text is translated, "slaves." [07:30] So of course, in many societies including the United States of America, appeals to, "Well you know, the bible says it's alright to have slaves, we have slaves and we will stay on the scripture." Now of course, we didn't take the next step which is in this text, which s- basically says there is no sense in which a human being is property. And that they have to agree to the situation, [08:00] And that it can only last 6 years. You see, so whether or not that's part of the law that you want to apply or not, and also they look to the new testament and it's very interesting you're very – I mean, I know that Bruce Winter's not technically on file but he comes here a lot, talks about Sanford a lot, is imminently grateful for the medical care the city provides accounting he had a heart problem and something else when he was here teaching and as some of you know. [08:30] And he was very grateful he was not back home in the medical system he was used to. He said at a certain point they seem to think it's time for you to die. Anyway --

[audience laughs]

[08:41] Bruce is a friend of mine. You know, he's done a lot of study in ancient, first century backgrounds. As he said, the slaves in the New Testament again are people who by large are indentured, who are always encouraged by [09:00] the apostle Paul to seek their freedom, and not simply to remain in a situation where they don't have to take responsibility for their own lives. Since it's a choice, choose freedom, choose – but, you say what about all the, you know, "masters," you know, "serve your masters," you know, all that? Well, in a situation where you agreed to the situation, you have a responsibility to live up agree to a situation not to work hard?" Well, I've heard that that's true. So on the one hand, people say, well I've often heard in a variety of, "Well, you think thus and so is true, but you know the bible also believes in slavery." See any more I don't let that one go. I say, "Well let's have a discussion on that, what [10:00] do you know about what the bible does or doesn't do?" But simply because you find the word in English, does not mean the word there and the context there means the same thing that people most familiar with American History think it means. So, even in a situation in which someone has agreed to be someone else's servant for a period of time, this individual has [10:30] rights so that if they're abused physically they may go free. That's the bit about if you knock the eye out off you do – if you abuse them physically. So, the sense of the matter is that individuals are to be protected and be cared for. And if you say, "Well, ok. Why would it have that system at all?" I suppose the same reason that they would have it in society which is – [11:00] there are times and circumstances in which people don't have better options. As some of you might, might have relatives like this or whatever, when I was growing up and would talk to some of the people who went through the American Depression, I met men who said, "Yes, I was willing to work for somebody for no more than a place to sleep and meals. No payment, nothing, but I would sign up with a farmer for nothing more than a place to [11:30] sleep and meals."

[11:32] Well this was not his first option, it's not his favorite option, it was his only option, is what he was telling me. Things can be that way. Same as, you would hope that no one would be reduced to gleaning around the edge of you of your field, this would not be their first option. But since these things do occur,

the society is to provide structures. [12:00] Again, to- to give kindness to the poor but it's almost always with industry and dignity. And I don't know that the two always go together, and I'm not trying to make any big point on it I'm just saying. And there are also offerings taken up, as you read Deuteronomy particularly, there are offerings taken up for, for instance every third year, to be given to the poor, to the widow, and to the orphan. So there is that sense, and as it is setup, [12:30] those who have are not to abuse those who come to them for help. Have you yet read what the interest on loans is to your brother? It's nothing, it's not even "0.9 financing."

[audience laughs]

[12:47] It's like the furniture people, "Heck, we're going to give you this stuff." I mean, that's the way it sounds. "No payments until you're 95." No interest, and [13:00] clear on down to, you read about the years of Jubilee in Leviticus. What happens when a society is built on a Sabbath principle? One thing that would have to happen is, people would have rest, the land would have rest, remember that? They're supposed to – I mean, that- that's pretty good farming. The land lies fallow a certain amount of time. But they also note the economy has rest. Debts are cancelled [13:30] every, what is it, 50? It's like every 2 generations, every 2 and a half generations. No it's not every 3 years, not every 4 years. There's responsibility built into this, but that there would be a relief from debt and a starting over. And it's interesting, those who have land are told not to fail to give a loan just because the years coming up. You say, "Well, you know, if I give this loan it's not coming back. [14:00] It's – next year and it's gone." But it's also true that those who put themselves into a situation where they ask the help of someone, they do not abuse that relationship either. And say, "Well heck, you're poor. You can do whatever you want to." There are those who feel like if they're underpaid then they're justified in stealing from the employer. You know the old joke, don't you, about the guy who- every day he'd leave work with [14:30] a wheelbarrow and a- and a tarp over it and finally when he retired his friends said, "I just want to know what you were taking out of there every day at work." He said, "Wheelbarrows and tarps." You know, he's just stealing every day. I think that the law is protective of both the poor and those who have the wherewithal. They- they may be rich or not, but the wherewithal to help [15:00] someone else.

[15:02] So, it is – in- in Exodus 20:24, we can see the principles of protecting the individual, building the community. So we have to derive some of the principles there and work with what we have. Then in Exodus 25 to 31, you have a God who [15:30] intends to be present among the people, right in the very heart of them. It's not thrilling to me to read about the Tabernacle. Chapters 25, 27, here's what you put into it. Chapters 35 to 40, here's how they built it. What is the intent of the Tabernacle? It was a portable sanctuary that was to be placed at the center of their camp [16:00] to represent the notion that God is at the heart of the people, he is in their midst, he is with them. He goes out with them, he camps with them. They're not saying that God's in that box, that's the only place he can be, they know that he's the creator of the heavens and the earth, but he is willing to place his presence there to dwell with them. So when you rednecks dis – after the golden calf incident [16:30] in which God's saying, "Well, you know, I'm- I'm not going to dwell in the midst of you then." And Moses intercedes, and that sort of thing. You see, if God is not with them, they're a hopeless people. So the Tabernacle is to represent God at the center, God at the heart of life. It's the same principle you get in Europe in centuries gone by that you would have a Cathedral town in which the Cathedral was the most [17:00] prominent building, everything being built around it. Sometimes you still see that in small towns, and even in major cities. You know, if you go to the heart of it there's often a church. And it's no longer the tallest building, but it is at the heart. Some college in seminary camp says, "You know [17:20][inaudible]." But you know the place of worship would be at the heart of it.

[17:24] So God is present, according to this law. [17:30] And in Exodus 32 to 34, God is willing to forgive even the most basic, heinous sin, and what is the most basic, heinous sin? Worshipping another God, breaking either the 1st or the 2nd Commandment or both. So that Moses being gone too long, as you know the story, they make an image and say, "That is the God who brought them out of [18:00] Egypt." They bowed down to worship, and they rise up to revel. To place, to party. Through the intersession of Moses, and through the grace of God, he forgives them even this. And they have to redo the covenant though, don't they? This covenant has been [18:30] sealed by Moses having covenant tablets with the basic commands on it. This is the way they made covenants in the ancient world. So that whether it's between nations or particularly between nations, they would put the basics of the covenant either on a scroll, on a roll, or on tablets and place them in the sanctuary of the relevant nations. Here comes Moses with the agreement, [19:00] and I used to think he just tossed those tablets down because he was really angry, and while that may have a part of it, what he has done is to symbolize what is true. There is no covenant if this is what they're going to do, and so he breaks them. He doesn't lay them aside and see what happens, there is no covenant. And so when God and Israel renew their Covenant with Moses the mediator, there are new covenant stones written but God is willing to forgive. Now this starts- this willingness to forgive [19:30] st- started even earlier than in Exodus. Murmurings, complaints, grumblings, and God was willing to forgive. And this starts a centuries-long pattern, doesn't it?

[19:47] So that we start hearing, depending on which date you take for the Exodus, whether it's, you know, the late 15 century B.C. or the early- early 30th century B.C., pick either one of those, and realize [20:00] that God's patience is such that Israel is not truly judged in exile until 722 B.C. for the north and 587 B.C. for the south. So every now and then we think, "Boy, God is- he kind of lacks patience in the old testaments. He's got a short fuse, you know he- he gets ticked off." Centuries [20:30] and even, there are a lot of us who have a short memory for this or that or the other. And one of the saddest things that can happen to a human being is to lose their short term memory. Had an aunt like that, she could not remember that you had been there. She could live in the present, and she could live in a good bit of the past, but she had no idea what happened 5 minutes ago. [21:00] That's a problem if you put something on the stove and you forget that you're supposed to turn if off if it boils over. There's certain things that we need to know short-term. So loss of short-term memory is pretty bad, well how bad was their short term memory? Miracle after miracle, deliverance and yet, they could forget. As can we, but God was willing to forgive. In Exodus 32 to 34, [21:30] and when you come to the end of Exodus, it's a pretty glorious moment because in the – they're worshipping the Tabernacle right? And the glory of God has come, God is dwelling right there with them. You have an obedient people, you have a priesthood selected, you have a Tabernacle made by people filled with the spirit of God to have the wisdom to make it. Remember Bezalel and Oholiab, [22:00] God dwells with them. He's creating this community, he's creating a kingdom of priests, a Holy nation. Looks pretty good so far.

[22:14] Leviticus God is the law and God is Holy. Leviticus is a misunderstood book for a lot of reasons, but again basically I- sometimes I think things are simpler than we often- than they often first appear to me. [22:30] First barrier and Leviticus, as we read the sacrificial regulations in the first 7 chapters or so. And it seems really complicated to us, but it's actually one of the simplest systems in the ancient near east. You have 5 or 6 basic sacrifices, for the 5 or 6 basic types of sin. [23:00] General sin, sin that incurs guilt, sin that incurs guilt and requires restitution, and by incurs guilt I mean deserves punish—some sort of legislation against what you might do. And then all-encompassing sin. Community sin, [23:30] so for the bird offering it's kind of general sin. Like we pray forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. That's not very specific about what we've done. A sin offering is that which is a

deliberate sin that either incurs guilt, in other words we would need to make restitution to somebody or we would need to have some sort of punishment laid upon us. And as you noted, corporal punishment is [24:00] is an acceptable form of punishment, not only in several countries of the world today but in this text. So, at that point, the Day of Atonement sacrifice indicates that the whole community – that sin is so evasive that even under the best of conditions, sin is so evasive that it has to be atoned for once for all once a year. So, we have this system, and what do the sacrifices tell us? [24:30] It tells us that the law understands that sin will occur. That sinless perfection is not required to be a covenant keeper. That Leviticus is part of the covenant, but to be a covenant keeper you must seek forgiveness in God's way. You must seek forgiveness in the way that God chooses. And so, again [25:00] the individuals kept in mind, if you cannot afford a certain type of sacrifice, there is a replacement that means the same thing that is less expensive. Grain can be offered, a bird could be offered as opposed to these- the more expensive sacrifices of animals.

[25:19] I believe these sacrifices were seasonal, not necessarily daily for individuals. [25:30] I think sometimes we get in our mind a line, we got a terrible backup at the altar, we've got people lined up clear to [inaudible][25:39] with cattle fainting in the heat. I believe it's seasonal, probably the times of the festivals that are set forth. Maybe more often as an individual's conscience dictated. But never forget, particularly the psalms indicate to us they could always pray to God. [26:00] One of the mistake and notions that people have is that people could not approach God except through a priest. They had to offer a sacrifice to the priest, more on that in a moment, but they could always talk to God. Bible's filled with prayers. Now, they're just a few basics, they're to be offered in faith, isn't that sheer external— no- I mean no because God says, "If you will do this, I will forgive you." [26:30] And I don't know how many of you have ever kept animals really. I used to th- when I first started reading about the sacrificial system or thinking about it, I thought about the cattle we used to raise, calves and stuff, you know. And I liked raising calves, they had more personality than a whole lot of house-pets I've seen. But if you stare deep into their eyes, you'll see there's nobody home. There's no moral merit in a bull or a goat, particularly not a goat. [27:00] And if you see that, "Ok, I don't have any merit or I wouldn't need to bring this animal." The animal has no moral merit, on what basis would I know that I was forgiven? Solely because God told me so. And the text says in Leviticus over and over again, "And they will be forgiven." Why, because they are in faith bringing what God has asked.

[inaudible man][27:30]

Yeah I don't think sacrifices are any longer necessary, but the point being, I think we often think that what they did was a sheer ritual. And that that was acceptable, but if we want to read whether or not it was acceptable to God in those conditions or [28:00] whether faith was required. Go read the first chapter of Isiah and what it says about how they were bringing all the sacrifices and God said, and in Malachi and in Jeremiah 7 and 26 and the other places, they call it trampling of the courts. Why? Because their hearts weren't right with God. So an offering that's not brought in faith, it is not brought out of the right motive, is unacceptable [28:30] to God. Now if that's not spelled out clearly enough for us, in Leviticus 1 to 7 you might argue it's not because it's talking about how to do it more than it is why you do it. It's certainly spelled out in the rest of scripture, and it'd be very interesting to do a paper sometime on anti-legalism text in the Old Testament. It's saying these sacrifices are unacceptable brought by a heart that is not sorry nor contrite [29:00] Yes sir? You raised a finger?

[29:02][inaudible man]

[29:04][laughs] No either you did, or you didn't but go ahead.

[29:08][inaudible man]

[29:17] Well two things about Job that relate this, we're at a certain point in time and prior to giving law, which is- most people think Job would be in that setting, you know Abraham made sacrifices that seemed- the head of the [29:30] family seemed to be the one making the sacrifices. It's also interesting about Job is, most people who think that he's not an Israelite. So what you have is someone like Melchizedek, someone like Abimelech in Genesis, people who knew God and new the same God that Abraham knew, but who were also in the same situation as Abraham, offering sacrifice. But I think the question about a [30:00] priest is an important one, it actually falls on next in Leviticus 8 to 10, and it'd already been introduces in Exodus 29, what is the role of a priest? Now, I'd often heard that they were the inner Sesser and that you couldn't get forgiveness unless you went through a priest, and therefore one of the freedoms of the New Testament was that we had Christ. Although if you read Hebrew's long enough, you'd say that's the same thing. We're going through a priest. He's the priest, but anyway. [chuckles] Now, [30:30] what do the priests actually do? Some of you who, well either read Leviticus or you have read Leviticus, what's a priest doing during those chapters, during the first 7, let's start there. Is he? I don't think so, no. I'll tell you what I thi- I mean, but he's standing there with the people right? He's an instructor more than he is anything else. He's- [31:00] because the- they bring it – it sounds like he's, to me, he's showing them how to do it themselves, making sure they don't sin against God's ways. And it's the worshiper who lays the hand on the head, isn't it? These are my sins, I- I confess it. And there are parts that only the priest does yes, but he's helping the people do what's right. They don't bring the animal and say, [31:30] "We'll see you." He helps them participate in it.

[31:37] In the clean and unclean passages, what's the priest do? Get all the priest roles down here. Who is it who decides whether a house is clean or unclean? That's a priest, isn't it? These people operate – they- th- you're going to see at several roles. Ok, they're helping people offer sacrifices so they can be right with God. They're also health [32:00] inspectors. Probably because they're the only tribe that's set apart for this purpose and would have the leisure to do it, but they're- also they're supposed to learn about these things. As the Old Testament progresses, the priests are criticized, in Malachi for instance, for offering- for accepting an offering, injured sacrifices. Instead of bringing in your best cattle, you bring in one with a broken leg or [32:30] the smallest or the weakest, or you know, something you think's about to die anyway. We'll bring that to God, and of course Malachi says, "Well would your Governor accept that, and how would that go with your taxes?" But the other thing they're criticized for, and this is one we often forget, the priests were supposed to instruct the people in the word of God. When the priests are criticized by the prophets, it is almost uniformly stated [33:00] that they did not instruct the people properly. And, in a positive statement, I always forget this text from chronicles, but one of the days, I think it was Joe Ashes day when they had a revival of religion, when there was renewal and reform, there was a group of priests sent out to teach the word of God to the people.

[33:23] They were to be the people who would explain God's standards, help them sacrifice, [33:30] make sure the community was safe. That's what I mean by health inspector. So they were community servants, teachers of the world of God, helpers in liturgy, and on the day of atonement, the High Priest would go into, as you know, the Holy of Holies Leviticus 16, and offer sacrifices for his own sins [34:00] and those of his family. Then this is always interesting, for the altar itself because of the pollution of sin in it, and for the sins of all the people. It's been very interesting through the years, it's always interesting if you're a teacher to ask preliminary questions to find out what people think, or you could also just give quizzes and if they have it [34:30] read they'll fall back on what they always thought. The first time I taught New Testament survey, gave a quiz to the students that included ask, "What was the role of the first deacons?"

You know, we'd read axe. Those who had not read the lesson fell back on what went on in their local churches and this was fascinating. Answer, "The Deacons are supposed to keep the pastor from going off the rails and ruining the church." "The Deacons are supposed to run the church," very interesting. [35:00] What they thought the Deacons were supposed to do, if they hadn't read the lesson. It's also been very interesting to ask, "What did priests do in the Old Testament?" The average answer, though not always, the average answer was Baptists predominantly, Baptists students was they would basically describe what happens in Leviticus 16. You know, the High Priest would go into the Holy of Holies, that part they remembered. But that's the High Priest, [35:30] once a year, what did these people do otherwise? Well some of the things we talked about.

[35:36] When I ask American Episcopalian students, they would almost always say, "This individual planned and ran the liturgy."

[audience laughs]

[35:47] So it's whatever model they thought they'd seen. But never forget, the priest, among all other duties, is to be the one who cares for and teaches the word of [36:00] God, in this case law. Again, go through- just get a concord, just get the word priest, and go through the Old Testament. See why the priests are criticized, and virtually every time they're criticized, I mean there's [inaudible][36:14] criticizing us all. But almost always, there's a criticism of not teaching the Torah accurately and effectively. And you know, when the prophets are criticized, they're often criticized for prophesying their own visions and prophesying for money [36:30] and these sorts of things. But the priests are criticized for something else. But the priests indicate that in the law, God sets apart a group of people to help the nation be a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. That the priests have the awesome responsibility and the wonderful privilege of being the point persons for creating a holy community, a safe community. [37:02] Thus they had tremendous responsibility and they had the privilege of gaining their sustenance from the sacrifices and the offerings of the people. Now as you can already see, we have potential danger. What if the people aren't faithful to bring their sacrifices, what happens to the priest? They can fall on hard times right? And what if the [37:30] priest starts abusing his own people for his own interest. You remember, was it Eli's sons. Man they were changing law as it went. No, no, no, no, we want that fat portion. Well it's not time to worship I'd say, we'll take it by force if need be. [chuckles]

[37:45] I mean, it is possible for people to abuse priests and priests to abuse the people, this we have seen. But the law included a group of people who had helped the people [38:00] learn the law, understand the law, live by the law, and was supposed to help the people become what they were called to be. They were to be ministers, helpers in the strongest use of the word. And I find it interesting that it is not a one-for-one correspondence, but if you will go through the standards for priests, what they were supposed to do, the kind of character they're supposed to have, [38:30] and compare it to many of the standards in the pastoral epistles as- for what a minster of one sort or the other ought to be. You will find many, many correspondences. Particularly this teaching function. There was so much else that a priest had to do that it could have been easy to neglect the word of God, right? The average priest day, oh you know from 8:30 to 9 I've got to go check out three guys [39:00] for potential leprosy. Got to check a house to make sure the contagion hadn't broken out in it. From 9 to 9:30 I have to see 4 people for sacrifice. I have- There's nothing new under the sun, it would be easy to not do the one thing that would keep continuity in the covenant keeping community. That would be to actually teach them to the people. Having said that, the priests in the law were a benefit. What are these laws of clean and unclean? In the law, say [39:30] Leviticus 11:15, It's an unfortunate problem with English language to say these laws are about clean and

unclean. Because probably the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear unclean, is dirty. [laughs] And something that needs to be cleaned up- something you want to stay away from. Something that's, blah.

[40:00] Or you're thinking of lepers, because if you've heard some sermons a leper's walking around unclean, unclean, you think something contagious or fowl. Pardon?

[inaudible man]

[40:10] Oh yeah, yeah. Dangerous, warning. Now, the problem is that isn't what it means here. [laughs] Clean and unclean basically mean something like the fall, and this is why I can't do this in [40:30] translation. There's- you. You can't do everything in a translation. But it basically means appropriate and advisable for that person to be in community. It's not advisable for a leper to be in community the- and always continue to debate what kind of disease that was. But it was a communicable skin-disease obviously. And since it would have been difficult for Moses to say, [41:00] "You know, if this breaks out, take an antibiotic." They didn't have that sort of medicine at their disposable of course, so really quarantine was their best option for keeping the community safe. Now on the one hand, it does show the one reason that Jesus's love for lepers and other people's kindness too and this sort of thing, [41:30] is extraordinary because it put them at risk of the illness that would cause them to be unsafe for the community. So one they hated lepers, or they were- I mean, you know, there- there are specific laws against mistreating a handicap persons. At the law, did you read those? You don't put a stumbling block before the blind person, put something down there they can fall over. You don't do this or any—there's standards [42:00] against people's incapacities being used against them. But, quarantine was our best bet, so God's trying to create a safe community. And then [inaudible][40:11] I've always thought one of the most misunderstood was of course, when a woman has a- a baby, she's beyond clean for certain point per- ah, I see, you know, they thought, they though babies run clean, having them was unclean and dirty and [42:30] unhealthy or contagious, and little girls were doubly dirty. Because what is it for a boy baby, is it 6 weeks I think? Like 40 days that the woman doesn't go into the communities where I'm talking about, she remains unclean for X amount of days, well now – and then twice as much for a little girl, and you say, "Why?" Because [43:00] while they do tend to outlive boys no matter what, they- they are smaller and the- and the conception is. So here's a law, the mother and the child do not have to go back into regular life and work for either 6 weeks or 3 months.

[inaudible audience member]

And 66 for a girl? Yeah, there you go. You get a month or two months, something like that.

[43:30][inaudible audience member]

Absolutely, that's called family leave. It's called maternity leave. Again, on the one hand you say – there are all the- the, see with any kind of family leave act, there will always be those who say, "You mean to tell me I can't come back to work for X amount of time?" And then there's others who say, "Ah, you mean to tell me that I have two months leave?" [44:00] It will all depend on the person, but let's remember this, unclean doesn't mean the little girl is twice as dirty as the little boy. The mother has twice as long to nourish the child and to, as we say, "bond with it." Understand that this is a benefit. Same people think with, if I can be so indelicate, with a sexual act. Runs, cleans, leave and they're not to go out [44:30] until morning. Well last I heard some people complain that there's not enough intimacy after sexual act. They're at least supposed to be together then until the next day. See it just depends on your attitude toward us. If you're coming at it saying, "I know the law is restrictive and mean and hard-hearted." So I

know what this is doing, or you could say, "You know, so far in the bible, we've seen a God [45:00] who's been willing to forgive some pretty heinous stuff." And is trying to put a law together that would create a Holy community that would be protected of that holy community, and we might start by asking, "Well is there some benefit to this we might appreciate?"

[45:16] And I'm saying, in a society in which it's often said women weren't treated very well, I- I want to start with leave. And when [45:30] you get to chapter 18 and the other texts about sexual sins. On the one hand, you can call these laws against incest. There's another word for laws against incest- another phrase, it's called "laws against sexual abuse." You have one law after another against sexual abuse here, whether it's rape or incest or whatever it is. [46:00] Yes there are laws about homosexuality, they get a lot of airplay today amongst Christians. Yes there are laws against bestiality here, that usually gets a high yuck-factor with folks. But there are laws against rape, there are also laws against sexual abuse. This is one of the places where you're going to say, "If God is going to create a protective community, you're going to protect [46:30] women and children from unwanted and harmful sexual activity." As terrible as all the sins are, I'm not minimizing the terrible rate of any of these sexual sins, but currently of- the- the statistics that are given aren't even anywhere near accurate. The sexual abuse side is the most [47:00] serious of all the problems. Again, without minimizing rape or bestiality or homosexuality. But I was pretty convinced that the numbers of homosexuals in the society were lower than the folks who thought when certain politicians stop listening to that lobby much. I begin to suspect the numbers were lower than we'd first been led to believe. [47:30] And regardless of that, if indeed the numbers are anywhere near accurate, what are they now like something like 33 and they're bouncing anywhere between 25 and 30 percent for girls and 15 to 25 percent for boys. I mean the numbers are extraordinary. If that's true, then one might want to see that in the law, people are supposed to be protected [48:00] from such things. Now I'll also add, I don't know anywhere else in the bible that this is covered. So, I think if you ask the apostle Paul, "Why don't you have any anti-pedophilia laws?" He'd say, "Well I thought we already had them." Protect the community, protect the individual, protect the community, and of course say, "Well I- haven't you been talking really about protecting the family too?" [48:30] Sure. You're protecting the husband / wife sexual relationship there. But of course, once you been into chapter 70 and 26, you are talking about Holiness, you're not longer talking so much about uncleanness. That which makes it unadvisable or advisable for you to be in a community. But the law is bringing up the higher standard of moving toward Godliness. And God would protect the community. Whether it's sexually, financially, or [49:00] otherwise.

[49:04] And at the end of Leviticus, in chapter 26, God offers blessings for adherence. By now you'd say, "Well we could make a list of blessings." What if you actually acted this way? What if you actually confessed your sins, and yeah sure once a year you st- you have to have the Day of Atonement, but we're forgiven. The biggest [49:30] with the Day of Atonement is you have to do it every year. It's annual. But you know, we should be able to do that. Most of us manage to take a Monday holiday off when we it comes around. We could remember the importance of the Day of Atonement, we could do that. And in this community, we would have a group of committed priests helping us worship God. In this community, we'd be safe from sexual predators. In this community, we would guard against debt for one another. We would treat the poor [50:00] with equity. The poor would not be abusive of the rich. There's some mutual respect there. We can see several blessings to that kind of community I thi- and Leviticus 26 says, "God will bless you in the field," and all these other places there's going to be great blessing. But, if you do not obey the law, there will be great consequences. I don't like the word curse, it conjures up – a curse is not something that just hangs over you and, "oh, there's a curse in this room." It's a consequence of your [50:30] action, that's what it really is. By consequence, God then will punish. His purpose in

punishing is always redemptive, always to the point. We talked briefly about Amos ye- yesterday where it says, you know, "I gave you famine, I gave you defeat, I- always, but you did not return to me." The purpose is to get you to return. Hebrews talks about this, that you know [51:00] that God's intent in chastising is to bring you back to Himself. But, eventually if this is unheeded, God in Leviticus 26 and then again in a very detailed way in Deuteronomy 27 and 28, where the blessings and consequences are offered again, he says, "I will drive you from the land, you'll lose everything. If you will not [51:30] listen, then you will be defeated and exiled." And right at this very point, if we hadn't already learned it from the Joseph story, you're going to say, "Wait a minute, it couldn't have all been bad could it- it couldn't, it wouldn't have all."

[51:51] No there's always a righteous remnant. But do you notice that they suffer with the sinners? What does that mean, unjust suffering exists world. [52:00] And it's one of the blessings of leadership that you could be, or even of being a faithful member of the church, you can suffer for the mistakes of others. It's also a blessing of being in a family, or a seminary, or this class. You can suffer for the sins of others, just like you can benefit from others. So God is honest with them in this law, [52:30] a couple of other things about the law and then a break. All along, something left unsaid, just as a blatant principle, the law defines sin. It helps us know what it is that's against a holy God's standard. In this way, for those who love [53:00] the Lord and follows him, it inhibits sin, right? "Oh that's not right, God doesn't approve of that. I won't do it." But then also because God is a God who assesses and judges, the law through its punishments inhibits sin in two ways. One if you don't love the Lord enough to not want to sin against his grace, there is [53:30] some motivation in fearing the punishment. We have to admit this. I've heard people say, "Why don't you do such and such?" And they would say, "Oh because I didn't want to do that to those I love." And then someone else would say, "I'm scared of getting caught." [laughs]

[53:48] Then, it is also true that punishment has the potential to inhibit sin. [54:00] We can learn from punishment. Or s- I'm not making a pro or anti capital punishment statement, but one thing capital punishment would ensure if the person was guilty, that there would not be a repeat offense. Now you say, "That- that's kind of a low standard." I didn't say it was a high standard, I'm just saying it would do that. So there is a sense of which [54:30] the punishments or the law are to inhibit sin and correct behavior in those who have faith and want to walk with God and to have a punitive effect of bringing a person to justice who doesn't care. But again, protecting the community is the issue. It is very interesting that the crimes and the sins that attack the community base are taken with the utmost [55:00] seriousness. It's not defaulting on loans and that sort of thing, or sinning against a leader that is most serious as is true in most other near Eastern codes. But it's sins that will attack the fabric of the community that are taken seriously. And the sins that are taken most seriously are those that are against God and lead towards [55:30] Ideology. Israel has no future without God, therefore anything that undermines seriously the worship of God is the most devastating thing that can happen. That is hard for us to accept.

[55:50] So you go through Leviticus and you have a law that Exodus 19 and 20 and- ha- has told us about that it's [56:00] based on a prior relationship. It's a covenant made with a holy God. Intends to help us understand how to treat God and others, protects individuals but develops a community in Exodus 20 and 24. Exodus 25 and following, it's a law that would include God dwelling in the midst of the people. It's a law that has a group of priests that would help that be maintained. It's a law that has forgiveness built into it because [56:30] of the sacrifices. It's a law that protects the community through the unclean but also protects the person who has had a baby or who's had a- an illness or has had something as well through the laws of clean and unclean. In the holiness code, the law tries to protect the community from everything from sexual predators to financial predators and a lot of things in between. [57:00] It's a law

that offers blessings, and threatens consequences. It's an honest law, and really, when these things are understood, it makes more sense to me why someone like the apostle Paul can say, "So is the law sin? Oh no, the law is good." Romans 7, "oh the law is good. Problem's not with the law." Where you get to Jeremiah 31, [57:30] I'm going to make a new covenant with the people of Israel. Not like the old covenant, and if some preaching I heard were true, the next line would be, "Because after all, the law was hard, it was nasty, tough to keep." Really pretty legalistic when you get right down to it. No, the next phrase in Jeremiah is, "Which the broke." The problem with this covenant is not with God or with the basic fairness of the law or the basic intents of the law, we're right back down to what human [58:00] sin does. And because of God's grace and because of human sin, God will in salvation history continue to work with human beings.

[58:14] And we'll do even more. So that as another New Testament pastor says, "So that at Judgement, every mouth will be stopped." So that- in another text, "So that you're without excuse." So we say look, so [58:30] law was rejected. This covenant was rejected. God made a new covenant. This covenant too is also rejected. But we're going to see what precedes both in today and also from when we deal with the [inaudible][58:50] and salvation passages. But see, when we get right down to it, we still would have many questions about the intent of a lot of these laws and the attitude behind a lot of these laws and that sort of thing. [59:00] But surely we can see that the law is given by a good God, would create a good community that would indeed be – let's say Israel has always operated like this. What sort of witness would that have been to the world around them? "Why aren't you working today?" "Well, you know, we rest. Materialism doesn't run us and we worship our God today." "Oh that's interesting, why is it you set that servant [59:30] free after 6 years?" "Well that was our agreement." Well slaves have no rights." "Sure they do, in our law they do. You can't mistreat them, you have to keep your commitment to them and they go free." "Oh, that's odd. What's this bit about Jubilee?" Now what was the problem with the law? They never did it. [laughs] If you say- I mean, as a whole, say, "Well, how did the Jubilee work out?" There's no evidence they ever did it. How did letting the land lie fallow [60:00] work out? There's no evidence they did it, so that Jeremiah says that, "One of the reasons the exile has to happen for 7 years, is to give the land its Sabbath that it never got." Here is a gracious and kind covenant that basically went untried. At the best, may of the aspects of it occurred but often basically this went untried.

[60:25] So, I've often had students say, they fall in the old trap [inaudible][60:30] so good, "Why'd there have to be a new covenant, which they broke?" Which they broke. Now the other part we need to remember is if we read Hebrews 11, "By faith a whole lot of people loved the lord, walked with him, kept his standards, but it was the faith that lead to the works, not the opposite." That's clear throughout the scripture. So [61:00] that the works didn't save them in any way. It's never been true that'd be the case, but works would always be the evidence that we are a holy community trying to witness to the world and minister to one another. That's what it was for. So some of them got it, some of them figured it out, some of them walked with God, some of them were faithful. And so, but as time goes on for a disobedient people, what the law does is point out their sin, inhibit their sin, punish their sin. [61:30] And if that's the only use you'll make of the law, that's what you're going to get. It points out your sin, tries to inhibit your sin, punishes your sin. To any outside of Christ, that's all the law can do for them. Can drive them to their need for Christ, but it has very little other specific personal benefit for them. Because like every other aspect of [62:00] truth in the scripture, it must be received, appropriated, and lived out by faith. Otherwise, you won't do it.

Chapter 8

Law and Faith

I want to remind you of some subsequent text when we complete a couple of other things. The book of Numbers got a start as one of the most hopeful books [00:30] in the Bible, if you know what's been going on. They have this law that's going to create this community we've been talking about. And they celebrate the first Passover early in Numbers, so you know they've been out a year from Egypt.

And it all falls apart, doesn't it? Now, you have this ongoing grumbling that kind of continues. Finally, in Numbers 13 and 14, [01:00] they send out spies, of course. And the spies come back and said, "Yeah, land is good." – That's their first report. First report has the most truth in it. Yeah, the land's good, but the cities are inhabited and fortified.

Well now, this is not news to anybody, is it? [Laughter] I think God never said go out there, and I'll tell you what – they're just going to lay down arms and give you land. I mean, it always was that there was a populated place.

And they said [01:30] we're not able to take it. When there's a dispute, then the lies start being told. The land eats people. It devours their inhabitance – all this was news. Then, of course, the giants are in the land. I mean, it's not the first committee that stretched the truth when their first opinion was disputed.

They all weigh in, and finally God weighs in. And what does God say the problem is? God doesn't say the problem is what some sermons I've heard say the problem is. We are as grasshoppers in [02:00] their eyes. That's your problem; you think too little of yourselves. If you just had a higher self-esteem.

If you'd just get with it, you'd know. God says, "How long will they not believe Me?" – 14:!1. How long will they not believe Me? What's their problem? Their problem is theological, which causes it to be practical. They don't believe what God has told them. They do not believe that He will take them to victory. Therefore, [02:30] the practical problem is they're not going to invade.

So, they are punished, and Moses and Aaron, though at this point, they have not sinned in a way that will cause them not to go to the promise land. Mostly Joshua and Caleb – they did everything right, didn't they? But they're gonna suffer too, aren't they? Then, we just keep this theme of we should not [03:00] be surprised, even for outrage by it, we should not be surprised by suffering for the sins of others – you know, sinful world.

And, so this generation is gonna have to die in the desert, and such a generation it is too – Lots of complaining, lots of rebellion, lots of death. Really, if you're in a foul mood while you're reading Numbers – and that often is the case. [Laughter][03:30] You may be prone to say things like, "I wish these people would just die, so we can get on to the promise land."

Do you notice that God sustains them, even in the midst of their sin? He still provides for them, still makes sure they have clothing and food. The manna doesn't stop just because they're terrible sinners. God's grace continues on, and God begins to grow [04:00] up what becomes, perhaps, the most impressive generation ever in the history of Israel.

Think about it. A generation that grows up in the desert… grows up to conquer the promise land and be faithful to God. And just from a human standpoint, it seems that they're saying, "We may not conquer the promise land, but we're not dying in this desert." They become, perhaps, the most successful [04:30] generation in Israelite history.

They are covenant keepers. They conquer the promise land. They're lead by Joshua. Moses becomes exhibit A that God cannot give his glory to another. There's nothing worse for the community than for God's glory to be attached to someone else, because [05:00] you must worship God – that's what's best for you.

So Moses' sin in Numbers 20 is not just that he strikes the rock when he's told to speak to it, but what does he say? – Must we get water out of the rock? He takes credit for the miracle, really. As great as Moses was, his punishment is that he won't go to the promise land. Thus begins what may be the clearest evidence of the greatness of Moses.

I have become tremendously [05:30] impressed that in comparison to Saul, for instance, what Moses does after he knows he won't go to the promise land is impressive. He still leads the people. He still teaches the people. He still mediates for the people.

Moses knows he won't go to the promise land, yet he does all this for Israel and prepares Joshua to take his place. He does ask God again to let him go [06:00] to the promise land. But he accepts God's verdict and does God's work, even though he will not get the thing he wants most. It is often what we do after we realize what is closed to us to be faithful to God that may be the most impressive testimony to your godly character.

But he prepares the next generation, and, in Deuteronomy, gives [06:30] instructions to this new generation in the form of a covenant treaty. He reminds them of the past. He reminds them of the Ten Commandments. He gives them standards to live by.

He gives them some new case laws because, after all, they're going to be in a new situation. Now then, how are they to keep this law? How's it going to happen? You remember Deuteronomy 6:4 and following – [07:00] Love the Lord, your God, with all of your heart, with all of your soul, with all of your strength – your muchness. That's a general term in Deuteronomy 6:4 and following.

Jesus says that mind and strength, right – that's how he defines muchness. Heart, soul, strength – it's an internal [07:30] commitment that leads to an external exertion. And over and over again, love the Lord. And by the end, the indication is if you love the Lord, you'll keep his commandments. So, this is a standard Moses has learned. This is a standard Moses puts forth to them. And again, by the end of the book in 27 and 28, he [08:00] is saying to them, there are blessings and consequences laid before you.

He knows, according to Deuteronomy 30, that the people will indeed, someday, break the covenant long enough that they'll lose the land. Is that the end? No, he says in Deuteronomy 30. If you'll repent in the land which God has sent you, God will bring you back. God will restore you.

As [08:30] long as there's a chance for repentance, there's always hope in the Bible. So, in Deuteronomy 30, you have the game plan for coming back if you lose the land. And again, it's in the heart. Repentance always begins in the heart. Obedience always begins in the heart. Love always begins in whatever you – you know, I'm just using "heart" as a metaphor, of [09:00] course.

But it's also true that as Jesus interprets Deuteronomy 6, heart, soul – it's a whole person, that which is emotional, spiritual, intellectual and physical. It's a whole portion. It's like an engine. You can only take it

apart to talk about it. But you have to keep it together for the thing to run – the human body, the same way. We have different components. We can take them apart to discuss them, but the truth is heart, soul, [09:30] mind and strength – Jesus' Mark 12 interpretation of Deuteronomy 6 – as a whole person, that's how you have to love God, with everything you are.

Thus, you can be a covenant keeper and if the – when the time comes that you have sinned, repentance is the key to coming back to God. As you know, the Old Testament word for repentance is shoove, and it really just means turn around. You've been going this direction, turn around. You're going north [10:00] on I-65 when you should be going south, turn around. I would use the other two lanes, but turn around.

So, there yet remains hope when the law ends. What is the law's value? Joshua 1, Josh was told to meditate on the Law of Moses. Don't swerve from the right or to the left – stay in the covenant – in [10:30] Joshua 1. When David wants to instruct Solomon in First King's 2, he says virtually the same thing. Stay with the word of God for your life and for the people's life.

When Isaiah preaches in the first chapter, or writes, at least, he says, "Look, [11:00] external observance is not enough." Though your sins be a scar, they can be white as snow. Reason together. Turn in – in your heart. And then, in Isaiah 8, when speaking about how Israel needs to turn from the sins he's been describing all along, he says in 8:19 – because the people are looking for direction.

When they say to you, consult the mediums [11:30] and the spiritists who whisper and mutter. He says, "Should not a people consult their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?" – To the law – and to the Torah, the law and the testimony. If they do not speak according to this word – with the "they" being whoever you're seeking – it's because they have no dawn. They have no light to the law and to the testimony.

If [12:00] you want to know what God thinks, go to the word of God. And I think the law is – is the Mosaic Law. I think the testimonies are, at the least, beginnings of narratives. I would give testimony to what God does in history. Go to those, he says. And if your prophets and spiritus medium don't speak medium don't speak out of that law, they have no light. And you have no guarantee that they're not just muttering and [12:30] whispering the thoughts of their own mind.

This sort of thing is more and more prominent in this country, and it's prominent in a lot of places. I think I have 54 channels on the cable at the apartment [inaudible][12:46] provides. There's hardly ever anything on in the – but you have more commercials for [13:00] tarot card readings and for all these other things that I've ever seen. It's a growing phenomenon. I think this one lady that's always advertised with the cards – she must be busy because she also helps everybody in Pittsburgh too.

She's [Laughter] everywhere. Her cards get pretty worn out. But in a way, you say, well, why are people doing this? They're looking for guidance and help. Look to the word – to the testament – to the law of God remains [13:30] valuable on through. Jeremiah preaches the Ten Commandments, as I said in Jeremiah 7 – not all day, but, you know, a good number of them in 7 and 26.

Amos says in his chapter 2 and 3, if people are walking together, haven't they made an appointment? Haven't you made an agreement? We made an agreement with God, and yet, we've broken the covenant. The prophets say over and over again what's wrong with Israel is [14:00] they've broken their agreements with God. They have a lot of metaphors for it. So that Jeremiah and Josiah, they talk about it in terms of a marriage that's been violated.

Josiah also talks about it in Chapter 11 like a child running away from a good parent – the more I call, the more you run away – which was a good way to get in serious difficulty where I grew up. [14:30] Are there metaphors beside parental, marital...? – a king and his – and his people, there's a lot of metaphors for what it means that we were in agreement. You agreed to do something, and Israel has gone away from it. And the manifestations of it are many – lying and killing and stealing, oppression of the poor, injustice in the law courts... [15:00] It goes on – the manifestations are many, but the problem is the same.

You know what God has said, what God has taught, what God has set forth about individual life and community life. And you go against that revealed will – that's the problem. So the prophets preach against covenant breaking, against the breaking of the law and standards. They [15:30] even criticize it when their bringing their sacrifices – bringing it for the wrong reasons. Don't the prophets have anything good to say about anybody?

It wasn't their job to say all these wonderful things. Once we get into the Psalms, remember, Psalm 19 – and particularly, Psalm 1:19 argues that the law is a gift from God so that people might know how to live a life that pleases God, and how to avoid all sorts of [16:00] pitfalls. Again, the law is protective. How can a young man keep his way pure? – By walking according to the law of the Lord.

Protecting you from this and from that and from the other. Understand that God's law is perfect and pure, enlightens the eyes, keeps people from sin, it's a gift [16:30] from God that's largely neglected by the run of the mill person. Now then, so the law according to Exodus and Leviticus were all the things we said before the break. Since the break, the law indicates that your relationship to God is one of believing in him.

For Israel, when they sinned against God and would not go into Canaan, the issue was they did not believe in Me. That's the [17:00] primary problem, and that will lead to disobedience. And Deuteronomy, the issue is one of the heart. The covenant is based on love and on the heart and you say, "What about God?" Well, remember Deuteronomy 7 – why did he enter into covenant with him? – Because he loved him.

And the law is counsel as a way to walk with God. It doesn't establish a relationship with God, but it governs [17:30] one and proves one – in Joshua 1 and First Kings 2, breaking and walking away from a covenant is the root cause of all sorts of sins in the prophets. And again in the law is shown as protective and good and a way for people's souls, uh, to be healthy before God in the Psalm.

So we've seen the [18:00] law's not simply about externals, but it's about how people's hearts operate. Now then, the New Testament on the law – it's a diverse subject, but I'm just trying to follow themes that we've already seen. Now, something that did happen historically that we do need to remember is that it [18:30] is true that there were certain groups and factions in Israel who came to believe that because of the passages in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 26 and 28 – emphasize law-breaking as the reason for the loss of land.

They did come to believe that if we would just keep the rules and regulations, everything will be [19:00] alright. There were some like that, and some of them were prominent. In Acts, the Pharisees were zealous – the lot of them. They believed in what they believed, and so they propagated what they believed. That's what zealous people will do. Though, in recent – the last 50 years – New Testament scholarships indicate there was by no means every Jew in the first century believed that if I'll just keep the rules, I'll be alright [19:30] with God.

Also pretty evident, a whole big bunch of them didn't care about God one way or the other. That there were Pharisees, Sadducees, zealots; there were Essenes and there were "leave me alones." Now, that meant that Jesus and Paul had to deal with something that the average prophet didn't. The average prophet's [20:00] problem was not that the people were so scrupulous in keeping the law and by it – they thought they were righteous.

You notice that in the prophets that's not the common problem. But it is a problem Paul has to deal with and that Jesus has to deal with. But right away, in his ministry, Jesus, in Matthew 5 and the canon, gives the beatitudes – what a list of attitudes and [20:30] actions to keep us right with God and right with one another. And then, Jesus goes on to say what we looked at the other day, he does not come to abolish the law, but by verse 20, unless your righteousness succeeds that. And describes to the Pharisees, you won't enter the kingdom of Heaven.

What is Christ saying about the law and about his commands? It is to produce a people whose righteousness exceeds that of the Pharisees and the [21:00] Sadducees. Already, this emphasis on a people whose holiness is evident and obvious to the world is entered in, after all, in verses 13 to 16 of Matthew 5. It says, "You're the light of the world." You need to be a light on a city on a hill – that's the kind of light. You know, we want you – we want to have the kind of people that would be up here and be [21:30] a light to everybody.

And that would be salt that would just permeate the culture – preserve it. And for that to occur, apparently, he says, "I want your righteousness to exceed that of the Pharisees and the Sadducees." Some passages in the New Testament, you'd say, "That wouldn't be too tough." But on other ones, you'd say, "They are serious about the word of God." You see, they've got a problem, according to Paul, who was a Pharisee of this type – and there were more than [22:00] one types.

But, he says again, as we looked at yesterday in Romans 9:31 and 32 – they sought this righteousness as if it were by works. The righteous, he said, is by faith and by faith, the actions follow. But the actions themselves have no merit, and that's what they thought. They thought I could pile up merit before a holy God who is sinless. It's hard to impress [22:30] a sinless God. It's like me trying to impress Michael Jordan with my free throws; it's just not all that impressive to someone like that.

They can be kind and generous and gentle, but it's hard to reach that standard. So one thing a law does is create a community that is a light on a hill, in Matthew 5. That is not so far off from Exodus 19 and 1 Peter 2, right?

They're [23:00] ought to be a sense in which the people of God are so committed to the standards of God that they would stand out. Jesus also says, particularly in John, that the law speaks of him. We'll get to more of that later. When you turn to Romans, which is a rich book and it's such a tight argument that it's really hard not to start with Chapter 1 and go. But Paul makes it [23:30] crystal clear in Chapter 1 that the just shall live by faith – that's what Habakkuk teaches, he says.

And that, by Chapter 3:21, now, apart from the law of the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. Paul's saying, look, the law and the prophets say righteousness is apart from the law. That's what the law, itself, [24:00] teaches – even the righteousness of God, verse 22, through faith in Jesus Christ for those who believe, for there is no distinction.

In other words, righteousness of God comes through faith in Jesus for all who believe. And he says in verse 23, all of sin and falling short of the glory of God – I often tell people who think that the standard is

that they're a little bit better than their neighbors – that they're good moral people. Now, I've heard a lot of preaching years ago that basically told them – tried to convince them they were foul, miserable sinners.

True or not, the standard is the glory of God and all have fallen short of that standard. If the standard was that Valerie is a little bit better than Cherie – Maybe, Valerie's alright, maybe she's not. But the point is that isn't the standard. And so, the [25:00] only way one can be right with God is in verse 22 and verse 24 – being justified is a gift by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

Verse 27 – where then is boasting? It is excluded. What would we boast in, in other words. Even Christians will find something. It tends to be something like this, "I was a worse sinner than you before I converted, so I get to give a testimony." It's excluded by what kind of law of [25:30] works – no. This is a lovely phrase, but by law of faith. For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the law.

And he has said that's what the Bible teaches – that's his point in verse 21. The Bible teaches us that very thing – the law and prophets give testimony to this. So then, in verse 31 do we then nullify the law through faith – may it never be on the contrary we established law [26:00] on all points he's been making. On the point that keeping the law is evidence of a heart relationship with God, not the source of it.

And he continues to make his argument on into Roman 7, where he talks about his trouble. Keeping on, of course, it depends on your point of view, whether it's pre-Christian or post-Christian. But he says, verse 7 – What shall we say [26:30] then, is the law sin? If that's how I wake into the fact that I'm a sinner, "Is the law sin?" – may it never be. On the contrary, I would not have come to know sin, except through the law.

Mary said one of the purposes of the law is to identify sin. I wouldn't even know sin unless it was through the law for I would not have known about coveting, if the law had said you shall not covet. And coveting is sort of a summary sin, isn't it? If you don't covet, you won't steal. If you don't covet, you won't commit [27:00] adultery.

If you don't covet, you won't kill. Coveting is at the root of all sins against others. If I don't covet your car, I won't steal it. If I don't covet your money, I won't steal it et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. So, he said, the problem is not the law, but verse 8, but sin taking opportunity through the commandment produced in me – coveting of every kind. For apart from the law, sin is dead.

Notice, I don't even know [27:30] I'm sinning. I don't have any knowledge of it, but if I – the law tells me. And then, there's something about a sinful human being, he seems to indicate, that once I know that what I'm doing is against the law, I want to do it all the more. This is a problem since Genesis 3.

So he says, verse 14, we know that the law is spiritual, but I'm of the flesh sold into bondage to sin. Problem's not of the law; the problem's with [28:00] me. So, he knows that God will deliver him from the body of death through Christ. But you see, the law is his friend here because it's bringing him to a knowledge of his dependence on God, his need of salvation. But, he goes on in a variety of places to show that those who love God are those [28:30] who will fulfill the commandments – who will do them. How?

How is this the case? Only through the grace and the power of God, and that there's no merit in us doing this. Because, first of all, God gave us the knowledge that we needed to do it. Second of all, God gave us the power through the Holy Spirit to do it. So, [29:00] exactly what sort of credit do we take for this. The other interesting thing is God rewards us for doing what he empowers us to do – that's generous.

it really is like little kids. You teach them how to do a chore. You help them do a chore. You end up doing more – it takes you longer to help 'em learn how to do it than it would to do it yourself, and then, you give them – often, my dog, when he hears an odd noise, cocks [29:30] his head to look at it. My dad would probably do it if he heard.

And then, you might even give him some money [laughs] for carrying out the task. You're rewarding them for doing what you empowered and taught them and helped them do – this to his grace. It's all of God, you see. From the beginning to the end, there's no merit in it. And so, back to yesterday, whether you want to describe it as – okay this – God gives you the faith. Then, he imputes to you the righteousness.

And then, after that, at that point, he helps you to do all [30:00] these – fine with me. As long as there's – or you talk about a different system. I continue to work that over. But, the point is all of us must say there is no merit in us that brings salvation and that if we are a new creature in Jesus Christ, we will, indeed, because of his power and his grace and his love and his help and his prodding and his conviction – we will [30:30] keep the law.

You say, does that mean sinless perfection? Well, did it ever mean sinless perfection? The answer is no. The sacrificial system was always right in the middle of that thing. So, when you read 1 John, he said, man, 1 John, he sure seems to act like if we're Christians, we won't practice sin. It won't be our habit. It won't be what we do. It will bother us if we do it.

Is he talking about sinless perfection? No, he kicks off the books with verses 9 and 10 – confess [31:00] your sins. If we say we haven't sinned, we lie. And he said, "Confess your sin and God is just and right to forgive you your sins." That's on a daily basis.

So, if your conscious is very tender – and that's a good thing – and you say, "Boy, I'm no covenant keeper. I sin every day." You need to go back and make sure your definition of covenant keeper is correct, because there was confession of sin by the covenant keepers [31:30] in the Old Testament.

There were sacrifices for sin by the covenant keepers in the Old Testament. And in the New Testament, the covenant keepers that John's talking about do confess their sins. If you're expecting sinless perfection in order for you to be right with God, either as a Christian or before, you're gonna be either disappointed, frustrated or both.

Understand, then, that Paul says, "Living will follow." He says [32:00] it in Romans. He says it in Ephesians 2 in that classic statement of how we're saved – by grace are we saved through faith, not of works or we would boast. We have nothing to boast about before God. But then, he says, "We then do the works that He has created us to do." But again, it's God having sealed us with the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1 that does it.

And then, of course, if you go on to Galatians Chapter [32:30] 3, Paul reminds us – look, you Galatians, do you want to go back and be saved by works of the law? – It's impossible. It's impossible – you can't – never could do it, can't do it now. Never was the standard – can't do it. It's not the standard now.

Not only that, Christ has come now. Here's the question that you liked here. Galatians 3:19, like a straightforward question – why the law then? [Laughs] That's clear enough. It was [33:00] added because of transgressions. In other words, we can't have a holy community unless we have a law that defines it, and says it forth, "It was ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator until the seeds would come

to whom the promise had been made. Till Christ would come, and he would keep it fully and would help us to do so.

Now, the mediator is not for one party only, whereas God is only one. Is the law then contrary to the promises God made? – Never be. For if the law had been given, which is able to [33:30] impart life and righteous would, indeed, have been based on law. Now, the way of putting what Paul just said – the law was never intended to impart everlasting life – never been its intention. It always had another purpose.

And then it said, before faith came we – he's talking about himself and the Galatians – people who lived post-Jesus Christ – were kept in custody until the law had been shot up to the face, which is later to be revealed. Therefore, the law has become our tutor, helping get us to [34:00] Christ. So, on the one hand, the law seems so negative because it points out what's wrong with me.

But if that's what it takes to get me to Christ, it is my tutor, my friend and the glory of god. And again, it's for my benefit and protection. And if it allows us to live in a way that would bring other to Christ through our godliness, it's a friend and a benefit and a protection to others. James [34:30] is pretty strong too, as you know. Chapter 2, it says – I know some of you say, "I don't think he's talking about Paul. I think he's dealing with the church members he's got – most of these letters do.

So, you say, "Well, you know, I have my faith. There are no works." "What good is that?", he asks. He doesn't even think that that's evidence at all that you know Christ. He says, "I'll show you my faith by my works." Then, he says, "I'll show you I have faith by what I do for God."

He never says [35:00] my works produce my faith; my works are the way I got to Christ. He says, I'm gonna show you that I love the Lord by what I do. What good does it do if you come upon somebody and they're cold and hungry and say, "be warmed and filled." That's hardly faith. And so, again, what is the function of the law?

It teaches us to be in community, pleasing [35:30] God. It is evidence of a relationship. It is not constitutive of a relationship. It doesn't constitute a relationship with God. It gives evidence of a relationship with God, and that's been true since Exodus 20 and verse 2.

He doesn't say, "Now here's some commandments that if you will keep, I will be the Lord your God." He says, "I am the Lord, your God, who led you out of Egypt." That relationship is established. The evidence [36:00] of the relationship would be the relationship to the law.

And I think that remains true because that seems to be the way Jesus is treating it in Matthew 5. Seems to be the way I think Paul is treating it and James is treating it. I think it wards off works salvation because there's no merit in it. Because it's the result of relationship, not cause of it. It's all given by God and empowered [36:30] by God. I can't take credit for it.

But, it also wards off libertinism in Christians which says, "I'm saved. I don't have to do anything." That too is dangerous. I don't know what's the most dangerous. We can argue that. That would be an important point, wouldn't it? We can sit here and argue, "What's worse? Believing you're saved by works or believing if you're saved you don't do anything?"

I don't know what's worse because I'm not sure either one's a [37:00] Christian. [Laughs] What sort of non-Christian is worse? I don't know. I'd really prefer to live next door to a legalist, wouldn't you? [Laughs] Somebody who keeps the place clean, makes sure the garbage is out, and they're trying to work their way up – than you would with somebody who's a libertine.

But, the point being, it wards off both. And it gives God the credit and God the glory and creates a community that would be a light on a hill. Now, if you say what's [37:30] wrong with this picture – how we act, how I act – what's wrong with this picture? Is law sin? – No. Is God's salvation inadequate? – No. Is my obedience perfect? – No.

But still, the law has its purpose. And once we understand that keeping the law does not save because it never did, I think it changes a whole host of things for [38:00] us. Paul says if you use the law for the purpose it was not intended – he goes down to 1 Timothy 1 – you know, talk about people who were teaching the law in all sorts of "squirrely" ways – that's a biblical term – and says the law is good if it's used to identify and inhibit sin. [Laughs] But, if you want to use it for something else – speculation or for the means to get saved or for any other number of abuses – Well then, you're not using it lawfully.

You're not using the law for the intention [38:30] it was given. That leaves us with some questions about what remains relevant from the law. And that – for that, we would spend some time in Hebrews. But questions and comments at this time – give me a chance to sip the little coffee. Yeah, sure.

Audience Member: [38:47] [inaudible][38:49]

Paul: [38:52] For the Old Testament person, this is the best answer that I have to that question is really Hebrews 11, which indicates some things that aren't spelled out in the Old Testament text. For instance, that Moses considered serving Christ more important than the riches of Egypt and Pharaoh. It's very clear to me that Isaiah and Jeremiah had [39:30] faith in the coming Messiah.

And that that was faith in God's promises and God's word. And that Abraham did too in Hebrews 11 points them out as people who did. That's fair enough from the Old Testament. Because if, as I believe, Moses is the author of Genesis 3:15, is the author of Deuteronomy 18, and some of these other passages, he understood, [40:00] and that Jesus said Moses wrote of me.

