



PRINCIPLES OF INTERPRETATION

BY DAVID CARTLEDGE

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Cartledge

29th Sept 1940 – 24 Oct 2005

David Cartledge gave his life to the Lord at the age of 15 and three years later God called him to the ministry. He went to an Australian Bible College a year later (as a 19 year old) and graduated three years later. The following year he was married to Marie who stayed at his side, often sharing in the ministry work throughout his life.

For the first two years of his ministry David was an assistant pastor in Hobart, Tasmania. Then, in the following four years, David and Marie planted a Church in the relatively small country town of Devonport (also in Tasmania). After this, David pastored a Church in another small country town, Lithgow (in New South Wales).

In 1970, at the age of 30, David was called to pastor a Church in the growing city of Townsville (Queensland). In the 18 years he was there, the church saw incredible growth. David embraced the charismatic renewal, and the church was in revival! The meetings would go on until all hours of the night. At these meetings people were touched, miracles occurred and the church exploded.

As the church grew, David decided the church needed to buy land to build a larger facility so he purchased 92 acres of land on the outskirts of the city. On this property he started a Bible school and a Christian school, the first to be started by his Church denomination in Australia.

At the age of 37, David became a member of the Australian National Executive of his Church denomination and held a leadership position in this movement for 26 years.

As a leader within his Church movement, David's strategy was church planting. His determined, faith filled and systematic approach to implementing this strategy resulted in many churches being planted, initially in the state of Queensland, and then, partly as a result of his example and influence, at a national level throughout Australia.

At the age of 48, after growing the Townsville church from a few dozen to well over 1,000 people, and seeing through the building of a large auditorium, Bible College, and Christian School, David and Marie moved from Townsville to start a church with a small group of local people on the Gold Coast. Moving from such a large church (in Townsville) to start a new church would have been hard for someone who had "broken through" and overcome enormous challenges, but because God had spoken to him, he moved. It wasn't long before he had established a church on a main road close to Surface Paradise and saw it grow rapidly.

At the age of 53, the National Executive of David's Church movement asked him to become the President of the national Bible College just outside Sydney. He accepted and remained in that position for nine years. In that time he instituted many changes and improvements. He moved the College from Katoomba in the Blue Mountains to Chester Hill, much closer to the centre of Sydney. This move involved the miraculous purchase of a former large, Australian Defence Services property.

At the age of 62 David began travelling the world, inspiring churches to move into the prophetic and apostolic realm and went to be with the Lord a few years later. He had given his all and he left a legacy of a life of devotion and service to God. His wife Marie continues to serve the Lord and is a wonderful example of a mother and grandmother for the family she and David raised together as they served in ministry.



"Our movement has been deeply impacted by David Cartledge. He is truly one of our greats. What David believed in, he believed in 100 per cent. Whatever he did, he did 100 per cent. He spoke fervently about faith, and lived so fervent by faith."

Brian Houston, Hillsong, Australia

INTRODUCTION

These principles of interpretation will have to be considered in a somewhat wider context than the principles of interpretation of types. This is because there are general principles of Biblical interpretation, which reflect on the interpretation of types, though they do not specifically apply to Types. The way other parts of the Bible are interpreted also reflects on the interpretation of some types. There are 21 specific points or principles included in this study.

A Type in scripture is a representation of truth or principles embodied in people, actions, objects or events; such as when Moses said, "A prophet like unto me shall the Lord God raise up unto you." He was specifying that he himself was a type of the prophetic ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ. When he smote the rock, that action became typical of the smiting of the Saviour from whence the Living Water flowed. When he raised up the serpent on the pole, that object became typical, for Jesus Himself said, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness so also must the Son of Man be lifted up." As far as events are concerned we have the feasts of Israel, etc. These are all typical. They are types. It does not have to be one specific thing. It can be an event, a place, a name.

Types are parallel to prophecy and in fact most types are prophetic. They have the same anointing and they have the same scope as prophecy. The only difference is that prophecy is generally given by the spoken word, and types are illustrated prophecies. Unless we understand prophecy we are going to miss a large part of the scriptures because most of the Bible is prophecy. It was given by prophecy, it was given by the anointing of God to man and although it came in different forms, some illustrated, some through events and circumstances, some through the spoken or preached Word, it is all prophecy and it needs to be understood as such.

Sometimes the types, besides being prophetic are definitive, or explanatory or illustrative, in the sense that a circumstance or occurrence in the New Testament is explained or clarified or defined by the Old Testament type that related to it. Often the type will explain it in greater detail. This is true of the Tabernacle. There is much more about the Church in the Tabernacle than there is in the New Testament, for simple statements made by Paul are taken up by Moses and explained. Long before Paul ever came along, Moses saw the pattern of the Church, and of Christ and the Holy Spirit, and put that into effect when the Tabernacle was built.

