

Hermaneutics

Walter Beuttler
(teaching notes)

These are the original Hermaneutic notes compiled and used by Walter Beuttler in his classes at Eastern Bible Institute, Green Lane, Pennsylvania in the 1940's and 1950's.

I. The Purpose of the study of Hermeneutics

- A. To ascertain the meaning of the Word of God.
 - 1. Learn the rules of interpretation.
 - 2. Apply the rules learned in practical given scriptures.

II. The importance of the study

- A. The fact that there are different methods of interpretation is one of the chief keys to the difference of opinion between groups which differ theologically.
- B. To properly understand the Word of God, it is necessary to have a system of interpretation.
- C. To be able to detect and avoid error. See I John 4:1.

III. The Methods of interpretation

- A. There would be no problem if there was only one method of interpretation.
- B. There are two very common methods of interpretation:
 - 1. Allegorical
 - 2. Literal, or (Grammatical-Historical)
- C. Definition of the Allegorical method:
 - 1. An allegory is any statement of facts which admittedly has a literal interpretation and yet requires or justly admits a moral or figurative one.
 - a. PURE Allegory
 - 1. It contains no direct reference to the application of it as in the Prodigal Son.

b. MIXED Allegory

1. It is plainly intimated. Psa.80:17 plainly indicates that the Jews are the people whom the vine is intended to represent.
2. In this method the historical import is either denied or ignored and the emphasis is placed entirely on a secondary sense so that the original words or events have little or no significance.

D. The dangers of the Allegorical method:

1. It does not interpret scripture.
 - a. It does not draw out the legitimate meaning of an author's language but puts into it whatever whim or fancy the interpreter may desire.
2. The basic authority ceases to be the Scriptures and becomes the mind of the interpreter.
 - a. The interpretation may then be twisted by: The interpreter's doctrinal position, The authority of the church to which the interpreter adheres, His social and educational background, and many other things.
3. It leaves the student of the scriptures without any means by which the conclusions of the interpreter may be tested.
 - a. To say that the first, or literal meaning of the scriptures is a second-sense meaning and that the principal method of interpreting is spiritualizing, is to open the door to almost uncontrolled speculation and imagination. (Some scholars state that they feel this method is used to pervert scripture)

E. The support of the Allegorical method.

1. In Galatians 4:21-31, Paul is said to have used the allegorical method.
 - a. This is the only place in the N.T. where it is obvious that the allegory may exist. However, Paul is not using the allegorical method of interpretation, but is explaining the allegory.
 - b. The use of allegories is not justification for the allegorical method of interpretation.
2. The interpretation and application of "types" is an allegorical method of interpretation.

a. Whether or not a type is effective depend on the literal interpretation of the literal antecedent. In order to convey truth about the spiritual realm, there must be instruction in a familiar realm or the literal.

F. Definition of the literal method.

1. The literal method of interpretation is that interpretation which gives the words the same exact meanings they would have in normal everyday usage.
2. It is called the "Grammatical-Historical" method to show that the meaning should be determined by both grammar and history.

G. The danger of the literal method.

1. The main danger is found in Jewish circles where there is an extreme literalism. This is often referred to as "splitting hairs."

H. The evidence for the literal method.

1. The literal meaning is the normal approach in all languages.
2. All secondary meanings of documents, parables, types, allegories, and symbols depend on the literal meaning.
3. Most of the Bible makes sense when interpreted literally.
4. The literal approach does not rule out figurative language, symbols, allegories and types.
5. This method is the only safe check on our imaginations.
6. Because the Bible uses the unites of language in its inspiration, we must begin our study by studying these.
7. The prophecies which have been fulfilled have always been fulfilled literally.
8. Whenever the Old Testament is quoted in the New, it is always quoted literally.

I. The advantages of the literal method.

1. It grounds interpretation in fact.
2. It exercises a control over interpretation in that it checks the constant threat to place a double-sense upon the Scriptures.
3. It has had the greatest success in opening up the Word of God.
4. It gives us an authority by which interpretations may be tested.
5. It delivers us from both reason and mysticism as the requisites to interpretation.

J. Some objections to the literal method.

1. The Bible contains figures of speech which quite obviously are not meant to be interpreted literally.
2. "God is a Spirit: The most precious teachings of the Bible are spiritual." Allis.
3. The fulfillment, in the New Testament, of Old Testament types show that many Old Testament passages have a deeper and far more wonderful meaning.
4. Figures may be used to teach literal truths more forcefully than the bare words themselves and do not argue for allegorical interpretation.
5. The only way God could reveal truth in a realm into which we have not yet entered is to draw a parallel with the realm we live in.
6. The fulfillment of the Old Testament types is a literal fulfillment of the literal truth of the types.

IV. The History of interpretation

- A. Our reason for studying it.
 1. To establish the authority of the literal method.
- B. The beginning of interpretation.
 1. Interpretation began at the time of the return of the Jews from Babylon.
Neh.8:1-8
 2. Ezra is the first one (recorded) to have interpreted.
- C. Old Testament Jewish interpretation.
 1. The interpretation in the Old Testament was literal and later became extremely literal.

