

Jesus Christ in all the Scripture

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THERE IS great value in searching Scripture for types of Jesus Christ. Firstly, these types and shadows can be found from Genesis to Revelation, providing evidence for the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures. Forty-five or so human writers were used over 1,500 years to write the Bible, but their message on the subject of Jesus Christ forms a consistent, harmonious whole. Secondly, the more we study these types and shadows, the more appreciation we will have of his greatness and of how marvellous is the work of God through him. All Scripture focuses on him. Thirdly, not only in Christ himself, but also in the types, we regularly perceive the mind of Christ, the mind of the spirit, and this perception is in itself a powerful motivating force in the shaping of our own characters.

Types, shadows and allegories

Scripture itself reveals that we are right to look in it for types, shadows and allegories. When writing to the Galatians, Paul was inspired to show that the account of Hagar and Sarah is an *allegory* (an abstract idea conveyed by personification) of the two covenants (4:22-31). The more one considers the detail of Hagar and Sarah's lives, the more wonderful this allegory is seen to be.

In his Spirit-directed exposition of the Law, Paul writes of "priests that offer gifts according to the law: who serve unto the example and *shadow* [Gk. *skia*] of heavenly things" (Heb. 8:4,5). Again he says: "For the law having a *shadow* of good things to come, and not the very image of the things . . ." (10:1); and again, to the Colossians this time, using similar language, he shows that holy days, new moons and sabbaths "are a *shadow* of things to come; but the body is of Christ" (2:16,17). Writing to the Romans, he speaks of "Adam . . . who is the *figure* [Gk. *tupos*, from which comes our English word 'type'] of him that was to come" (5:14).

How necessary it is, therefore, that our Bible classes, our personal studies and even public lectures deal with aspects of the Law and Old Testament subjects, that we might understand more about 'heavenly things' and the Lord Jesus Christ! To neglect the Old Testament in favour

of speaking only about the New Testament will result in a shallow understanding of these things, and lead eventually to our accepting the views of Christendom, which preaches "another Jesus" (2 Cor. 11:4), the 'Jesus' of the Trinity.

So the life of a Bible character can represent allegorically an element of the work of God; features of the Law foreshadow things of the Kingdom of God; and a person who is a figure or type points forward to a person or group of people other than himself or herself.

Types in Bible history

It is Paul who puts us on to the track of the first type: Adam, son of God, a type of the second Adam and Son of God. We soon thereafter in Genesis 4 meet Abel, who "offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice" and was testified as being righteous, his blood being poured out as a type of Jesus (Heb. 11:4). In Genesis 14, we see the first recorded war as a shadow of Armageddon, with Abraham, a type of Christ, marching north with his trained men (a type of the saints) in a lightning campaign to defeat the king of the north's confederacy and rescue Lot (a type of Israel). There is Isaac in Genesis 22, the beloved son of his father, led like a lamb to the slaughter, and who was "in a figure" dead for three days (Heb. 11:19). Joseph as a type of Jesus Christ is one of the most wonderful; no fault of Joseph is recorded, and we see him as a type of Jesus, rejected of his brethren and cast into the waterless pit, and as a type of Christ, exalted as saviour of the world to be ruler second only to the king.

Moses, the servant of Yahweh, was tempted in Egypt, but "refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter", and chose the shame of rejection by his own people (Ex. 2:11; Heb. 11:24), just as Jesus was tempted in the wilderness and chose the stake rather than temporal power. Of both Moses and Jesus, the nation said that God had visited His people (Ex. 4:31; Lk. 7:16). Moses was the only one of his nation who was not a slave in Egypt; only Jesus has never been a slave to sin.

There is Joshua, and then the book of Judges abounds with many types. Gideon is both a type of Jesus at his first coming and of Christ at his second coming when Israel's oppressors will be

defeated. In Judges 6:36-40 the fleece full of dew speaks of the resurrected Lamb of God (Ps. 110:3), whilst the dry fleece with dew upon the ground round about was a sign of the resurrected saints (Isa. 26:19; 1 Cor. 15:23).

The prophets

Both Ezra and Nehemiah are types of Christ, and the list of faithful men of God as types continues: Isaiah; Jeremiah, who was “like a lamb or an ox . . . brought to the slaughter” (Jer. 11:19); and Ezekiel, styled ‘the son of man’—these are all figures of Christ worthy of study. The same principle holds throughout the shorter prophetic books, with Zechariah, for example, being valued at “thirty pieces of silver” (Zech. 11:12) in accordance with an earlier spoken prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the Christ (Mt. 27:8-10).

