Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7, Mosaic Covenant, Part 2
Resources from NotebookLM

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

1. Abstract of Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7, Mosaic Covenant, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL

Dr. Niehaus's lecture continues his discussion of the Mosaic Covenant, focusing on its purposes beyond pedagogy, such as establishing and liberating the people of Israel, and the subsequent conquest of Canaan as a fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. He addresses the ethical complexities of the conquest, interpreting it as God's just judgment against the Canaanites' sin, highlighting Rahab's faith as a key contrast. **The lecture then explores the consequences of Israel's potential disobedience, drawing parallels between their fate and that of the Canaanites, and emphasizes that God's judgment is a form of warfare.** Niehaus posits that biblical history writing is rooted in ancient Near Eastern covenant structures, with historical prologues and analistic accounts relating to these agreements. **Finally, he examines the covenantal basis of prophecy, noting Moses' unique role, the criteria for evaluating prophets in Deuteronomy, and the differences in judgment under the Old and New Covenants, concluding with the covenantal foundations of biblical poetry and wisdom, pointing towards the fuller revelation in Christ.**

2. 15 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Theology → Biblical Theology - Niehaus).

Niehaus_BibTheo_Session07.mp3

3. Briefing Document: Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7, Mosaic Covenant, Part 2

Briefing Document: Dr. Jeffrey Niehaus on the Mosaic Covenant, Part 2

Overview: This session continues Dr. Niehaus's exploration of the Mosaic Covenant, delving into its purposes beyond its pedagogical role towards Christ. The lecture examines the conquest of Canaan, the stipulations regarding the treatment of the Canaanites and the potential consequences for Israel's disobedience, the relationship between covenant and history, the foundation of prophecy within the covenant framework, and finally, the covenantal basis for biblical poetry and wisdom.

Main Themes and Important Ideas/Facts:

1. Purposes of the Mosaic Covenant Beyond Pedagogical:

- While the pedagogical purpose toward Christ is paramount, the Mosaic Covenant also aimed:
- "to constitute a people"
- "to liberate them" (from Egypt)
- to establish them "as a people with a law"
- to facilitate the "conquest" of Canaan.

2. The Conquest of Canaan and Just War Theory:

- Niehaus addresses the challenging aspects of the conquest in light of just war theory (provocation, proportional response, treatment of noncombatants).
- He argues that from a human perspective, the conquest "completely fails on the human plane" due to the lack of provocation from Israel and the command to "kill them all. Have no mercy, men, women, and children."
- He posits that the Lord is the "aggrieved party" due to the Canaanites' "rebelliousness and sin," and therefore His judgment, even extermination, is proportionate and just ("the judge of all the earth will do what is right").
- The key issue in understanding the judgment on the Canaanites is **faith**, exemplified by Rahab.

3. Rahab as an Example of Faith:

- Rahab's statement, "the Lord, your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below," is presented as her statement of faith, acknowledging Yahweh as the only true God and rejecting the pagan pantheon.
- Her faith contrasts with the fear and resistance of others in Canaan who also knew of Yahweh's power. This highlights that "faith is the deciding issue" for salvation and judgment.
- This also foreshadows Jesus's question in Luke 18:8: "When the Son of Man returns, when he comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

4. Consequences of Disobedience for Israel:

- The Lord commanded Israel to "destroy them totally" (the Canaanites), make no treaties, and not intermarry to prevent them from being led astray to serve other gods.
- The example of Peor, where Israel was led astray to worship Baal, illustrates this danger.
- If Israel behaves like the Canaanites (engaging in their sins), they will be treated like them by the Lord. Niehaus cites Leviticus's warnings against sexual immorality and child sacrifice.
- Disobedience will result in covenant curses, including plagues like those of Egypt and eventual exile. "If you defile the land, it will vomit you out as it vomited out the nations that were before you."

5. Covenant as the Foundation of History:

- Niehaus proposes that Old Testament history writing is rooted in the covenantal structure, mirroring ancient Near Eastern treaty formats.
- Ancient Near Eastern history writing is found in "historical prologues of the ancient treaties" and in "royal annals."
- The Old Testament presents a series of divine-human covenants followed by historical narratives detailing life under those covenants.
- "The foundation of history writing is covenant." Even world history begins with the Adamic covenant.

6. Covenant as the Foundation of Prophecy:

- Prophecy is also grounded in the covenant. "Covenants are instituted through covenant mediator prophets" (Adam, Noah, Abraham).
- Under the Mosaic Covenant, prophets serve as "covenant lawsuit messengers" for a people in a covenant relationship with God.
- Moses exemplifies the prophetic dynamic: God speaks through a prophet to an audience (Exodus 4, with Aaron as Moses's mouth to Pharaoh).
- Numbers 12 distinguishes Moses's unique prophetic authority (face-to-face communication) from other prophets who receive revelations through visions and dreams ("riddles" or "dark speech").
- Deuteronomy 13 and 18 provide guidelines for discerning true and false prophets, emphasizing adherence to the Lord and the consequences of leading people to follow other gods (treason in the context of the nation-state kingdom).

7. The Shift in the Form of the Kingdom and Judgment:

- The form of the kingdom under the Mosaic Covenant was a "nation-state," justifying the death penalty for treasonous prophetic pronouncements leading to idolatry.
- The New Testament form of the kingdom is the "church," which does not have the power of life and death. Judgment of false teaching within the church is different (e.g., excommunication - "let him be eternally condemned, anathema" - Galatians 1:9), with God ultimately judging.
- Similarly, warfare under the Old Covenant involved physical weapons for establishing and maintaining the state, while the church's warfare is "not against flesh and blood."

8. Covenant as the Foundation of Biblical Poetry:

- Drawing on Hermann Gunkel's genre analysis of the Psalms, Niehaus suggests that biblical poetry also has a covenant foundation.
- He identifies genres related to the Suzerain (hymns, enthronement psalms, royal/messianic psalms, salvation history psalms) and the vassal's life under the Suzerain (songs of Zion, community laments, psalms of trust, individual thanksgivings).

- He acknowledges Gunkel's liberal theological leanings and his rejection of messianic prophecy in the Psalms.

9. Covenant as the Foundation of Wisdom:

- The wisdom of God arises from the "covenant revelation" through which one learns about God and how to relate to Him.
- "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," involving reverence and recognition of the difference between God and humanity.
- Moses's emphasis on carefully observing the covenantal laws was meant to demonstrate Israel's wisdom and understanding to the nations.
- In the New Covenant, believers have an even greater advantage with the revelation of Christ and the indwelling Spirit, through whom wisdom and knowledge are imparted. Niehaus references Paul's writings (Colossians 2:2-3) and the gifts of the Spirit in the church (1 Corinthians 12:8).

Quote Highlights:

- "Certainly, if one had to talk about any purposes of the Mosaic Covenant, that would be the most important. But there were other purposes too, certainly to constitute a people, to liberate them, to liberate them, and then constitute them as a people with a law. And then, though, there's another fairly immediate purpose, and that is the conquest."
- "Well, if we look at the conquest in those terms, I think we have to agree it completely fails on the human plane. Because what's the provocation? Israel was not provoked at all... Well, the Lord tells them you kill them all. Have no mercy, men, women, and children. That seems pretty severe and, in human terms, completely unjustifiable."
- "If, however, we realize that Israel is not the offended or aggrieved party, the Lord is the aggrieved party... And even if that includes the extermination of all the people because the judge of all the earth will do what is right."
- "Rahab says to the spies, I know that the Lord has given this land to you and that a great fear of you has fallen on us so that all who live in this country are melting in fear because of you... For the Lord, your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below. Now, that's a very revealing statement for a couple of reasons. First of all, I think it's right to consider that this statement here... is Rahab's statement of faith."

- "The foundation of history writing is covenant."
- "Covenants are instituted through covenant mediator prophets, as we have termed them, Adam, Noah, and Abraham."
- "So, the form of the kingdom determines the form of the judgment."
- "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."

Conclusion:

Dr. Niehaus's lecture provides a comprehensive overview of key aspects of the Mosaic Covenant beyond its pedagogical function. He tackles difficult issues like the conquest of Canaan, emphasizing God's justice and the centrality of faith. Furthermore, he illuminates the profound influence of the covenantal framework on the structure of biblical history, prophecy, poetry, and wisdom literature. The lecture also highlights the significant shift in the nature of God's kingdom and its implications for judgment and warfare in the New Testament era.

4. Study Guide: Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7, Mosaic Covenant, Part 2

The Mosaic Covenant and Its Implications

Study Guide

I. Purposes of the Mosaic Covenant (Beyond Pedagogical) * Constitution of a people * Liberation from slavery * Establishment of law * Facilitation of the conquest of Canaan

II. The Conquest of Canaan * Fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham regarding his descendants' return. * Challenges to just war theory when viewed from a human perspective (lack of provocation, command to exterminate). * Theological perspective: God as the aggrieved party, enacting just judgment against the sin of the Canaanites. * Rahab's counterexample: Her faith as the key issue in both the conquest and eschatological judgment (Hebrews 11:31). * Rahab's declaration of faith: Recognizing Yahweh as the one true God. * Distinction between Rahab's faithful response and the general resistance of the Canaanites despite their knowledge of God's power.

III. Warnings and Consequences for Israel in the Promised Land * Command to annihilate the Canaanites and avoid treaties or intermarriage to prevent idolatry. * The danger of being led astray by false leadership and influence (example of Peor and Baal worship). * The importance of faith and reliance on God's power for the conquest (contrast with the fear and unbelief in Numbers 13-14). * God's promise to fight for Israel and even use natural means (hornets) and psychological influence (hardening hearts) to achieve victory. * The decisive victory in the southern part of the Promised Land under Joshua, followed by ongoing campaigns.

IV. Actions Upon Entering the Promised Land * Complete destruction of Canaanite idols, high places, and associated materials (Deuteronomy 12). * Warning against worshipping God in the Canaanite way (pagan mentality). * Consequences for disobedience: Treating Israel like the Canaanites if they adopt their sinful practices (Leviticus 18, Deuteronomy 8). * Specific prohibitions mirroring Canaanite sins (sexual immorality, child sacrifice). * Covenant curses as a consequence of disobedience (Deuteronomy 28).

V. The Relationship Between Covenant and History * Ancient Near Eastern parallels: History writing found in historical prologues of treaties (Hittite, Egyptian, Assyrian annals). * Biblical history as structured around divine-human covenants. * Historical prologues (or backgrounds) preceding covenants and narrative historical material following them, detailing life under those covenants. * The Bible as a series of royal

annals depicting vassals under the Adamic covenant and accounts of God's interventions and covenant making. * Covenant as the foundation of historiography.

VI. Covenant and Prophecy * Covenant mediators (Adam, Noah, Abraham) and prophets as key figures in covenant institution and management. * Prophets as covenant lawsuit messengers under the Mosaic Covenant. * Prophetic guidance provided to Israel (Deuteronomy 18). * The prophetic dynamic: God speaking through a prophet to an audience (Exodus 4, Aaron as Moses' prophet). * Uniqueness of Moses' prophetic authority (Numbers 12: face-to-face communication, distinct from visions and dreams of other prophets). * Visions (open and closed) and enigmatic speech as forms of prophetic revelation. * Testing of prophets (Deuteronomy 13, 18): Fulfillment of predictions not sufficient; adherence to the Lord's commands is crucial. * Consequences of false prophecy in the Old Testament (death penalty due to treason against God as king). * Contrast with the New Testament (church as the kingdom, spiritual judgment, not physical death).

VII. Covenant and Poetry (Based on Hermann Gunkel's Categories) * Genres of Psalms related to the suzerain (hymns, enthronement psalms, royal/messianic psalms). * Genres of Psalms related to the vassal's life (songs of Zion, community laments, psalms of trust, individual thanksgivings). * Other poetic forms (wisdom poems, liturgical poems). * Caution regarding Gunkel's liberal theological views on prophecy and historicity.

VIII. Covenant and Wisdom * Wisdom arising from covenantal revelation and the fear (reverence) of the Lord. * Israel's intended role to demonstrate wisdom through obedience to God's laws (Deuteronomy 4:6). * Fullness of wisdom and knowledge found in Christ in the New Covenant (Colossians 2:2-3). * The role of the Holy Spirit in imparting wisdom and knowledge to believers in the church (1 Corinthians 12:8). * Distinction between the message of wisdom (guidance) and the message of knowledge (revelation of information).

Quiz

1. According to Niehaus, what were two immediate purposes of the Mosaic Covenant beyond its pedagogical function towards Christ?
2. From a human perspective, what are two key reasons why the conquest of Canaan seems to fail the criteria of just war theory?
3. How does Niehaus explain the seemingly harsh command to exterminate the Canaanites from a theological perspective?

4. What crucial element did Rahab demonstrate that distinguished her from the general population of Canaan and made her an example of faith?
5. What specific warning did God give to the Israelites regarding their behavior in the Promised Land, and what would be the consequence of disobedience?
6. Drawing on ancient Near Eastern parallels, how does Niehaus characterize the structure and purpose of history writing found in the Old Testament?
7. Who are identified as covenant mediator prophets, and what role do prophets play under the Mosaic Covenant?
8. What is the fundamental dynamic of prophecy as illustrated in the relationship between God, Moses, Aaron, and Pharaoh in Exodus?
9. According to Deuteronomy, what are the two key criteria for evaluating whether someone claiming to be a prophet is truly sent by the Lord?
10. How does the form of the kingdom (nation-state vs. church) influence the nature of judgment against those who promote false teachings or rebellion in the Old and New Testaments?

Answer Key

1. Beyond its pedagogical function, two immediate purposes of the Mosaic Covenant were to constitute the Israelites as a people and to facilitate their conquest of the Promised Land.
2. From a human perspective, the conquest lacks sufficient provocation from Israel's side, as they had no prior conflict with the Canaanites justifying invasion. Additionally, the command to kill all inhabitants, including noncombatants, seems disproportionate and unjust.
3. Niehaus explains that from a theological perspective, God is the one who was offended by the Canaanites' rebelliousness and sin, making His judgment, including extermination, a proportionate response by the "judge of all the earth."
4. Rahab demonstrated faith by recognizing Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the one true God in heaven and on earth, abandoning the pantheon of her culture and acting upon that belief.
5. God warned the Israelites not to intermarry with or make treaties with the Canaanites and to completely destroy their idols to prevent being turned away

from following the Lord and serving other gods, which would lead to God's anger and swift destruction.

6. Niehaus characterizes Old Testament history as being structured like the historical prologues and annals found in ancient Near Eastern treaties, serving to document the relationship between God (the Suzerain) and his people (the vassals) before, during, and after the establishment of covenants.
7. The covenant mediator prophets mentioned are Adam, Noah, and Abraham. Under the Mosaic Covenant, prophets served to provide guidance, deliver rebukes, and act as messengers in covenant lawsuits on behalf of God to his people.
8. The fundamental dynamic of prophecy is that God speaks through a prophet to an audience. In Exodus, God would speak to Moses, who would then put words in the mouth of Aaron to speak to Pharaoh, illustrating Moses acting as God to Aaron, who served as Moses' prophet.
9. According to Deuteronomy, two key criteria for evaluating a prophet are whether their predicted sign or wonder comes to pass, and more importantly, whether they consistently call the people to follow the Lord their God and adhere to His commands, rather than leading them to other gods.
10. In the Old Testament, the kingdom was a nation-state, so treason against God (leading to other gods) was punishable by death to protect the state's divinely ordained order. In the New Testament, the kingdom is the church, which lacks the power of life and death, so judgment against false teachings is spiritual (anathema, divine judgment) rather than physical execution by the church.

Essay Format Questions

1. Analyze the theological implications of viewing the conquest of Canaan not as an initiative of Israel, but as an act of divine judgment against the Canaanites. How does Rahab's story challenge or support this perspective?
2. Compare and contrast the role and function of prophecy in the Old Testament under the Mosaic Covenant with potential manifestations of spiritual gifts like prophecy in the New Testament church. Consider the differences in the form of the kingdom and the nature of judgment.
3. Discuss the significance of covenant as the foundational framework for understanding biblical history, as proposed by Niehaus. How does this perspective illuminate the purpose and structure of the Old Testament narrative?
4. Explore the relationship between obedience to God's law in the Mosaic Covenant and the concept of wisdom. How does this understanding relate to the idea of wisdom in the New Covenant, particularly in light of the person and work of Christ?
5. Evaluate the warnings given to Israel upon entering the Promised Land (regarding idolatry and adopting Canaanite practices) in light of their subsequent history as recorded in the Old Testament. To what extent did they heed these warnings, and what were the consequences?

Glossary of Key Terms

- **Pedagogical Purpose:** Relating to teaching or instruction. In the context of the Mosaic Covenant, its purpose in leading people towards the understanding of their need for Christ.
- **Just War Theory:** A philosophical and theological doctrine that attempts to provide criteria for the ethical permissibility of using military force.
- **Provocation:** An action or speech that makes someone annoyed or angry, especially deliberately. In just war theory, a sufficient reason for engaging in warfare.
- **Proportional Response:** A principle in just war theory that dictates the response to an aggression should not be greater than what is required to achieve a just outcome.

- **Genocide:** The deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group with the aim of destroying that nation or group.
- **Amening God:** To affirm or agree with God's being and actions, expressing faith and alignment with Him.
- **Eschatological Judgment:** The final judgment at the end of time.
- **Pantheon:** All the gods of a people or religion collectively.
- **Covenant Foundation:** The idea that a covenant or agreement serves as the underlying basis or structure for something else, such as history, prophecy, or wisdom.
- **Suzerain:** A dominant state that controls the foreign relations of a subordinate state but allows it internal autonomy. In covenant theology, often referring to God as the dominant party in a covenant.
- **Vassal:** A subordinate state or people obligated to a suzerain. In covenant theology, often referring to humanity or Israel as the subordinate party in a covenant with God.
- **Historical Prologue:** An introductory section of an ancient treaty that recounts the history of the relationship between the involved parties, often emphasizing the benevolent acts of the suzerain.
- **Royal Annals:** Official records of the deeds and events of a king's reign, common in the ancient Near East.
- **Eschaton:** The final event in the divine plan; the end of the world.
- **Covenant Mediator Prophet:** A prophet through whom a major covenant between God and humanity is established (e.g., Moses for the Mosaic Covenant).
- **Covenant Lawsuit Messenger:** A prophet who delivers messages from God to his people, often indicting them for breaking the covenant and announcing impending judgment.
- **Prophetic Dynamic:** The typical pattern or interaction in prophecy, involving God communicating through a prophet to an audience.
- **Hazon:** A Hebrew word meaning vision, often referring to a supernatural sight or revelation. It can also refer more broadly to revelatory information.

- **Hose (Seer):** An old term for a prophet, emphasizing their ability to see into the supernatural realm.
- **Open Vision:** A prophetic vision experienced while the prophet's eyes are open, in which heaven seems to break into the natural world.
- **Dark Speech (Riddles):** A form of prophetic communication that is not immediately clear or easily understood, often requiring interpretation.
- **Anathema:** A strong condemnation; a curse. In a religious context, often meaning to be excluded or cut off from the religious community.
- **Enthronement Psalms:** Psalms that celebrate or affirm God's reign and sovereignty as king.
- **Royal Psalms (Messianic Psalms):** Psalms that relate to the king of Israel, often prefiguring the Messiah.
- **Salvation History Psalms:** Psalms that recount and reflect on God's saving acts in Israel's history.
- **Community Laments:** Psalms in which the community expresses sorrow, distress, and cries out to God for help in times of hardship.
- **Palahu:** An Assyrian word meaning "fear" or "reverence," used in the context of worshipping a deity.
- **Words of Knowledge:** A spiritual gift involving the revelation of information that the recipient would not naturally know.
- **Words of Wisdom:** A spiritual gift involving the ability to apply knowledge with understanding and discernment, often providing guidance.

5. FAQs on Niehaus, Biblical Theology, Session 7, Mosaic Covenant, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Frequently Asked Questions: The Mosaic Covenant and Its Implications

1. What was the primary pedagogical purpose of the Mosaic Covenant? The most important purpose of the Mosaic Covenant was pedagogical, serving as a guide and pointing toward the necessity of Christ. While it also served to constitute Israel as a people, liberate them from Egypt, and prepare them for the conquest of Canaan, its overarching aim was to reveal humanity's inability to perfectly adhere to God's law and thus highlight the need for salvation through faith in Christ.

