

Dr. Meredith Kline, Prologue, Lecture 25

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Heavenly intrusion on earth

What a remarkable projection of heaven to earth that was, where the heavenly temple took form there on earth in the tabernacle and where the glory-spirit who is the heavenly temple came to manifestation in the midst of Israel in the tabernacle between the cherub and in the holy of holies above the ark in the form of the glory cloud, in the form of the spirit. What an intrusion of heaven to earth that was.

The eternal cosmic realm receives symbolic expression in the whole land of Canaan. The land of Canaan was a prototype then of the whole cosmic kingdom as is shown by the sharp distinction between this holy theocratic Sabbath sanctified kingdom of Israel and the kingdoms of the common grace world around it. The special Israelite manifestation of the kingdom of heaven was indeed an intrusive phenomenon in the common grace order and appropriately in connection with the symbolic kingdom intrusion under the Old Covenant there were also in-breakings of the power of eschatological restoration in the fiscal realm.

Let's just pause there for a moment. We said that the healing miracles of Jesus were intrusions of the healing power of the world to come here but we have healing powers, healing events, within Israel's experience through the prophets and so on. So you have that kind of thing happening within this holy kingdom. But then in addition to that there are also in-breakings or anticipatory applications of the principal of final judgment.

Judgment as intrusion ending common grace

Now this would be leading us to that theme of ethics that we want to come back to, but we'll just mention it at this point. In the history of Israel, as God now projects into

earth history his holy kingdom, at least in typological form, he also projects into that history a kind of final judgment. How is it that God finally establishes his cosmic holy heaven? By an act of final judgment, as we said, by delivering this whole common grace would be infested by man's sin culture. By judging the wicked. By judging Satan and his host. It is by an act of final judgment where there's no more common grace anymore. Where you don't love your enemies. Where you hate them. Where you kill them, where you blot them out. Where you take all their property away from them. That's what happens at the final judgment. That's the ethics of the crown of Christ. The ethics of final judgment which implies the end of common grace. That's the way God establishes the eternal kingdom, by delivering all but the elect to hell and giving over everything to the elect for final judgment. Holy war to the nth degree. That's how God establishes heaven at last. In flaming fire, taking vengeance. In 2 Thessalonians, Jesus, in flaming fire takes vengeance, destroying those who obey not the gospel. That's how God establishes his holy kingdom. That's how he established Israel.

So there is intrusion of final judgment. Not just the intrusion of that happy, holy, prosperous kingdom. But the intrusion, the judicial method, by which that finally gets established. That's the key, this structure of things is the key, so that we see what's going on there and when we are so puzzled, about how can God command them to do such things. And we have to see that it's not novel, it's not unique, it's part of the big picture. It's what God is going to do down there. If you have a problem here, you have a problem down there. You better get used to the idea that this is the way the holy God of heaven functions.

The day of common grace is not forever, it's only as long as the earth endures, and the Lord is the one who determines the times. He is the sovereign of space, he's the

sovereign. He defines the eras and the eons. He closes doors. When the age of grace is over, he closes it, and when he does, this is his sovereign choice. Who are you, O man, to argue with the holy judge of heaven and earth? We have to get used to and so at that point. If we haven't, we're not ready to do it there, then of course, we aren't going to know what to do with the command to the Israelites to go in and to butcher men, women, and children and all the animals of Canaan. But if we do understand this then we will have the basic insight that's necessary to know what's going on back here. It's part of the typology. Typology then, this prototypical symbolic token, setting up of the future, or of the heaven down on earth. Typology then is an intrusion of the future events. Well that's the kind of concept then that we're trying to bring out and we'll be coming back to it as I say.

Typology and Sacrament and anticipation

So in messianic as well as in pre-messianic times, the intrusion of the heavenly consummate reality has been accomplished by symbols of various sorts. There have been prophetic typological symbols of the coming intrusion in the Son, you just think of the Old Testament, all of the typology there of the sacrificial animals and so on. So you have typological anticipations of what the Son would do. There have been sacramental symbols of the already realized intrusion through the Holy Spirit. Holy signs of the presence of the other world eon within the historical.

