



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of Dr. S. Lewis Johnson

Structure of Dispensational Theology (3):

Distinctive Features: The Hermeneutics – II

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the privilege to study again tonight. We ask that Thou wilt give us guidance and direction as we think over some of the questions that have to do with the study and interpretation of the word of God. We are grateful for all of the light that Thou hast thrown upon the word for us and, Lord, we pray that Thou will continue to unfold the Scriptures that we might understand our Lord better and follow him more closely. We commit this hour to Thee.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] Now, there are a few of you who have not been here in our series of studies and we studying the Divine Purpose and, particularly, as it relates to the ages, the nation Israel, and the Gentile nations. In a sense, it is an attempt to have a little bit more sophisticated study of God's plan of the ages, but we will also be dealing with some other questions later in some of the details of the plan of God. We have followed this general practice of or this general procedure, I should say, beginning with Covenant Theology, setting out Covenant Theology as it is taught by covenant theologians with the three primary covenants of the Covenant of Redemption, the eternal Covenant of Redemption, the Covenant of Works made by God with Adam in the Garden of Eden and then the

Covenant of Grace, a covenant made by the triune God, some students say, the Lord Jesus with the elect. And then we also pointed out that in Covenant Theology there is also a place for dispensations. But the dispensations of Covenant Theology are the periods of time during which and in accordance with which the Covenant of Grace is administered. So generally speaking in Covenant Theology we have the dispensation from Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to Moses, from Moses to Christ. And then the New Testament dispensation is usually considered as one.

We discussed Covenant Theology and sought to set it out as fairly and as plainly as possible and we have not been overly critical of it at this point. The next purpose was to investigate Dispensational Theology. We looked at the history of Dispensationalism as we did Covenant Theology and now, we are seeking to set out some of the distinctive features of Dispensational Theology. These are two types of theologies within evangelicalism that seek to set out a plan of the ages in accordance with what they feel the Scriptures teach.

Now, very important from now, on we will be dealing with some of the features of Dispensationalism. I say from now, on I mean for the next few weeks that we have the study we will be dealing with certain features of Dispensational Theology such as The Hermeneutic, which we are finishing tonight. We will look at the question of law and grace and a few things like that which are distinctive of Dispensational Theology such as the covenantal scheme is distinctive of Covenant Theology. Then later on we will seek to erect a slightly different view from either of these two positions of the Purpose of the Ages but that will be later on in our studies.

Now, last week we were looking at distinctive feature number one of Dispensational Theology, The Hermeneutic of Dispensational Theology. And I was overly ambitious thinking that I could cover this outline in one hour, though I usually take at least two in theological seminary to treat it, and I, unfortunately, got a little bogged down and so we didn't finish it. In fact, we got down to roman II B or “The Problem of

Typology.” But some of you were not here, so I am going to take the liberty of just giving a brief review of what we were talking about so that you’ll understand this outline.

Again by mentioning that there is a great deal of discussion in evangelicalism in Christian theology over the question of Hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is the technical term for interpretation. So when you study Hermeneutics in a theological school you are studying the science of interpretation that’s because the term is built upon the Greek word “hermeneuo” which means to interpret. So Hermeneutics is the science of interpretation. And the struggle over Hermeneutics is very fundamental for understanding the Bible because we understand the Bible by the exercise of certain Hermeneutical principles in our mind as we read and ponder the word of God. We may think that we don’t know, anything about Hermeneutics and we may just read the Bible, but you are reading the Bible according to certain principles of understanding a written text. And while your Hermeneutics may not be very sophisticated you have one. It’s like a theology. Everybody has a theology. It may not be a very sophisticated one but, nevertheless, you have a theology. And believe it or not everyone one of you in this auditorium is a philosopher because we all have to have a certain philosophy. Some of us have a poor philosophy some have a better philosophy, some have a well thought out one, but we have a philosophy including the one who says, “I don’t have a philosophy.” That, of course, is his philosophy. So he has a very poor philosophy but he has one too.

