

MARK JENKINS MINISTRIES

P.O. BOX 701138 • TULSA, OK 74170

February 2015
Our Examples

Dear Friend,

Two words that are often used when talking about the Old Testament are “types” and “shadows”. Have you ever heard these words? We are going to discover where they can be found in the New Testament, what exactly they are referring to, and an example from the Old Testament demonstrating their use.

Recently, I have heard of believers who were discouraged from reading the Old Testament, as though there was nothing in it for them. Yes, I agree that new believers should spend their time studying the letters written by the Apostles in order to establish a firm foundation on which they can grow. But, I have a problem with the idea that the Old Testament has nothing to offer mature believers. Here’s why. (Joshua 1:8)

“This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.”

This was God telling Joshua, a spiritually dead man, that if he will meditate day and night on the Law, then he would have good success. I’m not suggesting we spend our time studying the Law, necessarily. My point is that we, who are born again and have a new nature, ought to feel like we can benefit by reading any of God’s Word at least as much as what God promised Joshua.

Here’s what we have to keep in mind when reading the Old Testament. The emphasis for us today isn’t necessarily found in the actual Old Testament events themselves as much as the message conveyed by the event. This is what I have been writing about for the last several months regarding the children of Israel, which I have referred to as a “picture in a picture”.

The Holy Ghost through the Apostle Paul described how we are to view the children of Israel's wandering in the wilderness in the first letter to the church at Corinth. (I Corinthians 10:6)

“Now these things were our examples (speaking of the wilderness events), to the intent that we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.”

It stands to reason that they can only be our examples if we read them. Paul went on to make this statement. (I Corinthians 10:11)

“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.”

The Greek word translated “examples” and “ensamples” is actually the same word, “typos”. It is easy to see that this is where our English word “Type” originated. Think about how the old fashioned typewriters used keys to make impressions on paper. The impressions were the images from the keys. The events of the Old Testament were to be images of what was to come for us once salvation became available to humanity.

Paul used another word in his letter to the Colossians. (Colossians 2:17)

“Which are a shadow (speaking of the Law) of things to come; but the body is of Christ.”

He is saying that the Law is the “shadow” of what was to come, but the body making the shadow is Christ. A shadow doesn't necessarily show every detail, but it can represent a very good likeness of the thing that is making the shadow. That is exactly how we should view the images we see in the Old Testament. They aren't always going to be a perfect representation, but they will give us a very good idea of the message being conveyed.

This is what I do; I bring everything I study in the Old Testament back to the New Testament, particularly the letters written by the apostles. What I have discovered is that my appreciation for what is said in the letters has grown tremendously by seeing the “types” and “shadows” in the Old Testament. I have found that the letters, also referred to as the “epistles”, clearly state what is expected of us today. The “types” and “shadows” from the Old Testament paint a picture that I often find to be even more graphic than what is presented in the “epistles”.

Here's a case in point. First, we will look at what is "expressly" told to us in the epistles and then we will look at the image given to us as a "type" and "shadow" relating directly to the message in the epistles.

My recent letters have been focusing on the importance of believers growing up spiritually and the necessity for us to put to death the deeds of the flesh. I have been using Israel's wanderings in the wilderness as our backdrop, which we will continue to do in this letter. First, we will look at the more explicit instructions given to us through Paul. (Ephesians 4:14-15)

"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; (15) But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ."

(Ephesians 4:22-24)

"That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; (23) And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; (24) And that you put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

The Holy Ghost through Paul is saying that believers should grow up, put off the old man, and put on the new man. As is often the case in Paul's letters, the believer is simply admonished to do something. There doesn't seem to be much elaborating as to why or the dangers if they don't. Fortunately, we can look at an Old Testament "type" and "shadow" and see the war that will ensue with our flesh when its rule over us is challenged.

The event we want to look at involves a prophet named Balaam and a king named Balak. Balak, king of the Moabites, was in fear of Israel and wanted to stop them before they conquered his people. He decided to call upon a man by the name of Balaam, a prophet, to curse Israel. Balak sent messengers to fetch Balaam with this message, (Numbers 22:6)

"Come now therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people; for they are too mighty for me: peradventure I shall prevail, that we may smite them, and that I may drive them out of the land: for I wot that he whom thou blesses is blessed, and he whom thou curses is cursed."

It's difficult to understand the kind of relationship the prophet Balaam had with God. Balaam heard from God, but he was also referred to as a soothsayer that

Israel put to death in Joshua 13:22. What is not hard to understand is how king Balak viewed Balaam. It says that king Balak sent his messengers to get Balaam and they were going to pay him with the “rewards of Divination” to curse Israel. (Numbers 22:7)

When the messengers arrived and told Balaam what the king desired, Balaam said he would ask God what to do. (Numbers 22:8) Balaam spoke with God and told God all that the king wanted him to do. God told Balaam; (Numbers 22:12)

“...Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people: for they are blessed.”

Balaam sent the messengers back to king Balak with the news that God refused to let him go with them. King Balak wasn't going to take “no” for an answer so he sent more messengers who were more honorable than the first ones. This was the king's message. (Numbers 22:17)

“For I will promote thee unto great honor, and I will do whatsoever thou say unto me: come therefore, I pray thee, curse me this people.”

Notice Balaam's answer. (Numbers 22:18)

“...If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord my God, to do less or more.”

I just love the determination in his words. I think Balaam actually believed what he said. In other words; “You go tell the king that I am not for sale. I only do what God wants me to do.” How many of us truly believe that about ourselves? We believe that we wouldn't compromise for anything in the world; not for money, honor, position, nothing. I have to wonder why it is after God had already told Balaam “no”, did Balaam think God would say anything else to him? Was he hoping God would change His mind? (Numbers 22:19)

“...Tarry you also here this night, that I may know what the Lord will say unto me more.”

God said; (Numbers 22:20)

“...If the men come to call thee, rise up, and go with them; but yet the word which I shall say unto thee, that shalt thou do.”

That seems easy enough. Balaam was supposed to wait and see if the king's messengers came to call upon him in the morning. If so, he was to rise and go with them. What did Balaam do? (Numbers 22:21)

“And Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.”

Balaam did not wait for the men to call upon him. Why? Balaam wasn't about to take the chance of missing them because he in fact did want what the king was offering him. **As much as his words said one thing, what was in his heart was something very different.** Consequently, God was not happy with Balaam and He sent an angel to stop him. (Numbers 22:22)

“And God's anger was kindled because he (Balaam) went: and the angel of the Lord stood in the way for an adversary against him...”

The actual event that took place next is a “type” and “shadow” of the struggle we now have with our “old man” that we have yet to “put off”. (Numbers 22:23-27)

“And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand: and the ass turned aside out of the way, and went into the field: and Balaam smote the ass, to turn her into the way. (24) But the angel of the Lord stood in a path of the vineyards, a wall being on this side, and a wall on that side. (25) And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she thrust herself unto the wall: and he smote her again. (26) And the angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place, where was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. (27) And when the ass saw the angel of the Lord, she fell down under Balaam: and Balaam's anger was kindled, and he smote the ass with a staff.”

The **old man**, our flesh, is represented by the man on the back of the donkey that we are to put off. The **donkey** represents the **spirit man**, the new man, which is born again. This is evident because it was the eyes of the donkey that were open to the things of God, while the man was unable to see the angel. Once we are born again, our spirit is able to understand and follow the things of God, but our old man, the flesh, is still blind.

God is showing us through this illustration the dangers of not “putting off the old man”. The flesh wants to hold on to the “reins” of our life and drive us into the direction that it wants to go. Isn't this event a great illustration of how domineering our flesh can be? Think about how convincing Balaam was about

obeying God, only to take off with the messengers instead of waiting, as God had said. Balaam wanted the money. (II Peter 2:15)

“Which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness.”

The “**way of Balaam**” is the way of not putting off the old man and allowing the flesh to remain unchallenged. The “type” and “shadow” of Balaam beating his donkey is a beautiful illustration of just how overbearing the flesh can be against the spirit. This is the struggle Paul describes as the flesh lusting against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh. (Galatians 5:17)

Our lying flesh believes it will obey God regardless of what the world offers. But, given the opportunity, our flesh will invariably choose the path that’s contrary to God’s will for our lives. What we want is for our spirit man to have the reins of our life because our spirit man will always follow God. How do we take the reins out of the hands of the flesh and put them in the hands of the spirit?

This is accomplished by utilizing the tools God made available to us which are reading the Word of God, meditating the Word, confessing the Word, praying in other tongues, and fasting. As we put each of these tools to use in our lives we will find that a gradual change takes place in which the spirit takes the reins out of the hands of the flesh.

God wants us to “dethrone” our flesh and empower our spirit to take its place. The “type” and “shadow” illustrated by Balaam and his donkey paints a clear picture of the fight we should expect. In addition to the message itself, we have also seen how that by reading the Old Testament the Holy Ghost is able to take a natural event and paint a beautiful illustration explaining a New Testament principle. Hopefully, this proves that we can receive from reading both the New and Old Testaments.

~ Grace be with you

Mark Jenkins