

THE STUDY OF THE TYPES

BY

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CHAPTER 14

Typical Characters

THE Bible characters which foreshadowed the Lord JESUS CHRIST are very numerous; but they need to be studied very differently from such types as the Tabernacle, Temple, Offerings, etc. The latter were instituted for the one great purpose of uttering His glory, every detail being of Divine importance; and though we can only suggest the meanings of many smaller particulars which are unexplained, we may be quite certain that they had a typical significance.

It is not so, however, when we take up the characters. They were not perfect men, and therefore they cannot be perfect types.

In chronicling their histories the HOLY SPIRIT has presented them as they were; not hiding their sins, but faithfully giving their portraits. For this reason some feel great reluctance in acknowledging them to be types; but the fact that they are quoted in the New Testament as foreshadowing some truth about the Lord JESUS proves to us that they are intended as such. In many of them there is a double teaching, by contrast as well as by likeness; and their very failings serve to intensify the perfections of the great Antitype.

The first character presented in the Bible prefigures our Lord JESUS CHRIST in several ways; and yet he was the one through whom "**sin entered into the world.**"

In the eighth Psalm David was probably referring to Adam in the first instance. "**Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands**"; but we know that it was also a prophecy of the Lord JESUS CHRIST, for it is quoted thus in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Then again he foreshadows CHRIST as the head of a race; and in I Corinthians 15, Paul compares and contrasts the two. "**For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.**" Death has come upon all the members of the first family because their father died; those who belong to the second live because the Head of their race has been made alive. The first "**all**" includes the whole of mankind - all the descendants of the first Adam; the second, all believers, those who are united to the last Adam.

Later on in the same chapter the two are again contrasted:

"**The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.**" In the former there was life ending in death; in the latter there was death bringing forth life. "**The first man is of the earth earthy; the second man is the Lord from Heaven**" - and thus Paul compares the destiny of their descendants, the character of the life they possess, and their origin.

In another Epistle, as we have seen already, he points out that in his relationship to Eve the first Adam is a type of CHRIST; for in Ephesians 5, quoting from Genesis 2, he adds, "**This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.**"

Many other points might be noticed, especially the contrast between their temptations. Satan in both cases came in to try and spoil GOD's work immediately after He had expressed His approval.

In Genesis, after the creation, GOD had pronounced all "**very good.**"

In the Gospels, at the baptism of the Lord JESUS, He had proclaimed, "**This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.**"

The devil at once appeared on the scene; but how different was the result! The first Adam fell, and "**by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin**"; but the last Adam vanquished His foe: and the latter part of the Psalm which Satan so artfully quoted to Him was really fulfilled, "**Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.**"

In quoting - or rather, misquoting - the preceding verses, "**He shall give His angels charge over Thee,**" Satan did not add those which prophesied his own defeat under the three-fold simile of the lion, the serpent, and the dragon.

In both temptations the object was to make GOD's Word and His goodness to be doubted. To Eve he put the question, "**Yea, hath God said?**" to the Lord he said, "**If Thou be the Son of God**" - though GOD's voice had just been heard from Heaven, saying, "**This is My beloved Son.**"

In the first, the lie was believed; but in the second, it was not listened to for a moment. Thus we see in Adam a Bible character who in some respects is a type of CHRIST, and in others by contrast teaches us precious lessons about Him.

While some only typify Him in certain particulars, there are a few which seem to do so in almost every detail of their lives.

Of these, Joseph, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, David, and Elisha, seem to be the most complete, though the disobedience of Moses, the golden calf of Aaron, and the terrible sin of David, mar the pages of their history.

Three of them, Joseph, Moses, and David, foreshadow both the sufferings and glory of the Lord; and may thus be linked together. Though their circumstances were very different, they all beautifully prefigured the rejected One; while if the three are placed side by side, each adds touches to the picture which are not given by the others.

