

# Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 1, Adamic Covenant, Part 1

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This is Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus in his teaching on Biblical Theology. This is session 1, Adamic Covenant, Part 1.

Hi, I'm Jeff Niehaus. I teach Old Testament and Biblical Theology at Gordon-Conwell Seminary, and I'm here today to talk with you about the Biblical covenants. What we will do is go through each covenant, talk about its essential qualities and nature, and how it fits into the overall pattern of what the Lord is doing with human beings through history before and after the fall. I'd like to start by putting before you this: well, I don't know how this will show up here, but here it is.

Is that big enough, do you think? This is a page from the end of the Prolegomena of my Biblical Theology, the first volume of it, and it lays out different covenant schemes that have been proposed, several of them quite recently. So, the classic thing that is called covenant theology, people use that term very loosely, but covenant theology classically understood is something that originated in the 17th century and perhaps the most well-known articulation of it is the Westminster Confession. But the idea is that you had an Adamic covenant, which was a covenant of works, and the idea there is that because all of the covenants entail works after all, and you see the next category is the covenant of grace, well, all of the covenants are gracious because the idea of grace is that it's a gift and there would be no divine-human covenant unless the Lord gave it.

So why a covenant of works? Why a covenant of grace? The thinking is, according to this model, that before the fall, Adam and his wife could have done the work; they could have done everything needed to fulfill the covenant, and so it's called a covenant of works. After the fall, it's impossible for any human being to fulfill any of God's covenantal requirements completely, and so all of that has to be considered. Then, those covenants can exist and continue because of grace. And all of the biblical covenants after the Adamic covenant are lumped together and called a covenant of grace.

Now, there are a couple of problems with the use of the terminology. One is that in the ancient world, no one would have lumped together a bunch of related and yet different covenants and called them one covenant, so it's not a use of the term covenant that's consistent with the way the word was used; the concept was used in the ancient Near East. The other problem with it is that the Noahic covenant is a common grace covenant, and it is, in fact, a renewal of the Adamic covenant, and yet

the covenant of grace scheme lumps it together with the Abrahamic through the new, which are all special grace covenants.

So common grace means that it's a covenant that is given to everybody in the world, and that's true of the Adamic and the Noahic. Those are continuing. Everybody is born under them. According to the Adamic covenant, for instance, and the Noahic, we're all being fruitful and multiplying, and most of us are.

We're filling the earth, we're subduing it, we're dying, which was one of the problems that came from the disobedience to the Adamic covenant, and so on. Whereas the Abrahamic covenant begins when the planet makes a special covenant with him, and that has to do with salvation. The Adamic and Noahic covenants have nothing to do with salvation, and they just keep the planet going.

So that God's special grace program of salvation can take place and continue on that planet. So, the Abrahamic is the start of that, and the new covenant is its culmination. But this classic 17th-century schema obscures all of that.

And it's got to be understood, with all charity and honesty, that in the 17th century, people didn't know what ancient Near Eastern covenants or treaties were. So, this was their best way of articulating and reconstructing the program that God has, and given what they knew, it's not a bad attempt. But we can do better because we know more.

A scheme that was proposed more recently was by John Walton in his book *The Covenant*. Walton correctly realizes and displays that the Noahic covenant is different from the Abrahamic through the new because it's a common grace covenant, whereas the others are special grace. However, he does the same thing that the classic covenant theologians in the 17th century did by using the term covenant to embrace a number of different, although related, covenants.

And so, he takes all of the special grace covenants and calls them the covenant. You'll note also, which I think is not a good use of terminology because, again, it's not using the term covenant the way an ancient Near Eastern person or a biblical person would have understood it. And we want to understand the Bible as they understood it.

You'll note in his reconstruction that there's no Adamic covenant. So, he is one of a minority of scholars who think there never was an Adamic covenant. And we'll talk a lot more about that soon.

Another way of looking at all of this has been proposed by William D'Umbrell, and Scott Haefemann has taken this view as well, that all of the covenants constitute one covenant relationship, or even you might say one covenant. And in fact, if you've got one covenant relationship, you have one covenant. There's no real difference there.

This, of course, blurs all the distinctions that we've talked about. And moreover, it has its own problems. I'll just hint at one now, but we'll look at it again later.

If we say that all of these covenants embody one covenant relationship, well, let's consider the relationship a person had to the Lord under the Mosaic covenant. He had all these rules to obey. If he sinned, he had to bring an animal and have it slaughtered at the temple, and so on.

Well, as Hebrews says, the blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin. Those things were only typological. And moreover, there's no temple, there's no priesthood now to bring a sacrifice to.

And in fact, Christ is our sacrifice, the completely sufficient one. So, we don't have to do any of that. Moreover, we have the Holy Spirit in us, as they did not have it under the covenant, and we'll talk about that.

So, the relationship that we have with God under the new covenant is quite different, structurally and dynamically, from the relationship that a person under the Mosaic covenant had, for instance. So, it doesn't really make good sense to talk about one covenant relationship. So, what do we propose here? I propose something here that I think is true to the way the concept of covenant was used in the ancient Near East and in the Bible.

The Adamic covenant, for whose existence we will argue, and the Noahic covenant together constitute, they are both common grace covenants. Since the Noahic renewed the Adamic, a good way to put that together would be to form one legal package. What does that mean? It means that everybody in the world today is living under both of these covenants, whether they think there's a God or not.

A good example of this later in the Bible is the Mosaic covenant, in fact. The Lord makes a covenant with Israel at Sinai. He renews that covenant with the next generation in Deuteronomy on the plains of Moab.

So, the covenant, the Mosaic covenant, the Sinai covenant, and its renewal, the Moab covenant, let's call it Deuteronomy, together form one legal package. So, if you ask any Jewish believer today, well, that is a person who thinks he's under the Mosaic covenant and doesn't believe that Jesus is Christ. If you ask him, well, are you under the Sinai covenant or the Moab covenant? He'll think, well, you know, what are you talking about? It's one covenant.

And indeed, the New Testament refers to these together as the *nomos*, the law. So that's a good example, and I think that can help illuminate what's going on with the

Adamic and Noahic covenant. I should add that in the ancient Near East, a lot of this relates to the Hittite treaty form, of course, and their practices.

