

## **Dr. Meredith Kline, Prologue, Lecture 2**

© 2012, Dr. Meredith Kline and Ted Hildebrandt

The covenant of common grace is an interim situation in which believers and non-believers can coexist politically and otherwise. It was a completely different covenant of common grace as opposed to this covenant of salvation. Palmer Robinson used to confuse these; all kinds of people are confused. If you confuse these two you're going to end up completely unable to handle properly the questions of: "What is the State?", "What is the Church?", and "What are the functions of the two?" You're going to get them all confused. So that's one of the big important things that we're going to deal when we come back to that section.

### **Genesis 10 Table of Nations: The City of Man once again**

Alright! Now here we are chapter 10 verse 1 and following. This is the story once again of the City of Man. Remember what you have in chapter 10--the table of nations? It is the account of how after the flood the world is repopulated through the three sons of Noah. It isn't just obviously God's people, the Covenant People, but here's mankind in general spread all over the earth and many of them are unbelievers. So some are believers and some are non-believers. But this is the story of the City of Man. And, by the way, the City of Man, as I said, in itself is a legitimate thing. God instituted it. It's perfectly good. Believers are in it as well as unbelievers. Today in our relationship to the State, as Christians, we should act responsibly towards the State as though we are part of it, fulfill our obligations within it, and so forth. We just shouldn't be expecting the kingdom of God to come through this avenue. But it's a legitimate thing in which we can play our role.

Here's the City of Man now developing after the flood. The Japhethites are going there, the Shemites are going here and the Hamites are going there. Various types of divisions are developing, ethnically, geographically, politically, and linguistically. The text tells us how they're being divided as they spread all over the world.

### **Old ideology retained: Tower of Babel**

But unhappily, the old ideology is still there. That old urban ideology that leads up ultimately to the antichrist is there again. How do we see that? Well, before you come to the end of that whole fourth section, you move into chapter 11 and you get the story of the tower of Babel. That particular account then is a window on religious developments within the City of Man as various political organizations were developing here and there and these various differences among them. But the spirit that is driving them underneath is that same old diabolical lust for a name. It comes to a particular expression in this place in the land of Shinar.

Again we will have a rather lengthy account of that in *Kingdom Prologue* but the essence of the thing is: mankind realized that things are not the way it should be. Back in the Garden of Eden, there was a nice little coherence to everything before the fall. There was the mountain of God, there was the glory of God in the midst as a cultic center for all of human life that was going on so that as man made his way culturally fulfilling the mandate to fill the earth and subdue it, there was a coherence. There was a connection between heaven and earth. There was the presence of the God of heaven on earth at the mountain of God which is sort of an axis, a stairway between heaven and earth. There is a connection with heaven, immortality and light. Then the fall happens and they lose that. Then they're dispersed and they're scattered. That is the story of Genesis 10, they're being scattered all over the place. Now mankind feels that he wants to get hold of things again. He wants to get power over his existential dilemma. He wants to get hold of access to the realm of immortality up there in heaven. "So come let's build this staircase a tower that reaches out to heaven," they say. "It's man-made. Let us make the bricks, let us do the jobs." So you can see what the ideology is.

How does one return to the Garden of Eden? How is paradise to be restored? Well, we know the story. It is this story that is developing on this bottom line, the covenant line among the people of God. Heaven is restored--access to heaven. The secret of eternal life is to be found in the message of grace leading up to the seed of the woman and the coming of Christ and so on. But man doesn't want to do it that way. He rejects the grace

of God. I'm going to do it my way. I'm going to do it by works and not by grace. So he tries to make his way up into heaven. So that's the story of the tower of Babel. It's the story of a man and his rebellion refusing the message of the gospel of grace and trying to assert his way back into glory without the help of God in terms of human strength and for human glory. That's what's going on there in the City of Man.