* The fault of Rabbinical exegesis was less in the rules than in their application.
- D. Literalism in the time of Christ:
 1. Among the Jews:
 - a. It has already been mentioned how hyper-literal their interpretation was.
 - b. It has been your teacher's experience to sit in a Bible class conducted in an Orthodox synagogue and see first had the truth of this charge.
 2. Among the apostles.
 - a. After a careful examination of the interpretation of the Disciples, it seems as if they had all studied under one master; and they did. JESUS

b. Their method of interpretation was literal, but not the hyper-literal method of the Rabbis.

E. The rise of allegorism:

1. Allegorism can most probably be said to have had its beginning in the desires of Philo to unite Greek philosophy and the Word of God.

2. Augustine was one of the first to make Scripture conform to the interpretation of the church.

3. The Roman Catholic Church depended on the allegorical method for its position.

a. This period of time is commonly known as the Dark Ages. It is very possible that this method of interpretation had a great part in making this the Dark Ages.

F. The Reformation period:

1. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and Tyndale all opposed the allegorical method of interpretation.

2. The foundations of the Reformation were laid in the return to the literal method of interpretation.

3. Calvin even felt that the allegorical method was peculiarly satanic.

G. The Post Reformation period.

1. The grammatical school was founded by Ernesti.

2. Zwingli was another who followed in the footsteps of the Reformers.

V. General considerations in interpretation.
--

A. The interpretation of words.

1. All sound exegesis must begin, of necessity, with words because they form the medium of communication of thought.

2. Find the notion affixed to a word by the persons in general.

3. The accepted significance of a word should be retained unless strong evidence requires that we abandon it.

4. If there are several meanings to a word, pick that one which best suits the passage in question.

5. Don't place too much confidence in etymology, because the primary significance is often very different from its common meaning.

6. Distinctions between synonymous words should be carefully examined.
7. Of any particular passage, the most simple, readily suggested sense is in all probability the genuine sense or meaning.
8. The epithets introduced by the sacred writers are to be carefully considered.
9. Before we conclude on the meaning of a passage or word, we must be careful that the meaning is not repulsive to natural reason.
10. Words must be interpreted in the usual, natural, literal sense.

B. Interpretation of the CONTEXT

1. Neglect of context is a common cause of erroneous interpretation and irrelevant application.

a. The context may consist of 1 verse to an entire book.

2. Context is important because thought is usually expressed in a series of related ideas!

a. Context is the most important thing involved in interpreting the scriptures.

3. He needs to know the content of books in which there are passages devoted to the same theme which he is interpreting.

a. Parallel passages are important.

4. Things to be careful of:

a. Originally there were no verse or chapter divisions, so we must note carefully the breaks in thought. Hebrews 3&4

b. Be careful to enter into the total train of thought.

5. Parallel material

a. DEF. Parallel means identical or similar language or ideas found in a different context than the one being studied.

b. See if it helps to clarify the meaning in any one context.

1. Compare Luke 17:37 with Deut.28:26. Deut.28:26 in this case is the context.

c. In considering parallels, the interpreter should understand the purpose and outline of each book involved.

d. Jesus often repeated himself and sometimes explained it better.

e. Parallel sections in other books mean that we have to know the outline of the other book.

f. Parallel material in non-parallel sections.

1. DEF. The section may not have identical language, but the material is related. Compare Luke 14:25-35 with Matthew 10:37,38.

6. Sometimes the immediate context provides little help in explaining the passage.

a. The Proverbs are good examples of this.

7. RULES FOR INTERPRETING THE CONTEXT.

a. Observe carefully the immediate context - that which precedes and follows the passage.

b. Examine the particles as they form the connections between the passage and the context. Rom.12. "Therefore" - always refers to something before.

c. Observe carefully any parallels in the same book.

1. Don't connect a passage with another remote one unless the one nearer doesn't agree.

2. Watch for deviations on the part of the author which may appear to be a different subject when in reality it is the same.

3. The parentheses which occur should particularly be examined. See Rom.9-11.

d. Observe carefully any parallel in another book by the same or different author(s).

e. Try to find genuine parallels which come from the same period or time.

f. The smaller the amount of material, the greater the danger of ignoring context.

g. No explanation should be accepted except that which fits.

h. If there is no connection found between the preceding and subsequent parts of a book, don't look for one.

C. The Historical Interpretation.

1. The immediate historical setting and influence should be carefully weighed.

2. Basic assumptions for historical interpretation.

a. The Word of God originated in a historical way, therefore, can be understood only in a historic way.

b. It is impossible to understand an author or his words unless you understand the proper historical background.

c. The place, the time, the circumstances, and the prevailing view of the world and of life in general, will naturally color the writings that are produced under those conditions of time, place, and circumstances.

