

Dr. Robert A. Peterson, Church and Last Things, Session 4, People of God in the Old Testament, Part 2

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This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on Doctrines of the Church and Last Things. This is session number four, People of God in the Old Testament, Part 2.

We continue our study on the doctrine of the church, pursuing the Old Testament people of God in more detail than we have treated other topics.

We're up to the Davidic Covenant. Second Samuel 7 is one of the most important chapters of the Bible, although it's probably neglected too much, for it records God's promise to give David an eternal dynasty, known as the Davidic Covenant. Although the word covenant does not appear in Second Samuel 7 to describe God's promise to David, other scriptures refer to it as such.

2 Samuel 23:5, 1 Kings 8:23, 2 Chronicles 13:5, Psalm 89:3, 28, 34, and 39, Isaiah 55:3, Jeremiah 33:21. One more time, 2 Samuel 23:5, 1 Kings 8:23, 2 Chronicles 13:5, Psalm 89:3, 28, 34, and 39, Isaiah 55:3, Jeremiah 33:21. The chapter divides in two, the circumstances and founding of the covenant, number one, and two, David's prayer of gratitude. While David lived in a palace, a house made of cedar, he shared with the prophet Nathan his burden that God dwelt in a tent. This didn't seem right to David.

He proposed to make God a house and a temple, and the prophet Nathan, speaking on his own, thought this was a good idea. The Lord, however, thought otherwise and told David he would not build a house for God, but that God would build a house, play on words, a dynasty for David, 2 Samuel 7:1-11. God reminded David that he took him from being a shepherd and made him the leader of God's people.

The Lord had always been with David and has now given him rest from his enemies. God vowed to make David's name great, an honor previously bestowed only on Abraham, Genesis 26-24, and Moses, Numbers 12:7-8. The Lord promised, quote, I will designate a place for my people Israel and plant them, 2 Samuel 7:10.

Sorry, I'm going to do the ESV. I'll appoint a place for my people Israel and will plant them so that they may dwell in their own place and be disturbed no more. 2 Samuel 7:10.

This was Jerusalem, the city of David. This promise recalls the land feature of the Abrahamic covenant. God designates a place to plant Israel within the borders that he swore to Abraham.

Both covenants also promise enduring descendants. As Waltke explains, quote, the Davidic covenant also supplements the Abrahamic covenant. The I am, the way Waltke refers to God, Yahweh, promises unconditionally to both Abraham and David an eternal posterity, to Abraham an enduring nation, to David an enduring dynasty to rule that nation.

Indeed, David's eternal dynasty mediates the kings whom I am promised to give from Abraham and Sarah's own bodies. Close quote. Waltke and Old Testament theology, page 693.

God tells David he will not make a house for God, but vice versa. After David's death, God will establish the kingdom of his son, Solomon. God pledges.

2 Samuel 7:13. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. Whereas God rejected Saul from the kingship for his stubborn disobedience, God will deal with David differently.

I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son. When he commits iniquity, I will discipline him with the rod of men, with the stripes of the sons of men, but my steadfast love will not depart from him as I took it from Saul, whom I put away from before you. 2 Samuel 7, verses 14 and 15.

Waltke gives an important proviso. While the covenant, quote, is unconditional, the king's experience of its blessings depends on his obedience to the Mosaic covenant. The unconditional Davidic covenant is not a carte blanche to David's descendants to do as they please without regard to the moral boundaries of the Ten Commandments.

There follows the heart and soul of the Davidic covenant—verse 16. And your house and your kingdom shall be made sure forever before me.

Your throne shall be established forever. The father-son relationship results in David's throne continuing eternally, as Vinoy underlines and quotes. The Lord then repeats the promise that David's royal line will endure forever. 7:16 of 2 Samuel.

The starting and far-reaching promise, this startling and far-reaching promise appropriately terms the matrix, termed the matrix of biblical messianism by Gordon, provides the basis for subsequent development of the messianic hope in the writings of the prophets and psalmists and finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus the Messiah, a descendant of David and Abraham. Matthew 1:1, Vannoy, First and Second Samuel,

his commentary on First and Second Samuel, Tyndale House. God makes a covenant with David, promising him an eternal dynasty, culminating in Jesus Christ's rule.

