

Dr. Meredith Kline, Prologue, Lecture 33

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Parental Authority

It is under his parental authority. This was Isaac or Jacob and so on right down the line then the whole teaching in Romans that if the root is holy then the branches are holy. So that's my understanding of it. There are no problems with it that I can see. So it is infants are born into the holy covenant community by this sign (circumcision). It's simply because they are under our parental authority and my general thought is that the main question is simply when God organizes the family of the covenant, the family of Jesus, does he or does he not honor the natural family and authority structure which he has set up? So the Lord has set up the natural authority of parents over children, now does he bypass that ignore it or does he honor it and incorporate it in the constituency of this covenant family? As I see it, the consistent climate of biblical testimony from beginning to end that he honors that family authority and that is precisely the basis for baptizing infants. And an assumption of election or regeneration is simply not what is going on there.

Grace, works and the law

Student Question: Can we apply the same categories from the Old Covenant and the typological categories, the covenant of works and election in the same way to the church?

Kline's response: No, absolutely not. We are in a different age. That is a distinctive age characteristic precisely of that second layer of the Mosaic economy. If you wanted the characteristic of the of the Old Covenant then you want to identify the whole covenant with that second layer. No, that belongs to that but, of course, circumcision wasn't just initiated in connection with that but was initiated with Abraham before that. So you might say that

the New Testament continuity then you could trace back in terms of being an age of grace rather than an age of works back to its patriarchal origins. So circumcision gets taken up into the other arrangement here. As such then, it takes on the particular meaning the curse it symbolizes, takes on a particular meaning of the curse that is going to overtake corporate Israel. That is a specialized function that it performs in that context but in itself before that, and after that it is pointing to a more general judgment of God. The nature of the New Covenant order then is not of works but that of grace and so on.

Student question:

Kline's response: Salvation, the offer for that matter of election is not on the basis of foreseen works.

Student Question: But still life in the kingdom in the church today we recognize that for us to live peacefully with one another we have to live out certain doctrines and we have to live out and live according to the law.

Kline's response: What does that mean? Do you mean that we are under a works principle? Just explain how you are using "law," as works and inheritance or whether you are using it as a standard of conduct.

Student question: the standard of conduct.

Kline's response: That's another question all together.

Student question:

Kline's response: What is necessary is to truly be in the Kingdom of God. and to experience his blessings of justification and peace with God and fellowship with the saints. What was necessary. Is it by faith alone? Or were the reformers wrong? It was by faith. I'm sure you would agree by faith alone. So whatever you want to say about works after that just say something that is consistent with the fact that it is by faith alone. Then there is the question of law as standards of conduct which is a separate question ... that's a completely separate issue. This is an important one we want to keep straight

on is this. We are in the kingdom and blessed by faith alone and whatever works are still demanded of us function in some other way especially by validating faith alone.

Student Question: Is there any connection between the standard of conduct idea and the covenant of works that God made with Israel? Because they were not working towards the experience of the kingdom of God, that was still by grace.

Kline's response: That's at the bottom level, remember we keep talking about the covenant of grace and so far as you're talking about individuals getting to heaven. From the fall to consummation it is one way by faith alone. That's true under the Old Covenant as well. When the old problem comes up with this peculiar other dimension that comes into the picture with the Mosaic covenant, namely national election with typological kingdom. That is where works are functioning, that's where the works principles is functioning.

Now standards of behavior are the same throughout. The function of the obedience is different however. The function of obedience at this level is attesting to the validity of the faith whereby they get to heaven. The function of obedience of corporal Israel at this level was actually the meritorious crown of hanging onto the blessings. So the continuity in the New Covenant is with this bottom line. It's in discontinuity with that. Therefore Paul says, this is not of faith, the law was not of faith. He's not talking about the bottom line obviously he's talking about the top line. There is a difference in the operative principle with the meritorious ground. Faith alone here, it was the obedience of Israel functioning at a different level. That's the question of the function. There are always the standards, there are always the demands. There are always the commandments for the good works. The question is what is the function of the good works.

