

## END TIMES LESSON 7 | Typology

### 1. Definition.

- a. A type is a *predetermined* representative relation that certain *historical* persons, events, institutions, offices, actions, and things of the Old Testament bear to corresponding *historical* persons, events, institutions, offices, actions, and things in the New.
- b. Various Old Testament *types* prefigure/foreshadow ultimate *antitypes* in the New Testament. Typology is one kind of prophecy.
- c. Typical fulfilment “identifies the authorially intended patterns of certain Old Testament persons, events, or objects and finds corresponding fulfillment in the New Testament.”<sup>1</sup>
- d. τύπος: “**a mark made as the result of a blow or pressure, mark, trace...** (taking a stone out of the ground leaves a hole that bears the contours of the stone, but in effect the stone has made the impression...)... **embodiment of characteristics or function of a model, copy, image**...the children are τύπ. of their parents...the master is a τύπος θεοῦ *image of God* to the slave...**an archetype serving as a model, type, pattern, model...** of the *types* given by God as an indication of the future, in the form of persons or things” (BDAG, 1019-20). See Ro 5:14; 1 Co 10:6, 11.
- e. Illustration: a pilot hole for a screw.

### 2. Importance.

- a. “The Typology of Scripture has been one of the most neglected departments of theological science.”<sup>2</sup>
- b. Typology is considered “unscientific” by many Christian scholars today. It is interesting that many who criticise typology are happy to allegorise.
- c. Jesus and the apostles themselves recognised types in the Old Testament (Lk 24:25-27; Jn 5:39). Stephen’s speech in Acts 7 and the book of *Hebrews* are built upon typology.

### 3. Distinctives.

- a. Typology differs from direct prophecy only in its means of prediction. Direct prophecy *foretells* through words; typology *prefigures* through persons, events, institutions, offices, actions, and things.
- b. Typology differs from allegory in that, with typology, types and antitypes are tied to *historical reality*. Allegories are tied only to the *imagination*. The biblical use of typology *does not* warrant the allegorical method of interpretation in general.

### 4. Principles.

- a. Typology is always built on real life, historical, space-time events. Both the type and the antitype are *historical*.
- b. The type always has its own historical context and meaning, independent of the antitype it prefigures (*i.e.*, Nu 21:9; Jn 3:14-15). It effectively prefigures the antitype precisely because it is efficacious in its own setting.
- c. It usually takes the New Testament to understand that an Old Testament person, event, institution, office, action, or thing is intended as a type.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Rydelnik, *The Messianic Hope*, Kindle Location, 1193.

<sup>2</sup> Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture*.

- (1) We don't know for sure how much the biblical authors understand regarding the typology contained in their own writings. They probably write more than they know or understand. In their own time, most types are not comprehended.
- d. The *essence* of a type must be distinguished from its accessories. We must expect agreement between the type and antitype in many particulars, *but not all*. For example, Joseph's life does not exactly match Jesus' life, though there are many similarities.
- e. The only sure authority in the identification of types is Scripture itself. The mere perception of an analogy does not suffice. A special divine intent must be evident.
  - (1) "...[S]omething more is wanted than mere resemblance. The [type] must not only resemble the [antitype], but must have been *designed* to resemble the latter. It must have been so designed *in its original institution*. It must have been designed as *preparatory* to the latter. The type, as well as the antitype, must have been preordained, and they must have been preordained as constituent parts of the same general scheme of Divine Providence. It is this *previous design* and this *preordained connexion* which constitute the relation of type and antitype."<sup>3</sup>
- f. Beware of taking typology too far. Taken too far, typology slips into allegory.
  - (1) "Do not give way to metaphor and figure, nor follow out Scripture figures too far. Brilliancy and imagery please us, but they draw our attention away from the truth contained in the text."<sup>4</sup>
  - (2) "From Origen's day to now, some have emphasized typology beyond reason. Typology has often suffered more from its friends than its foes."<sup>5</sup>
- g. Types often point to the person and work of Jesus, but not always.
- h. Typology illustrates doctrine, but it should not be used to establish doctrine not otherwise taught in the Bible.

