

Chapter 21

THE TYPICAL PRINCIPLE

I. DEFINITION

The principle by which the interpretation of a verse or passage of Scripture containing typical elements can be determined only through a proper interpretation of the type or types involved.

II. AMPLIFICATION

A. **Definition of Types:** Webster's Dictionary defines the word "type" as:

1. An emblem; a symbol; that which has a symbolical significance; that which is emblematic.
2. An allegorical symbolic representation of some object, which is called the antitype; a symbol; a sign; theologically, the word is mainly applied to those prophetic prefigurings of the persons and things of the new dispensation, which occur in the Old Testament.

The word "type" comes from the Greek word "*TUPOS*" which means "The mark of a stroke or blow; a figure formed by a blow or impression; the impress of a seal, the stamp made by a die; a figure, image, form, or mould; counterpart; example to be initiated; a model, pattern; an anticipative figure."

It is translated:

Print	John 20:25
Figure	Acts 7:43; Romans 5:14
Fashion	Acts 7:44
Manner	Acts 23:25
Form	Romans 6:17
Example	I Corinthians 10:6; I Timothy 4:12
Ensample	I Corinthians 10:11; Philippians 3:17; I Thessalonians 1:7; II Thessalonians 3:9; I Peter 5:3
Pattern	Titus 2:7; Hebrews 8:5

For the purposes of defining the Typical Principle now under consideration we will define a "type" to be "a figure or representation of something to come; an *anticipative figure*, a *prophetic symbol*." This necessitates a brief discussion of the distinction between types and symbols.

B. **Distinction Between Type and Symbol:** Types are to be viewed as a select group of symbols having prophetic and foreshadowing characteristics.

Symbol — A representation, one thing standing for another.

Type — A prophetic representation, one thing prefiguring another.

Types are to be viewed as prophetic symbols. This is not to say that all symbols used in prophecy are types. For example Daniel 7 is prophetic of Gentile kingdoms which are symbolized in this passage as "beasts." These beasts are not types (prophetic symbols), rather are symbols used in prophecy. A type is prophetic in and of itself and does not depend upon prophetic language for its prophetic import (e.g., Genesis 22 provides us with a type having prophetic import without prophetic language).

A Symbol may represent a thing, either past, present or future.

A Type is essentially a prefiguring of something future from itself.

- A Symbol is a figure of something either past, present or future.
- A Type is a figure of that which is to come.
- A Symbol has in itself no essential reference to time.
- A Type has inherent in itself a reference to time.
- A Symbol is designed to represent certain characteristics or qualities in that which it represents.
- A Type is designed to be a pre-ordained representation of something or someone to come.
- A Symbol to be interpreted, requires a pointing out of the characteristics, qualities, marks, or features common to both the symbol and that which it symbolizes.
- A Type to be interpreted, generally requires a setting forth of an extended analogy between the type and that which it typifies.

The *rock* in Psalms 18:2 is a *symbol*, not a *type*.

The *candlesticks* in Revelation 1:20 are *symbols*, not *types*.

The *lamb* in John 1:29 is a *symbol*, not a *type*.

The *rainbow* in Genesis 9:13-16 is a *symbol*, not a *type*.

The *olive trees* in Zechariah 4:3 are *symbols*, not *types*.

The color *white* in Revelation 19:8 is a *symbol*, not a *type*.

The number *666* in Revelation 13:18 is a *symbol*, not a *type*.

Adam in Romans 5:14 is a *type*, not a *symbol*.

Animal sacrifices in Leviticus 1-5 are *types*, not *symbols*.

The *offices of Prophet, Priest and King* in I Kings 1:34 are *types*, not *symbols*.

The *Tabernacle of Moses* in Exodus 25-40 is a *type*, not a *symbol*.

Jonah's experience in the fish in Matthew 12:39-41 is a *type*, not a *symbol*.

It must be recognized that types may involve symbols but symbols, of themselves, are never types.