In considering the principles outlined in this study, it must be noted that one or more of these principles will always apply to all scriptural and especially typical interpretation.

1. LAW OF TOTAL SIGNIFICANCE

Some people, even some in Pentecostal fellowships, underrate the importance of the Old Testament. That is a most disturbing thing. Some say that only the New Testament is important, but the Bible tells us that "all Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (**2 Timothy 3:16**). The Old Testament was all the Bible that the early Church had, and it was to this that Paul referred Timothy (**2 Timothy 3-15**). Most of the New Testament was not available to the Early Church. Some had the Corinthian epistles, some had Peter's letters, etc., but the whole of the New Testament as we have it today was not available to the Early Church. Their Bible was the Old Testament, and it did not seem to have hindered their growth. They still turned the world upside down.

Luke 24:27 and 44 tells us that Jesus appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus and beginning at Moses and all the prophets he expounded unto them in the scriptures the things concerning Himself. All scripture is of total significance.

I believe that not one thing in the Word of God is unimportant. Some people are of the opinion that a lot of it is just packing, or is just history or a lot of it is mere data and detail. There is not one thing in the Bible that is without significance. Every genealogy, every list of name places has significance. All of it is inspired by God, there is a reason for it being recorded. Not all of the things that are recorded in the Bible are good. There are many sinful actions recorded, but the fact that they were recorded is significant, and why they were recorded. We need to understand that **Romans 15:4** says, "Whatsoever things that were written in earlier times were written for our learning". Whatsoever! Anything that God has caused to be recorded is written for our learning - "that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope".

Acts 3:21 declares that "all things that were spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" are going to be fulfilled before Jesus comes. Jesus has gone into heaven there to remain until the times of the restitution of all things spoken by the holy prophets. That one scripture alone proves conclusively that the prophets spoke of things relating to us, and that the Old Testament has not yet been fulfilled or lost its relevance. It has not been fulfilled in totality, but only in part, and we need to understand that even since the world began, Adam and Abel and these early men of God spoke things, and things have been recorded about them which are important to us.

In **John 20:30** we have a very clear statement that even the miracles which Jesus performed are signs. "Many other signs did Jesus" and this refers to the miracles which He performed. There is tremendous significance in the turning of water into wine and also in the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand, of the walking on water, etc. Every miracle that Jesus performed is a sign which needs to be and can be interpreted, with value for our personal lives. They are not just interesting little things that happened there. They are not just events. They have special spiritual significance.

The New Testament writers referred exclusively to the Old Testament for their point of reference. Stephen's great sermon in **Acts 7** is almost 100% a quotation from the Old Testament. He quotes passage after passage, and then begins to interpret what Moses claimed, "that a prophet like unto him would the Lord God raise up." Then Stephen declares that this was Jesus. He also interpreted the types of the old Testament. Paul did the same. The book of Hebrews is almost totally a re-capitulation of the Old Testament in that the scriptures taken from the Old Testament are explained. Everything is explained in its spiritual significance. The book of Hebrews is really a book on typology. The book of the Revelation is full of Old Testament quotations, and in fact it is impossible to understand the book of the Revelation unless you understand the book of Daniel.

1 Corinthians 10:11 tells us that the things that happened in earlier times happened as ensamples. That word "ensamples" is very interesting. It is the Greek word "tupos" which means types. The Old Testament events happened as types. Who for? They happened as types for us upon whom the ends of the world are come.

These few scriptures have established for us that the Old Testament is absolutely essential. We do not in any way undervalue the New Testament. We cannot understand the old Testament without the New Testament, but the Old Testament has not been discarded. It is vitally important, and it is for us, and all the types are of special significance to us today.

2. LAW OF FIRST MENTION

For example, the first mention in the Bible of fig leaves is in **Genesis 3** where Adam and Eve, after breaking the commandment of God and sinning, found that they were naked and sewed together fig leaves to cover their nakedness. The typological aspect of this, is that the fig leaves represent the works of our own hands. It is self effort to cover up our condition. In most cases where you read of

the fig leaves, it is clear that this matter of self effort will apply. When Jesus came up to the fig tree that had no fruit upon it, but only leaves, the leave of pretense, he cursed it because the time of figs was not yet. The fig tree bears its fruit before its leaves. However this fig tree had its leaves before its fruit and it was right out of order. It was pretending to be something that it wasn't. It was advertising that the crop had already arrived, and Jesus cursed it because it was out of order. So here is the law of first mention. Fig leaves are first mentioned in **Genesis 3**. and we are able to establish that it represents work or self effort.