God's amazing promise humbles David, for in his prayer of praise, he refers to himself 10 times as God's servant. David exalts, you are great, Lord God. There's no one like you, and there's no God besides you.

Verse 22, David asks in wonder, who is like your people, Israel, the one nation on earth whom God went to redeem to be his people, making himself a name and doing for them great and awesome things by driving out before your people whom you redeemed for yourself from Egypt, a nation and its gods, and you yourself established for yourself your people Israel to be your people forever. And you, oh Lord, became their God. David ends his prayer by trusting Yahweh to fulfill his promises to David and Israel.

2 Samuel 7:25 to 29. To this day, quoting Walkie again, I am and is chosen king, remain famous through the fulfillment of the covenant promises in the eternal son of David, Jesus Christ, whose throne in heavenly Jerusalem rules an eternal kingdom that today encompasses the earth. Close quote.

Walkie *Old Testament Theology* page 661. Christ reigns spiritually and we await the fulfillment on the new earth where there will no longer be any curse. The throne of God and of the lamb will be in the city, and his servants will worship him.

Revelation 22:3. The new covenant. This is the crown of the previous covenants, the telos to which they point. Lane tells us why William Lane, *Hebrews 1 to 8*, Word Biblical Commentary.

Quote, the new covenant thus brings to realization the relationship between God and his people, which is at the heart of all covenantal disclosure. Close quote. This is true as the following quotations show.

Abrahamic covenant. I'm showing now that the relationship between God and his people is the heart of every covenant. Abrahamic covenant.

Quote, it is a permanent covenant. To be your God and the God of your offspring after you. Genesis 17:7. Mosaic covenant.

I will take you as my people. I will be your God. Exodus 6:7. Davidic covenant.

Of the Davidic king, God says, I will be his father. He will be my son. 2 Samuel 7:13.

New covenant. I will be their God and they will be my people. Jeremiah 31:31.

I guess it's fair to say of all the soteriological or soteric covenants, the salvation covenants, the roots of the new covenant, are in the Old Testament, especially in Jeremiah 31:31 to 34. Other Old Testament texts speak of the new covenant without using the words new covenant, including Jeremiah 32:40, Ezekiel 36:24 to 27, Joel 2:28, 29, compared to Deuteronomy 30:1 through 10. So, although Jeremiah 31 is a famous passage because it uses the words new covenant and Hebrews 8 quotes it almost in full that Jeremiah 31:31 to 34 text, other Old Testament passages pertain to the topic of the new covenant without the words new covenant.

Jeremiah 32:40, Ezekiel 36:24 to 27, Joel 2:28, 29, Deuteronomy 30:1 through 10. Jeremiah 31:34 deserves our attention. God called Jeremiah early in chapter 1. See, I've appointed you today over nations and kingdoms to uproot and tear down, to destroy and demolish, to build and plant.

Jeremiah 1:3. Chapters 2 to 29 of Jeremiah's prophecy deal with uprooting and tearing down, with destroying and demolishing. Chapters 30 to 33 are known as the book of consolation and for good reason, for they speak of building and planting. In chapters 30 and 32, God promises to restore Israel captive in Babylon to the promised land.

Jeremiah 31 is in between these chapters and is justly famous for its new covenant passage in verses 31 to 34, which provide future hope for God's people. Thompson exalts J. A. Thompson, *The Book of Jeremiah*, NICOT, 565. Quote, the new covenant passage in Jeremiah represents one of the deepest insights in all prophetic literature and became of tremendous importance to early Christians.

Compare Hebrews 8:8 to 9:28, 2 Corinthians 3:5 to 18. Still quoting Thompson, Hebrews 8:8 to chapter 8:8 to 9:28, 2 Corinthians 3:5 to 18. Let us examine Jeremiah 31 to 34 in detail.

Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. My covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the Lord, for this is a covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord. I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Although the opening words, the days are coming, are used both short term and long term, of the short term and the long term, here they clearly are used of the latter.

