

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 2, Beginning of NT Theology – Genesis 1-3 Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 2, Beginning of NT Theology – Gen. 1-3, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the foundations of New Testament theology within Genesis 1-3. The lecture posits that Genesis lays the groundwork for dominant theological themes that will be developed and reach their climax in the New Testament. Mathewson argues that God creates the earth as a suitable dwelling place for humanity, intending to reside with them. Furthermore, humanity is created in God's image to represent his rule and spread his glory throughout creation. The lecture addresses themes of covenant, obedience, sin, exile, and the promise of restoration through the seed of a woman, setting the stage for understanding the conflict and resolution present throughout the Bible.

2. 22 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 2 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (New Testament → NT Introduction → NT Theology).



**Mathewson_NTThe
ology_Session02.mp**

3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 2, Beginning of NT Theology – Gen. 1-3

Okay, here's a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas presented in the provided excerpts from Dr. Mathewson's lecture on "The Beginning of New Testament Theology in Genesis 1-3."

Briefing Document: New Testament Theology in Genesis 1-3

Source: Excerpts from "Mathewson_NTTheo_EN_Session02.pdf" (Dr. David L. Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 2)

Overview:

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the foundational theological themes present in Genesis 1-3 and their profound implications for New Testament theology. He argues that these early chapters lay the groundwork for understanding God's relationship with creation and humanity, setting the stage for themes that are developed throughout the Old Testament and find their climax in the New Testament, particularly in the person and work of Jesus Christ. The lecture emphasizes that Genesis 1-3 presents a conflict that the rest of the Bible resolves.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. God as Sovereign Creator:

- Genesis 1-3 establishes God as the sovereign creator who brings all things into existence through his powerful word.
- "God is the sovereign creator of all that exists and that creation owes its existence to the God who speaks creation into being by his powerful word."
- This foundational understanding of God's creative power is the starting point for both Old and New Testament theology.

1. Creation as a Suitable Environment for Humanity:

- God creates the earth as a land, a suitable environment, and a gift for humanity to dwell in and enjoy. The creation is not simply about the origin of things but about preparing a place for God's people.
- "God is creating an environment suitable for his people...God is creating a land on which his people can live and dwell."

- God's intention was always for humanity to have a physical existence on a physical creation, a theme echoed in Revelation 21 with the new heavens and new earth. "God's intention for humanity was never that they are disembodied spiritual beings, but instead, God created them as physical beings to live on physical earth."

1. **Humanity Created in God's Image:**

- The creation of humanity, male and female, in God's image is the climax of God's creative activity, not an afterthought.
- "The creation of human beings, male and female, is, I think, the climax of God's creation. It's not an afterthought."
- Being created in God's image means that humans are to be God's representatives or vice-regents on earth, ruling over creation on his behalf. "As God's image bearers, Adam and Eve are to be God's representatives...Adam and Eve were to be God's vice-regents."
- Greg Beal's argument is referenced, stating that humanity's mandate includes spreading God's rule and glory throughout the entire earth, starting from the Garden of Eden. This is linked to the command to be fruitful and multiply.

1. **God's Intention to Dwell with His People:**

- God intends to take up residence and dwell with his people in creation, as exemplified by the Garden of Eden.
- "God actually intends to dwell with his people in creation."
- The Garden of Eden serves as a prototype for the Tabernacle and Temple, representing a sacred space where God dwelled with his people. Adam's role in working and taking care of the Garden is likened to the work of priests in the Tabernacle/Temple.

1. **Covenantal Relationship with God:**

- God enters into a covenantal relationship with Adam and Eve, even if the word "covenant" is not explicitly used.
- "It seems to me that God's relationship with Adam and Eve was at least covenantal...there are all the marks of a covenant."

- This relationship involves God's blessing (the gift of creation), a prohibition (not eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil), and consequences for disobedience (death).
- The covenant formula, "I will be their God, and they will be my people," is seen as implicit in this relationship, finding its ultimate fulfillment in Revelation 21.