And the prophet certainly, it's – Isaiah has this multi-faceted portrait of a coming savior – Jeremiah, Ezekiel, [inaudible][40:12]. What is less clear to me is what the people we never read about – the run of the mill works for bringing a sacrifice in Leviticus. We have two options and, [40:30] I think, they're both solid.

One is, if it's true of the big names, it's probably true of the small names too. But it's also true that every person who brought a sacrifice to God because God required it – because his word said so – were operating in faith and belief and obedience to what God had told them. And that shows faith. So, it's faith either [41:00] way.

The text in Leviticus does not tell us how much that faith was based on a coming Messiah, in my view. Subsequent biblical theology helps to see that that's what it was. But it is both faith in what they knew to be true now – to be explicitly God's word now. But also, to whatever extent they were given promissory [41:30] note, if you will. They believed that.

But they all believed that they couldn't save themselves, that sacrificed was needed, that faith in God's promise was required – and that's what they brought. But, I do believe it was a remnant – as the text talks about it – a minority, just like it is today.

Audience Member: [41:51] [inaudible][41:53]

Paul: [41:54] In my opinion, anybody who ever brought a sacrifice with the right attitude had to come by [42:00] faith. And the right attitude would be, "I'm a sinner. I must do this because God has asked me to make things right. I am such a helpless sinner before God that I must bring a dumb animal to help me be forgiven. I must believe the promises and the teachings of God to true or I won't bring this."

Why would you? – It's expensive and time-consuming. [42:30] I've never understood people who went to church when they didn't believe it. But I do know there are folks who would answer my question different. Well, for community standards and for a lot of other things. So that was one or two questions.

Audience Member: [42:44] Um, I think the second half, in a lot of ways, is not evidence of the right way to think of God.

Paul: [42:49] Right.

Audience Member: [42:49] And it says...

Paul: [42:51] Can it be counterfeited? Can we be filled by...? – Oh, yes, of course. See, right, but there's no [43:00] sure way for us to know their heart. If a Pharisee said I don't confess to Jesus, that was easy enough to see. But it's sometimes harder – you're one of our baptists, right?

Audience Member: [43:13] Yeah.

Paul: [43:13] Particularly, in a church where someone, at some point in their time, agreed to be baptized. If infant baptism is in play, you know, they might grow up and say, "Well, you know, those were my parents." That's easier to see, [43:30] maybe. But, I can think of several cases where, if you get a person who has agreed to be baptized by believer's baptism, by immersion at whatever age and live a pretty good moral life, it's not as easy to see that they're a Pharisee – there's nothing in the heart.

One of the scariest passages in 1 John, though, [44:00] gives the clues – How do we know? Remember in 1 John 3, we know we have passed from death unto life because – what? – it's one of the few times the Bible says we know we've passed from death unto life. Here's evidence, if we what...?

Audience Member: [44:14] [inaudible][44:15]

Paul: [44:15] Love the brothers. I've been thinking of a man right now – I hope this isn't judgmental in the wrong sort of sense. I hope it's discerning – that's a – that's good Christian talk. I can only say this individual – member [44:30] of a southern baptist church – in his business, if he sold me something, I

would have no question that it was in whatever order he said it was. He would not sell me something broke. He would not cheat me.

I know that. I also know that he has caused dissention and trouble in the church for at – I only know about 30 years. There may be [45:00] longer. This is the frightening part – deacons talk to him and about three preachers on – and you just have to know the culture. They said, "We're here to talk to you because you can't keep running our preachers off." Just make life so miserable that if there's some place less miserable that pays reasonably, they're willing to talk to a [inaudible][45:18] committee. [Laughs]

He named the pastor and said, "I got mad at that person, and I haven't forgiven him. And I never will." I think the wrong response was made. I talked to my father about this. He stuck with it, and the guy said, "What are you going to do? Kick me out of the church?" My father said, "I'm willing." If this is your attitude, I'm willing.

Because you're going to take it out on whatever preacher's handy. Here was the frightening part – I haven't forgiven that person, and I never will. And I will take it out. I mean, the subtext was, "I will take it out on neighbors around [46:00] me." The concern I had was we know we've passed from death unto life because we love the brothers. If you practice sin, you don't know God. He was satisfied to hate this guy till the day he died, knowing he professed intent to repent.

It's not like we're left totally without – I would just say, a combative, mean, stupid person who, having been taught differently, will not repent is – I don't care how many times they've been baptized [46:31] or been down the aisle or wherever they've been, it's hard to believe by biblical evidence those are believers. And they're in all kinds of churches.

Audience Member: [46:42] [inaudible][46:45]

Paul: [46:48] He hardly has any. See, that was the other thing that embitters him. It's a smaller church, but see, he has no leadership role at all. That too embitters him. Yeah, but you're [47:00] right, there are those who would abuse it. And would constantly do so, even though they know it's wrong. But here's the point – here's the problem. I'm not saying he would be saved if he were a nicer man. [Laughs]

Because there are lots of nice people. Our pastors would have said, "Yes, there are lost people in the community who claim nothing about God, who treated him nicer than this guy." But the point is, those are harder to see. But we can always be [47:30] – There are things we don't know too. How do you account for people who serve the Lord for a long time and who literally now deny the faith and live in open sin?

And if you've ever had somebody close to you like that, it grieves you. See, you spend time wondering how is it between them and God? It gets more acute because, you know, I just attended a funeral a few weeks ago – my [48:00] best friend in high school. See, it's that kind of situation. So we can't know perfectly – that's one of those secret things that belong to God.

But I can know that in my own life, and in my teaching, that Godly living is the outflow of a relationship with God and has been from the beginning of the text on down. And I try to make sure people understand that no, I'm not talking about that this contributes anything to your salvation. But it contributes everything to your [48:30] witness. And that the standard is therefore important because we

are serving a holy God whose character is pure, whose actions are pure, even when we're not sure they are.

I think by now we've mostly mentioned most of the text that we had – that you had read – Leviticus, and Galatians and Peter. And so, again, I think that we need to remember that [49:00] Christ set aside parts of the law. He declared all foods clean, didn't he? In Mark's gospel – isn't it Marks 7:19? By his death on the cross, all sacrifices – and one way to be put it, he removed the need for sacrifices. Another of what he said, all sacrifices were subsumed in him.

All of them came together in him. All the sacrifice for any sort of sin, they were all placed upon him. And here's another one that requires us to think a bit in our own roles as ministers. You don't need a high priest anymore because he is the high priest and the mediator of the covenant. Or to put it another way, all the priests are wrapped up in him.

Paul makes it pretty clear in his writings to the [50:00] Romans, Chapter 13 and others – it has not been given to Christians the power to punish law-breakers. In other words, the church has not been given the power – say, for instance, to write traffic tickets, imprison people, carry out punishments – that's been given to the states. However, there's nowhere the Bible says that Christians cannot hold up these [50:30] standards, and as witness, urge acceptance of higher standards that are found in scripture.

Audience Member: [50:39] You mean, like, to the world or whatever...?

Paul: [50:44] I think so. Because, in some cases, the world doesn't know or hasn't taught about – I mean, this is the kind of saying that says – hasn't thought that certain things are wrong and harmful. Of course, the problem is [51:00] we go on and on in human history. We know more and more about people. In today's climate, if you say something is wrong, it is taken as a negative comment on a particular person or persons.

Because it's a very dicey thing these days to say this is wrong, because there's a group of people doing it. Because, then, there's an advocate group that will immediately say we are calling us bad. But, there are times where the church can do that. But I [51:30] think, also, the Christians can always hold up the standard of scripture of fairness and justice, lack of oppression... I think you can always hold up standards that benefit the community. I think these are things that, certainly, we can do.

Now, of course, because the Bible is pretty silent on the following issue, Christians have disagreed to what extent do we press our claims and how? So that you'll have a more [52:00] [inaudible][52:01] person who would say, "My example alone is all I can do." A more activist person is going to say, "Oh no, man, that's not..." [Laughs] If we wait till people figure out that this is the right thing to do, we're going to be sitting in this situation forever.

The Bible never explains to us directly – this is back to the principial points and how to apply God's word. The Bible doesn't tell us exactly how [52:30] to set forth and integrate a lunch counter or how you do some other things – how you punish a bunch of freshmen for doing thus and so. How do you even set up the standard? So, you happen to use principles to go to work and to do it. And part of the wisdom issue is going to be, "to what extent do we press our claims and how."

That's always part of the tough one. But I think, yes, Christians have the responsibility to hold up godly standard. And here's the other one, a lot of times, Christians [53:00] get the reputation – sometimes, justly so – of always – of complaining. Then, another thing we might do is really clap our hands loudly and be happy when a law that we considered to be just and right and good and godly is upheld or passed.

It might be nice to say, "Way to go, that looks good, we're with you on that one." Maybe, as often as we say, "what the heck was that." [Laughs] So, but the work must be [53:30] done. The principles are laid out. And all the principles, as far as I'm concerned, are for the benefit of those who would live by them. And seeing it in that sense, even a non-believer can benefit from God's standards.

It is better for the person to keep God's standards than it is for them not to do so. But, it is only a Christian who can fully give a testimony and say that I do these things and I'm unable to do these [54:00] things at all because of Christ – because of my relationship with him. And because of my relationship with him, I love this community; I love these people or I'm trying to. And thus, we live this way. Yeah, other questions are coming – yes, sir?

Audience Member: [54:20] [inaudible][54:23] the Lord will empower. [inaudible][54:24] but they don't want to, if they have [inaudible][54:30].

Paul: [54:31] Yeah. Let's do some things before we sit in judgment because we may have to eventually. They may live in such a way that we would have to judge that they're either not believers or so harmful to the community that something needs to be done. Before that day comes, let's try a few things. In the law, the priests were supposed to teach the people the truth. Let's make sure that's been done.

I shall never forget as long as I live – I think, as long as I have a conscious mind, remember two deacons come into the study at the church and saying, “You know we have a problem. These guys never brought a joy to me. They usually brought problems. But that's alright, they're good men.” We baptized so and so two weeks ago. Yes, and I was – big church said, do you realize that that guy is living with a woman – they're not married.

I said no. Then, I said, "Is he here?" – Yeah. Bring him in. I said bring the study. You know, I said – I learned this from my father a long time ago – I said to him – I asked him, "Now, is this situation – you're living with this woman?" He said yes. I said [55:30] do you realize that the Bible teaches other than that? He said, "You know, I was suspicious it did." [Laughter] I didn't think that was probably right – I wasn't sure.

He wasn't lying to me cos, again – there was nothing – yeah, that's what we're doing. Yeah, yeah... What confused him, however, was that the woman was a member of another church somewhere. She was kind of the only Christian he knew and so, who is he to – So, I had already asked the deacons and I said, "Now, you can't just [56:00] criticize this man." He has to have a place to go. If he moves out, he has to have a place to go.

This one deacon, God bless him, on the write-up, he said, "He can live with me or in one of my rental properties as long as he needs to." So what did the guy do? Once he knew what was right, he did the right thing. Now, this is an extreme example but, in this culture, I'm not too sure how extreme a lot of things are gonna get. People simply don't know. Let's make sure they know what's right first.

Then, let's try to [56:30] create ways in which we can be helpful to them. Let's make sure that we're teaching the way the priests were supposed to. Let's make sure we're helping the way the priests were supposed to. Let's not blame ourselves then, though, if the people say no. But let's make sure and then let's understand that this is a growth in godliness, not an automatic principle.

The question is, "Will there be growth?" Or, as John says, is there the practice of sin? When [57:00] I say God empowers – of course, as I've also been saying, people have to believe and do that by faith. They must turn to God. They must believe. They must trust in him. They must do that – and He empowers.

But I would not blame God, and in certain points, I don't blame the person all that much. We try to instruct. We try to help. We try to lead. We try to create opportunities. At least in the culture where I lived most of the time, if I assume [57:30] that everybody knows what the Bible teaches about certain morals, I'm just out of touch. And so, one of the favorite stories of one pastor friend of mine – he says he had people come to him and say they were new Christians.

They said, "What is tithing?" We know we're supposed to do it, and we want to be obedient to God. They were only slightly sobered when they found out what it was. [Laughter] "Oh – oh, it's money. Oh, okay." But they didn't [58:00] know. They literally didn't know. So, let's make sure that some of these things are being done, and then let's make sure that a chance for growth has occurred. Let's make sure that indeed they are practicing sin willfully and happily – or at least willfully and intently – before we make that judgment.

But let's also comfort the people with a tender conscience who are struggling that this is – let me take [58:30] Joshua 1. Joshua was on a life journey. He had work to do. He was supposed to be helping Israel, leading Israel and doing all that. And along the way, he was supposed to be meditating on the word of God. It was a journey. It was life process.

Let's encourage people. And one of the nicest things you can do as a pastor is to say to them, "You know, let me be honest with you. When you started in Christ, this is where you were and though you are not as far as you may want to be or we'd like to see, you're not there anymore. You've [59:00] moved forward." And because I've just noticed that a whole lot of tender consciences feel like they've just not gotten anywhere with the lord when that isn't so.

But also, there's the rebuking part. I've been positive now, but there are some Christians – and I think they are Christians – that unless you say to them, "I love you, but you're doing the wrong thing. And we will support you in your repentance and help you any way we can, but you are doing the wrong thing. And I can't just [59:30] keep letting you do it without pointing it out." That's hard work.

For those who love to point out other people's fault, it's hard work to do it and love. For those who are reluctant to do so, it's hard to point 'em out. But, I think it has to be done. Those are some pastoral things to say, but the power of God is always there as they believe and walk with God. God does it. That's one of the mysteries, isn't it? God does it, and we have to [01:00:00] obey.

We obey, but it's God doing it. I don't know how to work all that out in a good, linear fashion. But the Bible teaches I wouldn't even want to do it, unless God showed me the way. Yes, sir?

Audience Member: [01:00:11] [inaudible][01:00:14]

Paul: [01:00:17] My experience in the episcopal church has been rich and deep. But, I had the same question from the class. I'll just do it briefly. I said to them I think they have [01:00:30] a high view of what it means to be God's representative to the people. They have a high view of that. The average episcopal – the episcopal church as a whole, even in the conservative wing – in my view – there is a growing conservative movement – has an abnormally low view of the priest's responsibility to teach and preach the word of God.

Though there has [01:01:00] been a growing conservative movement in the episcopal church, there has not yet come a solid, strong preaching tradition like there has been in Britain. And that needs to happen. The other thing that I've said to Episcopians – let's make sure we don't confuse our sacramental theology to the point that we think that what you're doing is saving the people.

Remember [01:01:30] you're God's representative, not God. When you take the responsibility – see, every week, doing all sorts of things – interceding for the people, absolving them of sins – It's easy to believe it's what you are doing for them and to become... But, if I could do anything for the Episcopal Church in America, even the evangelicals, it would be to remind them that the priests [01:02:00] teach the word.

And it's really interesting because many of the African students we had at Trinity thought that was – surely, that was not a problem. But once they attended enough churches and heard enough sermons, even from good and loving and good, Bible-believing people, they could see the problem. The episcopal church, USA has had a – the conservatives were outside of it for so long that, right now, a lot of the [01:02:30] models for ministry they still have are not evangelical models.

So, if your model for preaching has been kind of a liberal values-oriented 10 minute sermon, until some good models come along – and you know you have some good ones, even in this city. Until some decent models come along and there are enough of them for long enough and people follow 'em – you know you have a problem. I've run into Anglican priests who [01:03:00] really thought, in a way, that they were re-sacrificing Jesus every week.

They were post-Catholic on the mask. And so, I think this is dangerous – that's a danger too, the sacramental theology going too far. So, those were some of the things. But this idea of the priest teaching and also interceding through prayer more than just during the Eucharist – I thought was – was significant. Thought that's certainly, uh, an emphasis.

I don't know, I guess I would answer the [01:03:30] question differently to [inaudible][01:03:33] but the prayer emphasis would certainly be one for Baptist pastors. Methodists are all perfect. [Laughter] The Presbyterians as well, so we'll get to them later. Thank you for your help today. We're going to look at God's ruling of history.

Though I can't give you the test questions until I see what we've covered for a while, do know that the reading is always [01:04:00] valuable [laughs] for answering the questions. And it's easy to refer back when you're writing than it is to read it for the very first time. So, I'd just encourage you along those lines. Thank you.

Chapter 9

The God of History (part 1)

I want to conclude the discussion of the, the law with questions or comments you'll have in a moment but I felt like we had barely mentioned a few hermeneutical principles that would help answer the question for people what remains of the law. If they're fairly negative, or weary, or something they say, "How much of this do we have to keep?" This might help to answer. If they're enthusiastic, and buoyant, and gung-ho, [00:45] and say, "How much of this do we get to do," perhaps this would also help.

But some hermeneutical principles, these are not perfect because the Bible does not give us a list. Here are five ways you will know that the Old Testament should be taken seriously today. We do have some specific statements in scripture but we also have to draw some principles. Because of this, [01:15] we must be humble in our approach and do the best we can and know that someone else's wisdom may supplement ours, or improve on it, or absolutely blast out to the water parts of it.

We'll, I'll do the best we can. We can follow-up with questions there. I attempted at least a bit with God's holiness but an adequate job when we talked about Leviticus and when we were talking about the law being given by a Holy God [01:45] who is already in relationship with these people, giving them a law that would give evidence that they belong to him and that they're a kingdom of peace, a holy nation ready to serve him.

So the covenant keeping would be a witness of a relationship they have with God that would indeed impress the other nations. But [inaudible][02:09] hermeneutics we had started with this but at least we can say principle number one, [02:15] if the new testament explicitly sets aside a part of the Old Testament, then we would consider it not relevant as far as keeping the code. It might be relevant to give us a principle about God or about life.

Mark 7:19, the text [02:45] declares all foods clean. Sets it straight-forward parenthetical statement. Some think it's an addition to the text, but I think it's the best evidence is that it's not thus Jesus declared all foods clean. The kind of nice, crisp statement we like to have when we're asking a question. If you want to eat pork, may you do so. Jesus declared all foods clean. Armadillos, opossums, [03:15] as you wish, Jesus declared all foods clean.

That does not mean that God commanded us to eat all foods but as the New Testament unfolds it's pretty clear that in more than one place, it is evident that food laws are not supposed to be an issue when Christians are doing their work. Food laws are not [03:45 supposed to be an issue.

So, that's one and note there's a hermeneutical principle different than if the New Testament doesn't repeat it, we don't have to do it. It's very different than to say there must be an explicit statement to the contrary for us not to set it aside. Now, despite what some people would think of the Old Testament, this is a, an amazingly small amount [04:15] of text, isn't it?

Not a great deal of material on that because a lot of the sermons about people who deal with Old Testament laws are about the Pharisees. And you can get quite a grocery list of Pharisaical rules and regulations and it often talked about the food laws and, and people if they know anything about current

Orthodox Judaism, they would know that there were things Jewish folks will or will not eat [04:45] who are in that tradition.

So, they get the idea that there must be some huge section on what you can eat and what you can't. It's a pretty small segment. Nonetheless, there it is. A second principle, if the life and ministry of Jesus directly sets aside material, then this would be or replaces it. [05:15] That's the other issue. Set aside makes it sound like we're not going to use it anymore. Replaces it, or fulfills it, or takes it up into himself indicates that there was a past for this material and there is a present for it in Christ.

So it wasn't like Jesus said, "Well, forget that." It simply was taken up into His own work. And again, it's helpful to have Biblical testimony at this point so that when you're reading a text [05:45] well, even the Old Testament, the indications in the future there'll be a new covenant, which indicates there will be new principles. So the Old Testament itself begins to give you the clue that something new will happen.

When you get to the book of Hebrews, there are some explicit statements all under the theme that Christ is greater and [06:15] it is important for us to see, in my view, but the text teaches that Christ is greater than something God Himself administered, something that was great. Christ was greater than something great. In America there's a linguistic tendency to say if something is better to assume something is wrong with the other thing.

If you say, "My new car is better than the old one." You often have people ask you, "What was wrong with the old one? [06:45] Did it break down a lot on you?" Now you could've said, "I had the best Ford in the world. Now I have the best Buick in the world or the best Jaguar in the world," or whatever car hierarchy you've got in your mind, or God forbid something happens to you and your spouse marries and says the following, "This is a better marriage than the last one."

[07:15] The assumption is often, "Okay, was this person bad to you? Were they this, that, and the other?" No, you might say, "No, they were perfectly fine, really good people but this is just better." So we have to learn to think that something can be greater than something great. I honestly believe sometimes the things are very simple. I honestly believe that when you tell some folks that Christ is better than the old covenant, all of a sudden, at least in American [inaudible][07:44], the old must be really bad.

[07:45] Of course to call something old in American culture is typically not good anyway. Now I noticed in Singapore and some other cultures I've been around, they thought old was a good thing, oh, time-tested, long-term, stability, stuff like that. I mean it just had a whole different phrase to it. So Christ is greater than, according to Hebrews 7, greater than the Old Testament priesthood that [08:15] He is the high priest and there is no need for a high priest now.

Now I don't say that to make any kind of ecclesiastical comment. That isn't the goal of my statement. You can figure out what this would mean. But in chapter 7 is Christ is a greater high priest who according to Hebrews 8 has a greater ministry and [08:45] some comparisons, just pick the best high priest ever, the most godly one. The one that loved, they would still have to go into the holy of holies annually to do what?

First of all, make sacrifice for their own sins. Christ says no need to do that. So you can take the best priest ever, cannot measure up to Jesus. Christ also, out of this text, also notes that [09:15] even the-the greatest high priest ever, the most wonderful would have to offer these sacrifices for the people annually. Now as we know that's not too bad. There are some annual renewals we don't like, licensing our car, updating our insurance, doing this or that that.

We really don't enjoy certain annual things but the facts are an annual renewal is not a bad thing. It's not so bad. [09:45] But it is greater if it is once for all in the sacrifice and Christ is greater in that manner. In that whatever we mean by the Lord's Supper, whatever we would mean by Eucharist, whatever we would mean by communion, we would not mean that Christ is being re-sacrificed.

The sacrifice is made once for all and there is no need for another. [10:15] So, He is greater than the sacrifice and then replaces him if He replaces the day of atonement, which is the once a year sacrifice which they are all [inaudible][10:31] under, the all the sacrifices are brought together, their historical continuity runs, into Christ and stays in Him [10:45] forever. Any sacrifice that was ever needed to made, we talked about class a little bit yesterday that indeed Christ who was the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world was always the basis for any kind of sacrifice whether or not, I would say, whether or not the people who were following God's word were aware of that fully or not.

So, Christ is a better ministry. He was made a better sacrifice. [11:15] He is a better priest according to Hebrews 8, therefore he is the maker of a better covenant. Citing Romans 31, the new covenant passage reminding the Hebrews that what was wrong with the old covenant was the people wouldn't keep it. Human rebellion was a problem. So, Christ is the mediator of a better covenant because he has a better ministry, a better sacrifice, therefore [11:45] when we look to this principle and on down into chapter 10, which talks about Christ being the sacrifice, it being a finished sacrifice, etc., what Hebrews seems to be saying is the reason we would not offer sacrifices now, we would not have a high priest now, we would not enter into the holy of holies now to offer these things is because of the work of Christ.

And we have explicit testimony [12:15] of that fact. What about Passover? Christ transforms Passover into the Lord's Supper as we see. Does that mean Passover is set aside? Again, language like that in-in one way yes, but in another way we're saying again, no, its journey flows into the life and work of Christ is transformed by it and continues in that new form.

But notice that when I saw it is the work of Christ and that we have evidence in the scripture. [12:45] That parts of the scripture therefore are-are no longer, we no longer offer sacrifice, Leviticus 1 through 7 because the sacrifice has been offered. We don't have the kind of priesthood that's in Leviticus 8 through 10, or if we really want to be specific, Exodus 29. We have the high priest because you have a new high priest but then I've had some students say, "Well, for some reason the Sabbath really bugs people."

[13:15] I think it goes back to when we were children and we say we don't want to take our nap. "You can't make me take my nap." We want to run our own time. From the time we're little bitty we seem to understand that our life consists of a time that we have and we want to run it. Well, fair enough, but I've had students say, "Well, so then the same thing, Christ is our Sabbath. He is our rest, isn't he? So we don't need the Sabbath."

I, without explicit [13:45] Biblical testimony along those lines about it, therefore there not being the need for the Sabbath barring some kind of more explicit connection, though Christ did, we do rest in Him. The problem is Christ is everything then. Christ is our wisdom so we don't need to think. We can take that to extreme but the Bible, in this case as far as Christ being the sacrifice, being the priest, being the sanctuary even, you have straightforward statements of that.

[14:15] A third principle, which is already beginning to get more difficult. We're kind of going a bit in descending order toward more principle, more wisdom-based and we have to start being more humble even about what we know than usual. Point three is there are some laws that seem to be specifically related to Israel [14:45] as a national political entity that are not prerogatives given to the church or to any

other society. Now here comes the difficulty. So you say, "Okay, what do you mean?" Well, like we said a day or two ago, the church does not have the right under God even if it believes sin X deserves [15:15] punishment of X.

And I'm talking about church discipline here. I'm saying somebody steals, or kills, or something. We do not have the right to carry out the punishment. That authority is not given to the church. So you have to ask, well I remember a few years ago when a person fairly calmly killed an abortion doctor and said that, [15:45] "This is God's Law carrying out God's punishment for the sin against God's Law."

Even if you granted the premise, you cannot grant the action. It is not given to that person by God to carry out an execution for the government. Romans 13 would be key here, but already you begin to say, "Okay, well what about other things?" Even if we grant that one at [16:15] what point do you say, "This legislation?" Here's the difficulty because every, whether you're talking about Baptist, Presbyterians, Anglicans, the Methodist, or anybody else, [inaudible][16:28] whoever you've got in the room, bottom line is every group is going to say something, if they say anything, about continuing the moral principles of the Law, right?

But, virtually all of those would [16:45] say the penalties of some of those laws associated with them might either be more than we would give or a maximum sentence and not necessary pending on the Old Testament context. So, the question then would come, and this is where we have to be humble. We have to do some work and we might as well admit it and get on with it, if you say the penalty doesn't belong to the Church, can the Church also have the right [17:15] to argue for the principle itself?

Am I making myself clear? If you say it's not up to you to say someone could be put to death for thing X or punished in this way for thing X, how is it that you can also say that we know that it remains relevant that thing X is wrong? And again, it most often comes up with whatever hot button issue the church is talking about so that a discussion like this on [17:45] the, and again, it's just what I've heard a lot. It's not one that fascinates me really, but the issue of homosexuality.

But somebody will say, "Yes, we think is wrong." Oh, well would you stone them then? Or we think thing X is pedophilia. Well, would you stone them then? Then it just kind of depends on who you are as to your answer. You know, you might argue, "No, I would wish for something swifter," or you'd say, [18:15] "Well, I don't know." But you see the problem, right?

It's pretty easy for us to say, "Okay, we're not a theocracy setup with a divinely appointed king." And if we understand the Bible correctly, that's not going to exist again until Christ comes. So that one you can see and you can see it Biblically, but some of the principles and even ones that it seems like the New Testament seems to say [18:45] we know these things are wrong and we don't want them in the Church and we will take action in the Church even to exclude a person, Corinthians I.

Really only a couple three passages on church discipline in the New Testament but one of them you hear is an individual that it's either committing incest with his mother or more likely married to his step-mother, something like that and Paul says, "Take action." Paul talks [19:15] about turning someone over to Satan so they won't sin, which is a pretty serious comment to make.

But, so the New Testament says we know that things are right and wrong. We don't want them in the Church and we will take both loving and whatever action it takes. I think we ought to note how Paul says in Corinthians II you take this person back once they've repented. That's interesting, but it doesn't talk about how, [19:45] this is what I was saying yesterday, it does not talk about in what manner that we would advocate, pursue, or push for these principles in a government.

If someone says that shouldn't be done? I don't agree with that. I think that-that leads us to principles, and wisdom, and other Christian attitudes and characteristics. And I'm certain it's one thing to hold this discussion point in the United States, which does not [20:15] have a-an identified, an official state religion as opposed to a country where Christianity would be the established religion to say nothing of what it would be like to be a Christian say in-in an Islamic country or something else.

So I understand that our perspective on this and our interest would change from culture to culture. I do know the principle is true [20:45] that if a law is [inaudible][20:49] to Israel's theocracy, whether it's a Davidic king, I don't think America, whatever America is going to be held responsible for or Kenya's going to be held responsible for. I don't think it's going to be held responsible under God for not having a Davidic king.

That's one I think we're going to get a free-pass on. That one we could see but there are other that are tougher to see and that's what I'm trying to say. [21:15]. We could discuss that more as-as necessary but just in general what I would say is the more text that deal with this with a specific issue of morality in the whole of the cannon. I mean if you have a moral issue that's a concern of the law, prophet's writings, Gospels, Paul, and Revelation, and there are vice lists from A to Z in the Bible.

[21:45] Then in that case I think you're on firmer ground saying, "You know, it's not just the Old Testament. It's not just the law, this is a consuming interest." The closer you can come to that, the more you're on firmer ground to say, "Listen, there's a completely Biblical principle," or the more you can attach it to other things. For instance, if we know that adultery, and rape, and this sort of thing is wrong, we would have some idea that the pedophilia laws in Leviticus are connected.

[22:14] It seems the day of the Lord has come outside. There's a day of darkness and not of light. I want you to know that you have to be either in real need of an umbrella or really secure in your manhood to carry this.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [22:32] I used to think real men didn't carry an umbrella. Then I realized real men got wet.

Audience: [22:36] [inaudible]

Doctor House: [22:37] Yes, please ask.

Audience: [22:39] [inaudible]

Doctor House: [22:40] The Sabbath? I think Sabbath keeping is required in both Testaments.

Audience: [22:46] [inaudible][22:46-22:49].

Doctor House: [22:49] I can continue to work with that one. The issue is Jesus never sets the Sabbath aside, does he? In fact, that it's a gift from God to you. The other problem with Sabbath is it's not even one of the 10 commandments. It's in the fabric of creation. God set is aside on the seventh day. And of course, the early church adhered to the Sabbath because in most cases they were trying [23:15] to stay within the Synagogue.

They were not trying to leave Judaism. They were driven, or at least the synagogues. They were driven from it. It's pretty clear that early on they had hopes of the synagogues and their people accepting Christ as Savior and to be able to continue on. There is no explicit statement in the scriptures that the Sabbath is replaced by the Lord's Day. However, [23:45] I must begin to work with principles and wisdom.

That's all I can do. I'm happy for the Lord's Day to replace the Sabbath. I'm happy for that to be the case. I think it is the most logical thing. However, there are cultures where that doesn't make, if the Lord's Day means Sunday, it didn't make much sense to me when I saw the, man it was Anglicans as a matter of act, the Anglican Church in Amman, Jordan always had very [24:15] limited and tiny attendance on Sunday because it was a work day in Jordan.

Friday and Saturday were the days off because it was an Islamic country. Did not make much sense to me, well, I mean they would argue, "We're going to hold out for the Lord's Day as opposed to that but it didn't seem to make a lot of sense to me to have your church services on a time when you knew most of your people could not come.

I would have to again talk about principles and wisdom and do the best I could. [24:45] And for ministers for whom Sunday is not a day of rest if they carry out their duties. I think then it makes sense to say they would have to have a different day of rest. And make no mistake out it. The Sabbath simply means ceasing and rest. They did worship in some cases on Sabbath day but there is no indication that the word Sabbath itself [25:15] means worship.

It does mean in every sense of the word rest and that's I think Jesus basically said, "Sabbath was given to man for man," not man for the Sabbath. In other words here's a gift of rest and on the seventh day God rested and sanctified, make holy, that day. The principle to me is one day in seven. I think the Lord's Day is the most likely day for Christians. [25:45] But you see, that's not even true in the United States anymore. That's a day when a lot of people go to Church, but it's been a long time. I mean it's been within my memory, but there's no effort amongst merchants, and factories, and all of this to keep people from working on Sunday.

Again, in the United States we will have several people who if they were to keep their jobs and that may be in issue you want to discuss with them if they're to keep their jobs they must work on Sunday. [26:15] Interestingly enough, so are, that's true with most pastors. If they want to keep their job then just work on Sunday. But you have every right to a day of rest and that's where people start the argument, "You know, well what's rest to me might not be rest to you."

I don't know how to define rest for other people but it is, notice in-in the Old Testament the principle is everybody gets a rest. [26:45] There is not a day of rest for some family members and not for others. It's even a day of rest for the animals. The principle seems to be that a rest, an animal with one day rest in seven, a human being with a rest one day in seven has received an important gift.

So in my opinion I can be wrong. I don't, the New Testament shows the people worshipping [27:15] on the Sabbath, the-the Saturday. It talks about meeting on the Lord's Day. It makes no explicit statement about one replacing the other. So the principle I would work on is it is one day in seven and that God would give us as much wisdom and help as we could to keep that within the context of which we live and only wisdom and the Lord's leading could dictate to you, "I should give up this job [27:45] if it's going to require seven days a week of work, or Sunday, or whatever else." I think you have to take council and do the best you can.

I guess one of my concerns is for people like all of you, or most of you at least, that if we stick with a Sunday only principle, it leaves the minister exhausted and the musician, oh I use minister period, senior pastor, the however that [28:15] goes, but all the elders, the preaching elder, the music elder, the, the, um, organizational elder, and a whole lot of your lay people.

Audience: [28:26] [inaudible-28:26-28:31]

Doctor House: [28:31] I just have to say that in some of the really active churches, the wisdom I would have on it is I have to say to my most dedicated lay people the same thing I say to-to paid ministers, [28:45] "Sunday doesn't seem to be a day of rest if you're volunteer activity is as full and it is the Lord's work but it's full and well, exhausting is too strong of a work, but it takes exertion. Strenuous, that's the word.

I would urge anybody who is working for the Lord under those circumstances, and I would urge other ministers to say you need a day of rest. In fact, the Lord really commands you to [29:15] and so I, this is always interesting with college students, they get into the Sabbath principle. They can see they're running themselves into the ground or something. It's nice to be literalistic at times. The Old Testament view is the day start, tomorrow starts tonight, right?

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [29:33] Which makes sense to the student. So there have been times in my life when I did something like sundown Friday to sundown Saturday when I was very active in ministry. It gave you a 24 hour period. It kept, but it gave you relaxation, rest. [29:45] But I say the same thing to the people and I have to say it and maybe I present it wrong, but I remember being shocked that-that during a lay conference once and the notion that God would indicate that rest is a part of the cycle written. It made them angry because a lot of what people call recreation is just more strenuous activity. It isn't rest. "So, you can't tell me it's not rest to be in three softball leagues?" Yeah, I can just about tell you that.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [30:15] I mean I'm not against softball leagues. You may like softball. That's just fine but you have to ask about rest, "Does it help me love the Lord more with my heart, soul, mind, and strength?

Does it make me easier to live with? Does it make me a better Christian?" Well if not then I've got to wonder about your rest. The other it has to do with your witness to the world of one reason I've been reluctant to say replace, [30:45] I'm not speaking for anybody but myself, but reluctant to place Saturday evening worship for Sunday in my own church attendances. I don't know that my neighbors know that. If they see your car parked in front of the house on Sunday they just don't think you go to church.

You can take time to explain it to them. You can invite them to your service or something. Maybe that's too much. I'm also concerned when people say, "I love the 8:00 service because I can get it over with, and go home, and get on with the day." That's a bit telling, [31:15] but again, in your active church you've got to remember I've been living up North way too long. There's not a church in our community that has Sunday night church, not one. Now I-I've just moved so that's changed, but-but where I live near Pittsburgh, there's not a Sunday night service anywhere.

But as I recall it, if you're a lay volunteer and on Wednesday night you're doing something for the Lord in His church and then Sunday comes and you're [31:45] teaching Sunday school, or working, or doing the nursery, or doing whatever else, or you're a choir member, or you're working with the youth, or you're doing, doing, doing, then you're pretty much in the category of a paid minister as far as your lack of rest goes. Frankly, in the ministry often I have just said, "Sunday is not a day of rest. It's a day of work. I will treat it as such and will not disappoint myself with the notion that I didn't have my day of rest."

[32:15] But I'd be very disappointed if the other day that I picked wasn't. Now, in the ministry of course, even that can get derailed because you're on 24-hour call, really. And if a day off is three days from now as you know and somebody has the nerve to die there will be a funeral.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [32:37] And it's not good form to skip it.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: 32:40] But that's again what I mean. I mean it-it's a good example of where you say, you know, you may end up saying, "This guy is just [32:45] waffling. He's afraid to put rules down." I'm happy to put down rules where I have something explicit or when the principle gets, the Sabbath principle is not an option to me. The carrying out of it I have some explicit instructions. I have some other issues that force me to use principles of wisdom. That's where I think we have to be.

Those are just three basics. We could add to them. But questions or comments now about [33:15] the law, and its makeup, and its purposes, its-it's the reflection on it in the New Testament? Hermeneutical questions I'm happy to-to have some discussion or question but I suppose one of the hot spots in Christian discussion from now on is going to be the role of law, standards, whatever in-in Christianity.

If a church has gotten far enough away from God's standards, [33:45] the distances to how far they've gotten away will be the measure of how difficult it will be to get holiness, and justness, and fairness back into it. Lest we think that the law only begins in Exodus, let's remember as we've said, Sabbath principle

goes way back to creation in Genesis 2:1-3. The basis of treating one another with fairness and kindness go back to Genesis 1:26-31.

So the creation [34:15] principles begin in Genesis and really when you get to Exodus, you're expected to have already had that material in Genesis in mind and in hand. Keep the big-picture context in mind so that we won't make errors when we look at a specific context.

Audience: [inaudible][34:41-34:44]

Doctor House: [34:45] How is it tied to creation? Help me there. The life is in the blood, is-is for sure.

Audience: [34:49] [inaudible][34:49-34:52]

Doctor House: [34:52] I honestly don't recall. I'm not disputing what you're saying. I honestly don't recall it. That's my problem. It is in my view in the food laws for sure.

Audience: [35:02] But it would be covered there.

Doctor House: [35:04] If that is the place where it begins, yeah. Maybe it's in the Noah covenant because it takes about killing animals and things. So that may be what you're thinking of [35:15] but I always took those to be part of the food law and would be if you want blood.

Audience: [35:25] One thing about when you eat a steak like, eat a steak rare.

Doctor House: [35:28] Oh but that's not, they would say if you eat a steak rare, you've still drained the blood out of the animal before they gave you that slice of meat, trust me.

Audience: [35:38] I don't really know.

Doctor House: [35:38] Oh yeah. I'm telling you, they have.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [35:42] So you'd be safe on that one. Even if you had a scruple about it, you'd still be safe.

Audience: [35:47] [inaudible]

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [35:51] Bill is good to go, yeah, he's…

Audience: [35:54] [inaudible]

Doctor House: [35:55] That's right, I mean, uh, yeah, that, you'd be safe there, same thing with poultry, same thing with…Yeah, he's trying to get back before the law is his point.

Audience: [36:05] Not a big deal, I'm not trying to…

Doctor House: [36:07] You're trying to get back before the law but again, if-if you were worried, you'd kosher on the pigs.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [36:16] All right, I want to take up the theme, and this is one that's already been running through from creation, from God setting standards, from God delivering Israel from bondage. We have already been introduced to the notion that God rules history. With the question of openness of God and-and open theism questions, we've already been introduced to [36:45] the some of the debates about to what extent God rules history.

I want us to follow along God ruling history. I'm going to see if this works to be honest with you. If not, it'll be over in a little while and you'll have a break in-between, but I'd like to use God's statements about the land as kind of a vehicle for discussing God's ruling of history. [37:15] Genesis 12:1-9 as I think many of you would know is a absolutely Seminole passage in Old Testament theology. We've referred to it a time or two before. It's going to be prominent in messianic theology, also prominent here. It is God's promises to Abraham.

And I'm going to use Abraham all the way through if it's all right with you. I know there's a name change and that sort of thing or-or if I go back to an Abram and Abraham I'm not trying to make any point. [37:45] Some days I wonder if I'm trying to make any point anyway, but to start with Abraham. And these promises virtually encapsulate the rest of the scripture. In fact, [inaudible][37:57], their Old Testament [inaudible][37:59] said, "There are two sections of scripture, Genesis 12:1-9 and the rest of it," because the promises made to Abraham here are extraordinary.

We know that God has already mentioned, the text has already mentioned in 11:26-32, [38:15] Abram. It seems that God already has a prior relationship with Abraham. The Lord said, "Abram, go forth from

your country, from your relatives, and from your father's house to the land I will show you." And of course Hebrews 11 makes much of this faith journey. "I will make you into a great nation," promise one. But the text has already said to that he has no children because his wife is unable to conceive. He will become a great nation. In other words, he is promised descendants. [38:45] God say, "I will bless you. I'll make your name great." He's promised renown. Descendants and renown so long, so far.

Third, you shall be a blessing. That's kind of a general statement that's going to be heightened as we go. So, so far, great nation, [inaudible][39:13] descendants. "I will bless you and make your name [39:15] great, renowned, and you shall, you'll be a blessing." In other words, you'll be a blessing to others. Third and fourth, "I'll bless those that bless you and curse those that curse you." He's promising protection, really. And fifth, "In you, all the families of the Earth will be blessed."

So, descendants, renowned, that he will be a blessing, protection, and finally, that all families of the Earth will be blessed. [39:45] The creator is saying through this one person's family, all families will be blesses, all nations. When you get to verse 7, yet a sixth promise. Abraham comes to the land of the Canaanites, the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land."

That one single phrase causes much controversy as I suppose as any. [40:15] in the Bible. "To your descendants I will give this land so he built an alter there to the Lord who appeared to him." Now for God to make these promises to Abraham that all families of the Earth would be blessed through him and that we was going to give the land of the Canaanites to Abraham indicates already that God must be able to rule history. He must be able to either effect these promises or know that they're going to happen that Abraham is going [40:45] to have descendants.

As anyone who's had children knows, there are several contingent events, some more basic than others that must come into play for there to be descendants. When my grandfather died, he was a great-great-great-grandfather. As he said, you have to live a long time and unfortunately be helped by immorality for this to occur.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [41:11] But, not all the descendants has been married [41:15] when their children were born, but he was a great-great-great-grandfather. For that to occur, there had to be a lot of contingent events. For there to be descendants, God has to know and/or determine the future but he must be the Lord of history for this to happen. For all families of the

Earth to be blessed through Abraham is the same sort of situation. For God to give Abraham [41:45] the land must mean he has something in mind not only for Abraham but for the Canaanites and it could either be for good or for judgment, blessing or calamity, one or the other.

Why didn't God just give Abraham the land now? By the time you get to Joshua, people are going to ask some questions about the method of conquest, etc. [42:15] An often forgotten passage is the next one that I think is on the board 15:12-16. Abraham has to wait for the fulfillment of all of these promises. I guess he becomes a blessing right away [laughter] but all nations are not blessed through him anytime soon because there's not a descendant any time soon. Renowned comes sooner than these probably but he has to wait for [42:45] these promises.

And indeed, as Hebrew says, he lives in the land of promise that belongs to him as if it doesn't belong to him. He's a stranger in his own land but 15, after this primary text, he believed in the Lord and God reckoned him his righteousness, counted him to righteousness. Verse 7, I'm the Lord who brought you out of [inaudible][43:12] to give you this land to possess it.

[43:15] Here's the land promise again. During the covenant ratification ceremony, which is what's going on in the next few verses, verse 12, "When the sun was going down a deep sleep fell upon Abram and behold terror and great darkness fell upon him. God said to Abram, 'know for certain that you're descendants,'" we're back to that promise. Abraham was furious about not having a descendant. In the first part of the chapter God tells him he's going to have it and God [43:45] be, he believes God. Now God says, "As to you seed, or your descendants, they will be strangers in a land that is not theirs will they will be enslaved and oppressed for 400 years."

The God who knows and rules history knows this to be a fact, so before it ever occurs, before anybody has done anything good or bad to borrow from another test, this is, this is stated. [44:15] Verse 14, "But afterwards, I will judge the nation whom they will serve and afterwards they will come out with many possessions. As for you, you shall go to your followers in peace. You'll be buried in a good, old age. Then in the fourth generation, they will return here," and this is an interesting phrase, "For the inequity of the Amorite," who are the inhabitants of the land, Amorites, Canaanites, "is not yet complete."

Why is God waiting? Why will Israel be in bondage all those years? [44:45] For the inequity of the Amorite is not yet complete. Another way of saying it is God is giving the Amorites time. He knows that their sins will be such that in 400 years after this long period of time that God knows he will judge them by giving Israel the land. [45:15] But it's important for us to see at this point that the God who rules history is giving the land to Israel but when he gives it to them it comes as a punishment for the people who have sinned greatly in the land.

This is important because we need to understand that Israel's conquest was not just a blessing to them, but was a judgment [45:45] on the inhabitations of the land. And if you read a text like Leviticus 18 where we were discussing yesterday about laws about sexuality, etc., that whole passage is prefaced by, "You shall not do what the people did in Egypt and are doing in the land where you're going."

In other words, these practices that are denied Israel whether it be all these sorts of misconduct, [46:15] whether it's homosexuality, or promiscuity, or pedophilia, or bestiality, these are things going on in Canaan at the time though we need to understand that.

It's important then to see that the same thing really happens to Israel later, right? They had the land. They sinned in the land and as a promise to Babylon, God had Babylon, [46:45] positive for Babylon, gave Babylon victory. Negative for Israel as a judgment. Very interesting how God works because what is positive to one can be negative to another. What can be a reward to one can be a punishment to another. God can keep everybody's interest in mind. So, if you're saying was Israel in some way privileged over the Amorite, over the Canaanite, [47:15] at that point in time it looks like it but as time unfolds we see they're treated the same, really.

They are driven off the land because of their sin. Another thing related to sin is this-this is my read on it. We can dispute it. Why is Israel in bondage these 400 years? Text doesn't say it to some punishment to them. Part of their suffering and the length of it is to give the Amorites [47:45] time for their sins to be complete. Another way to put it, for them to see the error of their ways to turn to God, whatever. And if you say, "Well, how in the world would they have done that?" Well, explain how Rahab did.

Rahab heard who God was, heard what God had done and turns to the living God. You say, "Oh, well she was just scared." The rest of them weren't scared enough. [laughter] So it was possible. And I don't know, maybe there were others. It doesn't tell us everything that ever happened to everybody. [48:15] But it was possible because it was possible for Rahab.

So remember then that the scriptures indicate that sometimes suffering goes on on behalf of others. I think it's a key concept because I think all suffering has the potential to be redemptive for someone else, for ourselves somehow. [48:45] And often times if we can see that we're enduring pain now so that someone else's opportunity might be there. I don't know if it makes it any easier to endure or not, but it helps it be more sensible.

Yes, we can suffer for our own sins. Yes, we can suffer directly for the sins of others so that the Pharaoh is oppressing the Israelites. There's no doubt about it. [49:15] But, there's this other component that while Israel is suffering, God is giving the Amorites time and their sins are completed. So we know from Genesis 15 that if for argument's sake we give Abraham a date of about 2,000 BC, we know and if you give the conquest either again late 15th century, [49:45] early 13th century, whichever you think is the best read, God is ruling history from a distance of anywhere from what, five, six, seventh centuries.

Now, text does now say that therefore this indicates that God rules all of human history but again, if w- we have to say if God is ruling at 600, 700, 800 years out, he's probably in charge of all human history. That might [50:15] be a reasonable deduction. And we already saw in Isiah that God was ruling history. And so God's very giving of the land affects Abraham, and his descendants, Israel. It affects the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Parosites, the other -ites that are in the land.

It affects Egypt and their treatment of Israel and by the way, their chance to see who God is. [50:45] One thing is the plagues, the plagues against Egypt are a judgment but they're also a testimony of who the Lord is. Although it's impossible to know for sure how many, if any, Egyptians went with Israel, the text does tell us that when they went out of Egypt they went out a mixed multitude. They were not all Israelites.

Caleb wasn't an Israelite by race. [51:15] He was a Kenizzite. So from the very beginning, Abraham was going to be a blessing to the nations. For this to be true, God must be a ruler of history. And we can ask more questions such as in what manner but there are so many future events that would have to be known and managed for these things to happen from this distance [51:45] that it's an extraordinary statement of God's ruling power. So, the land promise starts here. I'll just do Genesis 46 in passing a bit, Genesis 46, Jacob, the patriarch, 12 sons, the beginning points of the 12 tribes of Israel, one daughter, Dinah, whose beauty was the beginning point of a great strife in one text.

By the way, [52:15] I used to hear people say all that can't be literal family, 12 sons and a daughter. Then I taught with Dan Block at Southern Seminary. Dan has 11 brothers and a sister.

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [52:28] It's kind of extraordinary talking to him. He says, "Well, when I was going to move to Louisville, some of my brothers though it was a good idea but some of them didn't." I said, "Dan, how many brothers do you got?" He says, "11."

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [52:40] I said, "How many sisters?" "One." I just started laughing. I said, "Yeah, you've got Jacob's family, don't you?" He says, "In numbers only, I hope."

Audience: [laughter]

Doctor House: [52:45] But God tells the old patriarch who's been living in Canaan. He's living in the Promised Land. Don't be afraid to go down to Egypt. You'll be buried back in Canaan. So he's buried in Canaan. Joseph, they made arrangements for his bones to be buried in Canaan. But again, the Land of Promise stays a Land of Promise even when [53:15] the bearer of the covenant leaves town. Then, and that's still in fulfillment of what's said in Genesis 15, you're going to go down to a nation not your own, be oppressed.

When they leave Egypt, it is with the idea of going to the Promised Land. As we said yesterday in Numbers 13 and 14, this is possession of the Promised Land is put on hold due to a [53:45] lack of faith in God and a subsequent disobedience. They didn't believe God so they would not invade so they were given the wilderness period, which basically from Numbers 14 is about 38, 38 ½ years.

Then, as we said yesterday, I left out Leviticus 26, but Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27-28, [54:15] God says having told them how to live in the land, if you will follow me, if you will walk before me and be covenant keepers, I will bless you in the city. I'll bless you in the country. I'll bless your, the animals, but then it reverses it all, if you fail to serve me, you'll be cursed in all those places. There'll be consequences. You'll be judged. And finally, if you persist you'll be driven from the land, right?

And again, [54:45] God must be the master of history to make this happen. And indeed, Moses says, "I know that the time will come when you will do this. We will lose land. Repent when you're driven into exile and God will return you." So again, the land is a promise. It's the concrete evidence of God's love [55:15] and we were talking the other day, if you want to read people who take seriously the theology of the land, one place to look of the succinct one is Elmer Martin's. He's one of the three editors of Your [inaudible][55:29] Old Testament Theology. His Old Testament Theology, God's design deals with land and how land is to be treated.

Christopher Wright has written a couple of books that talk about ethics [55:45] of the land and in the land, been the bibliographies in the Old Testament Theology, Christopher Wright. So those are people who are talking about these issues. I think more needs to be done not just on ecology but on a whole host of other issues of stewardship. But again, God must rule history for Him to know what's going to happen to Israel to command them to [56:15] do these things.

And that would all be kind of [inaudible][56:21 to what you read for today and [inaudible][56:25] cutting and some other things. But hopefully it'll pick up some threads from previous discussions we've had. And also as we see that God rules history, we come closer to Samuel II 7 where God promises David he'll have an eternal kingdom.

[56:45] We're going to be seeing that by the time we get there, God's ruling of history focuses upon the coming Savior and that'll lead into next week. But if God cannot rule history, it's very difficult to see how he can have a virgin born child born in Bethlehem according to two Old Testament prophecies. It runs both ways.

[57:15] God rules history because he can know what a person's doing, an individual and he can know about Bethlehem. But also because we already saw in Isiah 40, he rules the nations. He rules the rulers. God [inaudible][57:33] history. You can see it through the nations. You can see it through individuals. You can see it through places. There is nothing outside God's concern along these lines.

[57:45] And so again, if you, theological you can prove it by God's concern for people, places, and nations, and rulers, and also I think perhaps this land promise, it's all kind of riding on it.

Chapter 10

The God of History (part 2)

God ruling history and connected to the land is very - those things are extraordinarily evident in Joshua, aren't they? 'Cause in Chapters 1 through 12 God fulfills the promise to give Israel the land.

[00:37] Fulfills the prediction that it will occur by driving out the people of the land. And I don't have time to do anything except say of course this raises questions in thinking people's minds about issues of war, holy war, God using war to judge and to bless. That is an issue that causes some discussion, some concern. I would say yes, that's true and you need to work on it.

[01:12] But I think it's important for us to see that what was true of the Canaanite became true of Israel later.

God used war to judge them, to bless Babylon. Later on God used war to judge Babylon and bless Persia and we continue on. And I think that continues on into the current day that nations who sin against God and others repeatedly and unrepentantly will be judged by God.

[01:51] It's only a matter of time.

So we should have concern for nations who act this way, whether it is our nation or some other nation because the God who rules history, will use history in a matter which will judge sinful, oppressing, vicious nations.

[02:18] And this occurs in Joshua 1-12. God gives the land in Chapters 13 to 21 - probably not your life verses - God divides the land among them. He gives them the - yeah. So if you've ever tried to preach through Joshua and you're roaring through those first three chapters and feeling good and then you get to how am I going to preach through dividing the land maybe one Sunday or something.

[02:43] But notice that in Joshua one there they conquer the mid section of the land and fulfill that part and then they released - they tried to go conquer their part of the land and some aren't very anxious to do this.

But in Joshua 22 to 24 you have the covenant renewal being at the heart of it. Joshua about to pass from the scene, you have this famous covenant, renewal scene, where you says, "Chooses though who you will serve, but as for me and my house. we will serve the Lord."

[03:18] We were talking about altered calls and invitations during the break. It's quite an invitation that Joshua gives in it. They say, oh well, we'll serve the Lord. He says, you can't serve the Lord. You're a sinful stiff-necked people. No, but we will serve the Lord. I mean it's almost as if an evangelist's given a call, somebody starts coming. You go back to your chair. You don't want to serve God. He's a serious, severe God. You can't. No, but I will.

[03:49] At the end of Joshua though and particularly in the first couple chapters of Judges they're at rest in the land. In the sense they have the land and they're in it. In a sinful world there would always be more work to be done, right? The setting up and governing of communities that the laws already told us must go on. But we read a disturbing trend in Judges too.

[04:18] Israel, after the death of the wilderness generation, the conquest generation, the people turn to the idols of the land. They accept the teaching of the culture around them rather than transforming the culture as a holy nation and kingdom of priest.

[04:44] Instead of being the holy people they've agreed to be, that the law would help them be, they have chosen to worship the gods of the land. Remember that in the ancient world the theology of the polytheists was there are many gods, these gods are geographically defined, that is, they rule a portion of the world.

[05:10] And they are defined by their function, so that some of these gods may rule a place but some of them may be the god of a certain gild.

Now then if you believe a god is geographically defined, when you go from Egypt to Canaan well the question is, is the same god in control both places? Israel had a problem with that in the Exodus as you recall

[05:45] And if you think the gods of Canaan are established, and that they rule a certain place, and they have certain functions like making it rain, making the crops grow, this is what bales a popular god. The theology of Canaan was bale makes it rain, bale makes crops grow, bale's in charge of fertility so he's the one who, who opens the womb of the women and makes them fertile, and this sort of thing then you would fall prey to the theology of the culture around you rather than believe that there is only god, it's the Lord, wherever you go, he's the Lord.

[06:25] But Israel fell prey to the culture around them and worshipped the gods of the land rather than worshiping the Lord, that's Judges too. Therefore, in Judges 3 through 16 the god of history is the god who tests Israel really, allows the people of the land to stay there and over and over again Israel fails the test in Judges 3 through 16.

[06:56] "Let's be positive though. At times they repent and return to the Lord." It's kind of a cycle isn't it? They worship idols, God sends a punishing nation against them, they cry out in their bondage and repent, God delivers them. It starts again. And it is a grind, a historical grind at that point.

[07:24] And they have judges who come and serve as deliverers but some of these judges are not exactly models of virtue. Jephthah sacrifices his daughter. Sam does what is right in his own eyes. He's a great man, probably squanders more potential than anybody in the history of the scriptures. You might throw Saul in there but I mean here's Sam. He's bright and he's strong, he's blessed but his appetites do him in.

[08:05] And then he dies in Chapter 16. Chapter 17 to 21 some of the most frightening scriptures in the bible. It's really God giving them over to their own devices. Letting them do what is right in their own eyes. No deliver being sent. Hardly any divine intervention. It's a frightening chapter.

[08:32] They start with 17:6, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his eyes. Ends with the same verse. And in between as we said the other day, you have a Levite helping people worship an idol. The corruption of the Levites. You have a Levite against the law of God taking a concubine and she is raped to death by a mob, he cuts her in pieces and mails these pieces out to the 12 tribes.

