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his book *Effective Bible Study*.⁴ True, some of his seventeen methods involved more than one approach; however the point is that one may undertake one's devotional study of the text using approaches such as the biographical method, the topical method, the doctrinal method, the inductive method, or the analytical method. No one method is a magical wand that removes the need for using one's mind or for accepting the hard discipline that is needed in all these methods.

In fact, it would be well for readers of Scripture to vary their devotional use of Scripture from time to time. One should never be so bound that there is nor room for freedom of experimentation and enlarging the sphere of one's investigation. The only caution needed is that one should always be careful to let the text first say what it wants to say before we attempt to apply that text into our contemporary situations. It will always be helpful if we use a pen or pencil to pull together what it is that we think we are seeing in the text. A notebook recording our observations will complete the tools required, especially if we are going to draw together the various pieces into some organization that gives us larger overviews of what we are looking at.

Finally, one of the best ways to continually mull over a text is to select one or more verses from the passage we are reflecting on and to commit it to memory. There in the memory it can be stored for further moments of thought and reflection to be called upon for application in the various vicissitudes of life.

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The Use of Typology in Preaching

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In this article the author notes that there is a renewed interest in typology in scholarly circles but little in preaching. He shows that from the early Fathers to today typology has been rightly used and wrongly abused. He charts the difference between Typology and Allegory and suggests four essential characteristics of its right use, ending with a discussion use of typology in selected Psalms.

Editor

No interpretive principle in 20th century preaching has been more neglected than typology. One has to strain the memory to find any mention or example of it from the pulpit today. Reasons for this omission are varied, although one major factor is the deficiency of teaching the method to seminarians. Frankly, most students of the Bible have no idea what typology is, and the way it affects biblical interpretation is mostly ignored. The purpose of this paper is to introduce the reader to typology and to demonstrate its

⁴ Howard Vos, *Effective Bible Study*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956).

importance for the proper exegesis of Scripture. In addition, although the last few decades have seen a significant increase in interest in typology in scholarly circles,¹ that concern has not found its way to the pulpit. We hope to stir some pastoral interest in it. We begin our p. 237 study with a presentation of a definition of typology.

DEFINITION OF TYPOLOGY

The Greek term *tupos* (from the verb *tupto*), from which the word ‘type’ is derived, occurs sixteen times in the New Testament.² It principally signifies an impression left by a thrust or blow.³ That meaning is clearly demonstrated in [John 20:25](#), in which Thomas refuses to believe in the resurrection of Christ ‘unless I see the nail *tupon* (imprints left by a blow) in his hands’. From that central signification, several New Testament usages arise. The word *tupos* is used of statues which are ‘copies’ or ‘patterns’ of gods (see, [Acts 7:43](#)). It is also frequently employed to indicate a believer’s lifestyle as a ‘pattern’ or ‘example’ for another’s (especially see, [Philp. 3:17](#); [1 Thess. 1:7](#)). Finally, *tupos* is used of Old Testament persons, events, or things which prefigure or fore-shadow New Testament persons, events, or things. The judgments on Israel during the wilderness wanderings are typical warnings of what will happen to the Christian if he behaves in like manner ([1 Cor. 10:6–11](#)). *Tupos* maybe either the primary pattern or the secondary image of the pattern, although ‘type’ is normally applied to the pattern and ‘antitype’ to the copy. Thus, Adam is a type of Christ, and Christ is the antitype of Adam.⁴

Based on a study of scriptural usage, a type may be defined as follows: it is ‘a preordained representative relationship which certain persons, events, and institutions bear to corresponding persons, events and institutions occurring at a later time in salvation history’.⁵ In other words, the New Testament writers often see in certain Old Testament persons, events and institutions, prefigurations of New Covenant truths. Thus, the New Testament teaches that Jonah ([Matt. 12:39–41](#)), Adam ([Rom. 5:14](#)), Solomon ([Matt. 12:42](#)), David ([Lk. 6:3–4](#)), and Moses ([Heb. 3](#)) are all types of Jesus Christ. In addition, Jesus is understood as the new tabernacle (see [In. 1:14](#), in which the common translation ‘dwelt’ is literally ‘tabernacled’; cf, also, [Rev. 21:3](#)), the new temple ([Mk. 14:58](#)), and the new manna ([In. 6:32](#)).

During the wilderness wanderings, the people of Israel, because of their rebellious hearts, repeatedly murmur against God and Moses (see, for instance, [Exod. 14:11–12](#);

¹ Recent studies on the subject of typology include E. Earle Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981 reprint); R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London: Inter-Varsity, 1971); L. Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982 reprint); G. W. H. Lampe, ‘Typological Exegesis’, *Theology* 56 (1953): 201–208; G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woolcombe, *Essays on Typology* (London, 1957); and H. A. Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1981). I would like to thank Jessie Bible of Westminster Theological Seminary for reading an earlier draft of this article.