In Acts 7, Stephen compares the histories of Joseph, Moses, and Israel's Messiah, showing how the two former had been rejected by their brethren, but were afterwards received; but that He

whom they foreshadowed had been betrayed and murdered. His hearers did not allow him to finish his address, or to urge them to own their Deliverer; yet his dying vision was a fitting close to that wonderful summary of history and type, when **"he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into Heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God"** - standing as though to listen for their answer; standing as though ready to return.

Stephen's last words were also prophetic of the day when the Son of Man should be no longer the rejected One.

The thirteen chapters of Genesis which tell us the beautiful story of Joseph's life are full of CHRIST; and as verse after verse gives the familiar Old Testament picture we may compare with them many New Testament passages describing the life and character of the One of whom Joseph is such a marvellous type. See Appendix.

He is loved by his father, clothed by him, and sent forth on an errand to his brethren. By them he is hated and envied; they refuse allegiance, conspire against him, strip him, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. The sorrows, suffering, and shame, through which he passed are depicted in a series of pictures; and the pit, the price of the purchase, Potiphar's house, and the prison, show how Joseph was led, step by step, down the path of humiliation. The pit reminds us of how the Lord cries in the sixty-ninth Psalm, **"I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing . . . Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me."**

The price paid for Joseph when he was sold into slavery was twenty pieces of silver; while the Lord JESUS was betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, the price of a slave (Exodus 21:32). Next Joseph becomes a servant in the house of Potiphar, the captain of the guard; and is like Him of whom we read in Isaiah 49:7, 8, **"Him whom man despiseth; . . . Him whom the nation abhorreth; . . . a servant of rulers."**

There is one more step in his degradation. Falsely accused, he is thrust into the prison, and numbered with the transgressors. He is brought lower and lower; but here the type fails, for though the shame of the Cross is foreshadowed, Joseph did not have to lay down his life. We read in Psalm 105:18, **"Whose feet they hurt with fetters; he was laid in iron"**; but the crucified One cried, **"They pierced My hands and My feet."**

In Genesis 40, we see that, like Him of whom Joseph was a type, **"there were also two other, malefactors,"** with him; and to one he gives a message of life, to the other a message of doom. The one goes from the prison to the king's palace and the king's table; the other is led forth to death. So it was on Calvary **"where they crucified Him, and two other with Him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst."**

To one of these also He gave a message of life: **"To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."** The language of the dying thief was very similar to that of the chief butler when he stood before Pharaoh. The latter said, **"I do remember my faults this day"**; and went on to speak of Joseph. The former said, **"We indeed justly: for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man hath done nothing amiss."**

Joseph makes a threefold request of the chief butler: "**Think on me; .. and show kindness unto me; and make mention of me**": but his request was long forgotten; for we read "**yet did not the chief butler remember Joseph, but forgot him.**"

The Lord asks all those who have received the message of life from Himself to do these three things. Alas! that it should ever be said of Him, as of the poor wise man in Solomon's parable, who "**by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man . . . The poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.**"

Joseph's character throughout is very beautiful. He resists temptation to sin; and those whom he serves recognise that the Lord is with him, that he is blessed and others with him, and that he is to be entirely trusted. "**The Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand**"; like the One of whom it is said, "**The pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.**" That which was put into Joseph's hand was absolutely safe. The experience of the captain of the guard and of the keeper of the prison agreed; and we, too, can say with Paul, "**I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day.**"

Joseph's history does not, however, close in the prison. There is another side to the picture; and Stephen tells us that GOD "**delivered him out of all his afflictions,**" as we read in Psalm 22, "**He hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted.**" Joseph was brought out of the dungeon by Pharaoh, and "**he made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possession**" (Psalm 105:21, marg.).

Here we are reminded of another of Solomon's parable prophecies, of the poor and wise child in Ecclesiastes 4:13-15, who is "**better .. than an old and foolish king . . . For out of prison he cometh to reign: whereas also he that is born in his kingdom becometh poor.**"

The story of Joseph may be compared with Philippians 2, for we see him stripped of his robe, becoming a servant to his brethren, having been made a slave and numbered with the transgressors, and then being exalted and given a name of honour - all being commanded to "**bow the knee**" before him.