[09:08] There is a counsel called, they call the tribe of Benjamin and the people of the city of Gibeah to give up the perpetrators. They refuse to do so. This causes civil war in which the tribe of Benjamin all alone is able to hold off the other 11 tribes, killing thousands of people, eventually being defeated themselves and decimated.

[09:39] And as you know in the meantime, the fathers of Israel had made a fairly logical decision. They have sworn not to give their daughters to the tribe of Benjamin. That sounds extreme till you realize these are the people who were protecting the people of Gibeah who had raped the woman to death. I don't know about you but let me just take a stab at this and say if you have daughters, you probably won't want them to be looking for husbands amongst people who would protect such folks.

[10:15] But then they forget there's a problem there. Where will they get their wives. And so at the end you have this last scene where women who are dancing on the road going to Shiloh, is it, are kidnapped from the road and taken as wives for the men of Benjamin. And the book ends at this point, again another horrific point and says, there was no king in Israel. Everyone was doing what was right in their eyes.

[10:44] Another words, the author doesn't approve. He's showing what it's like to live in a society in which everyone can make up their own law. 'Cause never forget if the yuck factor is the only boundary to law, just remember not everybody finds the same things reprehensible.

[11:14] And there are people who don't find raping someone to death reprehensible. There are people who don't find kidnapping wives reprehensible. There are people who don't find worshiping idols reprehensible. There are people who don't find killing, men or women, reprehensible.

[11:42] But the author of Judges does. We already know by the law that if they continue to act this way in the land, what's going to happen? They will be judged so that they can repent, if they refuse to repent they will lose the land. We already know this. From Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 27-28.

[12:10] If you just drop in to Judges without this [inaudible][12:12] context you might make - people can be confused. The average person thinks partly because of their own hermeneutics and partly because of sermons they've heard they may think that any narrative in the bible is there as a positive example. Or if they don't read in the verse, like they read this horrible section of the rape and everything, if-if there's not right in those verses - and this was a terrible thing - they think the bible might approve of it, they don't know that 17:6 and 21:25 provide this frame.

[12:53] Or they don't know that such behavior's already been denounced in the law so that's where you can help them. I mean even Jephthah sacrificed his daughter. Who was it? We're hearing a sermon series at a church in Louisville and they said the sermon series was sounding like little known characters of the bible and Jephthah who sacrificed his daughter was one of the topics.

[13:25] And basically the sermon was, he wasn't a very good man but at least he kept his word. Based on, not just on the yuck factor now, not just on what, you know, I don't care what the bible says, it's not a good thing to sacrifice your daughter. Based on the law and even based on Genesis 22, in any case God does not require a human sacrifice and he said what about his [inaudible][13:47] hers? You know that the law says, rash vows can be redeemed by a payment.

[13:54] Not only that, if a daughter makes a rash vow, the father can void it. So there's a lot that's wrong with that scene. There are other things that are difficult but my point is, a canonical theology at this point would help you see that this is what's gone wrong in the land. This is what's gone terribly wrong. And we expect at the end of Judges, given what we already know about the theology of God's holiness and God's law and God as the creator and God as a judge, something doesn't change.

[14:30] This nation has had it. We would know this but we would expect this. What does happen in Samuel is that the god who gave them rest in the land and a god who turns them over to their own sins in

Judges is the god of history who had a new plan in Samuel. It's easy to bypass the significance of Samuel through the biblical record.

[15:03] He's kind of a bridge picker. He's the last judge and kind of a prophet and leads into the monarchy. But let's be careful to see here. Samuel is a very strong and godly leader who helps Israel get back on a better footing because in Samuel 1-7 I think the major theme is the god who protects his own glory.

[15:30] He protects his own glory first of all in kind of a tragic comedy scene in Chapter 1-7. You remember the Philistines defeat Israel and capture the arc of God. They figure they've got God in this box and they take the arc and do what they would have always have done in the ancient world with any religious artifact from a defeated people, they take it, they put it in their temple. What's that show? Their god's bigger.

[16:02] Right. Their god's more powerful otherwise they couldn't have won. Well what happens in the next day you have the image of the Philistines god bowing down to the arc, the covenant. You know hands cut off, defaced and then a plague breaks out, mice and tumors and most scholars indicate that the word really is hemorrhoids, you know?

[16:33] So the-the people are uncomfortable with their affliction, then they got rodents. And I don't know what artist - and they put the word doing this - but, you know, they make image of rodents and hemorrhoids, gold ones and they offer this as - and-and send the art back. [laughter] Israel fought - remember in battle - why did they bring this arc out? They thought if the arc was there - they thought it was magic, see?

[17:01] They got the arc out there we can't lose with the arc. Well yes they did. And the arc could be captured. But when the Philistines thought that they had God in the box here and they had God under control, they found out differently too. God protects his glory by these events. He also protects his glory by calling Samuel to lead Israel and Samuel's a godly man.

[17:28] His predecessor Eli was a good man but his sons were horrible as you know and Samuel's a godly man but his sons aren't in account either. Well the bible says they're worthless men who abused the powers of the priesthood, that sort of thing. And Israel just says, Samuel you're a good man but your sons, no. Give us a king. Now we enter into a period some people wonder is God ruling history?

[17:55] Because you have God in Chapters 8-12 instituting the monarchy beginning with Saul. Now it shouldn't be a surprise to us, we've been careful bible readers. We haven't mentioned it here I don't think this week but in Genesis 49:10 Jacob blessing his son says to Judah, "You'll hold the scepter. You'll be the ruler."

[18:24] So one tribe is picked out to rule over the others. It shouldn't surprise us that the time has come for a-a king. Also in Deuteronomy 17, Moses says, 'The time will come when you'll ask for a king. Here are the standards he must live by." So we've-we've had some sense that a king was - a monarchy was on the way. This has already been stated.

[18:51] And so now's the time. And God singles out Saul. I think that's clear in the text. Chooses him and rejects him in Chapters 13-15. How is God ruling Israel's history? By having already prepared them for the idea that there would be a king and by this king emerging. The first king emerging. This king is Saul. Notice how God works his life.

[19:19] God choosing. Picks him out, shows him Samuel. What else does God do? The text says he changes his heart. What else does the text say God does? Well he clothes him with his spirit and he prophesize. What else does he do? Well he-he gives him victory in battle, right? Saul's successful at the start.

[19:47] But when he is king Saul makes the same sort of mistake that Moses makes in Numbers 20. He presumes to offer sacrifice, presumes to disobey God's direct orders and presumes to build a monument to himself while doing it. It's not a one for one correspondence between Moses but the same problem.

[20:18] God does not strike Saul dead. God says to Saul you're through as king. Saul reacts a great deal differently than Moses reacts. He rebels, he fights God's new king David and refuses to accept the divine decision.

[20:51] and we know from Moses what he could have done. He could have [chuckles] helped the next king like Moses helped prepare Joshua, Saul could have helped David become king but he chooses a different path and God punishes him with what the text says is a-a-an evil spirit in English, it's just again it's our old friend Rah. [laughter]

[21:19] It could be any-any sore thing, I don't - I think contextually the Rah, the bad spirit, is the depression and the mental instability - the man obviously exhibits. I don't think it's a demon. I could be wrong at that point. I think it is the mental instability and the personal depression. Look at all the signs. He-he has these terrible periods.

[21:46] They play music to him to sooth him, he's unstable. One moment he's happy with David, another minute he hurled a spear at him. He admits that David's all right and he says I'll not bother you anymore and yet comes after him again. He knows he's not getting a word from God and not supposed to seek a medium but he does and when he gets the word though that he's going to die in battle, does he still go to battle? Yup.

[22:17] Again I could be wrong and I address that I could be wrong but I think this spirit here is a spirit of depression, it's a spirit of punishment. Again not everybody's depressed. It's not a judgment on them. I'm not saying that's hardly - it's a peaceful reward but still the truth is, this is the way he's punished. Now one of the key passages for this section is, first Samuel 15.

[22:47] It doesn't take a genius to ask some questions about how God rules history here. An encounter with my daughter who was five at the time she said, "What are you reading?" I told her I was reading about when David became king. She asked, "Who was king before David?" I answered, "Saul." She said, "Why wasn't he king anymore? Did he die?" I said, "No, he displeased the Lord."

[23:20] She continued to set the trap. "How-how did Saul become king?" I said, "God made him king." She said, "Didn't he know when he made him king that he wouldn't turn out alright?" "Sure," I said. "Then why did he make him king?" I grinned. I said, "Somebody had to be king as David was old now." She just laughed. She knew I wouldn't answer.

[23:49] We started dealing with the mystery of God's ruling. These are legitimate questions, right and logical? Nothing wrong with them. You couple that with the fact that-that in first Samuel 15, you have a series of passages. This is one of the ones that the openness of God folks focus on. Not - early. If they don't they ought to for their point-of-view.

[24:18] God says in 15:10, "Then the word of the Lord came to Samuel saying I regret that I've made Saul king, for he was turned back from following me. Has not carried out my commands." The word for regret

here is one for grief. You're going to have the same word Nacham played over three times. I regret - and why do I say grief?

[24:47] Because it's often a word for someone who needs comfort and chronicles its use when someone's loved one has died they go to comfort. Same verbal form. So it's God saying I'm taking comfort that I made Saul king? I'm grieved, I regret it. Problem with regret, of course, is that indicates I made a mistake, does it?

[25:13] I would argue and it's in life we can regret things that were not a mistake to do, whatever the right thing to do but you can regret what has happened. But any rate, that's one of the text. I regret. And some folks would read that to say well, you know, God realizes his mistakes. God can learn from his mistakes in history just like a person can. What's interesting to me is though that God knows all this already before Samuel does.

[25:39] It's an omnipotent God who is grieving here. So whatever else, this one makes - one of the things that opens to God, people and others - not just them, others have said, if you use words like God is immutable and immovable, you better at least define that for people. He's immovable in his appropriate emotions. He's not going to use inappropriate emotions, you know?

[26:05] But the fact is God can be grieved. Unlike me, God can be grieved without being wrong but God feels emotions. Some of the words that are used traditionally to describe God can lead somebody to think though that, again, he's like a rock in a garden. It's hard to move. But here God is grieved over Saul and we know that the New Testament says it's possibly to grieve the holy spirit.

[26:37] Now then you have - and he's-he's a - God is grieving. He's going to choose somebody else. In Verse 29 Samuel tells Saul the news. Saul asks that he still be able to be king in Verse 29. Also the glory of Israel will not lie or change his mind. It's also a phrase used in-in Numbers 23:19. "For he is not a man that he should change his mind."

[27:10] The same verb is there, Naham is not a - there's not a set of words for change in mind. The question is Verse 29, best interpreted, as God does not change his mind the way human beings change their mind. Or he's not grieved the way human beings are grieved. It's a tough verse to translate.

[27:36] Verse 35, the Lord regretted - back to the same verb - that he had made Saul king over Israel. A lot of different translations for Naham. A lot of different contexts. It could be comfort, it could be grief, it could be sorrow. Change of mind is hardly ever a satisfactory translation in my mind because Naham - human beings can Naham and so can God.

[28:11] Repent is not a good translation because that is a word that is used of human beings but never used of God. So it's a little bit like unclean. There is no clean way to translate in a word or phrase. But what seems to be occurring here, the Lord of history who knows the end from the beginning according to scriptures, puts Saul on the throne according to the whole of biblical theology knowing what would come of Saul and is grieved that it happens without it changing his purposes.

[28:50] This is the thing that's very difficult for me to understand about God. I mean because if I have sorrow or grief I will try to change the circumstances. If I think I'm going to be grieved by something, I will try to change that because I don't see the purpose in anything that would cause grief.

[29:15] If I know right now that my daughter is going to do something and I believe it will cause her grief, I will at least through advice or in some manner see if I can keep her from that grief. God does not always

do that. But let me be less idealistic. If I think I'm going to go through something that will cause me grief, I will try to avoid it if I can.

[29:49] Maybe that's the wise thing to do. But the truth is, God does not spare himself that even he will do what is right and best to rule history even if it causes him personal grief. He doesn't avoid it. And also he doesn't allow the knowledge that grief is coming to change his plans. That's the one that I continue to be amazed at.

[30:24] He will not change his plans knowing that grief is on the way. Maybe another way of putting it, the Lord of history is the only one with the guts to run history. With the wisdom or the courage to run it. The personal courage to accept the grief that comes by knowing his own creatures are going to do this and that and also the wisdom to say that the grief Bill suffers today will work for his good later.

[31:04] I have to accept that by faith and sometimes - talking about my daughter now again - I got to let that go. I have to let her go through grief that I think I might have tried to stop or sometimes when she suffers grief that I hadn't anticipated, I have to understand. But that wasn't a failure on my part but something that occurs that will work to the glory of God in her life. Same thing with parishioners - everything.

[31:32] And also - then if this is true, that all things work together for good, because this grief Bill's gone through, it's also going to work for the good for people around him and people influences. Give you an example of that. What does Paul said at the beginning of second Corinthian? He's enduring this suffering. He says something along the lines of, so that we may comfort others with the comfort by which we have been comforted.

[32:02] Others are going to benefit from God working all things to the good for Paul in second Corinthians 1. Example of that, my mother in one of her nobler moments, as she was - is dying, and I was visiting with her in the hospital and she said to me and my dad, she says, you know, this is a, this is a terrible thing we're going through but we hope this will help him as he visits hospitals and-and deal with other families, see?

[32:29] So that we can comfort those with cover, which we've been comforted. Now he said, that's just the positive spin on it. You don't know what I'm going through. No I really don't. And I've been through enough myself to again say, that this is an issue of faith. But if God can be grieved at sorrow and know the future, yet put Saul in that position, and let's-let's again be positive, it helped Israel for Saul to be king during that time.

[32:58] He got the Philistines off their back by and large. He got the monarchy off to a reasonably good start but he had personal failures as time went on. It's true but let's also remember that the Lord led Saul to be successful in many ventures that were helpful to Israel. It's [inaudible][33:22] to me that God knew what would happen to Saul and that Saul would come to grief but God still called Saul to be king and God still grieved through it.

[33:36] Why I use grief and comfort words for Naham because that's the normal, natural meaning of it. Not regret, not changes of mind whether it's of God or human beings, the normal word has to do with grief and comfort. So I don't have this down perfectly yet obviously but I think that's where we start. That's something going on there with personal grief and comfort. Yes, sir.

[34:04] Could as grief be pleasure? If by pleasure means his will? Yes. His own glory, yup. His own pleasure, yup. I think pleasure's a loaded word in English is the problem. The word pleasure for us is always something enjoyable. I don't think the bible teaches that God enjoys everything that ever occurs.

[34:33] That's where the grief comes in. But if by pleasure you mean glory, will it work out to God's satisfaction? Yes. But again that word pleasure I'm not sure works exactly. Again that's-that's a loaded word. Sorry to interrupt. Does God enjoy everything that happens in the sense that he's-he's happy about? No, that's again. If Jesus can weep, if the holy spirit can be grieved, if the Father could comfort himself in the midst of this situation, then God does feel pain and grief.

[35:12] But I think 15:29 one of the things it says is God does not experience grief the way humans do. I'd say yes and no. He-he can be grieved the way we can but it does not have the effect on God that it has on us. Doesn't have all the effects. But do I hesitate to say that these things work to God's glory? Absolutely. For believers particularly we have to understand.

[35:41] And this is all things including the worst sorts of things. The guy who wrote that, Paul, had suffered immensely. Maybe that's why there's more authenticity for him to be the messenger that all things work together for the good. Or-or Joseph. He says, "You men are free but God meant it for good," talking to his brothers. He suffered greatly. Maybe that's more authenticity than if say Solomon had said it.

[36:12] It still be true but Solomon wasn't known for his suffering. Joseph was, Paul was, Jeremiah part of what [inaudible][36:23] suffer these days and discretion. Jeremiah 1 what God telling. "Everyone's going to be against you and it's my will for you to be a prophet and that means everybody will be against you. And they will fight against you but I'm with you to deliver you. They won't kill you."

[36:45] So God calls us to stern tasks knowing the suffering we will endure, yes. When God called Paul - remember in Acts 9:16 it says to Ananias, "I've shown him how much he must suffer for my sake." Suffering was an inextricable part of Paul's calling of Jeremiah's. It's not everybody's, you know? I mean I can't tell that say Isaiah suffered the way Josiah and Jeremiah did.

[37:20] But still God told Isaiah I know that these people won't listen to you. So God knows. It's part of his plan, yes. I don't always know what words to use exactly. God will work his will, he will work for his glory and sometimes that causes him great pain and sometimes it causes us great pain. It will not deter that purpose. That's what I mean by God has the courage to run the universe. I don't have it.

[37:53] Then said some people have - I'm not glorifying warfare here. Some generals have the ability to run a war in a way that will make the tough decisions. That means death. Some don't. I mean I'm just using it as an example. I'm not trying to glorify war. Some leaders can make a tough decision, have the courage to make a hard decision that leads to good, other's don't. God always has that courage. He always has that ability.

[38:24] In the meantime, always has the ability to order history so that it will work to the good. That's the testimony. But it doesn't mean that God feels nothing. That's one of the points that I think should be made from first Samuel 15. Anymore that he felt nothing at the gravesite of Lazarus.

[38:51] But did Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead because he was sorry he was gone? No. Did he do Lazarus any particular favor bringing him back from the dead? Dearly I'd say watch you judge. Great to be alive. Then I remind myself, wait a minute, I'm a Christian. I believe that those who trust in Christ go to live in the new Zion where there's no suffering, death, pain, illness, etcetera, etcetera.

[39:22] And would I believe Isaiah 65 and Revelation 21. God was asking something difficult to Nazareth really when you get down to it. Come back, live here. I don't know you remembered anything else. He also was calling him to die again and if John's telling the truth, suffer persecution because Jesus raised him from the dead.

[39:48] I don't know that he was in prison but let's pretend he was. Somebody says, buddy what are you in here for? Oh I got raised from the dead. So Jesus calls Lazareth back to life, it included persecution and another death for the glory of God, right? For the glory of God in John 11. To show the people that Jesus could raise the dead. Well - but God feels grief but it does not alter his plans.

[40:20] So we have the best of both worlds with God. We have a God who's strong enough to stay the course no matter what and we have a God who is soft enough to feel pain. We've got a deity who's inheritantly perfect here. Apparently some of the question is, if God feels pain it will alter his purpose, therefore, the openness of God - people say well if it - if he feels pain or anything then that means it will alter his purpose. I don't think the bible teaches that.

[40:49] I also don't think it teaches that he feels nothing. But again, just like Jesus could be a human being and do all the temptations and we are yet without sin, at my analogy God could feel appropriate emotions without it causing him to get off track. I can't do that, God can. It's like in the discussion that we've already talked about, does God's knowledge mean that he's determined something there's no human responsibility?

[41:21] It's also if God has felt something does that mean he can't know and determine the future? I would argue it's a false dichotomy. At my best, I can do both. [laughter] So I expect God all the time can. But make no mistake about it, those are some tough passages with Saul.

[41:46] Everything from the evil spirit to what we've just discussed to the medium and end or, I never had an American student ask a question about that in several years of teaching. Taught in Singapore and I had one question after another because it was part of the culture there. Medium spirit is that part of religion and ghosts and all that kind of stuff was absolutely part of so many of the religions around them.

[42:16] They were asking all sorts of relevant questions and I'm not sure I had the answers to. A lot of hard questions in the Saul story. There's no reason to pretend there's not. So somebody just wrote themselves a note [chuckle] never preach on these text. It's on the same list as Jesus was - died, all those people came out of the tombs in Matthew. Never preach [laughter]. No idea what that means, you know? [laughter]

[42:47] You may have a list of those. But then in first Samuel 16, particularly through second Samuel 7 and 8 we have a God who [inaudible][42:57] and protects David. Another thorny issue. Why does God reject Solomon, hang in there with David? I would argue because of the type of sin. Type of sin that Moses and Saul admitted were relationship and a leadership and things of God. What David did was terrible.

[43:24] But God continues with him. First of all God chooses him. We might say if you don't know biblical theology, even though he's the youngest, by now you've read enough of these reversals you're expecting the youngest to get chosen probably. But David's chosen because God looks at his heart. Look at that again. He looks at his heart and David's sins in a whole lot of ways.

[43:52] But he never worships any other God. He says well that's little consolation if you're-you're [inaudible][43:59] the Hitite then - and I'm just - I know I'm talking about a messy situation here but of all the things David ever did there's not a hint that he worships another God. None.

[audience question]

[44:14] Sure. There was serious repentance. Saul was sorry but he's hard to tell that Saul had true repentance ever. But David did, sure. And this is important. God also has to protect him because he's king for a very long time before he gets to be king. I'm happy to say that usually when I lecture about - depending how tired I am, stream of consciousness lecturing sets in, but I'm happy to report that today's the first time that I would say that something like the following.

[44:49] It's kind of like the Lion King, he just can't wait [laughing] to be king. That's what went through my mind. I need a nap. God protects David all that time. Lots of the psalms, particularly in the first 42 psalms, are connected to this time period when David is harassed and pursued even though he's the king.

[45:18] This is going to be important later because when you get to Isaiah he makes a whole lot of a suffering servant and the question becomes how could the Davidic king ever suffer? That question's asked in the first century. You might also ask, given first Samuel 16 and following, if you're a Davidic king, how can you keep from suffering? David suffered plenty. But God protected him and God was with him.

[45:48] Finally God gives him the kingdom and you would say, yeah, does God give it to him or does his evil sidekick Joab give it to him? Joab is rather a low moral character and he's in David's life from beginning. David's not a perfect man. He does maintain Joab despite all Joab's atrocities. God gives David the kingdom, David consolidates his power by defeating all the enemies around him, he consolidates religion by choosing Jerusalem as his capital and bringing the arc there.

[46:32] And then in 7 Samuel 7 God makes an extraordinary promise to David that we will talk about next week. That he will have an eternal kingdom. Never failing to have a son on the throne. It is there that that messianic promises of the Old Testament take off. We'll see that there were prior promises but it really takes off from the second Samuel 7. "The Lord of history is promised David's family will reign forever." How is the question?

[47:06] How is the question? That's second Samuel 7. And not only that, [inaudible][47:13] and just say, look, in first and second Kings we note that the story is a tragedy because we go from the heights of the Divinic and the psalmonic kingdom down to the depths of the destruction of the land in two segments, 7:22 and the Icarians take the ten northern tribes, 5:87 when the Babylonians destroyed this last two tribes.

[47:40] And I know you might date 7:21 or 5:86 that would be fine with me. But the nation's devastated just like Deuteronomy 27-28 said would occur. So if you're a biblical theologian by now and you just drop in, you didn't even know. You didn't know the story but you read in second Kings 25, the nation's destroyed and you read the same thing in Jeremiah 52.

[48:11] You read the same thing in these last several texts, and somebody said to you, or you said to yourself, why did it occur? You would know from earlier texts that the reason it must have occurred was deep seeded, long-term, unrepentant sin and God drove them from the land. But God who ruled history, who gave the land the first place, treated them like they treated the Canaanites.

[48:39] If you're going to sin for 400 years I will judge you. And he does. We know this is not the end from Deuteronomy 30, remember? They repent from where they've been driven, God will return to the land so how does the Old Testament end? Second Chronicles 36, how does it end? With a call to go rebuild.

[49:05] So God keeps his word as they repent, God keeps his word through Isaiah that Syrus gives this degree. They're allowed to go home and - the land promise shows that God rules history. He rules the history of the Amorites, the history of the Egyptians, the history of the Israelites, the history of the Assyrians, the Babylonian, Persians. God rules history. The land promise is evidence that he does so and gives us insight in how he does so.

[49:39] But we also need to say that the fact that God rules history in no way ties him solely to the land. God rules history whether Israel's in Canaan or not so he's greater than this promise. My question to - as far as the New Testament goes, part of the debate's about [inaudible][50:02] such as does the land promise still have relevance today? Or if you read Matthew 28, is the whole earth the Lord's word to be a worldwide church without respective land?

[50:16] Are we looking for land in the new heavens and the new earth? But it's an open question and one that's not irrelevant in Israel/Palestine today. But the God who rules history rules the land of Israel, rules the nation's -

[audience question]

[50:53] Right now what I would say as far as the blessings of land go, all blessings must be mediated through believers in Christ. What disturbs me the most in the Middle East right now is the persons of blessings are often driven out. Palestinian Christians have by and large left the land because a lot of reasons, they have it and they generally overall had more education and money to do so and did. Jewish Christians are by and large disenfranchised in Israel.

[51:22] As you probably know a person of Jewish ethnicity can move from anywhere in the world and get instant citizenship in Israel except one type of Jew and that's a Christian. They're is discrimination against Christians of Jewish descent. What concerns me therefore is the very people of promise, the people who should care the most about being peacemakers and linkages are either mistreated or driven out.

[51:55] That concerns me. Everything else should flow but that concerns me. So the people of God are those who are in Christ and the promises belong to them. I continue to wrestle with what that made this land be honest with you. But the nice thing is all authority is given to me in heaven and earth. I think about that. And I wonder how it approaches the land and where to go and may decide for.

[52:26] But God rules history, the good and the bad and judgment and blessing. Sometimes it says both but I understand this does not mean that God has no personality, God has no emotion but do know that it means the future is known and secured by the Lord.

Next week we will deal with the Messianic promise. I can promise you though I can't give you the test questions ahead of time because I don't know myself what they are and not being omniscient.

[53:01] I can tell you if you want to start preparing, obviously we'll have a question on it, about Messianic theology because we have Lesson 6. could have a question about God ruling history and a question about law. At the very least you know I'll ask you to pick between those but I prefer you prepare them all.

[53:25] Also I will ask you - this is why you could start preparing yourself - to pick a relevant topic and use the method. Another words, you can prepare something that is related to the law, start with the law, prophets and writings and develop that theme. You take a topic of interest to you. It could be law, Messiah or what's your other one? Kingdom.

[53:57] God's ruler in your history and you develop that theme. So if you've been interested in some of the things we talked about or you have another interest, as long as you're able to do the following: Have a relevant topic, have a text from the law of prophets and writings that you will develop. And for those of you who are really gung ho, you can use scholars and do whatever you want to, but point is, if you want to do some form of Messiah that I don't do, law, prophets, writings, develop it yourself to begin that freedom.

[54:29] So use language that-that Sheri used the other day about the methodology question. She said it just kind of feels like regurgitation on that one. I prefer words like recital or rehearsal. So you probably have one question that yeah, it's pretty much. You have to go to the class notes and dig it out and humor me that way.

[54:53] And one, but you'll be able to develop on your own. But the way you'll have to humor me there is, is not kind of stream of consciousness, but you'll have to develop the theme that you're choosing, your topic, how it flows from the nature of God - another words, what's the thing about God you're going to start with. So if it's justice you'd want to start with Genesis 1 26:31, for instance. If it's sin you might want to start from the holiness of God.

[55:21] If it's judgment, same sort of thing. You'd start with God then you would have passages law, prophets and rides and develop your theme. You can write a nice five, six paragraph essay that way.

Chapter 11

Messianic Promises (part 1)

Today's topic is Messianic Theology and it'll be our topic tomorrow. And we do have enough flex to talk about it as needed. Some people would almost consider Messianic Theology the whole of Old Testament Theology. Now as you can tell by the fact that I would give at least give two days out of ten to the topic, I consider it a central, vital, significant [00:46] issue in Old Testament and Biblical theology. However, I do want to say, as I've said before, that it is not the only topic in Old Testament Theology.

That if we read the New Testament…I suppose we could use the word carefully or maybe with just an interested mind. We see that there is a great deal of attention paid to Messianic Theology in the Old Testament as it is fulfilled in [01:16] Christ. But that is not all the New Testament talks about from the Old. So we've been trying to strike a balance.

But I do want to say without hesitation that Messianic Theology is the most important thing that the Old Testament can talk about. That Christ, whether you want to talk about him as his life unfolds in the Canon or whether you want to talk about it as his being placed in history or his place in [01:46] theology, Christ is at the center of biblical theology and is primary and paramount.

So, I don't want to overplay or underplay role of Messianic theology. But I start this because I read from time to time, even in some volumes on interpretation — principles of interpretation or hermeneutics — that the New Testament writers read [02:16] the Old Testament through Jesus colored glasses.

And by that they mean, virtually any text in the Old Testament can say something about Christ. Now, I don't find this to be true as I start from the Old Testament and move to the New. I don't find it to be true of the Old Testament's intention and [02:46] nor of the New Testament's usage of the Old Testament.

What I find is that the New Testament writers interpret Old Testament Messianic text contextually and fairly to the original context. So, that they're not doing a bunch of special pleading to get Jesus into the Old Testament. Now of course, this does not mean that we don't have some difficult passages [03:16] to work with. And a high percentage of the difficult passages are in one Gospel — Matthew — which has led a lot of scholars to say well, maybe Matthew is working in a way others are not.

It is not my intention to affirm that or to discuss it in all that much detail. just to say when scholars two or three problem passages from Matthew and say [03:46] they see the New Testament interprets the Old, this way all the time, I think it is a vast overstatement.

So, I am trying to say that though I believe in general or at least almost, I would say in the main, the New Testament writers interpret the Old Testament passages contextually, historically, and accurately without special pleading. Doesn't mean there aren't any difficult passages to [04:16] deal with. But again I would want to deal with the vast majority of text and not with, start with a problem text.

So, when we go to the New Testament too, part of the difficulty we have in interpreting it is that the New Testament applies so many texts to Jesus — so many Old Testament passages. If we start with the Old Testament, and try to [04:46] draw a portrait of the Messiah from Messianic theology, we'll begin to

understand why the New Testament writers cite so many passages. The reason is the Old Testament offers a multi-faceted portrait of the Messiah.

It seems to me that it does so in part to make sure that we eliminate all pretenders to the title. [05:16] That it is not enough for a potential Messiah if you're living in the first century and assessing Jesus, as you would have to do, right? You wouldn't just say this person has a royal lineage. That's not enough. They come from the Davidic line. It's not enough. Or even to say, well, this person is a miracle worker, not enough. Or, that this person has suffered for the [05:46] sake of the Lord's work. It's not enough. You see, the whole portrait has to come into the play.

And by the time you finish the Old Testament, if you don't know, you would find it very difficult to believe that one individual could have all these characteristics, all these traits, all these roles, in and of themselves. Indeed, there's at least a kumaran [06:16] dead sea scroll texts or two that thinks there be two messiahs — one prophetic and one priestly. And so you could see why someone would say, well, this is a lot to be encapsulated in one person. But that's what the New Testament argues is true about Jesus.

That you put all these things together from the Old Testament Jesus fulfills them. [06:46] Jesus embodies them. And so what is the cost of having a partial view? Not having a full canonical portrait of the messiah if you're a first century person. It could cost you an understanding of who Jesus is.

And I would say though it's kind of a backwards question for today's Christian. Often times, [07:16] today's Christian has already accepted Christ. That's their entry point into biblical theology. Before they ever had a biblical theology, they had Christ. So what's the danger of not having a full biblical theology there?

Not fully understanding the one who saved you or as full an understanding that you can get. Not having the richness of scripture. Not having the ability to evangelize to your full potential to people who would ask questions. [07:46] I'm hoping in my own life and in others for a fuller understanding of the whole of what scripture says about Christ. So, that I can be a better teacher, preacher, to the extent that I'm evangelist, writer, etc., but it also helps us do one other thing. And that is as basically New Testament Christians, better access to truths of the Old Testament. It'll help our hermeneutics in other words.

I have seen [08:16] people work very, very hard to try to make an isolated verse or even a very solid, wonderful passage in the Old Testament, try to make it Christalogical. When I don't think the New Testament does that with every Old Testament passage.

A lot of biblical theologians try to fit every passage into some sort of salvation, history scheme. I'm not saying that's an illegitimate process. I'm also not [08:46] saying that it is necessitated by scripture itself. I don't think it's an illegitimate process, but I don't think it's the only way of doing the job.

So, let's talk about a biblical theology of the messiah and of course, you know by now our task is impossible. Because today's topic like the one you already examined too large to encapsulate in a lecture or a lifetime. So we make a [09:16] beginning. And the nice thing here is probably you would have your own parts of the beginning to help us with.

You have certain parts of the Messianic theology in mind from prior Christmases, if nothing else, and prior classes. So, we want to start in the law and talk about the roots of the Messianic promise. [98:46] And as far as that goes, from the last class when we kind of ended at the second Samuel 7, this is not just a Messianic promise, this is a promise made to David. This is a Davidic promise.

And even prior to that, we might say it is an Abrahamic promise, but more on that in due time. Roots of the Messianic, Davidic promise in the law. I want us to look at a few passages. All [10:16] the way back to Genesis 3. It's been a bit controversial this Genesis, Chapter 3, uh passage but let us stick to what we know.

Prior to Genesis 3, there is no sin described in the creation. Possibility of it exists from Genesis 2-15 to 17. Many of you wrote about that in your exam that we talked about it. God has set out some basic standards of the people must respond to by [10:46] faith.

We know then in Genesis 3 that in a dialog with the serpent, the woman believes the serpent's argument instead of what God has said. She eats of the tree, gives it to her husband, who apparently also believes the serpent or believes his wife or believes someone other than God. [11:17] Both of them sin. Both of them share consequences for their sin. And so we have consequences laid out, as you recall in Genesis 3, for the serpent, for the woman, for the man, in that order.

The serpent will come back to his curse or consequence in a moment because [11:46] that is the main factor for today. But of course we know that the woman is given certain consequences. People will continue to dispute what it means, her desire for her husband to rule over her. At the very least, we can say that the relationship she has with her husband, however people have defined it, I can synthesize it this way that there will be [12:16] problems, stresses, difficulties in her relationship with her husband. However you define that phrase.

So, in a primary relationship with her husband, this will no longer be naked and not ashamed. This will no longer be ideal. Doesn't mean it has to be horrific. Doesn't mean it's doomed to horrible, nasty failure. We read the rest of the scripture and see from experience that it's not necessarily [12:46] true. But it's not going to be a sinless relationship anymore.

She will have some stress and struggle physically. I think not in just childbirth but in other places. But the focus is on childbirth because of verse 15. Because there's going to be something positive said in verse 15. She will have consequences within her own body and with her children. [13:16] I can't tell that pain with children stops with childbirth.

And for the man, the ground is not going to be as easy to derive a living from as before. Work is not the curse. Working and not having things work out is the curse. He worked before, but now there will not always be [13:46] good results to his work. He can plant the best sort of garden. I mean there's some lovely places around here and Lark was talking about reading a commentary in the Botanical Gardens.

She had this little touch of heaven reading a commentary in the Botanical Gardens. What did she say about her trip to England if you ever make or if you have made one? It is really a nation of gardeners. The biggest insult that I heard my neighbor, uh in England when we spent a couple of [14:16] months there, that the previous occupant of the flat — because we have a little backyard — he said well, they tw'aren't no gardeners, I can tell you that.

[Audience laughing]

[14:28] Didn't like how they'd taken care…you could putt on the man's yard. They do a great job around here. Any farmer knows, any gardener knows that you have to deal with the weeds. Any student knows, I'm grateful if you've never had to experience the saying, I prepared well, I worked hard, I did not show what I could do on exam. If you heard that, you know what that's like. [14:58]

Or that somehow the result is not what you wanted. Understand then that sin has cost them these things and death, which really comes to mercy. What's worse than death? I suppose living eternally, endlessly in sin. There are some days I am not nearly as tired [15:28] enough of my sin as I ought to be. There are other days where I'm just sick not only of mine, but of mine, yours, ours, et cetera. Really tired of it.

So, death and these consequences. The reaction would be a little like what Cain says in Chapter 4. This is terrible. This is more than I can bear. So, back to the curse placed on the serpent. Notice that [15:58] the curse placed on the serpent is also a blessing to the human race. Remember when we talked about these events like war.

We said it can be a punishment for one and a blessing for another. In Verse 15, I will put enmity between you and the woman…and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise you on the head and he shall bruise you on the heel. Now if [16:28] you're going to be bruise or you're observing this struggle between the man and the serpent. You would rather have your heel bruised than your head, wouldn't you?

But even though there's been a bruising, there's a sense of which person who's put the foot down has succeeded. But not without pain or cost or injury. Now, of course with the rest of biblical theology, we [16:58] might be tempted to tease a whole lot of things out of this that may or may not be there.

But we do know that regardless of the complete implications of this verse, we know that the serpent's not going to succeed over the seed of the woman always. That the good news is that [17:28] evil and the temptation to sin as embodied in the serpent is not going to always be the case.

And that it is one born and the focus at this point is on the woman. The good news is that the one who was first tempted and gave way through a lack of faith in God to that sin and to that temptation [18:00] will the very starting point for redemption from sin. And often I have heard sermons that I thought people who had really singled out Eve for the problem of sin did not adequately single her out for the solution to it. So as a positive promise made to the woman and as the scriptures [18:30] unfold, we will see that, what these things mean, but at the starting point here.

And notice that God still sustains the creation he has made because the text in Chapter 3 and Verse 21, makes garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothe them. And even though He seems to be harsh, He drives the man out, [19:00] so that they may not take from the tree of life and live forever according to Verse 20.

This too seems to be an act of mercy. It's pretty hard for us to think of being driven out of some place of being a mercy. Some of you sadly if you stay in church and work long enough will have this feeling. That to be driven out may be a wonderful blessing. Hope not, but if it happens, remember it may be a mercy and not just a curse.

So we have [19:30] here what scholars in the past have called the protoevangelium — that is the first offer of good news. And notice that the first offer of good news comes at the first moment of sin. And if we summarize a couple things, we learn that there is coming the seed of the woman. That second of all, this seed of the woman will bruise or, in other translations, crush the head of the [20:00] serpent.

The victory over sin and evil is coming. Or maybe just to be more specific, victory over the source of evil is coming. So, this we can know. This is not a full-blown doctrine of the Messiah. So it will impel us forward. Certainly, sin moves forward, doesn't it?

[20:32] So that by Chapter 6 the imagination of the human heart is only evil always. Quite a telling state.

Male: [20:41] I had a question about 3-15.

[20:43] Mmhm.

Male: [20:44] Um, do you know any special reason why it would be in that order?

[20:50] I have no idea except that the blow to the head is the stronger and primary blow and that the bruise on the heel would be secondary. I think it goes from the greater to the lesser. It's also directed as a consequence to the serpent, so I mean the most serious thing could be put first.

Male 1: [21:11] Because it sounds like it's making the blow to the head to the serpent less permanent, you know?

[21:17] See it doesn't to me simple because it's placed first, moving from the greater to the lesser, but I don't. Maybe it's just the function of how we hear it. I think that when the verse is over, however, whichever order you put the bruising.

You have to ask your question, who's won? Who's been victorious and I think it's whoever's got their heel in the head. I think it is significant to note too though that this is not going to be a painless victory. It's not a full-blown doctrine of the cross by any [21:47] means, but it's not a painless victory.

So that even in the Ministry of Jesus, not just the cross… He once says if it's in one of the best manuscripts. Once says something about demon, this kind can't come out of except by prayer and fasting. There's not a sense in which Jesus acts as if he's not dealing with a significant enemy. It doesn't mean Jesus doesn't defeat the [22:17] enemy, but there is a sense in which this is a strong foe.

It even says you can't…you must first bind the strong man. He doesn't say you must bind the straw man. And I'm often concerned when I visited church. Not that they would talk about in prayer about binding the strong man and meeting Satan, but the apparent ease with which they think that's accomplished. That concerns me.

[22:48] Maybe that's theological or maybe it's just that I grew up with constant admonition from good athletic coaches not to take the opponent lightly. Remember that Jesus says this is a serious adversary and the cross.

There was a lot of theology and poems and literary treatments of the cross that would indicate. On the one hand you can say, Satan probably thought the cross was his [23:17] finest hour. Such suffering poured out the Son of God but also of course we know it's his downfall. So, it is a serious effort.

The scholars from way back in the early church were saying this is the first offer of good news. And you could preach a topical or biblical theological sermon and start here and move on through. And show people [23:47] or how it's found. What I don't want to do is to leave the impression that at this point in the Old Testament, from this single passage alone, the average Bible reader oughta understand all there is to understand about Christ. If you develop these themes throughout the scripture, you can see it happen.

But I have this theory that in ministry, the more you tell…the more you would just use this passage [24:17] say and act as if everything about Christ can be drawn out of it. I think it discourages Bible readers. Because they say I can't get all that.

They could if you then show them where these themes then unfold in scripture and that that's the way it has to be. They can understand it. But if they think they got to draw the whole of it out of that, in this one passage, I think it's one more example of where it discourages Bible readers. So, show them where it is.

[24:47] It took a few minutes yesterday and in church — at Valerie's church — but I commend one thing that they didn't want to read the scripture until everybody had found it and had it before them. And I think that encourages people to say oh okay.

It assumes that they can read and understand the scriptures. And what you draw out of it needs to be, if not evident, at least discernible from your text. So we start here with the first [25:17] offer of good news.

With the protoevangelium, first evangelism, a seed of the woman, and this word seed becomes important. We'll overcome the serpent. Evil will not prevail. We're off to a start. In Genesis 17-6, we don't have… [25:47] well, I'm sorry I've gone too far.

Start back to Genesis 12. [paper noise] Back to an Abrahamic promise, which is I said the Messianic promise fulfills promises made to Abraham and to David. The Abrahamic and Davidic covenants are going to come together in the Messianic theology.

You will note that one of the promises that God made to [26:17] Abraham is in Chapter 12 and Verse 3 — Then in Abraham all the families of the earth will be blessed — Chapter 12, Verse 3. I just note this because the New Testament by the time the Abrahamic and Davidic streams come together, we'll use this passage to talk about what God's doing in Christ both in the Book of Acts and the Book of Galatian.

[26:49] And also if we're going to talk about a Davidic promise, we have to remember that without Abraham there is no David. So the Davidic promise is derived from the Abrahamic promise. And part of the Abrahamic promise is that in you, all the families of the earth will be blessed. And that Abraham would have descendants.

Now to Genesis 17-6. [27:17] Again it seems to be another in a long line of promises God makes to Abraham. Genesis 17 is about the covenant of circumcision, which becomes the seal or the main symbol of God's covenant with Abraham. And God promises blessing in 4 and 5. And here's one of them, a further one in Verse 6.

[27:49] I will make you exceedingly fruitful back to the promise of descendants. And I will make nations of you and kings will come forth from you. Now as this unfolds in the Bible, it's not just kings of Israel but kings of other nations. But again, the notion that kings from Abraham is introduced here.

And I will establish my covenant [28:17] between me and you and your descendants or your seed. Same word as Genesis 3 and it just keeps moving on, your Zara. Your descendants after you throughout their generations, for an everlasting covenant to be God to you and to your descendants after you.

So, the covenant that God is making with Abraham is an everlasting covenant. And the covenant makes with David, as we saw last Friday, is also an everlasting covenant. [28:47] There's no real sense in which the mosaic covenant is never ending.

I think this is significant. We will not need laws to inhibit and define and to punish sin in heaven. If there's no more sin, sorrow, or death — according to Isaiah 65 in Revelation 21 — then we do not need a law [29:17] in heaven.

Because we won't have to worry anymore about well if there's no law, people will just do what's right in their eyes and run amok. See there's no one running amok in heaven. This is pretty good news.

But the covenant made with Abraham is everlasting. So is the one made with David as we shall see. Part of the covenant made with Abraham is that kings will come from him. This is part of the [29:47] blessing.

I say that because then in Genesis 49, 8 through 10, we have a further clarification. That one of those kings will be in Israel. So Genesis 3-15, the first offer of good news. Genesis 12, that that good news, that there is good news for all nations. [30:17] All nations will be blessed. A blessing is good news.

All nations will be blessed through Abraham, 17-6. Kings will come through Abraham and now a further point, Genesis 49, 8 to 10. Judah, now remember, Genesis 49 is Jacob slash Israel, his blessings, and assessments of his [30:47] twelve sons before he dies.

In some of these he makes marvelous statements. In other ones, don't seem so complimentary. Each one appropriate to his sons. Whereas 8 to 10 for Judah. Judah, your brothers shall praise you, your hand shall be on the neck of your enemies, your father's son shall bow down to you.

Now it's clear he's been given power over enemies and primary amongst his [31:17] brothers and sons. So if your father's sons shall bow down to you, you have the place of primacy. Judah's uh — 49-8, Genesis 49-8 — Judah's alliance whelped from the pray my son, you've gone up, he couches, he lies down as a lion, and as a lion who dares rouse him up.

Other words, Judah is compared favorable to a lion [31:47] who's ready to go. And really, basically to put in near slang, nobody wants to mess with a lion. Then Verse 10, the scepter, and Verse 10 is a difficult text to translate. The NAS does it fairly with its notes. The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor the ruler's staff from between his feet.

In other words, Judah's the one from whom his father shall bow down to. [32:17] He shall hold a scepter. So we know that Judah is going to be the ruling tribe. Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet until Shiloh comes, which is a nearly to impossible to translate with total accuracy. So what the NAS has done is just bring Shiloh into the text.

Another reading — or two other — until he comes to [32:47] Shiloh. Another reading, until he comes to whom it belongs. These are all possible readings. Until Shiloh comes is making Shiloh be the subject of the verb comes. As you know, if you've done Hebrew, though the verb comes is third singular, it can either be he or it, in this case comes.

The problem with saying until he comes to Shiloh is there's no preposition on [32:17] Shiloh. But who is Shiloh and what is Shiloh other than a place later on is always the difficulty. But the Verse 10 is fairly straightforward. And to him shall be the obedience of the peoples. Plural of people so that it's not seeming to be just Israel but of other nations.

So this ruler, someone is coming, whoever Shiloh is or someone is coming to Shiloh [33:47] or whatever. But the fact is this person will not just rule over Israelites, but over other peoples as well. So there is an extended kingdom seeing for Judah at some point in time in the future.

So then, at the very least, we can say Israel's king, you should look to Judah's tribe, for Israel's king, right? [34:19] We can say that from the text. And so even if you don't find anything more than in this text, though you can find more than this, but even if you don't find more than the following, we would have a good beginning.

David is from the tribe of Judah. David does subdue the nations around them. The peoples do bow down. The Philistines and the Amenites. [34:47] The Molobites. And it is to David, a descendant of Judah, that God gives the eternal kingdom of the Messiah.

That's the very least. It may be more than that in the text if it's talking about the person having the obedience of the people ultimately being the Messiah. So, it may be more, but at the very least we have a straightforward [35:17] thread — Messianic thread — from Genesis 49, 8 to 10.

Judah, ruler, promises then made to Judah's ruler, David. But at least Genesis 49 focuses the ruling family on a specific tribe and that is Judah. Yes sir?

Male 2: [inaudible] [35:38] …that David's line will never, so how does that…am I just misunderstanding that or…

[35:45] That is a possible interpretation of it. That Shiloh will replace or is replace the right word? There's this delicious ambiguity here in the text, ain't it?

So that you could say okay, Judah's going to rule until Shiloh comes. So is then Shiloh a person who's going to then take over? Would this person be from Judah or not or what? So see, the reading you have offered [36:17] is an acceptable one that continues to force us to ask these questions.

If the Shiloh reading is the way to go, and that is again, the NAS thinks it's the best way to go although it has these other…then the reading you offered and the questions that it engenders is a legitimate one. But it's still going to take us at least through the tribe of Judah and then you would ask is David Shiloh?

Is someone subsequent to David's [36:47] Shiloh? What? But we do know that the peoples, less specific the nations, early on will give obedience to Shiloh.

Man 3: [inaudible] [36:59]

[37:05] That is a potential, effective reading. If we didn't have the textual variance we have, not just trying to be postmodern here. Well you know, he's right and she's right and he's right even though they say three mutually contradictory things. No I think it's a Messianic text. That's why we're talking about. But at the very least, you're starting to ask the right question.

Shiloh, would have to be, in the way that you're talking [37:35] about, of Judah, greater than Judah. A ruler of more than Judah, of more than Israel. So you're already starting to ask the question, whoever Shiloh is in this reading, can this person…in what way are they greater than the normal Judahite. That's the question to ask.

And so I think, the [38:05] appropriate thing I would say is as biblical theology unfolds, we're going to that see if Shiloh is the right reading. That Shiloh, if that's the reading. The fact is, you're pressed by the oddity of the name and pressed by the oddity of the syntax to say is there something different about this name and this person? Something beyond a normal Judahite? That's the question.

And you could show [38:35] people that in biblical theology that the answer is yes. That in order to fulfill the different things that are gonna unfold, this person must be indeed more than David even. More than, you know you pick the greatest Davidic king. You can say it's David himself. You can say it's Josiah. You can say it's Hezekiah. It's gotta be greater than, different than.

And of course, it is the [39:05] New Testament's job — if we put it this way — to pull all these themes together and state how it is that Christ is greater. And one way that John does pull it together in the other Gospels is to say that Jesus is not just the son of David, but Son of God. And that's quite a statement and caused a bit of debate amongst the [inaudible] [39:30].

I don't think it's a stretch [39:35] unless you don't show how it unfolds in biblical theology. So again, I'm not trying to negate the Messianic theology. I'm just trying to show that it builds.

And we got Judah online now. We've got a Judah ruler online now. But we're still wrestling with how this would make sense over time.

Female: [40:03] Let me stop you for a second.

[40:04] Sure.

Female: [40:05] When you…you're saying that the Messianic promise itself acts as [inaudible] [40:10] primal Adam and Eve [inaudible] [40:14] you know is less than the first time [inaudible] [40:16].

[40:18] Right. This is how salvation history unfolds according to salvation historians. We know human beings need salvation from sin. They need something to deal with the sin problem.

God's answer is to say through the woman there will come a seed who will do this. As you proceed you see it's to Abraham that the promise is given. But again the woman is very [40:48] important, is she not?

Because it can't be just any son of Abraham, right? Has to be the son through uh Sarah. All nations are going to be blessed. You can is that the solution to the sin problem. That's the question you're asking. But in salvation history, yeah, we then move to Abraham.

But then Abraham has a descendant named Jacob who has his 12 sons. And to one of these 12 sons, promises of [41:18] of ruling will be made. But if we give a general date of the patriarch's at 2000 BC, we're going to be waiting a thousand years for David to live and these promises to be made to him.

So this is why they talk about a vast [41:38] salvation history. It's going to God dealing with the sin problem. And it's easier to see these threads I believe at the end than it is at the beginning, right?

So that the Bible states that Abraham knew more about the Messianic promise really than the text just explicitly says to us here. But you have to wonder what the run of the mill type of person would think. For us, we see it looking back. So again, I think those Old Testament people that are mentioned as having faith in Hebrews 11 would have a legitimate question to us.

Uh, [42:18] you had it all laid out for you about your problem. [laughter] We had to grasp it as it went. Then I think I would say to [inaudible] [42:26] we had to defend your faith all the rest of our lives. [laughter] So, having looked at a couple of those passages, let's look at least one more.

Numbers 24, is another royal promise. Numbers 24, you'll remember that this is an oration by a rather dicey prophet named [42:50] Baylem. He's one of the handful of prophets that the Old Testament shows having the word of God, an accurate word of God, but who [laughs] are not sterling characters.

It often makes use wonder. Baylem speaks a number of times from Numbers 22 to 24. You have a similar situation first Kings 13. [43:20] Where a prophet who lies to another prophet has an accurate word from God later.

I don't know whether this should admonish us, bring us comfort, or cause us to be puzzled. I don't know. But Numbers 24, Verse 15, through Verse 19. He took up his discourse and said, the oracle of Baylem, the son of Bayor, and the oracle of a man whose eyes opened.

[43:50] The oracle of him who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the most high, who sees the vision of the almighty. We say all right already. This is hardly humble thus says the Lord. Falling down he having his eyes uncovered. I see him but not now. I behold him but not near.

In other words, this is a future prediction. A star shall come forth from Jacob. A scepter shall rise from Israel. And we would know already if there is a scepter in Israel, it's which tribe? [audience speaks] [44:21] Judah.

He shall crush the forehead of Mohab, which is not comes as good news since it's Mohab who has hired Baylem to offer this oracle. They're not getting their money's worth. They'll tear down all the sons of Sheth. Edem shall be a possession. Seer, which is part of Edem and its enemies, will also be a possession. While Israel performs valiantly, one from Jacob shall have dominion over Mohab and Edem.

Now again, this is a [44:51] promise that is fulfilled in David. And the question is, is it yet a greater than David? But at the very least, David is going to arise. He is a focal point. He is one to watch. And he will rule Edem. He will rule Mohab. So the question is, is this a Messianic prophecy or is it simply a text that says watch, for, [45:22] David?

And from David there will come more information. He's singled out here. Same thing in two other passages, Deuteronomy 17, 14 through 20 — Deuteronomy 17, 14 through 20. This is a significant passage because in it Moses predicts that the day will come when Israel will want and receive a King. And he sets up [45:52] standards for how a king should act.

So, if you want to understand how the rest of the scriptures assess kings, on what standards, on what basis. And I would argue you could have principles for any sort of leader including political leaders from Deuteronomy 17, 14 to 20, but particularly a Christian leader. Such as having the word of God, having the law of God always before [46:20] them. That's their standard.

Not putting themselves above their countrymen. Not using their office to gain in this case wives and horses and lands. In other words, you don't use your office to get richer and richer. Understand that they're to be one of the people. And this is tough in the current climate in the United States and in other lands as [46:51] well. Much past the very local level.

Don't say it's impossible, but this is one of the challenges you have is, do people use their office for personal gain or for the people? And do the people try to sustain the leader or use them? Uh, it's an interesting discussion in the John Adams biography that I'm reading [47:20] now that John Adams argued that public servants should be paid or only the rich would ever be involved. [audience laughs]

But then you would have to work with how it operates. But the expectation for Moses is that there will be a king. He is in agreement with what he already stated in Genesis 49. In Deuteronomy 18, in Verses 15 to 22, [47:50] Deuteronomy 18 this time, 15 to 22, there is a text that the New Testament cites as Messianic.

The Lord, your God, will raise up for you, a prophet like leaf from among you. And from your countrymen, you shall listen to him. And so it apparently, is a special prophet mentioned in 18. And so it's a special prophet's laid out, but it's also true in 18 that [48:20] general standards for prophets are also given. Special prophet is coming but general standards for prophets are also offered.

And so in Verse 21, you may say in your heart, how will we know the word in which the Lord has not spoken? Moses answers, when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, it a thing does not come about or come true, that is thing that which the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously, you shall not be afraid of him.

What is a burden of a true prophet? [48:50] Merely a hundred percent accuracy. The true prophet, the one who speaks for the Lord, their word whether it's Jeremiah or Holda or whether it's Elijah or Isaiah. The mark of a true prophet is if your word comes true. So I just made a comment about that.

First of all, he says, there is coming a special prophet. This moves [49:20] us to question whether we now have a parallel or, if you want to call it competing, I wouldn't call it that, but some would. Theme running alongside this royal theme, there's coming a king. There's coming a prophet. Like Moses.

And in salvation history, these two are going to start running alongside one another. And when you get to the New Testament, the claim's going to be, Christ is prophet…and king and what else? [audience mumbles] Right. [49:51] All in one person. But this is the Genesis of the prophet promise according to New Testament. Someone like is Moses coming.

The other thing I want to say from Verse 22 as just kind of an aside. Whatever you believe about what the New Testament gift of prophecy is, we do have a standard by which those who would make [50:19] predictions can be judged in Verse 22.

I was minding my own business after a wedding conducted in Louisville. It was hot. The air conditioning had failed in a late May wedding and it was hot. And I had been asked to wear robes in this wedding. I don't mind that in a wedding cuz at least then you don't have to get a suit. You don't have to worry about it. They just say your robes. We want you to wear it, so I wore it.

Those things are hot, particularly the cheap model I had [50:50] purchased. [audience laughs] You know you need to get some cotton that'll breathe or something, but I had polyester. It's cheaper. I need to throw those things away, but…

So I had been hot and tired and I was minding my own business. At the reception in the side room, the one room that was air-conditioned apparently. And I was drinking some punch or whatever they had there. It was Baptist, there was no liquor, but I don't drink anyway. So…now I could lose my job if I do. So anyway, and a guy comes up to me [51:20] that I don't even know. I'd never seen him before you see.

He said, so, you're a college professor, huh? Made it sound like an accusation usually…

[audience laughs]

[51:28] usually reserved for questions like grave robbers or bank embezzlers. So, I owned up and said yes. Then he said he said so do you believe prophecies still exist? I thought I wouldn't have been surprised if this fella had asked me what I thought about the um Hong Kong or something being turned over to the Chinese.

But he says to me, well I thought for a minute and I say well you know I want to dodge your question except [51:58] I can say there is a standard for prophecy in Deuteronomy. It is accuracy. It is not prophecy from God to try out some predictions. So that I have prophecy for three or four of you and about your lives and you know, only one of them comes true. That's not biblical, God oriented prophecy. That I would know.