² [John 20:25](#) (2); [Acts 7:43](#); [7:44](#); [23:25](#); [Rom. 5:14](#); [6:17](#); [1 Cor. 10:6](#); [10:11](#); [Philp. 3:17](#); [1 Thess. 1:7](#); [2 Thess. 3:9](#); [1 Tim. 4:12](#); [Heb. 2:7](#); [Heb. 8:5](#); [1 Pet. 5:3](#).

³ Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament*, p. 126.

⁴ The LXX (the Greek translation of the Old Testament from the 3rd–2nd centuries B.C.) understands *tupos* in the same way. It is used, for example, in [Exod. 25:40](#) where God commands Moses to fashion the tabernacle after the ‘pattern’ shown him on Mount Sinai. Clearly, the Lord provided Moses with some type of blueprint or example which was to be copied in the making of the Tent of Meeting.

⁵ Virkler, *Hermeneutics*, p. 184. In reality, the basic thrust of this definition was first presented by Milton S. Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974 reprint), p. 336.

[16:2-3](#); [17:2-3](#)). As a result God sends 'fiery' serpents to bite many of [p. 238](#) the people so they would taste the bitter fruits of their treasonous spirits ([Num. 21:4-9](#)). Eventually, through divine grace, Moses is commanded by Yahweh to set up a pole or standard in the middle of the Israelite camp upon which he was to affix a bronze serpent. Whoever was bitten by a serpent needed only look up to the bronze serpent, and he would be healed.⁶ Jesus teaches in the New Testament that this Old Covenant event is typical of his own death on the cross. He states: 'And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whoever believes may in him have eternal life' ([In. 3:14-15](#)). The points of correspondence between the two events are evident: (1) The raising up of both the serpent and Jesus on a standard; (2) the life given to those who respond to the object raised up.⁷

Another striking example of typology appears in [Matthew 12:39-41](#), when Jesus answers the scribes and the Pharisees who ask him for a sign:

An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign shall be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet; for just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the sea monster, so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall stand up with this generation at the judgment, and shall condemn it because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.

Jesus is here claiming that the Old Testament story of Jonah the prophet is typical of his own work and ministry during New Testament times. The point of the correspondence between the experience of Jonah and that of Christ is the Prophet's three day ordeal inside the fish and his miraculous deliverance. This serves as a prefiguration of the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus. However, the typology consists of even more, as R. T. France explains:

The transition to the preaching of Jonah and the repentance of the Ninevites is not a *non sequitur*: Jonah was a 'sign' to the Ninevites in that he appeared as one delivered from death. It was the knowledge of this which attested his preaching and caused their repentance. The point of the comparison with Jonah lies, therefore, in 'the authorization of the divine messenger by deliverance from death'.⁸ Jesus' preaching, which his hearers are rejecting, will in due course be attested by a still greater deliverance; therefore their condemnation will be the greater.⁹

The trials and temptations of the Israelites in the wilderness and their failures to remain faithful are foreshadowings of the New Testament temptation account of Jesus ([Matt. 4:1-11](#)). Satan's three testings of [p. 239](#) Jesus in the Judean wilderness are specific antitypical references to the three trials which the Israelites underwent in their wilderness wanderings. The first temptation is an appeal to Jesus' physical desires and, specifically, his need for food ([Matt. 4:1-4](#)). Observe that Jesus answers the tempter by quoting [Deuteronomy 8:3](#), a passage Moses had used to warn Israel when she rebelled against God because she lacked food. Jesus, therefore, suffers the same trial as Israel did

⁶ This is an instance of dramatic irony, in which the very image of what punished the people (serpents) is set up to be the channel through which divine grace and healing may flow down.

⁷ See, Mickelsen, *Interpreting the Bible*, p. 237.

⁸ The quote is from Joachim Jeremias, in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. by G.W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: 1964), p. 409.

⁹ France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, pp. 44-45.

in the wilderness; yet, unlike Israel Jesus does not rebel or murmur. Instead, Christ trusts that God will provide food in his own time and own way. In the second temptation, Satan challenges Jesus to throw himself off the temple and thereby be spectacularly saved by God ([Matt. 4:5-7](#)).¹⁰ Jesus replies by quoting [Deuteronomy 6:16](#), a passage Moses had used in reference to Massah where the Israelites put God to the test because they had no water. Again, Jesus is tempted in the same manner as Israel, yet he does not yield to temptation as Israel did. He remains firm. Finally, Satan offers the world's riches if only Jesus would worship him. Jesus responds by quoting Moses in [Deuteronomy 6:13](#), 'You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve'. Moses had spoken these words against Israel's idolatry of the golden calf at Mount Sinai. Jesus is tested with idolatry just as Israel had been, but he does not worship riches or Satan—he remains faithful to the One True God.