3. Demands on the Exegete.

a. He must seek to know everything he can about the author.

b. He should reconstruct the author's world.

c. He should consider the various influences which determined the character of the writings.

1. The original readers.

2. The purpose the author had in mind.

3. The author's age.

4. His frame of mind.

5. The circumstances under which he composed the book.

d. He must place himself on the standpoint of the author and seek to enter into his very soul.

1. Guard against making the common mistake of putting the author in the present day.

D. The Grammatical Interpretation.

1. This is a study of the grammar of the original languages.

a. This can't be done unless you know the languages, but there are many scholars today which are reliable in their treatment of the original languages.

E. Figurative language

1. The use of figurative language

a. To embellish a language by way of adornment.

b. To convey abstract ideas by way of transfer.

2. When is language literal or figurative?

a. If the literal meaning does not make good sense, it is probably figurative. See Ezekiel.

b. However, the interpreter will proceed on the presupposition that the word is literal, unless:

1. It's obviously figurative.

2. The New Testament gives authority for interpreting it other than literal.

3. A literal interpretation would produce a contradiction of truths contained in non-symbolic books of the Bible.

c. Check parallel passages which treat of the same subject in more explicit terms.

d. If a literal interpretation would be morally improper, the figurative is probably the right one.

e. Poetic and Proverbial language very often contains figurative language.

F. The figurative portions of the Bible are as certain and truthful as the most prosaic chapters.

1. When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek no other sense!

G. Short figures of speech.

1. DEF. Figurative means the writer has represented one concept in the terms of another.

2. SIMILE

a. Def. It is an explicitly stated comparison employing words such as "Like" and "As."

b. The interpreter should seek to fully understand the two things compared.

c. Examples: Jer.23:29; Luke 10:3; Matt.24:27.

d. There are many similes in the book of Revelation, more than any other New Testament book.

e. One should ask himself:

1. Why did the author feel he needed to employ simile here?
2. How does it help me to better grasp the idea being presented?
3. Even with simile, what is still unknown or is only understood in a general way?

f. They do not guarantee a complete picture or understanding.

3. METAPHOR

a. Def. A comparison by direct assertion, in which the speaker or writer describes one thing in terms of something else.

1. Designed Metaphor - planned that way.

2. Undesigned Metaphor - presumed to be unintentional.

b. Example: The word "Lord" although it meant "Head," metaphorically, it meant "sovereign ruler."

c. One type of metaphors is Anthropomorphism. See. Isa.59:1.

1. Def. The ascribing to God of bodily members and physical movements.

d. Another type is Anthropopathism.

1. Def. The ascribing to God of human emotions, feelings, and responses. Ex. Heb.3:10.

2. When thinking of Anthropopathism try to remove all thought of human emotions for most of our human emotions contain a sin element. Grief: worry; anger: hatred, pride, bitterness; wrath; can be overlaid with a passion to return in kind.

4. METONYMY

a. Def. This means using the name of one thing for another thing because the two are frequently associated together or because one may suggest the other.

1. Examples. Luke 16:29 "Moses and the prophets" This refers to the law and the writings of the prophets. Rom. 3:27-30. "Circumcision" and "uncircumcision" refer to Jews and the Gentiles.

5. SYNECDOCHE

a. Def. A figure of speech in which a part is used for a whole or a whole is used for a part.

b. Example. Judges 12:7 "the cities" He was only buried in one city, but the plural shows the loyalty which his own people felt for him. Isa.2:4 "swords" and "spears". Two weapons here represent total disarmament.

6. PERSONIFICATION

a. Def. A thing, quality, or idea is represented as a person.

b. Example: Matt.6:34; "Morrow" Psa.114 "Jordan river," "Red Sea," and more.

7. ELLIPSIS

a. Def. An idea not fully expressed grammatically so that the interpreter must either supply words or expand and alter the construction to make it complete.

b. Examples: Gen.3:22; Gal.3:5.

c. Repetitional ellipsis

1. That which is to be supplied is expressed earlier in the context, or is clearly related to that which has been expressed. Gal.3:5.

d. Non-repetitional ellipsis

1. It is not explicit in the context. Gen.3:22.

8. ZEUGMA

- a. Def. Words are placed together which properly don't belong together.

- b. Ex. I Tim.4:3; "Forbid" and "abstain."

H. Figures involving understatement.

1. EUPHEMISM

- a. Def. A word or phrase that is less direct is substituted so that distasteful, offensive, or unnecessarily harsh language will not be used.

- b. Examples: Acts 1:25 "to his own place" instead of "to hell." Lev.18:6, read it.

I. Figures involving an Intensification or reversal of meaning.

1. HYPERBOLE

- a. Def. A conscious exaggeration by the writer to gain effect. John 21:25.

2. IRONY

- a. Def. The writer or speaker uses words to denote the exact opposite of what the language declares.