In that paragraph I've tried just quickly to define what I think are the two basic types of symbolism in the Bible. One you can call typology and the other, if there is such a word, "sacramentology," alright. Maybe we'll have time to come back to this subject, I don't know. But this is the way I think it's useful to distinguish between the kind of symbol that you have, in the Old Testament. There are some symbolic things there that

are pointing ahead to future developments of an outward visible nature such as the coming of Christ visibly in the flesh and the ministry that he performed in that outward way or to the outward form of the kingdom.

So, for example, the work that Christ does on the cross, bountiful expression in the sacrificial animal sacrifice on the altar. That symbolism of the sacrifice pointed ahead to something that Christ would do in His body for us visibly. That kind of symbolism I would give the word typology to, alright.

Now then there are other symbols in the Old Covenant and elsewhere, too, for that matter. Which I would give the name “sacrament,” adopting the classic definition of sacrament as the visible sign of the invisible grace of God. So types, types of signs of that which, let’s say the Lord Jesus Christ does in his body visibly for us. Sacraments are signs of that which Christ does by his Holy Spirit within us. And types are prophetic, they point ahead to things that are going to happen such as the cross, the coming of the kingdom of heaven. Sacraments, or we might put it this way, the types point ahead to unrealized eschatology. Aspects of eschatology that haven’t come to pass yet. Sacraments point to symbolize aspects of realized eschatology. Heaven has been breaking in all along the line we said in the form of the presence of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit who has been working. It’s Christ working within his elect through all of this period. That’s realized eschatology. That’s not just something that is future. All of these saints right along were experiencing that, and so there are signs then.

There are symbols that attend the life of God’s people that God appoints for them which portray for them outwardly this inner reality that they are experiencing in the spirit. Just to give an illustration, for example, let’s say an animal is sacrificed, as we said that points ahead to Christ on the cross and that’s a type. Now let’s say that part of

this experience with this sacrifice that is offered is that the participants sit down and they have a communion meal. They partake of that meal and so that part of the sacrificial ceremony, the part that points inwardly to the communion that they already have with God and the Holy Spirit, that aspect of the particular ceremony is sacramental. So what I've just said is that one particular ceremonial complex of sacrifice can have both a typological dimension and a sacramental dimension. In so far as there is a portraying of the death of the Lord, that's typological. In so far as another step in the ceremony, with the sitting down and eating the meal, that was pointing not ahead and outwardly but within to what was already happening. So that I think we call that sacrament.

This kind of distinction I think you might find helpful in analyzing the symbols of Scripture and that would be interesting to ask what kind of symbols do we have under the New Covenant. This situation I didn't think I'd start talking about this today and I won't go long. But under the New Covenant then, the Lord's supper would be an interesting one. Just for myself I would say for conclusion then that it is a sacrament, it is not a type. We should involve the thought that in the procedure, the administration of the Lord's supper. There is no representation of the death of the dying of Jesus. There is no representation of the act of Jesus death. It would fit the definition of a type, some sort of symbolic portraying of something that Jesus did visibly there--that would be typology. Myself, I agree with the analysis for example of, what's his name? The Dutchman. Herman Ridderbos, in his *Coming of the Kingdom*, where he takes the position, I must say that I think he's right, that breaking of the bread is not part of the proper symbolism of the Lord's supper. The Lord's supper begins with the broken bread. That's already available, and the symbolism of the Lord's supper proper consists only in the distribution and the participation of God's people in it which is what Christ is doing in us by his Holy

Spirit. So that is a visible sign of the invisible grace of Christ operating by his spirit in us whereby we have fellowship and communion with him. But that there is no visible outward portraying of the actual breaking of Jesus, by it. So, there's all of those questions which we could get into the exegeses of various passages.