Now, the question of Hermeneutics affects not simply the Bible but it affects almost every sphere of our human life. I illustrated it by the present struggle taking place between our Attorney General of the United States, Edwin Meese, and William Brennan, one of the Justices on the Supreme Court, who are debating how we should read the Constitution. And Attorney General Meese, being a conservative, wants to read the Constitution in the light of the original intent of its authors. Whereas, William Brennan, one of the liberal members of the Supreme Court, generally regarded as the most liberal of the members of the Supreme Court, wants to read the Constitution in a very loose way.

That is, he wants to say that the Constitution sets out certain principles and that we should feel free to apply these principles as is necessary in our society today. I don't doubt that Mr. Meese would agree with that except that he would say that we must be guided by the original intent of the authors. Well, Mr. Brennan is not so careful, and the Warren Court, as we all know, was illustrative of the freedom of reading the Constitution. In fact, if we do not read the Constitution or any other document for that matter by the principles of the original intent of the authors then we don't need the document at all. And so we really wouldn't need the Constitution at all if we are free to change the original intent that the authors had when they wrote it.

Now, there are many difficulties in doing that. After all, the Constitution was written a couple of hundred years ago and so, in fact, some have said how can we know, the original intent if all that is lost, as if history stopped and no one has any way of investigating history if it is more than a generation or so back. That's foolish, of course, and I'm sure Mr. Brennan wouldn't say anything like that seriously. But that becomes a real problem when we come to the biblical studies because we are seeking to interpret the documents that are not a couple of hundreds years old but thousands of years old; a couple of thousand of years old as far as the New Testament is concerned. So Hermeneutics is very important.

We also pointed out that the reformers, probably the finest biblical students for many centuries through the medieval ages, the late ages of the early Church, they established and generally supported the idea of a grammatical, historical method of interpretation. That is, we look at the history that lies back of the documents and of the times. Then we interpret according to the grammar and syntax of those documents and if our interpretation agrees with the grammar and syntax and is harmonious with what we know, of the historical background of it that's the interpretation that we should follow. And, further, the reformers generally followed the method that Scripture is its own interpreter. As I mentioned one of the Latin terms that was very prominent was *Scriptura*

sui ipsius interpretis or “Scripture is the interpreter of it itself.” Or *Scriptura, ex scriptura explicanda est* -- Scripture is to be explained by Scripture.” That is a fundamental principle in the understanding of Scripture. We pointed out that the reformers essentially said since Scripture is the interpreter of Scripture, and Scripture is authored by the guidance of the Holy Spirit who moved upon the authors of Scripture to give us the word of God that the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures is the ultimate standard of what God is saying in his word; the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scriptures.

Now, that’s a principle that should apply to all of us and even when we disagree over what we feel the Holy Spirit is speaking through the Scriptures, we ought to agree with that principle. And that principle is the foundation upon which anyone ought to approach the word of God. Then we launched into the discussion of Evangelical Hermeneutics. We discussed the grammatical, historical and theological method. And, incidentally, at that term theological, I have taken the liberty of adding for this reason. Generally, people will say yes we follow a grammatical, historical method of interpretation but that does not recognize the fact that the Bible is a unique book. Sure we should approach the Bible as we approach any book that is written, that is, it is grammar, it has syntax but there is something extra in the Bible that is importance, and it is this. The Bible by its own affirmation is a book of dual authorship.

Now, the ultimate author is the Lord, but the ancients by whom the word of God has come to us are the human authors of the word of God. So it is called the word of God but at the same time it’s the word of God that comes to us through men who were moved by the Holy Spirit as Peter puts it. So it’s a unique number. It’s a unique document. The Scriptures looked at as a whole or the Scriptures are composed of unique documents. They are documents of dual authorship. And so there is an element in the understanding of the Bible that one does not find in the understanding of Bunyan’s *Pilgrims Progress* for that matter, so the grammatical, historical, theological method.