The first mention of the number 13 in scripture is in **Genesis 14:4** where a few of the Kings of Canaan had served Chedorlaomer and in the 13th year they rebelled. The number 13 throughout scripture is invariably associated with rebellion. The first mention establishes it. This is a principle and is very important.

3. LAW OF LAST MENTION

In **Matthew 23:38 to 24:1** we read the account of Jesus being in the Temple and there He spoke the 8 woes to the Pharisees which literally defined the spiritual condition of Israel at that time and then at the end of the chapter He says "Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered you as a hen gathers her chicks, but ye would not. Now your house is left unto you desolate. You won't see me again" Then in the very next verse (**Matthew 24:1**) after Jesus had spoken these words of judgment against them because they had rejected His word, the scriptures says that He turned and went out of the temple, and He never went back. The last mention of Jesus in the temple is very significant because it literally became the fulfillment of what the daughter-in-law of Eli cried out when her son was born at the time of the loss of the Ark of the Covenant. She named him "Ichabod", for the glory had departed. Jesus was the glory of God, and He departed from the temple. He never went back and shortly afterwards that Temple was pulled down to the ground. Last mention is very significant too.

4. LAW OF MUCH MENTION

Whenever God repeats a thing it is important. It is significant. Earlier it was stated that everything in the Bible is significant, but there are some things that have a greater degree of importance than others. Some things have a powerful meaning, others have a continuing meaning, some things are only slightly significant, but whenever God takes a thing and refers to it twice, or three times or more it is important.

Whenever God gives a large amount of space to any one thing, then that thing becomes tremendously significant, and we need to find out why. It's not always easy to do so, because God cloaks His truth. He hides it. The Tabernacle occupies over 50 chapters of scripture. Creation occupies only two. The space which God has allotted to it and the much mention that God has given to the Tabernacle has establishes it as one of the most important things in the whole of the Word of God.

5. LAW OF TOTAL REFERENCE

Some facts are always referred to in the similar terms and must be kept in harmony. This will not apply to everything. One or more of the principles will apply to every part of scripture, but not every principle will apply to each part.

This is because God's word is a living word, and is not a text book. It's not. You cannot take carnal methods and apply them and analyze and define the Word of God as any other book. This was

where many Bible Interpreters Have gone wrong. They have assumed the Law of logic can be applied to defining and interpreting the Word of God. But it cannot be done.

God has so clothed His Word in mystery, and He has so hidden it, that revelation is needed for it to be understood. No one can even be born again without revelation. Unless God takes the things of Christ and reveals them unto you, you cannot even be saved. You cannot know it, you can read the Bible and not see it. You can go right over it, you can quote the thing and not be able to see it. we need to understand that. When you take hold of the Word of God, and go through a certain subject and find that it's always referred to in the same terms then it must be interpreted in line with those terms because that has been established as a principle with God.

This became one of the most shattering experiences I have ever had in looking into the Word of God. I was praying one day, waiting on God, and crying out to the Lord for Revelation and God to make Himself known to me that I might understand. The Lord spoke to me and said. "Do you really want me to show you something", and I cried out "Yes, Lord, I really want to understand the Word". He said read **John 10**, and immediately I felt a disappointment and thought what can there possibly be in **John 10** that I do not understand. I know the passage back to front, I could probably quote most of it, I've read it many times, and surely if God is going to show me something fresh He would do so out of some obscure part of the scripture. **John 10** is so clear. I began to read that chapter, and burst into tears, because I had always looked at it in familiar terms, the way that it's normally interpreted, and God showed me that passage totally back to front to what I had ever seen it before. Most Bible interpreters we have ever read have it wrong, totally back to front to what it really means. The key to it is the sheepfold. we have always been taught that the sheepfold is the Church and God is bringing us into the sheepfold, and if any sheep climbs up some other way, the same as a thief and a robber. He has to come in through the door. But when I saw that passage after God had taken the scales from my eyes I saw that it does not say anything about sheep trying to get into the sheepfold but about false shepherds trying to get in. Jesus said, "all that ever came before me are thieves and robbers". It has nothing to do with sheep.