In Philippians 2, we are told of the One who voluntarily emptied Himself and "**made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant**"; but the Antitype went far lower than the type: "**He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.**" For this we have no parallel in Joseph's life. The Lord went far below Joseph in His humiliation, and He also rose far above him in His exaltation: "**Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth; And [that] every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ [is] Lord, to the glory of God the Father**".

It was "**the gospel of the glory**" that changed Saul of Tarsus into Paul the Apostle; and it was the glad news that Joseph was yet alive and sitting on the throne that brought Jacob to Goshen.

Almost everything that is said by Pharaoh concerning Joseph is true of One greater than he. **"Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? There is none so discreet and wise as thou art; thou shalt be over my house; and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled."** And to the hungry ones who came for food, Pharaoh said, **"Go unto Joseph; what he saith to you, do."**

Then we may also trace out wonderful foreshadowings in his dealing with his brethren, noting how he told them that GOD had sent him before them to save their lives by a great deliverance; how he gradually led them to confess their sin in their treatment of himself; forgave them, and acknowledged them as his brethren; how in the time of famine he fed them, gave them as much as they could carry, and provision for the way; and when they had obeyed his invitation of **"Come unto me,"** nourished them, telling them to come and live near himself, lest they came to poverty. Reference has already been made to his inexhaustible storehouses, and his treatment of the famine-stricken people who came to buy; and also to the special Jewish application of the story.

We see from Stephen's address that Moses was another deliverer who was a type of the Lord JESUS, both in his rejection and when recognised by the people as their leader.

Whilst Joseph was hated by his brethren, Moses was misunderstood. **"He supposed his brethren would have understood"**; but, like the Lord Himself, **"He came unto His own, and His own received Him not."** They said, **"Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?"** These are almost the very words used by our Lord when one came and said, **"Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me. And He said unto him, Man, who made Me a judge or a divider over you?"**

It may be that He was comparing Himself to Moses. If **"His brethren would have understood,"** He would indeed have been their King and their Ruler; but they refused Him; and if He had consented then to arbitrate between them, He would have been treated as Moses. But we read, **"This Moses, whom they refused, saying, Who made thee a ruler and a judge? the same did God send to be a ruler and a deliverer";** and Peter said, **"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."** Though Israel has not yet acknowledged Him, they will by-and-by say, **"Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord."**

Joseph was taken from his home and his father's love into loneliness, slavery, and captivity; but what was the love he had received from Jacob compared to that of which the Lord spake in John 17. **"Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world"?**

Moses gave up the pleasures and riches of Pharaoh's court, and his high position there; but what was it all, compared with the glory to which our Lord refers, **"the glory which I had with Thee before the world was,"** of which He emptied Himself when He became of no reputation? **"Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor."** The son of Pharaoh's daughter held high rank in the court of Egypt; but what must have been the position of Him whom Jehovah calls **"the Man that is My Fellow,"** who even in His humiliation had but to pray to His Father, and He would at once have given Him **"more than twelve legions of angels"?**

During the time that they were strangers to their brethren, both Joseph and Moses took to themselves brides from a strange people. Asenath and Zipporah have therefore been taken to represent the Church during the present dispensation, espoused while Israel is a stranger to their Deliverer. We see that all through this time of separation the hearts of Joseph and Moses were full of love to their own brethren. The beautiful picture of Joseph's tenderness and love shows how his heart yearned over them; and Moses names his son "**Gershom; for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land.**" He had not forgotten his kindred who were toiling amongst the brick-kilns.

Throughout the whole history of Moses there is much typical teaching. He was full of wisdom, and "**mighty in words and in deeds**"; he was "**very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth,**" till He came who could say "**I am meek and lowly in heart.**"

He worked miracles which were rightly ascribed to "**the finger of God**" (Exodus 8:19; Luke 11:20); and it might have been said of him, "**What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him?**" In both these cases, however, he was only GOD's human instrument; while the Lord JESUS CHRIST manifested His own Divine power.