We talked about lower or textual criticism that one must practice textual criticism to come to the conclusions regarding the precise text itself that involves Hebrew, Aramaic, Green textual criticism. Grammatical and syntactical criticism involves understanding of the grammar of the text and the syntax of the text. If you are studying the original text you have to know, something about Hebrew grammar and Aramaic grammar and Greek grammar. If you are studying English text you must understand something about English grammar in order to understand it. And don't feel as if you are impoverished if you are looking only at the English text because if you have two or three translations before you, I tried to point this out, but if you have two or three translations before you and you pay attention to them and you notice the different ways in which the text may be read because they will appear in translations; translators differ over interpretations of matters. You will if you study the context carefully you will almost always be able of yourself, even though you know no Greek or Hebrew to come to the meaning of the text. Do not let anybody tell you that if you don't know, Greek or Hebrew you cannot understand the Bible. That person doesn't really understand the Bible very well if he makes a statement like that. Because you can understand the Scriptures without Greek, without Hebrew, in fact, you can understand it better than a lot of people who know, Greek and know, Hebrew very well. One has only to pay attention to scholarly literature to see that. Some people who understand the Bible about as poorly as anybody else write highly technical articles on certain portions of the word of God.

Higher criticism, we pointed it is a legitimate form of study because it has to do with the sources of the biblical material, questions about authorship, questions about destination, questions about origin and other questions of interest. Unfortunately, higher criticism has a bad name because the individuals who have specialized in this have largely been men who have been enamored of liberal theological principles. But there are individuals conservative and sound in their theology who give us worthwhile results of the study of higher criticism.

Then we discussed Evangelical Hermeneutics, Prophecy and Topology and we discussed the problem of Prophecy, the problem of a dual Hermeneutic. Let me explain what we were talking about. We're talking primarily here about Dispensational Hermeneutics. One of the claims of Dispensational Hermeneutics is that while we may agree on the grammatical, historical method of interpretation our opponents who represent Covenant Theology use a dual Hermeneutic rather than a consistent one Hermeneutic. And we discussed that. We tried to point out that a basis of that particular claim a basis of it is simply this. Dispensationalists claim that the proper method is the grammatical, historical method of interpretation. Covenant men generally speaking say the same thing but when Covenant men interpret the prophetic word they will add in addition to the grammatical, historical method of interpretation according to Dispensationalist another kind of Hermeneutics, Hermeneutics involving the spiritualization of the text.

Now, we tried to point out that spiritualization of the text is the taking of a passage that in its historical context referred, say the nation Israel and then in a different context the New Testament context, taking passages that referred to the nation Israel in the Old Testament and applying them to the Christian church in the present age or the context of the New Testament. I gave you one illustration from Acts chapter 15, in which the Tabernacle of David in the Old Testament would seem to be a figurative expression of rebuilding of the Davidic kingdom, but in the New Testament some interpreters have taken that to be the Christian Church. And the term “David” is not related to the Christian Church and Tabernacle is, of course, a figurative expression as one can see from just reflecting upon it.

Let me give you one other illustration. In Galatians Chapter 6 in verse 16, the Apostle Paul writes this. He says, “As many as shall walk according to this rule peace be upon them and upon the Israel of God.” Now, verse 16 of Galatians chapter 6, is really very simple and straightforward, “As many as shall walk according to this rule.”

Well he's just mentioned the New Creation that's the rule, the rule of the New Creation.

There is little disagreement over that. “Peace be upon them and mercy and upon the Israel of God.” But because some people think that the term Israel is a term for the church you will find translated in some of our evangelical versions this text this way, “As many as shall walk by this rule peace be upon them and mercy even upon the Israel of God.”

Now, by that rendering the term “Israel of God” is taken as an apposition with the preceding “them” and, therefore, since that clearly has to do with the Christian church then the “Israel of God” is a term for the Christian church.

Now, I don't have time to talk about this but that interpretation cannot be substantiated exegetically, it cannot be substantiated grammatically, and it cannot be substantiated philologically. If this were true, this would be the only place in all of the Scriptures that the term “Israel” refers to the Church. In other words, in every other case the term “Israel” refers to “Israelites” ethnic Israelites.