[52:25] Prophecies is not just trying out some things any more than teaching is just trying out some things. Or Evangelism or administration is trying out some things. So whatever else you think about prophecy and a lot of people think it is ceased. If you think continues, then you have a standard for it. Just thought I'd throw that in for free.

Because there will be people who will say to you, I have a word of prophecy for [52:45] you. I always listen to those and then wait to see if it's from the Lord or not. That's all you can do.

Male 4: [52:53] You said a standard here is for…the prophet?

[53:00] I think there are two or three things going on here. One is there's a future prophet that he talks about. It's a little bit like second Samuel 7. Cuz you're talking about Solomon, David, and some unstated descendants.

And here he's talking about Moses, a prophet who is coming, and then prophets in general I think. There are three things going on here. So he says through 19, he said ok here's the prophet that I'm going to send. He's going to be [53:30] accurate, he's going to be from me, he's going to be in the future. And it's almost as if people are trying to say well how are we going to recognize somebody who is not that?

Then he says standard is the…if the thing that any prophet has spoken doesn't come true, then they're not the true prophet thus they cannot be [emphasis] the prophet. See what I'm saying? I think that's what's going on.

Certainly Jesus could not be [emphasis] the prophet if the words he speaks do not come true. And the [54:00] people should not worry about such. Part of the burden of the New Testament is to show that the words of Christ came true. And if they don't then he's not [emphasis] the prophet. In fact, he's not an accurate prophet.

But in general in the Old Testament, the prophets knew this standard and they knew they were not true prophets of God if what they said did not come true. Therefore I have to wonder, if they didn't sweat a little bit about the predictions they [54:30] made.

Male 5: [54:31] How do you know that if some of them did? [crosstalk] [inaudible] [54:34]

[54:33] That's my point. Fire in my bones. I didn't want to put it out, didn't want to let it out according to Jeremiah but he couldn't do anything else. I think it's a huge responsibility. So you want, I always say to people, so you want to be prophet?

Let me tell you at least the pressures of being a prophet the way I would tell you about pressures of any other gift. But here he's saying the prophet is coming. You'll listen to him. [55:00] But that's about all we get here.

We're going to see further in the text that as the text builds, the prophet is the messiah. The king is the messiah. This we're going to see, but it's only started now.

Chapter 12

Messianic Promises (part 2)

We saw some of the roots of the Davidic promise of the law. Let's go to the issuing of the promise in the former prophets and the heart of our analysis must be [00:30] 2nd Samuel 7.

[00:32-00:36] Pause

The issuing of the promise in 2nd Samuel 7, 2nd Samuel is going to focus on the Davidic promise. Later on to the New Testament we will note the fact that this is not just the fulfillment of the Davidic promise, but is also the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise. [01:00] This becomes pulled together for us, but say in Samuel 7 we are at ground zero for the Davidic promise.

Let's note our context. David rules over Israel roughly 1010 years B.C. to 970 years B.C., 1010 to 970 B.C. That's a rounded [01:30] number. It's at least accurate within 10 years, which is about what we can do at this point in Biblical history.

But, you recall that Israel has come out of the era of the judges. They came out of that era asking for a king as Moses had said would occur. Though he didn't state exactly when, he did say they would ask for and receive a king, from [02:00] Deuteronomy 17.

And as Jacob had already said in Genesis 49, there is coming a ruler. What may surprise us is the fact that the first king is not from Judah at all, but from Benjamin.

David, however, is from the tribe of Judah. So perhaps we can say, by the time he's king, well it seems to me, well, we finally got it right, if there is going to be a king [02:30] it ought to be from Judah.

So then, remember that though David was chosen king in first Samuel 16, he must suffer many humiliations and difficulties. He must go through many painful toils and snares before he gets to be king and a lot of political intrigue.

One of the best treatments and fairest, I think, and [03:00] on the one hand reverent, but also, accurate, and doesn't go into the worship of David would be John Bight's "History of Israel." Because Bright gratefully admits God's work in all of this, but he also notes that David benefits politically from the activities of his friend Joab, who rules the army.

He assassinates Saul's [03:30] main army main, Abner. And that it's not all sweetness and light in above board how David becomes king. His main rival is beheaded by some of David's adherents. But David punishes them, has them put to death. But still David benefits from some political intrigue.

[04:00] Once king, he continues what Saul had begun. And does it better, really. He defeats the Philistines and subdues the small nations around 'em: the Moabites, the Ammonites, the Etimites. And you'll recall that Balaam's prophecy, in numbers 24, had said that's what, eventually that would occur. That somebody would come from Jacob; would defeat Moab, who was primary in that oracle and the others.

[04:30] So David, defeats his enemies, he centralizes Israel's government in an unlikely place, in Jerusalem, which at that time, was not an Israelite city, right?

There is no history attached like Bethel or Dan or Beersheba, there is no Israelite history associated with Jerusalem to that point. And [05:00] that may be why he did it.

It was at the edge of his tribe Judah, but there were always factions, regional factions, and fighting in Israel. Wasn't there?

The north, which had most of the land and money, resented being ruled by people from the south. [05:30] Benjamin's southern tribe had once fought a civil war against all the others. Remember that from Judges?

And Saul's heirs do not exactly, automatically drop their prominence and swarm to David's side. Do they, in the rest of Samuel?

So perhaps, David believed that a new city, next to his tribe, [06:00] without some of the old allegiances would be the best thing to do. But he centralized capital and he centralized the worship there by bringing the arch of the covenant, albeit, in what he says is almost a contentiously or sadly attempt.

He doesn't believe the arch of the covenant has a fit home and he wants to build a temple. But he localizes the worship there. Not at Shiloh [06:30], not anywhere else, but in his capital, in his tribe, and his place.

Now this too, though we didn't talk about it, this too was something Moses said would occur. He says several times in Deuteronomy the Lord will chose one place. And by the time the temple is built the Lord has said he has chosen this place, Jerusalem.

So historically, then, David is finally ascended to the throne. He has finally [07:00] gotten all twelve tribes under his rule. He has subdued nations around him. He has centralized the government, centralized the worship and with a heart full of gratitude.

2nd Samuel 1, "now it came about when the King lived in his house and the Lord had given him rest on every side from his enemies. That the King said to Nathan the prophet, 'See now, I dwell in the house of Cesar, but the arch of God dwells within tent curtains.' [07:30] Nathan said to the King, 'Go do all that is in your mind, the Lord is with you.'"

I've heard people criticize Nathan fairly severely for not praying about it. I think that's a bit much, but the word of the Lord comes to Nathan. Doesn't say to him, hey, why didn't you pray about it? Just says go to my servant David and ask him, are you the one to build me a house?

Now, that's an interesting question. [08:00] But, then in verse 6, God goes on to say to David, I haven't been miffed because you haven't built a temple. "For I have not dwelt in a house since the day I brought up the sons of Israel from Egypt. Even to this day, but I've been moving about in a tent even in a tabernacle." So, again, God is not upset.

He does not feel put out. He does not feel cold in the winter, or overly warm in the summer. And he says, "When did I ever command people to build [08:30] a temple?" So, in other words, you have not been disobedient. God affirms David's sentiments without allowing to build a temple.

God goes on to talk about what He, God, has done for David. Verse 8, "now, therefore, say to my servant David," servant theology becomes important in Messianic theology, "my servant David, and he says, 'I took you from the pastor of fallen sheep [09:00] to be ruler over my people, Israel, I've been with you were ever you have gone. I've cut off all your enemies. I'll make you a great name like the names of the great men who are on the Earth.'"

That promise is similar to the one made to whom?

Male voice 2: [09:13] Abraham.

[09:14] Sure, to Abraham.

"I will point a place for my people, Israel. I will plant them. That they may live and not be disturbed," He says in verse 11. That has been occurring since he commanded Judges. [09:30] He has been giving them rest.

Now, verse 12, promises David, "when your days are completed, you lay down with your fathers," promise number one, "I will raise up your seed, your [foreign word][09:43], your descendent after you. Who will come forth from you. And I will establish his kingdom."

Promise number one. David's direct descendant's going to succeed him on the throne. [10:00] Doesn't sound like much until you realize Saul didn't establish a dynasty, 'til you read the history of Israel you see how much intrigue and murder and death and stuff goes on and in the history of human beings in general. He says, "your descendent, he will come from you, I'll establish his kingdom."

Second promise, verse 13, "he shall build a house for my name." It is Solomon who will build the temple. At this point, it [10:30] doesn't name Solomon, right? Solomon isn't alive, yet. But, David knows one of his seed, [foreign word][10:39] theme all the way through, from Genesis three on, he's going to build a temple. And I will establish, at least this is the stunner, I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

So the promise made to David is an [11:00] enduring promise like the one made to Abraham. I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever.

But then we divide the question again that which is to Solomon and that which is forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to me. Still talking about Solomon. I have heard some launch off into how that's Christ because God's son. Remember that in Old Testament theology [11:30] the Messiah is God's greater son because the Davidic kings are called God's sons; the ones that he has favored. His-

But there is a greater son coming. And here, while we know it's Solomon, when he commits iniquity, Solomon does, doesn't he? "I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the son's of men, but my loving kindness shall not depart from [12:00] him as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you." It's almost like Saul's an object lesson here.

So that what David comes to find out is that, even though Solomon may be an imperfect ruler, the promise of an eternal kingdom stands anyway.

So, they're going to be flawed people [12:30] coming before God's greater son.

Verse 16, "your house and your kingdom shall endure before me forever. Your throne shall be established forever." In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David. So here, the promise has been issued.

[13:00] And of course, some of this language, as we mention sounds to some scholars like the Abrahamic covenant. And I want to put the title of three good books on the board so you can – these are works that you might purchase, check out and or use in your studies of Messianic theology.

The first one is Christopher Wright, Old Testament scholar, author of [13:30] books on Old Testament ethics, I think, Susan, and this is the guy I mentioned to you writes a lot about the land. He's associated with John Stott's ministry now. I think, kind of the international director of it.

He also has a book entitled "Knowing Christ Through the Old Testament" and it's not a heavily documented book. In fact, he said he had always wanted to write a book in which he would state what he learned from the [14:00] scriptures and not use footnotes. This is what he does. But it's a good and fair treatment.

Walter Kaiser, Jr., I mentioned him before, "The Messiah in the Old Testament." He is also the author of "Towards an Old Testament Theology," and he writes a lot about promise and fulfillment.

Did I have you read him for [14:30] today or tomorrow? Out of your "Flowering Old Testament Theology"? May well have done. If you looked puzzled, it either means I didn't, or we haven't gotten-haven't read it, yet.

[14:41] [Laughing]

But that's a good readable-

[14:44] [inaudible]

He's trying to fit the whole of the scripture into the promise of the Messiah. If he can't do it textually, he will do it by an era. And what's going on in a time frame.

Both of these, a British Evangelical and an American Evangelical, and then somebody [15:00] – for the 19th century, someone somewhat notorious for this and that, your old friend C.A. Briggs of Brown, Driver and Briggs, if you ever use that lexicon. That's Briggs. "Messianic Prophecy."

It's very interesting that in some ways Briggs historical critic and a lot of other things, in some of the Messianic Prophecy that he finds in the Old Testament, that he works with, at least, if not more, conservatively than Wright and Kaiser. [15:30]

Now, it has been a while, but it's interesting to me that the more liberal scholar these days haven't been doing much on Messianic Theology.

I can't remember if it's he who cometh or he that cometh, but about 50 years ago, Sigom Movicol [Unknown spelling of names][15:50], some of you know from Psalm scholarship. He who cometh in an Old Testament Messianic theology, and of course, to the extent that he can in [16:00] systematic theology, you'll get someone, I'm trying to think of non-evangelicals now.

Karl Barth does a lot with Messianic theology in his volumes on reconciliation and really the Old Testament scholars who are neo-orthodox or even farther left, haven't been doing much. But the systematic theologians of that vent still will deal with Messianic Theology as they deal with Christology.

You can take a look there-mhmm

Male Voice 3: [16:29] [Inaudible question]

[16:30] Van Groningen would be one, and also, I'm trying to think what are the top titles of it. Maybe just Messianic Theologies and also Van Groningen is V-A-N G-R-O-N-I-N-G-E-N.

Van Groningen then also, if you want to see a Biblical Theological approach, that does more than the Old Testament, but it's from an Old Testament scholar. [17:00] Willem Van Gemeren, "The Progress of Redemption," straight forward salvation history approach to the issue. Van Groningen is good because he does a lot of exegetical work. At times, I wonder if we aren't forcing the Messiah onto some texts, but you know those things happen.

You can force worse things onto a text. And I certainly have. With love and respect, I always say, there are the [17:30] reformed, the utterly reformed and then the TRs the totally reformed. I don't know if you're utterly and totally I don't know, but anyways we would have strong agreements and strong disagreements at certain points.

It's hard to have a mild disagreement with someone who is totally reformed or totally [foreign word] [17:49] or totally anything. But anyway it's –um- Van Groningen, Van Gemeren- both of them really Dutch Calvinists in their- and –

[18:00] Willem Van Gemeren is –uh- if you haven't had him here you ought to ask him to have him for either lectures or for class because he is an excellent Old Testament Theologian. Very much in the strong salvation history approach to the text very linguistically oriented because he is the editor of the international dictionary of Old Testament Theology - you know, 5 volumes.-

Once you get his accent because he is Dutch. So-

[18:30] There are others. These are three extremely readable and fairly straight forward. So if you were going to teach a series or a series in your church, say at advent time, or at any other point in time, that might also be a good way for those of you who follow a church here if you ever wonder what to do with the 26 or so weeks of Pentecost- about a long season.

You might lay some foundation that –uh- traditional advent time didn't offer you. [19:00]

The top three that find a lot of correspondence between the Davidic and the Abrahamic covenant at this point.

Briggs notes that the seed of the woman in Genesis 3:15, the seed of Abraham in Genesis 19, the seed of David here. A skeptic here would say just because [foreign word for seed][19:17] is used all over the Old Testament – but it's interesting though that when you're talking about descendents the same word is used here. It would at least make you think.

Also, the promise of renown, also, the promise of the theme of [19:30] calling Abraham out and calling David out. The issue of blessing. There're a lot of correspondents here. To be fair, you have to ask, if it's simply the type of literature involved that calls it out, or whether it's trying to draw the two together.

Don't know here. But in Isaiah the explicit bringing them together is done. So it's for sure that other place in the Old Testament they bring them together by [20:00] name.

So, here Davis is at least compared in away to Abraham. That's Briggs.

Kaiser, offers seven provisions in the Davidic covenant. You know the different blessings that we were talking about. He lines them all out. He compares them to the Abrahamic covenant and chief of the Davidic provisions is the fact, for him, the God calls David [20:30] my servant.

That's primary because servant theology will be important in Isaiah and elsewhere. He calls Solomon my son, which becomes significant because of the son theology in Psalms. And third that he declares the covenant eternal.

Kaiser notes the importance of the woman and the seed. [21:00] And then Kaiser draws out several things. I would site servant, son and eternal as significant points for future reference in Messianic Theology.

Well, the covenant with David includes an eternal kingdom. So I mean, [inaudible voice][21:24] I'd say it's the same thing. He calls it- declares the covenant eternal, and I would [21:30] say that's a good question of distinction.

I think he would say the covenant is eternal because the kingdom is eternal. David makes quiet a response of gratitude, but we won't labor over that at this point.

So, after 2 Samuel 7, you are aware that the laws focus on Judah. Has become a focus on David. Right? It has become more specific. We started Genesis 3 [22:00] with the seed of the woman. In a way, you could say that could be any kid born from now on.

But, it specifies in Judah as the ruler. Focuses upon David as the ruler forever. Focus on David and his dependents role as servant, son and [22:30] ongoing kingdom. So I would borrow from Kaiser there.

So on the one hand, we've gotten clarity as to whose family in Judah we're going to focus on. But, now at this point having gotten some clarity, now open up a whole set of questions.

In what sense is this king eternal or otherwise going to bless all nations? In what sense [23:00] is this Messianic at all?

So about the time you get certain things lined out, you then have some other ones. But we see here David's the focal point for an eternal kingdom. His seed like the seed of Abraham and the seed of Eve are significant.

At the end of the former prophets, what we typically call the historical books, but the end of the former prophets from this point on Judah has [23:30] nothing but Davidic kings, right?

One exception, Athaliah rules for a while, but in general they accept no one but – the authors of the Bible accept no one except Davidic kings as legitimate kings in Judah.

The northern tribes after the death of Solomon go off in their own kingdom. And they do not have a Davidic ruler. But so serious is the text about tracing the Davidic ruler that [24:00] the last person noted in 2 Kings, the end of the history, is a Davidic king who has been in exile for thirty some years and who is elevated above other kings amongst the exiles in Babylon.

So, the text becomes dedicated to tracing the Davidic line. The promise is to David. And, as we will see later, in the book of Psalms, say Psalms 89 [24:30], which is the Psalm about how the nation had fallen because of its' sin. It concludes with a question. What happened to the Davidic promise then?

If there is no king of Israel period, what happened to the Davidic promise of always having – so what happened to this eternal kingdom? And perhaps 2 Kings is trying to answer that question. There is still a Davidic king around, even if he doesn't get to rule. We don't know [25:00] if that's the intent.

But the point is it's not just skeptics like you or me asking what about this kingdom? The Bible itself asks the question. What happened, then, to the Davidic king?

At this point in Messianic theology, you see where we are. We have a focus upon the seed of the woman, we have a focus upon the seed of Abraham we have a focus upon Judah and David. They're getting more specific.

[25:30] We have a sense that there is going to be an eternal kingdom. But we do not yet know how this will bless all nations nor do we know exactly how this will eliminate the sin problem.

And, I guess, one of the things I'm trying to do is we walk through this- I want to keep an eye on New Testament theology at this point. But I want us to have a sense of what the Old Testament people had, then. So, that when we read that David had faith in God, [26:00] you know, texts like Hebrews 11 or in Romans 4, we're going to have a sense that it was real faith. There was information there but, that there was still a lot to come.

So, the seeds or the roots of promise are in the plenitude or in the law. The actual giving of the promise is in the former prophets.

And in the [26:30] prophets and writings the promise is developed. And it is these passages that we have come to know, mostly in Christian circles, as Messianic promises.

But my point is if you don't have what we have already seen we won't know from which the prophets derived their statements. And we won't see how God is keeping faith with promises made. As Jesus said, "when Moses wrote of me," [27:00] and these other texts.

But I admit that's a bit of work to slog through. I understand that.

So then, now, the text we know more about. We will sample some Messianic texts because the prophets in writing have many, many of them.

And in your test paper for next time, it might be you could develop one of those themes. You know [27:30] say, I think, there's you know House's admitted you can only do so much, so I'd like to develop one. Obviously, it might be helpful to you if it's a stream what you already know or one that you want to develop.

But Isaiah is the first book of the latter prophets. And Isaiah is going to pick up two themes in particular. Those themes are that the coming savior is a righteous ruler- [28:00] the coming savior is a righteous ruler- and the other theme is that he is a servant of God.

It's as if they assume now, [inaudible voice][28:16-28:19]

First book of the latter prophets, former prophets are Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. Latter prophets Isaiah, Jeremy, [28:30] Ezekiel and the twelve- the twelve are treated as one book in the Hebrew cannon.

Male Voice 3 [28:34-28:40] [Inaudible male voice]

Dr. House [28:40] In the writings, hmmhm.

It's interesting how the writings unfold. You start with Psalms go to Job and it's only in our minds- I think it's in the current Christian mind that we marvel at that.

But in Psalms, if we just [29:00] remember that have of them are laments.

[29:05] [Inaudible audio]

Laments- We forget that we don't know or we often forget, if half of Psalms are lament it won't surprise us so much that Job's next.

I mean, I just don't think it would. It seems more natural. Because the Psalms raise a lot of questions about what God's doing in history. How he is doing it -a lot on evil and suffering in the Psalms, my goodness.

[29:30] Then you have Proverbs, which is a sister to Job because of its interest in wisdom literature. Then you have some interesting connections starting.

Proverbs 31 ends in, what?

Virtues woman, yep, virtues wife. –Um- She is a busy lady. Then the next book in the Hebrew Cannon is Ruth [30:00] because, though Proverbs ends in what amounts to a wise a virtues woman a lot of its space has been taken up with what is a wise virtues man. And in Ruth we have examples of Boaz and of Naomi and Ruth. And Ruth is virtues woman. The traits you find in Proverbs 31 you find in Ruth, really.

Then after Ruth, which is among other things is a love story, [30:30] you get Song of Solomon. So you can see some natural progression that is thematic as well as Ruth and Song of Solomon are used at certain festivals in –in later years.

But then you have Ecclesiastes after Song of Solomon. It's almost like the youth group doesn't want to get too excited after Song of Solomon so we are going to have Ecclesiastes. So, on the one hand, you can see [31:00] that- how exciting things can be when they go well and then how difficult they can be when they don't.

Then you have Lamentations, which kicks off- obviously it has the same tone in many ways as Ecclesiastes- it kicks off the interest in the writings on the exile.

That's when you get Ester and Daniel together as exilic books.

And then [31:30] Ezra-Nehemiah chronicles as books about rebuilding, actually. You know, coming along. So, it is not that the Old Testament cannon treats Ezra Nehemiah as if they are not historical, it gives them a different emphasis.

The other thing that's interesting, they just expected that their people knew the history. It is our problem to have to read Ezra Nehemiah after 1 and 2 Kings, [32:00] 1 and 2 Chronicles to know what's going on. It was not their problem.

Isaiah, as we've already seen, is a prophet who works during difficult days. Of course, that becomes a standard line about the prophets. It's almost as if, if they weren't difficult days the Lord wouldn't have need of them, so Isaiah prophesized 740 to700 roughly.

[32:30] And he sets forth a problem in Isaiah 1 to 5. The problem with 8th century Israel is that they are sitting against God, oppressing one another, coming to the temple offering sacrifices that are abhorrent to God because of their wicked hearts. That's the first five chapters of Isaiah.

It ends with a song on a vineyard. God planted a wonderful [33:00] vineyard and somehow the vine went bad. Subsided to sin.

What's God gonna do?

He announces a day of judgment. He announces that all these things are coming. What's He going to do?

Chapter 6 he calls a prophet. Calls a prophet, preach to the people, that's one thing he is going to do. But, then, starting in Isaiah 7, [33:30] you see something else he is going to do that is already based in the history we've seen.

He's going to send a savior. This is always God's response to call servants and to send the servant savior. That's always- if you get right down to it that's still God's antidote, right?

Where ever you go in your ministry, you remember you are a part of a twofold plan. So, he [34:00] calls a prophet. A holy God, in Isaiah 6, calls a prophet who recognizes his own sin, to go to an even more sinful people.

To what result, God tells Isaiah they will not listen to you, what effect will your preaching have in general? It will cause their eyes to glaze over, their ears to become dull. They will do this [34:30] so they won't have to repent and turn to God. That's Isaiah 9 and 10.

So the prophet who was so enthusiastic about going for God asks how long. Typical Biblical question. How long? So God tells him until cities are devastated, until the nation lays in ruin. And he describes Israel like a tree that has been cut down, [35:00] hauled away and then the stump has been set on fire.

Now this comes about in Isaiah's time because all of Judah is conquered. All the 53 cities, we've already talked about this in light of Isaiah 40, and Jerusalem itself is devastated and starved and bare.

And it is just a burnt up stump of a tree. That's what's left.

So Isaiah is not given a [35:30] happy word, is he? [Laughing][35:32]

How long and what will be the evidence of his ministries effectiveness and truthfulness- that's all that will be left.

[35:42-35:45] [Inaudible]

I use those terms synonymously, unfortunately. But the truth is in his career both, In 722, of course, the northern tribes are devastated by Syria. It's not to lie in Judah in 701 [36:00] is the stump that is burnt up.

Isaiah has a tough ministry. Not as tough as Jeremiah, but one of the things God is going to do, though, begins in chapter 7. In one of the famous, maybe some would say infamous, because of its difficulty Messianic passages.

In Judah, they have a king names Ahaz. Chapter 7 [36:30] verse 3. "Lord said to Isaiah, 'go out now to meet Ahaz.'" Ahaz is king roughly from 735 to 715. And during his time, this is the first two verses of the chapter, okay. Assyria is the dominate nation.

You had a few choices with Assyria. You could- they demanded first that you give them tribute money.

[37:00]If you didn't give it, they would try to put their king on your throne so that he would help you give the money.

If that didn't work, they would come and destroy you. Like all bullies they preferred to get the money. But if they couldn't get the money they would terrorize you and destroy you.

The smaller nations around Judah were trying to fend [37:30] off the Assyrians by having an alliance together. Ahaz decided, whether than join the alliance, which he considered doomed to failure, he would make a pact with the Assyrians.

That's dining with the devil, for sure.

Isaiah says you should consider a third option that is keeping your covenant with the Lord. And then you will not need to be in league with these [38:00] or with Assyria.

To be honest, though, being in league with Assyria or trusting in the Lord had one of the same results. That is that all these little nations were going to threaten and send troops against Judah to try to draw them into the confederacy of countries against Assyria.

[38:30] So basically what Isaiah is going to say is, "look these people are going to fight you anyway, why don't you do what's right?"

And never forget in your ministries that if people are going to oppose you anyway, whether you do right or wrong that should make it easier to do what's right. It makes it easier what you have to do.

So, Ahaz still sticks with Assyria. [39:00] God in his mercy sends Isaiah to tell him that's not necessary. Verse 3, "Lord said, 'go out to meet Ahaz. You and your son, Shear-Jashub,'" the boys means a remnant shall return, a hopeful sign, right? At least a remnant will return, that's more hopeful than none of us will return.

And notice that he takes the boy with him. The boy has something to do with the [39:30] word. He said go meet the king.

Verse 4, "tell him take care and be calm. Have no fear and don't be faint hearted." This is a message of mercy. Don't worry Ahaz. He says they've said, verse 6, "go against Judah and terrorize it and make for ourselves a breach in its walls."

Verse 7, "it shall not stand or come to pass." God, in his mercy, is sending the prophet and his son to be a prophetic [40:00] word to this king.

Verse 10, it's even more, the grace is even further extended. The Lord spoke again to Ahaz, ask a sign. You know this goes against Biblical truth, right? It's very rare that God says ask a sign.

So again, he is not only sent a prophet, and the prophet son is an object lesson, he has not only got a word of comfort and a word of hope and a word of freedom, [40:30] he is told, here take a sign ask whatever you want. So later on, Ahaz says, well make the shadow go the opposite way of normal.

Gideon, one of the few offered, God doesn't say to everybody, ask a sign. So he says to Gideon to get this fleece. Wet one time; dry the other -something unusual. Ahaz, all of a sudden sounds [41:00] pious. I won't ask and I won't test the Lord. Why is it not testing the Lord? Cause the Lord offered it to him. It's testing the Lord to demand a sign when it's not offered. So basically, he is refusing the whole oracle object lesson and promise.

So?

[41:30] "Listen now, House of David, is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men that you will try the patience of my God, as well?" So the Lord will give you a sign.

Now, remember this sign is suppose to be a big sign. Or is it seems to be ask a big sign- high as heaven deep as a grave. Therefore, the Lord will give you a sign.

"Behold [42:00] a virgin will be with child and bare a son. And she will call his name Emanuel, God with us. He will eat curds and honey at the time he knows enough to refuse evil and chose good. But before the boy will no one have to refuse evil and chose good. The land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken."

Now of course this whole passage has sparked a whole history of controversy. Because [42:30] Matthew 1:23 says the virgin birth is a fulfillment of this passage. And this has led some to say, see the New Testament will do anything to a passage to make it work for Jesus sake.

Jesus may be the ultimate fulfillment of this, but there is no way that in its original context Isaiah 7:10 to 16 is about a virgin born person.

And [43:00] the argument goes like this and you can read it in a variety of commentators. The Lord himself will give you a sign. A maiden, in other words a woman, she'll bare and before the boy knows

good and evil the land, the two kings you dread, will be forsaken, in other words it can't be Jesus because you've got a short order. A kid being born living a couple years and kings being gone. [43:30]That's how the argument goes.

However, note Herbert Wolf's commentary on Isaiah. The variety of commentators that do something along the following in response; first of all, it's not much of a big sign for just a woman to get married and have a baby.

Therefore, in this case you would have to say the miracle would have to be the timing. Cause it's no big miracle. [44:00] No offense to all of us. Who some of us our parents were happy to hear that we were coming. My mother came to accept that over time.

[44:10] [Laughter]

But, understand it's not a great miracle for babies to be born in the sense of extraordinary- just go to the global center and watch the clock rock. It's not to minimize people being made in God's image or anything else.

[44:30] So you'd have to at this point say it would just be the timing that was the miracle, but the sign itself of a child being born, Wolf says, is surely a bigger thing. And it says the word can mean maiden in the sense of a woman of marriageable age, but it can also simply mean a woman without sexual experience.

Now then, he will eat curds and honey, according to Alec Motyer, which is [45:00] spelled M-O-T-Y-E-R, I pronounced it 'Motear' for a long time before I was corrected by people who knew Motyer. I know he has been here to speak. –But Motyer says that is the food of a peasant. Emanuel, the person God with us, is going to eat the food not of royalty, but of peasant.

[45:30] And connects that to the life of Jesus. Jesus is virgin born. Jesus is god with us. Jesus is living among the poor.

Verse 16, "before the boy" and the hey on could also mean this boy- one must decide- "will refuse evil and chose good and the land of whose two kings you dread will be forsaken."

[46:00] Wolf and Motyer and others note that Shear-Jashub brought along as an object lesson. Before this boy, Shear-Jashub, knows enough to refuse evil and chose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken. There are two boys involved here -Shear-Jashub, the son of Isaiah, and Emanuel, who is yet to come.

If this is the case, and I think it is, it is in [46:30] keeping with Isaiah's practice of consistently talking about current and future events. And you really have to be awake in Isaiah to know which one he is doing.

He is not always talking about the future. He is not always talking about the present. And he often brings them together at the same. And this is what I think is occurring here.

At this point, [47:00] if indeed this is a Messianic prophecy we could say that the virgin birth is important as a sign. The name is important as a statement of fact that God is with them. Humility is important. Humble origins in verse 15.

Which is, according to Motyer, another way of telling Ahaz your lineage is going down. [47:30] By the time Emanuel comes the heir to the throne is going to be eating peasants' food.

And you'll note that Matthew and Luke take some pains to give Christ genealogy through David to say he is the legitimate heir of David. But he is born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth.

You have to wonder if you go to Nazareth to hear a lecture as to how small [48:00] that town was when Jesus was there and how humble it was.

Maybe it was fewer than 200 inhabitants. Mostly dwelling in caves that had been fitted like houses and below the church the enunciation they have some excavated there and fitted out to look like it would have at that time.

Pretty humble. Pretty humble.

[48:30] So, even if you have questions about this text, which I think can be worked out, Isaiah 9 is pretty clear.

[48:40] [Inaudible]

[48:42] Yeah.

[48:45-48:47] [Inaudible]

And that's why I think Wolf's interpretation is correct. Wolf's point is that the New Testament writers didn't have to do any special pleading. They interpreted this text the way [49:00] he just did, which is virgin birth, Emanuel are a messianic promise so are the curds and honey. This boy must not be Emanuel, but Isaiah's son.

There are two kids involved in Emanuel and Shear-Jashub, both of whom have symbolic names. So Matthew 1:23, absolutely reads the passage as the [49:30] fulfillment. No one disputes that and the reason you go through this text like this is to the extent of what scholars think the original context was.

Did Matthew just find a phrase? Did he think Jesus was God and he found Emanuel and that's God with us and Jesus was virgin born and you had this passage so you applied it to Jesus even though it's not the original context?

A lot of liberal scholars would do that. And a lot of conservative scholars, rather than trying [50:00] to see if there is a context in which the New Testament writer is accurate, both contextually and theologically, would just say it's irrelevant. It's a fuller. Well, Christ fulfills it, whether it was intended or not.

I find that to be quick sand, honestly. Because I think it's a legitimate question, then, for someone who doesn't believe in the virgin birth, in the Christian tradition or outside of it, to say well, okay, then [50:30] how dependable are these predictions anyway. If they can rework them anyway they want to, it's not something you ought to be able to claim as evidence of the New Testament inspiration.

Male Voice: [50:42-40:45][Inaudible question]

[50:46] They would say it's not a virgin per say, nor the New Testament, Mary says how's this going to be since I've never known a man. That's pretty clear. They would say, well it's not a virgin- virgin. It's just somebody of that age -a woman of marriageable age.

[51:00] Which it is true. That is a possible translation. But in context it doesn't seem to work. It's also equally true that virgin- virgin is a –um- accurate –uh- possibility for it. And so when you have two possibilities you go by context.

You also go, in some ways, by translation traditions. And the [foreign word][51:27] before there was ever Christian church translated [51:30] it clearly as virgin as in no sexual experience. That's the way they understood it. That's the way they thought.

So before there was a Christian church there was an interpretation. Because translation is minimal interpretation- we all know that.

Sometimes it's a lot of interpretation. It has to be that there was interpretation that had 7-14 virgin woman meaning virgin woman with no sexual experience.

But I do want to hasten it to say that those who do translate it to say this as a [52:00] woman of marriageable age or something like it are not necessarily just being obstinate against the scripture. That is one possible translation of the word, in other texts.

Well, I think, Matthew's working both contextually in his own time in Isaiah's time. Then in Isaiah 9, 1 through 7, I guess, if I had to say, if I had a [52:30] favorite Messianic text, this is mine. That's worth nothing- just is. "But there will be no more gloom for whom who is in anguish. In earlier times, he treated the land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali with contempt. But later he shall make it glorious by the way of the sea on the other side of Jordan. Galilee of the Gentiles.

Well, what's all that?

Galilee, as you know, is in the northern part of Israel, right? Sea of Galilee is north. [53:00] Dead Sea south, Jordan River runs one to the other; 125 miles by 40 or 50 miles wide. Okay. In Galilee, that was kind of the northern door to Israel. Right?

Where would Babylon and Assyria and other conquering nations have entered the country?

Where would nations who wanted to do battle with Egypt, which was in the south, where would they have [53:30] entered?

Right up there in Galilee.

So, in a way, no part of Israel knew the misery that Galilee knew. The other thing was, remember those armies had to be sustained off the land.

Galilee was the best region to get fruit, food and stuff on your way. And then they were also the last place these armies came coming back. So if they marched out the Spring [54:00] to go to war they would devastate the northern part, go down for war, and then come back in the Fall and take what was left.

So the northern part of the kingdom, Galilee, they had suffered plenty. But there is going to be a time in which they are glorious.

So, verse 2, "the people who walk in darkness will see a great light. Those who live in a dark land the light will shine on them."

They are still talking about Galilee, the Gentiles.

So, verse 3, promises, [54:30] "you shall multiply the nation and you shall increase their gladness."

Verse, 4, "you shall break the yoke of their burden and the staff on their shoulders, the rod of the oppressor is at the battle of Midian. For every boot of the booted warrior and the battle tumult and cloak rolled in blood will be burning fuel for the fire." Peace is the promise.

Right?

Now then, we are about to get a Messianic promise. But we have also just [55:00] gotten the context that caused first century Jews the most problem in accepting Jesus as the Messiah.

Let's be honest about that. We've been given a promise of peace. And in Isaiah you always have to ask: is this a short term promise or a long term promise?

Verse 6, "for a child will be born on to us. A son will be given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulder. And his name shall be called wonderful counselor, Mighty [55:30] God."

Which is the only text in the Old Testament that equates the Davidic heir, the greater son of David, with God, overtly. Mighty God. Eternal Father, which is nearly to say the same thing. Prince of Peace, so these are the names.

It's going to have all the counsel of a wise king [56:00] all the power not only of a mighty king, but of God. All the endurance needed to fulfill the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. And the element of peace. There will be no end to the increase of his government or of peace on the throne of David.

Of course, it must be on the throne of David. And over his kingdom to establish and uphold it with justice and righteousness. [56:30] From then on and forever more the zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

So, we have clear cut royal imagery here. The Davidic line, government on his shoulders.

The emphasis on David and on the righteous and eternal ruler.

We are about to see in this text a hermeneutical principle that will help us as we look at Psalms. It is simply this; in the Psalm you often wonder and in the prophets you may [57:00] wonder, from time to time, is this text talking about an earthly ruler? Is this a promise to a normal Davidic king? Or is it a promise of the Messiah?

One way we can tell is are things promised to the person in the text that go well beyond what God ever promised David?

This kingdom, for this individual is forever, that was part of the Davidic promise, but he is going to have more territory [57:30] than God ever promised to David.

He is going to have more victories than God ever promised to David and more than he ever promised to any other king. So remember, there is no end to the increase of his government or of peace. And he is going to be a wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

In the midst of the eighth century, historical context [58:00] in which Israel and Judah were constantly faced with the Assyrians and if not with them, one of their minions, and if not with them, somebody who wanted to recruit them for a war against the Assyrians. War was a daily fact of life. Threats were a daily fact of life.

And, so, they wanted someone to give them peace. And not only that, to somebody like Isaiah, he looks at Ahab and [58:30] he knows this is not the Messiah. He longed for someone on the David throne who will set things right.

And, so, the promise is that in the future such a person will come. So, if as I think is true, and Matthew thinks Isaiah 7 is a Messianic text, you need a virgin born person for whom his birth will be God with us. [59:00] You need someone who will be a wonderful counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, Son of David, no end to his kingdom this is what you need so far.

And you need to be able to discern which ones will be true of the Messiah on Earth and in the [foreign word][59:23], in the end of time.

Or should we make that distinction?

[59:30] This was the dividing point between the Christians and a lot of Jewish interpreters of the first century. The Christians said some of this was for the time of the Messiah and some for the end of time. Others said no, it's all the same thing. So that when the Messiah comes, all of these things must be fulfilled when he comes.

Because the Christians answer to the legitimate question well [60:00] when are these things going to happen? Was, later. The end of time. And those who did not agree with that would have said that's very convenient, but it doesn't fit the portrait. I would disagree with those folks, but-

Just so you'll know that if you've ever heard it said that well, you know the first century Jews they wanted somebody to relieve their burdens, somebody set them free. Just remember those issues were [60:30] considerable. They were real issues. But that the question was not so much one of what the Davidic king would do, but when.

When. How long becomes the question again.

And we will see more of that as we develop the promise in Isaiah, in particular, but you'll see in chapter 11:1 through 10, similar sentiments [61:00] as this in chapter 9.

Start there. But also develop servant theology. Isaiah has the boldest to say the coming king is also a suffering servant. And that just sounds self contradictory to the average mind. Doesn't it?

A ruler won't suffer, at least not in the ancient near eastern context.

Chapter 13

Servant Passages

We're talking about the development of the promise. You had really seen the foundations and, and the offering of the promise yesterday in the law of the former prophets. Most of your reading for yesterday and today have been in the [00:30] prophets and writings, if not all of it, but certainly a good bit of it. And, so we're getting closer to what you actually read. You had two readings in the flowering of the Old Testament theology.

The one being from Walt Keiser who addresses promise in, uh, his theology. And you learned about his book on, uh, messianic prophecy and his approach to Old Testament theology being one of promise and [01:00] fulfillment. Which is in that old salvation history school.

You also read Ronald Clemmets who's attempting to show that promise is an aspect of law and the prophets. It's not that again, that the law somehow gets its weight on our back until we can get to the prophets and they can get us some promise. But the law particularly through its blessings emphasis is also promissory. And then of course he comes to the prophets he, he does talk about the promises there [01:30] in more detail.

We're drawing a portrait really of the Messiah, and we're having to pull several, uh, threads as we go. But Isaiah 11 is about as hopeful and soaring as was Isaiah 9. And it is again a Davidic text, but let's look at this passage. It's most famous for the lion and lamb imagery that occurs here. [02:00] That, uh, many of you would recognize.

Verse 1 sets forth the Davidic aspect right away. "A shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse." Jesse is… Who, who's Jesse? Sure. David's father. So it is Davidic from the first line. "And a branch from his roots will bear fruit."

Here are the aspects. "The spirit of the Lord will rest on him." And though I cannot say that something like Jesus' baptism, when the Holy Spirit [02:30] descends from Heaven is a fulfillment of this sort of scripture it certainly reminds one of it, if not.

"The spirit of the Lord will rest on him. This will be a spirit of wisdom and understanding." We've already talked about wisdom and the potential Christology of Proverbs 8, but certainly the New Testament indicates that Jesus is the wisdom of God.

You will have a spirit of wisdom and understanding [03:00] of council and strength. The same individual then who has been called wonderful councilor in Chapter 9 here is going to have council and strength. The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. A complete wisdom person.

So if you read the book of Proverbs, wouldn't that just about be the complete person? Wisdom, understanding, council, strength, knowledge, fear of the Lord. And, so this spirit of the Lord will [03:30] rest on this individual, and these will be the characteristics.

"He will delight in the Lord, will not judge by his eyes see nor make a decision by what his ears hear. But with righteousness will judge the poor and will decide with fairness for the afflicted of the Earth."

Sounds rather just, wise and good. You might say a bit passive at that point, if you will. But might be a fair comment if you think it's too passive. [04:00] Second half of Verse 4 — "And he will strike the Earth with the rod of his mouth. And with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked."

If all he must do to slay the wicked is open his mouth and speak or breathe — that's power! Not unlike Genesis 1, but certainly in line with what the ancient near-eastern kings were able to do. With just a word, cause life or death

[04:30] "And righteousness will be the belt about his loins. And faithfulness the belt about his waist." So this is quite the character trait. It is a king who's really an ideal wise man. So, in effect, it's not only that God's greater son. And greater — as Jesus would say, "Greater than David is here."

[05:00] But all this wisdom talk might remind you of what king? Sure. So on the one hand you say, "Is this talking about Solomon?"

Well, if you're a Canonical reader you know that 1st Kings 3 through 11 depict the life of Solomon. He's not fully wise, is he? Why not? How do we know?

He asked for wisdom and got it, but [05:30] does he always exercise it? Notably when he doesn't? Idolatry by Chapter 11 of 1st Kings.

And, so understand that this text would say, "Okay. Someone who is greater than Solomon." All these characteristics… So if you wanna talk about the savior it would be nice to talk about Jesus being, having the spirit of the Lord resting on him. Having wisdom, [06:00] understanding, council, strength, knowledge, fear, delight in the fear of the Lord, fair judgment, not judging the-by the way human beings judge. By simply what your eyes see, what your ears hear.

"He will judge with righteousness the poor. Stand for the afflicted on Earth." This is quite a list. And yet have the power to strike the Earth with the rod of his mouth. That he has the power to speak and have judgment [06:30] become…

And then an ideal scene that has repeated in other texts that are clearly at the end of time when — such as Isaiah 65 and Isaiah 25. "If death has been removed we are passed things on this Earth."

And in Isaiah 25 we have similar imagery. "The wolf will dwell with the lamb. Leopard will lie down with the young goat. The calf, the young lion and the fat lean together. And a little boy will lead them."

[07:00] And send a first grader out to lead the lion to his meal. Also, "The bear will graze." It's like one of these digitally created movies. We're gonna put the bear and the cow… We're gonna put the lion eating straw like an ox. Nursing child. Playing by the home of the cobra. Things that just make you, your eyes bug out, [07:30] your hands go stiff. Things that you say, "No. we must stop this."

See, there's no threat. The reason you worry is you don't want a kid playing with a snake is because there's a real threat here. So in this way creation has moved from creation through sin to recreation, right? There's no evidence that creation was at odds with one another until sin entered. [08:00]

Verse 9 we will talk about human beings and animals [phonetic] [08:04] I suppose together. They will not destroy and all by holy mountain for the Earth will have the knowledge of the Lord as the waters covered the sea. Beautiful image there.

So the knowledge of the Lord, relationship with him, delight and fear of the Lord and these sort of things will be common place. Not rare. And that day the nations will resort to the root of Jesse. [08:30] Who will stand as a signal for the peoples and his resting place will be glorious.

Now, here we bring together promises that will be made both to David and Abraham, right? This is an indication that all nations are blessed through the root of Jesse who is a descendant of Abraham. Stand as a signal or as a standard for the people. And he will give a resting place to the nations as well as to the people of Israel. [09:00]

Isaiah has an extensive interest in nations outside of Israel. For instance, if I turn over to Isaiah 19, Verse 23 which is one of the most startling passages along these lines in the Bible. There are others in Isaiah, but Isaiah 19:23…

Talking about long-term, future events [09:30] and this context starts up higher even in Verse 19. Isaiah 19:19, and I'll start Verse 23. "And that day there will be a highway to Egypt to Assyria. And the Assyrians will come into Egypt. And the Assyrians into Assyria. And the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians."

That text has already shown us the Lord is making himself known to Egypt in Verse 21, "The Egyptians will know the Lord." So [10:00] by 24, when the Assyrians are worshipping with the Egyptians they're worshiping the Lord together.

In that day, Verse 24, "Israel will be a third party with Egypt and Assyria. A blessing in the midst of the Earth whom the Lord of Moses blessed. Blessed is Egypt, my people. And Assyria the work of my hands. And Israel my inheritance."

Well, if we know anything about Egyptian religion and the way they treated Israel, if we know anything about Assyria and their activities during Isaiah's era — this is a startling passage. [10:30] That there is salvation and grace to such an extent. For these nations in the future.

But really they're just a third, Israel's a third, they're a third, et cetera. So part of the long term aspect of the Messiah's work is blessings for all nations and this is indicative. Not just [11:00] that David's going to be able, or his descendants are going to be able to carry out a military campaign and defeat somebody and have them under their control, but that this individual will bless these people.

Now this passage presses way beyond what any normal expectation, any statement in the scriptures about an Earthly king. When you read Deuteronomy 17: 14-20, we noted that one yesterday. [11:30] And those are the standards for kings in Israel.

And Deuteronomy 17:14-20… There's the expectation that this king needs the word of God nearby to keep him straight. That the temptation for this individual be to use the office to, you know, line their pockets. Help themselves. To seize more power.

But in this text there's no such temptation. This king is going to be [12:00] flawless, righteous, wise, good and just, et cetera, et cetera. This must be a messianic image, an ideal image because after all, again… This is not what God thinks human is capable of.

This is quite a portrait, and if you are a first century person expecting these things to happen when the Messiah comes on Earth the first time… [12:30] Again, you would be disappointed if you thought these things were going to happen not at the end of time but in the midst of time. This would be a problem.

I guess what I would argue is Isaiah 11, its imagery and the imagery that's like it in Isaiah 25 is pretty clearly eschatological, in the end of time. [13:00] But the question then would be — what's the Messiah going to do — These are things done at the end of time. What will the Messiah do in time? During normal human events.

And that was a question that even some of the Dead Sea Scrolls, whatever all their origins are. It was interesting that at least one of the Dead Sea Scrolls indicates that the Messiah will come and be killed by the gentiles. [13:30] That was their reading of the scripture. Maybe it was just there, maybe their discouragement on a specific day. [laughs]

But remember these are the three… We've gone over Isaiah 7, Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 11. Are three fairly substantial messianic texts. I'm not saying we've exhausted the first part of Isaiah's.

Comments on this, but we would go onto some other passages. [14:00] Questions or comments? Or, um complementary. With an E, not with an I… Filling out this passage…

[14:11] Some background discussion from a woman is inaudible]

Dr. Paul House: [14:18] Uh-huh. Isaiah 19, 19 to 25 would be the, the larger context.

[14:32] Some background discussion from a woman is inaudible]

Dr. Paul House: [14:36] Oh. I think so. And remember 11:10 it says the nations. The peoples. That's just the broadest possible statement. Isaiah 19 is a specific example of a broader principle in Isaiah 11, and yeah. Then look at Isaiah 11:11, "Then it will happen on that day again. The Lord will again recover the second time with his hand the remnant of his people who remain from [15:00] Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath…"

Now that's from, for the… "He will lift up a standard for the nation a symbol to banish ones of Israel." So some would argue this statement of all these nations is really just to get the remnant back. But that isn't what 11:10 indicates. 11:10 seems to be a general statement. Then you get specific ones. In 11:11 and also in Isaiah 19.

Yeah, I think though it, it — what you said is a sound principle. It's almost like this. If the Lord has a place [15:30] for Assyria and Egypt, alongside Israel… That's Israel's most ancient friend slash foe. And its most recent friend slash foe. But with Assyria, I mean it just covers their entire history.

And then as you develop your Biblical theology you're going to see that God is not only the judge of all these nations, but he is the one reaching out to all the nations. For instance, Isaiah 13-23. All those chapters are judgment oracles. [16:00] On the nations.

Same thing in Jeremiah 46-51. You have judgment oracles. So God is interested and will judge these other nations. But they're also passages — this one, Zephaniah 3:8-9 which the Lord purifies a remnant from all the nations.

So remember even as you go [16:30] down in Biblical history and then on into, near the first century… If you've heard it said that the Jews just hates all gentiles and they didn't care 'em and… It is simply not true. Now, it is simply not true to say that there were no Jewish people like that. Because my guess is there is some evidence of that, plus they're human being.

Exclusivistic [17:00] traits and racist traits, I don't think, are exclusive to any era. It's a human problem. But remember Daniel had a witness in the, uh, Babylonian court. Jeremiah had a witness in Egypt. Jonah

had a witness in Nineveh. And then, remember, by the first century, there were Jewish missionaries going about, trying to proselytize gentiles. [17:30]

Remember what Jesus said? He did not doubt, nor criticize their effort. He said, "You go over land and sea to make one convert. You make them twice as much [phonetic] [17:45] the son of yourself." But he's indicating that at that point in time there were people that were making extreme effort.

Plus, in every synagogue where Paul went, with home did he have the most success? What's the category [18:00] of people? — And who were the God fearers? Gentiles who had already attached themselves to a synagogue, either through what we would call evangelism or through their interest in knowing about God, as the Jews worshipped him.

So I've often wondered why, in the New Testament — not that Paul never — wondered why Paul made use of the text that he does. About God's universal concern. [18:30] I've often wondered why he didn't make more of 'em. Why he didn't incite more of 'em.

My expectation is that Paul was engaged in missionary activity that was not holy unusual in the ancient world. They would not have been shocked that he was there talking to gentiles. They would have been the God fearers. They just simply disagreed with his reading of who Jesus was. Which just simply caused rocks to bounce off of him, some jail time and that sort of thing.

[19:00] So, the Bible itself has an international interest and a mission interest. And the first century Jewish, there were elements of that, that did too. They were not all exclusivists.

But if you're gonna talk about exclusivists, they were most of them houses in Jerusalem. And where did most of the Gospels? Good h-healthy portion of them take place in Jerusalem and in Byron. [19:30] So we're going to see the universal aspect even more in the next set of texts.

Yes, sir, go ahead!

[19:40 - 19:45] Pause]

Dr. Paul House: I would think that it starts with salvation and is true of Biblical faith at any era. It starts with the relationship with God. That's the first blessing, and all other blessings flow from [20:00] that one.

In other words, if any nation, Israel or others, would have a relationship with God — personally or socially — and live out the standards that are in the scriptures, their whole land will be blessed. Be blessed with justice, be blessed with fairness, be blessed with integrity, be blessed in their law courts, be blessed in their homes, be blessed — In other words, the blessing starts with salvation [20:30] and flows there from the words of God, the teachings of God.

And, so that's the progressive blessing. It's the same as progressive blessing for Israel or any other nation that knows the Lord. The, the blessing begins with knowing the Lord, but is extended through the actual putting into practice of the standards of God.

And, so that's what I think the blessings are [21:00] for any person or for any nation. So I don't know if that answered your question.

[21:05] Inaudible noise from the audience]

Dr. Paul House: [21:08] That's where it starts. Yes, sir.

But where there is salvation — this is what I think the Bible teaches. Where there is salvation — and let me be honest — and knowledge of God's ways. Because it's possible to say that someone can be

evangelized but not know anything but Jesus saves and you know, the basics of the Gospel and not know the standards [21:30] of scripture. You know, we've talked about that.

But where there is salvation an knowledge of God there will be discipleship. If there is discipleship there will be blessing to the individual. And then the more individuals are living out the standards of discipleship is the extent to which that country will be blessed by God in the ways that he promised it'd be blessed.

[22:00] Indistinct voice in background]

Dr. Paul House: [22:15] Oh, no. I don't think there's an inevitable progression of blessing across generations. This promises to you and your children is great promise, but it is also a great responsibility. [22:30] The indication is the failure to appropriate these blessings could be by either you or your children.

Every parent — and I think you said you had four children? And "beginning their [laughs] slide into adolescence" I think you said. Every parent would like to guarantee their ongoing blessings of God. At least in your own family and [23:00] everybody else. We'd like to believe — I'm not saying that's the genesis of his question, I'm just using an example.

My father used to say, he had the following prayer. He was really frustrated one day because he had six children. And I suppose with the exception of one child with through a genetic deficiency, not to any choice of her own, caused enough difficulty for us all. Hardship. Struggle. I have [23:30] a mentally handicapped sister. But other than that, you're talking about extraordinarily easy growing up.

They had six children. And to my knowledge they had one of 'em break a bone, have a major surgery. Very idealic really when you talk about it. He started — he began to experience the real world. As he got older and he was frustrated.

And he said, "You know, I always prayed that the Lord would not allow any of [24:00] my children to suffer for any of my mistakes." I said, "That's not a prayer God can answer."

I said, "And let me speak on behalf of only myself, but at least one of your six children know. Not only that but you suffered for my sins."

[24:13] [Dr. Paul House laughs and the audience laughs]

Dr. Paul House: [24:16] "You are not a sinlessly perfect father and I was not a sinlessly perfect son."

So, as you know, you've heard it said, each generation has to. But you're exactly right. If a nation takes for granted, whether it's [24:30] United States, England, Kenya, Israel, whatever. If that nation takes for granted the notion that because the last generation was faithful, the next three will be fine, and that the progression will always go upward… It's just simply not Biblical.

There's a sense that we wish we could do that for the next generation, but we can't. Not only that. We would like to think that a small group of Christians could cause major blessings to come to a city, to a country or whatever.

[25:00] This too is not the case. It is only really, only when a certain number of people are applying the principles of God, that a community is altered. Anyone who's ever lived in the frustration of, say being the only Christian within a home whether it's in a marriage or a child or somebody. You can't turn around in a [25:30] substitive way... Necessarilly that whole marriage, that whole family, that whole clan, that

whole community. There has to be a critical mass of people serving the Lord. The Lord will bless that individual, but there's not necessarily so.

If you've noted that — here's a country that was once great for God and is no longer or at least is in serious decline... It is often true that the next generation, [26:00] basically, it was like the book of Judges, "There are rows of generations who did not know the Lord." I've often heard it taught, "Well, that means their parents must've failed to teach them."

I've lived long enough to understand their parents might have spent day and night trying to teach them. I don't say it bitterly. I got a good, my kid serving the Lord right now and I praise God for that! But I've also seen people raised in the same household, under a lot of the same principles. I mean, I know two individuals like that.

One of 'em served [26:30] the Lord and one of 'em not. You hand around long enough you can see it in identical twins. So there is always that factor. It is not inevitable, but where people do serve the Lord and come under his kingship, and under his principles, and under his standards. He will not only empower them as we've talked about before. To do his will. He will [27:00] bless them. And always the individual and then as a group.

So in a way if you ask me, "What is the awesome responsibility of a church beyond evangelism, beyond everything else?" Truly, communities can only be blessed, finally with righteousness and fairness, and justice and love. And kindness and all these other things. In the home, in the community, in the schools and everywhere else. [27:30] To the extent that the church is faithful and living out the principles it believes and expounding them to their families and to the community. Then the results are up to the Lord.

That's the factor I can't say, I can't — I've heard some say, "If you'll do X then you will have result Y." That belongs to God and his timing. This I don't understand, but I just know it.

[28:00] So if you say to me, "If I will have" say "revival planning. If we will do such and such planning we will be guaranteed such and such results." No. I can always guarantee some good things that will happen from preparation, but I can't guarantee. And I would break with affinity at that point.

Some will say, "Well, what about the Graham crusade?" What I'm going to say to that is "Yes. If people got as gifted in those way, in those extraordinary ways [28:30] with such preparation and they get the cooperation of the whole community, I can say, 'Yeah. That guarantees results.'"

And that's a good thing, and it will happen to you in your ministry as well, but I could also guarantee that there is no guarantee on that. I don't think the progression — I'm not an evolutionist in historical theory. I don't believe it's absolutely going to get better and better for any kind of Christians. Nor am I a defeatist. I don't think it's "You guys can go out there and ministry if you want."

[29:00] Laughter from audience]

Dr. Paul House: [29:02] You're going to "WHAM!" take it to the head. I guarantee you. It's not going to do any good. I'm not one of those either. So, those things are in God's hand, but the faithfulness is an aspect of human responsibility. I can't guarantee the blessings that I want because I don't even know what's good for me. That's my problem. Or what's best for me.

