

## Type and Antitype

Exodus 12:1-14 (ESV)

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God the Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us pray:

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer. Amen.

When the Christ appeared, much had been said about him. The Scriptures are overflowing with specific prophecies and predictions concerning who he was to be and what he was to do. Yet, these prophecies were shown in more than just spoken words from the prophets; they were also shown by the salvific actions of God. How God rescued his people in the Old Testament serves as a prophecy of how God would save the whole world through his Christ. So, we can observe and analyze God's amazing works and wonders throughout the whole Old Testament, and see how they better reveal the amazing works and wonders of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The New Testament speaks of this as a type and an antitype. The type is the event or person in the Scriptures which reveals certain things about what the future Christ will do. The antitype is the fulfillment, the fullness, of what was shown before.

We can think of this type and antitype as the difference we observe between an engagement and a marriage. When you become engaged, you have given a promise of a future reality. You have marked a special relationship between you and yours. This one is special and now you have an even more intimate relationship because you hope to soon become married. Yet, the engagement is not marriage. The marriage is the fullness of what the engagement offered. Marriage is the true one-flesh union, whereas the engagement is the promise. So, engagement is the type, the thing that points to the antitype. The antitype is marriage. Today, as we continue our journey through Holy Week, as we are reminded of the work of Jesus through every moment in his last days before the cross and empty tomb, we see many fulfillments in the work of Jesus. We see many things which were shown beforehand by the prophecies of God, through both words and actions. A thorough study of the Scriptures will show that God had placed before his people a type through his salvation of the Passover and the sacred feast which followed as a commemoration. The slaying of the lamb, the sign of the blood, the rescue from death, all these were pointing to show greater things which were to come. The antitype, or fulfillment, is in our Lord's sacred meal, the Lord's Supper. What God did before will help us to treasure and rejoice over what God does now. Seeing this connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper,

**LET US CELEBRATE REGULARLY THE FEAST OF OUR REDEMPTION.**

The Lord began his mighty wonder and magnificent power by instituting a meal. God had just warned Pharaoh and all of Egypt concerning their impending doom: the death of all their firstborn males. He proclaimed his judgment and warned of the coming destruction. Then, he tells the Israelites to celebrate. One follows immediately after the other. God has spoken many times before about how he would rescue his people from Egypt and bring them to the promised land. Yet, he had veiled the details; he had not explained how he was to do this. Now, he has explained. “There will be death for the Egyptians, but you Israelites will celebrate by slaughtering and eating a lamb.”

The Lord had very specific details concerning this celebration. The Israelites were to select a lamb four days ahead of time. They were to slaughter it at twilight. This lamb had to be a pristine lamb: one year old and unblemished. The lamb had two uses: one for the blood, the other for the meal. God first describes the meal: roasted lamb with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. The Israelites were to eat this lamb as a family (or multiple families if they did not have enough people for a whole lamb). They were to eat it in a peculiar way: sandals on foot, staff in hand, ready to leave. They were not to leave any lamb leftover, but were supposed to burn the remains.

God had still to give the “why” of this whole celebration. He detailed for the whole assembly of Israel what they were to do, but he still hadn’t told them the reason. Finally he tells Moses and Aaron, **“It is the Lord’s Passover. For I will pass through the land of Egypt that night, and I will strike all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and on all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgments: I am the Lord. The blood shall be a sign for you, on the houses where you are. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague will befall you to destroy you, when I strike the land of Egypt.”** God connects the dots for them. “Here is how I am showing my judgment on the Egyptians: I will kill all their firstborns. Yet, here is the purpose of the lambs: the blood which was spilt will be a sign. It is a sign for you Israelites that you will be safe from death. It will be a sign for me to pass over this house.”

So, God had finally explained why the Israelites would be celebrating with a feast. God was going to bring his judgment, but he would provide a means of escape for his beloved. On top of this, the Israelites would get to share in enjoying the sacrifice which saved their life. The very lamb whose blood would mean their safety, they enjoyed as a solemn and holy meal for all their family. Behold how God weaves all this together for his people. And this meal was not meant to be a one-off event. No, it was a yearly memorial.

The Lord lastly commanded Moses, **“This day shall be for you a memorial day, and you shall keep it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations, as a statute forever, you shall keep it as a feast.”** This feast was for every one of their generations. Each generation would tell the next one about the Lord’s amazing and mighty actions on behalf of his people. Each generation would hand off this sacred meal. In this very feast the people of Israel would find a connection to that day when the Lord saved his people. Even if someone, hundreds of years later, didn’t get to experience that special night when the Destroyer passed over each Israelite house with the lamb blood on its doorposts, he would experience it by partaking of this Passover meal.

