

Dr. Dave Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 3, Creation/Land/Recreation in the OT Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 3, Creation/Land/Recreation in the OT, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Mathewson's lecture explores the themes of creation, land, and new creation as they develop from the Old Testament into the New Testament. He argues that creation and land are interconnected gifts from God to his people, intended as a place of blessing and divine presence. This session examines key Old Testament narratives, including the flood and God's covenant with Abraham, as foreshadowing of a renewed creation. **The lecture highlights how prophetic texts anticipate God's restoration of his people to the land, which is not merely a physical return but a fulfillment of God's original intention for humanity.** Mathewson emphasizes the continuity of these themes, culminating in the promise of a new heavens and a new earth. **He also sets the stage for understanding how these Old Testament concepts are reshaped and find ultimate fulfillment in the New Testament, particularly in the person of Jesus Christ and the book of Revelation.**

2. 16 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 3 – 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).



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3. Briefing Document: Mathewson, NT Theology, Session 3, Creation/Land/Recreation in the OT

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from the provided excerpt of Dr. Mathewson's lecture on "Creation, Land, and Recreation in the Old Testament," session 3 of his New Testament Theology series.

Briefing Document: Creation, Land, and Recreation in the Old Testament (Dr. Mathewson)

Main Theme: The interconnected themes of creation, land, and new creation in the Old Testament, tracing their development and anticipation of ultimate fulfillment. The lecture emphasizes that God's original intention for humanity to dwell with Him in a blessed land, disrupted by sin, is progressively restored through various covenants and prophecies, culminating in the promise of a new creation.

Key Ideas and Concepts:

- **Interconnectedness of Themes:** Creation and land are intrinsically linked, and both point toward a future new creation. These themes cannot be treated in isolation. "It's impossible to simply treat these in an isolated fashion. They relate to each other very closely."
- **Creation as Gift and Responsibility:** Creation and land are gifts from God to sustain life, but also require obedience from humanity. The relationship is both physical and spiritual.
- **Disorder to Order:** God's creative act involves bringing order out of disorder. This is initially seen in Genesis 1-2, where God forms the earth from a formless and void state. This pattern of God overcoming disorder is seen throughout the Old Testament and into the New Testament.
- **The Flood as De-Creation and Re-Creation:** The flood narrative in Genesis 6-9 functions as both a judgment (de-creation) on the existing world and a quasi-new creative act, mirroring elements of Genesis 1-2. Elements of the new creation found in the flood story: water covers the earth, dry land emerges, plant life emerges, and a recommissioning is given to Adam like Noah in Genesis chapter 9. "That is a decreation and judgment by water covering the entire earth, in a sense undoing, judging the first creation and then a new creative act patterned after chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis."

- **Abrahamic Covenant and the Land Promise:** God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 to lead him to a new land is a crucial step in fulfilling the original intention of creation, reversing the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden. "Now, I think what we find going on in chapter 12 is God is now fulfilling his intention to bring his people back to the land that he originally intended for them to enjoy in Genesis 1 and 2." The promise of land to Abraham is a key aspect of God's plan to resolve the conflict introduced in Genesis 3.
- **The Exodus as New Creation:** The Exodus event, with the plagues and the parting of the Red Sea, can also be seen as a type of new creation. The plagues are a judgment upon the earth, the removal of the water of the Red Sea allows passage on dry land.
- **Conquest and Exile:** The conquest of Canaan is portrayed as the fulfillment of the land promise, but Israel's disobedience leads to exile, mirroring the fate of Adam and Eve. "So the Old Testament narratives of the conquest of the land of Canaan, starting in Joshua and elsewhere, are meant to be the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham, but also of God's intention for creation in Genesis 1 and 2."
- **Prophetic Anticipation of Restoration:** The Old Testament prophets consistently anticipate a future restoration of God's people to the land, fulfilling both the Abrahamic covenant and God's original creative purpose. The prophets anticipate a time when God will once more restore his people to their land.
- **Ezekiel's Prophecies:** The book of Ezekiel (specifically chapters 36 and 37) contains powerful prophecies of God gathering the people from exile and returning them to their land. These prophecies also contain allusions to the Garden of Eden, suggesting a restoration of God's original purposes for Eden. There are clear references to the patriarchs, to Abraham, the promise made to Abraham. "They will say that this land that was laid waste has become like the Garden of Eden."
- **Isaiah's Vision of New Creation:** Isaiah (especially chapters 60 and 65) elevates the concept of restoration to the level of a new creation, with "new heavens and a new earth." This new creation reverses the effects of sin and curse, promising a renewed cosmos. "...Isaiah 65 anticipates then a day when God will return his people to the land but now seems to conceive of it as something more than just a return to the land of Palestine but a renewed cosmos, a new creation, a new heavens and a new earth after the fashion of the first creation in Genesis 1 and 2."