1. **Requirement of Obedience:**

- God requires the obedience of his people as a response to his goodness and provision, not as a means of earning his favor.
- "God required unqualified obedience on the part of Adam and Eve, his people."
- Obedience would bring life, while disobedience would bring death, mirroring the stipulations of the Mosaic covenant.

1. **Sin, Exile, and Anticipation of Restoration:**

- Humanity sins against God by disobeying his command, leading to their exile from the Garden of Eden (the place of God's presence).
- "The sin of Adam and Eve demonstrates their rejection of God's word and the rejection of God's rule in their lives."
- Satan, represented by the serpent, is identified as the one responsible for introducing sin and evil into God's creation.
- This establishes a pattern of sin, exile, and restoration that will be repeated throughout the Old Testament.
- However, even in the midst of sin and exile, there is a glimmer of hope for restoration, particularly in Genesis 3:15 (the proto-evangelium), which anticipates the ultimate defeat of the serpent by the seed of the woman.
- God's provision of garments for Adam and Eve is also seen as a symbol of his provision for his people after their disobedience.

1. **Redemption of Creation:**

- God's plan extends beyond simply saving humanity; it includes the redemption and restoration of all of creation.
- "God is not just going to restore and save his people, but God is eventually going to restore all of creation."

- The ultimate goal is to reclaim creation as a dwelling place shared by God and humanity, fulfilling God's original intention in Genesis 1-3. This is achieved in Revelation 21 and 22.

Conflict Resolution Structure:

- The lecture presents the idea that the rest of the Old and New Testaments are a conflict-resolution structure. God will resolve the conflict created by sin in Genesis 3. How is God going to restore creation as a dwelling place where God and his people will reside in relationship to one another?

Implications for New Testament Theology:

- Genesis 1-3 serves as a foundational setting for understanding the rest of the Bible, particularly New Testament theology.
- The New Testament reveals how God accomplishes his intention for creation and humanity, resolving the conflict introduced by sin and fulfilling the promises made in Genesis.
- The lecture sets the stage for exploring specific themes, such as creation, new creation, and land, in the New Testament, tracing their development from the Old Testament antecedents and demonstrating their fulfillment in Jesus Christ and his followers.

Next Steps:

- The lecture will move on to explore the theme of creation, new creation, and land in the New Testament, building on the foundation laid in Genesis 1-3.
- The course will examine how key themes developed in the Old Testament find their climax in the New Testament, particularly in Jesus Christ.
- The lecture will also consider how these themes are developed within the framework of the "already-but-not-yet" tension, acknowledging both the inaugurated fulfillment in Jesus Christ and the ultimate consummation in the new creation.

4. Study Guide: Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 2, Beginning of NT Theology – Gen. 1-3

New Testament Theology: Genesis 1-3 Study Guide

Quiz

Answer each question in 2-3 sentences.

1. According to Mathewson, what is the significance of Genesis 1-3 for New Testament theology?
2. What is the land's purpose?
3. According to Mathewson, what does it mean that humanity is created in God's image?
4. How does Mathewson use the term "vice-regents?"
5. How does Mathewson describe God's dwelling with his people in Genesis 1-3?
6. Why does Mathewson believe that there is a covenant relationship in Genesis 1-3, even though the word "covenant" is not explicitly used?
7. What was the consequence for Adam and Eve's disobedience?
8. What pattern emerges after Adam and Eve's sin, and how does it relate to later events in the Old Testament?
9. What does Mathewson mean when he says, "God will sort the whole thing out?"
10. What is the connection between Genesis 1-3 and Revelation 21-22?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Genesis 1-3 lays the foundation for major theological themes that are developed throughout the Old Testament and reach their climax in the New Testament. It provides the starting point for biblical theology, introducing key concepts that will be further explored and fulfilled in the New Testament.
2. God creates the land to be a gift for humanity, a suitable environment for them to live and dwell in. The intention is that humanity will live in the land that God created and humanity will enjoy the land that God created.