[29:30] But this king does... And remember, in Second Samuel 7, we had emphasis on king and son and servant, right? So in Isaiah 42 and following you have four passages known as the Servant Song. And the New Testament takes these messianic.

Many commentators have said that in the original context, they weren't. [30:00] Because a lot of commentators agree with first-century interpreters that would say, "No text can be messianic if it asks the savior to be a servant and a sufferer because kings aren't servants and sufferers."

I heard that when I went to seminary and first heard these texts [30:30] expounded and thought about it. But I have to tell you, I don't think the premise is correct. David was certainly a king who suffered. And at his best was a servant, and is called "the Servant of the Lord."

Hezekiah, though not the Messiah, not the – he is a Davidic descendant. Read Second Kings 18. [31:00] The text starts with the fact that he's a good and righteous ruler. He loved the Lord, got rid of the idols, had religious reform. And the next thing you read: for his faithfulness, because of his faithfulness, the Assyrians came and laid siege to Jerusalem.

So that, whatever it was that Paul first penned, "All those that live godly in Jesus Christ will suffer persecution." Hezekiah said, "Oh. Yes." This is [31:30] true. He suffered. And yes, he was not a flawless person. There was pride, as we read in Isaiah 39.

But he suffered illness, he suffered persecution, he was a king who suffered. So the premise that kings don't suffer, or that ideal kings wouldn't suffer – I don't think holds water historically and Biblically. In fact, you have to wonder, [32:00] what sort of king would not suffer with his people.

Now I admit, Solomon wasn't known for his extensive pain tolerance. Josiah, my goodness, we just don't have righteous kings who have an easy life in the Old Testament any more than we have righteous prophets who have an easy life. Or righteous individuals in general.

So I want to start with a premise [32:30] that maybe the opposite is true. I don't want to overstate it, but maybe the opposite is true. To have a Davidic king, how could they not suffer? Because righteous kings are called upon to suffer the way righteous prophets, righteous priests, righteous – if you want to use this term – lay people, whatever. They're called upon, to suffer for the Lord.

A second issue is always been the identity of the servant. Because if you [33:00] look at 41:8, "Because of you Israel, my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen." Another encouragement passage. Israel is explicitly called "God's servant".

So the argument has been, by some, in Isaiah 43-55, the servant is Israel. And the New Testament appropriates those passages [33:30] that really are about Israel. And they apply them to Jesus. That's one of the arguments.

The identity of the servant is really Israel. And the New Testament appropriates this passage to Jesus. I have seen non-conservative scholars make that argument and say, you know, it's ultimately fulfilled in Jesus as a corporate representative of Israel.

I've heard conservative scholars say, "Yes. It's about Israel, [34:00] but frankly, it's ultimately fulfilled in Jesus." So they kind of agree.

There are scholars who say that the servant starts as Israel, and then develops and revolves into, from a bad servant to a good servant. Who is an individual, who is the Messiah.

The option I will take [34:30] goes a little bit differently than that. In the text, we start with Israel as a servant, and Israel is a blind and deaf servant. A servant who is marred, a servant who is discouraged, in Chapter 41. We've already dealt with the discouragement factor in Isaiah 40.

And, so God calls Jacob his servant. Verse 9 of Chapter 41, "You whom I have taken [35:00] from the ends of the Earth and called from the remotest parts. I've chosen you and not rejected you. Do not fear for I am with you." See, it's another comfort passage. You're my servant, but… Says Verse 14, it's – this is not language that is comforting today, but it was then – "Do not fear you worm, Jacob."

I would assume a worm has cause to be afraid. But not here. So remember, [35:30] at this point Israel has been identified as a servant. But then Chapter 42, Verse 1. Without identifying the servant, the text doesn't speak of a group of people but as an individual. "Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one and who my soul delights. I put my spirit upon you." Where have we read that idea before? My spirit [36:00] being upon him? [pause] Isaiah 11, sure.

So within the context of Isaiah, we heard that phrase before in a clear messianic text. I don't know anybody who thinks Isaiah 11's not a messianic text. So you hear that imagery, already.

And one of the arguments that Walter Keizer and J.A. Meter are gonna make, that the same characteristics that you have in Chapters 7, 9 and 11, a lot of these phrases are [36:30] applied to the servant passages that we're gonna look at.

"I'll put my spirit upon him. He will bring forth justice to the nations." See, again, we got an international concern here for justice for the nations. "He will not cry out or raise his voice, nor make his voice heard in the street. A bruise reed he will not break. A burning wick he will not extinguish." In other words, he will encourage people, [37:00] he's not gonna snuff out what little light's left.

"He will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not be disheartened or crushed until he has established justice on the Earth. The coastline's waiting expectantly for his law." And then you have creation theology. "And God has called him in righteousness."

And Verse 6, "I am the Lord who called you in righteousness. I will hold you and watch over you. I will appoint you as a covenant to the people." That's an interesting phrase. "A covenant to the people, [37:30] a light to the nation to open blind eyes to bring out prisoners from the dungeon and those who dwell in darkness from prisons. I am the Lord. That is my name. I will not give glory to another, nor my praise to graven images. Behold. The former things have come and past. Now I declare new things. Before they spring forth I proclaim them to you."

In other words, that's the phraseology that's used throughout Isaiah 40-48 to speak about the future and new things.

Note [38:00] the emphasis on the term servant, on God's spirit, on justice, on the nations, on righteousness, on helping the weak and on creation theology. And go back, when you have enough time, and compare Isaiah 42:1-9, what is said about this servant with Isaiah 11:1-10. What is said about the shoot of Jesse there. And you will find [38:30] many, many correspondences.

So who is the servant? If the servant has all of these messianic qualities it seems we have an individual. So we have Israel as God's servant, we have an individual Messiah as God's servant.

If you go to Chapter 42, Verse 18. [39:00] How is the Israel servant doing? "Hear you deaf and look you blind that you may see, who is blind but my servant or so deaf and my messenger whom I send. Who is

blind and is at peace he's blind for he is a servant of the lord." For he has seen many things, but you don't observe them. Your ears are open, but you don't hear. We know how that goes. [laughs] But…

So, Israel as a servant [39:30] is not so effective, is it? There are some within Israel who are attempting to help them be a kingdom of priests, a holy nation, that sort of thing. But it's universal.

Chapter 49, Verses 1-7. The second so called "Servant Song." 42:1-9 being the first. Who is a servant? 49, Verse 1, "Listen to me a while and pay attention, you people from afar. The Lord called me from the womb." How many different people can you name from the Bible, that God was dealing with them from the womb or called them from the womb? Name a couple.

Jeremiah is the one that comes to mind, as he came to your mind. John the Baptist. Any other Old Testament imagery from…

[40:29] Indistinct noise in audience]

Dr. Paul House: [40:30] I don't think think Moses is mentioned from the womb. Samson is. Jacob, the father of them all, is.

[40:41] Indistinct talking in audience]

Dr. Paul House: [40:42] Samuel's a child of promise. So this's a very typical way of saying that from the very beginning I've been called. "From the body of my mother he named me. He's made my mouth like a sharp sword [phonetic] [40:57] who is a speaker. In the shadow of his hand he has concealed me. [41:00] Made me a select arrow. He has hidden me in his quiver. He has said to me, 'You're my servant, Israel, in whom I will show my glory.' But I said," Israel's speaking, "'But I've toiled in vain. I've spent my strength for nothing, in vanity.' Yet surely the just is due and my reward is with my God."

So God has called Israel from the womb, from the very beginning. And, yet Israel, [41:30] his servant, has been discouraged, believing that God has not give them their justice. Remember Chapter 40, same swords of complaint. Now Verse 5. I find these Verses to be crucial.

"And now the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be his servant," you think he's still talking about Israel, right? If you're just reading along, but now read the next phrases. "To bring Jacob back to him, so that Israel might be gathered to him." Wait a minute! [42:00] We now have a servant, formed from the womb to be a servant, that is not Israel who also was formed in the womb to be God's servant. But someone trying to bring Israel back.

"For I am [phonetic] [42:19] honored to decide and the Lord, my God is my strength." He says, "It is too small a thing that you should be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob?" So let me stop here and make sure you understand.

You got a [42:30] servant ministering to the servant. [pause] You have a servant ministering to the servant to bring, servant Israel back to God. And isn't this the Biblical movement. To the Jew first and also to the gentile. That God's trying to work with Israel, first.

But it's too small a thing. Back to large question about basically universality of gospels. "It's too small a thing to raise up the tribes of Jacob and restore the preserved one of Israel. I'll also make you a light [43:00] to the nations. So that my salvation may reach to the ends of the Earth."

[43:08 - 43:13] Indistinct female audience member]

Dr. Paul House: [43:14] Right. It's speaking to the second servant in this passage, the one ministering to the first servant. It's too small a thing that you should raise up the first servant. I'm going to make you a light to the gentiles.

So if someone asks, [43:30] "What's the identity of the servant? You have servant Israel, you seem to have this individual." I say, "Right… right…" And that's in keeping with what happens in the scriptures.

The servant of the Lord, who is Jesus, ministered to the servant of the Lord, who is Israel. Trying to raise him up, and did raise up some of them, right? The disciples, the apostles were Jewish.

The first Christians were Jewish. [44:00] It doesn't mean there weren't any gentiles, but "I'll make you a light to the nations. So that my salvation may reach to the end of the Earth, thus says the Lord, the redeemer of Israel and its holy one. To the despised one, to the one abhorred by the nation, to the servant of rulers. Kings will see and arise. Princes will bow down. Because of the Lord who is faithful, the holy one of Israel who has chosen you. Rulers will bow down to this one who is abhorred by the nation."

So the [44:30] servant will minister to Israel, but we're also beginning to sense that this is not going to be easy if this one is going to be abhorred by the nation. So we have this servant who has the same characteristics as the king in Chapter 11. Has some of the same [45:00] characteristics of the king, who's now ministering to Israel to bring them back to God. And if that's not enough, he's going to be a light to the gentiles.

All the nations are going to be blessed, back to Abraham problems, back to where the Abraham and David covenants come together. Chapter 50 and Verses 4 through 11, [45:30] and the next servant's song. By the way these servant songs were first identified and set apart by Bernard Duhm, D-U-H-M, one of the early form critics.

Chapter 50 and Verses 4 through 11, the suffering aspect enters in prominently now. "The Lord God has given me the tongue of disciples and I may know how to sustain the weary with the word. [46:00] He awakens me morning by morning, he awakens my error [phonetic] [46:05] to listlessness and disciple. The Lord has opened my ear and I was not disobedient, nor did I turn back. I gave my back to those who strike. And my cheeks to those who pluck out the beard. I did not cover my face from humiliation and spitting. For the Lord helps me therefore I am not disgraced. Therefore I have set my face like a flint and I know I will not be ashamed." Sounds like Job, there doesn't it?

"He who vindicates me is near. [46:30] Who contend to me with let us stand up to each other. Who has a case against me let him draw near to me. Behold, the Lord God helps me. Who is he that condemns me. Behold, they will all wear out like a garment. The moth will eat them. Who is among you that fears the Lord, that obeys the voice of his servant. [pause] That walks in darkness, and has no light. Let him trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God."

[47:00] So one of two things is going on here. Either this is there servant because it defines as who's listening to the servant. And this servant is giving his back to those who strike him, his cheeks to those that pluck out the beard. Willing to be suffered, humiliation and spitting. Or one who testifies to the servant, but either way this suffering's entering in.

I used to have a beard. I want to get a different picture on this [47:30] book jacket cuz I don't ever intend to have a beard again, but I gotta tell ya every time I'd read that and consider what it'd be like just to have somebody yank the — [laughs] Pain, disgrace. This is what the servant is willing to endure to be the disciple of the Lord, to be the follower of the Lord.

And you recall, you know, later messianic passage Zekeriah 13 [48:00] where they strike the shepherd and the sheep are scattered. I don't want to do Isaiah 52 and 3 quickly, so if we need to we'll go to a break early, but remember that suffering is not something that the kings can avoid.

And that Isaiah 50 and 49. In 49, [48:30] the [phonetic] servant is abhorred by the nation. In Isaiah 50, that person endures suffering. So they're not universally appreciated for their ministry to the servant Israel. The servant Messiah is not universally appreciated by the servant Israel unless we say, "He is appreciated fully by the remnant." The people who love the Lord appreciate.

We're already beginning to ask a question that-that is a new covenant [49:00] question. How we going to define Israel then? Who is Israel anyway? Paul's still asking that question by, uh, Romans 2, isn't he? Who is a Jew?

None the less, the servant suffers and as you know, in Isaiah 52:13 through 53:12 you have the most famous Servant Song. Where the suffering servant [49:30] is set forth, and the aspects of the Servant Song, and the personality traits — not only the servant song, but of the king passages, all come to fruition here. We will look at that after the break.

But Isaiah 53 is absolutely one of the most cited passages in the New Testament, and so I think pages 292 and 293, [50:00] where I give just, at least a brief report of how the New Testament writers cite these texts we've been looking at. We'll look at those as well.

You're going to see that there's a heavy concentration. Pages 292 and 293, there's a heavy concentration of New Testament writers citing these texts we've just been looking at. And it seems [50:30] that Jesus saw these texts as a pattern for his own ministry. And we will, uh, look at that, uh, momentarily.

But the New Testament writers seem to say, pretty clearly, that the first few passages we looked at in Isaiah, express what the Messiah will do long term. And the passages we've been looking at, 42, 49, [51:00] and 50, express. And also Isaiah 61, as far as that goes, express what the savior was going to do, what the Messiah was going to do short term, during his lifetime.

So that seems to me to be the way the New Testament works with these issues. And they seem to expect that this will be an acceptable pattern. And, so [51:30] I've often heard it overstated I think, in sermons and theology and in New Testament classes I've had. That exonerates all your teachers.

I can't exonerate all your [phonetic] [51:45] dean. Cause I was one of his students, but I can exonerate your New Testament teachers from saying something like, "The only reason the Jews didn't accept Jesus was because they expected a king." I've mentioned that one.

[52:00] The Pharisees also thought Jesus came from the wrong place, did the wrong things, hung out with the wrong people. Lest we be too critical. Some of the people Jesus hung out with — gotta be careful, we're only hypocrisy. We blast the Pharisees for saying Jesus shouldn't have hung out with some of those people, and they're some of the people we tell our kids to stay away from! [laughs loudly]

So, [sharp inhale] but there are a lot of reasons why. And the [phonetic] Sagisees, [52:30] since they didn't believe in the resurrection anyway, they didn't believe in the final judgment anyway. They believed that everything was wrapped up in this life and the power we gain. They aren't going to like Jesus for all the same reasons they didn't like the Pharisees. To them, Jesus was just some kind of odd, dangerous, messianic Pharisee.

If you had said to a Sagisee, "Do you think Jesus is the Messiah?" You know what most of them woulda said? "I don't care. What if he is?"

If you don't believe in judgment [53:00] or resurrection, what difference what it make? And, so really, what was their response to Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead? "He keeps this up we're going to lose our temple and everything."

So there are a lot of reasons why reject — but let's say, for instance. When Paul went to [phonetic] [53:24] Beria and he preached that Jesus was the Christ, the noble people searched the scriptures to see if these things were [53:30] so. And the New Testament seems to say, if you'll search the scriptures it's a fair reading to say that some of these passages have to do with eschatological implications, and some of them have to do with life and the Messiah while he was on Earth.

We can disagree with that, but I think the New Testament writers at least had a plausible reading at that point and they didn't need special pleading for it.

Chapter 14

Son of Man Theology

Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12, pretty much holy ground for Biblical theology. Starts 52:13 with: "Behold [00:30] my servant will prosper, He will be high and lifted up and greatly exalted," which seemingly back to the kind of imagery we had in Isaiah 11 right? "Just as many were astonished at you, so His appearance was marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of man,"

And you say wait a minute I thought…[laugh] whose gonna prosper then? The individual servant? [01:00] Cuz you wanna prosper and be exalted, and then the next verse says He's gonna be marred. Verse 15, "Thus He will sprinkle many nations, kings will shut their mouths on account of him; for what had not been told them they will see and what they had hear-not heard they will understand." So this servant will have a strong effect on the rulers. [01:30] 53:1: "Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm," or the strength, "of the Lord been revealed?"

Audience Member: [01:38] [coughing]

[01:39] "For He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and a root out of parched ground." We've had shoot and root imagery [amused], back in Isaiah 11 again, only there it was a shoot of Jesse, the root of David. "He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon him, no appearance that [02:00] we should be attracted to him." It will not be physical appearance that would be striking. [pages turning] Makes you wonder about some religious art. You know, it runs in cycles. When I was a kid you always had this picture of a long, thin Jesus.

Audience Member: [laughter]

Now in Christian bookstores you've got robust, vibrant Jesus, smiling, really good-lookin' guy and that kinda thing. Whatever it is that draws people, it's not necessarily physical appearance here. [02:30] Verse 3: "He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and like one from whom men hide their faces He was despised and we did not esteem him."

All this in the context of a servant prospering, being highly lifted up and exalted, and yet suffering. "Surely our griefs He himself bore, and our sorrows He carried." And, I have to look it up, Matthew, [03:00] it's on page 292 of the textbook, bottom paragraph. New Testament writers think Jesus is the servant Isaiah portrays.

Matthew 8:17 and 12:18 to 21 cite Matthew 53:4, the passage I just read, and 42:1 to 4 respectively are reference points for Jesus' healing ministry. So that our griefs He bore, our sorrows or sicknesses He carried. [03:30] You know we ourselves esteemed him stricken, struck down by God, and afflicted. So there is a misunderstanding of what the servant is doing.

"He was pierced through for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities." So at this point it seems that He is suffering for the sins of others. [04:00] Perhaps in a general way but it becomes more specific in verse five, "the chastening for our well-being fell upon him, and by His scourging we are healed." So there is a substitutionary element here. That is emphasized by a quotation, or an image, used

earlier in Isaiah, "all of us like sheep have gone astray, we have each turned to His own way, but the Lord has caused an iniquity of us all to fall on him." [04:30]

It's not just that He is suffering for the sins of others but that their healing is affected by His suffering. He was brought into being by His suffering. "He was oppressed and afflicted yet He did not open His mouth. Like a lamb that is led to slaughter and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth."

Stop for just a moment and [05:00]…and collect a few thoughts. Isaiah 53:5, "pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities" [page turning] is used as evidence for Jesus' atoning death in first Peter 2:24 and Romans 4:25. Listed there at the top of page 293 in the textbook. First Peter 2:24, Romans 4:25, citing Isaiah 53 as evidence for [05:30] Jesus' atoning death on behalf of others.

Verses 7 and 8 are cited by Philip, or actually the Ethiopian eunuch is reading these verses and asked, "Who does this text speak of? Who does the writer speak of, himself or someone else?" Philip answers and speaks to him about Jesus. Verse 9, "His grave was assigned [06:00] with wicked men yet He was with a rich man in His death because He had done no violence nor was any deceit found in His mouth." That's a tough passage to translate but Matthew 27:57 cites this passage as evidence that Jesus was indeed to be buried in the rich man's grave. It's hard to tell from this text.

Audience Member: [06:24] [coughing]

[06:24] And from John, whether that's seen as a good thing, He had a nice grave, or He's lying down, [06:30] He's not been gathered to His Father's but been gathered to the oppressors. You're never quite sure what the disposition of the rich happens to be in a passage without getting into the context of it. But, text there says, this passage indicates that His grave would be assigned with the rich.

Verse 10: "The Lord was pleased to crush him and put him to grief. [07:00] If He would render himself as a guilt offering," now this is interesting, just like in Isaiah 9, the phrase "mighty God" is the only time that that's used of a [phonetic]coming person. This is the only text in – to my knowledge in the Old Testament that treats a human offering, a) as a guilt offering and b) positively. Cuz human sacrifice is denied [07:30] throughout the Old Testament.

But here this individual is a guilt offering, that is an offering that's offered for specific sins that require restitution, according to Leviticus. So this individual is a guilt offering. Now, whatever else we can say about a guilt offering, we should say that it is dead. Right? Guilt offering is put to death. [08:00] And yet in the second half of the verse, "He will see His seed" back to [amused] that word again. "He will prolong His days and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand." At that point you're sayin': "I thought He was dead." [drinks and swallows]

He gives himself up as a guilt offering, and as a result of that He sees His offspring, prolongs His days, and the good will of the Lord prospers in His hand. [08:30] This is one of the passages I think, the New Testament often says. An example being first Corinthians 15: "Jesus was raised from the dead, according to the scriptures." And you say "according to the scripture" is usually a phrase that says, "as is in accordance with a variety of scriptures" when they wanted to cite one, they tend to cite it.

But I think this is one of the passages that you [09:00] have a Messianic text, you have the Savior put to death, you have him then prolonging His days. Verse 11: "As a result of the anguish of the soul He will see it and be satisfied. By His knowledge, the Righteous One, my Servant, will justify the many." Same

word as in Genesis' 15:6, "counted him as righteousness." But what He does here, the servant makes [09:30] righteous the many, "causes to be righteous", is the word, literally.

So again, your theology of justification is gonna enter in here. And, I was on a translation team, I don't remember how it came out, but boy there was a big move to say, "well even though it literally means 'make righteous' what we wanna do is, we're gonna say 'declares righteous.'" And again, I'm not [10:00] wanting to get into the distinction because I think in the New Testament justification can mean "declared righteous", but it also indicates that you're declared righteous because God has made you a new creation. God is declaring, as God always does, something that's true.

You're made righteous, not of your own merit but of the work of the Servant here. "And He will bear their iniquities." So it's not anything they've done [10:30] to get out of their own sins. He did it. And they couldn't justify themselves, He did it. "Therefore I will allot him a portion with the great and He will divide the booty with the strong."

[amused] So here He is again, you could say this is eschatological, but it seems to be-be seen as offspring prolonging His days, seems to be now. "He poured out himself to death, was numbered with the transgressors, [11:00] He bore the sin of many and interceded for the transgressors."

What is the atoning work of the Messiah? You could make as many summary statements as you wanted to make [laugh] from Isaiah 53. How many sentences could you come up with? He interceded for the transgressors; He bore the sins of the many. He poured himself out to death; with His stripes we are healed. On the one side you could say, you could write down, [11:30] on the one side of the ledger what the servant does. And then you could write on the other side what the results are. Servant's work results for the people.

And I think it's, again, important to see that this guilt offering's back alive, which would be unusual to say the least. When Jesus explains His own death to His disciples in Luke 22:37 He uses Isaiah 53:12 as a base. [12:00]

Audience Member: [12:00] [inaudible]

[12:02] Oh, let's see, it's Luke 22:37. I'm just kinda workin' from my own notes which have been in this book. So, everything from the healing ministry, to Jesus, to His atoning death and resurrection, the New Testament calls upon this section of scripture to make these points. Had we not seen that it starts with verse 13: "My servant will prosper, be high and [12:30] lifted up and greatly exalted." We might not be able to connect it to earlier passages except for Isaiah 50: "But the servant who will bring God's people back to God. The servant who is ministering to the servant Israel is the same servant who will die for their sins, to justify them [03:00] and to share spoils with them."

But this is the most detailed statement about suffering and the servant, in Isaiah. And it makes the most; we would, propositional statements about what the servant's work is and what it does for His people. So it is interesting too, as…and I wanna get to questions about [13:30] 53, but conclude it by saying 55:3, in an invitation passage: "Incline your ear and come to me, listen that you may live, and I'll make an everlasting covenant with you according to the faithful mercies shown to David."

So the eternal covenant with David's brought back to cap this section and put the servant within that context. It is true that the servant passages do not, [14:00] necessarily, tie the servant directly to David in the way that Isaiah 9 and 11 do. But by describing the servant in the same terms and by using the term servant at all, which is used in second Samuel 7, in the foundational passage, use it again: "king, servant,

and son". It would at least make it plausible, [14:30] and I think more than that, but I don't think it takes special pleading to say: this is the same individual at a different stage of that individual's ministry.

So, it's almost saying, until the eschaton Christ is not the exalted king. He is and He isn't. The same way David was and [amused] wasn't. Again that is not to diminish Christ at all, but He is King of Kings and Lord of Lords [15:00] by Revelation 19, o' course, when the victory comes, when the victory's won. And so we can talk in terms, is Christ king now? Yes, of course. Will it be more evident that He is king when every knee bows and every tongue confesses, even those that don't love 'im now? Yeah, I think it'll be a little more evident then, to everyone. So I'm not trying to diminish the kingship now, it's just more apparent when Christ rules everything. [15:30]

Maybe good – one other Isaiah passage and, we close, [pages turning] and that's Isaiah [chair squeaking] 61:1 through 3, you will recognize this passage from Luke 4, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me." We read that already in Isaiah 42 and Isaiah 11, we are back to spirit imagery. "Because the Lord has anointed me," which is messiah [16:00] word, the anointed me, "to bring good news to the afflicted, He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners." Not unlike what we read in Isaiah 11:4, right?

"To proclaim the favorable year of the Lord and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, to grant those who mourn in Zion, giving them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of [16:30] a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified." Jesus read these verses in the synagogue in Luke 4, at the inauguration of His ministry and said: "These words are fulfilled in your hearing."

Though He did not say the following words, quote: "I am the Messiah." Unquote. [laugh] For anyone to read this passage in the context [17:00] of Isaiah, where this passage attributes to this individual the same characteristics as attributed to the servant and to the king, in Isaiah, was basically to say to them, "I am the Messiah". Do you say, "Hey I'm the one who sets the afflicted free, I'm the one who pardons sin, I'm the one who does all that." You're basically saying: "I'm the Messiah that's promised."

And though, as [17:30] [phonetic]Matear says, Isaiah 61 really treats the Messiah in 61, as the anointed conqueror, it's still the same characteristics. So I mean it-it's – as we say you have this building portrait, and you're sayin', "Okay the Messiah has to be the coming King, the suffering servant, and the anointed conqueror," Because the s – all those titles are wrapped up in the Messiah who shares the same [18:00] characteristics across all three types of text.

To me personally, I'm speaking personally here, one of the advantages of starting with the beginning and heading to the New Testament is, I begin to see the immensity of Jesus in a way I don't if I take a specific text and go find its original prediction. If I just, [18:26][inaudible] okay, predicted He was born in Bethlehem, predicted He would die. [18:30] So that – it's – you say, "Man I don't know how I'm gonna keep all these notes together." Well there's a way in which that's supposed to be how you feel. Because the immensity of who Jesus is, then in the New Testament – I don't know if it comes with joy, relief, or all, or all of the above when you say, "Okay, they're saying that this Jesus is all of that." Or you end up saying, "You know [19:00] I didn't know how much I did believe.' [laughs]

Audience: [19:03] [laughter]

[19:04] Before now. So maybe you knew it all and that's great, but as you walk toward it, you're going to sense a greater and greater aspect of who Jesus is. I just like Isaiah a lot. Again at your leisure read Isaiah

65 and see how many images from Isaiah 65, Revelation 21 picks up. I say it without any sense [19:30] of territorial-ness, it's just nice to see the apostle of the apocalypse and Isaiah the prophet agreeing on what we're gonna have when we die. [laughter] I'm all for that.

Audience: [19:39] [laughter]

[19:40] So, again, this is all mediated. And if you – so see, I had a – I got a call student back from, whose graduated from Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, and say, "What about the after-life in the Old Testament?" Well, for the faithful, read Isaiah 65. For those [20:00] who are not, read Isaiah 66, start with verse 21.

Again speaking about the nations: "I will take some of them for priests and for Levites, says the Lord. For just as the new heavens and the new earth, which I make, will endure before Me, declares the Lord. So your seed, your offspring and your name, will endure, and it shall be from new moon to new moon and from Sabbath to Sabbath, all mankind will come and bow down before Me, says the Lord. [20:30] Then they will go back and look forth on the corpses of the men who have transgressed against Me. For their worm will not die and their fire will not be quenched, and they will be an abhorrence to all mankind." All flesh, is literally.

So if you say, "Okay, at the end of Isaiah, where are the faithful ones who love the Lord who are His remnant, where are they?" In the new heavens and the new earth where there's no sin, sorrow, suffering or death, where are those who…have transgressed, [21:00] rebelled against him, who won't bow down? Well, they're where the fr-worm doesn't die, the fire is not quenched. It's a sobering and staggering statement.

So when the New Testament speaks of hell and that fire not being quenched, that sort of thing, it's – there are a lot of sources but one of 'em's right here. So, I just want us to understand their [21:30] implications. The implications are as clear in Isaiah as they are in the gospels. To those who would accept the Messiah God sends the Servant, the King, the Anointed Conqueror, and those who will not. So, that's a bit of Isaiah and His Messianic theology. Whatever you wish to say. [laughs]

Audience Member: [22:01] [inaudible]

[22:02] Is there any…

Audience Member: [22:05] [inaudible]

[22:06] In those passages it's talking about results, not origins. I'd take the doctrine of election to talk about origins of faith. Here, He's talking about the result. I don't think the issue of election, in a specific way, is not in play here. Talkin' about the results. Now, of course [22:30] there is election in Isaiah. If someone has been chosen from the womb, that is election imagery. You can then decide from your own perspective exactly what that means, as to whether God caused what He foreknew or just foreknew. You get into those discussions again.

But the fact is, if Israel is God's inheritance from the womb, if the servant is called from the womb, if that sort of imagery [23:00] is used, then certainly there is election imagery. But it's not prominent in the text we just…covered, in my view. It's focusing upon the work of the savior not the origins of the faith of the people of God, and it's talkin' about the results, not about how those results specifically begun before the start of time. If that makes sense. I don't know that election's the major theme there.

Audience Member: [23:23] [inaudible]

[23:30] Mm-hmm.

Audience Member: [23:31] [inaudible]

[23:35] Because they rebelled against God, is how they're outside in Isaiah 66:23 and 4. This text says nothing on that question. That's not an irrelevant question; I'm not tryin' to say that. It's not relevant to that passage or to what we've looked at today. Now, it is certainly a Biblical, theological question. You would start that [24:00] question…at least at-at Genesis 25. Maybe with Abraham, but certainly with the birth of Jacob and Esau. That passage is where, awhile before they're born, one is chosen as the bearer of the covenant. Malachi 1 talks about that. Romans 9 through 11 talks about it.

But in Isaiah, though we do have the imagery we've talked [24:30] about, a lot of people have really stressed that in Isaiah it's people's rebellion that is the focus. So that human responsibility is stressed there. But there aren't many statements in Isaiah specifically about election. So that the blame for the person burning in chapter 66 verse 24, is [pages turning] also in verse [25:00] 24, the reason is, they rebelled or transgressed against God. So human responsibility is stressed, and all throughout Isaiah, come let us reason together. You know, though are sins are [phonetic]scarlet they can be as white as snow. And so Isaiah's – those were the stresses that He offers.

And then the question is: is he not interested in the kind of question that you asked that [25:30] other texts are interested in? Does he not believe it? Does it not fit his situation? We don't know. But in the text at hand it's human rebellion that's focused upon. You know, so, the other thing we might do later, is to go back and trace that, you know, doctrine, work some more with salvation and election, how that unfolds.

[26:00] But the blame is laid on human beings in 24. The reason – they-they didn't create the place of burning, but the reason they're there is their own rebellion. Now then, other? That's a good question, hope I was fair to it, I wasn't tryin' to dodge it there but I think it's an accurate answer. Is there, other questions?

Audience Member: [26:27] What about how Jewish [26:31][inaudible]

[26:31] What Jewish community you wanna talk about?

Audience Member: Yeah I know there are multiple [26:34][inaudible]

[26:35] Well and which era, and which era, cuz the New Testament struck me finally, somebody sayin', "What do Jewish people think about this?" Well you know the New Testament writers were Jewish. That's one Jewish community. I'm not chastising you, cuz I know you had a job to do, that's where you were, but right – so-so what I'm about to say is not any criticism of you.

Right – but - you know, before the break, one of the things we were talkin' about is not, specifically, but I'll remind the class that, before the [27:00] break we said, the first century Jewish community, a variety of reasons for rejecting Jesus as a Messiah. Sadducees didn't believe in resurrection, final judgment, so they wouldn't agree with Jesus no matter who they thought He was. They wouldn't agree with him. Others thought He came from the wrong place or hung out with the wrong sort of people. The Pharisees never said, "You're the wrong kinda king." [27:30] They disagreed with His ritual purity, with His treatment of Sabbath, et cetera. You never hear the Pharisee's sayin' "What-hey." The average person, a lot of the crowds though, we read that, they like the zealots wanted a political liberator, right? So they weren't gonna be pleased with Jesus.

Audience Member: [27:50] [clears throat]

[27:51] Some of them weren't even interested in that. They weren't that exc- what they wanted was someone to feed and clothe 'em and give 'em daily sustenance. So when Jesus [28:00] says to 'em, "You're only followin' me cuz of the food."

Audience: [28:04] [laughter]

[28:05] See, not this food, which doesn't endure. But, ya know, you get John 6, and a lot of 'em turn back and didn't serve him anymore, over that issue. In a way, I used to think, and I may have left the impression, I used to think the average Jew didn't want Jesus because He wouldn't set himself up as a King. You read the New Testament carefully, there are a lot of other reasons why they didn't serve him.

But, the other issue is, a lot of the [28:30] Jewish community that still believes in the Messianic promise - which is by no means the majority - would say that the passages in Chapter 7, and 9, and 11, indicate that when the Messiah comes it'll begin these promises. It'll be fully realized eschatology. He's here, He's now, the Kingdom's now, sin is eliminated, our enemies.

But it [29:00] is a legitimate eschatology as well, the New Testament writers had it, the Pharisees, I think some of them had it, Qumran indicates, or some Qumran texts, that said that the Messiah would die, the Gentiles would kill 'im. And as I said earlier today whether that's just cynicism or depression, or whether that's a br-Bible reading, we don't know, but they thought, that's the way they read Isaiah 53. Some read earlier Targums and such, read Isaiah 53 Messianically but thought it [29:30] wasn't Jesus. So, those are some of the readings.

Audience Member: [29:34] [coughs]

[29:34] But what we can say, is that it is a legitimate reading that the New Testament does, that it's possible that these Messianic texts, some of them are for the earthly ministry of a servant who dies and is raised again, and some of them are texts that have to do with the end of time. And I have to say if you don't accept – I don't want to load this up too much, if this is an overstatement or seems manipulative, forgive me, I don't mean it [30:00] to be.

But, if we don't read Isaiah that way we're not gonna agree with the New Testament writers, are we? Cuz that's their viewpoint. That Jesus is the Messiah, that He came and taught and healed and suffered and died, and was raised from the dead. Is coming again to fulfill those promises of Isaiah 65, cuz that's what Revelation 21's sayin'. That's yet to come. So, [30:30] that's pretty much, as I read it, the perspective of the New Testament.

And I just honestly say, if they're wrong they've misread Jesus as the Messiah. So that allows some Jewish groups now to be more benevolent toward Christian theology and say: "Jesus was a great man, was a great teacher. The church just misread him as the Messiah. He's not the one. Not Jesus' fault that the church didn't have His [31:00] ministry down right, didn't understand him."

So, and then o' course you have a whole lot of secular Jews who – I remember when I was in Israel for a summer, one of the popular pop song was, "The Messiah's Not Coming" and it was a song about taking responsibility for Israel's future. And it was a great secular, atheistic kinda song, which basically says, "If there's no afterlife" and they didn't believe there was, [31:30] "if God's not gonna intervene" and they didn't believe He was, cuz they weren't sure He existed, "then we need to take responsibility for our actions and build the best world we can, the Messiah's not coming. That was the song. And, basically it was an ethical, atheistic stance. Quit waitin' for God to bail you out. If there isn't a God, your best help's [31:53][inaudible] in the arms of all your friends.

So really depends on whatcha mean, and a lot of Jewish theologians right now [32:00] believe that Messianic theology has divided them from Christians for years and years and years, it needs to be set aside. A lot of Christian theologians including Brueggemann and His Old Testament theology says look, "Jewish people are already all right, really by birth. And it's Gentiles that have to be joined in. They're all right from the start, we join in through Christ, but it's all the same stream. They don't have to accept s-Christ to be all right." Even though, again, the New Testament is filled with Jewish [32:30] writers who disagree. We're joinin' in that stream."

So it's kind of a two-covenant kind of approach. Tryin' to be a smart-aleck, that when I said, "Well it depends on what Jewish group we're talkin' about" and then there's probably a whole host of ideas that I don't – I'm not fully cognizant of. But you have a Jewish witness that says, "This is legitimate reading of Messianic theology." And it – really pretty much how the New Testament handles the two types of text. [33:00]

And I think it's legitimate reading given the Old Testament. Because, and I think this is Matear's crucial point, because the descriptions of the servant and the characteristics of the servant are in many cases identical to those of the king. So you either got two people who are genetically connected [laugh] or you have the same person, or you have two people who have the same characteristics, or the same person.

But see, [33:30] this is why at least one Qumran text says, "There gonna be two Messiahs, one person can't do all this. It's the Christian testimony that one person does." But this might explain to you why, as I say, if you're a believer in Jesus by the time you get to the New Testament you say, "Wow, that's a big portrait." That might also help us understand how people who start from the beginning get to Jesus and say, "Hang on. First of all, is all that gonna be in one person?" [whirring] [34:00] "Second of all, is that reading the eschatological passages correctly?"

And I think they're legitimate questions, I really do. And I think Paul had to answer 'em virtually every day of his ministry, among people who were Bible readers. Because remember, the apostle Paul, on his missionary journeys, there might have been an exception that proved this rule, but it's unlikely he ever preached to anybody who had ever seen Jesus in the flesh. [34:30] In other words, he didn't say, "Hey you remember all those miracles? Remember all that stuff that guy did?" You know? And not only that, if my reading of the gospel of John is correct, John may be telling us, it might not help it they had.

The astonishing thing was, as John says over and over again, "these signs Jesus did", and over and over again, "they didn't believe the signs", and so in Luke's gospel Jesus says in a parable: the rich man and Lazarus. [35:00] What does Lazarus want father Abraham to do? First of all he wants some relief. But then he says, "Send somebody back. They have the law of the prophets. They'll believe if somebody comes back from the bed." What's the chilling comment? [laughs] No pun intended.

Audience: [35:20] [laughter]

Audience Member: [35:21] the prophets [35:20]

[35:20] They won't believe if somebody comes back from the dead. Proven in John 11, with Lazarus being raised from the dead, some believed and some [35:30] went and told on Jesus to the authorities. They held a caucus to see what they could do to put an end to that. The signs don't necessarily lead to faith. Signs tend to confirm the faith of those who believe more then they engender faith.

I remember being troubled when I first heard of a lot of the signs and wonders movement, and how it was being carried out an – as an evangelistic tool. And it finally struck me, I can't tell in the New

Testament that signs and wonders [36:00] actually produce faith in very many people. They are wonderful to confirm the faith of those who believe and to reassure them and to help them. But, Susan would know more about this then I would, but you know, I assume that in a jury trial, what people are willing to believe and not believe are – is an extraordinary [laughs] [36:22][inaudible] things.

Audience Member: [36:23] They're often looking for confirmation of their own [36:26][inaudible] beliefs. Which is why so much goes in to [crosstalk] [36:29][inaudible] cuz they're looking for confirmation. But they're coming to the table, not empty, but full of experience, [crosstalk] and what makes them who they are, which is-which is bound to be - so the same set of facts are gonna be interpreted differently then - the signs confirm. [36:51][inaudible]

[36:29]Right. [laugh] Sure. [36:51] And then some are unable to believe certain things, no matter what. They could be fair, decent people. I'm always interested when I see – [37:00] these days we hear of heinous crimes and we see them on the news. There's always somebody in the crowd who would say, "They must be insane if they did that." They can't conceive of somebody ruthless and cruel enough to do such-and-such an act. At any rate, I digress.

It seems to me like – that the evidence before a first century person was the text of scripture, what they had seen [37:30] of Jesus, the witness of the apostles and their credibility, right? And again, when you put yourself in Paul's place - and I keep stressin' that because it's Paul who had to teach people from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. It's the missionary movement. Then, put yourself in that position as you work with your Messianic theology.

Now a couple of other passages [pages turning] in the prophets [38:00] and in – looks like the writings will take up a bit of time [laugh]. Jeremiah 23:1 through 8 in a passage in which primarily Jeremiah is criticizing the poor shepherd leaders of his day. He says, "There's coming a sh-servant, shepherd kind of leader who'll be what we need." [38:30] 23:1, "Woe to the shepherds who are destroyed and scattering the sheep of my pasture, declares the Lord. Therefore thus says the Lord God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who are tending my people, you have scattered my flock, have driven them away, have not attended [amused] to them." That's not a very positive comment on their leadership. [joking]So behold I'm about to attend to you!

Audience: [38:51] [laughs]

[38:51] "For the evil of your deeds, declares the Lord, that I myself will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I've driven them, bring them back to their pasture, and they'll be [39:01] fruitful and multiply." What happens post 587 when Babylon destroys Jerusalem? God then eventually gathers the people back to the land, verse 4, "I'll raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them, they'll not be afraid any longer, or by terrifye-terrified, nor will any be missing." The fact is, God brought a remnant back to the land and that remnant awaited the Messiah, [39:30] in Jesus' day.

Verse 5 "Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord, I'll raise up for David." Who else? Who else could it be? A righteous branch, or a righteous sprout, as in Isaiah 11:1. "And He will reign as King and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land." If anything this passage seems more concrete and less eschatological for sure, then say, Isaiah 11 or 9. [40:00] There are no lion and lamb imagery here to let you know that that's an idealized picture.

"In His days Judah will be saved and Israel will dwell securely. And this is His name by which He will be called, the Lord is our right." That's His name. This Davidic ruler is to bring the righteousness [pages turning] that their current rulers do not bring. Now then, I begin to deal in the last day [40:30] or not,

before, with Jeremiah 31, which is the new covenant passage. Where God says He will make a new covenant and a new people.

Audience Member: [40:43] You said Jeremiah 31?

[40:44] Yeah, the new covenant passage, Jeremiah 31 verses 31 to 34. So I-I say that because before we come to the next Messianic image, we're in a context, in a – Jeremiah [41:00] 30 to 33 of new covenant in days to come. And then in Jeremiah 33:14 we're going to have the new covenant imagery connected to the Davidic ruler in a way that Jeremiah 31 itself doesn't do. 33:14 through 26 is the whole context, we'll probably just do snippets, but, "Behold the days are coming, declares the Lord, [41:30] when I will fulfill the good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and the house of Judah. In those days and at that time I will cause a righteous branch of David." Remember chapter 23? "A righteous branch of David to spring forth, and He shall execute justice and righteousness" not just in Israel, but where? "on the earth."

This is a worldwide kingdom. "In those days Judah will be saved, Jerusalem will dwell in safety, and this is the name which she will be [42:00] called. The Lord is our righteousness." Same phrase as Chapter 23. "For thus says the Lord David will never lack a man to sit on the throne of the house of Israel." Where'd we first hear that? Second Samuel 7. "And the Levitical priests shall never lack a man before me to burn offerings, to burn grain offerings to prepare sacrifices continually."

What does Hebrews make of that? Saying, "Man, who's on the throne?" [42:30] Verse 19: "The word of the Lord came to Jeremiah saying thus says the Lord if you can break my covenant so that day and night will not keep their appointed time," and by the way, the same phrase is about night and day, follow the new covenant passage in Jeremiah 31. It's in Jeremiah 31:35 to 37.

"If you can break that covenant," verse 21, "then my covenant may also be broken with David [43:00] my servant, so that He will not have a son to reign on His throne, and with the Levitical priests, my ministers." He says in verse 22, "As the host of heaven cannot be counted and the sand of the sea cannot be measured so I will multiply th-the seed of David my servant and the Le-Levites who minister to me." Where did you get imagery like that before? In the Old Testament. Was not with David but with whom?

Audience: [43:24][inaudible] Abraham

[43:25] With Abraham! Specifically, in Genesis 15 [43:30] right before the, "believes in God and is counted righteous." So, understand that He's not gonna reject the descendents of Jacob and David my servant, and look at verse 26, "Then I," this if/then again, "if my covenant for day and night won't stand," verse 26, "then I would reject the descendants of Jacob and David my servant. Not taking from his seed rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac, [44:00] and Jacob." Again, not just the David, but back to the Genesis 49 text, "But I will restore their fortunes and I will have mercy on them." The covenant with David's connected by reference here with the new covenant of chapter 31, and this Messianic king. By the way I forgot to add, what's David called in verse 26, what's His designation?

Audience: [44:29][inaudible] Servant

[44:29] My servant. We're back to the servant imagery. Though connected to second Samuel 7 not necessary to Isaiah. This passage does the following: The new covenant is connected to the eternal covenant with David. The new covenant is connected to the eternal covenant with David. Second, we're reminded that David is God's servant. God's servant. [45:00]

So the first thing: the new covenant's connected to the eternal covenant with David. Second: David is called God's servant. Third: this passage links David's seed and Abraham's seed. So we have [pages turning] a bringing together of the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants in a Messianic text, which again is what the New Testament's going to do. It's going to bring together the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants in the person of the Messiah. [45:30]

So, I would just fourth refer you to [pages turning] Ezekiel 34:20 to 31, where you have some of the same images. Davidic covenant, new covenant, peacefulness, God's servant David. Ezekiel 34:25-31, [46:00] like Jeremiah pulls together these images, and as we're going to see when we talk about the new covenant, when the people of God, when Ezekiel conceives of God and the people of God, when you ask, "Well how's He gonna do this? How's God gonna create the new people?" Ezekiel says by a direct, giving of the spirit of God into the heart of the people.

Jeremiah 31 says "the law will be written on their hearts" [46:30] Ezekiel 36 says "it'll be done by the spirit". So, the longer we go on, in salvation history in the prophetic part of the canon, the more you see that Jeremiah and Ezekiel are pulling together threads and themes. Uniting them in the person of the Messiah, and this is not even to go into the minor prophets who have their own testimony of where the messiah will be born. Bethlehem because it's the city of… [laughter]

Audience: [47:09][inaudible]

[47:09] David. Zachariah saying the shepherd will be struck and the sheep will be scattered. Also, you know, Zachariah portraying Jesus as coming in on the donkey and being the anointed conqueror, just like Isaiah. So this is hardly to exhaust the passages even if it exhausts my [47:30] physical strength and your patience, although you've been very – you've been a gracious class it's – I don't think we'll exhaust your patience until eleven o' clock on Friday. But let's understand then that a whole lot from the law and the former prophets is pulled together by the latter prophets. So much from the law and the former prophets, from the law and the historical books, is pulled together, brought together, [48:00] by the latter prophets. By Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the twelve.

Audience Member: [48:07] [inaudible]

[48:12] It is the writings but, question about Daniel 7:13 and 14, I'd like to answer the question because of – not just out of courtesy, because I don't know exactly where we would fit this in. You would do this in the writings and description of the Messiah. [48:30] But it's important to see that in Daniel 7:13 and 14, at the end of time - here's kind of the narrative - at the end of time, the ancient of days, what a description for God. [laugh] The one who is just ancient from old times, or does it mean He just has days and days and days and days. He gives the kingdom of God to the son of man.

And in first century, here's something we [49:00]…I don't know again, just kinda in popular theology I grew up with, which is what I whole – I keep mentioning that, not to try to give my testimony but because I think there are a lot of people like this in your churches. I've been taught that son of man imagery is to show - in the New Testament - is to show Jesus identifies with human beings. I think the opposite's true. In the Old Testament, in Daniel, you asked, "the son of man is the one to whom God gives the kingdom."

So for Jesus to say, "I'm the son of man." [49:30] This is causing a bit of a reaction from the get-go. If He were using son of man the way God uses to speak of Ezekiel, I don't think it's gonna get the reaction it gets in the first century. So the son of man will be given the kingdom of God by the ancient of days. There

are two chief doctrines that Daniel – well, I – that's an overstatement – but there are at least two very s-s- - important New Testament matters that Daniel takes up.

One's the son of man statement [50:00] that you brought up, the other one's chapter 12 where He talks about resurrection. Tells him, "Go lie down Daniel, you'll sleep for awhile, I will raise you up and reward you." It's clear resurrection/judgment text. There are other things Daniel contributes but some of the things we've been talkin' about today. But yeah Daniel's in the writings, but that, the son of man theology of Daniel in that passage is a distinct [50:30] contribution that Daniel makes. And it's almost one of a kind.

If you're following along in the Old Testament, see all these threads comin' together. If we're alert enough we say, "David's the servant of God." Where does that start, you re- you'll have – always have somebody sittin' on the throne, we say, second Samuel 7. But, you don't really see that son of man passage coming, or at least I don't. And so, it is [51:00] such an evident passage to say that whoever the son of man is, is going to be The King. Again, scholars debate whether the son of man is a Messianic image. I like what Gerhard von Rad says, "Who else would it be?"

Audience: [51:17] [laughter]

[51:18] In Old Testament theology, to whom else would God give the Kingdom besides the Messianic king, servant, et cetera? There isn't anybody else to receive it. That's where I would place that. But it's a- it's a very important piece of the puzzle if we didn't get there. So, this brings us to the Psalms and really to the end of – I have a choice of either starting the Psalms… [laughter]

Audience: [51:45][laughter]

[51:46] And tryin' to jam those in the last few minutes. I don't think I wanna do that. This may be a serendipitous moment, tomorrow we're supposed to be talking about the Psalms [52:00] anyway and the God who merits worship. So maybe be a good thing to-to tie that together with the Messianic text and to bring it together that way, this will cheat the merits worship theme a bit, the way I cheated the holiness a bit. I guess though, it'd be better to proceed that way. Appreciate the questions. Do we have – I think we're – we'd do well to give you an extra eight minutes.

Audience: [52:29] [laughter]

[52:30][amused] To work on those exams and -

Audience Member: [52:33] I was going to ask you one real [52:34][inaudible]

[52:35] Okay yeah, go ahead, yeah. We're here.

Audience Member: [52:36] [inaudible] I have a quick question are you gonna be able to [52:37][inaudible]

[52:37] Well we'll see when we wanna answer it.

Audience Member: [52:40] What do you think about the Christophany, the alleged Christophany? Do you think there's [52:45][inaudible]

[52:46] Could we start that tomorrow?

Audience Member: [52:47] [inaudible]

The question's about Christophanies.

Audience Member: [52:50][inaudible]

[52:51] Appearances of Christ or not in the Old Testament? Why don't we start with that, cuz that's really a question that flows out of, mostly the law and the former prophets.

Audience Member: [inaudible] [53:03]

[53:03] We can start with that tomorrow. Thank you very much.

Chapter 15

Messianic Promises and the NT

If you have a regional God, is this God relevant in Babylon? Well, Ezekiel says he is. Daniel tells the King of Babylon it's not only that this God [00:31] is relevant for Israel, but is relevant for Babylonians as well. Right? So Ezekiel is trying to minister to Ezekielic [phonetic][00:42] people.

And let's, for argument sake, say some of the sinners in exile realized what they've done. Their question is, is there any hope for us? Is it too late for us? All of these emotions, of course, you will find not in the scripture and in your ministry, that there are those who believe that it's too late for them. There will be those who feel that though they have been faithful, something has gone horribly wrong. There will be the hard-headed people and the stiff necked people that Ezekiel ministered to.

I also think our problems [01:15] were political, not religious. Our problem was that we didn't make the right alliance. Our stupid kings sided with the Egyptians. The enemy of the Babylonians, instead of with the Babylonians. If we had just made the right political alliance, we wouldn't be up here.

The other solutions...our problem - Jeremiah heard this from the exiles in Egypt. Our problem wasn't we didn't serve the Lord, our problem was we were not...we were not [01:46] serious enough about serving these other gods. That is also a theological solution, it's not the correct one. They said our problem was we didn't serve the astral deities of Egypt nearly seriously enough. Our problem was we listened to you silly reformers who said turn to the Lord. We turned to the Lord, they didn't. That's what they [inaudible] [02:08]. We turned to the Lord and, wham, [chuckle] we ended up out of the land.

So, my point is that we're competing view points here. As is true today, it's not always just a one-sided argument. So this is kind of what Ezekiel's up against. In Chapters 33 to 48, he systematically shows that God will bring the people back [02:38]. He will put them in their land and he will send them [inaudible] [02:44] to them and eventually they will live in a glorified Jerusalem.

Now, these teachings are in line with what Isiah says and what the New Testament picks up on. So that Ezekiel 37, The Valley of Dry Bones passage, Israel is like those bones. God will bring them together, put flesh on them, put breath in them, raise them up. The nation is going to live again. [03:15] And eventually, they're going to live in this Chapter 40 to 48 depiction of Jerusalem.

You read nine chapters of a glorified Jerusalem. Often with the same patience you read the tabernacle passages. The point is, you're going to live in a new Zion. The messianic passages end within this context, Ezekiel 34. In this passage, again, [03:45] as we've seen in previous prophets, he's comparing the shepherds of Israel to the shepherd whose coming. And, of course, that's an [inaudible][03:54] image because of their context, and because of what shepherds do. But, also because that just happens to be what David did.

Chapter 34, Verse 20. “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD to them:”, to these leaders, "Behold, I, even I, will judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep. Because you push with side, with shoulder, and thrusted all the weak with your horns, until you scattered them abroad, therefore I will deliver my flock, and they will no longer be a prey; and I will judge between one sheep and another. I will set over them

one shepherd, my servant David." Who by this [04:32] time has been dead 500 years, so we know that he stands as a symbol and the messianic promises in play. "My servant David. He will feed them. He will feed them himself and will be their shepherd."

Give me the New Testament book. [inaudible][04:51] whole other major of theology of that book is...could be encapsulated by that verse, which of the Gospels? Sure. John's working with that. Jesus is the Good Shepherd. If Jesus says, "I'm the Good Shepherd", it's not just this passage, but you have...we already looked at Jeremiah 23 and 33, right? He is the good shepherd, and he will feed them. [05:23] Feeds the multitudes, right?

And he wants that episode to draw them to himself, to help them see who he is. What do they want?

Audience: [inaudible][05:39]

Food. [laughter] Food. They're not as interested in knowing Christ as they are in getting fed. They want, in effect, a new Moses who will get them manna every day. But he says, "I will feed them and be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I the LORD have spoken." Then it goes on to say, "We will make a covenant of peace with the land." [06:08]

So, Ezekiel, like Jeremiah, envisioned a Davidic [phonetic][06:13] air shepherding the people. Caring for the people. Taking care of them in a way that will be in contrast to the sort of shepherds they've been having. A righteous ruler. A loving king. A helpful shepherd. And so this is one image that Ezekiel has. And Chapter 36 [06:43] will be the other one.

Chapter 36, Verse 22. We've already seen that the Davidic [phonetic][06:55] ruler shepherd is important. Chapter 36, Verse 22. "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'Thus says the LORD God is not for your sake O house of Israel, that I'm about to act, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.'"

Now, again, let's remind ourselves what they were supposed to be doing according to Exodus 19:5 and 6. Or, Leviticus 11:44. Or a passage that I had neglected. Chuck mentioned it [07:30] in his exam. In Deuteronomy 4:5-8, God says that he's doing these things for Israel so that other nations might see and marvel at his work among them, and ask questions about the Lord. Instead, "They've profaned the name of the Lord among the nations."

Verse 23. "I will vindicate the holiness of my great name which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in their midst. Then the nations will know that I am the LORD." Again, we're on to this international concern by the one who has created them all.

This is important because in Chapters 25 to 32, Ezekiel has talked about judging the nations, but there is a redemptive purpose for the nations as well. [08:02] "Then the nations will know that I'm the LORD when I prove myself holy among you in their sight. For I will take you from the nations, gather you from all the lands, [08:31] bring you into your own land. Then I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols."

In other words, he will bring you back to the land, remove the spirit of idolatry. This certainly occurs. What other problems Israel may have had in Jesus' day, idolatry isn't really one of them. Once back in the land, they are pretty [09:00] scrupulous to oppose the idols and they are not really worshiping the different gods that the Romans and the Greeks had set up. That's a fair statement, I think.

Paul has, on his missionary journeys, certainly deals with idolaters. But as far as images go, you don't have much of that in Jesus' time. Verse 26. "Moreover, I'll give you a new heart." According to Deuteronomy that would be [inaudible][09:28] wouldn't it?

Audience: [inaudible][09:29]

"So, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you." So far this seems to just be kind of a new attitude. Another way of life. Another way of doing things. "I'll remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh." Hard-hearted being of a biblical image. Going to give you a new heart. At Verse 27. How will this happen. "I will put my spirit within you. [10:02] I will do it directly and I will cause you to walk in my statutes. And you will be careful to observe my ordinances."

And please note the progression here: "I will put my spirit within you. That being so, I will cause you to walk in my statutes." Third part, "And you will be careful to observe my ordinances". [10:30] That basically summarizes - if you wanted three points on how sanctification works. There it is. Right? The spirit is within you done by God. His Spirit causes you to walk in his statute and you will do so.

So you're saying, it seems to me like human responsibility and divine action are brought together here, aren't they? So, that the first cause is the divine action, the second cause is divine action and the third cause is the human response. [11:05] Now, this doesn't leave us without any mysteries. You know, we've had questions. Brian asked one the other day about it. Still, this is the biblical process in a nutshell. That if the first two aren't true, the third won't happen. And he says in Verse 20, "You will live in the land that I gave your fore fathers. You'll be my people, and I will be your God."

Understand that, again, this is in connection with the Davidic [phonetic][11:40] promise. It's part of Ezekiel's program for the future. It is a comprehensive program really, whereas Isaiah talks about the Messiah being a savior who will redeem them from their sins and give them what we would call, eternal life, in the new Jerusalem. In a place where death is eradicated. Isaiah 25 and 65. Those two big chapters.

And whereas, [12:15] Jeremiah talks about the sins of the people and the need for repentance and a new covenant that will initiate a new day. Ezekiel...Jeremiah talks about being in the heart. Ezekiel tells us how that's going to occur. "God will work on the hearts of the people. He will change those hearts. They will walk in his ways, and he will give them a shepherd [12:45] to lead them."

Again, what you find in the New Testament is the organization, the adaptation and the presentation of these views in the life of Jesus. So, if you're a Gospel writer and you say, okay, John. Apostle John. He admits to you in Chapter 20 he's got more material than he can put down. Right? Doesn't he say that. Many more things Jesus did.[13:15]

So how do you organize what you're going to put down? Well, one of the ways he organizes is according to shepherd theology that he finds in Ezekiel and that, by the way, you'll find the psalm. It's one of the ways he works. How is it that you would choose the speeches of Jesus from what you knew. Well, again, you would choose some of the key themes of messianic theology. And you would also contribute to your own theology. So that John, he talks about the signs Jesus did in a way that I don't think is unique to the Old Testament. It's his stamp on it.

I'm not trying to indicate that the Gospel writers or Paul, or anybody, you know, that basically they strung a whole bunch of Old Testament ideas together and said here you go guys. They had church issues. They had evangelistic issues. They had the same kind of issues you have in your ministry, but they were organizing principles from the Old Testament.

So you have this in Ezekiel. And then, in the minor prophets, if you look at Micah 5:1-3 and the minor prophets, you have some specifics. [14:34] But notice the other themes. We know Micah 5:2 has the evidence when the Wise Men came and asked Herod, "Where's the savior to be born?" The people he consulted right away said, "Bethlehem", right? Because of Micah 5, "Now muster yourselves in troops, daughter of troops; They have laid siege against us; With a rod they will smite the judge of Israel on the cheek. But for you, [15:08] Bethlehem Ephrathah, too little to be among the clans of Judah,

from you will go forth for me, ruler in Israel.

And, of course, that's David's City. Bethlehem's the origin. His going forth are from long ago. This ruler will come forth from Bethlehem, but he's one from long ago, from the days of eternity. Now, that's quite a statement [15:38] about a coming king, right? I don't care whether you say well is that specifically a text about where he'd be born, or where he'll emerge? It doesn't make a whole lot of difference because if you're from eternity that is an astounding statement, whether you're saying this person is going to be born on a [inaudible][16:00], or you're going to say all of a sudden here's the King. From eternity.

Verse 3. "Therefore , he will give them up until the time when she who is in labor is born a child; Then the remainder of his brethren will return to the sons of Israel and he will arise and shepherd." Ezekiel would agree. Of course, Ezekiel writes after Micah. "He will shepherd in the strength of the LORD and the majesty of the name of the LORD his God, and they will remain because at that time he will be great to the ends of the earth."

Again, this...so Micah and Isaiah talk about a Davidic ruler rooted in Jesse, rooted in Bethlehem. Shepherd of the people. A good shepherd, whose kingdom extends to the ends of the earth. Some of which are greater promises than God ever gave David in 2nd Samuels 7. [phonetic][16:57]. "To the ends of the earth, this is the ruler's kingdom."

So, in Micah 5, do remember that Bethlehem is a focal point, but that's not all this text says about the Messiah. So, then, famous passages you know, the rest of the minor prophets. Zechariah you read 9 through 14. Zechariah's a little bit like Ezekiel. Is he not? He has visions that are [17:31] very difficult. But in Ezekiel 9 and following, let's see...in Chapter 11 you have a variety of things, including shepherd imagery of the negative images of a shepherd out of a positive one to come. But, in Chapter 13, it is the "Shepherd of the people who is struck and the sheep are scattered".

[18:00] A text Jesus applied to his own death and disciple's reaction. But in the New Testament, the scattering of the sheep is not always a negative image, is it? In the Book of Acts, they go out preaching the Gospel scattered by persecution. But, again, this is in the context of shepherd imagery.

[18:31] Also, that's Chapter 13. But look back at Chapter 9 for one of the better known passages. Chapter 9, Verse 9. "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumphal Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your king is coming to you. He is just and endowed the salvation, humble and mounted on a donkey. Even on a colt, the foul of a donkey."

Audience Member: [18:56] I'm sorry, you're still on Zechariah?

[18:58] Zechariah 9:9. Yeah. I'm sorry. I was jumping around a bit on you. Zechariah 9:9 is a passage that...what folks [inaudible][19:10] see Jesus riding in on a donkey. But let's remember that there's more to this passage than that. That a humble ruler is coming. Ancient world seems a contradiction in terms, maybe in ours too. And that this coming should lead to rejoicing and victory for Jerusalem. But as I said,

[19:40] as we look at this shepherd imagery, go ahead and look at Zechariah Chapter 13 and Verse 7 for a text Jesus cites, or is sited in um, two of the Gospels. Mathew 26:31 and Mark 14:27.

"Awake O sword against my shepherd and against the man my associate declares the LORD of hosts. Strike the shepherd that the sheep may be scattered, and I will turn my hand against the little ones. [20:15] It will come about in all the land" declares the LORD. 'That two parts in it will be cut off and perished, but the third will be left in it.'" Remnant theology. "And I will bring the third part through the fire; I will refine them as silver is refined, test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, I will answer them; I will say, 'They're my people, and they'll say, 'The LORD is my God.'"

Let's just act as if there's a normal progression of events going on in 13:7. Act as if there's a natural progression of events. The shepherd will be struck, [20:45] the sheep will be scattered. God will refine that group that has been scattered, and they will be his people. I don't know whether Luke consciously follows this pattern in Luke Acts. I don't know whether consciously or not this is the fulfillment of what it says, but do note, that this is indeed [21:14] the progression that occurs.

The shepherd is struck. The sheep are scattered. Persecution refines them. They are his people. It's also true of the apostles at the time of the crucifixion. So, maybe it's an exile pattern as well. But just remember that the shepherd imagery in Zechariah and Ezekiel is very complementary. [21:44] They see that Israel has wicked shepherds that are abusing them. A good shepherd will be sent. The remnant will follow the shepherd, and God will be glorified through the work of his people.

You know, in Malachi, the last of the prophets, in Chapter 4, Verse 4 - [22:16] a very important theological book, Malachi. Particularly, if you want to see a critique of improper worship in the Old Testament. Chapter 4, Verse 4. "Remember the law of Moses, my servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him at Horeb for all Israel. Behold, I am going to send you Elijah, the prophet, before the coming and great and terrible day of LORD."

So we've had a reminder of the law. A promise of the prophet. [22:46] "He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will come and not smite the land with a curse."

The preparation of this Elijah is that he will do the work that will get the hearts of the people right in preparation for the savior. So what is the work of John the Baptist? When we say he's a forerunner, whom we say he prepares the people. What was his work? It was to get the people right with God, [23:16] to get those who would believe their hearts right and ready to receive the savior. In other words, to prepare the remnant that has been brought back to the land to receive their savior. And that the work of John the Baptist was effective for those who repented is evident, because it's some of his disciples who followed Jesus. Right?

And Jesus himself [23:46] spent time with John and that there was a remnant there is evident. And a Semian [phonetic][23:51] in the temple. They'd been waiting for Jesus all their lives, in a way. And so, there was a remnant prepared to receive the Savior. And through his ministry, it's tough for me reading the Gospels and Acts to answer the question about that. Did that remnant grow through the work of the Savior?

[24:19] On the one hand you see massive crowds hanging on Jesus' every healing. Another time, you see everyone leaving him, except the apostles. I kept asking this question. Historically, you can begin slowly to answer it. [24:40] Whatever happened to all those people who knew Jesus in Galilee? When we talk

about the Jerusalem church, it's evident in Acts. Whatever happened to the Galilee church? Was there one? We know archaeologically, prior to the end of the first century there was.

But, anyhow, the work of the Messiah - what we've seen today - is to be the good shepherd. Is to be the humble ruler. Is to have a ministry to the ends of the earth. Is to have a forerunner before him, and [25:15] you have to believe that John The Baptist saw his ministry in this light. You have to believe that the Apostle John saw Jesus' ministry according to these themes. And you have to believe that those who...Matthew, who stressed Jesus as a new Moses, as a new David, as all of these things. They also used these themes. But, because of the vastness of the portrait, and the material that they had at hand, and the needs of whatever recipients of their Gospels, whatever their needs were. All this in the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Gospel writers wrote their portraits of Jesus. And so, [26:00] that would be the prophets.

And I'll see what questions or comments you have, and then we do some work with the writings with our dual purpose of Messianic Theology in the context of worship. So, questions or comments at this point. Observations.

Audience Member: [26:26] Did John [inaudible] of the Good Shepherd? [crosstalk][26:29] What others [crosstalk][26:32].

[26:29][crosstalk] Hmm mm. [26:32][Crosstalk] You mean in the other three Gospels? You see, the reason I focus on John at that point is because - maybe you can help me here - but I don't really recall the other Synoptic Gospels making much of Jesus' shepherd. Is it? Help me here? I mean I'm an honest when I say I'm...this is not some trick question. I don't even got a sleeve today, much less anything up it.

Audience: [26:56][laughter].

[26:56] But that's my recollection. Not only that John makes a lot of that imagery. John also makes much of the Spirit of God, right? Luke does too. But, certainly, John does...so connected with that shepherd imagery and the spirit imagery, you really think is influenced by Ezekiel and Zechariah. I mean that seems to be a reasonable, ah, position. I think Barnabas Landers [phonetic][27:22] and others made that point in Johannine Studies.

Mark makes use of the theme asked about yesterday [phonetic][27:32] a theme in the writings, which is the Son of Man theology. What would it be like to have the Son of Man, to whom God's going to give the kingdom, on earth now? What does the Son of Man do to affect the Kingdom of God, now, is one of the themes.

Luke Acts I find to be a multi-faceted [27:55] work, as you could expect, given the subject matter. What he's trying to achieve. But, you see in Luke definitely Isaiah theology, virgin birth. You see Isaiah's interest. International interest that the Gospel go...that God rule all nations and that God is the Creator of all people, and that he will rule to the ends of the earth. You see that in Luke's Gospel.

You see both themes I just mentioned. [28:30] The virgin birth and the ruling God's Massiath to the ends of the earth. Now you're saying well wait a minute, I thought Matthew was a Jewish Gospel mainly to Jewish ears. How does it end with a great commission so that Isaiah's interest – here's the greatness of Isaiah's theology. The breath of it. It's taken up by the most Jewish of the Gospel writers and the gentile Gospel writer. The scope of [29:01] Isaiah's theology is sufficient.

Now where Luke does pick up, I think Ezekiel's theology is in his theology of the spirit. And Luke has people filled with the spirit before Pentecost, for sure. You read the first two chapters of Luke and ask

how many people are filled with the spirit, you got people in the womb filled with the spirit. [laughter] You got...you have mother's and prophetic utterances. Right? I mean, isn't that a fair statement?

What's interesting to me is Luke doesn't have any sense that the spirit is not active and involved in filling people prior to Pentecost. Something new happens at Pentecost, but it's not God's willingness to fill and empower people. That isn't it. Whatever else all is new. That's...and by the way, I'd...I think he's picking up not only on at that point, not only on the theology of Ezekiel, but on the theology of the spirit in the Old Testament as a whole.

There's been a fundamentally, I think, misleading translation of, say Joshua judges Samuel, that has led to some misunderstanding. I used to hear it said, from when I was a kid, that the [30:30] Holy Spirit came and went on people in the Old Testament. You know, it would come for a purpose and leave, though the leaving imagery is never there. It's the coming.

So you would expect wouldn't you, when you translate say judges or the spirit comes upon Samson or in Samuel, the spirit in the English translation comes upon Saul. What's the verb for come and go in Hebrew? Do any of you remember? It's a little simple word, "mo". [phonetic][31:06]. Right? You used hundreds and hundreds and hundreds of times. It's the way to say you went to this place, you went to that place and comes here and comes there and goes this place.

Um. I'm ashamed to say that until the last couple of years when I was actually working through those texts for a translation project, I came to understand that's not the word at all. It's not even the word ever used. The word used is the word for clothed. So the spirit clothed [phonetic][31:36] him. You say oh, it's the same thing. Came and went. [inaudible][31:40] I don't know. It's a lot closer to the New Testament idea.

I can say the same about the New Testament. See, it says Acts 4. Act of Pentecost. "They were filled with the Holy Spirit and the room was..." Well, you see it came and went, didn't it? He was filled one time, wasn't filled another. It just came and went. So you can say the same thing, but in both Testaments the Holy Spirit is not just coming and going, but clothing people. And in Isaiah...not Isaiah, Psalm 51. What does the psalmist say? "Don't take your Holy Spirit from me, [32:11] created in me a clean heart."

So, there is a theology of the spirit in the Old Testament that I think Luke's picking up on, is my point. For that little diversion. But I think, and Josh you were asking this question earlier, that a serious theology of the Old Testament, Holy Spirit...Some of that works being done now, but I really believe it's fruitful.

So Luke's picking up on say [32:40] Ezekiel's theology and on the theology of the spirit in the Old Testament. Picking up on Isaiah's notions of "...to the ends of the earth". Matthew picks up on that one without picking up on the spirit theology. Matthew's Gospel, I think, has one of its fundamental principles. Deuteronomy 18. "There's going to come a prophet like me."

Jesus, in many ways, is the new Moses in Matthew. Dale Allison [phonetic][33:09] has some good work on that. There are others. Every time I hear Dale Allison's name I think - he's the guy at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary and New Testament theologian – I always think, is that a name of a stock car driver? It's the mixture of two I know.

Audience: [33:22][laughter]

[33:25] But, Dale Allison writes about Jesus as the new Moses. I think that's true to an extent. You say, okay, what's Matthew thinking of? "There's coming a prophet after me." [is this biblical quote][33:38] Deuteronomy 18. "Listen to him". I haven't done justice to Mark's theology. But, those are some of the – I

think in the Gospels – those are some of the items we've studied that they're picking up on. Was that getting to it?

Audience: [33:57][inaudible]

[33:58] So as you can tell, I think that kind of this approach to the Old Testament that we are trying to take here is that it's more full blown giving you more data, does enrich our understanding of New Testament theology. Not just by seeing how they handled the predictions, but of seeing how they shaped their books. What themes were most important to them. And I honestly think, if we know that, it's going to help us understand their audience a bit better.

I happen to agree with Richard Bauckham. [phonetic][34:39] You know, he has this new work on how these Gospels weren't necessarily written for a single audience but to be read and spread. For a long time with the Gospels [inaudible][34:51], Mark wrote to Rome and that was a specific setting. You had the Johannine community and you had all this other...But they're saying now, it's pretty evident that these churches had a whole lot more connection and communication with one another and that the Gospels probably were intended for general circulation.

So I think it helps to see some more about the audience. But that'd be another good exercise. And I do it all of the time. Really, when I read the New Testament is to try to remember [35:20] what I've noted, what I've worked through and say, what are the theological principles that a single writer is picking up? Or, here's the other nice one. Given what he's up against in Church X, Galacia [phonetic][35:35], Colossae [phonetic][35:36] whatever else. What theology's is Paul drawing on? [chuckle]

Audience: [35:38][laughter]

[35:42] That's a fascinating...Why do I find that fascinating? Because if you're ministering in a church and you draw an audience profile of Colossae [phonetic][35:51] or of Galacia [phonetic][35:54] or of Corinth, and you compare your audience to it, you're going to find many of the same problems – let's see, no one has problems anymore – issues. We have issues. And you're going to see how Paul appropriated Old Testament theology for the purposes here. I think it helps you do your ministry. Helps you see what somebody who may have known more about ministry than I do, [36:25] handled this situation and what theology they used.

But with the Gospel writers, how shall we present the Messiah? They had to present it in a way that would be conversant with Old Testament theology or there hearers would say, I don't know what you're trying to pass off here, but that isn't what the Old Testament says about it. And that pretty much settled it for the Jews and the God-fearers, right? And that's who Paul had success with, basically, the God-fearers.

And then...[36:55] Here's a question I can't fully answer, and I don't think anyone can. Why would they choose this and not that? Well, the audience would have something to do with it. The personal theology of the evangelist would have something to do with it. What they believed to be important, but I can't answer the why this and not that all of the time. What we can do, however, is say we can see this theology going on in this Gospel.

Audience Member: [37:16] Would you say that when Jesus was ascending and he says, "I'm going to send a helper, to help you", that actually he had already sent the Holy Spirit? And that...

[37:26] Well, see if your...well, sure. I mean, [crosstalk][37:31] what is interesting is wherever Jesus is the Father and the spirit are, right? So we're talking about ah...this [inaudible][37:40] a time where Jesus accommodates what they're say...The text – is it John's, hmm, I always forget this text no matter what I do,

so I need a concordance – but, Jesus makes a statement to his disciples that if you unravel this statement and you understand it fully, you can answer all these questions about the Holy Spirit. So you can say, [38:01] okay we know this is loaded. We know we can't do it. What's the statement?

The statement is the Holy Spirit has been with you. Now he will be in you. And you say well, what has the with you accomplished? Everybody mentioned in Hebrews 11 every disciple, every prophet [laughter], Moses, etc. So the with you, it's another one of these great and greater deals. What's the with you achieved? This. What's the in you going to achieve? Even greater things than these. Jesus says even greater things – how does he put it, I don't want to misquote him too badly. I'd at least to paraphrase him accurately.

Audience Member: [37:32][crosstalk][inaudible]

Audience: [38:48][inaudible]

[38:50] Greater. Yeah. "Greater deeds than these", whose? What he's done, because I go to the Father and...And in the sense that I can ever tell that in the Old Testament, you know, the Holy Spirit took coffee breaks, or you did from him, or whatever else. That he is... God's promise to every prophet is what? I'll be with you. Constant presence of God. Now, whatever that difference is by what Ezekiel says [39:24]. John saying, okay, what's his Holy Spirit theology? The Holy Spirit is going to be on your heart, changing you. It is different and it is better, but it does not mean that the Holy Spirit is kind of flitting about testament.

So if I know the exact distinction Jesus is making in that passage, I would know all I needed to know. But I'm [39:54] not given...there are a couple of things we don't know about, but he's saying with you produced all this. In you, is going to produce even greater things than these, because I go to the Father and send the spirit. But in a sense, you don't have to send the spirit anywhere, do you? Because, like Jesus, he is the Creator, sustainer. And so, we have some of these mysteries.

But what I would say, the Holy Spirit has been active in all those ways and you go trace it in the Old Testament. And it's everything from being active helping [40:30] people know how to make things to you just go on down the line, but greater now. This presence is greater.

Audience Member: [40:40] So...so what about the passage that say's [inaudible][40:43] or whatever, he [inaudible][40:45].

[40:46] There is one text on the leaving of the spirit. So I want to make that clear because...

Audience Member: [40:52][inaudible].

[40:54] I don't know of another one. I could be wrong. But in other words, the kind of theology I grew up with from good people they didn't say the Holy Spirit didn't exist before Pentecost, but his ministry was rather limited. And they blamed the people, they didn't blame the Holy Spirit. They didn't say, you know, hey, he hadn't caught on to his job yet. They were saying he had sinful people, or whatever, and they were all praying from a greater...But you would have thought by the image of the spirit came upon them...you would have thought [41:30] that there was also a subsequent passage when then the spirit left so and so.

Now text does say, I think Samson may be the other case, God left him. Well, the New Testament's got stuff similar, only it's usually with the church's decision, "Turn him over to Satan, and he learned not to sin" [inaudible][41:50]. We may not say God left him, but I'd say that's pretty strong.

Now, in the Saul text it saith's the spirit is specifically attached to his anointing as King, right? So it says that the spirit...to punish him God replaced – really, replaced, is that the right word? The Spirit of God

with the spirit of depression [42:15] and then the spirit goes to David. In other words, he's King now. The power of the spirit. But the New Testament, I would say, calls the gift of the spirit to be king is with David and not with Saul. And Saul instead is punished.

But I think we need to be honest in biblical theology. Let's say a skeptic said to you, you know, yeah, you guys talk about this Holy Spirit stuff um, your beloved Apostle Paul used the same language, "... be filled [phonetic][42:44] with the spirit". That indicates there are times when you are full and time when you're not. What's the deal? The Holy Spirit coming and going, thought he abided with you always.

So you see what I'm saying is you've got similar language that I finally thought...here's the day I became nervous. Well man, you could apply those sames sorts of things they applied to the Old Testament to the New Testament and have a faulty doctrine of the spirit too. There is the passage with Saul, but I think it is about a gifting of the [43:15] spirit to be king, not about God's presence. Because, unfortunately, Saul still experienced God's presence didn't he? Only it was not a blessing now, it was what?

Audience: [43:25][inaudible].

[43:25] Punishment. He had a punishing spirit on him, but it was a spirit from God. This is something the New Testament – I'm trying to think if it actually deals with much. That the Holy Spirit can be present to judge and convict, yes. But, I mean, this is...this is done to someone that God had already blessed. So, I think that's [inaudible][43:50].

We don't get going and leaving imagery. What we get is clothing and empowering imagery and, again, if you read Acts 4, isn't it pretty much the same? They pray the Holy Spirit comes upon the place. Empowers them. They pray in certain ways and do extraordinary ministry. But what Paul says in Ephesians 1, we get Paul's theology. When he talks about Ephesians 1, [44:15] the Holy Spirit being in the heart and sealing us, that's what Ezekiel said would happen.

So, I'll be honest for myself and say I respond to questions about the spirit's work in the Old Testament. But I think I don't have it. And if mine needs work - and I think a lot of other peoples do too - to do work on the spirit's work in the Old Testament. Then to do a [44:45] serious comparison so that we would know what the actual differences are so we would actually know what is greater about the Holy Spirit's work with us.

Here's the other thing I would say, I'm not making a pro or con statement about cessationism in – I guess maybe I am – in the New Testament. See, I think there are some things that the Holy Spirit does because he is the Holy Spirit. [45:15] He can't do anything else. He acts out of his character. Those things will be evident in the Old, and those things will be evident in the New and they can't cease because he doesn't cease. See what I'm saying?

There are certain things God does because God is. [45:45] God will love, sustain, judge, etc., because he is God. The Holy Spirit will do certain things because he is God. The Son does certain things because he is God and if those things cease, you're bordered on a God is dead theology.

The Holy Spirit gifts people in the Old Testament. Gifts people in the New Testament. Holy Spirit convicts people in the Old Testament. Convicts people in the New Testament. It empowers people in the Old and empowers people in the New. The text is he has some new ministries in the New Testament that an Old Testament person shouldn't be surprised by, but it's greater and greater [46:15] and greater in the same way that the Savior is greater than what we've experienced in the past.

And I think one of the things that would be helpful is if we had a full-orbed [phonetic][46:26] Old Testament theology of the spirit, we could then say the ways in which it is greater. I don't have a ready answer to that. I have a method, I think. I know what I'd like to see happen, but I haven't done all that work. But here's what I've been convinced of for years. There have been so many times where I've said, huh. What if we don't draw that distinction between the Old and the New Testament? We don't put that chasm there and just go see..

It's amazing how often you find [47:01] that God is the same yesterday, today and forever and that he's promised, you know, greater things too. So try [inaudible][47:07] what way is...explain John's statement: "Greater works than these you will do." I'm almost afraid to say what would be greater than what [chuckle] Jesus is doing here. My question has to be asked.

Well...so we've kind of gone off on the spirit of theology. But, I think the Gospel writers are interested in Ezekiel's theology of the spirit. And I think they have a more holistic view of the Old Testament text about this spirit than is common New Testament theology. So I think those are a lot of questions. I gave some potential answers. I hope that's suggestive for how...further research you guys would do. [47:55]

Chapter 16

Worship

Josh had asked yesterday about Christophanies in the Old Testament — that is, are there times in which Christ is evident in some physical [00:30] way in the Old Testament? The way I start answering that question, I'm not sure why, is to say, "Well, okay, if it is possible..." We've been talking about how God is the same yesterday, today and forever and operates in some similar manners in the old and new testament — same for the Holy Spirit.

Be true for Christ. However, there's not a single time the New Testament ever makes a mention of a Christophany in the Old Testament, not once. I find that to be [01:00] interesting, at the least. So I start there. I also ask myself if I don't get any help there — one of the great things about the New Testament is it's always giving you clues about what you've got to look for in the Old Testament.

I have no such clue. However, we intrepidly move forward. And it would have to be a passage in which either an angel or someone is treated as if they're [01:30] God. So the best I can do is really — because I don't take Daniel 3, "And the fourth is like unto a son of God." That's not definitive.

In that context, it could mean the son of God, or it could mean an angelic being something. In Genesis, however, you have two or three episodes in which you have the messenger of the Lord speaking either for God or as God. You also have one instance where [02:00] Abraham is visited by three individuals, which then goes down to one, who speaks as God.

So if I were to find Christophanies, I would look for them in Genesis in general and would ask the question, "What is Jacob wrestling with?" Who is Jacob wrestling with? Is he wrestling with God? — A messenger of God? Genesis 22 is another time a messenger of God speaks for God as [02:30] God, one of the two.

Of course, a messenger could speak on behalf of the one who sends him in the first person. In the passage, Genesis 18, of the visitation of pre-destruction of Sodom visit to Abraham. Some argue Melchizedek — I have a problem with that, based on Hebrews. Melchizedek there is treated as a type of Christ, not as Christ himself.

So all [03:00] these are possibilities. That's where I would start. I would try to get some clues from the New Testament, which is always our friend in biblical theology. I would then try to look at passages in which you have either theophanies or Christophanies. I would try to derive a means of seeing which non-human entities are treated as God — that would be important — and which ones are treated [03:30] — there is angelology in the scriptures as well.

There are angels, messengers of God. So I would have to devise some means of separating an angel and the Lord. Some of those lines are blurred in Genesis; that's where I would look. As you can tell, I do not speak confidently of specific texts that are Christophanies for reasons one, two and three.

I am not pretending [04:00] to be all-knowing or all-wise on this subject, but at least, what I would do is try to limit the field so that I don't claim something is Jesus that isn't. I just — it's an argument from science. It really bothers me in the Old Testament and saying about because it would be interesting. It

would fit their needs, often, to claim a Christophany from the Old Testament and [04:30] say, "Well, see, Jesus was already here doing this."

So it would fit their needs, but it doesn't happen. It doesn't mean it doesn't happen, but it means they don't do it. But that's what I would do. I would look in Genesis. Also, Joshua is encountered by the leader of God's army in biblical theology. Is that Christ? Is that Michael?

We need to make a decision. Also, Samson's [05:00] family, they think they've seen God. I think the husband and the wife, one of them is afraid they're going to be killed. And the other one says, "Well, if they're going to kill us, they probably would have done it back there when he was with us."

[Laughter]

We've been allowed to live. I think we'll be alright. So you have those sorts of visitations. And the decision has to be, "Is this an angel? Well, it is in the gospels, isn't it?" When Mary is visited, it's not a Christophany. It's [05:30] an angel who declares it to her right. So if we say, "Well, in the New Testament, it's an angel, not Christ," it might be true in the Old Testament as well."

To make much headway there, I think you would need some principles to fly by. And you'd have to work at that. That's my opinion.

Audience Member: [05:51] [inaudible][05:52]

Paul: [05:53] I don't know because John 1 and Hebrews 1 make a huge deal of the end coronation. But [06:00] now — and again, the Trinitarian theology and a messianic theology in the Old Testament indicate that Jesus did exist. John 1 teaches it. He did exist, but comes in the flesh at this point in time. Galatians makes the same point too.

Those are things I would weigh in. Yeah, it's strange either way. Then, I'd have to look at the evidence. And John 1 and [06:30] Hebrews 1 would have to be weighed in that. In the New Testament, there's also a punishing spirit or a punishing time. I remember that when Paul and — I think it was still Barnabas — on their first missionary journey, they encountered someone who apparently believes in Christ. And then, wants — offers money that he might be able to give the Holy Spirit to people with whom he laid hands on and he struck with blindness.

Again, that's hardly a [07:00] reward that he got there. And so, it seems that the Holy Spirit can be punishing as well. [Inaudible][07:09] to get to the writings now and at least give you a couple of Psalms to chew on. If you'd like to read a crisp 20 pages on the Psalms Davidic theology, check out the following. The author is John Bright, who you know as an Old Testament historian but also an Old Testament theologian.

John Bright in his Old Testament theology writing tends to focus on the kingdom of God. He has a volume entitled "Covenant and Promise." The volume is entitled "Covenant and Promise," by John Bright. And pages 57 to 77 — pages 57 to 77, you have an excellent, straightforward [08:00] treatment of Psalm's Davidic theology. If you're ever trying to preach in the Psalms and its advent or whatever — good summary.

We would start with Psalm 2. Remember that in 2 Samuel 7, the text emphasized servant, king and son. In Psalm 2, we'll emphasize God's [08:30] king and God's son. Psalm 2, while the nation is in an uproar and the peoples devising a vain thing, the kings of the Earth take their stand. And the rulers take council

together against the Lord and against His anointed. And the word for anointed is the word that you get Messiah always.

So again, it's a common word. It could be used of any sort of anointing. You always have to decide whether [09:00] it's a messianic test or not by context against the Lord and his anointed. Saying, "Let's tear their feathers apart and cast away their cords from us. Let's see God's reaction." There's this rebellion. The nations are against God and his anointed. Maybe, this is simply a text in which the Davidic king is having trouble with his colonies, satellite nations, conquered people.

Maybe that's all it is. Maybe it's more. Verse [09:30] 4, here's God's response, "He who sits in the heavens laughs." Are these nations a threat to the creator, God? No, not really. He scoffs at them. Then, he will speak to them in His anger and terrify them in His fury, saying, "Well, as for me, I've installed My king upon Zion, my holy mountain."

In Messianic theology and in Old Testament theology in [10:00] general, when the word Zion is used for Jerusalem, a high-high percentage of the time — if not all the time — that means a glorified Jerusalem, as in Isaiah 25, as in a whole host of other passages. Is Zion my holy mountain? Zion is where God dwells with his people.

And so, we are clued in that if Zion theology is involved, this [10:30] may be more than just a local squabble being adjudicated. Verse 7: "I will surely tell of the decree of the Lord. He said to me, 'You're my son. Today, I've begotten you.'" We know that on the other one hand, 2 Samuel 7, God will consider Solomon and David's descendants his son — his special ones.

But we also know that God has a greater son to be chosen. So [11:00] Hebrews 1:5 picks this verse out. It said, you know, this is messianic. I think in context to the "You're my son. Today, I've begotten you." Ask of me and I will surely give you the nations as your inheritance. God never promised David all the nations. He never promised Moses or Joshua all the nations, did he?

The holy land has certain [11:30] boundaries. But he promises to the one in Isaiah 9 and Isaiah 11 all the nations, doesn't he? Zion language, son language and promises that extend beyond anything ever offered to David or Joshua or Moses were in the realm of messianic [12:00] theology. Basically, verses 1 through 3, these nations might as well get used to serving God's anointed because that's the way it's going to be.

I will give you the nations as your inheritance — the very ends of the Earth as your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron. You shall shatter them like earthenware — like a pot. Now therefore, oh kings of the Earth, show discernment. Take warning, oh judges of the [12:30] Earth. Worship the Lord with reverence. Serve the Lord with reverence, with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

Kiss the sun. Do homage to the sun that he would not become angry and you perish in the way for his wrath may soon be kindled. How blessed are all who take reckoning. The text is a messianic text in which it says God's greater son is God's anointed, God's installed king – God's son. Verse 2, God's anointed, Verse 6, God's installed king, Verse 7, God's son.

To this son, God gives all the Earth's kingdoms — a realm way beyond that of the promise land. So we have to say, certainly at the time of the Psalms, this king has not come. The end of an Old Testament there, this king has not [13:30] come. But when this one, this son, this anointed one, this messiah comes, you will have all the nations of the Earth.

Skip a few of the Psalms that you read for tomorrow as laments, and go to Psalm 18. This Psalm is not only parallel 2 Samuel 22, it's a near duplicate. And just go to the last verse. [14:00] It's giving praise to

God for how the Lord has helped David throughout his life. Verse 50: "He gives great deliverance to his king and shows loving kindness to his anointed..." — Not again, that's the word Mashak messiah — "… to David and to his descendants, his seed forever."

Now, of course, this refers [14:30] to 2 Samuel 7. To the messianic promise, God is showing loving kindness. In fact, he says, "I will not take my loving kindness away from Solomon the way I took it away from Saul." So at the very least, the loving kindness and the choice of Saul's kingdom is taken away.

And David and his descendants will be chosen forever. Now then, one of the questions [15:00] of Solomon that we've already talked about hermeneutically — there are lots of royal Psalms, Psalms about the king, right? But not every royal Psalm is a messianic Psalm. For instance, Psalm 45 is apparently written for a king's wedding. It is a royal Psalm. It does talk about God's love for the royal lineage and for David.

But it's not specifically, in my view, a messianic [15:30] Psalm. I could be wrong. But every time the text talks about the king, it's not necessarily talking about the savior any more than that is true in the prophets. Prophets talk about kings, even sometimes positively, that aren't messiah.

But, Psalm 2, it's a Davidic king chosen by God, anointed by God, given to the ends of the [16:00] Earth — God's covenant with David is relevant, Psalm 18. Psalm 78 [turns page] — again, this is a selection, not an exhaustive list. Psalm 78 — Psalm 78 is one of the Psalms that gives a historical sweep of God's acts in history — giving the history of the people as they've served or not served God.

You go to chapter 78, [16:30] verse 65. Through verse 64, you have a depiction of how God has created the world, given the law, put Israel in the land and Israel has sinned in the land. In other words, we're going from Genesis to Judges, alright? The people are being handed over to their enemies. Verse 65: “Then the Lord awoke as if from sleep." Like a warrior overcome by wine, God's groggy.

He awakes. He drove his adversaries [17:00] backwards. He put on them an everlasting reproach. He also rejected the tent of Joseph. He did not choose the tribe of Ephraim but chose the tribe of Judah. It takes us all the way back to what passage? — Genesis 49, sure. Passage in which Joseph's tribes are described, but it's Judah who's chosen.

Mount Zion, which he loved, [17:30] and he built a sanctuary like the heights, like the Earth which he has founded forever. He also chose David his servant and took him from the care of the Jews. With suckling lambs, he brought him to shepherd Jacob his people and Israel his inheritance. So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart and guided them with his skillful hands.

Though it comes after Ezekiel and the canon, do you see the roots of Ezekiel's theology of shepherd, David as the original good shepherd, his greater [18:00] son as the greater shepherd. But God chose Judah, Zion and David, God's servant, to rescue Israel from their strained ways. So you have a theology of first and second Samuel as well here.

Okay, that sounds good. David is the one who's helping Israel serve the Lord. Psalm [18:40] 89 — now we have significant problems — chapter 89, verse 19, "Once you've spoken in vision to your godly ones and said, 'I've given help to one who is mighty. I've exalted one chosen from among the people.'" Okay, let's stop for a moment.

I've given help to one who's mighty. That's chapter 18 of Psalms that we just looked to. God's help, that's [19:00] David's psalm of praise. I have exalted one chosen from the people. We saw that in Psalm 78. It's not the only place you can see it. We saw it there.

He's chosen one from among the people, David, to be his servant to help Israel. I have found David, my servant. With my holy oil, I have anointed him. With whom my hand will be established, my arm will also strengthen him. The enemy will not deceive him, nor the son of wickedness [19:30] afflict him, but I shall crush his adversaries before him and strike those who hate him.

Verse 24: "My faithfulness and my loving kindness will be with him. And in my name, his horn will be exalted." And it goes on, verse 26: "He will cry to me, 'You're my father, my God and the rock of my salvation.' I will make him my first born, the highest of the kings of the Earth. My loving kindness, I will keep for him forever. My covenant shall be confirmed in him. I will establish his descendants forever, and his throne is the days of [20:00] heaven."

Well, that's a soaring statement, isn't it? That about summarized anything promised to David in 2 Samuel 7. That pretty much encapsulates what some of the prophets are saying. Verse 30: "If his sons forsake the law, God will punish them. That's 2 Samuel 7.

Verse 33: "But I will not break off my loving kindness for him, nor deal falsely in my faithfulness. My covenant I will not violate, nor will I alter [20:30] the utterance of my lips. Once I have sworn by my holiness, I will not lie to David. His descendants shall endure forever. And his throne is a sun before me. It shall be established forever like the moon and the witness in the sky is faithful."

You sense a great big "but" coming, don't you? [Chuckle] But you have cast off and rejected. You've been full of wrath against your anointed. You've spurned the covenant of your servant. You've profaned his crown in the dust. You've broken down his [21:00] walls. You've brought his stronghold to ruin. He's become reproached to his neighbor.

What has occurred, friend?

Audience Member: [21:07] The kingdom's falling.

Paul: [21:09] The kingdom's falling. What happened to the king when the kingdom fell?

Audience Member: [21:15] [inaudible][21:15]

Paul: [21:17] Yeah, let's — remember, he was put into exile. Let's flesh that out a little bit. He had the three exiles, right? — The two small ones and the big one. The first one, the king survived. Jehoiakim — I always wanna — when I say Jehoiakim because my friend Jeremiah didn't think much of him.

He could do it however he wanted. He was Egypt's friend while it was good to him. When Babylon came and laid siege, he says, "Oh, it's alright. I'll be your guy now." So he endured. And then in 598, 597 as the years were [22:00] turning, Jehoiakim rebels against Babylon.

They march against him, and he conveniently dies before they get there.

Audience Member: [22:08] [inaudible][22:08]

Paul: [22:10] With him, it was never out of shame. That was for sure. An individual named Jehoiakim becomes king. When the Babylonians get there, Jehoiakim's been king for all of three months. He has to surrender. He [22:30] goes into exile. It's this person who's exalted in exile at the end of the book of 2 Kings and at the end of Jeremiah.

He's been in exile 37 years. So it's about 560 B.C. — must be. He's at least — I think he was 18 when he became — so he's at least 55, which in their context means he's an aged king. He's certainly aged. He spent two-thirds of his life in exile, so far.

Who was the last king of the south [23:00] in 587? You've got one in exile that the people apparently considered still the real king. Zedekiah is the last king. Remember him? Well, he wasn't even a very good puppet. The Babylonians put him in power.

As you read 2 Kings, you read Jeremiah, Zedekiah's got internal problems. He's ostensibly Babylon's puppet king, but [23:30] the people keep wanting — there are factions in the country that want him to lead a rebellion against Babylon. He senses he doesn't have the power to do that, but he's a man who won't take decisive action.

So he brings Jeremiah in, "Tell me what's going to happen" He tells him. He won't act on it. He brings him in again, "Tell me what's going to happen." Jeremiah [24:00] says, "Why don't you call on these false prophets you've been listening to. Why are you calling me in here?" [inaudible][24:04] just a smart aleck. No, he may just be tired and frustrated.

Look, I don't know why you're bringing me in here. I tell you the truth. You don't follow up on it. You do what these other guys say. I get in trouble — because he always says what's counter to the people. And so he gets jailed or worse. What's worse than jail? — Sinking in the mud up to your [24:30] armpits.

I can't tell you how uncomfortable in how many different ways that must be. I sat down one day and [phonetic] funny — first of all, I thought, "Boy, that's cruel. That's yucky." Then I started thinking other thoughts that I didn't need to think, "Well, this is — [phonetic] shit, this is really bad."

And so if the people find out what I say they do, I get in trouble. And you don't do what I say anyway, so why are you calling me in here? "No, no. Tell me what's gonna happen." So he tells him. It finally gets down [25:00] to surrender to the Babylonians. Remember this?

This is your last option. It was the last option since they wouldn't turn to the Lord. They wouldn't — he says, "Look, surrender to the Babylonians." Zedekiah says, "If I do that, the people will kill me." He says, "They won't kill ya." He won't do it. He fears the people who he's been rebelling against Babylon just enough to get along with.

And he fears Babylon because he's been rebelling against them to [25:30] satisfy the people. So — this doesn't always happen to people, but people who play both side against the middle eventually get hung. So he does it. He tries to flee the Babylonians. Now, this is a bad plan.

Finally when the Babylonians lay siege to the city and breach the walls, they try to flee in the confusion — the royal court tries to flee. They are caught and captured. What happens to them? Do you remember now?

Audience Member: [25:55] They kill his son.

Paul: [25:57] They kill his son. Then, put his eyes [26:00] out. So the last thing he saw was five, I think, of them. And it's almost like the author of Kings and Jeremiah, which their last chapters are virtually identical. He said, "Oh-oh, the Davidic lineage is all good then, right?" Five sons of the kid all hung.

There's no king. There's one in exile. There's one with his eyes put out. What has become of the [26:30] Davidic promise is the thrust of Psalm 89. Now, it ends in faith — blessed be the Lord forever. He asks him, Verse 49: "Where your former loving kindness is, oh Lord, which you swore to David in your faithfulness? Remember, remember."

And so the promise is one that is not ended, but [27:00] it's put on a shelf to be renewed in due time. But the Psalm must ask a heartfelt, heart-wrenching, serious theological and existential question: What happened? What's the future? — Restore.

But the understanding seems to be God can restore this promise. So this is a [27:30] major problem — the lack of a Davidic heir ruling in Jerusalem that New Testament writers had to face and what it means for Jesus to be the king. That was a buzzing question, wasn't it? Everybody from Herod to Pilate to the local people were asking, "What kind of king is this?" — Right? What kind of king?

So there is a covenant with David. It is [28:00] eternal. David is God's first born, but David's kingdom has been quelled. "What's God gonna do?" is the issue. And in Psalms 90-106, that question continues to be important. Let's remember, however, while we're thinking about that Ezekiel is a prophet in exile, what's his answer [28:30] to "What would God do?"

What did we see already today?

Audience Member: [28:34] The people will be restored eventually.

Paul: [28:36] The people will be restored eventually.

Audience Member: [28:39] [inaudible][28:39] new shepherd.

Paul: [28:40] A new shepherd king will arise, and this promise will be fulfilled. It is interesting then that within the Old Testament itself, you have an eschatology that these things must come later. When you get to Psalm 107 — let's notice that within book four, the Psalm had come to book five. Look at 106:47 — the last two verses of Chapter 106.

"Save us, oh Lord, our God, and gather us from among the nations to give thanks to your holy name in glory and your praise. Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say [29:30] amen. Praise the Lord." That ends book four.

Book five, 107:1: "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good. For his loving kindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he has redeemed from the hand of the adversary and gathered from the lands — from the east and from the west and from the north and the south."

You see there's a bit of a resolution here to the problem in 106, 47 and 48. So the last book [30:00] of the Psalms is set in the context of God who has begun his renewing work, right? So what's God gonna do? Ezekiel talks about. Isaiah speaks of it futuristically, so does Jeremiah.

Within the Psalms however, we can see a couple of things — what God's gonna do. One is Psalm 110. Psalm 110 is a messianic psalm. Again, I don't know of a scholar who denies [30:30] that. Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 are almost universally agreed upon as messianic psalms. Now, this is one you will remember from the New Testament, "The Lord says to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'"

All three of these synoptic gospels cite that. It is cited in Acts 2 and Hebrews 1. This is a major, major phrase in messianic theology in the New Testament: "The Lord says to my lord, 'Sit at my right hand [31:00] until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.'" If David is the author, then again, he's speaking of a lord greater than himself.

"The Lord will stretch forth your strong scepter from Zion, saying 'Rule in the midst of your enemies'" It reminds us of Psalm 2, doesn't it? [Chair moving] This one who will sit at God's right hand and the

enemies will be a footstool for his feet, will have the [31:30] scepter, Genesis 49, will be given the rule. Verse 3: "Your people will volunteer freely in the day of your power."

It's going to be a restored people, right? Now, verse 4, "The Lord is sworn and will not change his mind." You're a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek. Now, this is an unusual verse, to say the least. It is a rare thing in Old Testament theology for a [32:00] king to be assigned priestly duties — very rare.

And once David consolidates worship in Jerusalem by bring the arc of the covenant up to Jerusalem... Virtually unheard of for the king to take up priestly rules and [phonetic] a time or two punish [32:30] severely. You remember Uzziah? He attempted to take on the priest role and he is struck with leprosy.

So for the text to say this king will also be a priest is really an extraordinary thing. Like Isaiah 9 saying "mighty God," or Isaiah 53 saying "guilt offering." You remember we talked about those being unusual usages. And here, a priest, after the [33:00] order of Melchizedek, not after the order of Levi but way back to Genesis 14.

And as is often the case, it's just left there in the Old Testament. And so the interpretations in the new and in intertestamental Judaism is rich and varied. Some would say, at times, not in the New Testament, odd and fanciful. Melchizedek [33:30] is the king/priest of Salem who knows the same God that Abraham does, and Abraham tithes to him.

But Psalm 110:4 is cited, I think, four or five times in Hebrews. It's important to the Christ as greater than the Old Testament [34:00] priest's imagery in Hebrews. "The Lord is at his right hand. He will shatter kings in the day of his wrath. He will judge among the nations and fill them with corpses, shatter the chief men over a broad country."

This king priest will triumph. He will drink from the brook by the wayside. Therefore, he will lift up his head. Now, that's an odd verse difficult to translate all the way through. But it seems like this person's going to need or be sustained along the way in [34:30] some manner.

But a king priest that God exalts, who gets power over the nations, who gives victory over the enemies, whose people come to him voluntarily and willingly — clearly this has never happened in the history of Israel. [Laughs] So the greater son, the greater king, the greater priest — and verse 7 I interpret as the king needing to overcome [35:00] opposition of nations and of people.

On this text, I mentioned C.A Briggs' messianic prophecy the other day. On this text, see pages 132-134 — again, very readable. And on some of these texts, I'm giving you some more scholarly reference, simply because I think you might actually look at these [phonetic] texts, further teach and preach them and see them in New Testament theology.

[35:30] One more passage in the last — in book 5, that's chapter 132. Psalm 132 is a Davidic, messianic passage. It is set within the context of restoring the Davidic kingdom. 132:1, "Remember, oh Lord, on David's behalf, all his affliction. I swore to the Lord and vowed to the mighty one of [36:00] Jacob." [Audience member clears throat]

That was about building a house for God. Verse 10, "For the sake of David, your servant, do not turn away the face of your anointed." The Lord has sworn to David a truth from which he will not turn back: "Of the fruit of your body, I will set upon a throne. If your sons will keep my covenant and my testimony, which I will teach them, their sons also shall sit on your throne forever. For the Lord has chosen Zion."

So once again, David [36:30] is called God's servant. David has had bad heirs before. Yet he asks the Lord to renew the Davidic sprout. Verse 17: "I will cause the horn of David to spring forth. I prepared a land for my anointed." God is being petitioned here to restore to David, his servant, [37:00] someone to rule the people.

So certainly, by now, the text has introduced David's greater son. In the Psalms, this person must be a Davidic heir, rules in righteousness, lives as God's servant, redeems and justifies Israel and the nations, cares for the hurting, exists as mighty god. I'll repeat [37:30] that.

So far, in the Old Testament, we have a person who is a Davidic heir like all over the place, rules in righteousness — that's certainly Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the psalms — redeems and justifies Israel and the nations — redeems and justifies Israel and the nations, particularly in Isaiah and [38:00] Isaiah 53, cares for the hurting, Isaiah 42, Isaiah 61 — cares for the hurting and is mighty god, according to Isaiah 9.

Well now, only a greater son, someone way beyond the capacities of David, Solomon or their seed can fulfill these promises. So [38:30] I would say this messianic portrait in the Old Testament — and that was just five or six elements. What do we have by now? — A hundred or so discrete, distinct aspects of the savior?

This messianic portrait is so vast that someone who's merely wonderful, [laughs] who's merely great can't fulfill it. It requires the messiah, the [cuts off] anointed one, [39:00] according to the Psalms, which is in accordance with the other aspects. But Psalms does something that prophets don't do. The Psalms petition God, lament and ask for the restoring of the Davidic king.

And the prophets have predicted that it will occur. So if you say, "Okay, I'm reading the Psalms and I'm saying…" — they're lamenting and asking God to do it. What can I say canonically? It's already been decided. God's promised to [39:30] do this. The prophets have told us."

This prayer will be answered. The prayer of Psalm 89, the prayer of Psalm 132 will be answered for sure — Of course, just somewhat briefly. To do a full biblical theology of this of course, then you would take all this stuff you've learned and ask how the New Testament uses it and adapts it and applies it.

Other than that, you [40:00] wouldn't have anything to do. Now, you can just do it over a weekend.

[Laughter]

Paul: [40:04] But David's heir — let's just take that theme for a minute. Let's just do the Davidic heir and son, just for a moment. Which two gospels offer a genealogy of Jesus that emphasizes Davidic lineage? — Matthew and Luke. Which [40:30] gospel emphasizes the place of Jesus' birth? — Matthew does. Luke might, I don't remember.

But I know Matthew says it's a fulfillment of scripture.

Audience Member: [40:42] [inaudible][40:42]

Paul: [40:44] Well, Matthew and Luke's where you're going to find a Christmas story, isn't it? Tougher questions: Which two gospels include Jesus' declaration that he has no normal Davidic descendant? Jesus [41:00] decides to ask this question: Whose son is the coming one? Whose son will he be? What did they answer?

What would be the answer? — David. What's he then ask?

Audience Member: [41:15] Why does David [41:15]

Paul: [41:16] Why does David say in the Psalms what? When the Lord said to my lord, sit it in my right hand. That's Psalm 110. And they don't want to answer that. Not merely a [41:30] son of David, but David's greater son. In fact, wonder whom David has to bow down to.

Here's a — Psalm 110 indicates that David himself subsumes himself under one of his own descendants. That may be something you do in America, but that's not something you do in a lot of places. The elder does not bow to the younger. And think of a minute about Mary, the mother of Jesus.

Eventually, she has to come to a saving [42:00] knowledge of Jesus, the Christ, whom she happened to give birth to and raised. That's a one of a kind kind of situation, I think. These no-normal Davidic descendants, no-normal descendant of Mary — Paul makes less of the Davidic emphasis. Yet in Romans 1:3 and 2 Timothy 2:8 makes a connection — Jesus, the son of [42:30] David but no normal descendant of David.

Audience Member: [42:38] What was the book [inaudible][42:38]?

Paul: [42:39] Romans 1:3, 2 Timothy 2:8 — God's son. Usually, we would associate — or I would — associate Jesus as God's son with John's gospel, and rightfully so. How many times do we have to draw a father and son imagery there for me to [43:00] get the point?

But in the gospels, Jesus is announced as God's son at at least two events. What are they?

Audience Member: [43:11] Baptism and transfiguration.

Paul: [43:13] Baptism and transfiguration. Peter doesn't call him the son of God. All he says is "Yeah, you're the Christ, the son of the living God." That's been [phonetic] affirmed. But at the baptism, the Holy Spirit descends and God announces — you have the trinity all working together here — "This is my beloved son," and "in [43:30] whom I am well pleased."

Transfiguration: This is my son. Hear him. Listen to him. And yeah, Peter confesses him as such. And that would be in Matthew, Mark and Luke, not just in John. So all four gospels in their own way and for their own purposes, of course — but stress Jesus as God's son. And John in his gospel, Chapter Five, verses [44:00] 19-30, he says that he is the son to whom the father entrusts judgment — God's son.

Paul considers Jesus God's equal. Do we know Philippians 2:5 through 11? Though equal with God, Jesus emptied himself, so he's God equal. Paul also calls him the creator and the beloved son in [44:31] Colossians 1. Sprinting right along, Hebrews 1:5-14 — first chapter of Hebrews, verse 5 to 14 cites Psalm 2 as evidence that, as God's son, Jesus is superior to the angels.

And as God's son, he will inherit the kingdom. The son is given all that the father possesses. Oh, what of the — canonically, that's [45:00] the gospels and Paul. 2 Peter 1:16-18 — 2 Peter 1:16-18 reflects on the transfiguration emphasis on Jesus as God's beloved son. I'm just trying to give you a flavor of this.

Here's Peter. One of the things he's saying is you can trust this eye witness account that I'm giving you. Peter understands these people didn't see what he saw. He says, "So you've got to trust me for this." We saw him on the mountain [chuckles], God [45:30] said, "This is my beloved son."

My point really is gospels, Paulines and general epistles are all going to make this point about Jesus as God's son. They're all going to use that imagery from the Old Testament. And this will be fast, God's servant — I stated yesterday that the gospels all cite Isaiah 53 as [46:00] evidence of Jesus' death — atoning death.

I think all four do. I know the synoptics do. 1 Corinthians 15, in his summary of the gospel and the resurrection, I think Paul cites Isaiah 53. God's servant in the gospels, in Paul — but again, if you look at [46:30] pages 292 and 293 in the Old Testament theology, you'll see what little I know there on the servant in Jesus.

This is not even to go into things like shepherd imagery and priest imagery and all these others. That's just to start with the basics. David's son, God's servant, David's greater son, son of God, that's just to get started. And maybe you post yourself another okay [47:00] Jesus priest and see what gospels and Paul — and boy, what doesn't Hebrews do with that?

And you'll see that some of these basic Old Testament treatments of Christ continue on across every major segment of the canon. Not in every book of the New Testament, but in every major segment. How does the Bible end? — With an account of a righteous king of kings [47:30] who conquers all evil earthly forces.

Revelation 19: "King of kings, lord of lords." We then have the chaining of Satan, final judgment, the comings of the new heavens and the new Earth that we've been expected since Isaiah 65. This king is David's greater son, his heir who is also God's son. He is God, and he's the hope of all God's [48:00] people.

So it's taken a while. I didn't intend it to take quite this long. I guess now, having made other promises about worship, I would say, "Worship this king."

[Laughter]

Paul: [48:15] But certainly if these things are true, is it any surprise in Revelation that the people are bowing down and saying, "Worthy is the lamb?" If we say all these things [48:30] about Jesus, worthy is the lamb of God to receive glory and honor and praise. Would it make sense to us, also, to have a Christ-centered worship?

Yes, we would reflect on human need. But if human need is all that occurs in a so-called worship service, worship has not occurred. There must be a focus on God the father, son and Holy Spirit. But the Holy Spirit [49:00] would always say — What does Christ say the spirit wants you to do? — Focus on Christ.

And the father has given all things to the son. I would not neglect any member of the trinity, but let us understand that by the time the Bible ends, worth is the lamb. And certainly, if we see even — I've only done about an eight of what you could do with this [49:30] theme. You've absorbed as much as you can, and you know other items in this study.

Surely, this should be the focus of our worship. And if it's not — cos worship means bowing down to God, really — If it's not, then it isn't worship. I don't have any quarrel right now. I know of church plans right now that are [50:00] altogether given to contemporary Christian music of one sort or another.

And I've visited a church in Orlando this last January that is being planted with R.C. Sprole as the pastor. [Mild laughter] They've already got 500 people that are building and got staffed with a good bit of money in this congregation. Part of their niche is "You won't ever have to hear a chorus here." Sick of choruses? — Come in here. We have sacred music here.

Let's have [50:30] a niche. [Laughter] So I've seen everything from head banging, Rock 'n' Roll [laughter] — or more like baby boomers' style Rock 'n' Roll. That was the genius John [phonetic] Wimberton way. He was literally a songwriter for the Beach Boys and wrote Christian music after his converted — I mean, he knew baby boomer Christian Rock. [Laughter]

I'm not putting him down a bit. I'm saying that's a lot of [phonetic] work. I'm not too old to [51:00] care. I'm not too old to have a preference, but I am bold enough to say whatever you're gonna do, if it's not Christ-centered and if it's not content-oriented, if it's not biblical, theologically sound, do something else.

I try to keep my preference out of it. You can probably tell I'm not real big on [inaudible][51:20] worship. They won't be either in five years. [Laughter] But having said that, a Christal-centric, God-honoring, Holy Spirit-acknowledging worship, however it's done, in whatever style, is — has a chance to honor God in whatever culture it occurs.

So, again, I've cheated worship twice. I've done a whole seminar on worship, [laughs] so I don't know. But it's probably just as well. Tomorrow, we will talk about hurting and suffering. The best [52:00] way to prepare for the class is to do your reading, and then sit around and feel bad.

[Laughter]

Paul: [52:10] So if you've been getting up at seven, get up at 4.

[Laughter]

Paul: [52:15] If you're used to drinking coffee, don't drink any. No, I'm — that's ridiculous. We know enough about suffering to hold the discussion. And we'll look at the text. And then, the last day, we're going to talk about ways of doing linkages to biblical theology and we will call it a semester. So, down to two days.

Chapter 17

Hurting (part 1)

I suppose today's subject of God meeting the hurting is a subject that is at, in so many ways, at the [00:30] heart of God's work with the human race and is also at the heart of Christian ministry today.

It is very interesting that in many ways affluent societies often ask more questions about evil and suffering than non-affluent societies.

I think this is so [01:00] because the more unusual pain becomes the more we think that it is some sort of punishment or something that is out of the ordinary in life.

Also, in cultures that have access to life saving measures, [01:30] for which we are grateful in many ways, you know, -um- I do not want to die of a heart problem that could be easily fixed by a heart bypass surgery.

I'd rather live. I'm grateful to have access to antibiotics and other sorts of drugs. And to know there is an understanding of why some diseases occur.

At the same time, all those things make is seem odd, [02:00] if someone gets sick and dies. On the other hand, nations or cultures which don't have a lot of money, they still ask the questions, don't they?

They still suffer. In fact, they may take it more in stride like for instance; there may be a host of things such as death by disease and death by war and several other things.

But everybody [02:30] has the ability to ask the question. And we are going to see in scripture they do.

At the same time the scriptures give us several answers. –Uh- to the question of why evil and suffering. But it doesn't give us every answer. Nor does it give us the discernment always. And the [03:00] wisdom and the maturity to know which of the revealed options are operative in our lives right now.

See what I'm saying? I might know, for arguments sake, there are four reasons why I might suffer. But I might not know exactly what's going on. Which one is operative.

That requires wisdom and perspective. Also, the Bible does not promise us omniscient. Omniscient would [03:30] include what's happening to me, certainly and why it's happening now and how it affects everybody else. I don't know those things.

Also, because I'm not omniscient, as we said the other day, we don't have the knowledge of why this timing, so that [04:00] I might know that a person, all of us rather, who would barring the return of Jesus, we will all die.

But the timing, I don't know the importance of. The circumstances I don't know the importance of. So, I guess I'm offering some disclaimers from the start. There are certain things that require omniscient's [04:30] to make full sense out of even what God is revealed as to why. So I might know, for instance, I'm suffering for the sins of others.

The timing, the circumstances and the results I cannot know, necessarily, at this point in time.

So, in many respects, this issue is like other issues [05:00] we've discussed. We have things revealed to us that are clear and prominent in scripture. Then we are asked to exercise faith.

This is not a faith that is blind or a leap in the dark or that says you cannot ask questions because if you read the scriptures, if we said it is ungodly to [05:30] ask questions about evil and suffering or to lament evil and suffering in your life, then we are going to discount, oh let's see, shall we discount Jeremiah and David and Paul.

Jesus prayed to lament from the cross. Shall we discount all the people who are intelligent enough to know that things are not going well?

[06:00] So now I am not asking, I- I am not advocating that if you have difficulties you must speak of them in public. I'm not advocating that you spill your guts to people you don't know. Or that in every sermon you talk about, or every lesson you talk about whatever difficulty you have.

[06:30] What I am advocating, however, is honesty with God and with people you can trust. This is all over the scripture. I'd also advocate a theological frame work that will help us put these things into perspective.

And at least know that in our most frustrating moments what question would be relative at this point. There is some help in that. To say I know I'm asking the right sort of question.

[7:00]So when we begin scripture we don't have much time before people are affected-infected was evil and suffering. We get those first two chapters of Genesis. That's pretty good.

Then we get to chapters 3 and 4. We know what chapter 3 is about. Chapter 4 and verse 8 is the crux [07:30] of a Cain and Able- early part of the Cain and Able account.

God has corrected maybe rebuked even Cain for his sacrifice and accepted Able.

Verse 8, "Cain told Able, his brother, and it came about when they were in the field that Cain rose up against Able, his brother, and killed him."

Point number one, I think that we might derive from this you can suffer for the sins of [08:00] others. I doubt that was Able's last thought. As he was going into eternity, but this is a fact. Able suffered because of Cain's whatever, jealousy murderous intent.

And so that is an early point-same point.

[08:30] A second point, verses 9 and following. "The Lord said to Cain, 'where is Able your brother?' he said, 'I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?' He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. Now you are cursed from the ground, which opened its' mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand when you cultivate the ground it will no longer yield its strength to you. You'll be a vagrant and a wanderer on the earth.' Cain said to the Lord, 'my punishment is too great to bear.'"

Cain is [09:00] learning too, what Adam and Eve learned in Genesis 3. You can also suffer for your own sins. I guess we should have put that one first with Genesis 3 and the consequences of sin, but certainly true in chapter 4 as well.

You can suffer for your own sins. Now already we have two options. That would lead us to ask, which is it in this current [09:30] situation.

So, we see this in Genesis 3 and 4. It is certainly true in other places. I would argue that Noah, if this 1 year in the ark, which in one way is a marvelous redemption in another way- and his family- suffering for the sins of others. If there had not been only evil always [10:00] and him finding grace in the eyes of the Lord, he would not need to be on this boat.

We could go on down the list. Hagar is mistreated by Sarah. And Hagar, although she does not- her punishment does not fit her crime. She torments Sarah a bit. And certainly we see them [10:30] suffering because of others.

Let's look at the life of Joseph in a bit of detail. Find Joseph's life in Genesis 37- 50. And he is going to make certain points at the end of his life about suffering and its purposes.

Audience: [10:55-10:59][inaudible]

[10:59] You can [11:00] suffer for the sins of others. Sarah puts her out of the household in effect for an insult with a bottle of water in the desert.

So the first time, both times, God comes to her. First time, God comes to her- well she runs away. She has been driven out, mistreated. God tells her to go back and submit.

The next time – she is pregnant [11:30] the first time.- The second time she has her son and nothing but a bottle of water. She is sent away. And God comes to her, makes a covenant with her and makes promises to her about her son.

But she has hardly been well treated. It's my point.

And notice that with out – I want to be able to say this correctly. Without saying it's alright, the Hagar [12:00] account kind of indicates not only that God works with people who are caused to suffer that this is a normal part of life.

He doesn't strike Abraham and Sarah dead for what they do. God has different plans for Isaac than he has for Ishmael -can't get away from the fact that Hagar is not asked to be bearer of Abraham's child. And yet that's the role she plays.

She does treat Sarah with contempt, [12:30] which isn't a positive thing. But she is so mistreated she flees. So you can suffer for what others do to you.

I suppose Isaac, Isaac is a peaceful man, isn't he? It's hard to treat Isaac as a warring difficult man. How many wells does he have to dig before he is allowed to live in peace? At least that's kind of minor suffer. Well I'd say there is all kinds of sufferings.

[13:00] There is also, if we wished to just keep deriving principle, we have this whole list of women Sarah and Rebecca and Rachel. What do they have in common besides they are married to patriarchs?

Audience: [13:17][Faintly] They're barren.

[13:19] Right. And it's evident from the text that it is the women, those three women that they are the ones unable to conceive.

[13:30] Because the husbands have been able to father children, otherwise. So they know they are unable to conceive. And it caused them types of suffering- emotional anguish.

You're so- just to bring some order here- Starting with causes of suffering. You can suffer for your own sin. You can suffer for the sins of others -types of suffering.

[14:00] We've already seen physical suffering. At least at the very least with women emotional suffering already in the text.

And I guess I'd make an observation at this point. If such is the case, suffering is a part of the fabric of life after Genesis 3. Now, I don't say that so we will say oh well it doesn't matter. It matters [14:30] a great deal in the scriptures.

But Paul spends sometime in the New Testament trying to help people see it's not an odd thing to suffer, period, but particularly to suffer for Christ. So, the issue is how to live and to overcome not-

I'm not sure if we spent our whole life trying to avoid suffering [15:00] that we would be successful.

Tell me Abraham and Sarah did they have financial resources, or were they broke?

Audience: [15:09-15:12][Inaudible]

[15:12] Tremendous financial resources. He could fund a private army of 318 men out of his own household. That's not bad.

[15:20][laughter]

And God promised and did bless him financially. And yet Sarah has this emotional pain. [15:30] And Abraham has this constant temptation not to believe because there is no child.

He has a little frustration, doesn't he? I don't have anybody to leave this to. I'm going to leave this to Eliezer of Damascus. You are saying, who the heck's that?

And I think that's the point.

So if you can suffer for your sins and you will sin, suffering is a part of the fabric. If you can suffer emotional strain that has nothing to do with your financial resources, [16:00] then it's part of the fabric of life.

I think the only way to get a realistic answer to suffering is to actually have a realistic view of it. We would hope for realism that doesn't lead to negativism or cynicism. A balance being we are walking in a way.

Chapter 37 of Genesis, you have some of the same [16:30] suffering going. Genesis 37:1, "Now Jacob lived in the land where his father had sojourned in the land of Canaan." It's the land of promise, you know.

"These are the records of the generations of Jacob. Joseph when 17 years of age was pasturing the flock with his brothers while he was a youth along with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wife. And Joseph brought back a bad report about them to their father."

Now a little bit of a [17:00] flashback, retrospect. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons. This does have an effect on the brothers because he was a son of his old age. And he made him…" - a translation problem- a very colored tunic- sleeved garment- full length robe, there are only a couple of usages of [17:30] this word in the Bible.

We are so used to the interpretation of it was a multicolored garment- coat of many colors- what a phrase. I believe its Tyndale's coat of many colors.

What did the coat signify?

And its importance that, growing up I heard well you know you'd be jealous [18:00] too if your brother got the better clothes.

I thought I'd have to get over it. As third brother, I was really kind of hoping- since I knew I'd get it later, anyway, I was really kind of hoping they would get nice stuff. But I understood jealousy.

However, the coat signified leadership. The person with the coat was the overseer. Joseph is not the oldest, [18:30] but because he is the oldest son of the most loved wife, Rachel, as well as the son of Jacob's old age, Jacob puts him in charge.

Not Ruben, the oldest, but Joseph. And that's why he was the one in the position to bring a report. So, [19:00] his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers and they made a choice. They hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms -could not speak to him peacefully.

Well, one of the things I always try to note in this chapter is the brothers allowed what their father did to get to them. It was not alright what their father did necessarily. But [19:30] they allowed what he did to dominate their emotions, their attitude and their decisions.

That's a choice we make. Maybe a hard choice, but they regret this later. Don't they? Have you read the story? They spend all these years regretting what they had done.

Joseph had a dream. And when he tells it they hate him all the more. He has these dreams where they are going to bow down to him. Right?

Some visions [20:00] are best kept to yourself. Treasured in your heart as the New Testament talks about. Mary kept it to herself, treasured it in her heart, or whatever else.

"You are going to rule over us?" They ask in verse 8. "Father says to your mother and your brothers to actually come bow down?" We- his father kept it in mind. He is sent as the overseer to find out about the welfare of the brothers and the flock and bring back word.

[20:30] He has to ask for directions in verse 15. They see him coming from a distance in verse 18 and they say to one another "here comes the dreamer."

And the plot is hatched. First to kill him, which I think Ruben forestalled. "Let's not take his life," verse 21. But they decide to inflict physical emotional suffering on their [21:00] brother.

And they sell him into slavery oppression –pure and simple.

Now you say well, you know he may have brought this on himself through telling those dreams. Let me remind you the punishment does not fit the crime. Bringing a bad report, telling your dreams does not equal you deserve to be kidnapped and sold into slavery.

That would be a [21:30] rather stern punishment for a child for an immature action. So, though what he did may not have been the wisest course of action, he did not deserve what happened to him.

So, we find that this is but the first of episodes where Joseph does not deserve what happens to him. He acquits himself [22:00] well as the kind of care taker of his master's household in Egypt, chapter 39.

Everything he does the Lord blesses, according to 39:03. So God is with him, according to 39:03, though in Egypt not in Canaan. God is with him- though in this sort of [22:30] trouble God is with him.

So in the Joseph account you can certainly say because we begin to ask the question what's God doing? We see what the brothers did. What's God doing?

God is with Joseph in his troubles, 39:03, He's with him. And right now, at this point in the story, you might ask what good is that?

[23:00] Well, we will continue to follow that question.

But God is with him. And God prospers him in the thing he is doing at that time.

Then as we see it is his convictions for the Lord that land him in further trouble. Why can he suffer? He could suffer for his own sins. He could suffer for the sins of others. [23:30] He could suffer, third, and maybe it is a subset of the first two they are related, third he suffers for doing the right thing.

He will not give in to the woman's wishes. So her plan having failed she causes him to suffer for doing the right thing. This is a specific example of number two, but [24:00] I still think its specific enough and different enough to list we can suffer for the sins of others, we can suffer for our own sin and we can suffer directly as a result of doing the right thing.

And that might be the point in which you are saying, well, then why do the right thing?

So we're beginning to find out that there is something more important than either I suffer. [24:30] But God is with him. And, here's the interesting thing, verse 23, after Joseph is sent to yet another prison, for doing the right thing.

Verse 23, "the chief jailor did not supervise anything under Joseph's charge because the Lord was with him." The Lord is with him in his new prison.

Now it so happens that this is the career break he's been waiting for because while in prison [25:00] chapters 40 and 41. He meets a couple of fellows. Chapter 40 in verse 5, the cup-bearer and a baker of the King of Egypt, so they both have dreams. Remember this part?

And the cup-bearer, 40 and verse 9, tells his dream there is a vine in front of me. The vine of three branches, Pharaoh's cup was in my hand. Anyway, the gist of his dream, as Joseph [25:30] interprets it to him is that you will be back in favor with Pharaoh and you'll put the cup in his hand.

And, as you know, cup-bearer had to be fairly trusted because he would be the one tasting poison. I don't know how they did their job. I doubt they gulped the line down before-

When the baker sees that it is favorable he offers his dream, too. And Joseph tells him, well your dream means you're going to lift your head off your shoulders and the birds of the air they are gonna hang- the birds are going to pick around at your body.

[26:00] So at least we find out that Joseph has maintained a sense of integrity and honesty. He is not just interpreting dreams to suit people.

He asks the cup-bearer, please do remember me. But he forgets him.

Verse 23 of chapter 40 "at the chief cup-bearer did not remember Joseph, but forgot." It is not until Pharaoh has his dreams that Joseph is remembered by the cup-bearer.

[26:30] He is brought in. He interrupts the dreams. You know the story. And he is made, basically, prime minister of Egypt.

Pharaoh recognizes that God has told him the dreams and that he is wise and deserving.

Chapter 41 in verse 46, Joseph was 30 years old when he stood before Pharaoh. It may well be he has endured the 13 years, or a decade or more of suffering. [27:00] At 17, remember when he was- in Chapter 37, he is 30 in chapter 41, so those are markers for us.

Joseph settles down in Egypt. And in 41:51 he is having children. 51 he names his first born Manasseh for he said God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father's household.

Ephraim is the [27:30] second name because, fruitfulness because God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction. See what he says? In the land of my affliction God has made me fruitful.

So that he neither says I haven't been afflicted, he understands he has been afflicted, but he sees that God has been with him and caused him to prosper in his land of affliction.

And he thinks that [28:00] the emotional pain of memory has been eased and erased. The Lord has made me to forget the troubles and my father's household. And that sounds so sweet and so permanent and so restful.

Then you get chapter 42. And everything he had forgot is going to come back to see him. This too is an interesting tendency in life. [28:30] That just about the time you have forgotten or think you have, something will cause to remember to see if you truly, truly have dealt with this situation or if you are willing to operate in a godly fashion.

Jacob has lost none of his energy. We know there is going to be a famine, 42:01. "Why are you staring at one another?" He says to the boy [28:57] [laughing] to his grown sons. Why are you standing [29:00] around looking at each other? Why don't you do something? We need food.

In 41 and 42, we have now found another source of suffering- natural disasters, famine. So you can say they've suffered. You can suffer for your own sins. You can suffer for sins and the oppressions of others. You can suffer because you did [29:30] the right thing. You can suffer because of what we call natural disasters famine, earthquake, flood, but it's a famine here.

And here is Jacob needing grain, and he didn't do anything, did he? He's just an old man who wants to make sure the clan is fed. But famine brings it on.

So, this becomes.- Some other things haven't changed. [30:00] He sends the ten brothers, who are basically heads of many clans of their own, you guys are suppose to be leaders. You go down and figure out how to get us some food.

He won't send Benjamin. The only other son of the most loved wife. When Joseph meets the brothers he is faced with what is probably his toughest ethical dilemma. This [30:30] is about his character, right?

What will he do to the people who caused him to suffer?

He doesn't immediately say you guys are family, oh, good to see you. He tells them they must bring this brother, Benjamin. Find out that there is one brother they've held back. It's the one he is most interested in. It is his full [31:00] brother.

But they have to leave one behind, right? So they leave Simeon behind as a hostage. Joseph does not trust them to come back with Benjamin intact. That's pretty clear.

Does he ask early on about his father? Yeah, he says in 42:13 the father is still alive. I don't know if [31:30] Joseph believes that or not. But it seems like his first plan is to get Benjamin with him where he will be safe. That's my theory.

They come back with Benjamin. This is an emotional moment for Joseph. And then he tries to get rid of the brothers, right?

[32:00] He imprisons Benjamin on a false charge. And he plants stuff on him.

[32:06][Laughing]

It seems like what he wants the brothers to do is just leave. But they won't. Will they? They won't go. Finely they say if you do this you are going to bring- chapter 44, he just can't get this done.

[32:30] It's Judah talking, chapter 33, at the end of the speech, "now, therefore, please let your servant remain instead of the lad enslaved to my Lord and let the lad go with his brothers for how shall I go up to my father if the lad is not with me? For fear I see the evil that will over take my father." Then Joseph could not control himself.

The brothers have changed a bit. They won't leave Benjamin there. [33:00] They are no longer satisfied to let the favorite son go. Or send him away or leave him in slavery.

But notice what he says in 45:3, "I am Joseph. Is my father still alive?" His brothers could not answer him as they were dismayed in his presence. Talk about your worst nightmare coming true.

[33:24][Laughing]

In the story it even says [33:30] that at one time they say in Joseph's presence I told you we shouldn't have sold the boy into slavery. We're being punished for it. It's coming back to haunt us. See they never forgot this.

Another way you can suffer is –is- is constant regret brought on by your own sin. See they never forgot. And they weren't fully trustful until the end. Were they?

Here is the thing they knew. They wouldn't trust them. They knew they weren't fully trust worthy people and that's a problem. [34:00] When Joseph said to his brothers please come closer to me they came closer to me. And they said I'm your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. In other words, he is not saying what you did was alright or wasn't right. That is important to see.

Forgiveness doesn't necessarily mean being oblivious to what happened. Verse 5, "now do not be greed or angry with yourself because you sold me or for God sent me before you to preserve life."

He understands what's happened now. He says [34:30] we've got 5 more years of famine.

Verse 7, "God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth and to keep you alive by a great deliverance." Or by literally a great escaped company.

"Now, therefore, it was not you that sent me here, but God." Its quiet the confession. And he has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler of all the land of Egypt."

He says to go get the father, come back. [35:00] We will take care- I will take care of you. And so they –its interesting verse 15, "he kissed all his brothers, wept on them and after words his brothers talked with him."

Now, Joseph's confession is God sent me here to preserve life. His argument is, and we'll have to see if it is going to be a universal Biblical principle.

[35:30] There was a purpose for my suffering. There was a purpose for it.

And there was a divine purpose in it. And there was a good purpose in it. An operating theory I have from this point on in the scripture is God makes suffering purposeful, gives it purpose by making it redemptive.

[36:00] By redemptive, I mean, not you are saved through suffering, in other words, or that you redeem other people by your suffering. But you help others through your witness or through your activity. This is what makes suffering redemptive.

Suffering has a potential to build [36:30] your faith, serve the witness to others, help others. I say potential because I continue to wrestle with the issue of human responsibility.

There is a sense in which you can treat suffering as nothing more than a bad idea. Nothing more than a terrible event. Nothing more than an empty era in your life or you can understand that God has [37:00] made suffering with the potential to build your faith, to be a witness to others or to actually help someone in the midst of your suffering.

His testimony is to the brothers that made him suffer, you meant it, you sent me here, you sold me here, but really it was God who sent me here to preserve life.

This is the interesting tension [37:30] you get in this story and in all of Biblical suffering accounts. It wasn't alright what they did. They sinned, but this was part of God's plan for preserving life.

Let us understand that this is not all that God could have done. But it is what God did. And there is much about this story that I don't know. For instance, I don't know what that famine was doing in [38:00] the lives of all the Egyptians.

Again, when I say I'm not omniscient, I'm not even omniscient when I read the revelation. God transcends his own revelation. He's greater than what he tells us. But the fact is I don't know a whole lot. I don't know how else this famine and these circumstances were punishing others, blessing others I don't know. I just don't know.

But in this case, this is what it says, [38:30] God tells Jacob, in chapter 46, to go on down to see his son, that God will go with him. This also fulfills what God said in Genesis 15, doesn't it? They will go down. Eventually they will be oppressed. And they will be brought out.

In Genesis 50, when Jacob [39:00] dies and they burry him; the brothers concoct a story that says, "our father said to forgive us." Verse 19, chapter 50 and verse 20 and 21, very important. Joseph said "do not be afraid for am I in God's place?"

His attitude was this has been part of God's plan. My suffering, [39:30] which was a result of your sin, had a redemptive purpose and by faith Joseph choices to accept it that way.

Verse 20, "and that it is God's place to determine these things-" Added for you- you meant evil, but if you ask me, God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result to preserve many people alive. Therefore, don't be afraid. I will provide for you and your little ones."

So he comforted [40:00] them and spoke kindly to them. Now then, you meant it for evil, but God meant it for good to bring about this present result. So, that they are all safe, that they are alive and that God would preserve the family and make it grow, so that in Exodus 1, the very next chapter, they have multiplied a great deal.

[40:30] By Exodus 1, Abraham certainly has descendents. But the suffering he endured was real was brought upon him by someone else, but was used for God and by God for redemptive purpose and Joseph accepted it as such.

[41:00] And his response is very, very important. We could argue in the abstract and say was this the only way God could have preserved them? No. Was this the only way God could have built up Joseph's faith? No. But it is the way He choice to do so.

And this is what happened.

So I'd like to think the[41:30] test question I've set for you is to pick three examples, one from the law, one from the prophets and one from the writings of suffering and Joseph might be one you choose. You could also in the plenitude the people of God themselves.

Exodus 2:23, "it came about in the course of those many days that the king of Egypt died and the sons of Israel sighed because of their bondage. And they cried out and they cried for help because their bondage rose up to God, so God heard their groaning and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. [42:00] God saw the sons of Israel and God took notice of them."

Which is our sign that what God said in Genesis 15 is also coming true? That after the 400 years they will be brought out. We must read Exodus 1 and 2 in light of Genesis 15. What has been said and what God has been doing for these 400 years.

And I would argue part of what Israel was doing [42:30] was suffering outside of the land that was their own because of the sins of the Amorites were not yet complete.

Here's on odd fact of life. Sometimes you will not receive a ministry or a promotion or whatever we are talking about now because, let's be positive for a moment; the good ministry is not complete [43:00] yet. Let's also be negative, the sins of the Amorites are not yet complete.

So, I end at that point. Since you're not omniscient you know its one possibility, however, that you are currently suffering and not receiving the next step because somebody else is not yet [43:30] done sinning.

God is giving them a chance. I don't know how much comfort that gives you. It's one of the options. And it's important for us to be right with God so that we sin. And I say okay if you are currently in a rough situation, say, okay, well, am I suffering because of my own sins?

Well, you check that out and you really without any arrogant you pray the same read through the scriptures, you do whatever you do and you realize, well, no I can't tell what I'm suffering because [44:00] I sinned.

Am I suffering for a misjudgment, maybe? Either misjudgment or a lack of knowing what question to ask or a need. Well, I entered into a ministry and I- now I know to ask them, but because of other needs and because, maybe, you hadn't been through it before you didn't ask that question, but that's not a sin.

Let me be clear. That's not a sin. There is a difference between [44:30] a mistake or a lack of experience or just assuming the best about people, which is also a mistake [44:38][laughing], that's not a sin, maybe that's what caused it.

But once you're done with that and you say am I suffering for the sins of others? Yes, I can see that. Or am I suffering so that somebody else might have a chance to repent?

I don't know that, but that's an option. And you may [45:00] find out later that's exactly what happened. If so, just know, not as a point of pride, but as a point of purpose, that your suffering was in effect on behave of others, so that they might have a chance.

And that your attitude towards your suffering now, what should your attitude be? Or what did Joseph do? He did what the Lord called him to do at that point in time. Right?

[45:30] If it was be the head guy in prison, fine. If it was to interpret a dream, fine. But it amounted to 13 years of doing the right thing. And that's sobering. And for most of us it would not result in 3,700 years of renown.

But what was Joseph's attitude when Potiphar's wife tempted him? I can't do this. And sin against my master and against my God.

[46:00] There is some higher purpose than suffering and the avoidance of it. So that tells me there is dignity in suffering.

There is purpose in it. So Joseph's case is not the most extreme nor the most negative in the scriptures. For instance, in the prophets, [46:30] let us at least begin the discussion of our friend Jeremiah.

We have a couple of others I'll mention, but we'll start with Jeremiah. Jeremiah 1, let's start with his call.

In the first three verses you are given the historical summary. And what it tells you is that Jeremiah prophet from 627 B.C. to 587 B.C. [47:00] Because it's the 13th year of Josiah which was about 627 down to the exile of Jerusalem which is 587, you've got 40 year ministry and a little bit beyond that.

You have in his ministry Josiah's reform, Josiah's death, Jehoiakim, two smaller exiles [47:30] and then the final one. Let us suggest that these are difficult times to work.

Historically politically if –your- he was going to minister for the Lord during this era, I don't think he could avoid suffering. He is told to preach God's word in verses 4 through 10. That he's a prophet to Israel and to the kingdoms Judah and to the kingdoms.

[48:00] God is making him a prophet of plucking up and breaking down and destroying, overthrowing, but also building and planting.

Basically he is preaching judgment. According to verses 11 to 16, so you have Jeremiah's times in the first 3 verses. You have Jeremiah's message in verses 4 to 16. Now verses 17 to 19, "now gird up your loins and [48:30] arise or get ready for –er- work and arise. Speak to them all that I commend you. Do not be dismayed before them or I will dismay you before them."

You have a choice. You're going to be dismayed. Don't be dismayed or you won't be protected. You can't be afraid of these people or your fear- don't be afraid of them or they will make you afraid.

Now behold I've made you today is a fortified city and a pillar of iron and walls of bronze against the whole land. [49:00] To the kings of Judah to its' princes to its' priests and to the people of the land.

That's quiet the audience, isn't it? Whose that leave? If you need to be fortified against the kings, the officials, the priests and the people, what's that leave, small animals?

They will fight against you, but they will not overcome you for I am with you to deliver you. But from his call, [49:30] praise God this is not everybody's call, but his call is that he will minister in very difficult times, the first 3 verses, because those are difficult times. In 4 through 16 he will give a difficult message. And verses 17 to 19 he's going to have a difficult life.

This is his call. Isaiah was told they wouldn't believe his message. That he would only have a remnant, but he [50:00] wasn't promised constant opposition.

Ezekiel was promised that he was going to preach to a stubborn people, but he wasn't promised this kind of threats and opposition.

Jeremiah was and that's from the start. That's the call. I'll remind you of a New Testament verse that this reminds me of. Acts 9:16, "God tells Ananias, who is just a little reluctant to go help Saul of Tarsus to become a Christian. [50:30] He's basically saying, God are you sure? Are you sure this guy has been redeemed? God says yes, you go and verse 16 of chapter 9, "I have shown him how much he must suffer for my sake."

Suffering is a part of the call of the Apostle Paul from the start. And he has caused others to suffer so he understands the kind of suffering that's going to be put upon him. God has shown him how much he must now suffer for God's sake.

Jeremiah's gotten [51:00] this call. In chapters 11 to 20, Jeremiah offers 5 confessions to God. 5 Laments and complaints to God. Over what? Well, chapter 11 and 12 the people of his home town threaten to kill him.

I would count that as suffering- persecution. He's imprisoned, isn't he? [51:30] By chapter 20, he is put in stocks. And he complains to the Lord that he didn't want to be a prophet, but God made him and everyone is against him.

Here we are chapter 20 verse 8, "for each time I speak I cry out, I proclaim violence and destruction because for me the word of the Lord is resulted in reproach and derision [52:00] all day long. But if I say I will not remember him or speak anymore his name."

In other words, he says I can put a stop to this. I can just shut my name. "Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire. Shut up in my bones, I am weary of holding it in. I can't endure it. For I've heard the whispering of many terror on every side. Denounce him, yes, let's denounce him. All my trusted friends watching for my fail say perhaps you'll be deceived so they may prevail against him. And take our revenge [52:30] upon him."

Now he says the Lord has protected me. But again, protection has meant this "my trusted friends, the people of my hometown have tried to kill me. People are waiting to see me fall, they are whispering against me. They are plotting against me." When I try to stop speaking, God makes me speak. This is my life.

God has protected me, but I've needed it. The good news is [53:00] God is protecting me. The bad news is, man, I've needed it.

So, to say that God is with me as he was with Joseph, as we saw with Joseph, does not mean that there was no trouble. Both of them were promised God's presence, I'll be with you, or God was with him. And it's true. But my- it's needed.

This is Jeremiah's life. How [53:30] does his life end? Well, he, again, more persecution -more imprisonment. You'd think as an old man whose word had always come true, he would be left alone, but no.

After the Babylonians conquered Jerusalem, some of the ones left think it to be a good idea to kill the military governor. Why they think this is a good idea, I'm not sure. Maybe they think they'll start a guerilla action that will eventually lead to their freedom. It's hard to say.

[54:00] But when they kill the governor- as you- in oh- I often ask you to be specific on your exams- chapter 41 the military governors murdered. Chapter 42, the people come to Jeremiah to give sort to the Lord. Should we flee to Egypt or not? We've done this stupid thing, should we flee or not?

He says not. They say we're going to flee [54:30] not only that, we're going to take you with us. Now apparently thought he was some kind of magic charm. I don't know why they thought this. As long as we've got Jeremiah around, God won't do any harm to us.

That hasn't been borne out by history so far. God has delivered him, he hadn't delivered all them. So where does Jeremiah end up? But Egypt. [55:00] He is displaced. He is, in fact, kidnapped and dragged off made to go. I doubt he puts up a huge fight. He is an old man by this time.

An older man, anyway, so he goes. He preaches God's word in Egypt, but this is not where he would like to be. He just purchased land in Judah, didn't he? Remember that one? Buys land when the Babylonians are about to conquer, I know he got a good deal, but –

[55:27][laughter]

He was investing in Israel's future. [55:30] This is his life. Preaches one more sermon in Egypt, chapter 44. Is there any sense in which they believe him? No. He has been right all along, but he's not ever been listened to.

How many converts does he have? In the text we are told of 2. An Ethiopian named Ebed-melech, who helps [56:00] get him out of the pit and his friend Baruch who means blessed. He doesn't feel too blessed. And what does God say in Jeremiah 45 because God has a message for Baruch he has been groaning and the Lord has been adding pain.

45:04, "thus you're to say to him behold thus says the Lord what I've built I'm about to tear down what I've planted I'm about to uproot. That's the whole land. But you are you seeking great things for yourself?"

[56:30] "Don't seek them. Behold I'm going to bring disaster on all flesh, but I'll give you your life as your booty in all the places where you may go. Seeking great things for yourself? Don't seek them. I the Lord have been forced to tear down all I've built up." You think you feel bad? I think the creator feels as deeply.

As I've said before, only God has the guts to do what has to be done. And He just says I have built this up and now I've got to tear it [57:00] down. You're seeking great things for yourself? Don't seek them.

He has been a faithful man and that's enough. So, notice that Baruch got to be involved in the sufferings of Jeremiah as well. He thought he hitched himself to a prophetic star, maybe.

Is God with Jeremiah? Yes. Does he deliver Jeremiah? Yes. Is Jeremiah faithful in his suffering? Yes. Does he preach the word of God? [57:30] Yes, even with reluctance. He does it. Even knowing it will bring further suffering to him he does it.

Is it redemptive for Baruch and Ebed-melech? Yes. For you and me? Yes. For the people of his day, however, it was condemnation. The same word that brought grace to Ebed-melech and to Baruch and to us brought condemnation [58:00] to those who refused it.

So understand that those are somewhat important, I think. Oh well. This is a bit about Jeremiah. And his call to suffering and we will pick it up with the writings with Job.

I mean I don't even know if we have time to do laments and Ruth. [58:30] And I want to get to Lamentations a bit because it is the most graphic description of severe suffering you have in the Bible. And it has all types of the suffering involved.

Jeremiah suffered physically emotionally spiritually he suffered loss of friendship loss of family. There is no [59:00] indication he wanted to be single all his life. God called him to it.

This is to say nothing of Hoshea. The very fabric of his ministry had suffering written into it. [59:17] [Inaudible word] To expound God's grace. To live it out and make an object lesson of it. And there are some of these people that if we ever met them in heaven we ought to stick out our hand and say you [59:30] know you endured a lot and we appreciate it.

But these things are not unusual. We've already talked about David, we've talked about –oh well. You have suffered enough.

If you have questions, we will start with them next time.

Chapter 18

Hurting (part 2)

In the writings we have more examples of people who suffer to serve, maybe more because the last recipients of biblical revelation in the Old Testament were people either in exile or who were not able to govern their own affairs.

But you see Job [00:30], and in Chapter One of Job all the possible causes of suffering we've already seen, plus at least one, are involved. He suffers for the sins of the Chaldeans who raid his property. He suffers natural disaster. [01:00] He suffers emotional pain. He suffers in all these different ways.

Plus we find out that there is a metaphysical source of suffering, not just your own sins, not just the sins of others, not just for doing good, not just for redemptive purpose, but there is a metaphysical [01:30] cause. There is evil out there. And I don't know all of what to say about it, and if I did say a lot, it would probably still be a – a very, very incomplete picture.

But there's an adversary, a Satan, whose role seems to be to accuse, to condemn and harm. Satan's role in Job, his – his desire to harm is [02:00] limited by God's permission. That's the good news. The bad news in Job's case was he was permitted to do quite a bit.

I will state my opinion from the very beginning. How is Job's suffering redemptive? It is for all of us who read and for all of those friends of his who came and saw and dialogued and found what God – it is as [02:30] a long-time testimony that God is worth serving because God is in control of creation even when it seems that He is not. That seems to be the thrust of God's speech at the end of the book.

This too must be received by faith, because it does not always seem so that God is in control of the creation that He created [03:00] and that He has a purpose. That's what Job was called upon to believe.

He finds out in the end of his book in chapters 38 to 42 that God cares enough to come and respond. He responds to Job's pain. He responds to Job's questions. He largely responds with creation theology, but He still knows how to handle the exigencies of the universe. He is still handling things and Job [03:30] is reassured of that, and Job believes.

And our biblical witness already has been that God is with him, that there is redemptive purpose for it, that this can indeed be a witness to others, and Job chooses to receive it that way. But Job asks some probing questions, and he makes some accusatory statements [04:00] about God. And yet when the book is over, what does God say of Job, or rather to the friends? "Job needs to pray for you because you have not spoken well of me as has my servant Job."

They acted as if the way God ran the universe was as follows: You always get what's coming to you, so if you are suffering, it is because [04:30] you've sinned. That's the way God runs the universe.

They also said – they asked a question with the expectation of a negative answer: Can a man be justified before God? Their answer was no. This is not God's answer biblically. So they also seemed to argue that God [05:00] is impersonal. He will not come, He will not speak, He will not answer.

Job's answer is different: He could if He would, but He hasn't. And then God answers. Job said even if God kills me, I'll believe in Him. I know my redeemer lives. He will vindicate me. He refused to believe that you always get what you [05:30] deserve in life, partly because he was observant.

He said I've seen plenty of sinners die fat with their family all around. So Job, having heard the friends say the – only the evil sufferer – you are suffering, you must be evil. He said I see that the wicked prosper. You're prospering, you must be wicked. That's what he says to his friends, so two can play at this game.

If we're just going to talk about what we've observed, he said, we come [06:00] to an inconclusive point. We don't know what's going, so we need God to tell us. We need God's revelation.

And so Job believed that God vindicated the righteous and God does justify, He does vindicate, He does redeem. And Job is vindicated. He is rebuked to believe in the God of [06:30] creation, trusting, and he is worthy of this trust.

But God never says to him, now, Job, I'm about to tell you why you suffered. Let me recite to you chapters 1 and 2 of a book that's gonna come under your name.

Job is asked to receive by faith some of the principles we've already outlined. And again, with appreciation, we can know from Job that just because we're suffering, [07:00] it may not be because of our sins. There may be a greater purpose to it. There may be a purpose of witness to it.

If no one else learned, Job's first four friends did, didn't they? Have we ever thought that our suffering might have an instructive purpose to the good people around us? It's easy to criticize Job's friends. There's so much to criticize, but when he was hurting [07:30] and when he was harmed, they did come to see him.

They got thrown by some of the things he said. Their theology wasn't all intact, but they did come. They cared enough to show up and to sit with him and to be appalled at what had happened to him, so let's give them their due.

But even people like that sometimes need to be instructed, and our suffering may have a purpose in that. And keep it in mind the next time you see your friend suffering, it may not be because they did something stupid or wrong.

[08:00] One reason some friends of mine have stated that they no longer attend certain meetings of the Southern Baptist Church and Convention is that they got tired of going to meetings and being told if you were doing the right thing, your church would be bigger. If you'd just follow certain methods everything will be better and all right.

Well, don't get me wrong, there are plenty of us dunderheads in ministry, but I've seen some awfully faithful people pound away at it for year after year [08:30] after year, faithful, seasons of blessing, seasons of torment [chuckles], but their faithfulness was not the problem in their numerical church growth.

So the theology of Job's friends is all around you. It's out there. Not only that, some hurting people have accepted that theology and so they're in trouble. Their [09:00] kid lies in the funeral home because of a bad choice or somebody left them or abandoned them or did this or did that and the other, and they are certain they must have done Thing A that led to Thing B.

So Job has a host of things to help you: a theology of suffering, yes, a theology of friendship, yes, some concerns about how to handle [09:30] the hurting and deal with them. Asking the right sort of questions,

you can learn a lot from Job about ministry, but the truth about Job was he found out he could suffer for reasons beyond his control that were really metaphysical.

It had to do with God, it had to do with Satan, and if you think it was difficult for me to explain the first three or four types of suffering and sources of them, and we can observe them, this one is the hardest of all. We have the least [10:00] information about it, though there is information in the Bible.

So Job learned some of these things. A happier ending, though, Ruth, Naomi, described the suffering for me. Ruth Chapter 1, what happens to Naomi? What are some of her woes?

Audience Member: [10:25] A disaster.

[10:30] One's a natural disaster. That's the first thing that happened.

Audience Member: [10:31] Famine.

[10:32] Famine. What else then you got?

Audience Member: [10:34] [Inaudible].

[10:35] So she's displaced because of the famine. Next –

Audience Members: [10:40] She loses her husband and sons.

[10:42] Husband, sons. She endures death. For her in that setting to have lost her husband and sons means she's lost what? She's alone, and she's lost what besides family?

Audience Members: [10:53] [Inaudible] security.

[10:54] Right, finances. Social security.

Woman: [11:00] [Chuckles].

Man: [11:01] Hmm.

[11:02] She's got a few problems there, doesn't she?

Woman: [11:03] Uh-hmm.

[11:04] I once heard a sermon criticizing her for being bitter at the end of that chapter.

Woman: [11:09] [Chuckles].

[11:10] Now I'm not saying that was her best moment when she says don't call me pleasant, Naomi, call me Marah, bitter, but let's be serious here. She had some reasons. And let's also be serious: She comes out of it.

[11:30] And Ruth doesn't berate her for her attitude, commits herself to her and to her God. Ruth 1 is a conversion story of a gentile. She sides with Naomi and with her people and with her God. Maybe she sides with her people and with her God because of Naomi. So Ruth does that.

And of course, [12:00] Ruth herself has lost homeland, family, husband, and out of commitment and loyalty she attaches herself to a woman she's not strictly related to and in a relationship that historically throughout the centuries has not always been the closest.

Audience Members: [12:27] [Laughter].

[12:30] For a variety of reasons. God, see – Boyd Luter, L-U-T-E-R, Boyd Luter has this book called "The God Behind the Seen," S-E-E-N, but there's no overt statements about what God is doing except in the blessings offered in this book. May the Lord bless you and do all this and keep you and – and it comes about [13:00] that Boaz becomes the solution to the problem, and in the meantime his life gets better, too.

So I've laughed and said the joy of Ruth is that the story line is old guy gets girl.

Audience Members: [13:18] [Laughter] [inaudible].

[13:22] Solves everybody's problems, everybody's needs, and Ruth bears a son [13:30], puts into Naomi's lap, why? To show her that her future is secure. It's as if the child has been borne by Naomi.

So then you say, well, this is – this is a happy ending, but never forget the death of the three was no small matter. The famine was no small [14:00] matter. And not only that, I doubt that all the problems were over. In what era did they live?

Men: [14:05] [Inaudible].

[14:07] Thank you very much. Those were not easy times to live now, were they? So God works with them in this. In a little-known book [members chuckle] that I am spending a lot of [14:30] time with these days because of an assignment [members chuckle], Lamentations comes after Jeremiah in the English Bible but is in the writings in the Hebrew bible.

I hate to be critical because I know Jason's already found two more typos in my book [members chuckle]. Don't want to be too critical of the editors, but I'm gonna say Lamentations is so little read, so far it's the only book in my Bible that is misspelled [15:00] by the editors. I – I first saw this, I laughed cuz – and you know this is – you know, they had to be embarrassed – the Laminations [laughter].

There's old plastic Jeremiah, boy. Laminations [laughter]. It's spelled right in all the headings, but see, this is why I say always proofread your headings first. Smart alecks like me tend to see it [laughter] and Jason found a heading wrong in my book, try to [15:30] get it fixed.

This book is written in the aftermath of 587 and the destruction and it starts with how lonely sits the city that was full of people. She's become like a widow who was once great among the nation. She who was a princess among the provinces has become a forced laborer.

She weeps bitterly in the night, her tears are on her cheeks [16:00], and it goes on. Weeping and terror. Now why? Verse 18 of Chapter 1: "The Lord is righteous, for I have rebelled against His command. Hear now all peoples and behold my pain. My virgins and my young men have gone into captivity. I called to my lovers, but they deceived me. My priests and my elders perished in the city while they sought food to restore their strength themselves."

Woman: [16:26] [Inaudible].

[16:30] Literally, it's lovers.

Woman: [16:32] Wow.

[16:33] In actuality, it's an interpretation. The allies is a correct interpretation of who the lovers are. Remember in Jeremiah, and there are also passages in Ezekiel where Israel said you – you acted like a prostitute except you didn't charge and you called your lovers in? And the lovers are people like Egypt and Assyria and folks like that?

So instead of [17:00] trusting in God, they trusted in these other nations and the Bible also calls them the lovers. So the one's a literal translation; the other one's a – a correct interpretation of it.

Man: [17:09] Where – where's that other thing [inaudible] [17:10]?

[17:11] Oh, Jeremiah 2 to 6 has it. Ezekiel has three of these passages, 16, 20 and 23, where they take in the lovers. Ezekiel gets really graphic.

Woman: [17:24] Uh-hmm.

[17:26] That's one to watch your life verse on, you know, be careful [laughter].

[17:30] But I mean it's extraordinary, but the lovers are the ones – here she's like a widow. She's supposed to be – there – there are a lot of these metaphors just keep turning and mixing in, but Israel's supposed to be married to God and yet they gave themselves to all these other nations and these other gods and they can't save you.

Verse 20: "See, oh Lord, for I'm in distress. My spirit is greatly troubled. My heart is overturned within me, for I have been very rebellious." [18:00] She is suffering for her own sins. Is the pain still horrible? Sometimes – and this is where I can talk about innocent suffering a lot. Sometimes in our own life and that of others, whether we're observing, teaching, doing whatever, and it's best to warn people before it's an issue. Sometimes we must suffer a great deal for what we've done because of what we've put into motion.

Audience Members: [18:27] Hmm.

[18:30] This is frightening. Some of our sins have relatively – this is again relatively – minor implications to ourselves and to others. Others are far-reaching and horrible. Some of them leave you like David at Absalom's death. "Oh, Absalom, my son, my son, would that I had died for you."

[19:00] He knew his own mistakes and failures had led to this. The implications of David's sins and failures were borne out right before his eyes. It's a horrible thing, and so Israel, what she did led to terrible pain.

Chapter [19:30] 2 is a great deal like Chapter 1. Chapter 3 is really the crux of the book. The first 18 verses of Chapter 3 is talking about how this individual – Verse 1 starts, "I'm the man who has seen affliction." Sounds like an old Albert Brumley song.

Woman: [19:57] Uh-hmm.

[20:00] "I'm a man of constant sorrow." He says in Verse 3, "God has turned His hand against me." Verse 7, "... made my chain heavy." You just read all that. I mean this is sorrow, this is woe, this is pain.

Verse 18, he concludes it: "So I say my strength has perished and so has my hope from the Lord." Verse 19: "Remember my affliction and my wandering." What do you do when this is the truth? He prays to God. He prays to the [20:30] one who has laid this upon him.

"Remember my affliction, my wandering, the wormwood and the bitterness. Surely my soul remembers and is bowed down within me, but this I recall to my mind. Therefore, I have hope. The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail."

Now here's someone sitting around a devastated city in which people are starving to death, people have been killed [21:00] and raped and murdered, mothers have eaten their children, and he says, "Even if we've sunk this low, even if our actions have led to this" – and again, this is different than knowing that

someone else has come against you for no – they know that in some manner their actions have led to a chain of events that have ended with this.

So [21:30] it wasn't just one thing and, wham, it happened to them. This is a series of events that they set in motion that, here, this is the end product.

Remember we talked about Zedekiah yesterday, the last king of Judah? How by refusing to do, eventually he was able to make the following trade: He traded losing the government for a [sic.] absolutely devastated city and himself having his sons hung and his eyes put out.

He traded bad for worse and worse and worse. [22:00] Talk – this guy – this – uh, I knew a preacher in Missouri who came to Missouri in a pretty good car. Two car trades later, he was on foot [laughter].

You know, we know what can happen, but – and this is a serious issue for him, so at the bottom, you remember God's compassions never fail. Kind of reminds you of the prodigal son, doesn't it?

He came to himself and remembered [22:30] things about his father. "The Lord's loving kindnesses indeed never cease. His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness. 'The Lord is my portion,' says my soul. Therefore, I have hope in Him. The Lord is good to those who wait for Him, to the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently for the salvation of the Lord."

"It is good" – notice all the good – "It is good for a man that he should bear [23:00] the yoke in his youth. Let him sit alone and be silence [sic.] since He has laid it on him. Let him put his mouth in dust. Perhaps there is hope. Let him give cheek to the smiter. Let him be filled with reproach, for the Lord will not reject forever."

This is hope. And you'd say, oh my, what a severe mercy that is. Yes, it is. Particularly for those who are suffering for their sins, but even those – this might be one of the points we're talking about from Valerie's ministry at that church [23:30]. You can take the worst sort of sin that would cause – you just name whatever you think the worst sort of sin is.

I know it's been a sensation in the country, this woman who drowned her children. Everybody's been shocked by the notion that anything, even depression, if that's what caused it, would drive somebody to that. Or just out of personal actions.

Now, whatever [24:00] we find to be to us the most heinous act, even at the bottom, the Lord's compassion doesn't fail. So if that's the case, much less for someone who is suffering for their sins in a lesser manner.

See, if that's true – we argue from the greater to the lesser – if it's true and God could forgive Saul of Tarsus – he says, "I persecuted the church. I'm the greatest of sinners. [24:30] God saved me to demonstrate how great His grace is."

If that's true, he's saying – he says it other places. Some of us were blasphemers, some of us were this, some of us were that. If it's true, then how much more truer is it if you are suffering for something that does not entail those sorts of consequences?

"God's compassion never fails. Great is his faithfulness." However, [25:00] the book of Lamentations, there's one other point I'd make and make it from Chapter 4 cuz it talks about children being eaten by their mothers, it talks about the weak, suffering, people without resources. Chapter 5 talks about horrors such as rape and other sorts of atrocities.

[25:30] So there are those who suffer for the sins of others and can suffer horribly. It's at this point that we realize that they offer testimony of the horrors of sin. At the very least, and there's much more to say, and they are demonstrating to the world what sin is and what it's like.

And [26:00] the world doesn't want to look at it that way. We hardly ever look and see, uh, this is what people are capable of. It shows us something my grandfather illustrated if you'll permit me one expletive. I want to quote it exactly. It kind of loses its force unless I do it [laughter].

I was talking to him and I can only remember the subject, but it was about someone who had done something that was pretty bad, and [26:30] I was saying this and that, and he said, "Yeah, but one of these days you'll learn, boy, that some people are no damn good."

There is that. Yes, there is depression. Yes, there is mental illness. And then there are cruel, horrible people who show us what we are capable of. This is a terrible [27:00] realization, but back to what we need to understand.

Lamentations would show us that even if we are at the very bottom of suffering because of our sins, maybe we're still – we're at the bottom and what we have done is causing other people to suffer greatly. Is there hope in the Lord then? Is there faithfulness of God to count on then? The answer is yes.

What is the remedy [27:30] at that point? So whereas Job gives us evidence that if you're not suffering for your sins, the Lord has a purpose in it and the Lord has a way out of it. Lamentations would show us the same thing.

In a way it says to us if you are not motivated by passages of blessing and consequence like Deuteronomy 27 and 28, let me show you the consequences of sin. [28:00] Let me show you clear to the bottom of it. But let me show you that at the bottom there is the faithfulness of God. To those who turn to Him, there is a remedy.

So Lamentations is a sobering book, but if you understand the depth of it, the next time you sing "Great is Thy Faithfulness," I think it'll mean a little bit more [28:30] to you.

Also, when you have need of a serious lament, the typical psalm won't do. The Lamentations are there. I've been very interested in doing Lamentations research, that at the end of his life in 1563 John Calvin offered 18 lectures on the book of Lamentations and his written pages run nearly 300 pages. [29:00] Calvin understood suffering.

He had endured it, he had caused it, and I think he understood it. But a lot of times we read this and we turn away. We can't stand to look at it and – or we just read it and say, hoo, that was bad, 587, that was a rough time. Or we only know a couple of the verses.

We are correct to point out Lamentations 3, [29:30] 21, 22 and 23 as the heart of the book, the hope of the book, but don't forget the depth, and don't forget that the book ends with a prayer, Verse 19, "You, oh Lord, rule forever. Your throne is from generation to generation."

This Verse 19 of Chapter 5 sounds like Psalm 90. "Why do you forget us forever? Why do you forsake us so long? Restorest ye, oh Lord, that we may be restored. Renew our days as of old unless you have utterly [30:00] rejected us and are exceedingly angry with us."

And there's no way to really translate exceedingly angry. You'd – you'd think, well, duh [laughter], read the book. It – it's hard to translate. You – basically said unless you just have no more use for us.

And we know that's not the truth. Sometimes you have to get clear to the bottom of your theology before you understand. You say, okay, does God cast off his people? No. Okay, so that from the bottom rung where you are, that's [30:30] where you start.

I once so got discouraged with the concept of church that I had to start with the gates of Hell won't prevail against it.

Woman: [30:35] [Inaudible].

[30:36] Do you believe that or not?

Woman: [30:37] [Inaudible].

[30:38] Well, okay, I'm willing to believe that. Let me start up [laughter]. But that was the basement. You either had to believe that or there wasn't any point. And so you start at the basement here, is God's wrath a rejection? No. Okay, so they can pray to him and they can know that Chapter [31:00] 3, the heart of that's true, but still, how long is the question that we don't know the answer to.

And they're suffering physically, spiritually, emotionally. Jerusalem is suffering for its own sins, the elders and the priests and the leaders, but some of the – the little ones are suffering for the sins of others.

And [31:30] so this is just kind of a survey of suffering, but I think a theology of redemptive suffering and a god who is always working even the most extreme circumstances for good is in keeping with what we see here and what we see in keeping with Romans 8, "God works all things together for the good of those who are the called."

[32:00] But I'm gonna say again that is a statement that must be received by faith. Sometimes you have enough information to see how that is true, either enough information right now or enough information down the line.

But that is true. [32:30] It is not true if someone's suffering that you're going to be able to say to them, "This won't last long." You don't know that. You better be sure of that if you tell people that. I mean I can tell you this – the suffering in this class will end tomorrow [laughter]. I know that. I know that, but I don't know some other things. So be careful what you tell people.

Don't tell them "This isn't as bad as you think it is." It may be worse than they think it is. [33:00] And you speak for God when you go in there. Never forget that. They think you're the oracle of God. You can say I hope this won't be anymore, and I hope and pray that this isn't as bad as we think it is. But you don't know that.

You don't know how God will answer the prayer. It took my mother years and years to recover from, as a 4-year-old girl, having people tell her [33:30] – her mother had cancer – if you'll pray for your mother, God will heal her.

God could have healed her mother, but it was not His choice. They didn't explain that to her. We'll prayer for your mother. He has the power to heal her, but we don't know if that's what's going to occur. But God loves you and God loves her. You better fill that out a little bit.

Woman: [33:51] Could you elaborate a little on the illness factor. It's so common. People get sick, you know, if you had caught it earlier, it might have been cured. I mean is that a metaphysical thing or –

[34:03] That's the timing of it. I don't know the timing of it.

Woman: [34:07] I mean I've having trouble fitting that into the category of the, you know, the sins of others, your own.

[34:12] Illness is a part of the human condition necessitated by sin. You will die of something. And eventually if you caught it earlier isn't going to get it. It – it – timing in one sense – this is the problem because this is the part that sounds so cruel when I say [34:30] it, but once we know we're gonna die, period, end of story, the rest of it is timing and circumstances.

And what I have to trust is that I'm supposed to take care of my obligations, so I oughta want to live, right? If I have certain obligations – I have a wife, I have a daughter – I'm supposed to stir up the gift that is within me. I have responsibilities here so I want to live.

[35:00] That's been given to me. I'm supposed to persevere. Paul tells us that, Jesus, everybody, so I know that's my role, but I also know I'm gonna die, so the circumstances, I have to leave the timing and circumstances to God and that's the tough part for me.

But I do know that the reason I'm going to die is because I'm a sinner and on the flipside is because God loves me too much to let me endure, [35:30] you know, linger on in this forever. But I don't like the timing of it, I'm almost certain, no matter what it's going to be, and the timing of a lot less.

See, here's the other thing. When I say had you caught it earlier, you'd be all right, I don't know that, first of all. And here's something else I don't know, since I'm pretty good at disaster possibilities. You say all he needed was 13 trips to the doctor to take [36:00] care of this. For all I know on the seventh trip you'd been hit by a truck.

See I don't know that. That's my problem. I know enough about that treatment to want it early because I have responsibilities and I want to live. But I don't know enough about the future to guarantee that if I had gone and gotten that treatment I'd be alive today, much less longer. I don't know that, see. That's my problem.

But I have to operate because of my responsibilities and my charge to persevere and because God [36:30] provided this for us, but I oughta operate like if that treatment will heal, I need to take it.

Woman: [36:34] That's right. You know [inaudible][36:36] hearing everything that is supposed to be, how do you comfort that child?

[36:42] Well, I would try to build into the church a long time before the moment occurs, first of all. The church that does not talk about death and why it happens and how it occurs is not doing its job. I'm going to be blunt about that.

Women: [36:59] [Inaudible].

[37:00] No, no. No, I'm –

Woman: [37:01] [Inaudible].

[37:02] Yeah.

Woman: [37:03] [Inaudible] – with my, um, family, it's –

[37:04] Yeah, I don't know how young my daughter was when I tried to introduce her to the fact that people die. Three, I think. One of the things that a children's ministry oughta figure out a way to know is their grandparents they die, they see it, they see it on TV, they know this happens, they need to know

what the source of that is, and it's not just people ran into bad luck [37:30] or, gosh, we didn't know what to do.

Modern medicine has not ever found a cure for death. It's going to happen. Now once that's true, then we can talk about a stewardship of life. That's where I think this – it's stewardship.

Woman: [37:46] But you can't guarantee it's a good stewardship [crosstalk] [37:50] when we're going through a time that you – that will not [inaudible] [37:52] –

[37:52] That is in God's hands. That is in God's hands.

Man: [37:56] There are also situations where it's not just – isn't even known about it, that there are situations where people know about it and the cure is available and they just simply don't have the resources.

[38:07] Right.

Woman: [38:07] That – that's – that's – that's a societal [inaudible] [38:10] as well.

[38:10] It's another – yeah, it's another issue, but it's related. Correct. Now what I'm trying to say is I think children see death, they need to know what it is, and I think they need to know the remedy for it, but I also think [38:30] simple things.

Billy's not in Sunday school today. Where's Billy? Billy's sick. Well, Billy's not feeling well. Physically, he's having trouble. That's part of life. We'll pray for Billy, and God will probably heal him and everything will be all right. But we need to know, that's in God's hand. Start telling the kids early on, this in God's hand, and God loves Billy more than you do.

God will do [39:00] what is best according to Genesis 50 and Romans 8. In a way, I start with Genesis 50 and Romans 8 and ask how is this true and how can I explain it to people.

I think older people – some people thought I was crazy. The class thought I'd done the right thing, to talk to my 79er class about death. They were all sure thinking about it and suffering. [39:30] Some of them were suffering daily physically, or emotionally. Some of them had the bad luck to live long enough to have grandkids that were tormenting the family. Just when you thought it was safe to have another generation, there you go.

So I think it needs to be part of a comprehensive teaching program, first of all. That – I mean that – my first line of defense is to tell people the truth and help them with it before something [40:00] ever happens to them. And I think they need to see what millions of people today know that Americans don't, that pain and suffering and death are a normal part of life in a world like this sinful world.

But if you live in a pretty good affluent society with resources, you're saying, wow, sickness is weird, and without saying if it's weird to us, then we need to explain it. [40:30] And I think that we need to explain that sin has caused this – yours, mine and ours – but that God in his mercy heals us until it's time in His wisdom, in His timing for us to go to be with Him.

I think that's an important overall thing. Now when I comfort people, I think we have to be very – read Job and see, look, the man needed to talk. I think they jumped him a little too early. [41:00] I think the laments tell us that people need to be able to say their piece about their pain. But when it's all said and done, you say, take that to God. Take it to God.

Whether you're mad, whether you're happy, whether you're – take it to God. And I think that the average person would be comforted by knowing that prayer would include we are angry about this.

I think [41:30] the average church is deficient in its teaching about death and suffering. I think we're deficient in our teaching about prayer at this point. Jesus on the cross takes Psalm 20 to – not just as a prediction of himself but as a lament: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

That's Psalm 22:1. That's Jesus. So, understand that this is part of the scripture. [42:00] Read second Corinthians. See how Paul, he perceived it. So I would make it a – a teaching thing. I would give people their space in stating this is my pain, this is my hurt. That's the second thing.

The third thing, I would try to keep from lying to them, telling them things we don't know is true. Don't tell a kid it's gonna get better. They're sitting there hoping their parents will stay together, [42:30], they're sitting there hoping their grandmother will live or they're sitting there hoping – you tell them, well, it's gonna be all right. You don't know that. It's gonna be all right, yes, but you better tell them how it's gonna be all right.

So you don't lie to them, but you do tell them that God has a purpose for this and some of it depends on who they are in their situation. They may need to hear your sin didn't bring this on, don't do that to yourself.

And, yeah, you talk about kids. You [43:00] didn't make your brother die. You didn't make your mother sick. You didn't make your dad leave. Or sometimes lovingly say to somebody as they come to the realization, I guess the way I did thus and so has led to this, hasn't it? You can say gently, yes, but this is not the end.

So again, it kind of depends, but you take these theological principles and – and work with them, but I think a lot of us spiritually [43:30] get in trouble for the same reason we get in trouble financially or any other way. We didn't make preparation for things that were going to happen.

I like that commercial now where retirement is dressed up in a T-shirt following this dude around. He tries to get on the elevator with him, he closes him off, and he tries to follow him, he shuts the door. He doesn't want to think about retirement. But the point is, retirement is there.

Well, so is death, so is suffering, so is explaining it to others, and so I – those are just ideas I [44:00] start with, but you're right. If you're involved in the Lord's work at all, you're going to get asked questions about this or you'll ask the question yourself.

And frankly, my experience has been as bad as short-term tragedy is, I'd prefer that to long-term, low-grade misery and suffering. And you have people involved in both, for their own sins [44:30] and for the sins of other people, and God has called them to it. That was a tough one.

And I've learned in the past that – that if Romans 8 – here's something else I'd tell – if Romans 8:28 is true, if Genesis 50 is true, then start looking for how it's true if you're in a long-term situation. God will send help. He will come himself, He will send friends, He will bring circumstances. He will do things to encourage you and just start looking for how that's true.

[45:00] Again, that's a faith-based state. But I've never been disappointed with kids, being able to tell them the truth in the right way. In kindness and in love, and sharing with them. Children don't understand all of the implications, but they're willing to deal with it as you help them. But I don't know

how to apply all this to a church. It's easier in a family. I can tell you what to do in a family. Churches [45:30] are tougher.

Sure as the world, you act like grandparents die, boy, somebody's going to get upset with you. But I think if I were in a children's ministry, and what I know about wouldn't fill a bucket [laughter], but I would make the prayer time and the prayer requests very vital.

If they prayed my granddad's sick, if Jason's got a 3- or 4- or 5-year-old sibling, if [46:00] he mentioned his granddad or his great-granddad, then I would say let's pray for him.

I would make sure long-term and – and if somebody's grandparents die, I would say, now, we all need to pray for so-and-so because their grandparents – and we know people do that, but Jesus died for us so that if we trust in him, we can go to heaven when we die. It's a teachable moment. And whereas, you know, adults will shift around [46:30] and, man, they don't want to hear about it because they're closer to it, the kid will learn from it.

I attended a funeral I didn't want to attend here recently. Very painful. But I took stock and I was grateful at least that I wasn't surprised that somebody my age who was my best friend died. I at least had the comfort of knowing it's the circumstances and the timing I don't like.

So at least you can deal with what really bugs [47:00] you, what's really bothering you. That's the other thing. I try to figure out as a pastor, as a minister, what's actually bothering this person. And when you get right out into it, I'll never forget what my dad said when my mother was dying. He went and got right down to rock bottom. He said, "I never thought I would grow old without her." That's what bothered him most.

There are a hundred other things could have been bothering him, but that's what was bothering him. So it's good to know what the issue is so you can actually deal with it. I don't know if that's – I just kind of scattered stuff out.

Woman: [47:30] [Inaudible] – and the church made a big deal, you know, that it was God's will that saved that child and all of this stuff, and my kids, they're smart. They said, "Momma, what about [crosstalk] [47:39] that drowned last week. Did God not love him?"

[47:40] Absolutely. That's right. Uh-hmm. That's right.

Woman: [47:43] And I had to say to my children, "Those people meant well, but they were wrong."

[47:47] What they should have [crosstalk] – sure.

Woman: [47:48] [Inaudible].

[47:49] What they should have said was we're –

Woman: [47:51] I mean that was [inaudible] [47:51]. That's how it goes.

[47:52] Sure. Yeah, you say, we're grateful to God that the person was spared.

Woman: [47:58] So I said that [crosstalk] too but [48:00] –

[47:59] But God would have loved him if he had drowned. That's the part that we just have a heck of a time saying. God would have loved him even if he drowned.

I always have to tell the story about my grandmother, who was – who saw the dark side of things. There was that Jonestown massacre, you know, where the people went down and drank the poison and we were hearing that. Somebody in the house said, "Well, what of the children?"

This is my grandmother all over it. If you want a positive comment, I'm sorry, this won't [48:30] be it [laughter]. My other grandmother could give you that. "They won't have to grow up in this old, terrible world." She was about 83 when she said it, or 80 anyway. "They won't have to grow up in this old, terrible world and they won't be raised by people who will teach them how to go to Hell."

Now then that's not usually the best way to start your theology [laughter], but she was absolutely right [laughs] in so many ways. But it's hard [49:00] for us to see that there would ever be anything good in suffering. At the same time I'd say so we need to give a full orb [SP] theology.

God spared them. That's the truth. God would have loved them, but that is not the evidence that God loved them, which is what you were dealing with. God loves them because they exist, so He does love them.

That is the nub of it. Would God still have loved them if they had [49:30] drowned? Yeah. For a Christian, death's not the worst thing that can happen to you.

Woman: [49:34] And could you say that [inaudible] [49:35] to figure out why, you know, one was saved by the skin of his teeth and the other one drowned, that that's metaphysical –

[49:45] I can only – yes.

Woman: [49:46] We cannot – we cannot fully understand [inaudible] [49:49].

[49:50] We can only speculate at that point. Absolutely. We can only speculate and trust God. There comes a time where you get possibilities [50:00] as to why that was – and maybe long-term you could see how it was the best use of that person's life.

But you see, that's one event. It's a terrible one. It will stay in that family forever, but if you have a long-term handicapped person in your family like we do, we live every day wondering how 37 years of this works.

So you see it just kind of depends on what — But those things still belong to God [50:30], despite the logical, clear theology that James set forth before the break, that do not put us to the test [laughter] –

Chapter 19

Worship is a Unity (part 1)

I want to talk today about continuing to move toward biblical theology and the wholeness scripture. And I wanted to start with a passage that we have mentioned [00:30] and we have gone around and that's Jeremiah 31 because it is here that was one of our clearest connections and yet distinctions between the Testaments is made. But we go to Jeremiah Chapter 31 for the new Covenant passage. I will tell you as we've learned yesterday I will remind you of what we've learned yesterday [01:00] that Jeremiah was a prophet between 627 and 587.

More than any other prophet that we have recorded in scripture, he bore the weight and the strain of preaching God's Word during the nation's deterioration, and it must have been a difficult thing to know that it was his task to preach [01:30] repentance to the people. That word, some form of repentance is used 111 times I'm told in the book of Jeremiah. Which, by the way, is the longest book of the Bible on word count. I've been told that. Some of you'll go check the computer and find out I'm wrong. But it is a long book, it is a book devoted to preaching repentance, to a people that Jeremiah [02:00] knows from the start will not change. by his calling he is told they will not change, and God is protecting most all of the rest of us from that kind of knowledge. This is an extraordinary situation and God told Jeremiah that would preach, plucking up, other words, tear things up, by the roots, pulling [02:30] down, other words, tearing down an edifice.

So, a lot of his preaching would be about sin and its results and punishment. That's why he says in Chapter 20, that we looked at yesterday, he cries out violence all the time and the people get tired of it. They whisper against him and not only that, let's be fair, to the people he was preaching judgment [03:00] for a couple of decades before any resulted. So, on the one hand, he didn't even have the satisfaction of seeing his messages come true in history for a long time. Then when they did, how much satisfaction can you take when in a nation being devastated.

So, he had the satisfaction of the kings wanting [03:31] his word. He did not have the satisfaction however of those kings accepting his word. Whatever spiritual interest and energy there was in the nation came early in his ministry, and his ministry therefore was one long difficult journey. [04:00] But, there is one other thing God told him in his call and that was he would also get to preach about building and planting. He would pluck up but would also get to preach about putting plants back.

He would preach about pulling down, but he would also preach about building up. And it is in chapters 30 to 33 that the building and the planting section is [4:30] most prominent. They're other passages of hope. We've looked at the Messianic hope saying in Jeremiah 23 or in 33, a few days ago.

But, it's in 30 to 33 that you have a sustained emphasis on building and planting in the future, and perhaps the pinnacle of the [5:00] building and planting section is chapter 31. These chapters talk about God restoring the fortunes of Israel. Making things better again after a long period of trial and loss. This is a context, it's interesting that it comes in the middle of the book. [05:30] Kind of reemphasizes that it is a future point and that Jeremiah's book ends with the devastation and destruction of Jerusalem. Almost identical to 2 Kings 25, almost word for word.

So, you get so many of these hopeful passages in 30 to 33, but look at chapter 31:27 [06:01]. In a phrase that is fairly common throughout these chapters and 31:27, behold days are coming declares the Lord, when I will sow the House of Israel, other words, planting, and the House of Judah with the seed of man and with the seed of beast. You gonna replant people and animals and land. As I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to overthrow, to destroy, to bring disaster, other words he's made certain it's happened. He's watched over it. [audience laughter] He sat that work [06:30] and he has been making sure it occurs.

Just as I was determined and thorough in watching over that, so will I watch over them to build a plan declares the Lord. He gonna be as determined to do that as he was to judge. In those days, they will not say again the fathers have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge. What that means is they're blaming their ancestors for their problems. Even though, they themselves have sinned. [07:00] But, he says, in those days they won't say that anymore. Other words, they're gonna be a new attitude here. But, everyone will die for his own equity, each man eats of sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge. Another way of saying at that point in time the suffering for the ancestor's sins will cease.

Now let's see who asked a question about sins of the fathers? Oh, okay,[07:30] that question was asked the other day about, after class and I said we should take up the issue, that's appropriate here. What does it mean to say the sins of the fathers are punished on the children of the 3rd and 4th generation? Remember also though in that text it says that the Lord is loving and kind and something like to the thousands of generations. So on the one hand, one can read these passages and say those are just metaphors of saying God is throwing his punishment [08:00] and throwing his blessing.

But there's another factor. Is it possible for us to suffer for the sins of our parents, grandparents, great-grandparents? Oh, absolutely, I would argue that it's inevitable in many cases. There is a sense in which, [08:30] even if I didn't know my great-grandfather, they could set in motion both good and bad things that would effect me.

I think of one good thing, I'll just use this as an example, 1908 my [09:00] maternal great-grandfather built a house, he lived in it 'til the 1940s when he died. Sold it to my paternal grandfather, when he died it was sold to my paternal grandfather. In the 1970's it was bought by my father, and he lived there until last December. [audience reply] Pardon? [audience reply] I'm thinking about it. [man laughing]

So, it's been in one side or the other of the family for nearly a hundred years. I'm trying not to let my sentiments [9:30] overrun my pocketbook. [chuckles] But, it's also, there are other advantages, but when it's all said and done one great-grandfather set something in motion that has been a benefit to us. My dad laughs and says he knows that house needs internal repair but he does not think a tornado could take it down [chuckles] and when we remodeled it to move into when I was growing up, it was the first time I had literal 2x4 and actual [10:00] 2 inches by 4 inches board. I said to my dad, that thing looks big; he said that's an actual 2x4. Because, you know most of them now are 1 3/4 by 3 3/4 and it was made of oak so they actually had to drill holes so they could drive nails. They could not drive a nail in it.

So, the great-grandfather put something into play there and right across the road from there you can see[10:30] the church where all my mother's people, it's a little Methodist church, where they all came to know Christ and they were baptized there, and all that sort of thing. There's a lot of history there, and there's a little school house right across the road—They all educated there for a while. When it's all said and done, that man put into motion spiritual and physical things that continue to be a benefit. Now, I can tell you about a couple other ones however. Including great-grandfather was a massive temper and a

[11:00] rather narrow religious view. I think I will see him transformed in heaven. [chuckles] But, I think the last time they had to go get him from a fist fight was when he was 75, [laughter] there were ramifications to that. So, what I think is true from Scripture is that though you can suffer for the sins of the prior generations, they [11:30] cannot keep you from coming to know the Lord and that's key.

But, just like I can suffer for your sins or you can suffer for mine and probably the potential to suffer for one another's sins is extended by the length of time we know one another, [laughter] it's absolutely possible. And Jeremiah or Baruch, or [tape skips] [11:57] their other extended friend, Evan Mellick [phonetic] [11:58] they can all suffer for the choices [12:00] their father's made as to where they serve the Lord or not and how that fit into Israel's history.

Josiah suffered for the sins of his father like that, Esaki did. These are Godly kings, they had to try to undo what their father's done and they never quite got the job done. But these fathers could not keep them from knowing the Lord, that is key. There's coming a [12:30] time, basically coming in 31,29 and 30 the theology is set that the people and things will be evened out, that the people being a new era in which all of those previous sins have settled, so to speak. And you'll only be suffering for your own sins at that point. That would be pretty good news, on a bad day that's a good start.

Then we come to ourselves and say I probably need more Grace than that. [chuckle] because my own sins are [13:00] considerable. It's more than that, verse 31, behold days are coming when I'll make a new Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah. Even though, the House of Israel in effect no longer exists at this point and time. Jeremiah's vision of seeing the tribes all whole. That is true in the Messianic vision as well. So, there'll be a new Covenant with the Northern tribes and with the Sothern tribes and [13:30] taken as a whole.

Now I've heard this debated and once I heard a very interested debate of Jewish scholars in Israel, American and Israeli. [Mooshi Whinefeild] [13:45] [phonetic] a prominent Covenant [inaudible] [13:47] scholar, Jewish Covenant [inaudible] [13:49] scholar, argued that this means an absolute new Covenant, something we are arguing, it's a Covenant renewal. But, he argued that the language, for instance verse 32, not like the Covenant, New Covenant, et cetera.[14:00] That as it's been interpretation, this is one place he agreed with Christians scholars, he didn't believe Jesus was the Messiah, but he did believe they were right to say in days to come, there would be a new Covenant.

So, we see some distinctions made a new Covenant, not like the Covenant which I've made with their fathers in the day. I took them by the hand, those are God's [tape skips] [14:28] in a pretty positive light here, [14:30] the Covenant I've made with their fathers in the day. I took them by their hand like a kid, [chuckles] to bring them out of the land of Egypt. My Covenant, which they broke, although I was a husband to them. So you have parental imagery, you have marital imagery. So, the problem with the first Covenant was one of the Covenant partners. [15:00] Israel was not a fully reliable Covenant partner.

But then again let's talk about that term Israel because there was always within Israel a remnant of fully responsive Covenant partners. Now, whereas, Jeremiah and his chapters 2 to 6, could talk about Israel as a whole did not love the Lord and they [15:30] acted like strange spouse. Much like what you read in Josiah 1 to 3 or Ezekiel 16, 20, 23. Three chapters in Ezekiel 16, 20 and 23 agrees with Josiah 1 to 3, and Jeremiah 2 to 6. The Old Testament and the New, and again when Hebrew sites it, it sites the whole passage of Jeremiah 31:32, the problem is [16:00] not with the Covenant, nor with God, but with the other Covenant partner, because as a whole they are not Covenant keepers, there is only a minority of them that are Covenant keepers. After say, the time of the conquest. You don't want to say it's all of one piece, but

certainly during Joshua's time the people were free faithful. Certainly during Josiah's time, we have to wait a moment, seems like Josiah's was pretty committed, it's hard to tell who the [16:30] people were.

But, there were time of renewal. But, by in large as consistent ongoing Covenant that required the whole of the people to be faithful. They were not a good Covenant partner. They brought the Covenant, although I was a husband too. But, I want a nuance because I've heard it said basically, you know all of Israel, [17:00] everybody, all the time, when they didn't, you know everybody was un —That's not the case we were faithful people all along.

But this is the Covenant I will make with the House of Israel after those days declares the Lord, I will put my law within and on their heart, I will write it. Now, that's always been the ideal, according to Deuteronomy right? Jeremiah even text even says circumcise your hearts. You guys are doing the rituals all right, circumcise your [17:30] heart and so God will put the law on their heart. If there is a difference between the Covenants at this point, because you can see the law is a continuity factor. We see continuity of it, he said I'm gonna— He didn't say there was going to be some new law, he said I'm —The difference is, the people broke the Covenant, they've been a bad Covenant partner, so what I'm going to do, I'm going to write it on their [18:00] hearts. The law will be written on their hearts. That's continuity.

So, the difference is not the content of what's in the heart of the people. The difference is not that if you don't start with the heart you won't live it out. The difference somehow seems to be in the extent to which God does it and make sure it's done. Now that too is odd. It's like we were discussing with the Holy Spirit the other day.[18:30] You read if I remember the text, John 14:17, when Jesus saves [inaudible] [18:38]. Send the Spirit he says, the Spirit is with and will be in you. That's a distinction with a difference, but, with you and in you, say, okay. In the Old Testament, the people who trusted God had the law in their heart and they were God's elect. It's almost like saying well there's and [19:00] election and then there Election, there's having it on your heart, and then there's God writing it on your heart. It sounds like the same process except further divine involvement.

And surely, if God's already faithful Covenant partner, further divine involvement would simply make the Covenant planner and easier. [19:30] But further divine involvement. I don't know all of what that mean, other than incarnation, we do get that. Messiah's coming. Further divine involvement, maybe Ezekiel says the Spirit of God, is already working right on your heart. Remember the Holy Spirit falling on the elders in the Book of Numbers? They all prophecy and Moses says, boy I mean this is great. More of that? [20:00] Well we're left to work on the subject, but I will put my law within them and on their heart and I will write it and I will be their God and they shall be my people. That is language we have seen before. That's language from Exodus, chapter 20, language from, the be holy, for I am holy places, you be my God, I be your people.

Now, here comes a distinction, verse 34, we will not teach again [20:30] each man his neighbor, and each man his brother, saying know the Lord. Now, this was an ongoing issue in the history of Israel, right. Because you constantly had people, who were remnant folks, who were believers, who were believers who knew the Lord, having to teach those who didn't know or who were strained know the Lord.

And how well did Jeremiah know that process. He had spent his life saying know the Lord, turn to the Lord, walk with the [21:00] Lord. He spent his life trying to extend the remnant from a small group of Israelites to a larger percentage of them. But, he said in times to come from the least of them, to the greatest of them, they will all know me. So, I will forgive their iniquity and their sin, I will remember no more. [21:30]

So, the difference seems to be he will not make this Covenant with Israel indiscriminately. But only with those who know him. The Covenant partner will all know Him. That brings up and interesting distinction. In the Old Covenant, God obligated himself [22:00] to Israel as a whole, believers or non-believer. In the New Covenant, he does not do this; he obligates himself only to the Covenant partner who knows Him, that's the whole group.

Now, God always had what we call common Grace for those outside of the Covenant. There wasn't like the only place that ever rained or was ever food was in Israel, [22:30] there's always common grace, there's common grace today. But, God does not obligate himself to anyone except to those who know me. This definition of Covenant people is crucial for how we think about ministry.

And it also illustrates a problem that we all have. [23:00] I grew up with a believers baptism tradition, in which they adversely said we recognize no one who is not made profession of faith and been baptized as within the people of God. They may be good people, they may be moral people, they may be even kids in our families, but the fact is we would only accept that way. So, that seems to be full proof, doesn't it? [23:30]

We can Identify the people of God by those who made this commitment. But, then you grow up a little bit and it doesn't take long to realize some of those people aren't around. They don't come, we don't see them in church and if you see them in the community, they don't act like they've been redeemed. So, we have a ministry problem, we think from the beginning, as bad as 24:00] we might have the best start on a definition of the people of God, one way.

But, something is wrong — Then, some of my Presbyterian brothers, says your talking about Covenant children, Methodist do it too. It's part of how they explain how the baptism is, replaces circumcision, the Covenant households are part of us. But then you talk to them and you say, and we agree to raise him in the Lord, and the congregation agrees, some of the darndest ceremonies I've ever [24:30] seen. James and I were talking about it the other day. It seems to me if you're gonna practice it, the baptism, you need to lay on to the parents what the tradition requires. Are you agreeing to raise this child to know the Lord, or is this some right of passage you've got going on? That might be a little blunt. [laughter]

Confirmations is that a right of passage or are you only confirming believers? So, you got [25:00] the, [laughter] I just keep noticing this same ministry problem. You think okay, we disagree with Baptist definition of the people of God, we think it includes more than just those who profess faith, we think it includes our children, we think it includes money, great.

So, that gives us the chance to baptize our children, to not only swear ourselves to serving the Lord and bringing him up, we can also include the congregation. [25:30] They swear they are gonna help too. They stand right up and take vows. [laughter] They will do it, [just kidding under breath]. Then we have confirmation. I remember this one time down the isle into the Baptistery membership deal, we had a chance to instruct, and we go this deal going on. When you look around and you find out a whole lot of those people don't come. [laughter] Whole lots of those people aren't involved when you see them out in the community they don't act like a Christian.[26:00]

Now, obviously when dealing with thing, what is the mystery in human nature, which is some people will tell you something is a reality in their life, or they think it is and just not believers. There's also the problem that's mentioned earlier today. We have to be able to instruct the people or they will not grow, they will not mature and this is a frustration, something else very practical. [26:30] There're a whole lot of

Baptist who really don't examine people much before they're baptized. If they come down an isle, which is treated merely as a sacramental gesture in some Southern Baptist circles.

Leave something out of the service once and you find out how important it is to people. But, how seriously have we examined, some people do it very carefully. But, any believers baptism, was the Baptist Pentecostal, or others you got that. So, [27:00] how seriously do you examine someone before you baptize them?

A friend of mine was saying that his church, he was a new pastor, but he said, and he would remember it, and apparently they looked at the records and last year there was 40 baptisms in that church and one is still attending. No, splitting the church, no big blow up, there's a problem.

On our statistic, why I'm just kinda rambling here, [29:30] you see the statistics from the North American Mission Board of Southern Baptist Convention on adult baptism. I forget the actual numbers, but here are the percentages. A full 50 percent of adult baptism above the age of 21 in the Southern Baptist Convention were baptisms of people who were already believers, that had never received believers baptism, that's the first half. So, have any of you received infant baptism or whatever to join the Southern Baptist you are baptized by immersion, [28:00] that's 50 percent. The next 40 percent were people who had been baptized already by Southern Baptist but who said they were not believers at the time and were baptized the second time, that's the stunning statistic to me. That mean 40 percent of those people, which were baptized said, I didn't get it right the first time, I didn't know, [28:30] there was something not right in their mind. So, it's 10 percent of actual new converts, that was the baptism statistics.

Now, I praise God for all of it I guess, in a way. So, you say there ought to be some of that. Baptism ought to be a serious effort. I think we can work it more quickly. We can work it quickly without, and examine people both. Within — The more I have gotten to know the infant baptism [29:30] people have been frustrated by what I thought they were going to do, they didn't do, so how it seems in infant baptism. Basically, it amounts to a baby shower without presents, because in some of these — What they do is, they don't tell the parent, they don't remind the parents, they don't tell the congregations, these parents have made sacred vows to God to this and so for the child. And the don't say the congregation, don't you stand up if you don't aim to help. We only want to see people standing who are going to pray, [29:30] who are gonna — Don't make yourself a hypocrite we love you it's all right, if you are a visitor. But, if you're going to stand up and say we will help you parents do this, then mean it, do something. What it amounts to is kinda holding the baby up and showing everybody.

Now, that's the worst case scenario. Best-case scenario is the opposite, its was what I just said. In confirmation where it's meant the least, I'd talked to some friends in Denmark that even know the percentage of people that attend church is something like one percent, 90 some percent of parents still bring [30:00] the babies to be baptized at the Lutheran Church and 80 some percent of them still haven't confirmed. But they said they had no faith, see I'd got to where I wouldn't have cared, but it's so rapped up to Danish or Lutheran they still do it. And I've talked to Godly Bishops in the American Episcopal Church, when I started this job, I was asked to confirm people who couldn't tell me who Jesus Christ was and what his death meant, his right of passage. [30:30] But he says if you want to start a firestorm somewhere, if want napalm and incoming and the whole bit, he said just refuse to confirm somebody because they are not a believer.

Male 1: [30:42-30:48]

Dr. House [30:48] [laughing] Yes.

Male 1: [30:50] Another observation, for the people of that village...[crosstalk]

Dr. House [30:55] Right out of that parish, Mm mhm.

Man 1: [30:55] I mean, is in not necessary that being in the Catholic Church, the Baptist Church, the Church is there, just like a [inaudible] [31:04-31-09].and if you are to be baptized you just [make an appointment with the pastor.] [phonetic] [31:14] It is not something that is going to be witnessed in the church, but a family that [inaudible] [31:21-31:26] my witness. Some people who are doing that [inaudible [31:30] after [inaudible] [31:32-31:44]

Dr. House [31:44] Private baptism, yeah.

Man 1: [31:46] So, and that is the way they do it. [sound] [inaudible]

[31:49-31:55]

[31:55] Well, I think what we need to understand is this text talks about our definition of Covenant partners right. Now, when I went to teach the Episcopal Church center he said to me, well how is it between you and infant baptism and stuff. And, I said to him I have decided that if Episcopalians, which who I talked to, was more serious about confirmation and not confirming unbelievers. And Baptists were more serious about not baptizing unbelievers we would have [32:30] fewer problems; this is where it comes together, and for reason in both communions we are often nervous about being serious at that point. And what we are really saying then is something other than what this text says about who the people of God are.

We got to be serious about that and also I think our children's ministries should be transformed by the notion [33:00] that may have not reached the age of accountability or they may be Covenant children. But the truth is their infected with the disease of sin and they are little rebels in the making. Little sinners afoot and the church ministry ought to have something to do with sharing the Gospel in an age appropriate way so that they can come to know the Lord and that they can be discipled. [33:30] But, also that adults would understand.

The necessity that if you are a Covenant partner it means you know the Lord, otherwise you have no stake in this. You can be associated, you can be loved, you be part of. But the Covenant partners are those who know the Lord, and he has forgiven their iniquity and their sin. So, regardless of tradition, which we are used to operating, I think we have some of the same problems. That is, people [34:00] we thought were believers and folk who don't live that way and if the truth is, if we have not worked at instructing we should do it, we should make sure that those things are going well.

In some of my ministry with the Episcopalians too, you talk to some people and you say well, what do you think the most effective thing about Christian education and I said, cradle to grave. You have to have a cradle to grave Christian education. I said, [34:30] how many more of we Christians do we need? [audience chuckle] Why create more on purpose? So, at least the effort should be made and some manner because you need maturity, because we are talking about the Covenant people.

So then, back to the original thing the continuity of the Covenant is we still have ostensibly, what looks like the same partners, God and Israel. We still have the law of being on their hearts. [35:00] But, this time God insist that it will be written there and they will all know me. So we have an intensification of divine action and we have a transformation from the Covenant partner is remnant Israel and the majority Israel, it is only with the believers now. So, there's an intensification [35:30] of the partner as well, yes ma'am.

Woman 1: [35:34] We shirk God of, sort of shove it off on God to do later on are we… [crosstalk] [35:40]

[35:40] I think if we did things carefully and seriously and explained the best we can up front, we have fewer problems later, that's a general principle of life. That would be helpful. I think you can go to extremes on that. I know one pastor who is a Baptist, who has never baptized anybody below the age of 18. [36:00] Now I don 't know how, I've known enough 18 year olds, I'm not sure what was magic about that, I don't believe that's Biblical. But, I can see his point, they had baptized for a time — They had been such an abuse in the church, but you take care of things up front, you have less problems. And then if we are loving and kind in our concern was, we want to make sure you're a Covenant partner and help you grow in it. And not, how dare you basically slander our church's name out in the community, even though that isn't the reaction I have from time to time, [36:30] but to be willing to take redemptive steps to help people.

Now, then you need wisdom to know how long to let something go on. How much time to give people and how much help to give them, that just takes wisdom and practice. But, most churches are really unwilling to take either redemptive action in life, or [37:00] corrective action in life, or to say to you well if this is the way it is and you really want your name removed and with great sadness we will do so. The reason we don't want to do it, partly because we know we are sinners too, but we also don't want to do it because it's hard work. It just is. [laughing] The other reason is we don't want to do it, is we let things get so far gone. I have hundred acres of weeds and a 1/2 acre of mowed grass, [37:30] your unlikely to want to go out there and weed that. So how to get started at this point and time is also just a practical problem. I actually think it would start with the people who are active saying we want to come under this kind of… Ourselves, let's just start with the people, currently coveted together without trying, I, I don't know.

Male 2: [37:52] To establish a renewable church membership [inaudible] [37:56-37:58] every three or four years.

[38:00] Yeah, I just think there are a whole lot of people who've gotten the idea from evangelistic people on the one hand and on kind of genetic Christianity on the other. That there's nothing required, this if they've gone down and aisle been baptized, they're set. Or that if their parents took 'em and baptized them and brought them, they're set. But the Christianity really doesn't have much point to it if-if it actually [38:30] requires a life style and see the older I get it doesn't require something significant I don't see the point, that's just me. But your theology of church in my opinion, if it doesn't start with Jeremiah 31, this ought to be a significant point, who are the people of God?

This text would give us some questions about continuity and discontinuity between the Covenants, [39:00] absolutely. But also let's not forget that a vital idea of who are the people of God that is grounded here. Because it's about the Covenant partner. So when you get to a text like, ah, oh, Romans 9 through 11. I got a phone call from a guy in South Carolina wanting to know who really is in Romans 11. I said won't you start back with Chapter 2 and follow the thread and tell me. [chuckles] [39:30] But, all Israel being saved means, all those who believe, in the context of Romans, Jewish and Gentile, both.

So, understand then that the definition of the people of God, Israel, et cetera, is reshaped by the New Covenant. There're continuities. Continuity is, the remnants always been there and it's defined by their faith and obedience to God [40:00] that never changes. But, it's reshaped into only the remnant and if there's a ["wheat and tears effect"] [phonetic] [40:07] it's not within Israel now, its in the world. It's the believers within the world, Jewish or Gentile, all will know me.

But, as Jeremiah 31 indicates and the New Testament this Covenant starts with whom? With Israel. It begins with the [40:30] the descendants of Abraham and David, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. You would make them to resent that all we want, but this is the historical flow. But, Jews and Gentiles must both come into this Covenant. There're aren't two Covenants in my view.

So there're aren't two Covenants, one for Jews and one for Gentiles are operative now. That's the other question [41:00] I get often. So we start here in so – Biblical theology, a starting point is to say, linking the Testaments, we have a New Covenant that's connected to the Old, but leads to a New. We have Covenant that helps define who the people of God are and under what condition they know the Lord. So that's on linkage that I think we have to get.

When I was interviewed at Trinity [41:30] Episcopal, I started telling a story, we were talking about infant baptism, surely we are both agreed that if you've got a 25 or 30 year old person and I'm just putting the age up where you'd say they are grown. You have a 25 person who has heard the Gospel and rejected it, it doesn't matter whose baptized and were confirms or do whatever, you don't think that their going to heaven do you? Well, I know. I said yeah, I believe we just merged with an agreement. The people of God ultimately are those who [42:00] trust Christ, period. However we work with it, [Eplesiostically] [phonetic] [42:06] however, we come at that ministerally the fact is none of us would think that anybody in this room, would we, who has rejected the Gospel is a Covenant partner. And if that's true then we can disagree about the nature of how to do that ministry and how to work with the church and how the church is set up in that kind. Let's agree that [42:30] if we get to crunch time at the very nub of the Gospel and the acceptance and the rejected of it, we evangelicals are going to agree. There's either a commitment to Christ or your outside the New Covenant. And that that is the most serious responsibility that any human has to make that decision. Yes?

Male 3: [42:54- 43:04] [inaudible question]

[43:05] Well, Wesley would say yes of course. It does get to your doctrine salvation and perseverance to the saints. Wesley would say yes, that's possible but you don't slip out of it, you choose it like you chose to come in it. You don't lose your salvation like you lose your car keys, you know. You lose your salvation because willfully forfeited by as conscience decision as you took it. [43:30] Calvin would say I think and of course, I'm more on that strain but I also think that Wesley's been caricatured by a whole lot of Baptist I've heard in past, Methodist have been for sure on this issue.

But even Calvin would say yep, only the elect persevere. So that it would be evidence that we don't know the mind of God, we're not God so we can't fully decide. But if you have someone [44:00] who over a period of time and not persevering and not living for the Lord and not caring that they're not, we mistook them for the elect.

Jonathan Edwards once asked how many converts there were in the second great awakening, he said, we don't know yet. [chuckles] He meant by that not only maybe they're still some to be accounted for, He meant maybe some of these don't have true religious affection. What a book that is. But, [44:30] I would say people that do not persevere were never believers. I don't care what we try to believe about election, or lack thereof, there will always be a possibility that we will see people that we though were believers, but they weren't or that we're believers that feel away.

Woman 2: [44:52] I guess that you have [inadible] [44:53] avenue to either kick back [inaudible [45:00] ah people want to know their not, you know, they're aren't really protected [inaudible] [45:07] you know, in their minds to accept that, you know. [crosstalk] [45:12]

[45:12] Right to try-try to [crosstalk] [45:13] avoid these problems, yeah, yeah.

Woman 2: [45:16] Problems [inaudible] [45:17-45:20]

[45:20] And I think there are lots of ministry steps can be taken, to make sure that we are trying to baptize or confirm Covenant partners. Those are strong steps to take.

Woman 2: [45:30] [inaudible] Easter morning [inaudible] [45:32-45:34]

[45:34] That certainly has [press] [phonetic] [45:34] in the early Church. I would say to everybody, it is a great encouragement to your people who love the Lord and are working for the Lord to see throughout the year baptisms. Or however you take it, it new life. Because its just a great encouragement to people. I think, as far as being able to tell what is true conversion and what is not. I still say, the best of thorough [46:00] treatment of that written by Jonathan Edwards, Religious Affections. And he's a strong Calvinist as you can get probably, but he said there are at least some Biblical standards to know whether someone's converted.

But really you have to ask people to examine themselves on those issues and to help them examine themselves. But what we must get away from without adding [46:30] to salvation, we must get away from the notion that you can be a believer and live any old way you want to. That's what we have to watch.

Male 4: [46:38] Even now, I remember a [inaudible] 46:41]

[46:41] Right.

Male 4: [46:41-46:53] [inaudible]

[46:53] Well and see its, the issue pastorally is okay let's say, let's see how much difference there really is. Let's say in our church we have someone and you either believe that they have rejected their salvation if they had one in the past or believe that they weren't the elect ever because they are not persevering. Okay.

The same task basically still applies, we must go back and remind them of what has been true before and ask them to return to the Lord. So I know it makes a difference. I'm not trying to minimize [47:30] I'm trying to bring things together. The pastoral duty it remains the same. I have someone who is not showing any marks of being a believer when we thought they were, I must go and help them return to Christ.

To help them walk again that past seed. Have you truly committed you life to Christ. And committing your life to Christ means conversion, it means being changed and it means a change of ownership in your life. [48:00]. And help them understand the pastoral issue is pretty much the same. What you do about baptism at that point does affect you if you're in a believers baptism tradition.

But, when it's all said and done I think the pastoral issues is pretty close to being the same whether you're a Calvinist or and Armenia at that point. To redeem the person you have to go back, catechize them in affect and ask them if this is their faith and ask [48:30] if it is their faith will you return to the Lord. I would use language like that; I would diagnose the problem, differently, theologically if I'm a Calvinist or if I'm a Armenia, but when it's all said and done, I got the same problem before me, Baptist do too. But always ask them when they say when they say, I was save back in 1947 or whatever they are gonna tell you. Saved, what did that mean to you? What does it mean to be saved? When you say I was saved back in, what happened? [49:00] It's the same problem.

But, I know in my tradition we have baptized host of people who had absolutely not notion that they were suppose to live for Christ. They thought they were getting relief from a debt. They had sinned and they owed God and they were getting relief from that debt. And also, they had been taught, a lot of them, if you do this everything will be all right in your life. [49:30] You might of just added to your problem as you know. Again, how you define the people of God, how you try to determine where they are the people of God and how you call them to the people of God are important pastoral issues. Unless you're involved in churches I've never seen before, which is possible. If so we are all grateful to God for you and our advice is to not take in any more members or you will have the problems we've got.

Chapter 20

Worship is a Unity (part 2)

Understand that Jeremiah 33:14 to 26, the Messianic passage that we studied the other day, is also in the same section of Jeremiah, so the new covenant passage in 31, [00:30] 34, and the Messianic passage of Jeremiah 33:14 to 26 are in the same general context. So that is a passage of which you say [00:45], the new covenant, and what God's gonna do to write the law in their hearts, to make a covenant with only covenant partner who believes, is also connected by the notion of days are coming.

"Behold, days are coming" [01:00] is a futuristic passage, a Davidic covenant, the eternal covenant, will be kept, and that the people of Israel will be led by this David. But by now we have to say, "who are these people of Israel?" [01:15] They are the covenant keepers from Chapter 31. They're the people that, the servant of God, the descendant of David, will rule. So [01:30] the Davidic kingdom, the eternal Davidic kingdom, is tied together with the new covenant. But let's also see a little bit of the progression.

You have in Jeremiah 31 the new covenant. Chapter 32 [01:45] - God asks Jeremiah to yet another symbolic act that even though the Babylonians are occupying the land and laying siege [02:00], God tells Jeremiah to purchase property. So he does, then he says to God, "what was the point of that?" [laughs] God's answer in Chapter 32 is [02:15] that land will be bought and sold again, the people will be back in the land, that this is symbolic of the truth, [02:30] that the people will be restored to the land the way Deuteronomy said they would be after they were driven out of the land.

So restoration is promised in Chapter 33 next [02:45], in which God says he will bring them in a new exodus back to the land. Then, the promise to David is stressed. [03:00] Though it is not always the case in these Old Testament passages that you have a clear progression of ideas, if there is in this case, here's what happened. [03:15] The new covenant is described, it will be fulfilled how: by a return to the land, the emergence of the Davidic king. And, again, there is a remnant ready to receive [03:30] the Davidic king, and there was in the new covenant.

So we see, as we talk about linkages between the testaments today, one way to link [03:45] is by discussing the nature of the people of God. We'll start with Israel, but as you know from Isaiah we'll not end with Israel, because promises are made [04:00] to all the nations. Promises have been made to Abraham about all the nations already. So that was one passage that I thought had been notoriously absent from our discussion [04:15], and that I thought needed to be brought into it. Also perhaps notoriously absent, specifically from our discussion, have been a couple other topics I'll at least mention, so you'll know I [04:30] think they're important.

In the future, where I teach Old Testament theology, if that happens, I will spend more time developing a serious doctrine of the human race. [04:45] I have been preoccupied with the nature of God and the implications of that doctrine, because of so much theology lately, and so much worship lately seems to me to be [05:00] very human-centered. It's focus is on what people want, and what people need, and what people think. Nonetheless, I do think, [05:15] starting with Genesis 1, and 2 and 3, the seeds of an

understanding of what it means to be a human being - our responsibilities, our failures, our chance for redemption, throughout the Scriptures [05:30], needs to be done.

One way of addressing the problem of having everything human-focused is to focus on God. That's one. A second issue would be, let's get a doctrine of human beings [05:45] right in the first place. If we're gonna focus on people, let's at least focus on what the Bible says about them. And I think that will lead to both positive and negative things that we will see, but I would spend more time with that. [06:00] And hope to do so.

Another issue that I think, that has been touched upon but needs to be pulled together in more detail - these are things I'm tellin' you that either don't know well enough to teach you, or [06:15] that I believe as a self-criticism I oughta spend more time on is eschatology. Now, in a way, everything we have shown from the Old Testament heading toward the New is eschatological. [06:30] Or at least it was from the standpoint of the Old Testament writer in some manner. It was at least futuristic. But the Old Testament has a great deal to say about the day of the Lord, coming judgment, and the end of time [06:45] that needs to be dealt with.

And what does it mean for the Kingdom of God to come in the Old/New Testaments? Eschatology is an issue that William Dumbrell takes up in his biblical theology, so if you wanna read a biblical theologian from an Old Testament perspective that deals [07:00] with eschatology, Dumbrell, which is spelled d-u-m-b-r-e-l-l, Bill Dumbrell, an Australian theologian, you would look at that. [07:15]

"Covenant and Creation"'s one of them, and then the other one, the one that deals more with eschatology than that one, is "The Search for Order [07:30]: Biblical Eschatology in Focus." William Dumbrell, "The Search for Order: Biblical Eschatology in Focus." His theme is really from Creation to New Creation. So [07:45] I know that that subject needs to be dealt with. I confess that I don't have a lot of interest in eschatology. I know that I should, it's like a lot of other things in our lives [08:00], but I'm not one of those who thinks that just because I don't have a great interest in it, that means it isn't worth considering. It is worth considering, and a lot of work needs to be done on it, people certainly have interest in it, they're often disappointed [08:15] when they find out what the Bible actually teaches. But somehow the Second Coming of Christ is not enough, we must also have "cool details."

But I think that issue, so that we might arrive at a better answer to the question [08:30] what is the Kingdom of God, in what sense is it present now the way Christ talks about it, in what sense is it to come, the Old Testament has a lot to say about that. Also has a whole lot to say about judgment, including the Day of the Lord imagery [08:45] in which all things are set right, and sins eradicated, and how that correlates with the New Heaven and the New Earth. So I think a more in-depth doctrine of human beings, I think more attention to the definition of the People of God [09:00], which is a pretty significant New Testament issue by the way, isn't it?

Jews, only? Gentiles who'll be circumcised only? What, Gentiles irrespective of Jews? [09:15] The Apostle Paul deals with folks who held any one of those three views, in his letters. So it's gonna make some difference. People of God, doctrine of human beings [09:30], eschatology.

Now, I'm not gonna ask you to make a list of things I've left out, but I'm gonna start with myself, and say I think those certainly need to be considered. Also [09:45], in a class like this where we've been very synthetic, something else you'll need to consider as you go, this point is reflected in the Old Testament theology book itself, but not in the classes as we've conducted it, and that is [10:00] that you need to spend time considering how each separate biblical book has its own theology that connects to the whole

of biblical theology. In other words, what is the theology of Isaiah? [10:15] What is the theology of Jonah? The reason I've been more synthetic in the classes, that is the direction I'd like to go in my own thinking, in my own teaching, writing… and I felt like [10:30] having taught the class before the lack of synthetic discussion had been a detriment, like trying to get the whole of Old Testament theology, and so I picked these themes that we've talked about.

But don't forget [10:45] that if you're gonna preach or teach or read about a specific book of the Bible, it has its own contribution to make. And again, part of building a biblical theology is to say [11:00] if I'm gonna talk about the doctrine of election, the doctrine of election is in Genesis, and it has a contribution to make to that discussion. So does the book of Malachi, so does the book of Romans, it's not all the same, there are some things that are the same, but each one might make a contribution of it's own, so [11:15] make sure you don't lose the specific theology in the synthesis.

In the search for synthesis, I've been justly criticized at times, in print and out of print, for not, uh, being serious enough about the differences. [11:30] I admit that. However, the problem that I've faced most often ministering in scholarship has been that people so heighten the differences that, it's, again, we have two Bibles. So I've combatted [11:45] that problem, but I'm gonna admit, from the get-go - not from the get-go, from the back-go - this is the end of it - that I battle with that problem, and so I would want to say there are certain distinctions that we need to wrestle with. [12:00]

But more and more, I've come to say that after we have done our best work, we have done our most serious work, our most careful work, our most involved work, exegetically and theologically and reflectively [12:15], there are still some things we will not know.

I wanna say that after I've made the effort, not before. Because it can become an excuse, a cop-out. If we say, "oh, well, y'know… [12:30] that's a mystery." That's another way of saying, "I don't care to expend enough effort to find out what I can know before I say what I can't know." [chuckles] That's a danger. But there's also the danger of pride at the other end, that says, "I have found out [12:45] this much, I know everything." Biblical theology, Old Testament/New Testament theology, systematic theology, must be done with humility. You've heard me say from time to time - uh, and I say this without any sense of self-importance [13:00] time to time I say, you know, I really, I haven't thought enough about this, this is where I am now. T his is what I would say now. But I am convinced of a few things.

One, if you're going to do biblical theology in the future, you need to [13:15] try to see the Bible whole first. To do biblical theology, ask yourself the question, "how may I see the text of scripture [13:30], the work of God, whole?" And if I'm used to dealing in parts, I'm gonna ask, "how can I take these parts and see wholeness in them?" [13:45]

It's like saying, "here, I have a pile of bricks, but I see a sidewalk coming, or I see a barbecue pit in my future - how can I see this thing whole?" [14:00] To do that, you're going to need a reading strategy. This is so simple that we can miss it. That you need a reading strategy that will help you see the Bible whole. [14:15] And to that end, that's why I suggest the law of the Prophets and the writings because of its New Testament background, and then the Gospels Paul and the general Epistles [14:30] of which 'course I'd include Revelations, and in the Gospels I tend to include Acts because Luke is a Gospel writer, it's a two-part work.

Now, at this point I've made a choice of content [14:45] informed by history, as opposed to an historical sequence. What I mean is, I am well aware that most people think [15:00] that a lot of Pauline Epistles

were written before the Gospels. I predict the day will come, when we'll know that those Gospels were written much earlier than are currently argued. The old argument was, there was no need to have Gospels [15:15] until the Apostles were gone is absolutely ludicrous to me on the face of it. How having an Apostle in Jerusalem is gonna help you in Syria remember the teachings of Christ, I can't say [15:30].

And again, read Richard Bach among some of that, but I'm just spouting ignorance now without much time left. That's my prediction. Nonetheless, let's for argument's sake say several of the Paulines were written before the earliest Gospel. [15:45] I've chosen to make a content decision that reflects history, in other words, even if the Gospels were written after Thessalonians, this is the starting point of Christianity. [16:00] Christ's life. And we'll start with the Gospels and Acts, because Paul self-consciously reflects on Christ as he knew him. We see this. [16:15] In a variety of text. And he's already dealin' with church problems that have to do with knowledge of Christ. And in the general Epistles, it's good to deal with Paul in a block, it's absolutely true that some of the general Epistles may have been written, and probably were written, before the last of Paul's [16:30] Epistles.

But if you read the general Epistles, you will see they have many of the same themes that are distinct to them, not necessarily in opposition to Paul, but definitely different than Paul. [16:45] And that Revelation fits in, at least the first three or four chapters sure fit in, so I've made a conscious decision to have a reading program that does not neglect history, that uses history to give us our background but to build biblical theology as content for it [17:00] and so same thing, law, Prophets, writings, Gospels, Paul, general Epistles. This is not the only way to read for biblical theology, but it is a legitimate way, is my argument. But you're going to need a reading strategy [17:15] if you're going to do biblical theology or teach it to others because, if you just skip around and today, read Jeremiah 31, and tomorrow read Romans 8, and the next day read Nehemiah 5, like a whole lot of devotional plans go [17:30], we are not gonna collect much information over time, but we'll have a lot of significant devotional moments, not making fun of that. But this is no way to build personal maturity and leadership over time. [17:45] And that's supposedly what we're all involved in.

So I think you're gonna have to have a reading strategy, as simple as that sounds, I think I bumped into that as a college student. I was a literature major and a Bible major [18:00] at the same time, and I decided that if I could read a hundred pages a day in my Lit major, I could read twenty pages of Bible a day, and what, I read the Bible through four or five times a year and things began to [18:15] come clear to me.

That was very helpful at that point. So you can work carefully and systematically through the whole canon, you should be able to do it even if your average person can't, by the time you have a [inaudible] you should be able [18:30] to read all the way through the [inaudible] without saying, "I just can't read about those sacrifices, I just can't make it." [laughter in background] You should have enough personal maturity and endurance to do it.

Student 1: [18:43] Are you saying it's best just to read straight through it? Or…

Dr. House: [18:45] With a plan. If you wanna get the whole, if we're gonna do the whole biblical theology, you gotta pick something. And what I would do, I would pick law Prophets right what I just mentioned. It is not a horrible thing to read it [19:00] through an English Bible order. I'm just gonna remind you that I think a biblical theologian has to think the thoughts of at least the New Testament writers after them, and they thought in terms of law, Prophets, and writing. That's my point. [19:15] So if I'm gonna be able to most enter in to New Testament people to make the connection with the Old Testament and pull this thing together, it's not gonna hurt for me to think of the Bible the way they did.

Student 1: [19:24] Is, is there a good Jewish… [inaudible] in English?

Dr. House: [19:28] Oh sure. The Jewish Publication Society [19:30] publishes an Old Testament. Or, you can just read your Bible in that order, based on the Old Testament theologies set up in that order. If you read it the way it is, you would still be able to pull out a whole lot of things except [19:45] you're gonna have the writings and… the way the English Bible is set up is basically law, writings, and Prophets. And I think that's fundamentally a mistake if you wanna note that the Psalms, for instance, reflect on the law and the Prophets.

[20:00] Again, there're gonna be a lotta worse things than readin' the Bible through in the English order. [laughs] But I would make that shift in order to think of it the way the New Testament did, and to reflect on the text the way the writings do. [20:15] Chronicles is reflecting on the canon from Genesis on, and it cites Psalms, it legimately should come at the end of the Old Testament. I have been astounded [20:30] starting with the fact that the book of Chronicles takes almost verbatim whole sections of genealogy out of Genesis to get started. It quotes more scripture per page [20:45] than any other book of the Bible, with the possible exception of Hebrews.

Self-consciously does so. It includes the Psalms in that, so I'm just saying. All I'm trying to do, it's not illegitimate, 'cause somebody said, we talk about canonical reading, "well, which canon [21:00], I'm, y'know, there're some canons where Job and Proverbs are flip-flopped" [laughter in background.] And I say things like, "it's still, in the New Testament: law, Prophets, writings [laughs]." You got at least start thinkin' in those terms. [21:15] So that's what I would urge. Remember then to do a second thing, get a reading strategy, but then go book-by-book exegesis, 'nother words, know what's in each book. You won't be [21:30] foolproof on this, but if you said to yourself, "okay, gimme the highlights of Leviticus, or, gimme the highlights of Jonah," your laypeople think you can do that anyway.

[laughter in background]

They walk up to ya and ask you any ol' question they want to [21:45], they're gonna think you've got that in mind anyway. So have that in mind, and then have a mindset that says, "I'm building my theology as I go, Genesis to Exodus, to…" note distinct themes, and also note the same ones [22:00] - I'm in Exodus already, I have these themes that have continued from Genesis, I have these new themes that are gonna go on and be picked up. Think like that, distinctively, but also synthetically, and [22:15] then, having done that, say, "okay, if I had to, I can say, these are the major themes of the Old and the New Testament."

You can't have 500 major themes [22:30]. You must decide what amounts to a major theme and stress it. You're going to do that in your preaching and teaching anyway, you might as well do it self-consciously. If you don't do it self-consciously, [22:45] you'll listen to a whole bunch of tapes, uh, of your sermons, if you can stand it, then what you will realize is, there are three or four things I emphasize over and over again. That might be good. Or it might not be. Try to [23:00] pull together senses, and keep thinking as you're reading. A minister or informed layperson oughta have two types of Bible reading going, one that's holistic, and one that's kinda specific. [23:15] And it kind of depends on where you are and why you're doing each one.

Remind yourself that then when you get to themes, when you preach and teach a text, you would think of these themes. For instance, last Sunday [23:30], when I was preaching in First Thessalonians, what you have there is faith, hope, and love, adapted to this situation. But those are major biblical themes and how they play out there can even be true in a specific context. [23:45] So begin to think in those ways, read and

interpret in those ways, then you'll find yourself, I think, being able to use the small bits to create a big bit. [24:00]

Remind yourself every day that you do this that this is a lifelong process. Used to think, if this was the beginning point, and this was the ending point, if I could write a book, or preach a series of sermons [24:15], or read or study or whatever, I knew I would never reach a goal, but I'd think I'm way up here. Now I realize, if I started here… I'm about here. [laughter in background] [24:30] This is a lifelong process. You're not gonna know everything at the beginning, but hopefully, y'know, if you're gonna live another forty or fifty years or whatever, you're gonna be farther along. But this is a long-term process.

[24:45] I've had people been all, "aw, y'know, I'm 50." Well, in four years, you'll be 54. What do you want to have then? So dig in and begin to do this work, and then start taking note where your gaps are [25:00]. Say, "I realize that this is an area where I really need to do work." What I just said, here are some areas that I just said to ya, I oughta be doin' some more work, if I wanna know what I wanna know. That'd be helpful, people. So work on those [25:15] and you will find, I think my experience has been, I've had a growing appreciation for the Trinity. I've had a growing appreciation of what it means to be part of the people of God [25:30] worldwide. I've had a growing appreciation for the church, even on the worst days. And I've sensed that, for instance, if I do a canonical study of suffering [25:45], I've grown up some.

So those are just some things I would personally address. I'm a big believer that you can either do fragmented theology or you [26:00] can try to have something that holds together. And I would rather do the latter. If you don't want to do that, now you don't have to any more. [laughter in background] You don't even have to try. [26:15]

On preaching, and biblical theology, Graeme - G.R.A.E.M.E. is the first name - Gold, as in G.O.L.D., Goldsworthy is his last name [26:30], G.O.L.D.S.W.O.R.T.H.Y. Biblical theologian, from Australia, preaching the whole Bible as Christian scripture. Working from a salvation history approach, he's talking all about [26:45] biblical theology, how to preach, how to teach, he has prior books to this one on biblical theology, this one's in the bookstore. It can get ponderous at times. But it's still, the goal is [27:00], how can I preach biblical theology and preach Christ from the whole of it. I think sometimes he gets Christ into passages where Christ is not, but that is a rare thing and this is in the right direction.

[27:15] You also have, in your own faculty, Frank Thielman's done good work, on the theology of Paul, [inaudible] New Testament theology, and he has also done good work on the New Testament and the law. So you have local resources.