### **Genealogy in Gen. 10: The covenant family**

The genealogies develop in such a way that they take you now from Noah down to Abraham. Back here we have the story from Adam to Noah. Now in this second triad, it's going to be the story from Noah to Abraham. So you get the list of the table of nations and everything that was developing down to that point. Meanwhile was there still a remnant in the earth even though things is going all wrong again? Yes, there is still remnant. And the fifth section, which would be 11 verse 9. It begins this section. That was a genealogy of Seth back in the last part. Now here's a genealogy of Shem. Here are those folk who are calling on the name of the Lord again. Here is the covenant community in the earth. The story of the covenant community is sketched very rapidly just in terms of a list of names. It's a family. The covenant is always organized in terms of families. If you're arguing the subject of Presbyterians first versus Baptist and so on the subject of infant baptism and what's the membership of the church, here's something that is relevant to that. The story of the history of the covenant is told as the history of particular families here in the line of Shem. So the covenant line is still in the earth. God's purposes are on the move again. Satan is still busy in City of Man but God is still busy fulfilling his eternal purposes in Christ. So there is the line of Shem taking us from Noah up to Abraham.

### **Line of Seth and line of Shem and the antiquity of man**

Now the next thing we're going to do after we go through this structure of the book Genesis is to go back and take these two sections, the one about the line of Seth and the one about the line of Shem--those two genealogies (Gen. 5, 10)--and to study them from the angle of what this tells us and does not tell us about chronology, about the

antiquity of man. How long has man been on the earth? So that's a special subject that we want to take a look at in a moment. It involves very much those two genealogies.

### **God's covenant to Noah and Abraham**

So here's the second one. The line of Noah through Shem up until Abraham. The same tensions are building up again. Now, just as the third section here led to the great covenant episode of God's covenant with Noah whereby God gave to Noah and his family, the kingdom and the ark; now we have another covenant. God's covenant with Abraham whereby God gives to Abraham and his seed the covenant in the promises. Now Noah got the fulfill the kingdom very quickly in the ark experience. Abraham gets the kingdom in the promises. Now there's going to be a wait before the kingdom promises materialize. In fact, we'll go all through the book of Genesis and that kingdom will not yet have come, not even in its first form, not even in its typological preliminary form which it does in the Mosaic covenant, the old covenant. Then of course, later on when it comes to its messianic fulfillment it will then come in a new covenant. But by the time you come the end of Genesis you have even the typological fulfillment of everything. But nevertheless Abraham has it in the promises of God which cannot fail. So now we have this covenant which is so basic to all the rest of the Bible--God's covenant with Abraham.

Now the covenant with Noah is a big bright dramatic picture, as we have seen, of God's final kingdom accomplishments for us. But you and I have nothing to do with that covenant. That covenant is all fulfilled within one year. Within one year the floods have come and gone. The ark has fulfilled its purpose and that's what that covenant was all about. But now here is the Abrahamic covenant. It has everything to do with us today. Here is the foundation of all of the rest of the Bible. So the old covenant, as I've said, the Old Testament, is one fulfillment of it and the New Covenant now is the second fulfillment of it and we are involved in that. So this is a supremely important development of how it takes place here with Abraham. So in the line of Shem here and there in the world there is faith.

Incidentally, although the story concentrates on the line of Shem here, it isn't saying that there wasn't any true faith in the line of Japheth or in the line of Ham any more than its saying that anyone in the line of Shem was saved. What it really seems to be doing is to say that the main development, the main ongoing continuous presence of true faith and covenant of community in the earth, was associated with the line of Shem wherever else there might have been pockets of faith as well.

Out of all of the expressions of the communities of faith in the world. Now here God focuses on Abraham. There are other believers in the world. The book of Job launched in the patriarchal period. So out there is Job who's not in the Abrahamic line. So there was faith in the world over there. Up there in the land of Canaan is Melchizedek. Melchizedek isn't in the line of the Abraham. But Melchizedek is a rare representative of true faith in the world. So here and there are elements of true faith still in the world in Abraham's day but the future doesn't belong to them. Whatever other pockets of faith there are, they are gradually dying out. But the future is going to belong to the line of Abraham.