The principal teaching of the above type is Jesus' fulfilment of what Israel failed to keep. Whereas Israel rebelled in the wilderness and did not trust in Yahweh, Jesus in his wilderness tribulations remained faithful to God. Jesus is thus able to claim victory over Satan.

Much more typology may be gleaned from the Scriptures. A major problem for the preacher is how to recognize typological references when they occur. But just as important is how to recognize when the principle of typology is not valid for interpretation. Such discrimination is crucial because without it one may be easily led into erroneous exegesis. Danger lurks at every bend. Therefore, the interpreter needs to be armed with clear-cut distinctives of the nature of typology—and that is what we now turn to consider.

CHARACTERISTICS OF A TYPE

Four principal characteristics of a type may be identified.¹¹ First of all, typology must be firmly grounded in history; both the type and the antitype must be actual historical **P. 240** events, persons, or institutions.¹² The historical aspect of typology distinguishes typology from other literary genre, particularly allegory. Whereas typology is historically oriented, allegory teaches that the literal, historical sense of a passage does not exhaust the divinely-purposed meaning of a passage. According to the allegorist, each passage in Scripture has a deeper spiritual and mystical sense than the mere literal, historical meaning.¹³ For example, Herod's massacre of Bethlehem's children, recorded in [Matthew 2:16](#), is allegorized in the following manner: 'The fact that only the children of two years

¹⁰ As an aside, Satan here quotes [Ps. 91:11-12](#) out of context. If one reads the following verse (v. [13](#)), it is apparent that [Ps. 91](#) calls for Satan's (serpent's) own destruction.

¹¹ Frankly speaking, what specific qualities are inherent to a type is a matter of scholarly debate. Few theologians agree on the necessity of each attribute. See, for example, Terry, *Hermeneutics*, p. 338, who argues that an essential aspect of typology is prediction or prophetic revelation. More recent studies, such as France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, pp. 39-40, and D. L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible* (Downers Grove: Inter-varsity, 1976), p. 258, deny that the typology is prophecy in any form.

¹² C. H. Dodd, in 'A problem of Interpretation', *Studiorum Novi Testament; Societas II* (1951): 17, comments: 'The writers of the New Testament, then, by their attitude to the older Scriptures, authorize an historical understanding of them as an indispensable element in their interpretation and application to contemporary situations.'

¹³ Allegory is often understood to say that each passage of Scripture has a four-fold sense: 'The letter shows things done; what you are to believe, the allegoric; what you are to do, the moral; what you are to hope, the anagogic'.

old and under were murdered while those of three presumably escaped is meant to teach us that those who hold the Trinitarian faith will be saved whereas Binitarians and Unitarians will undoubtedly perish.’¹⁴ Such are the speculations which arise from the use of allegory, which is ahistorical, unlike typology.

A *second* essential trait of typology is notable resemblance or similarity in one or more ways between the type and the antitype. The correspondence ‘must be both historical (i.e., a correspondence of situation and event) and theological (i.e., an embodiment of the same principle of God’s working)’.¹⁵ Lack of real correspondence either historically or theologically reduces typology to allegory. Good examples of this reduction are capricious allegorizations found for [Song of Solomon 1:13](#), which says, ‘My beloved to me is a pouch of myrrh which lies all night between my breasts’. Rashi believes the passage really refers to the tabernacle which lies between the two cherubim. No, says Bernard, the crucifixion of Christ is represented here, where Jesus hangs between the two criminals. Cyril disagrees, arguing that the verse clearly alludes to Old and New Testaments with Christ in the middle. In truth, none of these interpretations holds any correlation, either historically or theologically, between the [Song of Songs 1:13](#) and its supposed fulfilment.¹⁶

On the other hand, consider [1 Corinthians 5:7b](#) which demonstrates a real correspondence between a type and an antitype. The verse says, ‘For Christ our Passover also has been sacrificed’. The apostle is here claiming that the Old Testament event of Passover ([Exod. 12](#)) is typical of the New Testament [p. 241](#) event of Christ’s death on the cross. At the Passover event, lamb’s blood was shed and smeared on the doors of the Israelite houses, so that when God came to smite the Egyptians he would pass-by or pass-over the Israelites. The blood of the lamb thus served to cover the Israelites from God’s wrath and fury. The points of resemblance between this Old Testament event and Christ’s death on the cross are clear: (1) the actions of the shed blood of the Paschal lamb and of Christ covered Israel (i.e., the ‘true Israel’) from God’s hand of justice and wrath (historical); (2) the lamb’s blood provided deliverance for both Old Covenant Israel as well as New Covenant Israel (theological). Only when there exists both a historical and a theological correspondence, as in the above example, can typology be identified correctly in Scripture.