For Hebrews 8 quotes Jeremiah 31 in full to argue that Christ is the mediator of the new covenant. Short term fulfillment of the days are coming, and the destruction of Babylon is in Jeremiah 51:47 to 49. Long term, God's raising up a righteous branch for David, Jeremiah 23:5. Here, although that phrase is ambiguous, days are coming could be short term or long term, it's plainly long term because of Hebrews 8 quotation of this new covenant passage with reference to Christ being the mediator of the new covenant.

The prophet predicts that God will make a new covenant with his people, designated as the of Israel and Judah, Jeremiah 31:31. Evangelicals disagree concerning the future of Israel, although Romans 11:25 to 32 seems to teach that there is a future for ethnic Israel, and Hebrews 8 quotes Jeremiah's new covenant passage to show the new covenant superiority to the old. Jeremiah 31:32 teaches that the new covenant will be superior to the old covenant that God made with the Israelites after redeeming them from Egypt.

The Mosaic covenant was inferior because Israel broke it, verse 32. Hebrews offers another reason for the old covenant's inferiority. Lane summarizes, quote, the supersession of the old covenant was not due simply to the unfaithfulness of the people to the stipulations of the covenant.

It occurred because a new unfolding of God's redemptive purpose had taken place, which called for new covenant action on the part of God, close quote. Lane, commentary on Hebrews, page 208. Therefore, Hebrews says Jesus is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been established on better promises, Hebrews 8, 6. Moreover, because Christ is our, quote, high priest who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the majesty in heaven, Hebrews 8:1, the new covenant of which he is mediator has made the old covenant obsolete, verse 13.

Jeremiah then sets forth the terms of the new covenant, which I've already written, read, Jeremiah 31:33 to 34. The Lord makes four promises to his people. He'll put his law in their hearts.

We'll enter into a personal relationship with them. All his people will know him, and he will forgive their sins. Four promises.

One, God will put his law in their hearts. He'll enter into a personal relationship with them. Three, all his people will know him.

Four, he'll forgive their sins. Having taught the superiority of the new covenant to the old, we should not miss their continuities. Waltke, *Old Testament Theology*, 438, 40, 39.

First, they both were given to Israel, although Hebrews 8 teaches us that the house of Israel and the house of Judah ultimately speak of believing Jews and Gentiles comprising the church. Second, the institution of both old and new covenants followed redemption. The old covenant followed the redemption from Egypt.

The new covenant followed redemption from Babylon, Jeremiah 30, 31. Third, both covenants took effect only after death. In the old covenant, this was after the death of sacrificial animals.

The new covenant, the death of Christ. Fourth and most important is the fact that the essential content of the covenants is the same. Jeremiah writes, quote, this is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the Lord.

I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts. Jeremiah 31:33, Lane explains, quote, the quality of newness intrinsic to the new covenant, it consists in the new manner of presenting God's law and not in newness of content. The people of God will be inwardly established in the law and knowledge of the Lord.

The emphasis falls on the interior quality of the human response to God through the new covenant, close quote. Lane, *Hebrews 1 to 8*, 209. Jeremiah's main new contribution to biblical theology is in his new covenant passage, which is found, of course, as we've been saying, in Jeremiah's main contribution to biblical theology is this new covenant passage.

Jeremiah 31:31 to 34. The new covenant consummates the relationship between God and his people that has been the core of all the covenants beginning with Abraham. Jesus Christ ratifies the new covenant by his death and resurrection so that he is its sole mediator, as Hebrews announces.

Hebrews 8:6. But Jesus has now obtained a superior ministry, and to that degree, he is the mediator of a better covenant, which has been established on better promises. Hebrews 8:6. Hebrews 9:15. Believers come to Jesus, sorry therefore he is the mediator of a new covenant so that those who are called might receive the promise of the eternal inheritance because a death has taken place for redemption from the transgressions committed under the first covenant.

Hebrews 9:15. Hebrews 12:24. Believers come to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood which says better things than the blood of Abel.

Abel, Hebrews 12:24. In fulfillment of the new covenant, God has blessed New Testament saints, so they now enjoy its benefits. God has regenerated them by his spirit, and his word dwells within them.

He belongs to them, and they to him. Believers, from the old to the young, from the young to the old, know God personally. He proclaims their forgiveness of sins as never before, doing so both in sermon and sacrament.