So the function of Adam's good works would be that's the meritorious ground of his moving on to the eschatological blessings. The function of Jesus in eternity was that of the meritorious ground of his receiving the blessings which then he was the mediator of the covenant bestowed on us by grace. The function of Israel's obedience was like Adam's and Jesus'. It was the meritorious ground of hanging onto at least the typological version of the eschatological blessings. So works obedience functions in one way in a works arrangement and functions all together differently in a grace arrangement. That's the whole problem to distinguish these things.

The Promises of the Abrahamic Covenant

Now we will move on. I think we will want to keep moving here to do at least some of these last things that I wanted to do together in our last evening folks. The next one that we deal with is the promises of the Abrahamic covenants. So we had dealt with the Abrahamic covenant in so far as who belongs to it and by a study of circumcision. Now, of course, there are other aspects of it. Now here again is this covenant of grace. It has had its earlier particular covenantal expressions especially in the covenant with Noah and the ark. Before that there was the covenant line of Seth, and after that, the covenant line of Shem leading up to Abraham. Now leading up to Abraham we have this covenant that gives shape and color to all the rest of redemptive history.

It is as we have just been suggesting a covenant of promise, it was a covenant of grace, it was not in itself a covenant of works. Paul makes a strong contrast between these. He speaks about the law coming those four centuries later as one that did not annul the promise. So that in itself shows that he saw that the law was different than the promise. Therefore he had to raise the question of whether being different it didn't annul it. Then, of course, he says, it didn't annul. Our question is how come it didn't annul it? If

law is the opposite of promise and comes later, how does it not obliterate the promise? I submit to you the only way you can answer that is if you do what I'm doing and recognize that the law was functioning up here. Down here it is in terms of individual salvation. The same thing was going on under the Mosaic period and under the Abrahamic promise namely, the principle of promise. So even though the law came in later and was different it has been annulled because there was not any application within this peculiar area up here.

Now then this particular period does however represent stage number one in the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises. The Abrahamic covenant as a covenant of promise is saying that it is an arrangement of faith and grace and spirit as over and against works. Now we are asking about the specific promises. By grace God is to bestow the kingdom. Ultimately here is the kingdom, the Sabbath kingdom, the kingdom of heaven which will be realized in the coming of Christ in two stages A and B for that matter. So we look then at these Abrahamic promises and what we discover is that there is indeed the promise of the ultimate kingdom but also involved in it is the promise of an earlier stage. So in our covenantal understanding of the thing, the book of Genesis, as we say, is the kingdom prologue. During the whole patriarchal age of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the kingdom hasn't come yet, not even in stage one.

God comes to Abraham and he promises him a kingdom and a kingdom we will try to break down into the ideas of the king, the people and the land. Those components make up the kingdom. That kingdom hadn't come in any sense yet within Genesis 12-50--the time of Abrahamic covenant.

With the coming of Moses we come to a fulfillment of those kingdom promises. But it is only a provisional not the perfect thing. It's only a passing fulfillment, it's not permanent one. It's only a typological fulfillment, not the

real thing, not the antitype. It's only a restatement of the promise really. It's not the fulfillment but it is stage number 1--the typological fulfillment.

Therefore this hermeneutical approach, I'm using the word "type" or "typological" or "covenantal" because it understands the nature of this Mosaic economy as precisely having that provisional shadowy typological function. But that's not the ultimate fulfillment as we said from the outset. What God was promising was the ultimate kingdom. So there's continuity in between them. So we can keep the chalk on the board while we're doing this. There is no big break in this particular plan.

Now you come to the New Covenant and here you get the perfect, not the provisional, the permanent not the transient or passing. You get the antitype not just the type. Here you get **the** fulfillment not just a symbolic restatement of the promise again. However it unfolds in two stages related to the first coming of our Lord and the second coming of our Lord. Now that's the way in which we will be interpreting these promises which we will then be running through and looking at the biblical evidence in some detail as time allows.

Description of dispensationalism

What we will be opposing to this and being critical of is the dispensationalist approach which is a non-typological hermeneutic. They don't understand the relationship between the Old and New covenant as having that type/antitype promise/fulfillment continuity between them. What is characteristic of at least and especially of the oldest Schofield Bible, which is the classical dispensation position, is to inject a discontinuity between what we would regard as the two levels of fulfillment. They wouldn't like two levels of fulfillment at all because they don't see any connection. In fact, they repudiate the connection between the two. The church, they allege, is not in the Old Covenant at all.

So classical dispensationalism then posits: so here you have the Abrahamic covenant and here you have a fulfillment in Moses--the Old Covenant which then gets interrupted at the point where as we have seen there is a failure to recognize the Lord of the vineyard's son. They have rejected the prophets and now they reject the son. So there is a break in the continuity of that arrangement. Nevertheless, it isn't that it is only passing and transient and now obsolete, as we would say, but it is something that was intended to be really permanent. It's not that this was the Old Covenant and replaced by the New Covenant. It's just the older covenant and the New Covenant was a newer one but the older one hasn't been replaced. The old one isn't obsolete on the back burner for a while and new deal is on the front burner. But this church deal will be taken off the front burner and when the older covenant will be put back on the front burner.

Meanwhile then we do take the chalk off the board here. We come to a turning point which very precisely they want to identify as the triumphal entry into Jerusalem. They would expound this thing in terms of their misinterpretation of the the seventy weeks passage in Daniel 9:24-27. They would say that the first 69 weeks of the 70 weeks ends at the triumphal entry. Then the prophetic clock stops ticking, according to them, and we have this parenthesis which is now the church but that is discontinuous with the church. The church is somehow projected into the picture which had not been spoken of in the Old Covenant before that. The church will fulfill its vision in the world not as that which fulfills this but as something that sort of runs parallel to it and might have some analogies. That is the word they would use instead of typology. We see typology and this is the antitype and that's the type. All dispensationalists would allow for some sort of similarities with certain analogies between the two but it's not the same program. It's a **parenthesis**. It's something else going on which will be

removed from the world in terms of what they conceive of as a secret rapture and followed then by the 70th week of Daniel as they understand it at that point culminating in a resumption of the old order, or the older covenant and millennium experience.

In a millennial experience which resumes the features of the old order including land, temple and so on. At the end of the millennium then you have the question of whether the church which has been raptured out of the world and is experiencing something elsewhere and whether the experience of whoever is up there ultimately melds and blends the experience of Jewish community down here or whether forever they contend the same. But that was the classical pre-mill scene.

Problems with classical dispensationalism

Now all kinds of problems have been seen with that. Especially I won't get into the whole works/grace business. I'll have to. In talking about the older covenant, the classical dispensationalists recognize that there was a works principle there. So they weren't so far off. They were right there is a works principle offered in the Old Covenant. Their problem was what Kline did with the thing that they didn't recognize was that there were two levels. The works principle applies to only the top level not the bottom level. Now if you obliterate that distinction and you say that there is only one thing going on there and it's works. It's very difficult to avoid saying that the salvation and the inheritance of the eschatological salvation is salvation. So you're in a position where you seem to be saying salvation is by works and that's where they were. Of course, they were criticized very heavily on that score and the criticism has sunk in through the years and that's good. So they have made some improvement.

Now there may be other ways and some of you may have worked it out and solved this but I know one standard way of analyzing the developments

of dispensationalists is to speak next of a “revisionist” rather than the classical position. Now there is the revisionist position who take up especially this problem of whether salvation is by works then and over against that, to their credit they recognize the message for the church was one of grace. So the whole business of a law/gospel they got straight which a lot of covenant theologians mess up on. But their problem was, as I said, they didn’t distinguish the two different levels.

Now the revisionists come along and they recognize that salvation is always by grace. So they repudiate that idea. They say that whatever blessing came under that older covenant that presumably is later resumption was by grace. It is only in Christ that anyone can be blessed and this is a big step in the right direction. But at the same time it is messing up in other ways. It’s throwing out the baby with the washer because now they say that all that’s going on there is grace. They no longer recognized what I insist is going on, that Paul insists is going on, that there was actually was works. They don’t have their schemes straight but most covenant theologians don’t have it straight either. But in terms of the dispensationalists they have rejected the element of truth they had before which is that there was a works principle operating at one level there.

So now they say everything is indeed by grace but still they haven’t given up the “parenthesis” bit. So Israel’s blessings come to them by grace, the churches blessings come it by grace but they are different blessings to different kingdoms come so they would still have this whole eschatological thing as part of the futures they see. So there still would be coming the day that after the church is raptured you go through this whole business again including the Jewish kingdom for the Jews and the some other heavenly realm for the non-Jewish believers.

Progressive dispensationalism

Now the next step of improvement of this evolution of dispensationalism is then at least I've often seen it called "the progressives." They take the next step which is one of recognizing the unity of the New Covenant people with the Old Covenant people. So we get rid of the "parenthesis" now. So here's Israel, and here's the church. Salvation is by grace all the way through and there is continuity of the church with the Old Testament people. So we're getting there.

Now inconsistently they have recognized now that there is blessing only in Christ and the problem is, of course, that if you are in Christ you are no longer a Jew or Gentile. The middle wall partition has been broken down and in Christ, which is the only place where there is blessing, there is no Jew-Gentile distinction. So if they have recognized that all blessings are only in Christ then they can't resurrect again the idea of a distinction between Jewish believers and non-Jewish believers but that is precisely what they do.

So inconsistently they still project two different futures for the people of God depending on if they are Jews or non-Jews. They would still conceive of a millennium too. So there is a millennial kingdom which involves an earthly Canaanite type of kingdom inheritance for the Jewish Christians and some other distinctive heavenly kingdom inheritance for others. So that's just an inconsistency where they haven't carried the thing out properly.

Classical Premillennialism

Then beyond all these there is this straightforward standard old premillennialism which is non-dispensationalist. So now you have just a premil position which is non-dispensationalists. They would be just like the progressives here except when it came to this point they wouldn't have a distinction between a Jewish kingdom and a non-Jewish kingdom. All believers have the same one. The only place which they are wrong, and I'm saying it from an amil position, is then that they say that after the second

coming of Jesus where there will be a millennial coming of the kingdom of power and glory.

A little earlier on we discussed millennialism. We said that the main distinction to be aware of in analyzing the different millennial views is where these views place the coming of the kingdom in power and glory. Do they place it as pre-mills and post-mills? Do they place the coming of the kingdom and power and glory before the consummation of the world or do they place afterwards. So pre-mills, of course, place the coming of the kingdom of power in the millennium. It is one that is shared by all believers that's fine. But it is a millennium which for one thing is wrong and saying that it follows the *parousia*. It is also wrong in saying that this coming of the kingdom in power and glory precedes the consummation of the world. We argued, when we talked about common grace remember, we said that common grace guarantees political coexistence and equal rights for believers and unbelievers as long as the earth endures. So before the consummation it is intolerable. It would be a contradiction of God's covenant of common grace to have a kingdom in power and glory which would obliterate the equal rights of unbelievers to have the before the end of the world. Pre-millennialism does that, and as we argue post-millennialism also does that.

Post-millennialism doesn't make the same mistake of making the millennium come before the *parousia*. Postmillennialism recognizes the millennium is now before the *parousia*. But they do think of the millennium as consisting in this coming of the kingdom in power and glory before the consummation. So they too are involved in this basic theological fallacy of contradicting the guarantees of the principles of common grace.

[Student Question]

For progressives, let's take the president of the seminary in Hamilton Massachusetts, Walter Kaiser. Ryre has written a new book with revisions.

Wilhelm Van Gemeren would fit in that category. Now Walter Kaiser would be an example of a progressive. I know he cringes when I tell him he's a dispensationalist. But he is because he still holds to this. When it comes to Dan. 9:24-27 that whole seventieth week thing he is still with the three and a half weeks and all that jazz. He still has that dispensationalist eschatology it seems.

Abrahamic Kingship promise

Now those are the options we are thinking and over against all of the these dispensationalist views and we are contending for a typological approach. So let's take several elements, as we said, the promise of the **king, the people and land**. Just by going through the biblical evidence we want to demonstrate that the biblical evidence the data confront us with these promises and each one of them at two levels not just one or the other.