If we observe and carefully meditate on how our Lord Jesus instituted his Supper, we can see how much more marvelous and wonderful his meal is compared to God’s actions of old. The Lord Jesus predicted his impending death; he spoke of the coming judgment. This judgment was not only on the people of Egypt, as with the Passover. The judgment which Jesus spoke of concerned the whole world. Jesus warned that he would have to be handed over to the scribes, the elders, and to the rulers in authority. He would have to face shame, mockery, physical beatings, and even death on the cross. All this he would face as a punishment for the whole world. All this he took on as a redemption, a buying back, what everyone owed. Jesus warned of these things, even when no one quite understood his prophecy.

Our Lord’s salvation became clearer when he instituted his meal. Yet, like the first time God gave the meal at the Passover, the Lord instituted this festival before God’s people had seen the salvation. Jesus said, “Do this in remembrance of me,” even though the disciples had not seen yet what he was about to accomplish on the cross. Yet it was a special and meaningful meal which our Lord instituted. Just as much symbolism and ceremony belonged to the Lord’s Supper as it did to the festival of Passover. Where the Israelites had the specific meal plan, eaten in a specific order and manner, so did our Lord Jesus prescribe. Jesus gave orders to prepare this meal as he had: with the elements which he gave the disciples (bread and wine), with the words he blessed (“Take, eat. This is my body...Take, drink. This is my blood”), with the correct company (his disciples). All this shows the special solemnity and care with which the Lord Jesus wanted his disciples to carry. Jesus means for his disciples to treasure and cherish his meal just as much as the Israelites were to treasure the Lord’s Passover meal.

The redemption which the Lord Jesus was about to accomplish dwarfs the redemption he showed to the Israelites. It was impressive how God defeated Pharaoh and the Egyptians (and all their false gods) by killing the firstborn and parting the Red Sea. Yet, the victory which Jesus was about to accomplish is much greater. More than saving a small people from a large, tyrannical kingdom is saving all people from the tyranny of sin, death, and the devil. By his blood shed on the wooden posts of the cross, he made God pass over all mankind with his wrath. Instead of mere lamb's blood which draped the Israelites' entrances, the blood of the lamb of God now is given to drape over all human hearts. And this blood which was shed is not just animal blood (or man's blood); it is the blood of God.

Even as intimate as the Passover meal was meant to be, as the Israelites ate of the lamb whose blood had marked their doors, as they tasted the Lord's salvation, so much more intimate is the Lord Jesus' meal. For now you can taste more than just a lamb; you taste the lamb of God. Through his meal, the Lord lets you eat the very instrument of the world's salvation. You can taste on your tongue the victory of your God. And this meal brings you into unity with the salvation in a more special way. Although the Israelites were unified with their source of salvation by eating of the lamb, they were not as close as you are with your salvation. For, you indeed become one flesh with the Savior of mankind. By partaking of this body and blood of Jesus you are a part of the body of Christ. You are members of the one true God-man who redeemed all people so that all might live in him. That is an intimate connection.

Lastly, the Lord Jesus made his meal a memorial and remembrance just as the Passover was meant for the Israelites. It is a celebration meant for every Lord's day, for every day remembering the Lord's resurrection and victory over his enemies. The Lord's Supper is meant as a nourishment and a regular food for the Christian's soul; just as food and drink is necessary for the Christian's body. Each successive generation of the children of Israel had a special bond everytime they celebrated the Passover; this was the event that marked them as God's people. Yet, with the Lord's Supper you receive more than the bond of a special memory. This meal transcends time and space so that the whole body of Christ may always partake and receive the body and blood of Christ for their benefit. You do not have to go back in time to receive the benefits of Christ's victory for you; it is brought to you right here, right now.

Looking back at this story of God's salvation for his people, looking back at the Passover event and meal, looking back at his mighty and wonderful acts of old, it helps to fill out our Lord Jesus' work. It gives a vivid imagery for us to enjoy and meditate upon the amazing actions of Jesus. Yes, engagement is not the same as marriage. And when you're married, you don't long for that previous time when you were engaged; you have the fullness now. You don't long for the type when you have the antitype. But, you can learn from, and remember with fondness, that time where you experienced something special as you awaited the fullness when you were engaged waiting to be married. In the same way we can treasure the Lord's work in his Passover as he pointed us to its fullness in the cross and in his Supper. Permit me to end this sermon with the words of Dr. Martin Luther because I think he makes this connection between the Passover and the Lord's Supper in a most beautiful manner. Here is stanza five of his Easter Hymn, "Christ Jesus Lay in Death's Strong Bands", which we will sing with joy this Sunday morning:

Here our true Paschal Lamb we see,  
Whom God so freely gave us;  
He died on the accursed tree--  
So strong His love--to save us.  
See, His blood now marks our door;  
Faith points to it; death passes o'er,  
And Satan cannot harm us.  
Alleluia!