When the Hittite emperor renewed a covenant, a treaty, with the son of a king who had been his vassal, so the son is the new vassal, both of those together, the treaty that the suzerain, the emperor, the Hittite king had had with the vassal king, and the treaty that he is now, he's renewing that with the dead king's son, together those two treaties form one legal package. And the way the Hittites expressed this was the deal that your father had with me, you now have with me. So that's just a thumbnail sketch of all that.

What, then, about the special grace covenants? Well, they are very much interrelated, and yet each one is different. We talked about the differences between the Mosaic and the New Covenant, for example. There are four special grace or revelation covenants, and there they are.

And the Abrahamic covenant, as people have understood, and as we will see and talk about, embodies foreshadowings or promises, anticipations of the Mosaic, the Davidic, and the New. And we will argue, though, that the Abrahamic, the Mosaic, and the Davidic Covenant covenants no longer function as covenants because they've all been taken up and fulfilled in the New Covenant through Christ. So, one might say that, in a sense, they live on in the New Covenant, but none of them functions anymore.

The Abrahamic covenant, the sign for that is circumcision, and we're not to be circumcised as a covenant sign anymore. So, if the sign that is needed for entry into the Abrahamic covenant has been abrogated, then the covenant can't be functioning anymore. We know that the Mosaic covenant no longer functions as a covenant.

Hebrews says it's passing away. It was not sufficient. Colossians 2 says that Christ nailed it to the cross.

He canceled it. And the Davidic covenant, of course, has been fulfilled in Christ. He is now the King of Kings, and there will not be another king over Israel, even the true Israel, the Israel of God, which is the church.

So that's a sketch. That's an anticipation of where we're heading with this. And we'll begin then by looking at the Adamic or creation covenant.

Okay, and this will recapitulate briefly, but you can have the very words before you, some of the ideas we've used, talked about in an introductory fashion. From the Westminster Confession, the first covenant made with man was a covenant of works wherein life was promised to Adam and in him to his posterity upon condition of perfect and personal obedience. And then man, by his fall, having made himself

incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace, wherein he freely offers unto sinners the life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, and so on.

A lot of true things in there, of course. The problem, as we've indicated, is the characterizations, the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace, which are not true to the way the term covenant was used in the ancient world or in the Bible, arguably. Then, John Walton's book.

If we depend on the biblical text to identify such covenants, that is, the divine-human covenants for us, we find the first covenant in the time of Noah. Now, as it will appear in a moment in the notes, there's a problem here, which scholars sometimes commit, if I may say so. And that is, they think if the term isn't there, the thing isn't there.

And that's simply not a sustainable point of view. But that's the thing. He says the Adamic covenant is not called a covenant, which is quite true.

Therefore, there's no covenant there. Then, the next point is that while the covenant with Noah clearly represents an agreement between God and man, because indeed it is called a covenant in the Noahic narratives, it's not to be included in God's program of special revelation. And as we've said, that's, we quite agree with that.

It is a common grace thing, not a special grace thing. Anthony Herkimer, similarly, in his book on the image of God, which is a very fine book, notes that, well, as regards an Adamic covenant, the Bible does not call this arrangement a covenant. But then someone will say, well, what about Hosea 6-7? Like Adam, they have broken the covenant.

It is ambiguous, in fact, because, after all, in Hebrew, the term Adam can simply mean humanity. If it means humanity, then it could refer to the Noahic covenant. And in fact, that seems to be indicated in Isaiah 24, as we will see.

But again, the fact that the term isn't used doesn't mean that the thing doesn't exist. The Bible doesn't call God a either. And yet, God is a triune God.

I would add that the Bible doesn't call Noah a prophet, but it seems quite clear from everything he does, the fact that he hears from God and relays his commands and mediates a covenant, that he's a prophet. So, another point here, according to Herkimer, is there's no indication in these early chapters of Genesis of a covenant oath or ratification ceremony. The same is true of the Noahic covenant, which is still called a covenant.

Herkimer recognizes this and says, well, since the Bible clearly calls this bestowal of divine grace, that is, the Noahic covenant, a covenant, we must also acknowledge it to be such, even though there's no record of either a covenant oath or covenant ratification. As we'll see, there are reasons, I think, why there is no covenant ratification in the common grace covenants, but those are Herkimer's main points against an Adamic covenant. Well, we'd note then that if the Noahic covenant can be called one without an oath or ratification, the Adamic covenant can be a covenant without them, too.

Well, what evidence is there then for an Adamic covenant? This is something that I first proposed to God at Sinai, and I think it has some merit to it, but it needs to be understood. The Second Millennium B.C. The treaty form is something that was produced by the Hittites. It was used by Moses in articulating the divine-human covenants, and it even shows up in its essentials in the Davidic covenant, which is much later than Moses.

The First Millennium B.C. Hittite, rather, treaty form, I should note, is different. It lacks a historical prologue. It lacks blessings, and the reigning power then, the great empire then, was the Assyrian empire, and more than one scholar has noted that the Assyrians, whom one might compare to the Nazis of recent history, who ruled by absolute brutality, would reconquer rebellious vassals, skin them alive, drape their skins on the city walls, blind them, cut off their hands, and so on, they didn't feel the need to promise any blessings to anybody who might obey their treaties, and they didn't provide a historical prologue.

The historical prologue and the blessings are motivational factors. The historical prologue aims to show the good things the suzerain has done for the vassal, and so the vassal should obey the treaty. The blessings are the good things that the gods will do for the vassal if the vassal is obedient, and so, again, the vassal should obey the treaty.

The thinking goes that in the First Millennium with the Assyrians, they didn't feel the need to promise such things. They were motivated by fear, not by promises or trying to remind anyone of how good they'd been to them. So, in any case, the biblical divine-human covenants in the Old Testament are all parallel and have the essential elements of the Second Millennium Treaty form that was in use.

Just incidentally, Moses, having been brought up as a prince of Egypt, would have received a diplomatic education. He would have been fully aware of this form. The Hittites and the Egyptians had treaties together during that period.

So, what do we find when we look at Genesis 1.1 through 2.3? We find that it has the essential elements of a Second Millennium Treaty. It has a title. The title in the

treaties would introduce the suzerain or the emperor, the great king, as the term was.

And so, what do we read in Genesis 1.1? We read that in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Well, that might not sound like a claim of kingship, but in the ancient world, it was universally understood that if a god was a creator god, he was the king over everything, and all authority came from him. So, a person in Moses' day or later who read Genesis 1.1 would have understood that the claim is being made that this Elohim, God, is the creator.

He's not only the creator, but he's the king of everything. He's the suzerain. He's the emperor.