Now here maybe we should get our Bibles at some places if we are wanting to read the verses. Maybe some of you could help me read these verses if I just mention them you can find them for me. In support of the fundamental structure that we are talking about there is a two stage fulfilling of these kingdom promises. There is the appearance of the language of divine remembering at the beginning of each stage. God remembers his covenant in the development of the Noahic Covenant right in the middle of things when the waters are covering the earth and so on and things seem disastrous. Right in the middle of it, it announces that God remembers his covenant with Noah. God had a covenant that there would be deliverance. So in the middle of the apparent disaster now God remembers the promises and he proceeds to fulfill them. Now the waters begin to assuage and so on. So the language of God remembering his covenant equals God fulfills the promises of his covenant. That language of God's remembering his promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob the very thing we're talking about is found in the beginning of this in

the book of Exodus. It's found at the beginning of the second stage in connection with the Gospels.

More specifically let's check out some of the verses in Exodus 2:24, someone else who might be looking up Exodus 6:5 and 8. But Exodus 2 then verse 24 "God heard their groaning and he remembered his covenant, his covenant with Abraham Isaac and Jacob." We know what that meant. He proceeded to deliver his people and lead them up to their promise land.

Does someone else have Exodus 6:5-8? "Moreover, I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, whom the Egyptians are enslaving, and I have remembered my covenant. Therefore, say to the Israelites: 'I am the LORD, and I will bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as my own people, and I will be your God. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, who brought you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. And I will bring you to the land I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob. I will give it to you as a possession. I am the LORD.'" So what God's doing through Moses is a fulfilling clearly of the Abrahamic covenant.

Psalm 105:8 looking back on this experience says the same sort of thing: "he remembered his covenant forever, the word he commanded for 1000 generations, the covenant he made with Abraham, the oath he swore to Isaac, he confirmed it to Isaac and confirmed it to Jacob, to decree to Israel as an everlasting covenant."

So there the Abrahamic covenant is seen as one not just made with Abraham but with Isaac and with Jacob so that the whole patriarchal period can be conceived as the making and confirming of that Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic period is launching a fulfillment of it.

Then the Gospel of Luke especially some of the New Testament. Someone

can be finding Luke 1:54 and also verses 72-73. “He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful.” Then verses 72-73, “to show mercy to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, the oath he swore to our father Abraham.” So what is about to happen now, not through Moses, but through Messiah, is also remembering of the Mosaic covenant.

So this is a very simple fundamental biblical structure then which serves to show that these two things are two stages in fulfillment of the one set of promises that were given to Abraham. So that package of those promises is this complex progress in eschatological history that typological and anti-typological stage.

Now let’s take the promises one by one and see how they found fulfillment at these two levels. First is the promise of the king and within the patriarchal narratives themselves that comes out especially in the circumcision chapter of Genesis 17 where God promises to Abraham and also to Sarah that among their descendants there will be kings. They will have a royal dynasty embedded in their descendants. We won’t take the time to read them but Genesis 17 you’re familiar them with verses 6 and 16 that involve the promise of a king or of kingship a royal dynasty.

Patriarchal Blessing in Gen. 49 and Judah’s kingship

As the patriarchal age moved along we come toward the end of the book of Genesis. We come to a point in Genesis where the promise of the king is picked up and made the particular subject of Jacob’s dying, death bed blessings on his sons and in particular his blessing on Judah. So in Genesis 49 there is Jacob’s words “Judah your brothers will praise you.” Next year when you will have had your Hebrew course and you will be studying your prophets you’ll be seeing the Hebrew. We will look at this passage again and how he is punning on this word for “praise” as indeed Judah’s mother had punned on this word “praise” when she gave him the name Judah in the first

place. "Judah, your brothers will praise you." That word "praise" is related to the brother's praise. "Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies, your father's sons will bow down to you." So Judah is the one and who the leaders the twelve tribes are to be invested. The particular time that Jacob gave this prophetic blessing he, Jacob, was the patriarchal head and in terms of the immediate situation in Egypt, Joseph was the head. But now beyond that Jacob foresees the day when Judah will emerge as the leader of the twelve tribes system. Kingship will be invested in Judah. It goes on to describe this leadership which is related to their military victories as well as we have seen. It is set forth in the figure of the lion, the lion of the tribe of Judah. "You are a lion's cub, O Judah. You return from the prey, my son, like a lion charges and lies down, like a lioness who dares to rouse."