We enjoy new covenant blessings now in part but will reap them fully only in the eternal state. Believers look forward to the new covenant's future benefits when Christ returns. The dead are raised, and all God's people will reap eternal life with the Trinity forever on the new earth.

Conclusions. The covenants, the conclusion to our study of the covenants of God in the Old Testament in light of the big topic which is the people of God in the Old Testament. The covenants define the Old Testament people of God because no other ancient Near Eastern deity made a covenant between himself and the people.

Yahweh, the living and true God, entered into a succession of covenants with Israel. Yahweh is their God, and they are his people. The covenants share commonalities.

The Lord initiated each covenant. He approached Noah, Abraham, Moses, and David and, through Jeremiah, predicted a new covenant. God's covenant-making obligates his people to respond in each case.

Noah obeys God by building the ark and taking in family, animals, and food. Abraham is God's covenant partner, circumcises males in his family, and offers up Isaac. Israel promises to obey God in the Mosaic covenant.

David humbly accepts God's gracious covenant promises concerning his son and kingdom. The new covenant is all of God and all of grace, but it claims human beings who, in turn, trust God and live for him. The Noahic covenant ensures the perpetuity of the human race so God's people can experience salvation brought by the Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and new covenants.

God promises to give Abraham a land and a seed that is a people and ultimately an individual who is Christ. God, who chose Israel out of all the nations on earth in the Mosaic covenant, claims them as his treasured possession, a light to the nations and his holy people. God gives them his law, which they promised to keep but largely failed to do.

Still, God also provides a priesthood and sacrifices for the forgiveness of their sins, which point to Christ, the lamb of God and his blood. God won't allow David to build a house for him but in the Davidic covenant pledges to build one for him, a dynasty of kings whom God will discipline but from whom he will never remove his faithful love as he did from Saul. This dynasty culminates in Jesus Christ, the Lord of Lords and King of Kings.

Second, the covenants successively build on one another. The Noahic covenant provides the foundation of an ongoing human race, including God's people. The Abrahamic covenant provides a land, a people, and a blessing for all people on earth via Abraham's seed, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the Davidic covenant, God promises leadership for his people living in his city, Jerusalem, in the land that he promised to Abraham. The great son of David, who is also the son of God, inaugurates a new covenant with his death and resurrection. The house bears quotation.

Paul House, *Old Testament Theology*, page 319. Since this new covenant will transform the definition of the covenant people, it cannot be broken, and it will, therefore, never cease. This agreement will incorporate the everlasting covenants with Abraham and David and will stand forever.

With these elements assured, details such as unity, internalization, and forgiveness will be secured as well. God alone is the power to effect such change in the diseased hearts. Compare Jeremiah 17:9. Jeremiah observes in his day.

Third, the new covenant gathers the other soteriological covenants into itself as their crown. The new covenant does not provide new content but writes God's law on hearts in regeneration. I'll put my teaching within them and write it on their hearts.

Jeremiah 31:33 God's new covenant pledge. I'll be their God, and they'll be my people. Fulfills his promises in the other covenants to enter into a personal relationship with his people. Genesis 17:7, Exodus 6:7, 2 Samuel 7:13. Genesis 17:7, Exodus 6:7, 2 Samuel 7:13. The new covenant extends this personal relationship with God to all the people.

They will all know me from the least to the greatest of them. Finally, the new covenant bases this universal knowledge of God on unprecedented forgiveness. For I'll forgive their iniquity and never again remember their sin.

Close quote, verse 34. We continue with the church in the Old Testament, this time with various themes. The people of God and their election.

God's election of a people for himself does not begin with his choice of individuals to comprise the church in the New Testament. But with his choice of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as the fathers of his chosen nation of Israel. God's choice of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The main object of God's electing love in the Old Testament is the nation of Israel. The roots of this national election lie in God's choice of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They are good examples of God's sovereign grace at work.

God did not choose Abraham based on the foresight of Abraham's faith or virtue, for he came from a family of idolaters, as Joshua said. Joshua 24, two through four. House accurately interprets God's election of Abraham.