The historical prologue is presented in the treaties as the words of the great king. And so what about that? Well, the point there is that the treaty for the Hittites was going to structure the life of the vassal. The treaty gave all the terms under which the vassal would have to live and the terms the vassal would have to obey.

Here, you have the creation of the world by the Lord, by his words. And so, the Lord, as the great king, is literally structuring the reality in which the vassal, the man, and the woman will be living. And so there's that parallel.

There are stipulations in the ancient Near Eastern treaties, things the vassal had to do, and you have those in Genesis 1.28. There was a deposition. There was a regular reading in the treaties. The point there was each king would have a copy of the treaty.

Each king would deposit his copy in the temple of his gods. Of course, we're talking polytheistic cultures here. And there would be regular readings so that neither king would inadvertently break the treaty.

Of course, we get this with the Decalogue. It's deposited in the tabernacle. And in Deuteronomy, when the covenant is renewed, in Deuteronomy 17, we're told that any future king should make himself a copy of this so that he can read it and not inadvertently break the covenant.

So, a lot of parallels there. Those things don't exist here because God did not give Adam and his wife a written treaty. And that's something important to understand about this narrative and all the other biblical covenant narratives as well.

We don't ever have a treaty document from the Lord. The closest thing to it is Deuteronomy. But what we have is a succession of biblical narratives that embody and articulate the covenants that the Lord made.

That's what Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 is. It's a narrative passage that articulates God's covenantal structuring of the cosmos and putting the man and woman in it. And so that's the way these things are presented.

And so, but it has been understood, of course, that these narratives enshrine the covenants, so to speak. 2 Samuel 7, for instance, gives us the Davidic covenant. The word covenant is never used there.

And yet it's understood to be the articulation of the covenant the Lord then makes with David. And we'll be looking at that. Well, these covenants also had witnesses.

In the treaty, the idea was that if the treaty were broken by the vassal, the gods would bring punishment on the covenant breaker, the treaty breaker. In Genesis 1, 31, arguably, we have God as a witness to what he has done. He sees it all and he says it's very good.

So, he is the witness to all that. There are blessings, as we've indicated. He blesses the man and the woman, and he gives them these stipulations.

He blesses the seventh day, Genesis 2:3. There's also the curse element in Genesis 2.17b, where Adam is told that you don't eat the fruit of this tree. We'll talk about the relationship between Genesis 1 and Genesis 2, but just to make this clear now in a brief way, Genesis 1 gives you the overall view. Genesis 2 zooms in on the relationship between God and the man and the woman.

So, in a sense, Genesis 2 zooms in on Genesis 1.27, when you read that God made the man and the woman, arguably, in his image. And so, this is not unusual with ancient Near Eastern narratives. You get a general account, and then you zoom in on some aspects of it.

All of that is to say that stuff that you read in Genesis 2 is pertinent to Genesis 1. It's a further narrative exploration or explanation of the nature of the relationship in what we're calling the Adamic covenant. So when you read a command and an injunction in Genesis 2:17 or a permission and an injunction that you made from any of the trees in the garden, but not of this one tree, that's understood to be something that's part of the deal. That's part of God's relationship with Adam in this thing, which is not called a covenant in the material in Genesis 1 or 2 or ever, but I hope the display shows that it has all the elements, or the key elements, that you would find in an ancient Near Eastern treaty.

So, I think if one is going to be fair-minded here, one has to be willing to agree that these elements in this narrative articulate a covenant relationship. What would be later called a covenant relationship? Now, if one wants to stop short of calling it a covenant, one can do that.



I don't know why one would do that because it's got all the guts of a covenant. It's got all the elements. I'll make another point here, and that is where this comes from. And I've argued this in volume one.

It's commonly thought that all these divine-human covenants have the elements of a Hittite treaty, so these biblical writers chose to employ a form that would be understood as a legal form. I think there's perhaps a better way of looking at the Genesis of all this, and there's no pun intended, and that is that all the divine-human covenants articulate something of God's nature. Genesis 1:1 through 2:3, the creation account, tells us things about God's nature.

He's a great king. He provides good things for his people. He blesses them.

He has requirements of them, and so on, and he's a witness to his own faithfulness and goodness. Later, in Revelation 1: 5, Jesus is called the faithful witness. He's a faithful witness to his father's nature and goodness.

So, all of these covenants articulate God's nature. Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 shows us that. In the fullness of time, the Hittites, developing an empire made in God's image, developed a form that articulated something like that, and why would that be? God's relationship to anyone or anything he has created is inevitably a power relationship, and so the Hittites being made in his image, not knowing him, but having an empire and creating power relationships with vassals came up with a legal form that articulated that power relationship and having the elements we've just talked about.

That's true today all over the world. If you have a job, you have a boss. The boss is your suzerain.

The boss provides you with good things, things you need for your workplace, a cubicle, a computer, a car, whatever. He or she has certain requirements, which are things you have to do on the job. If you do them, you're blessed.

You get to keep your job. You get a pay raise. You get a raise in position.

If you don't do what the arrangement has called for, you are cursed. You get a pay cut. You get demoted.

You get fired. And there are witnesses to that. There's a contract.

So, Genesis 1:1 through 2:3 and all these divine covenants articulate a power relationship between God and those who are parties to the covenant. And again, the Hittites, made in God's image, produced a form that shows that kind of relationship quite well. And so it shows up in the Bible as well.

What about other evidence for an Adamic covenant? Well, we have the Noahic covenant. In Genesis 6, the Lord says, I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark and so on. The verb here and the covenant idioms are used for the Noahic covenant.

The same ones are used in Genesis 17, and we'll talk in a minute about why that is so. The terms in Hebrew are Nathan berit and Hakim Berit. And they mean literally to give a covenant and to cause the covenant to stand.

The dictionaries will tell you, among various definitions or explanations of these verbs, that these idioms verbs can mean the first one, Nathan, to give, and the next one, to cause to stand. But one understanding of these verbs is to put into effect. And that's the argument, that's the understanding I would argue for here in these passages.

So, the concept then opens the door to this idea that there is a covenant that exists, and the Lord is now going to put it into effect. This is especially relevant in Genesis 17, as we'll see because some people argue that Genesis 17 is a different covenant from Genesis 15. But the better way of seeing it, I believe, is that in Genesis 15, the Lord makes the covenant.

He cuts the covenant as the Hebrew idiom in Genesis 15:18. And then in Genesis 17, he puts it into effect. This isn't as strange as it might seem at first hearing.