A *third* requisite quality of typology is the antitype’s intensification of the type. As L. Goppelt points out, ‘things are to be interpreted typologically only if they are considered to be divinely ordained representations or types of future realities that will be even greater and more complex. If the antitype does not represent a heightening of the type, if it is merely a repetition of the type, then it can be called typology only in certain instances and in a limited way.’¹⁷ Thus, the idea that Jesus’ death is a typological fulfilment of the Exodus passover event is feasible because the salvation Jesus wrought on the cross is much greater and more complete than God’s deliverance of Israel from Egypt. Israel’s redemption from the bondage in Egypt is merely physical and temporary, but the New Testament believer’s redemption from the bondage of sin is physical, spiritual, and eternal.

¹⁴ Lamp and Woolcombe, *Essays on Typology*, pp. 31–32.

¹⁵ France, *Jesus and the Old Testament*, p. 41.

¹⁶ Another example is cited by France: ‘The lack of real historical correspondence reduces typology to allegory, as when the scarlet thread hung in the window by Rahab is taken as a prefiguration of the blood of Christ’ (*Jesus and the Old Testament*, p. 4).

¹⁷ Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, p. 18.

The *fourth* and final necessary feature of typology is ‘there must be evidence that the type was designed and appointed of God to represent the thing typified’.¹⁸ Van Mildert explains it in the following way: ‘It is essential to a type, in the scriptural adaption of the term, that there should be competent evidence of the divine intention in the correspondence between it and the antitype—a matter not to be left to the imagination of the expositor to discover, but resting on some solid proof from Scripture itself.’¹⁹ There is, however, debate among scholars as to what precisely constitutes scriptural evidence of typology. On one extreme are those who agree with Bishop Marsh’s famous view that only those persons, things, or institutions are to be regarded as typical which are specifically designated [p. 242](#) in the New Testament.²⁰ On the other hand are some interpreters (‘hyper-typers’) who see typology on almost every page of Scripture.²¹ The majority of commentators hold to a more moderate view: ‘For a resemblance to be a type there must be some evidence of divine affirmation of the corresponding type and antitype, although such affirmation need not be formally stated’.²²

In summary, the four essential characteristics of a type are: (1) the type and the antitype must be historical persons, events, or institutions; (2) there must be some notable points of correspondence between the type and the antitype; (3) there must be an intensification of the antitype from the type; and, (4) some evidence that the type is ordained by God to foreshadow the antitype must be present. These are unchanging distinctives which provide proper exegetical boundaries in typological interpretation. Without these four features in a passage, the pastor must be aware that typology is not likely present.

DIVISIONS OF TYPOLOGY

Different types or prefigurations in the Bible may be classified according to three major categories, as follows:

1. Types of Persons. In this category, we are primarily concerned with the typological application of Old Testament individuals, particularly as it pertains to Jesus Christ. For example, Solomon as the son of David and a great teacher of wisdom is a type of Christ, who is the greatest teacher of wisdom ever (see, [Matt. 12:42](#)). Adam is also regarded as a type of Christ. ([Rom. 5:19](#)). Jesus is as well foreshadowed by Melchizedek ([Heb. 7:1–17](#)), Jonah ([Matt. 12:39–41](#)), Elisha ([Matt. 14:15–21](#)), Elijah ([Lk. 4:24–27](#)), and Isaiah ([Matt. 13:13](#); [Heb. 2:13](#)). Others in the New Testament are the subjects of typical relations, such as John the Baptist (see, [2 Kings 1:8](#) and

¹⁸ Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, p. 337. Patrick Fairbairn comments regarding this characteristic: ‘It must not be any character, action, or institution occurring in Old Testament Scripture, but such as only had their ordination of God, and were designed by him to foreshadow and prepare for the better things of the Gospel’ (*The Typology of Scripture* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1963 reprint], p. 46).

¹⁹ W. Van Mildert, ‘An Inquiry into the General principles of Scripture Interpretation’, Sermon at the University of Oxford, 1814. Quoted by Terry, *Biblical Hermeneutics*, pp. 337–338.

²⁰ Bishop Marsh, *Lectures on the Criticism and Interpretation of the Bible* (London: 1838), p. 373.

