

Definitions

A **parable** is a "thrown aside" (Greek parabola) story of a spiritual truth. The point of a parable is to clarify spiritual principles by revealing a parallel in real life that runs "parallel" to this spiritual principle. A **type** is two situations separated by time, with the antitype being closer in time, and the more distant is the type. A type introduces us to concepts in antiquity and helps to clarify the closer points of teaching. It is identified by its time element. A **symbol** is a relation between two things (A "is like" B), which is a representation or element in a thing that is similar the one in the other, without introducing an element of time. For example, "*the Holy Spirit is like a dove*" is a symbol. The difficulty in interpreting a symbol is that any object can have several elements, and identifying what is that similar point between the two is very difficult. A **prophecy** is a pre-recorded account of events and subsequent events. The point of a prophecy is to predict, then over imposes a spiritual element (usually the idea of judgment, or prize for the faithful) to events and events.

Why use types and anti-types

Actually, this literary figure is simply a way of introducing topics, so as to convey understanding and provide original concepts. I say "provide original concepts" because the purpose of God in relating two things, something in the present (when the antitype was identified by the biblical author) and its type in the past, that is using forms, figures, persons, and events that we know in the Old Testament so as to explain and clarify the New Testament concepts. (Also within the Old Testament framework, between prophets and events involving them, are these types such as the Exodus and Israel's rescue from Babylonia **Isa 11:11-12, 15-16; 43:16-21; 48:20-21; 51:9-11; Jer 16:14-15**). The explication then is no foreign, nor strange, nor hidden from the believer because these events and elements are well known to those who study Scripture. It is as when God mentions Melchisedec with Jesus in Hebrews 7, the idea of this type is to

demonstrate the validity of a priest without relationship to Aaron and the Levites. The use of the Melchisedec priesthood and Abraham is to demonstrate honor and giving tithes (to Melchisedec) is to establish validity that God has designated whom he wants to be priest before him. For the Jew in the NT, perhaps this strange concept perhaps he would completely reject it, but seeing it in Abraham's life, he would have to accept it. The majority of the types have something to do with Christ or with the salvation, and the prophets and apostles saw and used many OT examples that were directly related with Christ and the salvation.

The Definition of a Type

A type is an event in the past that has importance in the future because it carried a shadow or element parallel to something future. We know absolutely that something is a type when God makes the connection between the two things, that they are parallel, and that there is an element of time between them. In this time element, the type is very near being a **prophecy**, but the difference is that a prophecy is to clearly pre-declare something so that when it comes to pass (for good or evil), that God assigns his powerful hand as having done the thing. The second part is a complement or fulfillment of the prophecy, without need of explanations. The type is rarely realized without the type-antitype relationship being defined.

It is important to realize that types take OT elements and uses them to explain NT teaching clearly. This is not to say that all the details between the two parallels are equal or are necessarily important, but rather the type is a small preview of what is coming. The first part (the OT shadow) does not have clarity of the NT teaching, but is a clarification of the OT element (the antitype). We can see these events from the NT perspective with little explanation. The reality (the antitype) is just clearer than its shadow (the type).

	1st Part	Time	2nd Part
Type	Shadow	Yes	AntiType
Example <i>Melchisedec as Jesus the Priest</i>			
Prophecy	Clear	Yes	Fulfilled
Example the Captivity of Israel -> Babylon			
Symbol	The Spiritual	Immediately	Worldly
Example The Holy Spirit as a dove			

The Error of Alegorism

In the middle ages, many Christians used the allegorical method to interpret the Bible. In this method, instead of taking an OT figure as a shadow of the New, they essentially equated the OT and NT as the same. So they tried to read back into the NT Gospel writers as types of the OT prophets. They presumed that the elements of NT persons were the same elements as the OT. The error in this is that they imposed their own ideas on Scripture, and they made their own ideas equally inspired (in their own minds) as Scripture.

How do we interpret a type?

We remember that the clearness of Scripture can never be exchanged for speculations. What you can take from a type cannot cancel or change other clear declarations from Scripture made in other places.