You might sign a contract to sell your house. But it might be a few weeks before that's actually put into effect before the person who has bought the house moves into it, and you're completely moved out of it. So, it's not a strange concept at all.

Why is it used in, why are these terms used in the Noahic covenant? And what are the implications? Well, the implications, I'm not going to read every bit of my notes here, and here are slightly various translations of these verbs, which I've also used, but which pretty much carry out the same thing, to carry out covenant or put into effect, to give it, to put it into effect, go on giving it. Why are these terms used in the Noahic covenant? Dumbrel has noticed in his book that we referenced the use of these verbs, which suggests that there's a preexisting covenant, which they are reaffirming. And I think that's very close to the truth.

That's part of the picture. So, in other words, the use of these verbs in the Noahic materials indicates that the Lord is not exactly making a completely new covenant. He is renewing a covenant that already exists.

I think there's another reason, though, for using these terms. The term that is usually used in the Old Testament for making a covenant is qarat berit, or to cut a covenant. And the ceremony that we read in Genesis 15, where the Lord has Abraham cut

animals in half and then he passes between the pieces, very clearly shows the meaning of that idiom.

Well, that kind of cutting and that kind of passage, what would happen there in the ancient world was the suzerain would make a treaty with the vassal. The animals would be cut and set apart, just as you read in Genesis 15. And then the vassal would walk between the pieces.

And the symbolism is, well, if I, the vassal, break the treaty, then may the same fate befall me that has befallen these animals. And in fact, Jeremiah 34 records exactly this. Well, in these common grace covenants, there's no such curse.

That is to say, the special grace covenants. If you are disobedient sufficiently, you can be cut out of them. The Mosaic covenant is perhaps the clearest example of that, but we'll talk more about it. You can't be cut out of the common grace covenants, arguably.

You'll die, we all die, but you can be a very bad person and break all sorts of standards that the Lord would have you live by, and yet go on living to a ripe old age. So, a different idiom was needed, arguably, in Genesis 9, where the Lord finally does this, or puts into effect, or reaffirms, or renews this covenant. And so these idioms are used so that the idea is clearly conveyed that there's a covenant going on here, but it's not one out of which one may be cut.

Well, what about evidence from the prophets for an Adamic covenant? We've mentioned Hosea 6:7, and the ambiguity of that. But also in Jeremiah, Jeremiah speaks of the Lord's decrees that regulate the shining of the sun, moon, and stars. That term decree is a technical term, *terminus technicus* here, because if you don't use some Latin and German sometimes, people don't think you're really an expert.

So, you've got to throw those terms in now and then. So, these are terms that are used in the realm of covenant, and we know that from the Mosaic covenant. And then in Jeremiah 33, very explicitly, the Lord is talking, incidentally, in these passages from Jeremiah about his faithfulness to the Davidic covenant.

So, he's saying that if you can break my covenant with the day and my covenant with the night so that day and night will not come at their appointed time, then I will not be faithful to David. And likewise, in verse 25, thus says, Yahweh, if I have not established my covenant with day and night and with the ordinances of heaven and earth. These statements and the phrases they use, day and night, heaven and earth, shining of sun, moon, and stars, and so on, they certainly seem to point back to Genesis 1 with covenantal terminology in this case.

So, we've said before that the Adamic covenant is not called a covenant in the Bible. And if we're going to be strict about it, which we should be, that's true. However, these statements by Jeremiah are highly suggestive that the created order was covenantal in its nature.

Well, what about New Testament evidence? Well, there's Jesus as the second Adam, of course. And Jesus is the mediator of the new covenant. And so if he's the second Adam, and he's a prophet, he hears from his father, and he does what his father says to do, these have obvious parallels with Adam.

He certainly heard from God. He did for a while, presumably what God told him to do. God was his father.

Luke's genealogy goes backward and refers to Adam as the first son of God. So if Adam is parallel to Jesus in these various ways, it would make sense that he's also parallel to Jesus as a covenant mediator. There's also, and let me just make a comment about that, too, as we will see.

There are, I think, ways to understand the categories of prophets in the Bible. There are two large categories, certainly in the Old Testament and with Jesus and the new. There is a category that should be called covenant mediator prophets.

These are prophets through whom God mediates a covenant to a larger group of people. And so arguably here, Adam is the first, Noah is the next, and Abram comes after that, and then Moses and David, and then, of course, in the New Testament, Jesus as the mediator of the new and final divine-human covenant. Other prophets that we read about in the Old Testament could well be categorized as covenant lawsuit messengers.

And these really appear under the Mosaic covenant because that's the first time that God's people have a law that is expressed and that they have to obey. And when they don't obey it, the prophets, the Lord, raise up prophets to bring lawsuits against them as lawbreakers. I think that can even happen in the church sometimes, although, as Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14, the person who prophesies edifies the church.

So probably, usually in the church, prophecy is meant for encouragement, perhaps instruction. But then again, rebuke can be edifying, too. So I think there's room for that.

Anyway, I think those categories would serve us well when we think about prophets in the Bible and how they function. But back to the evidence for an Adamic covenant. Well, if we look at Jesus as the second Adam, we also look at the results of his work.

It's going to eventuate in a new humanity. And those who have received the spirit already have a foretaste of what that means as we are being made new creatures in Christ; as Paul says in 2 Corinthians 5, whoever's in Christ is a new crisis, a new creature, a new creation. But we also anticipate a new heaven and earth.

So, if you have the new humanity and the new heaven and earth being produced through the new covenant, through the mediatorship of the second Adam, that would argue that the first Adam is also a mediator of a covenant. All right, what about the anthropology of the covenant? What does Genesis 1 tell us about human nature? Well, Genesis 1.26 says, let us make the human in our image, in our likeness. Those terms, image, and likeness, you know, we reckon that the Lord gave this material through Moses in order to communicate to people so that people could understand it.

Well, those terms, tselem and demuth in Hebrew, both, they pretty much mean the same thing. And what they mean is a formal outline. They are both used of statues, which obviously are meant to resemble the original.

Kings in the ancient Near East, the same terms appear in the ancient Near East. Kings talk about statues being made of themselves, images, or likenesses. And so a person in Moses' day or after in the ancient world who read Genesis 1.26 would naturally think, well, that God is saying he's going to make human beings to have the same form that he does.