²¹ In this regard, the writings of A. W. Pink should be considered. Although much of Pink’s work with typology is quite good, there are times when he imagines a type that was never meant to be. For example, in his *Life of David* (Swengal, PA: Reiner, 1976 reprint), pp. 216–218, Pink sees portrayed in the actions of the Egyptian slave in [1 Samuel 30:11–15](#) as ‘a beautiful type of a lost sinner saved by Christ’. In reality, there is no indication that typology is at work in this scene. Pink is reading into the text at that point.

²² Virkler, *Hermeneutics: Principles and Processes of Biblical Interpretation*, p. 186.

cf. [Matt. 3:4](#)) and Judas (see, [Acts 1:20](#), in which the traitor is typified by David's enemies in the Psalms).

2. Types of Events. Under this heading are simply Old Testament events that foreshadow or adumbrate New Testament events. Thus, the episode of God bringing Israel out of Egypt in order to bring her to Canaan ([Hos. 11:1](#)) is a type of God calling the youthful Jesus from Egypt to Palestine ([Matt. 2:15](#)). The Passover in [Exodus 12](#), which served to deliver Israel out of bondage, is a foreshadowing of Christ's death that delivers the 'true Israel' out of bondage to sin [p. 243](#) ([1 Cor. 5:7](#)). As already mentioned, the raising of the brazen serpent in [Numbers 21](#) is typical of Christ's death on the cross ([Jn. 3:14-15](#)). The plagues that God hurled against Egypt ([Exod. 7-12](#)) prefigure the plagues God will bring on the wicked in the end-times ([Rev. 8:7-12](#)).
3. Types of Things. This category includes Old Testament offices and institutions that adumbrate later New Testament offices and institutions (especially those foreshadowing the person and work of Jesus). One example is Jesus serving as the eternal high priest ([Heb. 9:11](#)). Another instance is the apostle Peter's identification of the church as the New Israel ([1 Pet. 2:9-10](#)). Regarding the office of prophet, Moses is a type of Christ ([Deut. 18:15](#)).

EXAMPLES OF THE PREACHER: TYPOLOGY IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Examples of typology based upon prefigurations from the Book of Psalms abound in the New Testament. In fact, no book from the Old Testament has been typologically interpreted by the apostolic authors as frequently as the Psalter. We will limit ourselves here to a brief discussion of only a few instances in the Psalms in order to give the reader a mere taste of the richness of the material.

Psalm 2

[Psalm 2](#) is a royal Messianic psalm which appears to celebrate the recent coronation of the Israelite king on Mount Zion. Many nations who have been subjects of Israel see an opportunity to rebel against a new king with little experience. So the nations plan, plot, and devise how to succeed in revolution (v. [1-3](#)). The psalmist warns that such thoughts and actions will come to nought, for it is God who is the true sovereign of Israel; indeed, it is he who installed the king and gave him 'the nations (as) your inheritance' (v. [8](#)). Finally, the countries are exhorted to yield and not to attempt such foolish endeavour. Rather, they should submit to and worship the Holy One of Israel (v. [10-12](#)).

Who is the king that the Lord installs on Mount Zion? And, who are the nations that rebel against his rule? Can the historical context of [Psalm 2](#) be accurately determined? The first thing to take into account is that the Scriptures teach that David authored [Psalm 2](#). Consider the following Lukan account:

Who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say,

**'Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the peoples devise futile things?
The kings of the earth took their stand
And the rulers were gathered together
Against the Lord, and against his Christ'**

(Acts, [4:25-26](#)).

Here the disciples introduce a quote of [Psalm 2](#); [1–2](#) with the straightforward declaration that David had written it. On that basis one might rightly conclude that David is speaking of himself in [Psalm 2](#).

There is no evidence in [Psalm 2](#) that it is primarily prophetic in [p. 244](#) nature. It appears to have been composed by David to speak to a situation in which he was immediately involved. However, there are three major prefigurations or foreshadowings that New Testament authors see in the passage that indicate that [Psalm 2](#) is, in fact, a prophetic, Messianic piece. The first type appears in verses [2–3](#). Here the plotting of the nations is verbalized in which the leaders openly pronounce their intention of revolution. The rulers pointedly declare that they will throw off ‘the bonds’ and ‘the ropes’ that God and his ruler have placed on them. Because the nations are not literally bound with ropes and cords, the leaders are employing a metonymy: for these chiefs the figures of ‘bonds’ and ‘ropers’ represent Israel’s dominion and control over them. The heathen simply desire autonomy.