- b. Ex. A student asks, "How was the exam?" The other student may say, "Simple! Simple!" Matt.23:32. Explain from the book.

J. Figures involving fullness of thought.

1. CLIMAX

- a. Def. A series of qualities, characteristics, or actions are listed.

1. First the quality is stated.

2. Then this quality is specifically said to give birth to or be followed by another quality.

- b. Each quality, characteristic, or action is mentioned twice.

c. Ex. Rom. 5:3-5; II Pet.1:5-7.

d. Repeating these things emphasizes them.

2. EPANADIPLOSIS

a. Def. An important word is repeated for emphasis.

b. Ex. Isa.6:1-5.

K. The interpretation of figurative language.

1. The sense of a figurative passage will be known, if the resemblance between the things or objects compared be so clear as to be immediately perceived.

2. One particular is generally the principal thing thereby exhibited in a metaphor.

3. Many times the author himself explains the figurative language.

4. Consult parallel passages in which the same thing is expressed properly and literally, or in which the same word occurs.

5. Consider history.

6. Consider the context and connection of doctrine.

7. Don't extend the comparison too far.

8. Regulate the meaning of figurative expressions by those which are plain and clear.

9. Do not judge the application of characters by modern or occidental usage as the customs today are very different.

VI. Interrogation

A. Rhetorical Questions

1. Def. A question which is not expected to be answered.

VII. Opaque Figures of Speech

A. Riddles

1. Observe the reason for the riddle.

2. Observe the content of the riddle.

3. Observe the outcome of the riddle.

B. FABLES

1. Def. A fable is a fictitious story meant to teach a moral lesson. It often contains members of the animal or vegetable kingdoms whose actions, being contrary to the natural activities of animals or trees depict the vagaries, emotions, and failures of human beings.

2. Ex. Judges 9:1-21; II Kings 14:9; Ezek.17.

3. Rules for interpreting fables.

a. Understand the contemporary situation in which the speaker resorted to a fable.

b. Note whether the fable is simple or complex, i.e., does it stress one point or several points.

c. Observe the influence of the fable on the hearers and the immediate response or comment of the one who told the fable-words, attitude, or action of both hearers and of the propounder of the fable are significant.

d. State why the lesson taught in the parable is pertinent to modern man and in what other ways the same lesson can be brought to the modern reader's attention.

VIII. Enigmatic Sayings

A. Def. Statements which are so highly saturated with meaning that the hearer is perplexed because of his own unpreparedness for that meaning.

1. Obscurity in Old Testament Revelation.

a. God's revelation by means of visions and dreams is pictured as being enigmatic, or obscure. Num.12:6-8.

b. There are three elements in enigmatic discourse.

1. Condition of the hearers.

2. Profoundness of the message.

3. Media or means by which the revelation came.

2. Obscurity in New Testament Revelation.

- a. Jesus' manner of speech generally until his departure from the disciples is designated as obscure language which is only able to express the supernatural truth imperfectly by hinting at it in human words.
- B. Procedures for Interpreting Enigmatic Sayings.
1. Remove all the superficial ambiguities. Know what the words mean.
 2. Pay careful attention to context so you can follow how the thought flows along before, through, and after the enigmatic portion.
 3. Watch for quick shifts from literal to figurative.
 4. Check good commentaries after you have done firsthand careful exegesis.
 5. Write down a tentative statement (in your own words) of what you believe the meaning of the enigmatic statement(s) to be.

IX. Parables

- A. Reasons for use.
1. Jesus used them to teach spiritual truths.
- B. The understanding of the parables presupposes that the hearers are willing to go along with the ideas of the speaker and who are capable of grasping the (point of) similarity between the image and the thing itself.
- C. Jesus spoke in parables for the purpose that many would have an external acquaintance with his teaching, but no internal relationship to it. Mark and Luke. Mark 10:13.
- D. Source material for parables is taken from the surroundings and everyday life of the hearer. i.e. Agriculture, employment, politics, law.
- E. Setting for parables.
1. There was a double setting:
 - a. The original historical setting.
 - b. The setting in the primitive church.
 2. More important than the setting is:
 - a. Those to whom He directed the parable.
 - b. His purpose for using it.

F. The parables serve to illustrate and unfold various aspects of the reign of God.

PARABLES HAVE ONE CHIEF POINT OF COMPARISON.

1. The presence of the reign of God. Matt.13:30 Tares.
2. Role of Grace in the response to the reign of God. Matt. 21:28-32. Son didn't go.
3. Loyal adherents to the reign of God. Luke.14:25-35. Tower builder.
4. Crisis in the reign of God. Matt.21:33-46. Unfaithful husbandmen.