Genesis 5:1 through 3 parallels these things because it starts out talking about how God made Adam in his image and likeness. And then you read when Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image, in the same words, and he named him Seth. Clearly, Adam's son had the same form that he did.

He had a head, shoulders, torso, arms, and so on. And so, as we will see in the Bible, explore this a bit later: whenever the Lord appears in a glorious theophany and is described to any extent, he has a human form. And there's no contradiction.

Somebody will say, well, but God is spirit. That doesn't mean he can't have a form. The risen Christ has a glorified body, but he's also a life-giving spirit.

He's also omnipresent. So, these things are not inherently contradictory, although superficially, they might seem to be so. But we'll explore all that.

What about God's creation, then, when it actually takes place, of the man and the woman? That is set up in Hebrew poetry for us. This is the first Hebrew poetry in the Bible. And incidentally, sometimes you'll read commentators or Bible study authors talking about Genesis 1 as poetry.

That's true only in a very figurative sense. Hebrew poetry is a very particular thing. It's a genre.

It has rules. Here is the first example. We might say, for instance, that a sunset is poetic.

Well, you can say Genesis 1 is poetic in that sense. It's obviously lofty prose. It's magnificently structured.

But it's not poetry in the technical sense. But this poetry is set up, I think, to show us something. So, if we look down at the English-only diagram here, translation, God created the Adam, the earthling.

Adam means earth or soil. He created the Adam in his image. In the image of God, he created him.

Male and female, he created them. The A's, B's, and C's are meant to show the parallel elements. So, God created.

In the second line, he created. In the third line, he created. God created what? The direct object is Adam, the man.

In the second line, God created him. The third line, God created them. Well, that leaves the C element.

I use the primes as a way of showing that these are parallel elements, but they're not exactly the same words. This is just a convention in diagramming Hebrew poetry. The third line, he created them.

We've taken care of that. Well, what about male and female? If there's going to be a C element in the third line to parallel the other C's, it's going to be male and female. And I think we're invited to understand that that's the case.

So, this poem is set up to tell us, I believe, that God created male and female in his image, in the image of God. So, both males and females are created in the image of God. Well, what are the implications of that? Both males and females show the image.

That is to say, in the terms we were talking about, what do the terms mean? Basically, they show the outline. Now, a lot of other things would probably be implied there. Certainly, the ability to communicate, to understand, as God does, because he tells them things and they understand them.

The ability to rule as he rules. They're going to rule over the earth as vassals if you will. Vassal king and queen.

However, any differentiation between the roles of the male and the female is not addressed here. Nor is it implied. So that's important to understand.

This poem gives us a lot of information, but there's a lot that it doesn't give us. It doesn't tell us about their roles. You do get role issues addressed in the next verse, in Genesis 1.28, when God blesses them and says to them, be fruitful and increase in number, fill the earth and subdue it, rule over the fish, and so on.

Now, are role differences addressed there? Well, in a small way. One might not consider it too small. They're going to be fruitful.

And human biology, we reckon, hasn't changed so much that we can't understand this. There's a difference between the roles of male and female in producing carrying and giving birth to a child. So, we know there's some role differentiation there.

But that's all that tells us. Presumably, in the more advanced stages of pregnancy, the woman would not have been able to do certain things in terms of subduing the earth that she might have been doing before. But we can't be speculating about that.

But I think it's important in the early going, in these early chapters, to be very strict with ourselves about the limits of the evidence. A lot of people want to see equality from this egalitarian point of view. There are other things in these early chapters that people want to see as indicating a hierarchical relationship in marriage or a complementary view.

And I would argue that in all these early materials, you have a lot of ambiguity, a lot of uncertainty. And so, I think the answers to questions like that lie in the New Testament, where you get the fullest articulation of God's revelation on all sorts of things. And, of course, scholars disagree about these issues there, too.

But I think it is important to be strict with ourselves here for the sake of intellectual honesty and integrity. I sometimes use the example of Gordon Conwell, where I teach, and say, suppose you are told that the trustees of Gordon Conwell have told Haddon Robinson and Alan Matthews, Alice Matthews, they've given Haddon and Alice the mandate to administrate Gordon Conwell. Haddon Robinson was the president of Gordon Conwell for a while.

And Alice Matthews was his dean. But suppose you're not told that. Well, if you're told only that the trustees had given those to the mandate to administrate Gordon Conwell, to rule over Gordon Conwell, if you will, in terms of Genesis 1:28, would you

know that there's any difference in their roles? And the answer, I think, has to be, of course, you wouldn't know.

Having more information, in that case, we know that one was president and one was dean. So, one had a higher office, and so on. But Genesis 128, that's all it gives us.

And I think we've got to be honest about that. Okay. It is clear from Genesis 128 that royal function is assigned to both.

They're both going to rule. The cultural function is assigned to both. They're going to subdue the earth and so on.

Role differentiation is not stated, as we've just said, except for the matter of father and mother. It's long been thought and understood, and I think correctly so, that in Genesis 2, which, as we've said, expands upon what we learned in Genesis 1 in terms of the covenant relationship, Yahweh God took the Adam, the earthling, planted him in the Garden of Eden to work it and serve it and work or serve it and keep it. The verb work, *avad*, point A there, is used of Levitical service in the tabernacle, as is the verb *shamar*, point B. So the implication of a priestly function has been understood.

This, of course, would carry with it the idea that Eden was the first temple. And I think there's evidence for that, which we'll look at. At this point, we think of a temple as a building.

But a temple in the ancient world simply meant a place where the God dwelt. The older form of it we have in Sumerian means literally a big house. And the Hebrew word for temple is just a transliteration of that.

That's why students who are in Hebrew will learn that that word, *hekal*, can either mean a palace or a temple. So, the king is a king, he has a palace, a *hekal*, he has a big house. God is God; he has a big house, too, a temple.

But the point is that a temple in the ancient world was a residence. That's how the tabernacle could be, in effect, the temple. That's how we can be called temples.

We're not made with blocks of stone and beams and so on, but we are a residence. We're a place where the God, the Holy Spirit, resides. So, the indications would be then that they had a priestly role or priestly roles in the garden, whatever those would have been.

We're not told, really, beyond working it and keeping it. And that would mean that that was a place where God also hung out, where he resided. I once saw a poster that said God's original plan was to hang out in a garden with two naked vegetarians.



I don't know how that would have looked, but indications are that God resided there, not necessarily that he was always visible there. Another role is the prophetic. They hear from God.