Quote, all persons are infected with and affected by sin. The results of this fact have been catastrophic. Now, God identifies an individual through whom God's plan can be revealed.

God's choice of Abraham also initiates the ongoing practice of divine election. God selects Abraham from people like himself, idolaters, though Abraham may have possessed special qualities for the task given him. Still, the Lord chooses Abraham the same way God determines to create the heavens and the earth, out of the sheer freedom that comes from being the unique, all-sufficient, self-contained God.

Election, in this case, proves God's merciful kindness to the world, not just to Abraham. That's Paul House, *Old Testament Theology*, page 73. God's choice of Abraham to be the father of the covenant nation implies his choice of his son Isaac and grandson Jacob.

Scripture explicitly teaches God's choice of Jacob before his birth. When Rebecca felt Jacob Esau struggling within her womb, the Lord told her, quote, two nations are in your womb. Two people will come from you and be separated.

One people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger, close quote, Genesis 25:23. As the story unfolds, we learn that God loves Jacob and so will supplant Esau as Isaac's heir, Malachi 1:1 and 2, Romans 9:13. J. Barton Payne wrote, quote, the most outstanding example of unconditional election to be found in all of Scripture is that of Jacob, Genesis 25:23.

Quoting Barton Payne, he was chosen before birth. He was one of twins, so humanly equal. He was the younger of the two, and in his personal character, he was an unethical trickster.

From his very birth, in fact, quoting within this quote, the purpose of God according to election might stand not of works, but of him who calls, Romans 9:11. God even granted him the promise of the testament at the very moment he was fleeing from home as a result of his crimes, Genesis 28, 15, quoting J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament*, page 179. God's choice of a nation of Israel, God's election of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, was not an end in itself.

His design in choosing them was to bring forth a nation from them, a great nation that he would commit himself to in covenant and claim to be his people. Four passages in Deuteronomy attest to this. Deuteronomy 4:37 and 38.

I've got to get to ESV. Because he loved your fathers, that's the Lord, and chose their offspring after them, and brought you out of Egypt with his own presence by his great power, driving out before you nations greater and mightier than you to bring you in to give you their land for inheritance as it is this day. Deuteronomy 4:37, 38.

Deuteronomy 7:6 through 8. For you are a people holy to the Lord your God. The Lord your God has chosen you to be a people for his treasurer's possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the Lord set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples.

But it is because the Lord loves you and is keeping the oath he swore to your fathers that the Lord has brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Deuteronomy 7:6 through 8. Deuteronomy 10:14 and 15. Behold, to the Lord your God belong heaven and earth, belong heaven and the heaven of heavens, the earth and all that is in it.

Yet the Lord set his heart in love on your fathers and chose their offspring after them, you above all people, as you are this day. That's Deuteronomy 10:14 and 15. Deuteronomy 14:2 is the fourth passage.

The Lord has chosen you to be his own possession out of all the peoples on the face of the earth. Collectively, these four Deuteronomy texts teach that one, God is the Lord of heaven and earth. Everything belongs to him, including all nations on earth.

Deuteronomy 4:39 and 10:14. Two, God chose Israel alone to be his people out of all the nations, 10:15. Indeed, out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, 7: 6, 14:2. Three, God chose Israel not because they were more numerous than all peoples, four, they were the fewest of all peoples, 7:7. God did not choose them for what he saw in them.

Four, God chose Israel because he loved the patriarchs, 4:37, 10:15. His love and choice of Israel is his motivation for redeeming them from Egyptian slavery, 4:37, 7:8, and for giving them the promised land, 4:38. In response to his election, God expects his people to acknowledge he alone is God, 4:39, 7:9, and to obey him, 4:40, 7:9, 10:13, 16:14, 1 to 10.

To acknowledge he alone is God, 4:39, 7: 9, and to obey him, 4:40, 7:9, 10:13, and 16, 14:1 and 2. God chose Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to form his people Israel. God did so for a purpose. In calling Abraham, God promised to give him a land to make him into a great nation and through him to bless all the peoples on earth, Genesis 12:1 to 3. God was on a mission from the beginning of his call.