Student Questions

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] Yeah, I mean, it is of course, it is because of the work of the cross that this sacrament, that these benefits, are available. So the precise point is just which aspect of it is being symbolized in this process. I think it boils down basically to the fact that breaking of the bread and I think that even those, that, when the bread is being broken as part of the actual procedure, even then, interestingly, we don't pour the wine. Whereas if the actual dying of Jesus, the act involved, you would expect both things to be going on there.

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] The saying of the *pascal* "cover over" lamb, that was a type pointing ahead to Christ.

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] I wouldn't be ready to say though that the breaking of bread there was a sacrificial act, like the slaying of the lamb.

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] Yeah I'm not persuaded here in a moment so I think what I'd rather do is to see that one in terms of what I was just saying about a sacrifice that would involve both dimensions. So part of this cover over the *pascal* ceremony I would see as typology as far as it involves sacrifice, the shedding of the blood of the lamb. And other

parts of it as expressing fellowship and communion, which would be the meal and whatever is involved there.

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] Yeah, so this is, that's especially what I had in mind when I said if we got into this thing that there would be various verses that we would want to have explained. And of course, I was thinking especially of that one and the way then that that would be understood is that of course, the meaning of the Passover, is an exhibition of the benefits that come to us from Christ's death at the point of it just being made. It's only because of the work of the cross that there is this, there are these benefits available so that in symbolizing the blessings that come, these blessings having been procured for us by the death of Christ, we are showing forth the glories of Christ's work. This is not the same as saying that we are actually symbolizing the act of his death, but we are conveying the significance of what he did. There are a lot of points here.

We're going to have to keep this moving, but this was just as a quick introduction to something, the idea of biblical symbolism because so much of it then is a matter of intrusion. Symbolic, we've talked about how the intrusion takes realistic form, the presence of the very person of Christ or the person of the Holy Spirit are the actual powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, here's the power of heaven working in the hearts of God's people. But the intrusion also took symbolic form--a symbolic kingdom of God, a symbolic sacrifice at some point.

The State: common grace

Alright, this clock keeps moving doesn't it? Now, what did we want to do next? Next we will go back to where we ended up last week where we had introduced this subject of common grace and we had then begun to analyze the benefits that provided

and we had focused upon one of those namely the State.

So already we argued in Genesis 4:15, when Cain comes to the Lord and complains, that his punishment is too great for him and there will be no law and order and there will be complete anarchy. People will be out to kill him and they will be able to do so with impunity and no deterrence and God says, “No, you’re wrong. There will be deterrence. I’m setting up seven-fold divine vengeance. So murder will be dealt with.” Alright so we discussed that whole passage and *Kingdom Prologue* discusses it somewhat further and refers to an article I wrote in some time ago. If you can get ahold of that for further exegetical details.

But now after the flood and as we have just been saying in that covenant in Genesis 8 and 9, the Common Grace Covenant, once again we find reference to the institution of the State, “whoever sheds man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed.” So here in the revelation of common grace, along with the family institution, there is the institution of the State. It is an institution launched in the common grace order and the common grace order continues as long as the world endures, which is right up through our own church age up until the consummation. So we have to deal with it, we have to understand the State.

So here is the State existing in our day, here we are in the church and there are all these problems then that we are engaged with all the time in trying to see what the relationship is of the church to the state. What are the functions of the church? What are the functions of the state? So we haven’t left this behind and if we want to understand these things, in fact, we have to go back to these texts here and try to work out our theology of the state. I’ve made some attempt now to do that here in *Kingdom Prologue* on page 101 and following.

The second chapter there is dealing with what I call the prophetic cult in the city of man. Alright, here are these two lines again, here's the covenant community, the cult of God's people, the ones that have the voice of prophecy within them. This is existing in this common grace world and if we want to understand what the people of God have been doing and what we should be doing we have to understand it in terms of the world in which we are living. So that's what's going on here--the prophetic cult within the city of man. That's where we live, or that's where we have our human existence carrying out these functions. But carrying them out we're building this city of God, but we're doing so as we live in this common grace world of the city of man. Alright page 101 then, is what we've covered which is the original promulgation of the ordinance, that's where I have my discussion of it.