G. As certain parables are brought to a close, the reader finds a terse, hortatory saying. Matt.20:16.

1. In the parable itself, however, the stress is not on reversal of rank but rather on the goodness or kindness of God.

H. A PARABLE IS OFTEN AN EXTENDED SIMILE

I. Principles for Interpreting Parables

1. Seek to understand the "earthly details" of the parables as well as the original hearers did.
2. Note the attitude and spiritual condition of the original hearers.
3. If possible, note the reason which prompted Jesus to use the parable.
4. State briefly the main point of the parable. Give reason for your selection.
5. Try to relate the main point of the parable to the basic aspects of Jesus' teaching. Keep in mind the centrality of the reign of God in all that Jesus said and did.
6. Observe whether any generalizing sayings have come into the parabolic story. Their presence adds a hortatory note which may be central or peripheral to the main teaching of the parable.
7. Where most of the details are explained, try even harder to uncover the main emphasis.

X. ALLEGORIES

A. Def. An Allegory is a story put together with several points of comparison.

1. Examples. John 10:1-16; In the allegory of the good shepherd the story is told for the specific purpose of having the door represent Christ, of the shepherd represent Christ, of having the sheep as those for whom Christ has laid down his life, and of having the flock represent the union of all believers under the one shepherd regardless of their cultural, national, or religious lineage.

2. Other allegories: Gal.4:21-31; Psalms 80; Ezekiel 13:8-16.

B. Contents or Context for each allegory.

1. It often determines:

- a. The original hears of the allegory.
- b. The reason the original speaker used it.
- c. The meaning he assigned to each of the basic points of comparison.
- d. The role of the allegory in developing the total thought.

C. Principals for Interpreting Allegories.

1. Be able to state, explicitly who were the original hearers or readers.

2. If possible, note why the allegory was told in the first place.

3. Search out the basic points of comparison stressed by the original speaker or writer.

a. Watch for explicit identification. i.e. John 15:1.

4. After listing the basic points of comparison and the things for which they stand, state in as simple a manner as possible why these truths were essential for the original hearers or readers and why they are essential for us today.

XI. POETRY

A. Extent of Poetry.

1. Song of Solomon, Obadiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, and all but a few verses in Nahum are in poetry. Most of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Hosea is poetry.

Parts of other books contain poetry. Also Job, Psalms, and Proverbs are all poetry.

B. One must understand Hebrew to understand all the intricacies of Hebrew poetry.

C. Forms of poetry.

1. Hebrew poetry consists in a balance of thought, not sound.

2. Parallelism is one of the main features of Hebrew poetry.

a. Synonymous Parallelism.

1. Def. The second line expresses an identical or similar thought to the first line. Psalm 103:3.

b. Antithetic Parallelism.

1. Def. The second line expresses a thought which is in sharp contrast to the one in the first line. Prov. 15:1.

c. Emblematic Parallelism.

1. Def. One line makes a statement figuratively while the other makes an assertion in a literal manner. Psalm 42:1.

D. Acrostic Poetry

1. Def. Poetry which is alphabetical in its basic form. Psalm 119.

E. The very essence of poetry is destroyed if we are absorbed in the mechanics of it.

F. Imprecatory elements in the Psalms.

1. Def. Psalms which call down judgment upon the ungodly.

a. These are the poetic expressions of individuals who were incensed at the tyranny of evil, yet whose attitude towards retribution is so colored by their sense of being wronged or of the blasphemy committed that they speak out in language far removed from the teaching that one should leave judgment to God. Psalm 109, 137; Deut.32:35.

G. Figurative language in poetry has more effect than in prose.

H. Proverbs

1. Def. Short, full of meaning statements taken from everyday life.

2. There are five types of proverbs.

1. Personal proverbs, inter- personal proverbs, proverbs referring to God, proverbs referring to personal possessions, and proverbs referring to moral principles.

I. Rules for interpreting proverbs.

1. Determine whether the proverbs involves any of the short figures of speech.

2. Find the character of the proverb, its scope and bearing by studying carefully its content.

3. See if the context sheds any light on the meaning.

4. Do not explain the obvious in proverbs. Interpretation should center on what is obscure.

J. Job was the Shakespeare of the Old Testament.

XII. SYMBOLS AND SYMBOLICAL ACTIONS

A. Def. A symbol is a sign which suggests meaning rather than stating it.

1. It is a literal object.
2. It is used to convey some lesson or truth.
3. The connection between the literal object and the lesson it teaches becomes clearer when we learn what the one who used the symbol meant to convey by it.

B. As long as the one who puts forth a symbol explains it, the interpreter faces no difficulty.

C. Examples:

1. Striking the rock. Ex.17:1-7
2. Speaking to the rock. Num.20:8, 10-13.
3. Pillar of cloud and fire. Ex.13:21-22.

D. Visional symbols. (A symbol from a vision)

1. A basket of summer fruits. Amos 8:1-12.
2. The golden candlestick. Zech.4:1- 14.

a. This apparently symbolizes the people of God as God's lights in the world.

E. Material symbols.

1. An actual object which conveys a meaning beyond their material use. Deut.12:23-25; Lev.17:11. The blood stands for the life.
2. The cherubim. As material symbols, they stand for the holiness of God. It also conveyed to the Israelites the exalted character of God.
3. The Tabernacle as a whole.