Then we come to the key verse in verse 10 where things turn on especially on the Hebrew meaning of the term *shiloh* and whether it is a proper name or what it is. If it is the name of the city Shiloh or the coming messianic king himself as a proper name or whether it is a composed of a couple of words that describes the messianic king. Now I have an NIV here takes the third of those approaches. "The scepter will not depart of Judah," from the preceding two verses that kingship is symbolized by the scepter was going to be invested in Judah. Judah is going to have the supremacy over all for the twelve tribes will be bowing down recognizing his leadership and kingship.

Now once that happens, and by the way, when did that happen? When was kingship truly invested in Judah?--clearly with David. At which time it was sort of registered as a special covenant that's when it happened with the Davidic covenant. Once it happened it was going to stay there. "The scepter will not depart from Judah, but the ruler's staff from between his feet." So kingship was going on remain in the dynasty started by David.

“Until he comes,” here is how the words *shiloh* is treated by the NIV translators. If we had the time we could make the plausible case that led them to adopt this. It consists of taking the elements of *shiloh* apart as representing the relative pronoun (“which”) on the one hand and then followed by a preposition with a pronominal suffix (“to him”) literally means “which to him.” So this is understood then as the kingship will remain in the line for Judah until that one comes, namely Christ Messiah. All these views would be understood messianically--until the Messiah comes. He is the one to whom the scepter really belongs. In other words, this promised kingship will not pass away permanently, of course, it was interrupted. It started with David and continued until the days of the exile and that was then interrupted but the promise was still to be fulfilled, not at this level anymore but nevertheless in the career of the coming Messiah. In him, of course, it is consummated and does continue forever. So that’s what this prophecy is predicting, the kingship promised to Abraham.

Already we can see here how there is continuity between the old typological Davidic dynasty and the second level fulfillment in the Messiah. “Until he comes to who it belongs,” now notice when he comes the realm of commitment is not just in terms of the Old Testament with twelve tribes but now it says, “the obedience of the nations.” You get the theme of universalism now which is characteristic of messianic prophecy. The nations now are going to be recognizing this ultimate king promised to Abraham.

The following verses are fascinating and cryptic. It would take too much time to defend a particular interpretation. I would just point out to you that there seems to be mysteriously enough conveyed here some suggestions about the fact that this glorious lion of the tribe of Judah will also be the prince of peace, the lamb of God who must suffer. So we get this double theme in this messianic prophecy that we find in all messianic prophecy

mainly the sufferings of Christ and then the glory that will follow. So we have had the glory of the king who has universal dominion and everyone's bowing down to him recognizing his powers and so on.

But nevertheless there is the suffering hinted at here by the reference. Earlier on we were talking about the covenants and I used the illustration of covenants were cut by taking certain animals and cutting them. Remember that business and we talked about the particular donkey that would be used to cut the covenant sacrifice. Here's a place then where there is a reference to that covenant donkey and it's a peculiar type of animal that was used to be sacrificed in order to make covenants. So there's a suggestion here and this reference to that peculiar kind of technical language for that special breed of donkey.

The suggestion here especially when it's related to the idea then of washing garments in wine and then robes in the blood of grapes. So you get this mysterious imagery of blood and of washing of grapes. Elsewhere later on the Bible this is picked up in terms of the blood of Christ, the sacrificial donkey, and the saints had their robes washed in that blood. So there is this kind of suggestion then just hastening on. There is also reference to "his eyes will be darker than wine, his teeth will be whiter than milk" is this some reference to the general prosperity of the messianic age which is a common theme.

But in any case my main point clearly is that Jacob in this blessing on Judah picks up the promise of the king he finds it more precisely for us and shows how it is something that will be made permanent in terms of that ultimate *shiloh* figure. I would prefer myself the interpretation of *shiloh* as a proper name where it's related to Hebrew words like *shala* a verb and *shala* noun that have to do with the idea of peace and prosperity. So it becomes almost a virtual synonym for *shalom*, "peace." So that's the other option you

have. I would guess the King James Version had *shiloh* down as a proper name so that's what we'll be going on there.

Transcribed by Katherine Bailey

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