That's clearly a prophetic thing. Adam, as we've argued, is a covenant mediator. If there's an Adamic covenant, then Adam's the mediator of it.

And as a mediator, he's a mediator of that covenant to all his offspring, with all of its implications, unfortunately. So Paul can say that in Adam, all die. But then in the second Adam, all will be made alive.

And the implications in terms of our daily life, too, are not all that great. Just as sin entered the world through one man and death through sin, and in this way, death came to all people because all sinned, and so on. And we can talk more about this later when we talk about the new covenant, death reigning from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, and so on.

But sin is in the world because of the sin of the covenant mediator, arguably. And then, as we've talked about briefly, we will discuss the parallel of the second Adam. The first man, Adam, became a living being.

The last is Adam, a life-giving spirit. Well, if the last Adam was a covenant mediator, one would not be surprised if the first Adam were a covenant mediator before him. There's also the ethical or moral aspect of the Imago Dei.

And we have the stipulations that we've talked about, and the covenant breaking that we've talked about, too. And so, the point being here that made in the image of God before the fall, the man and his wife were morally perfect beings. They were without sin.

A Puritan writer from the 16th and 1700s created this structure, which is pretty useful, I think. Man before the fall, able to sin. Yes, he could sin, and we know he could because he did.

But he was also able not to sin, which, unfortunately, he did not continue. Post-fall man, certainly able to sin. Unable not to sin, and I raise a question about that, which we'll look at in a moment.

I think the intent of Thomas Boston there was to say that you might live a life and not sin in certain ways, but you could not live a life without sinning at all. I think that's what he meant because clearly, though, we are able to live and not sin all the time, certainly, especially with the Holy Spirit. But anyway, reborn man is able to sin, able to not sin, and we all know that.

Glorified man, to which we look forward to when we see him, we'll be like him. We'll be able to not sin, and we'll be, apparently, unable to sin. Well, what about unable not to sin? I'd rather not split the infinitives as he did, but Romans 7, you have man under the law, and we'll look at that, but I think that's really what's going on there.

Paul is not describing himself as a Christian. He's describing what it was like to be under the law without the Spirit, and he knew that very well. But in Genesis 4.24, we read that Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Well, to walk with God that's a pretty powerful statement. He must have had some goodness in him. There were some times he was not sinning.

Genesis 7, the Lord says to Noah, come into the ark, you and all your household. I've seen that you are righteous before me in this generation. So again, Noah was righteous.

It's not that he was without sin, but he, to be righteous, is to. This is another topic, but I'll just give a thumbnail sketch of it here. Righteousness, the basic definition of righteousness, is conformity to a standard. Biblically, the only standard that counts is God, and so if a person is righteous in the Old Testament or the New, that person is conforming to the standard of God's being and doing to whatever extent perhaps he can, or she can, under whatever covenant and degree of revelation he or she is living.

Jesus Christ did it perfectly. That's why he's called Jesus Christ the righteous. And so when Noah is righteous, he's called righteous, which means that to some considerable extent, he was the way God would want a person to be.

Not perfectly, but so he would have some of those qualities of God. He'd have some goodness; he'd have some wisdom; he'd have some love; he'd have patience and so on, faithfulness, and so on. So, the long and the short of it is that people after the fall but before Christ could have some goodness in them could have some righteousness about them, which meant then I think that in the way they lived, they weren't always sinning all the time.

We might remember that Jesus says, you know, that the Father causes his son to shine on the righteous and the unrighteous and that his rain falls on the good and the bad. So, there were righteous and good people out there. Paul says in Romans 5 that, you know, it would be hard to die for a righteous person, but I suppose for a good man, one might even dare to die.

Presumably, he's talking about people under common grace. So, of course, he follows that with, but you know, Christ did this for us. He died for us and the unrighteous.

So, there are good people out there, and that must mean they were not sinning all the time. There are different ways, if we go back to the bigger view of the Adamic Covenant here, there are different ways of looking at the Adamic Covenant structurally. We've argued that it has the elements of a second-millennium treaty.

Meredith Klein, my old mentor, produced what is called the framework hypothesis, and I think it's a very good expression of looking at what's going on in Genesis 1 in another way. And this goes back to Augustine. Augustine sensed this balance of days.

The critical scholar S.R. Driver, late in the 19th century, saw this and talked about it in terms of days of form and fullness. But Klein, I think, was the only one who penetrated more deeply and saw that there are issues of authority here. And so he talked about the first three days as created domains and the next three as days in which the creature kings, the things that would rule over those domains, were created.

And this is not arbitrary. We read about the fourth day that God created the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. And, of course, the man and the woman to rule over the earth.

And one might imply or impute the same thing to the sea creatures and the birds. We might even today use the expression the birds rule the air. So there's authority involved there.

And then there's the Sabbath day. Other indications of authority in the passage, incidentally, and this was noted some time ago by the Jewish scholar of the ancient Near East, Umberto Cassuto, in his book, *Biblical and Oriental Studies*, that there's a lot of command fulfillment going on in Genesis 1 and in the Bible, in fact, for that matter. But the command fulfillment pattern is this way, and it's found in the ancient Near Eastern inscriptions too.

In the third millennium and the second millennium. In Jesus's ministry in Matthew 8, when the centurion comes to him, he wants his servant to be healed. And Jesus is prepared to go and heal him.

But the centurion says, no, I'm not worthy of having you come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed because I'm a man under authority, and I have those under me. I say to this one, go, and he goes, command fulfillment. To this one, come, and he comes, command fulfillment.

To this one, do it, and he does it, command fulfillment. The reason for the pattern or what it's meant to show is that the authority of the one giving the command is such that what that person commands has to be obeyed to the letter and has to be fulfilled just as was said. And so Genesis 1 is full of this.

And so, in addition to what we see with a framework portrayal of the passage, we have this indicating there's a lot of authority going on. This makes perfect sense if we consider that this is all about God, and he is the source of all authority. So divine authority, all authority, resides in God because he is the creator.

He imparts that authority to humans as well. Human authority therefore comes from God and is part of being made in God's image. And that then is a matter both of individual authority, and we see this later in the New Testament as John says, John the Baptist, when his disciples complain, hey, look, everybody's, they're not coming to you anymore, they're going to Jesus.

And John says, well, a man can receive only what is given him from heaven. Paul in Romans 13 says, everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities for there's no authority except that which God has established. And we'll talk more about that, but it's a clearly articulated biblical principle, this thing of authority coming from God.