After Abraham was willing to sacrifice Isaac, God blessed Abraham and reaffirmed his promise to bring a great nation from him, Genesis 22:17. Then God said, quote, all the nations of the earth will be blessed by your offspring because you have obeyed my command, verse 18. Ultimately, this promise is fulfilled in the person and work of Jesus Christ, Galatians 3:7 through 9. Chris Wright stresses the link between God's election of Israel and his mission to the world, quoting again his mission of God.

God did not choose Israel that they alone should be saved as if the purpose of election terminated with them. They were chosen rather as the means by which salvation could be extended to others throughout the earth. The election of Israel is fundamentally missional, not just soteriological.

God's calling and election of Abraham was not merely so that he should be saved and become the spiritual father of those who will finally be among the redeemed in the new creation. It was rather and more explicitly that he and his people should be the instrument through whom God would gather that multinational multitude that no man or woman can number. The people of God and their redemption from bondage.

The identity of God's Old Testament people was forged in God's mighty redemption of them from Egyptian bondage, as Exodus declares. It presents God as Israel's deliverer, a warrior God who shows his might against Pharaoh in plagues and the Exodus. Stuart calls God's promise to free the Israelites in Exodus 6:6 to 8, quote, an outline of what he is doing for them and a definition of how they are to think of themselves in relation to him.

Close quote, Stuart, *Exodus* page 34. Walkie is terse, quote, the signal act of deliverance in the Old Testament is Israel's Exodus from Egypt. Close quote, Walkie, *Old Testament theology* 390.

In this great act, God claims his redeemed people for himself, slaves in Egypt. For 400 years, Israel languished in Egyptian bondage. After suffering for generations, the Israelites cried out to God, who heard their cries for help and, quote, remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob, Exodus 2:24.

Israel was unable to rescue itself. As Stuart explains quote, in Egypt, the Israelites were a non-citizen gang of slaves without any land of their own or any human hope of having one. But God has not abandoned his covenant plans for them and led them forth by a mighty hand from the domination of the Earth's greatest superpower, not merely to a wilderness existence but to a place of permanent settlement.

Stuart, *Exodus* page 38. My son, the Old Testament, only calls God's father 15 times, a small number compared to the Gospel of John alone, which does so 118 times. The words God's son in the Old Testament apply to the nation of Israel, its king, and sometimes individual Israelites.

Here God, talking to Moses, calls Israel my son in both a warm and challenging way. Exodus 4:21 to 23. Exodus 4:21.

And the Lord said to Moses, when you go back to Egypt, see that you do believe, see that you do before Pharaoh all the miracles that I have put in your power, but I will harden his heart so that he will not let the people go. Then you shall say, thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn, and I say to you, let my son go that he may serve me. If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.

Exodus 4:21 to 23. Moses was still in Midian when God told him to perform the signs that God had given him before Pharaoh. Pharaoh refused to let Israel go, and God judged Egypt as a result.

Two firstborn sons are mentioned in this passage: God's firstborn son, Exodus 4:22, and that of Pharaoh, verse 23. Stuart tells how Moses was to announce to Pharaoh, quote, quote, the close and tender protected relationship of Israel to God as firstborn son to father and to contrast it to the deadly fate that awaited the firstborn of Egypt, individualized in Pharaoh's son. Close quote, Stuart, Exodus page 150.

Chris Wright articulates the significance of God calling Israel his son. Quote, Israel is addressed as a son of God, singular, who was sovereignly brought into being by God. Israel owes it to the Lord's creative or procreative action because the Lord brought them into existence.

The nation was not adopted by the Lord, but formed by him. Furthermore, Israel is not his son by its choice and action, but by the Lord's election of them. That's actually Waltke, *Old Testament Theology* 543, quoting Chris Wright, God's people in God's land, page 21.

My people. By contrast, Pharaoh does not know the Lord, and the Egyptians are not God's people. This is a covenantal way of saying that God speaks of Israel.

Just before God calls Israel my son, he refers to them as his people. But I will harden Pharaoh's heart so that he won't let the people go. Exodus 4:21.