Now, I know, there are two or three other passages that are debated. Don't misunderstand me. I've just written a twenty-page technical paper on this particular thing in which I called upon the New International Version to retranslate and correct the translation of this point. I have made reference to this before in these studies. But while there are some, to my mind, rather feeble attempts to support this idea from other places when we look at the mass of the usage of the term “Israel” in all of Scripture you can see that the mass of the evidence stands solidly on taking the term “Israel” as ethnic Israel. It's very simple to understand it if you read the Epistle of the Galatians through a half a dozen times and you find out the persons that Paul has in mind are the Judiazers who have come in after him; Jewish professing believers who have come in and have sought to teach the Galatian Gentile Christians that they ought to be circumcised in order to be saved. That's what they were being taught.

Now, the apostle writes a very harsh letter as you know. He doesn't even give thanksgiving as he usually does in Galatians for his readers. And at the end he says, “I have written this with my own hand,” which was contrary to his own practice. That was a way by which he sought to show them I'm really concerned over this. I wrote this with my own scrawling, sprawling hand. And he said you see what large letters I have written this in my own hand. He usually used an amanuensis or a secretary. So what was he doing at the conclusion of the epistle? Well he was saying after this very harsh letter there are believing Israelites who have not succumbed to the false teaching of the Judaizers. They are Israelites, but they are the Israel of God. They are true believing Israelites, members of the Christian church, who have not succumbed to the doctrine that one must be circumcised in order to be saved. It's a marvelous climatic conclusion of the Epistle to the Galatians. If you have any question about Paul using that particular idea in Romans 11, remember, when he's talking about these same questions he says, “Even in the present season there is remnant according to the election of grace.” The remnant is the remnant of the Israel of God, believing Israelites. But, now, if we were to take the term Israel as a reference to the Church then that would be in my mind a violation of grammatical, historical method of interpretation.

So we talked about that. I tried to say this, however, Dispensationalists to my mind have been wrong in accusing many of the covenant people of practicing a dual Hermeneutic. Oh, it's true maybe in a few little places they do, but they do have a reason for saying what they say. And what they say is, essentially, this and the principle is correct. What a covenant theologian will say with reference to hermeneutics is if you apply the grammatical, historical method of interpretation to the text of Scripture you will find that the writers of Scripture do spiritualize. So you see the point is they are applying the same principle and maybe we shouldn't accuse them of a dual hermeneutic but just a different understanding of the results of the application of the hermeneutic of grammatical, historical, theological method of interpretation.

Strictly speaking, what it all comes down to in my opinion, this is my opinion, is that both practice the same kind of hermeneutic. But in the case of the covenantal interpretation there is the claim that the New Testament interpretation of the Old Testament supports the idea of spiritualization by grammatical, historical study of Scripture. Dispensationalists and others, not simply Dispensationalists, and others on the other hand affirm that it is not supported by a study of the interpretation of the Old Testament and the New Testament. In other words, the issue resolves into how does the New Testament use the Old Testament? Or how do the writers of Scripture use Scripture? Do they practice the principle of spiritualization? In my opinion, they don't. And so in this particular instance I would come down on the side of the Dispensationalists. But there are some passages that are problems. Even if I could be shown that I was correct, for example, an angel from heaven should stand by me and say, “Lewis you're right about that,” I would still acknowledge that there are passages that are questions and if we had a course for about six years we could talk about all the use of the Old Testament and the New Testament but you would be even sleepier than you have become now.

So let us go on from that point. I mentioned the problem of reinterpretation in that many evangelicals today have sought to take the position because they find difficulty in understanding how the New Testament writers interpret the Old Testament. Have you ever had that difficulty? Well maybe some of you have never bothered to look at the Old Testament when you read a citation from the New Testament in one of the New Testament texts. Well sometimes start doing that. Read the Epistle to the Romans and when Paul says as it stands written go back and look at the context of the passage in the Old Testament and see if you can see the principle that Paul sees in that passage which he applies in his New Testament epistles. And you'll find that are some very, very hard things and one must study this rather intently and finally come up with a kind of analysis of the text in which you may put in a form by which someone would be helped in understanding the Bible.