And so we can skip ahead then to page 102. Where it begins with, I'll be just trying to show that this is a good gift of God. We who have seen this state in operation through all of the generations and the millennia of human history and seen how far astray it can go. It has become a persecutor of the saints and a blasphemer of God, we then tend to see the state through the glasses of that history and maybe find difficulty in being able to see it in terms of its being a good gift of God. But this is part of God's common grace. It's an act of mercy. It's a benefit, it's for man's common weal that he has given this, and that comes out in the way in which the state provides a remedy for some of the effects of the fall. Isn't that the whole purpose of common grace? The state is a common grace institution. The purpose of common grace is precisely to blunt the sharp edges of the common curse, the miseries that tend the human existence because of our fallenness.

Characteristics of the state

So what is characteristic of common grace would certainly be also characteristic of

the state. It is remedial. Let's see if I can just pick up a few of the ideas. It provides for some mitigation of the dispersal of humanity, of the fall, results in this centrifugal curse, this scattering of mankind. The Babel episode illustrates it sharply later on where they don't want to be dispersed. They want something more cohesive and so on. But it does show that the gathering together, the structuring of human kind into these social political units that we're talking about then does provide something of a correction or a mitigation of the brokenness of the human community. There is some gathering together with common roots and so on that is there. It provides some mitigation of the fragmentation of the human family. The isolation of people thrust apart by the scattering impact of the common curse. The curse doomed man to be vagabond or even a fugitive existence. You see that's what Cain was complaining about right from the beginning. This curse of God is going to mean that he is going to be driven from the face of the earth. He's just going to be a fugitive and a vagabond and that's true. But the institution of the state provides for something of a corrective for that. The exile curse would work relentlessly to drive man on in a restless vagrancy exposed to wild terrain and tempest in an untracked world. But the city community would bring a measure of settled rootage and stability. Alright so there is one way in which benefit was provided and all along the line of the activities that are going on there, that can be pointed out, and I'll let you read in 103 for that kind of discussion.

Especially significant in the alternate identity of the common grace city. You know as I said, before the fall it was the city of God they were building. Now under common grace they are still building a city, but it is no longer the city of God.

Role of the state in administering justice

So especially significant in the alternate identity of the common grace city is the

corrective function now performed by it as a governmental structure apart from the fall. Whatever government would have existed would not have any corrective work to do but now the corrective aspect is quite prominent. Positive regulation of societal order and direction of cultural endeavor must now be supplemented by an enforcing of justice through penal sanctions. That's a major means used in his common grace to restrain the manifestation of man's depravity. God assigns to city government the responsibility to act as his agent as the minister of the temporal sanctions of justice, until the world comes to the hour of God's final judgment with his eternal sanctions. So, the state has the authority to kill the body until the judge comes who can destroy both body and soul in hell. And you know which of those Jesus tells you you should really fear. And so thus the city is invested with the sword, and so heavily preoccupied does it become with this enforcement of justice, with policing and punishing, that the state is known in this present evil world as preeminently a judicial order. It's distinctive hallmark is that it bears the sword and that's the way we think of the state functionally. It does perform these remedial corrective things and, Cain was right, without it all hell broke loose--anarchy, but not so. God put some restrictions on this and these limitations on the curse. So the state is something we should appreciate as a good remedial gift of God even though it doesn't bring heaven, it meanwhile is a good gift of common grace.

Common grace city and the kingdoms of God and Satan.

On page 104, first point is emphasizing again that this is a good thing, it's a legitimate thing. Even though it moves along, and we come to Daniel, and Daniel sees in his vision what the state has become. The state has become a beast, a whole succession of beasts with big mouths that blaspheme God with horns that thrust against the saints of God and Revelation 13 picks up that theme and gives it to us again in the form of this

beast from sea and so on. Even though that is what the state becomes, nevertheless, it is legitimate.