In part it's because of this special revelation that God multiplies the means of grace including presently the coming of the scriptures themselves into the midst of this people as a preservative for them so that this line of faith is preserved in the world and it moves on. So here then is that, as I say again, when we come to the later part of kingdom and prologue we'll want to be analyzing this Abrahamic covenant in all kinds of detail-- the meaning of its principles of power and so on. We'll want to be assessing a biblical view of the fulfillment of those promises. That is over against the dispensationalist scheme and we'll be moving on through these things but in the meanwhile we'll be moving on through the structure of Genesis.

Starting with section 6 then we have again come to the climactic third section. Now the rest of the book of Genesis has ten sections as we said. There are four sections remaining seven, and eight, and nine and ten. All of these we might consider a sort of expansion of the Abrahamic covenant in section six. It is an expansion either by way of dismissal from the covenant or the continuance of the covenant.

## **Section 7: Ishmael**

Section seven deals with the short section concerning Ishmael. So Ishmael was within the covenant but he moves out from the covenant back into the world. See up along the top line section one section four, there's the world out there. Here's the bottom line, the covenant line but we have this phenomenon you see out from the covenant ranks there are those who don't genuinely belong to the covenant. So there is Ishmael. So section 7 speaks of how he moves from the covenant community back into the world but meanwhile there is Isaac who is the seed of promise. The covenant goes on.

## **Jacob and Esau and the covenant: sections 8 & 9**

Then the next section here is Esau and Jacob. Both of them are within the covenant both received the seal of membership in the covenant and yet Esau is hated. He is rejected. So that's in section nine deals with the dismissal of Esau. Esau is moved from the covenant family back into the world. Then there is Jacob--Israel. So the covenant goes marching on via the grace of God. The triumph of God goes marching on in the world. There is a people of faith in the world.

## **Covenant membership**

From what we've already seen. There are big messages about the covenant structure and about the structure of the church today. One thing that right away we see is this: the covenant is a big circle but not everyone who's in the covenant is elect. "They're not all Israel who are of Israel." Not everyone who is a member of the church today is elect. They're in the covenant but they are not all elect. But what determines whether you belong to the covenant? What determines that is if you have professed the faith or if you are under the parental authority of someone who has professed the faith. You are holy in the sense that you are under the covenant. But that does not necessarily mean that you are elect. It is not the presupposition that you are under the covenant on the basis of your being baptized only indicates that you are being reckoned as a member of the church. This is in the case of those who have not professed the faith for themselves but are under

their authority the basis for that is simply that you are under the parental authority of someone who has.

Esau and Jacob are under the parental authority of Isaac and that's why Esau is given the sign of circumcision. So he's in the covenant. It's not that he's elect, or presumed to be elect. As a matter of fact before he's born his parents know that he's not elect and that God has rejected him. That has nothing to do with your being a member of the covenant. He is a child of those parents and therefore he is a part of that covenant. But he in due time shows that he really doesn't belong there. So in section nine he is dismissed from the covenant but Jacob shows himself to be genuinely the one who owns the covenant. So the covenant line proceeds through him.

### **Ten section structure of Genesis: three, three and two pairs**

That brings us to the end of the book of Genesis with the ten sections divided into these nice patterns of three, three and two pairs. The whole thing is structured in terms of various themes so that you just don't go marching ahead chronologically from beginning to end but you deal with one theme then back up, go through another theme, go through the flood again, after the flood the same way you go through Noah to Abraham, then you back up and so on. So that's the way Moses develops his story.

But the main thing that we should get out of this survey is the structure of the book of Genesis is what the Bible is all about. What we've been talking about is what the whole Bible is about. This is what's been going on throughout history, this is what's going on in the kingdom of God. This is how the covenants are developing and all of this is foundational to it.

### **Abrahamic promise of the kingdom**

Now in terms of the Abrahamic promise of the kingdom as we said within the book of Genesis you don't get there. There are promises but the Kingdom hasn't come yet. In the book of Exodus "the Kingdom comes"--that's the coming of the kingdom. But even there it's not the real kingdom, it's the typological kingdom, it's the preliminary provisional thing that God set up as a sort of a historical parable for the world to look at

to see what was to come and what the real thing would be when, not Moses, but Messiah was the leader of the covenant. But nevertheless there was a coming of the kingdom with the book of Exodus. The kingdom comes and God redeems the people in the book of Exodus and yet he enters into covenant. The kingdom is instituted there in Exodus 19 and following. The king has his coronation he has his covenant people build a kingdom house for him in which he assumes his throne. So there is an establishing of the kingdom. That is what the book of Exodus is all about. The whole rest of the Old Testament history is the ongoing story of that king who claims his land and has his people march in and take over that land and so on. So the Old Testament is the story of the coming of the kingdom as the first fulfillment of those promises given through Abraham back in the book of Genesis.