The New Testament applies the rebellion of [Psalm 2](#) explicitly as a type of the heathen conspiracy against Jesus Christ. After Peter and John are released by the Sanhedrin, the disciples glorify God in the following manner:

And when they heard this, they lifted their voices to God with one accord and said, ‘O Lord, it is thou who didst make the heaven and the earth and the sea, and all that is in them, who by the Holy Spirit, through the mouth of our father David thy servant, didst say,

**Why did the Gentiles rage,
And the people devise futile things?
The kings of the earth took their stand,
And the rulers were gathered together
Against the Lord, and against his Christ.**

For truly in this city there were gathered together against thy holy servant Jesus, whom thou didst anoint, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever thy hand and thy purpose predestined to occur’ ([Acts 4:24–28](#)).

Note that Luke understands the gathering together of the persecutors of Jesus as having been typologically predicted in [Psalm 2](#). In other words, the plotting and revolt of the heathen nations against the Davidic king in [Psalm 2](#) serve as a prefiguration of the scheming of Herod and others to kill the Son of David, the true king of Israel.

A second adumbration is found in v. [7](#), in which the newly consecrated king claims that his kingdom has been established because God has decreed his sonship. The king is the heir of the Holy One of Israel. This sonship is underscored by the Hebrew for ‘I have brought you forth’ (v. [7c](#)). The verb here used (*yalaḏ*) literally means ‘to bear, beget’ and it is often used of parents giving birth to a child (cf., [1 Kings 3:17–18](#)).²³ Therefore, it must be [p. 245](#) realized that when nations revolt against the king of Israel, they are really rebelling against the son of the living God and, indeed, against God himself.²⁴

²³ Some authors, such as Paul Gilchrist (see *yalaḏ* in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, eds. R. D. Harris, G. L. Archer, and B. K. Waltke [Chicago: Moody, 1980 pp. 278–279], argue that an actual father/son relationship is not being represented in [Psalm 2](#). Rather, they say that the verbal form of the word in [Psalm 2](#) (Qal) represents a more generalized relationship than father to son. Such a contention is unconvincing, since many occurrences of *yalaḏ* in the Qal stem depicts a parent/child relationship. See, for instance, [Gen. 4:18](#) (*yalaḏ* used three times in the Qal); [Gen. 4:2](#), [2 Kings 19:3](#).

²⁴ H. K. LaRondelle makes an interesting remark: ‘Such solemn words are known from extra-biblical sources—e.g., the code of Hammurabi (192)—as the ancient adoption formula in courts of justice. They

The New Testament authors understand this verse to be typological of the glorious resurrection of Christ Jesus. In the Book of Acts, Luke records the sermon of the apostle Paul which makes the typological connection: 'And we preach to you the good news of the promise made to the fathers, as it is also written in the second Psalm. "Thou art my Son; today I have begotten thee" ' ([Acts 13:32-33](#)). The typological correspondence between the Davidic king ascending the throne and the resurrection of Christ are clear: both events mark the time when God's chosen heir takes the throne and receives the inheritance. Further supporting passages for this foreshadowing can be seen in [Romans 1:14-4](#), [Hebrews 1:5](#) and [5:5](#).

Verse [9](#) is also a prefiguration of the work of the coming Messiah. The Davidic king is told by God that he will rule rebel nations with an iron rod and smash them as a piece of pottery breaks. The first colon is a synecdoche that symbolizes an ironfisted discipline that the king will have over the nations. The second line is a simile. As a piece of pottery or earthenware breaks easily when dropped or hit, so the nations will be pulverized by the king of Israel. The Davidic king is able to rule over and destroy his enemies because he is God's appointed son, heir, and king.

The apostle John employs [Psalm 2:9](#) as a type in the Book of Revelation. It is used in reference to the work of Christ.

And he is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; And his name is called the Word of God, and the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following him on white horses. And from his mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it he may smite the nations; and he will rule them with a rod of iron; and he treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty ([Rev. 19:13-15](#)).

Jesus Christ will rule over and destroy the nations in the same way that the Davidic king in [Psalm 2](#) was commanded to smash the nations. Yet how much greater is Christ's victory! Whereas the Davidic king will merely shatter the rebellious nations immediately threatening Israel, Christ will conquer Satan and the wicked nations who follow him.

[Psalm 2:9](#) is further manifested in the Book of Revelation as a typological promise to all believers in Christ Jesus. What God pledges to the Davidic king in [Psalm 2:9](#) is pledged to us as believers. Jesus proclaims:

Nevertheless what you have, hold fast until I come and he who overcomes, and he who keeps my deeds until the end, to him i will give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I p. 246 also have received authority from my Father' ([Rev. 2:25-27](#)).

Christ will share his rule with Christians, as the Father shared it with him. Thus, [Psalm 2:9](#) is typical of or prefigures our future rule over the heathen nations.