F. Emblematic Numbers

1. Any symbolic meaning given to numbers must be based on an inductive study.
2. The numbers 3,12,40,7,1,4, & 70 may have real significance.

G. Emblematic Names.

1. Examples: Synagogue - A symbol of Satanic opposition to the good news. Rev.2:9; 3:9 - Jerusalem - Babylon.

H. Emblematic Colors

1. Any symbolic import of colors comes from association.

2. Some important ones are white, red, black, and speckled. Rev.6:1-8.
- I. Emblematic Metals and Jewels.
 1. Whether they have symbolic import where more than one occurs or individually is not easy to determine.
 - J. Actions
 1. The actor or what he does become the living symbol. Ex.2:8; 3:3; 4,5; Jer.13; and Rev.10:2,8-11.
 - K. Ordinances
 1. In the New Testament baptism and the Lord's supper involves:
 - a. Common material elements.
 - b. The action of men.
 - c. The action of God.
 - L. Principles for Interpreting Symbols
 1. Try to note the qualities of the literal object denoted by the symbol.
 2. Try to discover from the context the purpose for using the symbol.
 3. Use any explanation given in the context to connect the symbol and the truth. If the symbol is not explained, then use every clue found in the immediate context or in any part of the book where the figure occurs.
 4. If the symbol is not clear for modern hearers, state explicitly what the barrier is for the modern reader.
 5. Notice how often used and where the symbol is found, but allow each context to determine what the meaning is. Do not force symbols into preconceived notions.
 6. Think or meditate upon your results.

XIII. TYPOLOGY

- A. Def. In types, the interpreter finds a correspondence in one or more respects between a person, event, or thing in the Old Testament and a person, event, or thing closer to or contemporaneous with a New Testament writer.
 1. The word "type" has only 2 basic ideas:
 - a. pattern
 - b. that which is produced from the pattern, i.e. a product.

2. The Greek word is used of types given by God as an indication of the future in the form of persons or things. Rom.5:14; I Cor.10:6.

3. Examples; Adam was the type of the one (Jesus) who was about to be the head of the new humanity.

B. "Antitype"

1. The Greek adjective "antitupos" has the meaning, "corresponding to something that has gone before."

C. The Typological Approach to interpreting is different than the grammatical-historical approach, which focuses attention on only one period.

1. This is the difference:

a. The grammatical-historical interpretation focuses its attention on the periods in which the passage was written.

b. The interpretation of types by necessity focuses its attention on the periods in which both the type and the antitype occurred.

1. Two things are necessary to be understood: (a) The historical facts of the Old Testament. (b) The basic characteristics of the New Testament message about salvation.

2. Typology should not become the ruling concept in Old Testament Exegesis.

D. Essential characteristics of Typology.

1. The things compared are always placed by the Biblical writers within the sphere of history. It comes out of the living stream of human existence.

2. Some NOTABLE point of resemblance or analogy must exist between the type and antitype. This "particular point" must be worthy of notice.

3. The contemporaries of the type did not necessarily recognize that it had special significance.

4. The point of correspondence is important for later generations because they can see that God's earlier action became significant in his later action.

E. Examples of Typology.

1. David was a type of Christ. Psalm 69:9.

2. Melchizedek: That Melchizedek is a type of Christ is seen in the fact the writer of Hebrews draws one basic conclusion from the silence of the Old Testament narrative. In Heb.7:3 the "being made similar to the Son of God" indicates that

Melchizedek is a type. For the writer of Hebrews, the points of correspondence consist in Melchizedek's superiority as a priest, his independence from all earthly relations, and the absence of any allusion to his death.

3. Passover - Exodus 12. Christ is called the Lamb of God, (a metaphor); John 1:29 and Paul states in I Cor.5:7 that Christ is "our pascal (passover) lamb."

4. Brass serpent - Numbers with John 3:14.

F. Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New Testament.

1. The New Testament writers quoted the Hebrew, and the Septuagint, literally.

2. The New Testament writers also adapted certain words and phrases for themselves and quoted from memory and blended ideas from 2 or more passages. These adaptations may involve the substitution of one thing such as a pronoun for another, or perhaps the addition of a word or phrase. See pages 256, 257 in the book.

a. In these interpretive alterations the main thrust of the original passage is left intact. **IN TYPOLOGY A STATEMENT MAY BE APPLIED TO A HIGHER LEVEL, BUT SUCH A TRANSFERENCE DOES NOT OBSCURE THE CORRESPONDENCE OR THE IDENTITY OF MEANING PRESERVED IN THE COMPARISON.**

3. Old Testament language in a New train of thought.

a. In these instances the main thrust of the passage is changed. Compare Rom.10:6-8 with Deut.30:12-14.

4. Allegorical Interpretation.

a. The only instance is in Gal.4:21 -31.