State as a beast

So my heading here is “Beastlike Bestial.” Yes, it can become that, but meanwhile it is legitimate. Abuses of the city result in urban malformations like the slum, like the ghetto, like the gulag. But beyond the cities malaise of social, economic, political injustice, there is an evil more central to the concerns of biblical revelation. There is in the city a spiritual malignancy, the fatal consequence of the usurpation of the world kingdom by Satan and the prostitution of the city to demonic service. This takes place and it’s not just these social evils that we may use to emphasize but there’s that hidden thing that the newspapers aren’t interested in, is this satanic development where Satan sees the powers of the city and he uses those to express opposition to God’s people. This is the sort of thing then that goes on and yet in spite of that we’re saying that thing *per se* is not demonic. That’s a perversion of it that takes place. The thing *per se* is a legitimate act of God. As legitimacy exists then and the fact that God institutes it Genesis 4:15, Genesis 9, God institutes this arrangement and therefore it is a legitimate thing, we can’t write it off. If we live in this world of common grace, the world of common grace is not the world of unbelievers. It’s the world shared by you and me, as believers with unbelievers. We enjoy these privileges. We have these responsibilities that attach to these institutions of the family and the state even though they are not producing the holy kingdom of God. You might consider that as a much more significant and urgent thing that we should be busy about. But meanwhile these are legitimate concerns that we can’t escape especially in terms of most Christians particular vocations are going to be in this line. So we must be able to feel comfortable, if you will, with the state and understand

that it is a legitimate thing in itself with which we can conscientiously cooperate. That, of course, is the whole emphasis in the Bible, wherever Christians are addressed in terms of this responsibility.

State in elsewhere in the Bible

So if you look at 1 Timothy 2:2 or if you look at, what is it, 2 Peter, wherever the verse is in there, wherever. Then the people of God are being exhorted to respect to the state. It's that we should have a respectful attitude toward the state, in Romans 13, as the minister of God. These are wonderful passages.

Jeremiah 29 and the state

The one in Jeremiah 29, you remember that? Here are the Israelites and they've been living in this theocracy thing, but because it was a covenant of works and they broke the covenant. Here comes the point of exile, days of Jeremiah, when God says to them "no longer my people." The whole corporate nation is driven out, the covenant is done with for the moment, He will renew it for a while afterwards but meanwhile exile and off you go to the common. So here are God's people no longer in this theocratic holy kingdom situation. Now they find themselves in Babylon in this common grace context and how are they supposed to behave? What should be their relationship towards Babylon? Babylon, God's instrument to exile them. What should their attitude be toward them? God's prophet Jeremiah writes and tells them there in Jeremiah 29, "Pray for the peace of the city, settle down there, marry, build houses, plant, engage in business." Get into this whole common grace deal. It's not the holy kingdom of God program but there where you are it's part of this legitimate common-grace thing. God has set it up and you pray for the peace of that place and the peace of that place is, of course, where you, too,

then will experience some peace and stability. So that's the consistent biblical instruction for the people of God as to how they should relate to the state.

State and abortion and same sex marriage

[Student question]

[Kline's response] Yes, as to how effectively we appeal to them is one question. What we should try to achieve I guess is the first question. So if we understand through biblical revelation that common sex marriages are taboo, are forbidden, then we don't want them to be encouraged and we don't want the state in which we live to be encouraging this repudiation of divine audit for society and so on. So in so far as we have enough of us that are influential voters we should try to get the state then not to pass laws that would encourage and promote same sex marriages. But in standing up and debating society in the public square, whether we should then be appealing to revelation, divine revelation. We may if we want to. We needn't expect that that's going to be persuasive then to the society and that we're going to win the day. So as to just what's the most effective way of carrying forward our case there might be different suggestions made. There's no way in which we can guarantee that we're going to win the day either. So I think all that we can really do is to try to determine from Scripture what would be the right thing for the state to be doing and try to get that done. But the fact that we have this information from Scripture should not inhibit us. Special revelation shouldn't inhibit us from, trying to apply this to common grace.