3. When humanity is created in God's image, in Genesis 1 and 2, the emphasis is that Adam and Eve are to be God's representatives on earth. They are to reflect and represent God's rule over all of the earth.
4. Mathewson uses the term "vice-regents" to explain that humanity are created to rule over creation in God's place. As God's image bearers, Adam and Eve were to rule over God's creation, representing God's sovereignty and rulership.
5. God intends to dwell with his people in creation and actually takes up residence with his people. The Garden of Eden is the first place where God took up residence with his people, Adam and Eve.
6. Mathewson believes there is a covenantal relationship because God enters into a personal relationship with his people, promising blessings and establishing consequences for disobedience, even though the specific word is not present. It contains the essence of the covenant formula: "I will be their God, and they will be my people."
7. The consequence for Adam and Eve's disobedience is death, and they failed to maintain a covenantal relationship with God. In Genesis 3, they ate the fruit, which resulted in exile.
8. After Adam and Eve's sin, a pattern of sin, exile, and restoration emerges, the nation of Israel refuses to obey God's command, breaks the covenant relationship, and they too will be exiled from their land. A glimmer of hope exists for restoration and redemption.
9. When Mathewson says, "God will sort the whole thing out," he means that God will eventually restore both creation and humanity. This will take place when God puts everything right and reclaims creation.
10. Revelation 21-22 reflects the fulfillment of God's original intention in Genesis 1-3. Creation is once again reclaimed as the place where God will dwell with his people, and creation itself has become a temple, a sanctuary, a dwelling place where God resides in a covenant relationship with his people.

Essay Questions

1. Explore the significance of the Garden of Eden as a "sanctuary" or "temple" in Mathewson's interpretation of Genesis 1-3. How does this understanding shape our view of God's relationship with humanity and creation?
2. Discuss the implications of Mathewson's argument that Genesis 1-3 presents God as creating an environment specifically suited for human habitation and enjoyment. How does this perspective challenge or affirm traditional interpretations of the creation account?
3. Analyze the theme of "sin, exile, and restoration" as it emerges in Genesis 3 and its significance for understanding the broader narrative of the Old Testament. How does this pattern inform our understanding of God's redemptive plan?
4. Evaluate Mathewson's claim that the concept of covenant is present in Genesis 1-3, even in the absence of explicit covenantal language. What evidence does he provide to support this assertion, and what are the implications for understanding God's relationship with humanity?
5. Explain Mathewson's interpretation of humanity as "vice-regents" of God in Genesis 1. How does this understanding of the *imago Dei* influence views of human responsibility and dominion over creation, and how is this responsibility impacted by the fall?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Vice-Regents:** Representatives who rule on behalf of a sovereign, reflecting and enacting their authority and will. In the context of Genesis 1, Adam and Eve are described as God's vice-regents, tasked with ruling over creation in His place.
- **Covenant:** A formal agreement or relationship between two parties, often involving promises, obligations, and consequences. In the context of Genesis, Mathewson argues that a covenantal relationship exists between God and humanity, characterized by blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.
- **Imago Dei:** Latin for "image of God." The theological concept that human beings are created in God's likeness, possessing unique qualities that reflect God's character and enabling them to represent Him in the world.
- **Shekinah Glory:** A visible manifestation of God's presence, often associated with light or radiance. In Jewish tradition, the Shekinah glory is said to have dwelled in the Garden of Eden, signifying God's intimate presence with humanity.
- **Proto-Evangelium:** A term referring to Genesis 3:15, which is interpreted as the first announcement of the gospel, foretelling the ultimate defeat of the serpent (Satan) by the offspring of the woman (Jesus Christ).
- **Already-But-Not-Yet:** A theological concept describing the tension between the present reality of God's kingdom and its future, full realization. In New Testament theology, this tension is evident in the inaugurated kingdom of God in Jesus Christ, which is both present and yet to be fully consummated.
- **Biblical Theology:** A discipline that seeks to understand the overarching themes and narrative of the Bible as a unified story, tracing the development of theological concepts and motifs from Genesis to Revelation.
- **New Creation:** The ultimate restoration and renewal of all things, promised in the Bible. In Revelation 21-22, the new creation is depicted as a place where God dwells with His people in perfect harmony and righteousness.
- **Sanctuary:** A sacred place or space set apart for God's presence and worship. Mathewson describes the Garden of Eden as the first sanctuary, where God dwelled with humanity in intimate fellowship.
- **The Fall:** The event in Genesis 3 where Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command, resulting in sin, alienation, and the introduction of evil into the world. The fall had far-reaching consequences for humanity and creation.