Jesus said He leads His own sheep out of the sheepfold. Every reference in the Bible to sheepfolds shows that they are something that God took people away from. He said to David, "I took you from the sheepfold and from following the sheep", and every reference to sheepfold in the Old Testament shows it to be a place of bondage, a place of limitation. Jesus brings us out of that sheepfold. He broke through. He was the only one to whom the porter opened. (**John 10:3**). He was the only one who could come in through the door of death. He was the one of whom they cried out, "Who is this king of glory? The Lord strong and mighty. The Lord mighty in battle. Be ye lifted up ye everlasting gates" **Psalms 24**. He was the only one who could go into that place of bondage and bring us out. The scripture says (**John 10**) He leads forth His own sheep. If they do not come out by leading, He puts them out. There are two words used, "*ekballo*" which means to lead out and "*exballo*" which means to cast out. If you aren't coming out of the place of bondage willingly, as the Lord draws you out, He's going to bring circumstances to bear in your life that will get you thrust out. That is literally the meaning of the passage. The Lord does not bring us into a sheepfold, He brings us into a flock. In verse 16 it says "other sheep have I which are not of this fold. Them also I must bring." That is a wrong translation in the King James Version. In the Revised Version it is corrected. The Greek Word is not for fold as in verse 1 but for flock. God does not bring us into a fold, a place of bondage, a place of limitation, and defined limits, but he brings us out into the flock of God.

The point to be made here is that the total reference of sheepfolds always indicates a place that God takes us away from. That is important in interpreting the meaning of the passage.

6. LAW OF TWO OR THREE WITNESS

This is something that is often transgressed. Very often people will just take one verse and will use that as a basis for their doctrine or belief.

For example, many years ago a famous preacher by the name of Alexander Toplady was offended by the style of women's hair being piled on top of their heads in a bun or knot. He preached against it on one occasion and gave as his text "Top knot come down". After the service he was challenged by a lady to produce the actual quotation from scripture. He referred her to, **Matthew 24:17** which says, "Let him that is upon the house top not come down." He just took one little part that suited him and isolated it from the rest of scripture.

The Bible is a book that must be interpreted by the principle that ;'In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word is established." God Himself has bound Himself to this principle. In **Matthew 18:16** Jesus said, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses let every word be established".

In **John 5:31, 32, 33**, He said, "I bear not witness of Myself. He that sent me beareth witness of me." He said, "You sent to John, and He also bore witness of me." Jesus was witnessed to in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses. And not only that, on more than one occasion God the Father spoke from Heaven, and witnessed to him. "This is my beloved Son. Hear ye Him". In **Acts 5:32** Peter says, "We are His witnesses of these things, and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.

In **Hebrews 2:4** we read that God bore the Early Church witness both with signs and wonders and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost according to His will. By three specific things He bore witness to the Early Church. In **Hebrews 6:13** the scripture says when God was making an oath to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself - i.e. three persons. In the mouth of two or three witnesses every word must be established. Every scriptural truth. We cannot discern it by reason, logic or guesswork. Paul says in **1 Corinthians 2:13** that the Holy Ghost teaches interpreting spiritual things with spiritual. Some people get wrapped up in spiritualizing, which is not true interpreting of types. They just take a fact out of scripture and apply it without proper mandate. e.g. Some people have said that the south side of the Tabernacle and the Holy Place where the candlestick was, represents the southern part of the world and Australia in particular. The candlestick refers to the revelation or light upon God's word (which is true). Because it was on the south side that proves that the south land Australia is going to be the repository of direct revelation in the last days. That is spiritualizing. That cannot be supported in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses. It is a very nice theory, and I would like it to be true, but it cannot be supported by this principle.

You can never take one isolated fact and say "This means That". It must always be supported by scripture from somewhere else. We must interpret scripture that way.

For example, in **Revelation 13:1**, "And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea having 7 heads and 10 horns." We may ask what it is. What is the sea? What does it refer to? The scripture does interpret itself and says what this sea is. **Revelation 17:15**, "He said unto me, the water which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." So we understand in **Revelation 13:1** that when the beast rises up out of the sea, that beast is the antichrist who is rising up out of unorganised masses of humanity, out of people and multitudes and nations etc. That agrees to the principle that in the mouth of 2 or 3 witnesses every word must be established.

7. LAW OF ACTUAL LANGUAGE

We must never approximate. It's important that we have actual language. In fact it's important to get back to the original language whenever we can and to find out what the Greek word meant in such and such a case, and what the usage of that word was. There are so many words which we can apply to our modern situation, but the circumstances in which they were given can often be totally different.

For example, Jesus said, "that it's hard for a camel to go through the eye of a needle", and we can say that is a silly illustration anyway because we know for a fact that no camel could go through the eye of a needle (it's hard enough to get the cotton through). That is not what is meant at all. The eye of a needle was a small gate into Eastern Cities through which pedestrians went, alongside the large gate through which animals went, and the camel would not normally be able to get through the smaller one. That's what Jesus was talking about. We have to find the usage of a statement, and the actual wording. These things are important.