Psalm 41

The superscription of [Psalm 41](#) ascribes it to David. It is the distressful cry of the shepherd/king to God because his enemies slander him (v. [5](#)), speak lies behind his back (v. [6-7a](#)), and plot his physical destruction (v. [7b-8](#)). Even the psalmist's 'close friend' (literally 'man of my peace, my welfare, my friendship') has 'lifted up his heel'²⁵ against

were pronounced on the occasion someone legally adopted a child as his own son'. See his *Deliverance in the Psalms*. (Berrien Springs, MI: First Impressions, 1983), p. 55.

²⁵ The metaphor 'lifting the heel' has been variously interpreted by modern scholars. Some suggest that it is a metaphor often used of a horse lifting up a hoof preparatory of kicking (thus demonstrating disdain to the recipient). Others, such as R. E. Brown (p. 554), believe that to show the bottom of one's foot in the Near East is a special mark of signification of contempt. There really is no biblical evidence to support either

him (v. 9). This very person ‘who ate bread’ at David’s table, a sign of close fellowship, now has only contempt for him. Because the psalmist has been estranged from all those around him and is in great danger, he seeks God’s intercession, protection, and justice.

The betrayal scene pictured in [Psalm 41:9](#) is designated in the New Testament as typical of an episode in Christ’s life. At the Last Supper the apostle John reports Jesus’ washing of the disciples’ feet ([Jn. 13:5–11](#)). After concluding the actual cleansing, Jesus explains the act to the disciples that it represents the servantlike attitude they should have for one another. Then John records a caveat of the Saviour: ‘I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, he who eats my bread has lifted up his heel against me’ (v. 8). Clearly, Jesus sees in [Psalm 41](#) a prefiguration of his betrayal at the hands of his close friend and disciple Judas.

If one merely read [Psalm 41](#) without knowing the New Testament there would be no indication of direct verbal prophecy that would later be fulfilled by the coming One. [Psalm 41](#) simply sets out a pattern that is later repeated in the life of Christ. The two episodes have direct correspondences: (1) David and the Master are both suffering persecution at the hands of enemies; (2) they are, as well, sustaining unnatural treachery from a close friend (one who eats at the table with them). David’s tribulation is also a type of the Holy One because the latter’s suffering was to be so much greater and more meaningful.

Psalm 118

[Psalm 118](#) has no superscription to indicate its authorship. It is generally understood as a Thanksgiving Hymn of the nation of Israel, one which is expressed by the king or the nation [p. 247](#) itself.²⁶ The psalm describes a stressful situation in which Israel is surrounded and afflicted by her enemies (v. 10). She calls on the name of the Lord, and is then delivered by his mighty hand (v. 13–14). The climax of Israel’s deliverance is stated in verses [22–23](#): ‘The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. This is the Lord’s doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.’ The first part of the passage (v. 22) is a hypocatastasis, in which the word ‘stone’ is a figure representing the nation of Israel. The meaning of the hypocatastasis is clear: Israel has been rejected by all the nations of the earth, yet God has seen fit to establish her as the ‘cornerstone’ of the building of his kingdom on earth.

The New Testament writers view Israel in [Psalm 118:22–23](#) as a foreshadowing of Christ Jesus (see, [Matt. 21:42](#); [Mk. 12:10–11](#); [Lk. 20:17](#); [Eph. 2:20](#); and [1 Pet. 2:7](#)). Thus, for example, Peter’s sermon to the Jews in [Acts 4](#) quotes [Psalm 118](#) in reference to Christ saying, ‘He is the stone which was rejected by you, the builders, but which became the very corner stone’ (v. 11). The correspondence between Israel and Jesus is plain: (1) they are both rejected and despised; and (2) they are both foundational to the establishment of God’s kingdom on earth. How much greater is the antitype, however, because he has secured the eternal, imperishable kingdom!

Both direct verbal prophecy and typology are prophetic in nature, but they convey prophecy by different and distinct means. In other words, they differ in form but not in essence. This is true because the New Testament authors do not distinguish between the two but acknowledge the prophetic nature of both methods. It would be worthwhile for

contention. The meaning of ‘lifting the heel’ is best interpreted when the use of the noun heel (*aqeb*) is investigated in Scripture. It is derived from the word *aqab*, which means ‘to trip, to take by the heel, to supplant’ ([Gen. 27:36](#); [Jer. 9:4](#)). The metaphor ‘lifting the heel’ probably reflects the verbal meaning, the idea being that David’s adversary is exerting himself to trip David and throw him to the ground (in a symbolic sort of way).

²⁶ R. T. France, *op. cit.*, p. 56, and C. A. Briggs, *op. cit.*, p. 402ff.

the reader to consider the following two passages—[Matthew 1:22–23](#) and [Matthew 2:15](#). The first is directed verbal prophecy and the second is typology, but they are both treated equally by the inspired writer.