In Exodus 12 the historical event of the Feast of Passover is a type of Christ and His Church. Within this type there are symbolic elements such as the lamb, the hyssop, the unleavened bread, and the bitter herbs, but these by themselves are not types.

In Exodus 17 the historical event of the smiting of the rock is a type of the crucifixion of Christ. Within this type there are symbolic elements such as the rock and the rod, which by themselves are not types.

The above illustrations show the interrelatedness of type and symbols to be such that, while symbolism may be used in typology, the converse is never true.

C. Classification of Types: God, knowing the end from the beginning, was able to cause the writing of the Old Testament to be done in such a way that many of its elements were meant to be viewed as anticipative of that which was to come in the New Testament. The types of the Old Testament may be divided into four main classifications: Persons, Offices, Institutions and Events.

1. **Persons:** In the writing of Scripture God caused the recording of history to be such that certain persons are meant to be viewed as prefiguring another person to come. These persons can be seen as foreshadows in either their character, office, function or relationship to the history of redemption.

Romans 5:12-21: Verse 14 — "... Adam ... who is the figure (Greek; Type) of him that was to come. . ."

Here, Paul, in setting forth an extended analogy shows Adam to be a type of Christ.

2. **Offices:** In writing Scripture God meant for certain offices to be viewed as foreshadows of offices to come.
 Hebrews 5:1-10: Verses 4, 5 — “. . . as was Aaron. So also Christ. . .”
 The writer to the Hebrews here sets forth an extended analogy showing the Aaronic Priesthood to be typical of Christ’s Priesthood.
3. **Institutions:** In writing Scripture God meant for certain institutions to be viewed as foreshadows of institutions to come.
 Hebrews 8:1-5: Verse 4 — “Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things . . . the tabernacle.”
 The writer to the Hebrews gives an extended analogy showing the instituting of the Mosaic Tabernacle to be typical of the heavenly institution.
4. **Events:** In the writing of Scripture God caused historical events to be recorded in such a way that they may be viewed as foreshadowings of events to come.
 I Corinthians 10:1-11: Verse 6 — “Now these things were our *examples* (Greek; Types). . .”
 Verse 11 — “Now all these things happened unto them for *ensamples* (Greek; Types). . .”
 In this passage Paul refers to several historical events of Israel’s wandering in the wilderness as being typical of events in the experience of the New Testament Church.

NOTE: It should be recognized that these categories often overlap in Scripture. For instance: an event may include persons, offices, and institutions.

These illustrations show that God, in authoring Scripture, was able to cause it to be written in such a way that many of the persons, offices, institutions and events were meant to be viewed as types of things to come.

D. **Conclusion:** The *literary method of prefiguring* (typology) used in writing Scripture gives rise to the *Typical Principle* of interpreting Scripture.

III. QUALIFICATION

A. The first step in using the Typical Principle is to correctly discern what elements, if any, of the passage under consideration are meant to be viewed as types.

B. The use of this principle must be in constant conjunction with the context group of principles.

C. Because types generally involve symbols, the Symbolic Principle must constantly be used in connection with the Typical Principle.

D. The interpreter must ascertain the primary point of *resemblance* between the type and anti-type. Then he must realize the full correspondence between them by drawing out an extended analogy.

E. The typical sense of Scripture is always solidly based on the literal sense. Typical sense cannot be used to eradicate or contradict the actual sense.

1. The significance of a type is based upon the literal nature and characteristics of that which is being used as a type.
2. A type is meant to prefigure something essentially different from itself.

3. The link between that which is used as a type and that which it typifies is the extended analogy that can be drawn between both.

F. Generally speaking, the Bible interprets its own types, or at least gives us the *key* to their interpretation. Thus the interpreter must search through the Scripture to discover the key by which he unlocks the door into the full interpretation of the type. The only safeguard against the human imagination's interpreting types is to let the Scripture interpret its own types. The best interpreter of Scripture is Scripture itself. To the honest searcher for truth there is hardly a type used in the Old Testament which is not interpreted or its key given in the New Testament. Many times just one verse of the New Testament is the key to the interpretation of many verses or chapters of that which is typical in the Old Testament.

e.g., John 1:14 becomes the key to interpreting the many chapters devoted to the Tabernacle of Moses in the Old Testament.

e.g., John 1:51 becomes the key to interpreting the chapter concerning Jacob's ladder in the Old Testament.