When entering into the Mosaic covenant, the Lord says, I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. Exodus 6, 7. God pledges in the new covenant. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Jeremiah 31:31. Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh, quote, this is what the Lord, the God of Israel says, let my people go. So they may hold a festival for me in the wilderness.

Exodus 5:1. Pharaoh replied, who is the Lord that I should obey him by letting him go? Israel go. I don't know the Lord. And besides, I will not let Israel go.

Exodus 5:2. House points out the names of about 40 gods and goddesses from ancient Egypt are known. House, *Old Testament theology*, page 98. Pharaoh probably knew some of these, but he did not know Yahweh, the God of his people, Israel.

God does not hide his identity from Pharaoh but repeatedly declares, I am the Lord. Seven times, Moses tells Pharaoh, let my people go. And God backs up his word with signs.

The first nine plagues can be grouped into three groups concerning God's name. The first three are the land of Egypt, the second three and the whole earth, the third three. Due to Moses and Aaron, Pharaoh reluctantly comes to know of the Lord, but he would never know him personally as his Lord and Redeemer.

Before the plagues, God announced to Moses his intentions for Pharaoh and thereby revealed his name. Exodus 6:1 to 5. But the Lord said to Moses, now you shall see what I will do to Pharaoh. For with a strong hand, he will send them out, and with a strong hand, he will drive them out of his land.

God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am the Lord. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob as God Almighty. But by my name, the Lord, I did not make myself known to them.

I also established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan, the land in which they lived as sojourners. Moreover, I've heard the groaning of the people of Israel, of whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant. Say therefore to the people of Israel, I am the Lord, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, and I will deliver you from slavery to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and great acts of judgment.

Liberal scholars debate the matter, but this text does not mean that Yahweh did not appear before Exodus 6, 3. For Genesis uses the name. Example, Genesis 2, 4 and 12, 8. Rather than introducing contradictions into scripture or dividing it into sources based on occurrences of the divine names, John Sailhamer offers a simpler solution. He, quote, states that the distinction made in Exodus 6, 1 between the El Shaddai of the patriarchs and the Yahweh of Moses is one of intimacy, close quote.

Paul House *Old Testament theology* citing John Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch As Narrative, A Biblical Theological Commentary*, page 2, 5, 1. Yahweh revealed himself in Genesis in visions, but in Exodus he speaks to Moses face to face. Ironically, Egyptians joined God's people in the Exodus from Egypt. Quote, the Israelites

traveled from Ramses to Succoth, where about 600,000 able-bodied men were on foot, besides their families.

A mixed crowd also went up with them. Exodus 12:37, 38. This partially fulfills God's promise to Abraham.

All the peoples on earth will be blessed through you. Genesis 12: 3. Those redeemed by God. When the time came, God fulfilled his word to Abraham 400 years prior.

Quote, know this for certain. Your offspring will be resident aliens for 400 years in a land that does not belong to them and will be enslaved and oppressed. However, I will judge a nation they serve, and afterward, they will go out with many possessions.

Genesis 15:13 and 14. God redeemed his people from slavery. He did not do this all at once but sent plagues and then led his people on the Exodus.

Exodus 3:16 to 22. The Egyptians were so glad to see the Israelites go that they gave them silver and gold items and clothing. Silver and gold items and clothing.

Exodus 12:35, 36. Inadvertently fulfilling God's promise to Abraham years earlier in Genesis 15:13 and 14. A battle ensues between Yahweh, the living and true God, and Pharaoh, the gods of Egypt.

Pharaoh is obstinate. At first, his magician seemed to match Moses' signs, probably by demonic power. Then God, through Aaron, made the dust become gnats throughout Egypt.

Try as they may, the Egyptians could not duplicate this feat and confessed, quote, this is the finger of God. Exodus 8:19. Meaning it was a supernatural act.

Still, Pharaoh would not relent. Quote, in all, between Exodus 4:21 and Exodus 14:17, God hardens Pharaoh's heart ten times and Pharaoh hardens his own heart the same number of times. House, *Old Testament Theology*, page 95.

At times, Pharaoh makes minor concessions. 8:25. Other times, he seemingly repents.

9:27. 10:16. And grants permission to let Israel go.

8:28, 29. 9:27, 28. But when that plague is removed, reneges on his word.

