I am grateful to John Carey for his excellent teaching last week! I read his notes and was very impressed! He is a gifted teacher and excellent scholar.

Genesis is the Historical Prologue for the Covenant of the Exodus. The Historical Prologue introduces the parties to the covenant about to be entered into by the parties...further it seeks to set into a context How and why these two parties come to this place and time to enter into this covenant. The typical structure of a second millennium BC begins with a Preamble, introducing the parties. Historical Prologue in which the parties, their backgrounds and the context of their relationship is detailed. The Stipulations, What is expected of the parties is laid out. The Blessings and Curses, which explains the consequences for covenant faithfulness and unfaithfulness. Finally, the Documentary clause, which addresses the ability of the covenant to be amended and updated.

Genesis, sets in motion several dramatic relationships that continue throughout history that weave in and out of the larger story of rescue and the establishment of the kingdom or reign of God upon the earth.

Such subplots are the relationship between Shem, Ham, and Japheth...Israel and the nations Abraham and Lot...Israel...Amman and Moab...Ruth...Boaz, David...(Ammanites marry Solomon and birth Rehoboam and introduction of Molech worship on Mt. of Olives...destroyed by Josiah) Ammanites part of opposition to rebuilding Temple and wall of Jerusalem...Tobiah Jesus Isaac and Ishmael...Israel and Arabia...Midian Jacob and Esau...Israel, Edom, Amalek, Herod Judah and Benjamin...David and Saul...Amalek...Agag...Esther, Mordecai, Haman...Jesus, Saul/Paul 1000 year relationship upon which the salvation of the world depended threatened by a 2000 year enmity that sought to destroy it...playing out an even older enmity Yahweh and the Adversary.

Genesis 1:1 Is understood in different ways. The majority of scholars see it “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” as a title or rubric or topic sentence that the author then intends to unpack in the verses that follow. A minority see it as a statement of fact and that verse 2 is not an unpacking of verse 1 describing how God created but describing something that happened subsequent to verse 1.

In either case, verse 2 cries out for the Creator to do something because verse 2 represents something less than an A+ creation. Verse 2 is not judged “Good”.

Verses 1:3-2:3 represent God’s response to the darkness (hoshek) and formless void (tohu vevohu).

Days 1-3 describe how God ordered and created realms. Days 4-6 describe how God created ‘sovereigns or rulers’ to ‘govern’ these realms. Finally, on day 6 we are told of God making a different kind of creature, made to bear God’s image or make God’s presence local to rule over and cultivate the potential of the creation to create it to be a place of Shalom or right relationship.

Karl Barth, one of the great theological minds of the 20th century understood the stories of Creation to be a polemic or an attack against the pagan cosmology particularly of Egypt.

Further, it is written with Exodus in mind. The first words of the Bible were written by whom and what were those words? See Exodus 31:18.

Genesis 1 is written with Exodus 20 in mind. Notice how Exodus 20 begins...does that remind you of anything? Notice how many commands Yahweh gives and notice how many times in Genesis 1 we read, ‘and God said...’.

The Rabbis in reflection understood that the universe is founded on Torah...the ten words of the Commandments are the same ten words that God spoke in Creation to bring order out of the chaos and light out of darkness. The God revealed in Genesis in particular and the Bible in general, is a God, who is the True and only God, who is the Creator, Ruler, and Judge of everything, everyone, in every age. This Creator is irrevocably committed to rescuing God’s creation through Judgment.