G. Procedures for Interpreting Typology.

1. Note the specific point or points of correspondence between the type and the antitype. The interpreter must see the type and the antitype as specific, concrete realities that men encountered and to which men responded.

2. Note also, the points of difference or contrast between the type and the antitype. This removes the artificialities that are fatal to all true typology.

3. The unity of the people of God in the New Testament should be fully grasped.

H. Rigorous guide rules for types.

1. A potential type must show a similarity in some basic quality or element.

2. The basic quality or element of this potential type should exhibit God's purpose in the historical context of the type and also God's purpose in the historical context of the antitype.

3. That which is taught by typological correspondence must also be taught by direct assertion.

a. I.E. by a typological procedure of comparison, Christ is said to be creator in Heb.1:10-12. The writer quotes Psa.102:25- 27. In John 1:3 it is stated directly.

4. (The use of direct assertion as a check on typological correspondence is essential for anyone looking for genuine typological parallels.)

XIV. PROPHECY

A. Def. A prophet is a spokesman for God who declares God's will to the people.

B. Role of a prophet.

1. Prophecy embraces such a variety of phenomena that it appears almost impossible to bring it together under one common aspect.

2. They were used of the Lord to examine, prove, or test the people.

3. They acted both as watchmen and intercessors.

4. The form or character of prophecy are conditioned by the age and location of the writer.

C. Sources of the prophetic message.

1. Dreams or night visions have some use, but they should not be regard as a main method. Num.12:6 gives the basis for this.

2. Ecstatic Visions. This is a vision in which the prophet had all of his mental and spiritual faculties raised to a new level of performance.

a. The prophet is said to "see" the word or message of Jehovah. Isa.2:1; Micah 1:1; Ez.12:27.

b. The false prophets are said to speak a vision of their own hearts and not from the mouth of Jehovah. Jer.23:16.

3. Direct encounter with God. God himself is present to the prophet as he makes his disclosures through word, speech, or declaration. II Kings 20:1-6.

4. Interaction with Events followed by revelation from God. This differs from the others in that a specific historical event brings the prophet into a relationship with God, because of which the prophet has an authoritative message from God to deliver. i.e., Zedekiah sent two of his lieutenants to Jeremiah to ask him to inquire of Jehovah about Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, who was making war against the people of Judah. Jer.21:1,2.

D. Time of the prophet's message.

1. The time may touch upon the past, present, or the future.

a. Prophets speak of things future as present in view. Isa.9:6

b. They speak of things future as past. Isa.53.

c. When the precise time was not revealed, they describe them as continuous. Daniel 2.

d. Some scholars feel that the more distant the prophecy, the better.

1. This is dangerous thinking.

2. The future aspect of prophecy was not given to satisfy man's curiosity about the future.

E. The Prophetic Message

1. There are two aspects of prophecy.

a. "Forthtelling" - Exhortation, reproof, correction, and instruction.

b. "Foretelling" - Prediction of events to come.

1. Immediate

2. More distant

3. Very distant

4. Even the future aspect exhorts, reproves, corrects, and encourages.

2. The message was meant to induce holy living and a spontaneous, loving obedience to God.

3. The relationship between prophecy and history.

a. There are two erroneous views.

1. Prophecy is a more vivid way of writing history after the event has occurred.

2. Prophecy is simply history written beforehand.

History deals with details and their subordination to basic events in some type of chronological pattern. This is in contrast to the prophetic narratives which deal with future realities. Prophecy never gives as complete a picture of an event as does an historian's account.)

4. Progressive Character of Prophecy.

a. On many subjects prophecy is an unfolding, expanding kind of treatment.

b. Prophecy is progressive in the sense that later revelation is based upon earlier revelation. Heb.1:1,2.

1. Later revelation often discloses elements omitted from earlier revelation.

c. Progress does come as we amass the total elements for study.

1. No one should try to work out an integration of the material too quickly.

5. Restricted Perspective of Prophet.

1. The prophets were confined within a divinely limited perspective. i.e. The Second coming of Christ. Most of the writers believed that He would come during their lifetime. God did not give them unlimited vision.

F. The law of double reference.

1. Definition of this law.

a. Two events, widely separated as to the time of fulfillment, may be brought together into the scope of one prophecy. Isa.7:14.

2. It is not always easy to make the transition from one to the other.

3. Why the law of double reference?

a. It was the purpose of God to give the near and far view so that the fulfillment of the one should be the assurance of the fulfillment of the

other.

4. That which is seen is always complete in itself; A prophecy may appear as just one event, but in reality there may be a two- three -, or fourfold fulfillment.

5. Parts into which ideas revealed have been separated may appear to contradict each other.

G. Conditional Prophecies.

1. There are hidden conditions with many prophecies. Jonah at Nineveh.

2. The condition is not always plainly stated in the scriptures.

3. God gives us the conditions in Jer.18 and Ezek. 33:

a. The persons spoken to must turn from their evil.

b. If the persons do evil after a blessing is given to them, God will take back the promised blessing.

c. There are some things concerning which "the Lord hath sworn and will not repent." Psa.110:4.