### **Kingdom Prologue**

Then you come to the New Covenant. Then you have the anti-type, the real fulfillment, not just something provisional, imperfect, passing, transient, but that which was perfect, the real thing, the type of the fulfillment not just the promise. That's the coming of the kingdom for sure. Up to that point it's kingdom prologue. It's the background. It's the foundation. There are fulfillments here and there but here is the kingdom prologue. That's the meaning of the title of the book which you can then see I trust is the foundational character of Genesis as an introduction to all the rest of the Bible. It's the introduction to the rest of the old covenant. It tells you when you come to the book of Exodus and this Mosaic covenant, when you read about the Hebrews, when you read about the God of the Hebrews who enters into a covenant relationship with them; what it's all about? Genesis tells you who these Hebrews are. It tells you who this God of the Hebrews is. It tells us what that covenant is that God remembers with Moses and so on. The book of Genesis is immediately preparing for that and, of course, in its earlier chapters, especially the book of Genesis, is the foundation in a universal way for all of the rest of the Scripture.

It must be time for a break. I don't know how to handle time for discussion or so



on but maybe just before we take a break, out of all of that confusion was there something that is more confusing than the rest of it? As I said, we have covered it rapidly and we'll be backing up and treating it gradually but maybe just having a feel for where we are going and what the overall message is and reading *Kingdom Prologue* we will be able to piece it together more and more. Should we take five minutes or so? [Break]

### **Antiquity of humankind**

Some of the evidence for the age of man seems to say 100,000 B.C., or at least 35,000 B.C. Until at least fairly recently you would read about Neanderthal. Now there's another big question. There was certainly the Neanderthal beings. I would say it's a difficult question. I would say that they're not genuine human beings; they are not descendants of Adam. They are not genuine modern man. But usually it's thought that went back toward around 100,000 B.C. and that when you come to the middle of the period around 35,000 B.C. or so there seems to be a little bit over overlapping between Neanderthal and modern man. How is it that Neanderthal died out and modern man continued? What was the relationship between these two communities? We can speak about communities of Neanderthals as there seems to be some culture remains. But the evidence from these to modern man seems to go back tens of thousands of years B.C. Does the Bible allow that or not? That is the question I had to ask.

As for the flood, no one knows when the flood happened. One of the things we can say with certainty it didn't happen in 2,500 B.C. or 2,300 B.C. I don't know where the flood happened, but it was long before 2,500 B.C. It was much longer than 300 years before Abraham. That is a point I'll be coming to. As I say, the question is: exegetically can we believe, hold to the authority of Scripture and allow for let's say a date for Adam of a 100,000 B.C. or 50,000 B.C. or a date for the flood that would put it just before the beginning of what is called the agricultural revolution and sort of the Neolithic Age or from about the end of the last ice age about 10,000 B.C. and on? Since the end of the last ice age where you have this agricultural revolution as they describe it. Where men proceeded from being nomadic and food gathering to settled community and food

growing with the domestication of animals and development of cities and so on. From about 9,000 or 10,000 B.C. and on there was this development of culture along these lines with no evidence of the biblical flood there on this side. For myself I don't see why you can't date the flood before 10,000 B.C. maybe as far back as 35,000. I just don't know where to put it, but we can leave those questions open. We don't have to have the precise answers for it all but we do have to be prepared to ask: Does the Bible allow for these possibilities? So that is what we want to do together.