The same thing with abortion or whatever. It is in the light of Scripture that we see what abortion is. We should try to get the state therefore to take measures that would discourage abortion. But how you would go about in the public debate, making your case

or just appealing to scripture, in a Christian gathering, sure, we can persuade one another by that appeal.

[Student Question]

[Kline's response] I think the first question that we should be asking is one not of where the ethical standards are but what the functions are. Then after that we can ask the thing, by what standard? I think the first question we want to ask is in terms of the biblical, theological revelation of Scripture, what are the functions of the state? That's really the question. As for the standards, the standards are going to be a question for the individuals within the state. Where do you and I find our standards of right and wrong? Well, of course, we get them in the Scripture. Other people who are coexisting with us in this common institution, who knows where they get their standards from, the New York times. Then it becomes just a question of the demographics and as to which side's going to prevail. But you and I know where the standards are, the only standards of right and wrong are from the Scripture. But the primary issue I think is as to function and if I may I want to deal with that one, and then maybe some of these questions can surface again. But I first want to ask about functions.

Contra the state

So our first heading then was just to establish the legitimacy of this institution, and having done that then to avoid the opposite extreme. So one extreme would be to say that the State is not legitimate, it's demonic. You're familiar with writings that have come into the scholarly world that would equate the state with the principalities and powers of evil, and make an equation of that kind. That's not right, the state in itself is a legitimate thing whatever false direction is given to it by some of those who take over. But on the other hand, the state is not holy. So in backing away from the mistake of identifying the

city *per se* with the kingdom of Satan, we must beware of backing into the opposite error of identifying it with the kingdom of God. In an institutional sense, an error equally serious and I think in our circles even more common. In the midst of the threatening world environment to which man is exposed to the common curse, the common grace city offers the hope for a measure of temporal safety, but it does not afford eternal salvation. It should not therefore be identified with the holy kingdom of God, which is the structural manifestation of that salvation. And failure to respect the boundary between the common grace culture, which the city is an institutional expression, the boundary between that and the holy kingdom of God, is an error that takes various forms with a variety of theological positions in other respects quite divergent from one another.

So I have a few pages of arguing then what we tried to be establishing in general back here, the common grace area is non-holy and the state is an institutional expression of that. Therefore it should not be regarded as having sanctity, as being the holy kingdom of God. So coming to the conclusion, the bottom of 106, summing up then the meaning or central identity of the postlapsarian city is not found in identification either with the kingdom of Satan nor with the kingdom of God.

State, the family and covenant community

Now trying to say something more specific and positive about what the state's functions are. As I said, that's the question I want to address before we think about ethical standards which is a secondary thing. But what are the particular functions? What does God give us a job as a state to do. Here we want to deal with that by saying, "what is the relationship of the state to two other institutions? Two other institutions that existed before the state did. One of those is the common grace institution of the family. So before there was any institution of the state, there was the family. Certainly then when God

comes along later on and adds a second one, the state, the intention is not to undercut or undermine or do away with this primary institution in which he has set up, which is the family. So we deal with that for a while here, and ask what is the relationship of the state to the family?

Then there is a second institution that exists before the state, and that's the one up on this line, and that's the holy covenant community. What is the relationship of the state to that? In *Kingdom Prologue* then first I deal with the functions of the state these would be the family, and I try to develop it in terms of three ideas. The first is that the state is supportive of the family. The second is that the state is supplementary. It does some things that are supplementary, to the functioning of the family. Thirdly, and this might be the most debatable between Democrats and Republicans, or so, but the third point would be that the state in certain instances can function as a surrogate, or substitute, for the family--so supportive, supplementary, surrogate. And the first one, we'll cover quickly and *Kingdom Prologue* tries to do a little bit more with each of them.

This transcription is by Jessica Fittro (grand-daughter of Edith Schaeffer)

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