G. There are types in the Old Testament that are neither interpreted nor have "keys" given in the New Testament. However, there are none of these that cannot be safely guided and governed in their interpretation by "example-types" that God gives us in Scripture.

Ephesians 5:22-23 implies that Adam and Eve are to be viewed as types of Christ and His bride. This becomes a sample type by which we may interpret other Old Testament brides as types of the bride of Christ (Rebekah, Rachel, Ruth and Esther).

Hebrews 11:17-19, together with John 3:16, sets forth Abraham and Isaac as a type of the Father and Jesus in their Father/Son relationship. This becomes a sample type by which we may interpret the relationship between Jacob and Joseph as a type.

H. Often a type may have more than one application to its interpretation.

O.T. Type	Interpretation Point of Resemblance	N.T. Applications
Tabernacle of Moses	God's Dwelling Place	1. Christ — John 1:14 2. Church — Hebrews 3:1-5 3. Believer — Ephesians 3:17 4. Heavenly Sanctuary — Hebrews 8:1-5

I. The interpreter must recognize that a type is generally to be viewed as a prophecy. Many times God instructed His servants to do typically what He would fulfill actually. For example, God the Father instructed Abraham to do typically that which He Himself planned to do actually (Genesis 22). In another instance God told Israel to do typically with the Passover lamb what He would fulfill actually with the True Lamb (Exodus 12). However, we must recognize that these were not types to those persons involved, but were actual circumstances. Thus God takes the actual to be typical, which then becomes prophetic of another actual. All types are to be viewed as God-ordained, not originating with man. Because all types are God-ordained, they hold an important place with Him. (Notice Moses' punishment for spoiling a God-ordained type through his disobedience. Exodus 17; Number 20; Psalms 106:33; I Corinthians 10:1-4).

J. No doctrines should be built on types alone, but types may be used to illustrate doctrines.

K. No type is to be interpreted by or with another type.

L. The interpreter must recognize that there is no such thing as a “perfect and complete type,” for the very nature of the things used as types were all stamped with imperfection and incompleteness. However, God used the imperfect and incomplete as sign posts pointing to Christ, the Perfect and Complete One.

M. The interpreter must be careful not to force the typological principle upon unsuitable passages. Some interpreters desiring to personalize Scripture, to establish eschatological truth or even to find Christ in the Old Testament have forced this principle upon passages to the point of distorting their interpretation.

IV. DEMONSTRATION

A. **Persons — Genesis 37-50:** These chapters cover the life-story of Joseph. A consideration of his character and experiences leads us to view him as a type of Christ. The primary point of resemblance is to be seen in the son’s relationship to the Father.

O.T. Type	Point of Resemblance	Antitype
Joseph	— Son’s relation to Father —	Jesus

In the extended analogy below only some of the most prominent correspondences are given. A full interpretation of this type would involve many more.

Joseph	Analogy	Jesus
Genesis 30:22-24	A firstborn son	Matthew 1:25
Genesis 29:31	Miracle birth	Isaiah 7:14
Genesis 37:2, 3	Beloved son	Matthew 3:16
Genesis 37:2	A shepherd	John 10:11
Genesis 35:22-26	Hated by half-brothers	Mark 3:31, 32
Genesis 37:5-10	Revelation of exaltation	Matthew 26:64
Genesis 37:12-14	Sent by father to brethren	John 5:24, 30, 43
Genesis 37:18	Rejected by brethren	John 7:3
Genesis 37:28	Sold for silver	Matthew 27:3-10
Genesis 39:11-19	Falsely accused	Mark 14:55-60
Genesis 40:1-4	Suffered as criminal	Luke 23:32
Genesis 41:40, 41	Exalted in due time	Acts 5:31
Genesis 41:45	Given an exalted name	Philippians 2:9, 10
Genesis 41:43	All bow the knee	Philippians 2:10, 11
Genesis 41:45	Receives a Gentile bride	Ephesians 3:6
Genesis 45:14, 15	Brethren reconciled	Zechariah 12:10-14
Genesis 47:1-7	Reunited with his father	Mark 16:19