You know as ministers of the word, as teachers of the Scriptures and elders in the church and so on that's what your job is to know what the Scripture is saying and not to go off half-cocked and in the name of God and the scriptures and say this is what the scriptures do say and actually impose limits on the Bible that are not there. You're not doing God and the cause of Christ or the Bible any good by doing that. You're just creating stumbling blocks in the world of young Christians who have had a course in the science along the line. Study of the Bible is our job and so let's try to address that question about the antiquity of man in light of what Genesis 5 and 11 say. There are really two main views that I've already described a little bit but we can mention a third view too.

### **Genealogical structure: Gen. 5 & 11—Three views**

So here are these lists of names with a certain routine formula to them: A lived X number of years, and after that you got B who lived so many more years and the total number of A's years was so and he died. Now what does that mean?

Of course, there is the view that we can call the "**Complete View.**" The complete view says that the genealogy is a complete list of names with no gaps, no generational gaps between any of them. So when it says that A lived so many years then begat B. B is the immediate son of A who was begotten in that particular year. As I said if that's your particular interpretation of Genesis 5 and Genesis 11 then the flood took place about 300 years before Abraham and Adam is 4,000 B.C. Whatever you are going to do with all the evidence to the contrary then is a big problem. But if that's what the Scripture teaches

that's what we'd hold. But do the Scriptures insist on that?

A second view, I'll just mention this in passing because there really isn't much to be said for it. You will encounter it maybe in some place or another. It's the less literal view. Now the complete view understands these names as names of people, individual persons, alright? And it also takes literally if it says so and so lived for some 900 years, that they actually lived 900 years.

Now the view that I'll be coming up with is the third view agrees that these are literal individuals and also that it says that lived that number of years, that they did. There was this longevity we won't be taking exception to that. But there is a less literal view, a second view, whatever we want to call it we may call it, the "**Dynastic view**," where these names that you find are no longer regarded as the names of individual persons but as the names of a dynasty--a series of kings in a particular dynasty. So the life span would not be the life of an individual but the duration of the dynasty.

Now in the first view, we discussed, **the complete view**, you get at you're total numbers A lived X numbers of years, he died. You would get your total simply by adding up the small numbers of how old each individual was when he begot the next one. So you add up all of those and that gives you the total we talked about. Now in the **dynastic view** you don't take that small number but you take the whole life span from the time he died and that's how long that dynasty lasted. Then dynasty B would be added on to it. If you take that approach to it then you get obviously some bigger numbers. Just to give you some rounded up suggestions on the dynastic view you would have something over 8,000 years from Adam to the flood--something over 8,000 years on the dynastic view. You'd have something over 11,000 years from Adam up to the days of Abraham. So you'd have something more like 3,000 instead of 300 years between the flood and Abraham. So you'd have a little more space to work with on that view.

But there is really exegetically nothing much to be said for that dynastic view. Clearly the text is not talking about dynasties, its talking about individuals. Let me see if I can find some illustrations. For example, in Genesis 7:6 it says, "Noah was 600 years old when he entered into the ark." This is not talking about dynasties. When you come to the

end of these lists you come to Abraham who is obviously not a dynasty but an individual. Exegetically there is no warrant I would say for taking these names as dynasties rather than individuals. So we can dismiss that view.

Now third view, and the one clearly I'm leading up to and the one I'm going to favor, is one we can call the "**Selective view.**" Now we called the first view the "**Complete view**" because it says there were no names missing. It is a complete genealogy. So this third view could be called the "Incomplete view" but I don't like the ring of that. So let's say the "Selective view." The idea is here are all these generations they might have all been listed but for whatever reasons Moses here has selected certain ones that he has mentioned.

Now then what does it mean when it says, "A lived X number of years and he begat B." It would mean that when A was that old that there branched off from him, he begat someone who started a line that eventuated in figure B but how much later we don't know. So it is just that at that point that the B line branches off from the genealogy of A. But there is a principle now of discontinuity that is introduced or elasticity. We don't know how long it might be so there is now a flexibility and that would be the result. So you are not limited to 2000 years for this period. You're not limited to 10,000 years for this period. How far the elastic will go before it breaks that is going to be a matter of subjective opinion. To anticipate the end of the story I think that there is that principle of elasticity. I don't think it would be stretchable enough to allow that genuine Adamic man to be identified with fossil remains of sub-human critters going back to two or three million years B.C. But I do think the elastic would stretch far enough to accommodate what could very well be genuine evidence of mankind going back to 50,000 B.C. if not 100,000 B.C. I think the biblical text would allow for that much of a stretch.