1. These irreversible promises do not depend on man's goodness, but on God's.

2. Many surrounding things may be modified, but the events themselves are ordered and sure.

4. A prophecy is conditional when it depends on man.

5. A prophecy is unconditional when it depends on God.

H. Methods of Prophetic Revelation.

1. Future events are revealed through types, symbols, parables, dreams, and prophetic ecstasy.

2. Prophetic revelation through types.

a. Definition of a type.

1. A type is a person, event, or institution ordained by God in the Old Testament to have a relationship with corresponding persons, events, and institutions in the New Testament.
 2. The antitype is the ideal or spiritual realization of the type.
 3. The type may have its own place and meaning independently of that which it prefigures. Brazen serpent.
 4. The type may not have been realized to have a higher character at the time it occurred.
 5. The essence of a type must be distinguished from its accessories.
 6. The only real authority for the application of a type is to be found in the scriptures.
 7. Mere resemblance does not make it a type; it has to be designed to resemble the antitype.
- b. A type is different than an allegory.
1. In allegory, the historical truth may or may not be accepted.
 2. In a type, the fulfillment can only be understood in the light of the historical truth.
- c. A type is essentially prophetic in character.
- d. But a type differs in form with prophecy.
1. A type images or prefigures.
 2. Prophecy foretells coming realities.
3. Prophetic revelation through symbols.
- a. There are or may be six kinds of symbols that are prophetic in character.
 1. Persons.
 2. Institutions.
 3. Offices.
 4. Events.

5. Actions.

6. Things.

b. There are three fundamental principles in dealing with symbols.

1. The names of symbols are to be understood literally.

2. The symbols always denote something essentially different from themselves.

3. Some resemblance is traceable between the symbol and the thing symbolized.

c. The scriptures interpret their own symbols.

1. In the immediate context.

2. In the book which they occur.

3. Somewhere else in the Word of God.

d. Rules for interpreting symbols.

1. Watch the historical standpoint of the writer or prophet.

2. Watch the scope and context.

3. Watch the analogy and import of similar symbols and figures elsewhere used.

4. Prophetic revelation through parables.

(Def. A parable is a story constructed for the sake of conveying important truth.)

a. Every parable is composed of three parts.

1. The sensible similitude.

2. The explanation or mystical sense.

3. The root or scope to which it tends.

b. Rules for the interpretation of parables.

1. Determine the exact nature and details of the customs, practices, and elements that form the material or natural part of the parable.
2. Determine the one central truth the parable is attempting to teach.
 - a. Separate the essential from the attendant themes.
3. Find out how much of the parable the Lord interpreted.
4. See if the context gives any clues as to the meaning.
5. Don't insist upon every single word in a parable.
6. Don't build doctrines from parables.
7. Know what time period it is intended for.

5. Prophetic revelation through dreams and ecstasies.

- a. Dreams are the lower and ecstasy is the higher form of divine revelation.

I. Approaches to understanding the far distant prophecy.

1. The interpreter may insist upon a literal fulfillment of all details.

- a. Horses= horses, bridles = bridles, spears = spears. Even if God had shown the prophet something else, he wouldn't have known how to explain it.

2. Another interpreter may insist on the symbolic meaning of an entire prophecy.

- a. Every aspect of the prophecy is simply a picture of the 8 ideal hopes of the prophets.

3. In terms of equivalents, analogy, or correspondence.

- a. chariots = something like it in modern times, weapons= something like them in modern times.

- b. "To suppose that the ancient ritual of sacrifices should be restored should be abhorrent to everyone who takes seriously the message of the book of Hebrews." The temple, priesthood, and ritual connected therewith was the shadow of which Christ was the reality.

J. Rules for the interpretation of prophecy.

1. Interpret literally

a. In the field of fulfilled prophecy it is not possible to point to any prophecy that has been fulfilled in any way other than literally.

2. Interpret according to the harmony of prophecy. II Peter 1:20,21.

a. No verse of scripture can be interpreted by itself.

1. It must be examined in context and see how it harmonizes with other passages in the Word of God.

2. By the above verse, "private interpretation" does not mean that an individual cannot interpret the scriptures by himself.

b. This rule is good for any type of scripture such as doctrine, prophecy, poetry, history or law.

c. Observe the perspective of prophecy.

1. Many times prophecies will be grouped together so that one is not distinguished from the other.

d. Observe the time relationships

1. A prophet may view a future event as either past or present.

2. He may view separated events as continuous.

e. Interpret prophecy Christologically.

1. Find out how it refers to the Lord Jesus.

f. Interpret historically.

1. This is the absolute first starting point in the study of prophecy.

2. We must know the historical background of the prophet and the prophecy.

g. Interpret grammatically.

h. Interpret according to the law of double reference.

i. Interpret consistently.

j. Prophecy must be compared with other prophecies.