Also under this category the meanings of names has tremendous significance in the Bible; the names of people, the names of places, even the names of events. They are significant. No Jewish child was ever named thoughtlessly. They were named either in faith, or in anticipation of what his character would be. Often times they were named prophetically, and many times their names were commanded by God. e.g. John the Baptist, Samson etc. names are very significant and it's important to follow the law of actual language in these things.

8. LAW OF THE ORDER OF REFERENCE

The order in which things are listed in the Bible, or the order in which they are recorded, or the order in which they occur is very significant and important. In studying the Tabernacle it will be discovered that there were two different orders given for the Construction. This is vastly significant.

9. FRAGMENTARY PRINCIPLE

Isaiah 28:9-13 says that God's word is revealed to us line upon line, line upon line, precept upon precept, precept upon precept; here a little and there a little. It's a fact of God's revelation that it is fragmentary. It is never spelt out in complete detail in any one place. There's just no place in the Bible where that happens. You cannot say, "here is the total revelation, we do not need any other part". It always needs to be confirmed and clarified from somewhere else.

We have always been taught that Abraham believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness. **Romans 4:3, 17-23** seems to indicate the same thing, that he was justified because he believed that God would give him a son. The scripture says in **Romans 4:20** that he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief, but he was strong in faith giving glory to God, yet he believed God in spite of evidence of his age, and God granted him a son. We have been taught that faith in his heart, was the basis by which God justified him. But that is not so. If we were to take just one isolated statement of scripture we could arrive at that conclusion, but by following through with the fragmentary principle of taking things from various parts of the scripture and putting the whole story together we discover another aspect of Abraham's justification. In **James 2:20-23** we read, "But wilt thou know, o vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness."

One part of the scriptures cannot be taken on its own, but all relevant quotations must be put together and so build up the total picture. This is the fragmentary principle.

10. LAW OF ASSOCIATION

Whenever you see the words "as it was" or "as is" or words which link two things together, they are significant. When Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so also shall it be in the days of the coming of the Son of Man". That makes the days of Noah of prophetic and typical importance to us. It seems that we then have the right to interpret those days in the light of modern happenings and events, e.g. as to the permissive society, violence, greed, gluttony, and these kinds of things. We are able then to interpret the days of Noah and the signs of his day with their meaning for today. Many such associations are included in scripture.

11. LAW OF SYMBOLISM

Whenever a symbol is closely linked with an event in scripture that symbol can be taken to other parts of the scripture and applied. e.g. New wine is spoken of in **Joel 1:5** - "New wine languisheth". In chapter 2 the promise of God is that He is going to cause the new wine to flow again, and His people will never be ashamed and then He gives a great promise of pouring out His spirit on all flesh. In **Zechariah 9:15**, "The Lord of hosts shall defend them; an they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. v.17...corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids." In **Acts 2** we find that people declared that the Apostles and the 120 were filled (or drunk) with new wine. We find that the Holy Spirit has designed that the symbol of new wine be closely linked with the Baptism or the anointing with the Holy Spirit. "They shall make a noise as through wine." The symbol of new wine can be followed through other parts of the scripture, and related to the anointing of the Holy Spirit. That's very clear.

A further example of this principle is in the fig tree which links up with Israel. Jesus said, "When you see the fig tree and all the trees put forth their leaves you know the summer is nigh." In 1948 Israel was the first of the nations to go independent, and since then nation after nation, after nation began to go independent, and spread forth their leaves

In **Luke 13:7** Jesus told a parable about a householder who came and said, "For three years I came seeking fruit from this fig tree." For three years Jesus walked in His ministry seeking fruit from the fig tree of Israel, and found none. There we have the principle of the symbol.

The same is true of the vine; and the Church. The Church is known as the vine in scripture. Jesus said, "I am the vine, ye are the branches." We are linked to Him. You will find in Joel's prophecy that the fig tree and the vine are often linked together. In fact right through the Old Testament the fig tree and the vine are linked together. The fortunes of Israel and the fortunes of the Church are very closely tied together. Whatever God does in Israel, He does in the Church. Whatever God does in the Church, He does in Israel. Look at every major event that has happened in Israel - something supernatural has happened in the Church at that same time.

12. LAW OF NUMERICS (NUMBERS)

The meanings of numbers is very important, then applying those numbers to other situations.

