

TYPOLOGY IN THE BIBLE

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The Bible is full of signs and patterns of things which are and will be fulfilled.

The Bible teaches that events that happened in the past are actually foreshadowing events that would happen afterwards. These things are called “types”. The interpretation of Bible types is called “typology”. This area of study and interpretation is based on the Scripture, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4).

Events that happened in the Old Testament have a whole other meaning in them. One well known example is the Passover lamb as being a type of Jesus’ death. Other examples include Abraham, “For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. ... Which things are an allegory” (Galatians 4:22, 24a) or Moses and the Israelites, “Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. ... Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.” (1 Corinthians 10:6, 11).

On these principles, it is possible to understand how there is great hope for Christians today. Even though there is a famine of the Word of God, as Amos prophesied, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD” (Amos 8:11), there must also be an ending of this famine, and supply for believers. Typologies of this include Joseph and his brothers in Egypt, who were blessed in a famine, and were very rich (see Genesis chapters 41–50), and also of Elijah and the woman of Zerephath (see 1 Kings 17).

Again, it can be understood that even if the Church seems to be worn down and in captivity to wickedness, as Daniel prophesied, “And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people.” (Daniel 8:24); nevertheless, God has His due season of saving and recompensing His people. Consider Gideon, whom God raised up to defeat the oppressors (see Judges 6–8), and also of Jehosaphat’s deliverance and prosperity (see 2 Chronicles 20) and also Hezekiah’s blessing, because of his trust in God’s Word (see Isaiah chapters 36–39).

Christians should not be surprised if they see things in their own lives in the light of Bible types. Christians should also believe that God’s workings at present and in the future are in line with the patterns that He has laid down in His Word. As the key Scripture states, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4).