New Testament types of Jesus Christ

This tends to be a neglected subject, but nevertheless the New Testament has many examples of faithful men typifying Christ.¹ Consider the following points about Paul:²

- 1 Both Jesus and Paul were tried before Jew and Gentile (Mt. 26:57-68; 27:11-26; Acts 23:1-10; 24:10-22).
- 2 Both were charged before the Jews with blasphemy and before the Gentiles with sedition (Mk. 14:64; Lk. 23:2; Acts 21:28; 24:5).
- 3 Both Jesus and Paul were struck by officers of the high priest (Jno. 18:22; Acts 23:2).
- 4 Jesus gave thanks and broke bread (Lk. 22:19) and Paul did the same (Acts 27:35). Both Jesus and Paul sought that others should follow their example (Lk. 22:19,20; Acts 27:34).
- 5 “Death hath no more dominion over” Jesus (Rom. 6:9), for, whilst being bruised in the heel, yet he bruised the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 2:14). Paul was unaffected by the bite of a poisonous snake, and, though he was ‘bruised’ in the hand, he was able to destroy it (Acts 28:3-5). In type, Paul was shown as the resurrected and immortal Christ.
- 6 The Gospel records conclude with Jesus Christ ascending to heaven (Lk. 24:51). The Acts of the Apostles concludes with the Apostle Paul taken to Rome, the political ‘heaven’ of the time.
- 7 Jesus wrote to seven ecclesias in Revelation 2 and 3; Paul wrote to seven ecclesias: Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Ephesus, Philippi, Colosse and Thessalonica.

- 8 “The LORD [Yahweh] hath called me from the womb” (Isa. 49:1) clearly has reference to Jesus Christ; Paul speaks of “God, Who separated me from my mother’s womb” (Gal. 1:15).

David and the spiritual mind

There are four records of the lives of Hezekiah and of David, corresponding to the number of Gospel records of Jesus’s ministry. These men are two of the greatest types of Jesus Christ in the Bible. The fourth record of David’s life is contained in the Psalms, which regularly reveal his spiritual mind, and by which we in turn are encouraged to align the thinking of our minds to godly things. Such psalms are particularly instructive in teaching us to pray; and because the sufferings of David are prophecies of the sufferings of Christ, it is in fact the mind of Christ that we are thereby absorbing into ourselves.

Psalm 31 is one of many psalms revealing the minds of both David and Christ when under intense pressure and suffering. Indeed, as Jesus died he cited verse 5: “Into Thine hand I commit my spirit”; and it is quite possible that when he awoke in the tomb he completed the verse: “Thou hast redeemed me, O LORD [Yahweh] God of truth”. With David and Christ, we can confidently say, “But I trusted in thee, O LORD [Yahweh]; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in Thy hand” (vv. 14,15).

Negative types of Jesus Christ

There is also much value in considering those Bible characters who were in a position to be types of Christ yet who failed through lack of faith so to be. Such provide a negative exhortation on how we must *not* conduct ourselves, yet at the same time cause us to magnify in our hearts the enormous contrasting achievement of Jesus Christ.³ As this is not an area which is much explored, a measure of detail follows.

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1. New Testament types of Christ have been subjects of the following *Testimony* articles by the present writer: “Paul—a wonderful type of Christ” (May 1997, Nov. 1997); “Peter’s imprisonment and release in Acts 12—a wonderful type of Christ” (Aug. 1997); “Constantine—a type of Christ” (Feb. 1998).
 2. The two articles cited above contain a total of forty-six points in which Paul was a type of Christ.
 3. The example of Absalom as a negative type of Christ was set forward in my article, “Structural symmetry in the Bible” (Jan. 1998).

Abimelech, who sought equality with God as king

Consider a few points about Abimelech in Judges 9. His name means 'father of the king', and he is the only Israelite king in the book of Judges, which describes twelve other judges. Abimelech was born of a concubine (8:31), but Jesus was born of a virgin. To Christ, Yahweh said, "Ask of Me, and I shall give thee the *heathen* for thine inheritance" (Ps. 2:8), But Abimelech canvassed political support by means of seventy pieces of silver, not to redeem his brethren, but to slay all seventy of them and to make himself king (Judg. 9:1-6). The number seventy relates to the number of the Gentiles nations in Genesis 10, who eventually will be brought into the family of Israel (Gen. 12:3).

Abimelech slew his brothers "upon one stone" (Judg. 9:5), a stone of death, but we have come "unto a living stone" (1 Pet. 2:4). Abimelech instructed his followers to cut down boughs from trees, saying, "What ye have seen me do, make haste, and do as I have done" (Judg. 9:48), to the end that death might ensue to the men of Shechem. Jesus bore his cross (Jno. 19:17), and said to his disciples: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it" (Mt. 16:24,25).

The death of Abimelech refers back to Genesis 3:15 in a most interesting way. In this verse God says to the serpent: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel". Abimelech was identified as the seed of the serpent, not the seed of the woman, when a woman bruised Abimelech's head with an upper millstone (used in Scripture to represent the Word of God from which comes the bread of life): "And a certain woman cast a piece of a millstone upon Abimelech's head, and all to brake his skull" (Judg. 9:53). He was then thrust through with the sword of a young soldier (v. 54).

