

THE STUDY OF THE TYPES

BY

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CHAPTER 2

Reasons for Studying the Types

THERE are many reasons why in our study of GOD's Word we ought not to neglect the types which occupy so prominent a position.

(1) It is very clear that GOD Himself sets great value upon them. It was His Spirit who designed them; for we learn from the Epistle to the Hebrews that in the construction of the Tabernacle every detail was planned by Him. In speaking of the veil which divided the Holy Place from the Holiest of all, the writer says, "**the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first Tabernacle was yet standing.**" There was a meaning in that veil; it was not merely a hanging to divide between the two parts of the Tabernacle, but was meant to convey a great lesson.

Other details of the Tabernacle and of all the types must be equally significant; and though all are not as clearly explained, we may, with the help of the Author, try to learn His meaning. Without such a Teacher, the difficulty of the study might indeed deter us; but we have the Lord's promise, "**He shall teach you all things,**" "**He will guide you into all truth,**" "**He shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.**"

When we read in the Gospels of the veil being rent, remembering the passage in Hebrews respecting the hanging up of that veil, we may write in the margins of our Bibles "**the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holiest of all**" was now made manifest.

An invisible hand rent the veil "**from the top to the bottom**"; not from the bottom to the top, for then it might have seemed as though man had something to do with it. It was GOD Himself who was completing the type, and adding the finishing touches to the picture.

Does it not show the immense importance which He puts upon the types, that at such a moment He did not forget to mark the significance of that event to which so many of them pointed, and by rending the veil declared that the closed way was, by the death of His Son, now made open? "**His decease which He should accomplish at Jerusalem**" had been the subject of conversation when Moses and Elias talked with the Lord JESUS CHRIST on the Mount of Transfiguration, and afterwards all Heaven must have been occupied with what was taking place on Calvary; but yet the types were not forgotten by GOD.

So accurate are all their details, that each one must be fulfilled by the great Antitype when He came. Not only are they pictures of long past events, which we may compare with what happened afterwards, but they were the plans with which the subsequent events must correspond. Thus in John's account of the crucifixion we read, "**When they came to Jesus, and saw that He**

was dead already, they brake not His legs... for these things were done that the Scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of Him shall not be broken."

Where is this Scripture, if not in the ordinance of the passover, when it was distinctly stated, "**neither shall ye break a bone thereof**"?

(2) Our Lord thought much of the types. Again and again He referred to them and showed how they pointed to Himself. What a marvellous Bible-reading must He have given to those two disciples on the road to Emmaus, when "**beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself;**" and from them answered His own question, "**Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into His glory?**" The sufferings and the glory were predicted in the types as well as in the direct prophecies; and it was no wonder that their heart burned within them on that memorable walk, and later on in the same evening, when "**then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.**"

The events which had just taken place were all foreshadowed there; but they had not understood the old familiar passages till He showed them how "**all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms,**" concerning Himself.

Those who neglect the study of the types fail to see how much there is of CHRIST in the law of Moses.

In the book of the Revelation it is as the Antitype of all the sacrifices that He is chiefly seen. No less than twenty-eight times is He spoken of as the Lamb. Even in chapter 5, where the Apostle is expecting to see the Lion of the tribe of Judah step forth in His strength, He appears as the "**Lamb**"; and the beloved disciple sees Him again as he first saw Him on that memorable day when John the Baptist pointed out "**the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.**"

(3) Not only does CHRIST speak of the types, but they speak of Him. If we would "**grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,**" we cannot do better than study what they tell us of His person and of His work. He said to the Jews, when He was on earth, "**Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed Me, for he wrote of Me.**"

With the exception of a few such passages as Deuteronomy 18:15-19, where the coming of the Messiah is clearly foretold, it was in the types that Moses wrote of CHRIST. They all spoke of Him: the tabernacle, the offerings, the feasts, told of different aspects of His work for us; and as "in His temple every whit of it uttereth His glory," so also in everyone of these earlier types.

