

TYOLOGY AND THE SONG OF SOLOMON

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Typology is the study of types.

In Christian theology, it is the comparing of some Old Testament characters with the Lord Jesus because it is asserted that these characters have the same characteristics, personality and life style as the Lord. This is how it is defined in dictionaries and by some ministering brethren.

And so, people say that Abraham is a type of Christ as is Joseph, Moses, David and Solomon. I have heard brethren preach about these various characters and stated emphatically that they were types of Christ having the same characteristics as the Lord. I have read that Solomon's bed was pure and that this makes him to be a type of Christ.

We read in the New Testament that the Lord Jesus was sinless. In Him was no sin. There was no guile or deceit in his lips (1 Peter 2.22) He was holy, sinless and undefiled (Hebrews 7.26) These are some of His unique characteristics.

The prophet Isaiah asks a rhetorical question Who can compare with God (Isaiah 46.5) and he continues to quote the words of God, To whom will ye compare me? With whom am I equal?

Psalm 89.6 asks who in the heavens can compare with the Lord and who among the sons of men can be likened to the Lord?

And the sons of men include Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David and Solomon.

Another references is Isaiah 40.18.

Now it is so that events in the Old Testament prefigure events in the New Testament, that is to say that some Old Testament events foreshadow some events that were to happen in the time of Christ. But there is no man in the Old Testament, or anywhere else, that can compare with, or be equal with the Lord Jesus. To whom can we liken the Lord Jesus, or, put another way, who can be a type of Christ?

We read that David was a man after God's own heart (1 Samuel 13.14). We should be careful how we use this verse. That was the case in his early days, but he later fought against his own people, feigned madness, ate the shewbread which it was unlawful to eat (1 Samuel 21), indecently exposed himself (2 Samuel 6.20) in his dancing before the Lord admitting that this was vile (2 Samuel 6.22), He committed adultery with Bathsheba (2 Samuel 11.4) the wife of Uriah whom David then plotted to have killed (2 Samuel 11.15), numbered Israel invoking God's wrath (2 Samuel 24) and, at the end of his days, wanted a beautiful young virgin to share his bed (1 Kings 1).

He was penitent about the Bathsheba incident, it would appear, as we read in Psalm 51, but, after that repentance, his sins still grieved the Lord.

Solomon is noted for his wisdom and he started well. But he oppressed his people with his building plans. It took seven years to build the Temple and almost twice as long to build Solomon's palace. He introduced the poll tax on his people. He lived an extravagant life style paid for by taxes put upon his people which they could not afford. He married a heathen princess (1 Kings 3.1) and he had many wives and mistresses.

1 Kings 11 says that he did evil in the sight of the Lord. He has 700 wives and 300 mistresses who turned his heart away from the Lord. He built a temple to a pagan god opposite the Temple of the Lord.

The Lord had to raise up enemies against Solomon because of his evil ways.

Solomon, a type of Christ? Certainly not!

There are many who interpret the Song of Solomon in the following way. Solomon is a type of Christ and the Shulamite woman represents the Bride of Christ, the Church. But there is another man in this story, the Shepherd who is bidding the Shulamite to come away from Solomon.

The Shulamite is in the city and goes to the watchmen asking if they have seen her beloved (Song of Solomon 3.3). He will come from out the wilderness whereas Solomon is in his bedchamber in the city and he and his bed are guarded with 70 courageous men (3. 6 and 7). Solomon's interest in the Shulamite is sexual. It is not spiritual. This is why when this book is read in the synagogue all the women and children have to leave.

The Shulamite has entered Solomon's harem and, apparently, by her own choice (1. 4). To be desired of the King must have meant a great deal. Note the harem is called the daughters of Jerusalem (v 5). In Chapter 2, Solomon is making amorous advances towards her but she is refusing more wine and is sick of his so-called love. In Chapter 1 v 7 onwards, she speaks of her true love, the one my souls adores, who is a shepherd currently tending his flock. She realises that she has made a mistake and is in sin waiting for her Shepherd-Saviour to redeem her.

Solomon was never a shepherd and cannot be a type of Christ. His interest in the Shulamite was licentious. Christ's interest in us is spiritual and pure.

You will recall the words of the Lord Jesus, Consider the lilies of the field; and yet I tell you that Solomon in ALL his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Matthew 6.28 ff). You cannot say that the Lord was giving Solomon a compliment.

Someone has referred to this canticle as an indication of the Second Coming. The Shulamite is in the world of sin and debauchery and is waiting for the Coming of her Shepherd, just as the Church is awaiting the rapture of the saints to take us out of this evil world which is ripe for judgement.

Song of Solomon 8. 12 refers to Solomon having a thousand vineyards which is the same amount as his wives and mistresses. Vineyards are sometimes a symbol for women who produce the fruit of their womb, namely children. The Shulamite laments that she has not kept her own vineyard. The canticle ends with her pleading for her shepherd love to come and take her out of the palace of Solomon.

Typology is wrong and so are we when we compare anyone to the Lord Jesus. The Scriptures tell us not to.

The fact is that the Lord is greater than all the sons of men. Of course, He is. He is the Son of God and, unlike the sons of men, the Lord Jesus is perfect.

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