Jesus bruised the serpent's head—a fatal blow—and in so doing received a bruising of his heel—a non-fatal blow since he was resurrected from the dead. Jesus also was pierced with a soldier's spear (Jno. 19:34), whereby came forth blood and water, resulting in life for his bride, even as an incision was made in Adam's side, when he was in a deep sleep, for the 'building' of his bride (Gen. 2:21,22, mg.).

To consider Abimelech is to consider the opposite of how Jesus displayed that wisdom from above. Further, we learn that in ecclesial affairs we must not exhibit that same carnal mind in, to take an example, canvassing 'political' support to get our way at a business meeting, and as a result "begin to smite [our] fellow servants" (Mt. 24:49). In a word, we have to ask ourselves whether we often behave like Abimelech or like Jesus.

Eli, the priest who sought to be king

1 Samuel 1:9 informs us that "Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD [Yahweh]". The Hebrew word translated here as 'seat' is *kisse*, and it is usually translated 'throne'. His name means 'lofty one' or 'one who ascends', and on his throne he appears not to have been approachable, for Hannah has to offer her own prayer. Further, no provision is made under the Law for priests to sit, they were to stand ministering, but Christ is able to sit down at the right hand of the Father, as Paul explains in Hebrews 10:11,12: "And every priest *standeth* daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down* on the right hand of God".

Eli was not touched with the feeling of Hannah's infirmities (*cf.* Heb. 4:15), and rebuked her as a drunken woman when he saw her lips moving in fervent prayer (1 Sam. 1:13,14). Jesus always knows what is in man (Jno. 2:25), and never makes such mistakes: "For Christ is . . . entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

Eli was capable of *seeing* from his throne Hannah's lips moving, but he only rebuked his sons when he *heard* the people's reports of Hophni and Phinehas's immorality. His honouring of his sons above Yahweh, yet rebuking Hannah, was an exhibition of respect of persons. Of Jesus Christ, Isaiah in the spirit records: "he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: but with righteousness shall he judge the poor . . . and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked" (11:3,4).

The eyes of Eli "began to wax dim, that he could not see" (1 Sam. 3:2), but "the Son of God . . . hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire" (Rev. 2:18), and can say to all ecclesias, "I know thy works . . ." (v. 19). The lamp of God in the

temple went out during Eli's priesthood, but Jesus said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life" (Jno. 8:12).

"Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm [Heb. *zeroa*], and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house" (1 Sam. 2:31). So spoke the man of God to Eli, but Isaiah prophecies: "he shall see his seed [*zera*], he shall prolong his days . . . He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (53:10,11).

Yahweh swore with an oath that the iniquity of Eli's house should not be purged by sacrifice

(1 Sam. 3:14), and so Eli died with a broken neck like an unredeemed ass (Ex. 34:20). Previously God had sworn that the Christ would possess the gate of his enemies (Gen. 22:15-17), and subsequently "the God of peace . . . brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant" (Heb. 13:20).

Types of Jesus Christ, both positive and negative, abound in the pages of Scripture. With the psalmist we should cry: "Open Thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law"; and: "I rejoice at Thy word, as one that findeth great spoil" (Ps. 119:18,162).

"Baptized into Christ"

Trevor Maher

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16).

WHEN JOHN the Baptist came from the wilderness preaching his stern message of coming judgement and the need for repentance, and urging people to "Prepare . . . the way of the Lord" (Mt. 3:3), his preaching was accompanied by the requirement to participate in the act of baptism. This prophet of God, clad in his rough camelhair coat and leather belt, drew vast crowds from Jerusalem, Judea and all the regions round about. Many of these people willingly confessed their sins and were baptized, including some whom Christ was to call as his apostles.

John preached "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" (Mk. 1:4). Now forgiveness of sin is through Christ, so this baptism was a looking forward to the saving work of that one whom John described as "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (Jno. 1:29).

This act of baptism was a new ordinance that John was putting before the people, and it was one that they could only undertake on acceptance of the teachings of John, which contained much of what we term First Principles (see table below).

| The gospel of John the Baptist | | |
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| Mortality of man | "All flesh is grass" | Isaiah 40:6-8 |
| Christ the sacrificial Lamb | "Behold the Lamb of God!" | John 1:36 |
| Jesus as the judge | "He will thoroughly purge his floor" | Luke 3:17 |
| Gift of the Holy Spirit | "Baptize . . . with the Holy Spirit" | Luke 3:16 |
| The Kingdom | "All flesh shall see the salvation of God" | Luke 3:6 |
| Repentance, baptism, remission of sins | "Preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins" | Luke 3:3 |
| New life, discipleship | "Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance" | Luke 3:8 |