(4) Another reason for valuing this part of GOD's Word is the very high place that is accorded to the types by the writers of the New Testament. They are referred to as "**the Scripture,**" and we know that "**the Scripture cannot be broken.**"

The types and shadows of the Old Testament must be fulfilled in the New. For instance, we read in I Corinthians 15:4, that CHRIST "**rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.**"

Is not the resurrection of CHRIST prophesied in the types more plainly than anywhere else? In the waving of the sheaf of the firstfruits "**on the morrow after the Sabbath,**" immediately following the passover (Leviticus 23), the very day is foretold; and we know from another verse in I Corinthians 15 that this refers to His resurrection, for Paul speaks of "**Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming.**"

(5) There are many passages in the New Testament which we cannot understand without having become in some measure familiar with the types. The Epistle to the Hebrews is almost entirely made up of references to the Old Testament: as the substance, CHRIST, is proved to be better than the shadows - better than Moses, than Joshua, than Abraham, than Aaron, than the first Tabernacle, than the Levitical sacrifices, than the whole cloud of witnesses in the picture gallery of faith; and lastly, His blood is proved to be better than the blood of Abel.

We sometimes forget that the writers of the New Testament were students of the Old Testament; that it was their Bible, and that they would naturally allude again and again to the types and shadows, expecting their readers also to be familiar with them.

If we fail to see these allusions, we lose much of the beauty of the passage, and cannot rightly understand it. For instance, in Acts 3, Peter, when speaking of the Lord's return, says, "**Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things;**" and we shall quite miss the meaning if we fail to see the type to which he evidently refers. We read in Leviticus 25, that at the blowing of the jubilee trumpet, "**ye shall return every man unto his possession and . . . unto his family.**" And "**in the year of the jubile the field shall return . . . to him to whom the possession of the land did belong**" (Leviticus 27:24).

This is what will take place for Israel when their Messiah appears. The country will once more belong to them, and the Son of David will return to His family and to His land. This expression in Acts is an example of how the primary interpretation of a passage can be missed for want of seeing the Old Testament type to which allusion is made; for it is often used as the ground on which to build all sorts of theories which are not in the Bible.

In the Gospel of John there are constant references to the types.

In the first chapter our attention is drawn to the Lamb of GOD, and our thoughts go back at once to all the lambs that had before been sacrificed, from Abel's lamb in Genesis 3, to the last offered in the temple. In the closing verse of the chapter there is evident reference to Jacob's ladder. In verse 14, CHRIST is shown to be the Antitype of the Tabernacle, for it tells us how "**the Word was made flesh and dwelt (tabernacled) among us**"; whilst in chapter 2, He compares Himself to the temple, for He says, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**" In chapter 3, we see Him in the brazen serpent; in chapter 4, He compares Himself to Jacob's well; in chapter 6, He tells us that He was the true manna; in chapter 7, we are reminded of the smitten rock, for He Himself was the rock out of which would flow the rivers of living water. In chapters 8 and 9, He is the light of the world; in chapter 10, the Antitype of all the shepherds of the Old Testament; in chapter 12, He is the corn of wheat that brought forth the sheaf of the firstfruits; in chapter 13, we have the laver; and in chapter 15, the true vine in contrast with the vine that He brought out of Egypt.

Thus in almost every chapter an Old Testament type is brought before us. If we compare John's Gospel merely to one type, the Tabernacle, it has been pointed out that it seems to divide itself into the three courts. In the first twelve chapters we have our Lord's ministry on earth, in the outer court to which all the people were admitted; and we have His last words to outsiders in the closing verses of chapter 12.

As in the Tabernacle the first thing seen was the altar and the lamb, so we have in the opening chapter the Lamb of GOD that taketh away the sin of the world. In chapter 13, CHRIST is preparing His disciples for service in the Holy place by use of the laver. In chapters 14, 15, 16, we see Him with them in the Tabernacle; and He teaches them much about the Holy Spirit, typified by the oil for the candlestick; and about prayer in His name, typified by the incense on the golden altar; while in the 17th chapter we have the High Priest alone in the Holiest of all.

(6) We have already seen that the types seem to cover the whole range of New Testament teaching. Not only are the Old Testament types unfolded in the New Testament, but the New Testament is enfolded in them.

(7) This study gives us a sure antidote for the poison of the so-called "higher criticism."

If we acknowledge the Divine intention of every detail of the types, even though we may not understand all their teaching, and if we believe there is a lesson in every incident recorded, the attacks of modern criticism will not harm us.

We may not be clever enough to understand what the critics say, or to answer their criticisms; but if our eyes have been opened to see the beauty of the types, the doubts which such writers suggest will not trouble us, and we shall have a more profitable occupation than reading their works. When so much of this destructive criticism is about, we cannot do better than urge all—even the youngest Christians—to take up the typical study of GOD's Word; for though He has hid these things from the wise and prudent, He reveals them unto babes.

The "higher criticism" and the study of the types cannot go together; for no one who has learnt the spiritual teaching of the Old Testament pictures would believe, or try to prove, that the Bible was not what it claimed to be.

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