Now the real question is: Are there exegetical considerations that will allow for this approach? What is our fundamental principle, our hermeneutical principle in dealing with the Bible? The Bible is the word of God. It is therefore is completely self-consistent in itself. There is an integral coherent role. It is not self-contradictory, it is harmonious in all of its parts. I have a problem at this point in the text and I must therefore look all over

the Bible to see if there are other places in the Bible that throw some light on this particular problem. So the first basic hermeneutical solution is the analogy of Scripture. If we want to deal with certain questions here, let's see what the evidence is from elsewhere in the Bible. We're going to be concerned especially with genealogies elsewhere in the Bible.

So the question we want to ask ourselves as we examine this kind of literature, genealogical literature, in the Bible: Do we find that the language must always be taken with strict literalness or is there flexibility? Does the language like "beget" father-son relationship always describe an immediate father-son relationship? Or does it allow for something more remote than that? When you see genealogies elsewhere in the Bible are they always complete or are they frequently incomplete? And if they are, and they are, often incomplete? What are the signals that a particular genealogy is incomplete rather than complete? These are questions we should ask.

### **How to interpret genealogies: Mat. 1, Ezra 7, Ruth**

So the first one: Is there evidence in other genealogies that language like "begat" or "father/son" might be used for something other than immediate relationship? Of course, you are certainly already familiar with the fact that there is a lot of evidence like that.

Now when we were looking at that ten-fold heading in Genesis we said that same heading is found at the beginning of the New Testament in Matthew 1 verse 1. So we're going to be making a lot of use now by this principle of the analogy of Scripture of the genealogy in Matthew 1 in order to interpret the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 11. So now let's come to Matthew chapter 1. Right away the text opens with this statement concerning Jesus that "Christ was the son of David, who was the son of Abraham." So the language of "son" is used in the Bible for quite remote relationships. In this case, 1,000 years between them. Christ the son of David there is 1000 years. A round number for Abraham was 2000 B.C. and David about 1000 B.C. and so Christ the son of David, a thousand year gap; David the son of Abraham another thousand year gap. Alright, so

that is just one small sample of it.

What about the term “begat”? “A” lived so many years and he “begat” someone. Can you use that kind of language for someone who is down the road a piece; who actually wasn’t begotten at that particular time? You look a few verses later on in Matthew 1 at verse 8. And in verse 8 it talks about King Joram and tells us that he begat Uzziah. He “begat” him. Uzziah was the great-great-grandson of Joram. How do we know that? We know that because elsewhere in the Bible there are other genealogies that are more complete than Matthew 1 which is incomplete. Matthew 1 is not a complete genealogy. There are other places that fill out the relationship between Joram and Uzziah. For example, in 2 Kings 8, 2 Kings 11, and 2 Kings 14, when you check it out you find that Uzziah was the great-great-grandson of Joram. Yet the text says Joram begat him. So you can’t come to the biblical text here in Genesis 5 and 11 with some preconceived notions of what this language must mean. You have to sensitize yourself on how the Bible itself uses this kind of language and be ready to be a little more open and flexible.

You might think if I’d say a man might beget someone who’s his great-great-grandson, that it wouldn’t say that a woman would bear a child that was not her immediate child. Yet we have evidence here even of that kind of language. In Genesis 46 verse 18, it says that a woman “bore a child,” and once again the supplementary biblical evidence that we have shows that this child was actually a grandson, or a great-grandson. It says a woman bore one, and so that’s the flexibility of the language we are dealing with here. So much for terminology! The terminology in the Bible will allow for our exegesis.

Then the broader the consideration, in a way we’ve already dealt with that: Are genealogies always complete?—which is the assumption in the complete view. We’ve already seen that the Bible genealogies are not always complete. Matthew 1 is a good example then of a genealogy where there are big gaps along the line.