Well, whatever the days are then, the question of course, well, what are these days? Are they 24-hour days or what? A long-standing question. Whatever they are, they certainly order the progress of creation even by the framework hypothesis, they give it a structure. And the presence of such an order implies or expresses an authority that produced the order.

Authority is fundamental to the new creation as well. To all who received him, John tells us, to those who believed in his name, he gave the authority to become children of God. As we'll see, this term in John and Romans 13 in Greek is the same term, and so it's rightly translated the same way.

Well, okay, but what about the interpretations of day then? You can't talk about Genesis 1 and not talk about that. Well, the literal 24-hour day certainly seems to take the text at its face value. Kiel and Delitzsch are two German scholars who, in the 19th century, saw the rise of higher criticism, which was basically dismantling the Old Testament, not believing that God did any of that stuff, even questioning whether there ever was a Moses, and so on.

They said, look, we need to produce a commentary on the whole Old Testament that believes it and takes it seriously, and so they did. Well, what about the days? Their proposal was that the days grew shorter as the newly formed Earth began to rotate more quickly, which may sound like a very strange proposal, but that's one proposal that is out there. The time occupied in the first rotations of the Earth upon its axis cannot indeed be measured by our hourglass, but even if they were slower at first and did not attain their present velocity till the completion of our solar system, this

would make no essential difference between the first three days and the last three, which were regulated by the rising and setting of the sun.

This is really inconsistent with entropy. We know that things do tend to lose energy and slow down, and so even the universe is expanding at a slower rate, detectably, but anyway, this was their proposal. And then, well, but what about the sun being created on the fourth day? Well, the first three days were not. The light of the first three days was not made by the sun, which was not yet created, but they were still days caused by the light God had created.

So, why would one do this? Well, I think, as we'll see with other views of the days, some of these proposals arose because, as geology was indicating a very old age for the Earth, some explanation of the days in Genesis 1 had to be produced that would make them consistent with what geology was indicating. If we continue along this line, we look at the German scholar Gerhard von Raad, who takes it quite literally. He says what is said here is intended to hold true entirely and exactly as it stands.

Nowhere at all is the text only elusive, symbolic, or figuratively poetic. Von Rad, however, did not believe that there was a literal sixth-day creation. Rather, he thought that's what the text is telling us.

And this is the way the Priestly writer who produced this text, not Moses, the Priestly writer writing around 570 BC, that's the way he saw it, the way he wanted to portray it. And we can't get into higher criticism in this course. That's a whole other subject.

But that was that view. S. R. Driver argued that the passage was also by the Priestly writer. And so another view on the individual 24-hour-a-day thing was produced by G. H. Pember, who was not a liberal scholar, but he produced this in connection with the gap theory, which we'll look at in a while.

He was followed by Schofield with his reference to the Bible and Harry Rimmer. And people today, of course, still affirm the 24-hour interpretation. Another interpretation is the day-age or day epoch interpretation, which often appeals to Psalm 90.

A thousand years in your sight are but as yesterday when it is past or as a watch in the night. And that approach, as others, which we are going to look at here, seeks to conform the biblical account with the geological record, as we said. And there you have some exponents of it.

Even Driver was willing to take these things a bit figuratively, as he wrote in 1886. But he moved from that view to the view that it's the Priestly writer, and it's 24-hour days. But at one point, he said, in spite of the evening and morning, which seemed to imply literal days, the supposition that the narrator meant his day as a figurative

representation of periods should not, as the present writer ventures to think, be ruled as inadmissible.

You will be aware as we go through this that this is just an overview. This is a sketch of different main views of these days. This is not something we're going to resolve here.

Although I will say that I think Klein's way of handling it is the best. But we can talk about that in a couple of minutes. Another view is the days of God with no human analogy.

Augustine proposed this origin roughly a little bit before Augustine, actually, in his book concerning principal things, first things. So that is what it is. If they're days of God with no human analogy, well, we can't understand how long they might have been.

Another view is that the days in Genesis 1 are pictorial days. According to this approach, the notices about the days indicate the successive days on which God revealed to Adam how he had created the world. He either did this by vision or by verbal communication.

Some people have chosen that view. That's a convenient way of avoiding the problem of a 24-hour day seeming to conflict with the geological record. But there's nothing in the account to suggest that that's being used, that the day and night expressions are being used that way.

There's nothing there that says anything about God telling Adam these things on different days. But this might be a nice example of how scholars can just import into a text what they want to if they think it solves a problem. But you want to be strict and stick with the evidence, even if sticking with the evidence means that you don't have enough evidence to come up with a conclusion that you can be sure of.

Well, another approach here is to consider that this business of the day is a literary device to communicate effectively the power and sovereignty of God by portraying creation in a mere week. So that, you know, God's so powerful he could have done it in six days. We're not saying he did.

Well, what about the objection that the term seems to mean literal days? And Kidner argues that, well, it's an inspired usage, so it meant more than it said. Well, what about the objection that God is thus lying? No, he's not lying. He's communicating to us on a level that we can understand.

I find that to be a little bit problematic, but I think there's a better way of handling it. Gordon Wenham, in his Genesis commentary, it's a two-volume set of word biblical commentary. I would recommend that highly, incidentally.

I'd say if you're going to buy a Genesis commentary, that would still be the best one to buy. But he says this six-day scheme is what one of several means employed in the chapter to stress the system in order that had been built into creation. Other devices include the use of repeating formulae, inclusio, and so on.

Well, the fact that there are other literary devices doesn't have to mean that this is a literary device, but this is a vague interpretation, to be sure, and it's been adopted by both liberal and conservative scholars. We had mentioned the gap theory before in connection with Scofield and others. And just to be clear about that, the gap theory ends up with six 24-hour days.

But the way it does it is to say that, well, in Genesis 1-1, when we read that God created the heavens and the earth, that was it. In Genesis 1-1, it was all done, and it was perfect. But then the world was turned over to Lucifer, who conducted the temple worship of God located in the mineral garden of Eden.

And say, okay, where in the world is he getting that? Well, in Ezekiel 28-13, we read the statement about the Prince of Tyre, but that's long been thought, and I think rightly so, to be a sort of figure for a higher and evil power, Satan, says, you were in Eden. You were a cherubim. You were perfect before sin was found in you, and you walked among the fiery stones.