1 - unity, 2 - division, 3 - completeness, 4 - world, 5 - grace, 6 - number of man, 7 - perfection, 8 - resurrection, 9 - finality - the only number when multiplied by any other number, then added together will produce 9 as a result ($9 \times 7 = 63$ ($6 + 3 = 9$)), 10 - law and order 11 - disorganization and confusion, 12 - governmental perfection, 13 - rebellion, 40 - probation, 50 - release year of Jubilee. 70 - end of all limitation

Numbers are very important. When a number occurs in certain context and its meaning is established it can be related to numbers of the same denomination in other parts and the meaning or significance of that second passage will often become clearer. e.g. Take the number 120 in **Genesis 6:3** as the end of flesh and relate this significance to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost and also its occurrence in the Feast of Tabernacles. See also **Ezekiel 36:27**.

13. LAW OF CONSISTENCY

Throughout the Bible leaven always speaks of sin. Some people take **Luke 13:21** and **Matthew 13:53** which is the parable of a women putting leaven in 3 measures of meal, and say that is a type of the Christianizing influence gradually spreading through the world. However every time the Bible speaks of leaven it speaks of it in the connotation of sin, and we just cannot change it to suit ourselves and say now it means Christian influence, because it does not.

That parable really means that into the three measures of meal which we have from God, a women (which speaks of the corrupted Church) has placed a leaven of sin which has caused corruption to come into the Church and it needs to be cleansed out. The Kingdom of God has been permeated in many places and many ways through the Babylonian scourge which has grown up in it.

In **Psalms 22:12, 13** - "Strong bulls of Bashan have compassed me about". This is a prophetic statement relating to Jesus' Crucifixion. Some interpret this to mean the nations and the Jews who were against Him, but it means demon powers, because the next verse goes on to say, "They have gaped upon me with their mouths as a roaring lion." In **1 Peter 5:8** we read, "the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour." The principle of consistency is very important. Jesus said in **Luke 22:53** to the Pharisees, "this is your hour and of the powers of darkness." When He was crucified, every power of darkness that was available was there gaping around Him, trying to bring destruction to the Son of God.

14. PARABOLIC PRINCIPLE

This is the principle that Jesus used in telling parables. Truth is hidden. All of the parables contain hidden truth, and the disciples came to Jesus in **Matthew 13:11 & 13** and said, "Why do you speak in parables?" He said, "because unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom but unto them it is not given." I speak this way so that they will see but not see, so that they will hear and not hear."

All of God's Word is hidden. There is very little in the Bible that is obvious to us. We need the Spirit to open our hearts to it, so that we have understanding. In **Proverbs 25:2** we read, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of Kings is to search out a matter. Who are the kings? God has made us to be kings and priests unto Himself, and He has given us the anointing of the Holy Spirit to search out a matter that He has concealed so that it will not be available to the carnal mind.

15. PRINCIPLE OF NON-TRANSFERENCE

No sinful act can ever typify righteousness. For example some people say that Jacob is a type of the "Believer" in that he came into his father, dressed in his elder brother's garments which were put upon him by his mother, and this is like the way we come to the "Father" dressed in a robe of righteousness of our "Elder Brother" the Lord Jesus which our "Mother", the Church, has put upon us. That cannot be a type because it was a sinful act. No unrighteous act can ever typify a righteous act. Some people say that when Adam sinned, and stepped down to be with Eve, it was a type of Jesus leaving heavenly glory and stepping down to gain an earthly bride. But what Adam did was sinful what Jesus did was not sinful, and there is no relationship between the two. People talk about the incest of Lot's daughters as being typical.

No sinful act can ever be typical of righteousness. Such cases are allegorical not typical. However a sinful act can be typical of an unrighteous situation. e.g. Hagar is typical of bondage. **Galatians 4:24-31** and Saul, the Old Testament King is typical of the decline and end result of the backslider. Although the New Testament writers refer to many Old Testament situations as typical of this Day of Grace never once do they use a sinful act as typical of a righteous one.

16. HARMONIC PRINCIPLE

This is the principle of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary meaning. Almost every type has more than one meaning, as most prophecies do. They can relate to a specific instance, but relate to something else as well. When we use the word harmonic, we are using it in the sense of radio waves. There is a fundamental signal which is a perfect strong signal. But on either side of that signal there is another signal, which can be heard clearly and intercepted clearly but is not the original or fundamental signal, and you have it in various graduations on one side of the fundamental as well as the other. Similarly in notes of music you have the true note and you have variations of that up and down the scale on either side of that true note.

We have it also in interpretation of scripture, for instance in **Ezekiel 37** we have the prophecy of the dry bones in the valley. That speaks of Israel. There is no way we could misunderstand that. The scripture itself says it means Israel as a nation and that God is going to bring them back to their land. However it does not only refer to Israel, it refers to the Church. What we are seeing God do today in the earth, leaves no doubt that God is breathing life into the dry bones of "spiritual Israel" (**Romans 9:23-26**) that have been dead for centuries. So there is a Primary meaning, but to one side or the other of that, there can also be a secondary meaning.