A type is only a single focal point on a divine principle, and everything revolves around these divine principles, but there are usually more than one point of teaching on the principle, so the type illustrates but doesn't contain everything there is on the principle. Jesus Christ is a high priest like Melchisedec, and his designation as such before God is the same form (declared to be directly from God without being related to Aaron). It is important to understand that not all of the details of an event in the Old Testament can be applied or used in the correspondence. The bronze serpent was a representation of the serpent, that animal

associated with Satan. But Jesus was not associated with Satan in the same.

Some Perspectives on Types

Following the Reformation, three positions were established on types: Johannes Cocceius (1603-1669) saw any event or person in the O.T. as a valid type, almost coming to an allegorical position. John March (1757-1839) maintained that the only valid types were those expressly declared in the New Testament. Patrick Fairbairn (1805-1874) took the médium position between the two, say that there existed many correspondences between the NT and the OT beyond what was expressly declared.

Basically the liberals today throw out all types, and those that accept the interpretation of the historical-grammatical methodology see that there are many correspondences that exist but are not declared to be types in the NT. Even so it is admitted to be very difficult to clarify these undeclared types (even though they may exist). It is better to see teaching by types as a valid form of teaching. And it is better to not enter into speculation seeking to find a double meaning on everything. The authors of the NT saw the parallels between their time and the history of the OT. Equally Jesus had many experiences similar in form to people in the OT.

Examples of Types and Anti-Types

The Word "type" in the NT: Jn. 20:25; Acts. 7:43, 44; 23:25; Ro. 5:14; 6:17; 1Co. 10:6, 11; Phil. 3:17; 1The. 1:7; 2Ts. 3:9; 1Ti. 4:12; Tit. 2:7; Heb. 8:5; 1Pet. 5:3

People

- **The Bronze Serpent** Num 21:9 = Christ in the cross Jn 3:14.
- **Melchisedec** and Cristo Heb 10:11-17.
- **Adam** and Christ – First and Representative of the race Rom 5:14.
- **Aaron** and Christ as high priest Heb 5:4-5.
- **David** and Christ as the anointed King of God but not recognized by his people Israel.
- **Esther** and Christ as who rescued their people even though God was not very active.

- **Elisha and Christ** who raised the dead and feed the hungry.
- **Jonah three days and three nights in the fish's belly** and Christ in the tomb Mat 12:40.
- **Noah and the flood** and baptism 1Pe 3:20-21.
- **Israel leaving Egypt** and Jesus leaving Egypt as a child Mat 2:15; Hosea 11:1.
- **Sacrifice and killing** and Christ Heb 9:13, 19-22.
- **Israel in the desert** as a figure of the Christian life 1Co 10:1-6.
- **Hagar and Sarah** as illustrations of slavery under the OT and freedom under the NT Gal 4:21-31.

Events

- **Easter** Exo. 12 = Christ our Passover 1Co 5:7; Jn 1:29; Exo 12:3.
- **Sacrifice of Jesus** and the OT sacrifice 1Co 5:7.
- **Feast of unleaven bread** and the holy life of the believer 1Co 5:7-8.
- **Day of Atonement** and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross Heb 9:19-28; 10:1-14; Lev 5:16.

Institutions

- **Sabbath** and the Christian day of rest Col 2:17; Heb 4:3, 9, 11.

Things and Objects

- **The Tabernacle was a type of Christ** – access to God, communion between the believer and God Heb 8:2, 5; 9:23-24.
- **The Burnt Sacrifice** as a type of Christ offering himself for sin Lev 1; Heb 10:5-7.
- **The Bronze Serpent** is a type of the death of Christ on the Cross Jn 3:14.

Interpreting Bible Types

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Rom 5:14 *Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned **after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.***

Col 2:17 ***Which are a shadow of things to come...***

In the Bible, God used what is called types. Each **type** is a shadow of what was its antecedent, the **antitype**. The antitype is a reality in nearer time, and which casts a shadow backwards in time into the OT. The shadow (the type) is what is not seen so clearly, and the antitype is something known and more clearly seen. Not everything people say is really a type, but God himself makes these comparisons, "A is like B".

The type has to be defined by the Bible to absolutely declared a type without any discussion. Types are based in God controlling the past as well as the future and present. He sets the parallels. God uses these to teach us more clearly the truth.