There are lots of illustrations of incomplete genealogies. Another one, for example, is chapter 7 of the book of Ezra. Here Ezra himself is tracing his own genealogy, and he wants to trace it back to Aaron. He does so all in terms of 16

generations, each linked by the term “son”—“this is the son of that one,” and so on. But again, when we compare, in this case, 1 Chronicles 6 for a more complete genealogy, we find that Ezra has left out some of the names along the line. So Ezra 7 is actually an incomplete genealogy.

Another illustration is in the book of Ruth. Towards the end of the book of Ruth, there is that genealogy that traces the names from the patriarchal period up to David. It does so in terms of ten names. These simply do not cover the whole period, that is, it involves over 800 years. So that there are lots of incomplete genealogies, or selective genealogies, in the Bible. So those are steps one and two.

### **How do you tell if you have a selective genealogy?**

Our selective exegesis is warranted by the biblical terminology. It's warranted by the fact that biblical genealogies are very often selective, rather than complete. Now, the really interesting question for me, I think is: How do you know that? We're not saying that all biblical genealogies are incomplete, but we're saying some of them are, but others are complete. Are there any clues, are there any signals along the way? Let's suppose you didn't have another genealogy to check it out. Would there be any clue just in the literary form of the genealogy that would suggest that the author was more concerned with certain literary phenomenon than he was presenting a complete listing of the data?

Now, here is where Matthew 1 is very interesting again. In Matthew 1, maybe it would be helpful if you turned there. You read through the list of names, and then when Matthew has finished that, in verse 17, he wants to tell you the shape of what he has just written. Now, listen reader, he is saying, look up this list of names that I have just presented, and if you would look at it and analyze it, you will see what I have done. And he says, “So all the generations from Abraham to David are 14 generations, and then from David to the exile are 14 generations, and then from the exile up to Christ are 14 generations.” Now, we know this is an incomplete genealogy. He calls our attention to the fact of the nice symmetry of what he's done. He has selected names and he has left out others in order to achieve this particular pattern. Where you get the three 14's, and of

course, the 14 is the double Sabbath. So in affect there are two sevens, and there are two sevens, and there are two sevens, giving you a total of these six sabbatical things. So there is the sabbatical number 7 and the 14 is the double of that.

So the history from Abraham to Christ is the story of six sabbaticals, and that means when you come to Christ you come to the seventh Sabbath. You've had six of them and now you've come to the ultimate Sabbath, you've come to the jubilee. In other words, he has made use of certain numbers in structuring this pattern, numbers that have theological significance, sabbatical significance, in order to tell you who Christ is, and what the entrance of Christ into the world means in terms of the eschatological progress of the world. There are the six Sabbaths leading up to Christ and then Christ comes in fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises as the King, as the son of David, and so on. When he comes, he introduces these last days. He introduces the ultimate Sabbath days. And that's what Matthew is telling us. He has seized upon certain numbers and he has seen to it that these are the numbers that he ends up with by leaving out certain ones and selecting others. To achieve that, by the way, he has to count the name of David twice. You have to come up with these conclusions.

Now, you see if you say that in verse 17 that Matthew must be understood as describing the actual history, then the Bible has an error in it. Because there were more than those 14 generations. So you would have to come to the conclusion that that was not his intention. His intention was to present the history in this particular form that conveyed this additional eschatological point and help identify who Christ was. So what he's trying to do is to show who was Christ—he is the Messianic King who fulfills the promise that was given to Abraham.

You see how he sets it up in terms of themes. The first theme, now, is from the Abrahamic promise of the King himself, David--14 generations. Then there's the second subject: the history of the monarchy, when there actually was the Davidic King on the throne, from David up to Josiah, who marks the days of the exile. Then the third theme is beyond the Old Testament monarchy because, of course, the typological monarchy, David's throne, was terminated. After the exile there was no longer a Davidic King on



the throne until Christ comes. So that's his third theme, but you see what he's doing there. That's what you should be looking for, some nice obvious patterns, some symmetry with certain conventional numbers with theological significance. That's clearly what he is up to. For another example of that, that's Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. Luke has one too. Etc.

Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt