

Session 3:

The People of God

Emergence Winter Sessions, 2023–24
Biblical Themes



The Bible tells the story of how God is setting apart a people for his own possession to live under his rule in a place that he provides.

Then God said, “Let us make man in our image [*b^eṣalmênû, ṣelem*], after our likeness [*kidmûtênû, d^emût*]. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” So God created man in his own image [*b^eṣalmô, ṣelem*], in the image [*b^eṣelem, ṣelem*] of God he created him; male and female he created them (Gen 1:26–27).

“The father of the king, my lord, was the very image (*ṣalam*) of Bēl, and the king, my lord, is likewise the very image (*ṣalam*) of Bēl.”

Simo Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*
(State Archives of Assyria 10; Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993), 181.



The image [*dmwt*'] of Hadad-yith'i,
which he has set up before Hadad of
Sikan....

The statue [*šlm*] of Hadad-yith'i, king
of Guzan and Sikan and of Azran,
for exalting and continuing his throne

...

this image [*dmwt*'] he made better than
before.

In the presence of Hadad who dwells in
Sikan, Yahweh of Habur,
he has set up this statue [*šlmh*]....

“Hadiad-Yith'i,” translated by Alan Millard
(*COS* 2.34.153–54).

“Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

Genesis 1:28

“I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

Genesis 3:15

The lines of Cain and Seth
Genesis 4–5

Now Yahweh said to Abram, “Go from your country and your kindred and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.”

Genesis 12:1–3

Then Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.

Genesis 12:7

Yahweh said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, “Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward and southward and eastward and westward, for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your offspring forever. I will make your offspring as the dust of the earth, so that if one can count the dust of the earth, your offspring also can be counted. Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.”

Genesis 13:14–17

When Abram was ninety-nine years old Yahweh appeared to Abram and said to him, “I am El Shadday; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly.” Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, “Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations.

Genesis 17:1–5

I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God.”

Genesis 17:6–8

The scepter shall not depart from Judah,
nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
until tribute comes to him;
and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples.

Genesis 49:10

⁴ When Yahweh saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” ⁵ Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” ⁶ And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

Exodus 3:4–6

¹¹ But Moses said to God, “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the children of Israel out of Egypt?” ¹² He said, “But I will be with you [*’ehyeh ’immak*], and this shall be the sign for you, that I have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall serve God on this mountain.”

Exodus 3:11–12

¹³ Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” ¹⁴ God said to Moses, “I am who I am” [*’ehyeh ’ăšer ’ehyeh*]. And he said, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘I am has sent me to you.’” ¹⁵ God also said to Moses, “Say this to the people of Israel: ‘Yahweh, the God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and thus I am to be remembered throughout all generations.

Exodus 3:13–15

God spoke to Moses and said to him, “I am Yahweh. I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as El Shadday, but by my name Yahweh 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.”

Exodus 6:2–4

⁵ Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the people of Israel whom the Egyptians hold as slaves, and I have remembered my covenant.
⁶ Say therefore to the people of Israel, ‘I am Yahweh, 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 with great acts of judgment. ⁷ I will take you to be my people, and I will be your God, and you shall know that I am Yahweh your God, who has brought you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. ⁸ I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I will give it to you for a possession. I am Yahweh.’”

Exodus 6:5–8

⁴ “‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel”

Exodus 19:4–6

⁵ See, I have taught you statutes and rules, as Yahweh my God commanded me, that you should do them in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. ⁶ Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, ‘Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.’ ⁷ For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as Yahweh our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? ⁸ And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

Deuteronomy 4:5–8

⁴ ““You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. ⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶ and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel”

Exodus 19:4–6

“A mixed multitude also went up with them, and they had very much livestock, both flocks and herds.”

Exodus 12:38

¹⁰ “You are standing today, all of you, before Yahweh your God: the heads of your tribes, your elders, and your officers, all the men of Israel, ¹¹ your little ones, your wives, and the sojourner who is in your camp, from the one who chops your wood to the one who draws your water, ¹² so that you may enter into the sworn covenant of Yahweh your God, which Yahweh your God is making with you today, ¹³ that he may establish you today as his people, and that he may be your God, as he promised you, and as he swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

Deuteronomy 29:10–13

“I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people. Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them, in order that I may make a great nation of you.”

Exodus 32:10

³⁰ The next day Moses said to the people, “You have sinned a great sin. And now I will go up to Yahweh; perhaps I can make atonement for your sin.” ³¹ So Moses returned to Yahweh and said, “Alas, this people has sinned a great sin. They have made for themselves gods of gold. ³² But now, if you will forgive their sin—but if not, please blot me out of your book that you have written.” ³³ But Yahweh said to Moses, “Whoever has sinned against me, I will blot out of my book. ³⁴ But now go, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you; behold, my angel shall go before you. Nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them.”

¹ Yahweh said to Moses, “Depart; go up from here, you and the people whom you have brought up out of the land of Egypt, to the land of which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, ‘To your offspring I will give it.’ ² I will send an angel before you, and I will drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. ³ Go up to a land flowing with milk and honey; but I will not go up among you, lest I consume you on the way, for you are a stiff-necked people.”

Exodus 33:1

“My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.”

Exodus 33:14

“If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people? Is it not in your going with us, so that we are distinct, I and your people, from every other people on the face of the earth.”

Exodus 33:15–16

²⁴ When Moses had finished writing the words of this law in a book to the very end, ²⁵ Moses commanded the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, ²⁶ “Take this Book of the Law and put it by the side of the ark of the covenant of Yahweh your God, that it may be there for a witness against you. ²⁷ For I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. Behold, even today while I am yet alive with you, you have been rebellious against Yahweh. How much more after my death!

Deuteronomy 31:24–27

²⁸ Assemble to me all the elders of your tribes and your officers, that I may speak these words in their ears and call heaven and earth to witness against them. ²⁹ For I know that after my death you will surely act corruptly and turn aside from the way that I have commanded you. And in the days to come evil will befall you, because you will do what is evil in the sight of Yahweh, provoking him to anger through the work of your hands.

Deuteronomy 31:28–29

² It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of Yawheh shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be lifted up above the hills; and all the nations shall flow to it,
³ and many peoples shall come, and say: “Come, let us go up to the mountain of Yahweh, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths.”

Isaiah 2:2–3

For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. ⁴ He shall judge between the nations, and shall decide disputes for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.

⁵ O house of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of Yahweh.

Isaiah 2:3b2–5

¹⁹ In that day there will be an altar to Yahweh in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to Yahweh at its border. ²⁰ It will be a sign and a witness to Yahweh of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to Yahweh because of oppressors, he will send them a savior and defender, and deliver them. ²¹ And Yahweh will make himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know Yahweh in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to Yahweh and perform them. ²² And Yahweh will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to Yahweh, and he will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them.

Isaiah 19:19–22

²³ In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians.

²⁴ In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, ²⁵ whom Yahweh of hosts has blessed, saying, “Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel my inheritance.”

Isaiah 19:19–25

⁶ On this mountain Yahweh of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-aged wine, of rich food full of marrow, of aged wine well refined.

⁷ And he will swallow up on this mountain the covering that is cast over all peoples, the veil that is spread over all nations. ⁸ He will swallow up death forever; and Lord Yahweh will wipe away tears from all faces, and the reproach of his people he will take away from all the earth, for Yahweh has spoken.

⁹ It will be said on that day, “Behold, this is our God; we have waited for him, that he might save us. This is Yahweh; we have waited for him; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.”

Isaiah 25:6–9

“Behold my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights;
I have put my Spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.”

Isaiah 42:1

⁶ “I am Yahweh; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you;
I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations,
⁷ to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.”

Isaiah 42:6–7

¹⁸ “Hear, you deaf, and look, you blind, that you may see!

¹⁹ Who is blind but my servant, or deaf as my messenger whom I send?

Who is blind as my dedicated one, or blind as the servant of Yahweh?

²⁰ He sees many things, but does not observe them; his ears are open, but he does not hear.

²¹ Yahweh was pleased, for his righteousness’ sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

²² But this is a people plundered and looted; they are all of them trapped in holes and hidden in prisons;

they have become plunder with none to rescue, spoil with none to say,
“Restore!”

Isaiah 42:18–22

²³ Who among you will give ear to this, will attend and listen for the time to come?

²⁴ Who gave up Jacob to the looter, and Israel to the plunderers?

Was it not Yahweh, against whom we have sinned, in whose ways they would not walk,

and whose law they would not obey?

²⁵ So he poured on him the heat of his anger and the might of battle; it set him on fire all around, but he did not understand; it burned him up, but he did not take it to heart.”

Isaiah 42:18–25

⁵ “Surely *he* has borne *our* griefs and carried *our* sorrows;
yet *we* esteemed *him* stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.
But *he* was pierced for *our* transgressions;
he was crushed for *our* iniquities;
upon *him* was the chastisement that brought *us* peace,
and with *his* wounds *we* are healed.

⁶ All *we* like sheep have gone astray; *we* have turned—every one—
to his own way;
and Yahweh has laid on *him* the iniquity of *us* all.”

Isaiah 53:4–6

¹³ “I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. ¹⁴ And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed.”

Daniel 7:13–14

¹⁵ “As for me, Daniel, my spirit within me was anxious, and the visions of my head alarmed me. ¹⁶ I approached one of those who stood there and asked him the truth concerning all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of the things. ¹⁷ ‘These four great beasts are four kings who shall arise out of the earth. ¹⁸ But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, forever and ever.’”

Daniel 7:15–18

“The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”

Matthew 1:1

“She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Matthew 1:21

“¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Matthew 2:1–2

¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18–20

¹² “On the following day, when they came from Bethany, he was hungry. ¹³ And seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find anything on it. When he came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ And he said to it, ‘May no one ever eat fruit from you again.’ And his disciples heard it.”

Mark 11:12–14

⁵⁴ “He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy,
⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring
forever.”

Luke 1:54–55

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and
redeemed his people ⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in
the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his
holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our
enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.”

Luke 1:68–71

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:9–13

¹⁴ “I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me,
¹⁵ just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down
my life for the sheep. ¹⁶ And I have other sheep that are not of this
fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So
there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

John 10:14–16

⁶ So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” ⁷ He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Acts 1:6–8

⁴ For thus says Yahweh: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast my covenant, ⁵ I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.

Isaiah 56:4–5

⁶ “And the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to him, to love the name of Yahweh, and to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it, and holds fast my covenant—⁷ these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

⁸ Lord Yahweh, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, “I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.”

Isaiah 56:4–8

⁴³ “He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.

⁴³ To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.

Acts 10:42–43

“When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

Acts 11:18)

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:11–13

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

Ephesians 2:14–18

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,
²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19–22

¹ For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Ephesians 3:1–6

¹⁷ But if some of the branches were broken off, and you, although a wild olive shoot, were grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing root of the olive tree, ¹⁸ do not be arrogant toward the branches. If you are, remember it is not you who support the root, but the root that supports you. ¹⁹ Then you will say, “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” ²⁰ That is true. They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. So do not become proud, but fear.

Romans 11:17–20

²¹ For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. ²² Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Romans 11:21–22

²³ And even they, if they do not continue in their unbelief, will be grafted in, for God has the power to graft them in again. ²⁴ For if you were cut from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and grafted, contrary to nature, into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these, the natural branches, be grafted back into their own olive tree.

Romans 11:17–24

²⁵ Lest you be wise in your own sight, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery, brothers: a partial hardening has come upon Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. ²⁶ And in this way all Israel will be saved, as it is written, “The Deliverer will come from Zion, he will banish ungodliness from Jacob”; ²⁷ “and this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins.”

Romans 11:25–27

²⁸ As regards the gospel, they are enemies for your sake. But as regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. ²⁹ For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. ³⁰ For just as you were at one time disobedient to God but now have received mercy because of their disobedience, ³¹ so they too have now been disobedient in order that by the mercy shown to you they also may now receive mercy.

Romans 11:28–31