

Wilson's Dictionary of Bible Types

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WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

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CHAPTER 1

HOW TO STUDY TYPES

Lesson One

The student should first decide whether the word under consideration is used by the Spirit as a type. Not all objects are types. Care should be used in arriving at a conclusion on this matter lest one distort the Word of GOD and thus arrive at decisions which were never intended by the Lord.

A safe rule is to ascertain whether an object is said plainly to be a type. When Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:4, "**They drank of that spiritual rock ... and that rock was Christ,**" we know that the rock in the wilderness was a true type of CHRIST.

When we read of the good and bad fish in Matthew 13:47, we know that these fish are types though the passage does not say so. The story is a parable intended to teach a lesson. It is needful therefore to learn just what they do represent and also what the net represents.

When we read of the "Red Sea" or "the Jordan," we know this to be a type just because it teaches so many very interesting and profitable lessons.

But even though we decide that an object is a type there still remains the problem of learning what it represents. Here great care is needed. Let us ask, "What constitutes a type?" Let us seek an answer by a series of comparisons:

- There is likeness of appearance as "clouds" and "dust." (Nahum 1:3)
- There is likeness of action as "the leopard" and "Alexander the Great." (Daniel 7:6)
- There is likeness of effect as "rain and snow" and "the Word of GOD." (Isaiah 55:10)
- There is likeness of relationship as "nurse" and "Paul." (I Thessalonians 2:7)
- There is likeness of value as "gold" and "the Lord JESUS." (Isaiah 13:12)

- There is likeness of position as "head" and "Israel." (Deuteronomy 28:13)
- There is likeness of character as "the spider" and "the sinner." (Proverbs 30:23)

Lesson Two

Certain principles and processes are essential in the study of Typology. It is Scriptural to study this subject for the writers of the Scripture and our Lord Himself used types constantly for teaching great lessons. As a good knife is of most value in the hands of a skillful surgeon, so the Word of GOD is most effective when used by those who best understand its hidden meaning. The study of types is illuminating, for the Spirit uses the things which are seen, to teach us concerning the things which are unseen. The study of types equips us with a handy means and method of presenting the truth of GOD, for types are about us on every hand ready to be used.

Some suggestions for the study of types:

Think of the opposite of that which is under consideration;

- as the golden city (Revelation 21:18) and the gilded city (Revelation 18:16);
- the lion (Revelation 5:5) and the lamb (Revelation 5:6);
- the woman clothed in red (Revelation 17:4) and the woman clothed in white (Revelation 19:8).

Think of comparisons:

- great Goliath and little David;
- Joseph of the Old Testament and JESUS;
- the river in Ezekiel 47 and the river in John 7.

Look up the several occurrences of the type to ascertain how it is used.

Learn whether this type is referred to anywhere else in the Scripture as a type.

Consider the characteristics of the type being studied as the sea with its greatness, its depth, its restlessness, its size, its waves, its commerce.

Think of the lessons which may be learned from the type as the leaves in Isaiah 64:6,

- how they fade,
- how they reveal the kind of tree,
- how they show whether young or old,
- how they fall from the tree or hold on.

By considering these various thoughts, the student will be enabled to quickly and easily learn lessons from the subject under consideration.

If questions should arise in regard to any of the suggestions given, the reader may feel free to address an inquiry to the author. Such communications will receive prompt attention.

Lesson Three

Quite often an object is used as the same type or a type of the same thing by several writers. This

repetition confirms the object as a type and assures us of his true meaning.

- Moses uses the rock as a type of CHRIST in Numbers 20:8.
- David uses the rock as a type of CHRIST in Psalm 18:2.
- Isaiah does the same thing in Isaiah 32:2.
- The Lord Jesus also refers to Himself as the Rock upon which the church is built in Matthew 16:18.

- Balaam used trees to represent the nation of Israel, Numbers 24:6
- David used a tree to represent a godly man in Psalm 1.
- Jeremiah follows the same plan in Jeremiah 17:8.
- Daniel used a tree to represent the king in Daniel 4:10. He received this message from GOD.
- Isaiah used the same type for the eunuch in Isaiah 56:3.
- Jesus used the tree as a type of the people of Israel in Luke 13:6.

It is well also to note that an object cannot be a type of certain things.

I heard a preacher use "Joseph's coat of many colors" as a type of the doctrine of sinless perfection. It was a very grotesque comparison, utterly without foundation or truth.

Leaven is often used as a type of the Gospel which, of course, it could not be. The contexts concerning leaven all through both the Old Testament and the New indicate clearly that it is a type of some evil which should be removed. It will be most helpful for the student to ask himself certain questions in regard to the study of types and this will guide him in his investigation.

How is this object or subject first used in the Scripture?

What meaning does it have in the first place where it occurs?

To what does this object or subject refer in the last passage where it occurs in the Scripture?

What are the characteristics of this object or subject which make it a suitable type?

CHRIST is compared to a lion in Revelation 5.

In Isaiah 53, CHRIST is compared to a lamb.

As the characteristics of these two animals are studied, then the likeness will be more clearly understood. This plan should be followed in each case.

Types should be grouped according to that which they represent.

There are types of CHRIST, Israel, the nations, the Christian, the hypocrites, the worker, the state of the soul, Satan, and many others.

Types may also be grouped according to their character.

There are types taken from the mineral kingdom, the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the celestial kingdom, the human family, human actions, human attitudes, postures, etc. It will help the student to understand types more fully if these groupings are made while the study is being pursued.

~ end of chapter 1 ~