So that's where the mineral garden of Eden and Lucifer conducting worship come from. Well, Lucifer's exalted condition was too much for him, and he fell, and judgment was passed on them. And you see the judgment being passed on this figure in Ezekiel 28, but then this is also extended and said, well, it's passed on him and his allies and also on the earth.

And so, the earth was kind of destroyed, and it made a mess. Some argue that the ugliness of the dinosaurs and the fossil beds are evidence of a judgment for sin, the judgment that was passed on to the earth. Well, then, so after a long time, around 4000 BC, God reconditioned the earth in 624-hour days.

And so, what we have then, according to this theory, is Genesis 1:1, God created the heavens and the earth, perfect creation. And then you've got a gap. You've got the rebellion of Satan and the judgment that comes on the earth, and as a result of that, you've got the earth for a long time being formless and void in Genesis 1:2. And then, eventually, God reconditions the earth.

There's an appeal made to Isaiah 45 here, God did not create the Tohu. And of course, I think the response would be, well, yes, God did not create the earth at Tohu, but we're not told that he did. We're told that things were formless and void as part of a process, I believe.

That's what that's indicating, not that he created it to be that way. But then there's also the claim that the statement the earth was formless and void should be translated, the earth became formless and void, but there's no way in terms of Hebrew usage that would be the translation you would expect. There's a different Hebrew idiom used for becoming, and it's not what you find in Genesis 1:2. So, exponents of this, and there are still people who hold to it.

Well, okay, that's just a review of the days. If we look at the dynamic here of creation and what's going on, I would propose this. This is something that informs the three-volume biblical theology that I've alluded to here.

I've called it very modestly the major paradigm. But how do we get to it? Because it's a paradigm that articulates, I believe, the way God works in his covenant creation throughout the Bible. Well, he creates what I would call a prophetic dynamic.

And so, in Genesis 1:2, we know that the Holy Spirit is present. The Spirit of God is hovering over the deep. In John 1, we know that the Word is involved in the creation.

So, we have the Spirit and the Word involved in creation. That's where we start. If we look at the creation account and the baptismal account, there's an interesting parallel.

You have the Spirit of God hovering over the waters. You have the Spirit of God descending upon Jesus as he comes out of the waters. And so, do those things relate at all? And I remember thinking about this years ago.

I was invited by one of our graduates, who was the Dean of the Caribbean Graduate School of Theology in Kingston, Jamaica, to go down there and teach Old Testament theology in January. He phoned me in the summer. As you may imagine, when the invitation came to be in January in Jamaica, the conviction of the Holy Spirit fell on me, and I accepted the offer.

It was a very good time. I taught at night. And so, in the mornings, it's 80 degrees, I'd lie out in the sun.

And then I'd go and look over my lecture notes. And I was looking at Genesis 1:2 and thinking, what's really going on here? Meredith Kline, in his writings, likes to think of the Spirit as a witness to the covenant. I think Genesis 1:31 provides a better witness.



God sees it all, and he says it's good. But we know that the Spirit is involved, and in John 1, the Word is involved. And I thought, what if we take the ministry of the incarnate Word as a paradigm and suggest that something parallel to that was going on with the pre-incarnate Word? We know that all things were created through that pre-incarnate Word.

And so, this is what I came up with. We know that through the incarnate Word, in the incarnate Word, in that case, the Spirit works through the incarnate Word to produce the kingdom works and words of power. This should also be understood, incidentally, about Jesus' ministry.

Everything Jesus did was by the Spirit. He said, the words I speak are the words the Father gives me, and the words I speak to you are Spirit, John 6:63. When he cast out demons, that was by the Spirit, and when he healed, we know that was by the Spirit because healing is a gift of the Spirit.

So, it's very much the Spirit working through the Word to produce the works that we saw with the incarnate Son. Incidentally, I think perhaps the way I would understand this about the Spirit is that, if I could put it this way, talking about the triune God, how much can you really understand about what goes on in him? But Paul does say that no one knows a man like the Spirit of the man, and so it is with the Spirit of God. He searches the deep things of God.

I think the Holy Spirit is, in a sense, God at his most intimate. And so, if you sin against the Spirit, that is the unforgivable sin that you read about in Mark 3, because he's casting out demons by the Spirit, and they say, well, it's by the Prince of Demons, and Jesus warns them. There is any sin a person commits, even blasphemy against the Father or the Son, which can be committed, but there's a sin against the Spirit that cannot be forgiven in this age or the age to come.

And I think that's why. But in any case, this is the paradigm here. It's the Spirit working through the Son to produce the kingdom's stuff.

The proposal is then that, in the creation account, the Spirit was working through the pre-incarnate Word to produce those kingdom words and works. So that when we read, let there be light, those words, I would propose, are Spirit, were Spirit. Just as Jesus said, my words are Spirit, capital S. So, the Spirit, in the creation account, was working through the pre-incarnate Son to produce the words that did the creating.

The Spirit is the one who got the things done in that sense. Well, working on that basis, we propose this, looking at before the fall and then after the fall. The Father causes the Spirit to work through the pre-incarnate Word to do the kingdom work.

If we look at this part here, the incarnate Word was the basis for this proposal. The Father causes the Spirit to work through the incarnate Word to do the kingdom work. We know that now the Father and the Son send the Spirit to work in and through the church to do kingdom work.

And arguably, during the, shall we say, the period of the old covenant, when that was operating, or even before, with Noah or with Abraham, the Father, and the Son were causing the Spirit to work through a prophet to do the kingdom work. That simple paradigm seems to make sense. The parts about the incarnate Word, the church, and I think also the Old Testament prophets are pretty; I think we could all agree on those.

The thing that's open to question is, well, is that the dynamic that was going on at the creation? I think there's an indication that that's the case. Certainly, if it is true, God is shown to be very consistent in the way he chooses to work. Hence, the major paradigm with which we will end this first lecture.

God works by his Spirit through the Word, a prophet figure, to war against and defeat his foes. But that, of course, would only be after the fall because there were no foes before the fall. Then, he establishes a covenant with a people where there are people.

Sometimes, it's only initially one person and a family, as in the case of Noah, and then a few more people with Abraham. But that covenant established those covenant partners, vassals, as God's people. And again, when the times are right for it, he establishes a temple among them.

So, in the original covenant, it would have been Eden. And with the Mosaic covenant, it would have been the tabernacle and the temple. And with the new covenant, it would be us because he wants to reside among us.

We'll stop with that.

This is Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus in his teaching on Biblical Theology. This is session 1, Adamic Covenant, Part 1.