2. How does Dr. Niehaus address the seemingly unjust nature of the conquest of Canaan, particularly the command to exterminate the inhabitants? Dr. Niehaus explains that the conquest fails according to human just war theory, as Israel had no provocation, and the command to kill all inhabitants, including noncombatants, appears unjustifiable on a human plane. However, he argues that the Lord was the offended party due to the Canaanites' rebelliousness and sin, and God's judgment, even extermination, is just because "the judge of all the earth will do what is right." He emphasizes that faith, exemplified by Rahab, was the key issue. God's judgment was directed at those who resisted Him despite knowing of His power, while those who exercised faith, like Rahab, were spared.

3. What was the significance of Rahab's actions and statement regarding the Lord, the God of Israel? Rahab's declaration, "For the Lord, your God is God in heaven above and on the earth below," is presented as a profound statement of faith. It signifies her recognition of Yahweh as the only true God, rejecting the Canaanite pantheon. Her faith, evidenced by her fear of the Lord and her willingness to align herself with Israel, contrasts with the fear of her people, which did not lead to repentance. Rahab's inclusion in Hebrews 11's "honor roll of faith" highlights that salvation comes through faith, and the world is judged for a lack of it.

4. Why did God command Israel to completely destroy the idols and avoid intermarrying with the Canaanites? God commanded the total destruction of Canaanite idols (altars, sacred stones, Asherah poles) and forbade taking their silver and gold to prevent Israel from being ensnared by their detestable practices and the temptation to worship other gods. Similarly, intermarriage was prohibited because it would lead the Israelites astray, causing them to serve foreign deities, which would provoke the Lord's anger and result in their destruction. These commands were for Israel's own good, protecting them from spiritual corruption and covenantal unfaithfulness.

5. How does Dr. Niehaus explain instances where the Lord hardened the hearts of individuals or groups, such as Pharaoh and the northern Canaanites? Dr. Niehaus explains that the Lord can psychologically interfere with those He is judging. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart served to bring about the deliverance of Israel, while the hardening of the hearts of the northern Canaanites led them to resist Israel and be defeated, thus fulfilling God's purposes. This illustrates God's ultimate control and sovereignty in carrying out His judgments and plans.

6. How does Dr. Niehaus connect the concept of covenant to the way history is presented in the Old Testament? Dr. Niehaus argues that the foundation of history writing in the Bible is rooted in the concept of covenant, drawing parallels to ancient Near Eastern treaty structures. He identifies two main genres of historical writing: historical prologues found in treaties, which detail the history of relations before the covenant, and analistic accounts, which record events after the covenant is established. He suggests that the Old Testament narratives can be understood as life under these divine-human covenants, with historical backgrounds preceding them and accounts of covenantal life following.

7. What is the covenant foundation of prophecy, and how does the lecture illustrate the nature and validation of a prophet in the Old Testament? Prophecy is also founded on the covenant, with prophets often serving as covenant mediators or messengers. The lecture highlights the prophetic dynamic through Moses and Aaron, where God speaks through a prophet to an audience. It also discusses the different ways God reveals Himself to prophets (visions, dreams, clear speech to Moses). Crucially, it explains the criteria for validating a prophet in Deuteronomy: while miraculous signs might occur, the ultimate test is the prophet's adherence to the Lord's commands and whether they lead people to worship the true God. A prophet advocating the worship of other gods was to be rejected and punished as a treasonous act against the covenant.

8. According to the lecture, how is the covenant concept related to biblical poetry and wisdom literature? Biblical poetry, as categorized by Hermann Gunkel, has a covenant foundation, with various genres of Psalms relating to the suzerain (God) and the vassal's (Israel's) life under the covenant. Hymns, royal/messianic Psalms, and salvation history Psalms reflect aspects of God's covenantal relationship. Similarly, wisdom arises from the covenantal revelation, with the fear of the Lord (reverence and recognition of His sovereignty) being the beginning of wisdom. The Mosaic Law itself was intended to demonstrate Israel's wisdom and understanding to other nations through their obedience to God's decrees. In the New Covenant, Christ embodies all wisdom and knowledge, and the Holy Spirit imparts wisdom and knowledge to believers.