B. **Offices — Exodus 28: Hebrews 5:1-5; 8:1-4:** These passages, together with many others, deal with the office of the High Priest. The qualifications and function of this office, as outlined under the Mosaic Covenant, support the fact that it is a type of Christ’s own office under the New Covenant.

The primary point of resemblance is to be seen as Mediatorship.

O.T. Type	Point of Resemblance	Antitype
High Priest	— Mediatorship —	Christ’s Priesthood

The following are only a few of the many correspondences within the extended analogy that can be drawn in the full interpretation of the type.

High Priest	Analogy	Christ's Priesthood
Numbers 3:12	Born a priest	Zechariah 6:12, 13
Exodus 28:1	Taken from among men	Hebrews 2:17
Hebrews 5:4	Called of God	Hebrews 5:5
Exodus 28:29, 38	Ordained for men	Hebrews 5:5-10
Exodus 28:41	Anointed for ministry	John 1:41
Leviticus 1:1-9	Offer sacrifice	Hebrews 8:3
Exodus 28:1-4, 41	Ministry to God	Hebrews 7:22-26
Hebrews 5:2	Compassionate	Hebrews 2:17

C. **Institutions — Exodus 25-40:** These chapters are devoted to the institution of the Tabernacle of Moses. The New Testament gives us the key (John 1:14) that enables us to interpret this institution as a type of Christ. The primary point of resemblance is to be seen in the fact that it is God's dwelling place.

O.T. Type	Point of Resemblance	Antitype
Tabernacle of Moses	— God's Dwelling Place —	Christ

The following are only a few of the many correspondences within the extended analogy that can be drawn in the full interpretation of this type.

Tabernacle of Moses	Analogy	Christ
Ark of the Covenant	"God with us"	Matthew 1:23
The Mercy Seat	Propitiation	Romans 3:25
Rod that budded	Resurrection	John 11:25
Golden Pot of Manna	Bread of Life	John 6:48-51
Tables of Law	Tables of Heart	Psalms 40:8
The Name	Lord Jesus Christ	Acts 2:36
Altar of Incense	Intercessor	Hebrews 7:25
Golden Candlestick	Light of world	John 8:12
Table of Shewbread	Table of Lord	Matthew 26:26-28
The Veil	His Flesh	Hebrews 10:20
The Door	The Door	John 10:9
The Gate	The Way	John 14:6
Brazen Altar	Blood Atonement	Hebrews 5:9-11
Brazen Laver	Cleansing	Ephesians 5:26

D. **Events — Genesis 6-9:** These chapters provide us with the historical account of the event of the Flood. The circumstance and activity of this event is taken by Jesus to be typical of the Last Days.

The primary point of resemblance is judgment upon wickedness.

O.T. Type	Point of Resemblance	Antitype
The Flood	Judgment upon wickedness	Last Days

The following are only a few of the many correspondences within the extended analogy that can be drawn in the full interpretation of this type.

The Flood	Analogy	The Last Days
Genesis 6:1	Population explosion	)
Genesis 6:2	Intermarriage	)
Genesis 6:5	Great wickedness	)
Genesis 6:5	Evil thoughts and imaginations	)

Genesis 6:11, 12	Corruption	) Luke 17:26, 27
Genesis 6:11, 13	Violence	) Matthew 24:36-41
Genesis 6:8, 9	Godly remnant	) II Peter 2:5
Genesis 6:3; I Peter 2:5	Spirit and Word at Work	)
Hebrews 11:7	Ark of salvation	)
Genesis 7:1-24	Judgment-Deluge	)
Genesis 7:1-24	All wicked perish	)