"**There arose not a prophet since in Israel like unto Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face,**" till GOD raised up the One whom He had promised to send "**like unto Moses**" (Deuteronomy 18:15-19), "**Unto Him ye shall hearken**"; "**Hear ye Him**" (Matthew 17:5).

In Psalm 99:6 Moses is mentioned as a priest, and we know that "**he was king in Jeshurun,**" and shepherd, judge, and leader, of the people; but it is as the intercessor that he so pre-eminently reminds us of the Lord JESUS. When GOD was angry with them, "**Moses, His chosen, stood before Him in the breach, to turn away His wrath**" (Psalm 106:23).

When they were fighting against their enemies he went up to the top of the hill, and sat there as the intercessor: "**And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand Amalek prevailed.**" He tells them in Deuteronomy 5:5, "**I stood between the Lord and you . . . to shew you the word of the Lord**"; and when difficulties arose, he "**brought their cause before the Lord.**"

Thus he prefigured the "**one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus**"; the "**Advocate with the Father**"; the One who "**ever liveth to make intercession**" for us. He indeed stood in the breach when "**He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities.**" When beset by temptation, He prays for His people, that their faith fail not, as He prayed for Peter.

He is Himself the Word; and we have an example of the way in which He presents our cause to His Father in John 17. Not only is Moses a type by comparison, but also by contrast; for as the representative of the law, he is in the New Testament again and again compared with Him by whom grace and truth came.

While Joseph was an exile from home, and Moses from kindred, David represents another aspect; for he was an exile from his throne. Joseph was the deliverer from famine; Moses from

Egypt's bondage; David from the power of the enemy. It would be difficult in comparing this wonderful trio to say which is the most complete type of our Lord.

The first mention of David is in his genealogy at the close of the Book of Ruth, reminding us of the opening of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. His birth at Bethlehem, and the lowly place of submission in the home; then his anointing as GOD's chosen one - like the baptism of the Lord JESUS, when the voice from Heaven proclaimed, "**This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased**" - followed by his encounter with the enemy, all remind us of the Gospel story.

Forty days had the foe been menacing the people when David went forth and overcame him; and the temptation in the wilderness was for forty days. David vanquished the giant with one of his five smooth stones from the brook; the Lord, the champion of His people, conquered the enemy by a threefold quotation from Deuteronomy, one of the five books of Moses. The shepherd's bag or scrip, from which David took the stone, would be used "for carrying materials for healing or binding up lame sheep," or for the shepherd's food; and we also are provided in the Word with healing for sick and wounded sheep, food for the shepherd, and stones for the enemy.

David compared Goliath to the lion that had taken the lamb out of his flock, and had roared against himself; and we see that he was indeed a type of "**our adversary the devil**," who "**as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour**." There are many beautiful thoughts concerning David in I Samuel 18, where we have the description of the poor wise man lightly esteemed, who so wonderfully delivered the people (14, 15, 23, 30; Ecclesiastes 9:15), and whose name was in consequence "**much set by**," or "**precious**."

In the story of Joseph we saw a series of pictures representing various steps in his humiliation and exaltation; in Moses we saw different official relationships; and in David's history we have accounts of various characters who were attracted to his person, and became his friends, mighty men and servants, especially during the waiting time that preceded his coronation as king. Each one seems to give us a different picture of the sinner and his Lord.

First we have the story of Jonathan's devotion. His heart goes out to David on account of the deliverance he has wrought. His soul "**was knit with the soul of David**"; he "**loved him as his own soul**"; "**delighted much**" in him; "**stripped himself**" of his robe, his garments, and his precious sword, the second in the kingdom (I Samuel 13:22), and was content to yield the throne to David, "**that in all things he might have the pre-eminence**."

But David did not only win kings' sons. In the cave of Adullam he made himself captain over any who were willing to come to him - those in distress, in debt, and discontented, were welcomed as they were. He was very different from his predecessor, for "**when Saul saw any strong man, or any valiant man, he took him unto him**"; but in Saul's company they did not become stronger, but "**followed him trembling**."