- **Messianic Kingship and Universal Dominion:** Certain Psalms (e.g., Psalm 2, 89, 110) anticipate a Davidic king or Messiah whose reign will extend to the ends of the earth, suggesting that the ultimate inheritance of God's people is not merely the land of Palestine, but the entire cosmos. "...eventually what God's people are to inherit is a new creation, the entire earth. Eventually, the entire earth will be the inheritance of the Davidic ruler in the future."
- **Old Testament Summary:** God will one day restore his intentions for humanity and creation in a new creative act, a physical creation, where they will once again enjoy the blessings that they should have enjoyed in the new creation and where once again God will dwell in their midst.
- **New Testament Introduction:** The New Testament teaching on land and creation and new creation will highlight the almost complete absence of land language in the New Testament.
- **Already but not yet:** The land promises that we find in the prophetic literature, what is envisioned in the Psalms, God's intention for creation for the Abrahamic promise is fulfilled already in the coming of Christ and his people in anticipation of the not yet or the ultimate consummation that I think we find in Revelation chapter 21.
- **Physical and Spiritual:** As we find fulfillment, we'll probably find it happening both spiritually and physically. But the land promises, I think, are fulfilled according to this already but not yet scheme, already fulfilled in Christ and the salvation he brings and in his people in anticipation of the final fulfillment, the primarily physical fulfillment that one finds in the new creation in Revelation 21.

Significance: The lecture emphasizes the continuity of God's redemptive plan, demonstrating how the promise of land and restoration, rooted in creation, finds its ultimate expression in the concept of a new creation, anticipating the New Testament's fulfillment in Christ.

Next Steps: The next session will explore how the theme of creation, new creation, and land finds its fulfillment in the New Testament and the Gospels, the Pauline letters, some of the other New Testament writings and climaxing in the book of Revelation.

4. Study Guide: Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 3, Creation/Land/Recreation in the OT

Creation, Land, and New Creation: A Study Guide

Quiz

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. According to Mathewson, why are creation and land often discussed together in the Old Testament?
2. What is the significance of the flood narrative in Genesis 6-9 in relation to the theme of new creation?
3. How does God's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12 connect back to the events in Genesis 1-3?
4. In what ways can the Exodus event be seen as a new creation?
5. What happened when Israel entered the land of Canaan?
6. What is the role of the prophets in relation to the exile and the promise of return to the land?
7. How do Ezekiel 36 and 37 describe God's intention to restore the people to the land?
8. How does Isaiah 65 expand the concept of restoration to include a new creation?
9. According to Mathewson, how do the Psalms relate to the concept of land?
10. How does Mathewson describe the New Testament's view of land and creation?

Quiz Answer Key

1. Creation and land are connected because creation is a gift from God to his people, providing an environment for them to live and a place for God to dwell with them. The land is a specific manifestation of this gift, making the two closely intertwined in God's plan.
2. The flood narrative in Genesis 6-9 is designed to be a new creative act modeled on the first one in Genesis chapters 1-2. It is viewed as a quasi-new creation where God judges his first creation with water but then begins to fashion a new creation patterned after chapters 1 and 2 of Genesis.

3. God's promise to Abraham to bring him to a new land is seen as a way of fulfilling the original intention in Genesis 1-2, where Adam and Eve were expelled from the Garden of Eden. God is beginning to fix what went wrong in Genesis by bringing his people back to a land he originally intended for them to enjoy.
4. The Exodus can be viewed as a new creation because the plagues can be seen as judgments upon the earth and the removal of the water at the Red Sea so the people can cross on dry land seems to reflect the creation account in Genesis chapters 1 and 2. In other words, God is creating, as it were, creating things anew.
5. The Old Testament narratives of the conquest of the land of Canaan are meant to be the fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham and of God's intention for creation in Genesis 1 and 2. However, like Adam and Eve, Israel disobeys in the land, and they are exiled from the land.
6. The prophets anticipate a time when God will once more restore his people to their land in fulfillment of Genesis 1 and 2, as well as the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12. The prophetic texts are unanimous in anticipating a return to the land of Israel by God's people.
7. Ezekiel 36 and 37 describe God's intention to gather the people from exile and return them to their own land. God expresses his intention to bring the people back to the land in fulfillment of the promise made to Abraham that he would give them land.
8. Isaiah 65 expands the concept of restoration by envisioning a new heavens and a new earth, recalling the original created order of Genesis 1 and 2. The expectations of restoration now seem to have been expanded beyond simply the land of Palestine and to now embrace an entire recreated cosmos or a new creation.
9. According to Mathewson, several texts in the Psalms anticipate a day when the Messiah, when a king rules, a son of David rules, his reign will be extended to embrace and cover the entire earth. Eventually, the entire earth will be the inheritance of the Davidic ruler in the future.
10. Mathewson notes the almost complete absence of land language in the New Testament until Revelation. He says that the land promises that we find in the prophetic literature, what is envisioned in the Psalms, and God's intention for creation for the Abrahamic promise are fulfilled already in the coming of Christ and his people in anticipation of the not yet or the ultimate consummation.