8:30 to 32. 9:33 to 35. Doubtless, God sends the plagues against Egyptian deities.

For in conjunction with the last plague, he says, quote, I am the Lord. I will execute judgment against all the gods of Egypt. Exodus 12:12.

God causes some plagues to fall only upon the Egyptians. He makes a distinction between them and his own people. God won't let the plagues harm the Israelites, and he spares Goshen the effects of the plagues he pours out on the Egyptians.

8:22, 23. 9:4, 6, 26:11, 7:12, 13.

One more time. 8:22, 23:9 versus 4, 6 and 26.

11:7. 12:13. In this way, he demonstrates to Pharaoh and his people that the Israelites are God's people whom he cares for and protects. Stuart, speaking of swarms of flies, articulates this well.

Quote, here then, brings overtly to the reader's attention the fact that the plagues, far from being natural phenomena, were naturally produced, and nature turned on its head. Nature was ordered by its creator to act in abnormal ways that were ominously frightening for the Egyptians, wonderfully reassuring for the Israelites, and clearly evidential, in this plague, even the Pharaoh, of a divine, mighty act in service of a divine demand. Stuart, *Exodus*, page 215.

Of course, the epitome of Yahweh's distinctive treatment of his people is his sparing their firstborn sons when they applied blood to their doors in obedience to his command. Exodus 11:7 and 12:13. Israel was redeemed, but there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was no house where someone was not dead.

Exodus 12:30. Wrapping up this lecture, the results of Israel's redemption. God's freeing his people from Egyptian bondage is the Old Testament's greatest deliverance, never to be forgotten.

But the Lord selected you, quote, and brought you out of Israel's iron furnace to be a people for his inheritance, as you are today. Today, recognize and keep in mind that the Lord is God in heaven, above and on earth. There is no other.

Deuteronomy 4:20 and 4:39. Three months after leaving Egypt, the Israelites came to the Sinai wilderness, where they camped at the foot of the mountain for the next 10 months. Here, God would enter into the Sinai covenant with them.

He did so with them as a nation, not merely as a family or a tribe. This stresses the uniqueness of God's Old Testament people, Israel. God told them through Moses, now if you will carefully listen to me and keep my covenant, you'll be my own possession out of all the peoples.

Although the whole earth is mine, you'll be my kingdom, a priest, and my holy nation. Exodus 19:5 and 6. God, the owner of the whole earth, makes Israel his covenant partner and gives them special status. Uniquely among nations in the ancient Near East, God claims Israel as his own.

He chose Israel as the focus of his plan of redemption for the world. Stuart, Exodus page 38. At Sinai, God grants his redeemed people a new identity.

Before giving them the Ten Commandments, he urges them to obey him so they will enjoy a threefold identity. They'll be God's treasured possession, a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. First, he calls them my treasured possessions.

Verse 5. Exodus 19:5. This word, *segula*, is used in the Old Testament of a king's private fortune, as we said previously, to be used as he wills over against the general reserves used for governing his kingdom. In Exodus 19:5, it points to Israel as the king's private property, owned by him alone and used at his discretion. Waltke, *Old Testament Theology* 407.

God grants his people worth by making them the object of his choice and love. Second, when the Israelites obey Yahweh's covenant, he transforms them into a kingdom of priests, 19:6. Quote, by their obedience, they represent I am to the nations and become the means of bringing the nations to turn to and trust I am, who teaches and protects them. God wants them to be missional people to the other nations.

Waltke, *Old Testament Theology* 407 again. Third, Israel is to be God's holy nation. By obeying his commands, God's people display Yahweh's character to the world and become a holy nation.

As they obey the Lord, he sanctifies them and uses them in turn to sanctify other peoples. When viewed from the perspective of their horrible slavery in Egypt for more than 400 years, the redemption of the Israelites is glorious. They become God's dear son, his redeemed people, his treasure, a kingdom of priests, and his saints before a watching world.

In our next lecture, we will talk about the people of God and their God and how God himself helps define their identity as his people.

This is Dr. Robert A. Peterson in his teaching on Doctrines of the Church and Last Things. This is session number four, People of God in the Old Testament, Part 2.