5. FAQs on Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 2, Beginning of NT Theology – Gen. 1-3, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ: The Beginning of New Testament Theology in Genesis 1-3

1. Why is Genesis 1-3 considered the starting point for New Testament Theology?

Genesis 1-3 lays the foundation for the dominant themes that develop throughout the Old Testament and find their climax and further development in the New Testament. It establishes key theological concepts such as God as the sovereign creator, humanity as God's image-bearers, God's intention to dwell with his people, covenantal relationships, obedience, and the consequences of sin.

2. What is the significance of God creating an environment in Genesis 1?

God's creation of the land, separating light from darkness, water from land, and providing vegetation, demonstrates His intention to create a suitable dwelling place for humanity. This highlights that God intended for humanity to have a physical existence on a physical creation, a theme that continues through to the new creation described in Revelation 21-22. It also reflects God's delight in providing for His people.

3. What does it mean that humanity is created in God's image?

Being created in God's image, according to Genesis 1, primarily means that humans are appointed as God's representatives or vice-regents on Earth. They are meant to reflect and represent God's rule and sovereignty over creation, extending His glory and dominion throughout the earth. This mandate includes ruling over creation on God's behalf and populating the earth with other image-bearing offspring.

4. How does God's intention to dwell with humanity manifest in Genesis 1-3?

The Garden of Eden is presented as the first sanctuary or temple, a sacred space where God took up residence with Adam and Eve. Adam's role in "working and keeping" the Garden is similar to the duties of priests in the Tabernacle or Temple. This emphasizes God's desire for intimate fellowship with His people, not a distant, hands-off relationship.

5. Was there a covenant established between God and Adam and Eve in Genesis 1-3?

While the word "covenant" is not explicitly used, the relationship between God and Adam and Eve possesses covenantal elements. God establishes a personal relationship, promises blessings (access to all the trees in the garden), and sets forth a condition of obedience (not eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil) with a consequence for disobedience (death). This structure mirrors the traditional covenant formula found elsewhere in Scripture.

6. Why was obedience so important for Adam and Eve?

God required unqualified obedience from Adam and Eve, not as a means to earn His favor, but as a response to His gracious provision of the land and His presence in their midst. Obedience would bring life, while disobedience would lead to death, highlighting the importance of aligning with God's will and acknowledging His sovereignty.

7. How did the sin of Adam and Eve impact God's original plan?

Adam and Eve's sin, influenced by the serpent, led to their exile from the Garden of Eden, the place of God's presence. This introduced a pattern of sin, exile, and a hope for restoration that recurs throughout the rest of the Bible. Their sin demonstrated a rejection of God's rule and a desire for autonomy.

8. How does Genesis 3 hint at future restoration and redemption?

Genesis 3:15, often called the proto-evangelium, anticipates the ultimate defeat of the serpent and evil by the "seed of the woman." This verse, along with God providing garments of skin for Adam and Eve, offers a glimmer of hope for the redemption of both humanity and creation. God's plan is not just to save His people, but to restore all of creation as a dwelling place shared by God and humanity, a theme that finds fulfillment in Revelation 21-22.