

this lecture I shall present only the first part of the proposal, that part which deals with the definition of the term "Creation."

In order to set forth the scriptural understanding of this word, and in order to avoid the semantic ambiguity which so often accompanies its use in discussions of this nature, I should like to suggest three meanings for the term.

First of all, "Creation" means the bringing into being of that which did not (either in its *substance* or its *form*) previously exist. An example of this meaning would be the creation of the original matter-energy complex of the physical universe. This usage we shall call *Ex Nihilo Creation* (i.e., "creation from nothing").

Secondly, "Creation" means the bringing into being of that which did not (in its *form*) previously exist, employing previously-existing substance. An example of this meaning would be the creation of Adam's body from the dust of the ground. This usage we shall call Immediate Creation (i.e., creation by direct action of God, using previously existing substance).

Thirdly, "Creation" means the bringing into being of that which did not (in its *form*) previously exist, employing both previously-existing *substance* and *secondary causes*. An example of this meaning is the creation by God, through human parents, of each child born into the world. This usage we shall call *Mediate Creation*.

In each of these three usages -- in Ex Nihilo Creation, Immediate Creation, and Mediate Creation -- it is important to remember and to recognize that in the context of this discussion it is God who is the Creator. But it is also important to remember that when we speak of God's activity in Creation, we must from time to time clarify the statement "God created such-and-such" by specifying whether God created *ex nihilo*, or *immediately*, or *mediately*. This also means that when we read a statement in Scripture concerning God's creative activity, we must occasionally ask ourselves the question, "Which meaning of 'creation' is intended in this usage?"

At this point someone may be wondering, "Of what value are these distinctions, and how do they contribute to the subject at hand?" This is a perfectly proper question. However, instead of attempting to justify the making of these distinctions by giving *reasons*, I shall attempt to *illustrate*