Essay Questions

1. Explore the connections between the Genesis creation account and the flood narrative. How does the flood both undo and renew creation?
2. Discuss the significance of the land promise to Abraham in the context of God's redemptive plan. How does this promise relate to the concept of a new creation?
3. Analyze the role of the prophets in the Old Testament in relation to the themes of exile and return to the land. How do their prophecies shape the understanding of God's faithfulness and future restoration?
4. Compare and contrast the Old Testament understanding of land and creation with the New Testament perspective, considering the already/not yet tension and the role of Christ.
5. Trace the development of the theme of new creation from Genesis to Revelation, highlighting key texts and theological concepts along the way.

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Creation Mandate:** The divine command given to Adam and Eve (and later to Noah) to be fruitful, multiply, and fill the earth, exercising dominion over it.
- **New Creation:** A concept found in prophetic literature and fully realized in Revelation, referring to the renewal of the cosmos, encompassing both physical and spiritual dimensions.
- **Land Promise:** God's covenantal commitment to give the land of Canaan to Abraham and his descendants as an inheritance.
- **Exile:** The forced removal of the Israelites from their land due to disobedience and covenantal unfaithfulness.
- **Restoration:** The act of God bringing his people back to the land after exile, fulfilling his promises and renewing his covenant.
- **Abrahamic Covenant:** The unconditional promise God made to Abraham in Genesis 12, including land, descendants, and blessing to all nations.
- **Prophetic Literature:** The writings of the Old Testament prophets who spoke God's word to Israel, often addressing themes of judgment, exile, and restoration.
- **Messianic Figure:** A king descended from David who will eventually be given the ends of the earth as his possession to rule over.
- **Inaugurated Eschatology:** The theological concept that the end times have already begun in the ministry of Jesus, but their fullness is yet to come.
- **Decreation:** A reversal or undoing of creation, often associated with judgment or divine intervention to correct disorder.

5. FAQs on Newman, Synoptic Gospels, Session 3, Creation/ Land/Recreation in the OT, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

FAQ on Creation, Land, and Recreation in the Old Testament

1. How are creation, land, and new creation connected in the Old Testament?

Creation and land are intrinsically linked as God fashions the world to sustain his people. Land serves as a gift, an environment for them to live and where God intends to dwell. The theme of creation encompasses both physical and spiritual dimensions, requiring obedience. The concept of new creation emerges as a way for God to overcome disorder and chaos, ultimately fulfilled in Revelation 21.

2. How does the flood narrative in Genesis relate to the theme of new creation?

The flood narrative (Genesis 6-9) is presented as both a "decreation" and a "creation." The flood serves as a judgment by water, undoing the initial creation due to sin. Following this, God initiates a new creative act, mirroring Genesis 1-2, with the receding waters, emergence of dry land, and the recommissioning of Noah, demonstrating God's commitment to his original creation.

3. What is the significance of God calling Abraham in Genesis 12 in relation to creation and land?

God's call to Abraham in Genesis 12 is seen as a fulfillment of His original intention in Genesis 1-2. Adam and Eve were exiled from the land, but God, through Abraham, begins to bring his people back to a land that he originally intended for them to enjoy. This is a key step in resolving the conflict introduced in Genesis 3 and restoring humanity to God's presence.

4. How can the Exodus be understood in the context of new creation?

The Exodus is presented as a new creation, in which God redeems his people from slavery and creates them anew. The plagues are seen as judgments, similar to the flood, and the parting of the Red Sea echoes the separation of waters in Genesis 1, leading the people to their inheritance.

5. How do the Old Testament prophets address the themes of land and restoration?

The prophets consistently anticipate a time when God will restore His people to their land in fulfillment of Genesis 1-2 and the promises made to Abraham. Ezekiel 36 and 37 are cited as examples where God expresses his intention to gather the people from exile and return them to their own land. Isaiah 60 also highlights the theme of restoration to the land.

6. What role does the concept of a "new heavens and new earth" play in prophetic visions of restoration?

Isaiah 65 introduces the concept of a "new heavens and new earth," expanding the restoration expectations beyond the land of Canaan to encompass an entirely recreated cosmos. This new creation recalls the original creation in Genesis 1 and 2, reversing the curse of death and promising a time of fruitfulness, justice, and God's dwelling with his people.

7. How do the Psalms connect the theme of land with the rule of the Messiah?

Certain Psalms (e.g., Psalm 2, 89, 110) anticipate a time when the Messiah, a son of David, will rule over the entire earth, not just the land of Palestine. The Messiah is to be given "the ends of the earth" as his possession, fulfilling God's plan for humanity to rule over all of creation and extend His glory.

8. How does the New Testament build upon the Old Testament themes of creation, land, and new creation?

The New Testament demonstrates the intention to bring people back to the land, to restore the land so that it can be a place where God can dwell with his people, where his people can live and share in God's presence in the land. Additionally, there is an already, but not yet tension regarding these themes, fulfilled already in Christ but primarily fulfilled physically in the new creation in Revelation 21.