The same is true when the scripture says in **Haggai 2**, that I will fill this house with my glory says the Lord, and the glory of the latter house shall be greater than the former. We know that applies to Israel, but it also applies to the Church, because we are the temple in which God now dwells, and we are the "chosen nation" with whom He is now dwelling as well as Israel.

17. PRINCIPLE OF SPIRIT OF LETTER

The Pharisees knew the scriptures, and they could quote the scripture, predicted where the Messiah would be born; but they did not see the star and they never worshipped the Christ. It is all too easy to be hung up on the technicalities and have the letter of the thing and have all the logic there and yet completely miss the Spirit of the passage. If we are going to be legalistic and bound to logical interpretation we will often miss what God is really saying.

I believe with some of the early church fathers that there is a significance in the Word of God that is not always apparent on the surface. While there may be things on the surface that add up factually to a certain doctrine or thing, there is often something deeper and beyond that, that we need to grasp for our spiritual life. God can give us nuggets of truth and principles of spiritual life out of the experience and lives of other people in the Word of God and they literally become types for us.

For example we can read something like Isaac digging the wells again that were filled in by the Philistines, and we can see in that just the historical event of him going through lots of trouble, but we can see that spiritually also it is often necessary to dig out the rubbish that's accumulated in our lives, to get down to living water. There is often a meaning that is deeper than the surface meaning. we could follow this up by making the statement that in reading the Word of God, what we need is revelation not information. Unfortunately most schools, teachers and books rely on the impartation of information instead of revelation. Unless a truth is crystallized in your heart by the Holy Ghost it will never carry conviction and it will never change lives. You can say simple things that have been revealed to you by the Spirit of God, and they will carry conviction, clarity, and anointing to change people. On the other hand you can say profound things that haven't come by the anointing of the Spirit and they'll leave people cold and dry.

In **Acts 2** Peter said "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel"- Was it? Let's go back to Joel and find out. Joel prophesied, "It shall come to pass in the last days says God, I will pour my spirit upon all flesh, your sons and daughters shall prophecy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams and on my servants and hand maidens in that day will I pour out of my Spirit". Peter said, "This is that," but Joel did not talk about all being together in one place and in one accord, the sound of a mighty rushing wind, tongues of fire and speaking unknown tongues. He talked about prophecy and on the day of Pentecost they did not prophesy as such. Peter took the Spirit of Joel's prophecy and not the letter. If some of our modern Pharisees had been there on that occasion they would not have agreed with Peter's interpretation of the scripture. Peter was after the Spirit, or the intent, - the thing that was really meant, and that was fulfilled. Under the anointing of the Holy Spirit he was able to say, "This is that", even though there was very little similarity between the two things.

In **Luke 24:45** the Bible says, that Jesus opened their eyes of understanding that they might understand the scriptures. We cannot understand the Word of God unless the Lord opens us to it. That is no mandate for having bizarre or strange revelations or people claiming the fact of a "higher revelation" to prove any doctrines they may have. We are saying that every scripture must be interpreted by scripture, but to understand that scripture we need the anointing of the Holy Spirit. In fact in **Ephesians 1** that same thought is brought across very clearly by Paul. He says that he prayed for the Church there so that God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened that they might know what is the hope of their calling etc. He prayed that God would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation

18. PRINCIPLE OF PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

Every spiritual truth must constantly be reassessed in the light of unfolding revelation and increasing understanding. This is a big statement but I believe it to be true. Some years ago I took my volumes of a certain well known commentary and threw them in the corner in thorough frustration and I never opened them again, and eventually gave them away because they so totally frustrated me, with their lack of understanding of some of the truths of God. Because they were not anointed of the Spirit of God, because they did not understand the power of the work of the Spirit, they misunderstood the work of the Spirit, they misunderstood the work of Jesus Christ. They began to talk about his miracles being done in the power of His Deity and cutting Him off from us as being

someone special and different, when Jesus says, "The works that I do, shall we do and even greater works because I go to the Father. Because they did not understand the Baptism of the Holy Spirit they completely misinterpreted the life of Christ, for one example.

Now we have received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and we are able to readjust that area. But let none of us be so "cocky" as to think that we have arrived and that God has revealed all that He's ever going to reveal out of His word to the Church. Out of this Word of God there is going to come a greater increase of life and light than ever we have seen. I expect the Last Day Church to have a complete understanding and revelation of the Word of God. Not new strange teaching, without scriptural base but out of the Word, God will open our understanding so we can see what He is talking about.