IMPORTANCE OF TYPOLOGY IN PREACHING

There are two principal reasons for the absence of typology in preaching today. The first is easily identified as the basic ignorance of the modern church regarding typology.²⁷ Frankly, not only are the laymen at a loss in this respect, but most pastors are typologically illiterate. Ultimately, I suppose the problem lies at the thresholds of seminaries and faculty who refuse to or cannot teach such basics of proper biblical interpretation. How many seminary preaching classes teach the integration of typology into sermon preparation?

The second reason is that many [p. 248](#) church leaders do not see the importance of typology in preaching. They may understand the concept, but they are probably unaware of its application and the message it sends in one's preaching. So, why is it important to preach typology? Why bother making such connections of pattern between the testaments to a modern church audience?

First of all, and most importantly, typology underscores the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. It teaches that the Lord has sovereignly planned history with a unified purpose so that what God has done in the past becomes the measure of the future. He has simply designed history in such a way that certain patterns repeat themselves. In other words, God has directed history so that foreshadowings occur. And, since God has designed history that way, the biblical expositor has an obligation to search the Scriptures diligently to uncover typology. Furthermore, he has a duty to share that material with a congregation because *it reflects God's plan of history*.

Secondly, recognition of typology affirms the doctrine of the immutability of God. Typology demonstrates that God is unchanging. Thus, in the revelation of the Old Testament God is portrayed as unchanging ([1 Sam. 15:29](#)); when he is further revealed in the New Testament he is the same and unchanging. Certainly more is revealed and intensified, but it is the same immutable Creator. The typological patterns show that the way God dealt with people in the past is the way he will deal with them now and in the future. The Christian congregation can take great solace in those patterns because God will treat his people today in a similar fashion. It is incumbent upon the pastor to point out these eternal truths to his flock.

Thirdly, the principles of typology reflect the unity of Scripture. Many congregations view the Scriptures as fragmented because they have difficulty seeing how one section of the Bible relates to another. How do the poetic books relate to the gospels? Is there any association between the apocalyptic vision of John's Revelation and the Pentateuch of Moses? Such questions can be answered in the affirmative because the biblical system of typology provides homogeneity between the testaments. From every section of the Old Testament patterns are set which are later repeated and fulfilled in the New Testament.

Finally, typology adds depth and richness to the preaching message. It reveals material rarely studied or seen before, and it helps to make the Scriptures come to life. For example, the typological implication of [2 Kings 4:42–44](#) on the message of the Feeding of

²⁷ In this regard, the church has changed dramatically over the centuries. During the days of the Puritan divine Jonathan Edwards (18th century) it is difficult to find a sermon without at least one typological reference. Edwards himself was a serious student of typology. See his 'Types of the Messiah', *The Works of Jonathan Edwards II* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974), pp. 642–675.

the Five Thousand in [Matthew 14:14–121](#) or [John 6:5–14](#) are quite profound. Note the following correspondences between [2 Kings 4](#) and the gospels:

1. In each case there is a crowd of hungry people;
2. A few loaves of barley bread are the principal part of the meal ([Jn. 6:9](#));
3. Both Elisha and Jesus say, 'give them that they may eat'; [p. 249](#)
4. In each case an objection is made by the servants ([Jn. 6:9](#));
5. Finally, in both instances a surplus remained after the people had eaten.

On that basis, it is clear that Jesus' feeding of the multitudes was patterned after or modelled upon Elisha's miraculous feeding of his audience. To Jesus' listeners the point of the correspondences was also evident: before them was a mighty prophet of the Lord much in the same vein as Elisha. The task of Jesus was like that of Elisha who brought physical and spiritual sustenance to a famine-ravished land.

Understanding and recognition of typology is absolutely essential for biblical preaching. We shun it in the pulpit only at the risk of not declaring the great bounty and fertility of God's holy and inspired word to our congregations. Rather, we should be like Paul when he said that he 'did not shrink from proclaiming the whole counsel of God' ([Acts 20:27](#)).

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Preaching from the *Song of Songs*. Allegory Revisited

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Traditionally, the Song of Songs has been interpreted as an allegory of the soul's longing for God. The author of this article draws attention to modern interpretations which take a more literal view of the Song as a love story that is explicitly sexual. While extolling the joys of physical love, the Songs point to the pain and loss of certainty. He argues that the Songs point to the eternal and to the covenant relationship of God with his people—an erotic equivalent!
Editor

INTRODUCTION: VARIETIES OF INTERPRETATION OF THE SONG OF SONGS