## 5. Sample Listing.

- a. Persons.
  - (1) Adam's federal headship: Jesus' federal headship (Ro 5:14-19; 1 Co 15:45-47).
  - (2) Abel's innocence and acceptable sacrifice: Jesus' innocence and acceptable sacrifice (He 11:4; 1 Pe 1:19).
  - (3) Melchizedek as king and priest, without genealogy, who brought out bread and wine; Jesus as king and priest, without genealogy, who brought out bread and wine (Ge 14:18-20; Ps 110:4; He 5:6-10; 6:20-7:28)
  - (4) Isaac as the son born miraculously who was offered as a sacrifice on Moriah: Jesus as the son born miraculously who was offered as a sacrifice on the same mountain (Ge 21:1-7; 22:1-19; He 11:17-19).
  - (5) Isaac as the child of promise persecuted by the child of the flesh; believers as children of promise persecuted by children of the flesh (Ga 4:28).
  - (6) Isaac as the son who marries a Gentile woman after he "arises" from the dead and after his mother temporarily dies: Jesus as the son who marries the church after he arises from the dead and after Israel temporarily "dies."

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<sup>3</sup> Bishop Marsh, quoted in J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come*, 109.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Simeon, quoted by H. Moule, *Charles Simeon*, Kindle Locations 2806-2807.

<sup>5</sup> Lewis S. Chafer, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1993), 3:116.

- (7) Joseph as the brother who was rejected by his brothers but who ends up saving his brothers and the nations during seven years of famine: Jesus as the Messiah who was rejected by Israel but who ends up saving Israel and the nations during the seven-year tribulation (Ac 7:9-16).
  - (8) Moses as the designated saviour of Israel who is at first rejected by Israel but who later rescued her from slavery in Egypt: Jesus as the designated Saviour of Israel who is at first rejected by Israel but who later rescues her from slavery to sin.
  - (9) Exodus generation: believers who fail to attain the faith-rest life (1 Co 10:1-5).
  - (10) Joshua as the leader of Israel who defeats Israel's enemies and brings her to dwell peacefully in the promised land: Jesus as the leader of Israel who defeats Israel's enemies and brings her to dwell peacefully and permanently in the promised land.
  - (11) Conquest generation: believers who succeed in attaining the faith-rest life.
  - (12) Boaz as the kinsman redeemer in the line of Judah: Jesus as the kinsman redeemer in the line of David.
  - (13) David as the unlikely king born in Bethlehem: Jesus as the unlikely king born in Bethlehem.
  - (14) Antiochus Epiphanes as the boastful Gentile king who sets up an abomination in the Jerusalem temple: the antichrist as the boastful Gentile king who sets up an abomination in the Jerusalem temple.
- b. Events.
- (1) Israel's deliverance from Egypt: the believer's deliverance from sin.
  - (2) Israel's seven annual feasts: key events in Jesus' relationship with Israel.
    - (a) Israel's receiving the law on Pentecost: the church's receiving the Spirit on Pentecost.
- c. Institutions.
- (1) Marriage.
    - (a) Husband's love for his wife: Jesus' love for his church (Eph 5:25-30).
    - (b) Wife's respect for her husband: the church's respect for Jesus.
    - (c) Sexual oneness in marriage: spiritual intimacy between Jesus and the church (Ge 2:24; Eph 5:31-32).
  - (2) Jewish betrothal process: Jesus' betrothal to the church.
- d. Actions.
- (1) God's discipline of the Exodus generation: God's discipline of the sinning believer (1 Co 10:6, 11).
  - (2) Looking at the serpent in the wilderness: believing in Jesus for eternal life (Nu 21:9; Jn 3:14-15).
- e. Things.
- (1) Eating bread and wine as a sign of fellowship: eating bread and wine as a sign of fellowship.
  - (2) Passover lamb (Re 5:6-9; 21:9, 14, 22-23, 27; 22:1).
  - (3) Manna for Israel in the wilderness: spiritual food for the believer in the world (Jn 6:32-35).
  - (4) Tabernacle and its furnishings (Ex 25:30).
  - (5) Levitical offerings (He 10:10, 14).

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