The followers of David in the cave of Adullam - the audience to whom he addressed the thirty-fourth Psalm - became under his training some of the mighty men who are so beautifully described in I Chronicles 12.

Separated unto David, they became strong, skillful, and swift, devoted to his service and able to

do exploits. The love of his mighty men was such that he had but to express a longing for water from the well of Bethlehem, and three of them at once were willing to hazard their lives to satisfy that desire. It was not a great victory, but it was great love; and, therefore, they were his three mightiest. Our work will be tested, not as to what size it is, but as to **"what sort it is."**

Then there is the account of the Egyptian whom they found in the field. He was in a deplorable condition, sick, starving, and deserted by his old master, the Amalekite, when no longer useful; but brought to David, fed, revived, and saved to serve. The conversation between him and David is most suggestive.

"Though fully restored he was unable to act with David until possessed with the full assurance of life and liberty (Romans 6). The believer needs to know his entire emancipation from the dominion of his old master, the flesh, before ever he can with confidence apply himself to the service of CHRIST."

In Abigail, another of the brides of Scripture, we have a picture of one who recognised the Lord's anointed, even when he was the poor fugitive. Her prayer (I Samuel 25:31), **"When the Lord shall have dealt well with my lord, then remember thine handmaid,"** reminds us of the prayer of the dying thief, **"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."** In the one case the answer was, **"See, I have hearkened to thy voice, and have accepted thy person";** and afterwards, **"David sent and communed with Abigail to take her to him to wife";** while the other received the wonderful answer, **"Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise."**

The story of Mephibosheth is a beautiful illustration of the way in which the poor sinner is received by the Lord. Lame, and helpless; a fugitive in the far country; dwelling in Lodebar, the place of **"no pasture";** hiding from one of whom he has wrong thoughts, and on whom he looks as an enemy - he is at last fetched by David. He comes into his presence expecting the worst; but the gracious greeting, **"Fear not,"** falls upon his ear. He feels himself unfit for the king's presence; but David gives him a place at his table where his lameness is hidden.

All this is but a faint picture of how the Lord **"brings a poor vile sinner into His house of wine";** each one thus brought in is seated at His table, not merely **"as one of the king's sons,"** but having been actually born into the family. **"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: and such we are."** The last mention of Mephibosheth shows that the enmity was all gone, and its place taken by true heart-devotion to David.

Many other of David's servants and friends, such as Ittai and Barzillai, might well be considered; while Joab's history is full of solemn warning. The foremost in the battle, the leader against the foe, the nearest to the king, yet not really true to him, deliberately disobeying his commands and ending his life in rebellion. There could not have been real love to his king, though there was so much activity in his service. All his great victories counted for nothing without this: they were like the wood, hay, and stubble; while the devotion of the three mighty men who fetched the water from Bethlehem's well was like the gold, silver, and precious stones.

When our Lord would speak of Old Testament characters who typified His sufferings and glory, He linked together the two who foreshadowed the deepest depths of sorrow and the greatest

heights of exaltation - Jonah, who said, "**All Thy billows and Thy waves passed over me**"; and Solomon, whose glory attracted the stranger from the far country. He was greater than the prophet in his suffering; greater than the king in his glory; and earlier in the chapter He had proved Himself greater than all the priests, for He was "**greater than the Temple**" itself (Matthew 12:6, 40, 42).

Besides the many who are directly referred to in the New Testament as pointing to Him, there is another class of types from which we may learn many lessons; viz., those who by their offices or occupations speak to us of Him. They may not be mentioned as types; but they clearly foreshadow Him in these various particulars.

Thus we are not distinctly told that Boaz was a type of CHRIST; but in his relationship to Ruth the Moabitess as kinsman and redeemer there is no doubt that he beautifully foreshadows the Lord: and seeing this, the whole Book of Ruth becomes full of typical teaching. It has been pointed out that Boaz is a type in a seven-fold aspect - as the lord of the harvest, the near kinsman, the supplier of wants, the redeemer of the inheritance, the man who gives rest, the wealthy kinsman, and the bridegroom.

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