I think we need to reassess things, not necessarily change them but reassess. We need to look and see if God has brought some light to us that will adjust us, that will help us to see that we had prejudiced, biased opinion on particular aspects and truth at one time. God is bringing us further understanding through experience. As we grow older, and mature we are seeing truths of God's word with a greater understanding of the total revelation of God and constantly some of our ideas, beliefs, interpretation and doctrines have to be adjusted.

19. CHRISTO-CENTRIC PRINCIPLE

I consider this to be the most important principle of Bible interpretation. All Bible interpretation must relate to Jesus Christ. It does not mean that every fact has to be tied personally into His life or ministry. But in some way it must relate to Him. He must be the centre of it, or the motivating force of every part of scripture. All interpretation must exalt Him.

In **Psalms 40:7** in prophecy, David says on Jesus behalf, "Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me to do thy will O God." And in the volume of the book it is written of Christ, that same scripture is quoted in Hebrews. In **Luke 24:27** which we have already quoted, Jesus beginning at Moses, and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.

We can note in **2 Corinthians 3**, this passage that speaks of the ministration of death being glorious, which was given by the disposition of angels on Mt. Sinai. Paul goes on to say that because they do not receive and understand Christ, that previous glorious revelation has become the ministry of the letter, which kills and has no Spirit. WHY? Because it was not related to Jesus. They have taken Moses only, yet Moses said a prophet like unto me shall the Lord raise up unto you. They took Moses but, refused to see the anti-type. And because they refused the fulfillment of the Anti-type of Moses scripture, then Moses scripture became the instrument of death to them. All scripture must relate to Jesus. Every interpretation must relate to Jesus.

20. EVERY TYPE MUST HAVE AN ANTI-TYPE

It is no good studying Old Testament things just to deal with the facts that occurred there for the sake of it. we will end up with just data, information or history if we do that. Every type must have an Anti-type.

For example Sinai and Pentecost are closely tied together. Pentecost is the Anti-type of Sinai, for when the children of Israel reached Sinai, God came down and gave them the Law and it occurred on the same date as the day of Pentecost. Fire appeared, sound from Heaven. God came down with a supernatural voice like a trumpet that caught the people's attention and there was the giving of the

law. God said to Ezekiel in **Ezekiel 36:26-17** that "it will come to pass that I will put my Spirit upon them and I will write my laws in their hearts and I will cause them to walk in my ways." He is talking about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that will enable us and cause us to live a Holy Life.

Some people say the Baptism is not for Holiness, but how can you cut the Holy Spirit up in pieces? Whenever he comes, as the scripture says there will be a motivating force for righteousness. If people are really baptized in the Holy Spirit, they're going to have greater incentive to develop the fruit of the Spirit as well as the gifts of the Spirit. Most systems of theology would tend to categorize each aspect of the spirit's work separately but theology does not always relate to practical living. Now we have here this very important statement that ties up the giving of the law at Pentecost and the giving of the Law at Sinai. These two are closely related to each other, they follow through in detail after detail and we have Sinai as the type and Pentecost as the Anti-type.

21. THE PRINCIPLE OF DISPARITY

This means that no type is perfect within itself. For example Aaron is a type of Christ as High Priest, but Aaron himself needed cleansing and was rebellious and sinful. It is not possible to take an example and follow it through in every point, make every part of the person's life or every detail of the circumstance relate typically. In most cases there will be just a basic principle in which there will be a relationship.

Aaron as High Priest relates, but Aaron as a man does not. As a man he is no type of Christ at all because his life was far from perfect, but as the High Priest in the office and function that he held he was typical of the priestly intercessory ministry of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Not every detail of the implement, event or person etc. will have to be interpreted to any one Anti-type. There are some events, some circumstances, some people out of which a number of Anti-types come. Different circumstances are fulfilled at different times.

Abraham is a good example of this. There are many occasions in Abraham's life where different fulfillment's relate to it. You just cannot say, here is Abraham, now where in the New Testament can we find the one thing that fulfills all that Abraham was.

We do not have to take every single point in a person's life or in the event, but in some basic fundamental principle there will be an item of truth that will be important to us.

CONCLUSION

These general principles of interpretation will enable the student of scripture to understand and correctly identify the meaning of the 'hidden' and typical passages of the Word of god. There is much truth to be gained by the application of these principles and they will enable those who use them to avoid the mistakes of generalizing the Bible so that there is little of value left for the modern reader. On the other hand the student will also be preserved from spiritualising which moves beyond any boundaries and destroys the main message of the Word of God by making the interpreter superior to the author.