You will find texts are used analogically. You will find texts are used as simple prediction and fulfillment. You'll find some texts that are used typologically, that is in the Old Testament a passage refers to David which establishes a certain principle that is applied to Christ in the New Testament because David is a legitimate type of Christ. And you will find various other principles we don't have time to talk there. Probably eight to ten of these principles that one uncovers in the study of the use of Scripture by the authors of Scripture. And they don't tell us now this is fulfilled typologically or this is fulfilled predicatively or this if fulfilled analogically that's something we have to come to by analyzing the use that they make of Scripture.

You might say well why is that? Well the reason for it is very simple. The authors of Scripture were all Calvinists. [Laughter] That's right, they were, they were all Calvinists. Some of you, I know, are very upset over that but it is true. It is true. [Laughter] Anyway, I was just kidding you. They're all Calvinists in this sense. They believe that everything comes to pass according to the will of God. “God works all things according to the counsel of his will.” So all of human history and, particularly, all of the salvation history is overseen by a sovereign God. Therefore, all of the things in Scripture, particularly, but this is true of all things, all of the things in Scripture, particularly, come to pass according to the Divine Purpose. Therefore, when we say its fulfilled we don't have to ask how or why. We may, if we want to investigate it more, well, I think, the reason the Holy Spirit says this is because this is a typical use of the Old Testament but all things are in accordance with his will.

David came on the scene according to the will of God. David did the things that he did which are recorded in Scripture according to the will of God. All of these things are, therefore, they read Scripture as if were given us by a sovereign God. So they didn't find it necessary to say this is fulfilled typically or this is fulfilled by direct prediction. Both types of fulfillment are part of the sovereign plan and purpose of God. It took me a long time to learn that. You see I've given it to you in just a few minutes, but I'll tell you

it took me ten years to learn that. After I was doing Greek exegesis for theological students leading them through the Greek text of the books of the New Testament and puzzling myself when I came to some of those passages; how did the New Testament author get that force and sense out of the Old Testament passage? I was always looking for fulfillment by predictive, predictive fulfillment, and I discovered typological fulfillment, analogical fulfillment, and various other things that were perfectly harmonious once I learned the principle of God controlling history according will and purpose. It's very true. You read the Bible that way and you will understand a whole lot more about it.

Now, we want to say just a word about typology because typology is one of the questions that we will face in the interpreting of the Bible. The problem of typology is largely that of a misunderstanding of it. Oh, I should have said this, I'm sorry I'm doing this without any notes and I sometimes you are not always as scientific as you would like to be. I was leading up to reinterpretation suggesting to you that the principle of New Testament author reinterpreting the Old Testament and finding something in it that was not really in the Old Testament is not a valid principle. And people think that reinterpretation is in my opinion, again my opinion, because they haven't studied sufficiently the context of the passages of the Old Testament. If so, they wouldn't follow the principle that the New Testament author found something in the Old Testament that wasn't there. It's always there but sometimes we have difficulty finding it and, particularly, until you learn some of these principles.

Furthermore, if you do say the New Testament reinterprets the Old Testament finding something there that is not really there then you have some serious problems with the doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture. In effect, you are saying the writers of the Old Testament did not really understand what they were talking about and in fact say things that the New Testament writers, the New Testament writers find truth there that they didn't really say and that poses a very, very severe problems in believing that Scripture is truly and fully the word of God.

Now, the problem of typology is largely that to my mind to a misunderstanding of it leading to an over emphasis or under emphasis of it in biblical study. Now, we reject, I reject bizarre typology. The two wings of the great Eagle in Revelations 12:13, are probably not the U.S. Air Force's Phantom jets. Ezekiel's vision of the living creatures and wheels probably do not refer to UFO's manned by the Cherubim as Mr. Weber from Oklahoma City likes to say sometimes over his radio program. On the other hand, Bishop Morris' position was almost as absurd namely that nothing in the Old Testament is typical unless the New Testament declares it to be so. Well that is obviously a kind of pronouncement that doesn't really have any support at all from actual study of the instances of the use of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

Let me briefly point out a few important things. First of all, the term “type” “tupeos” is the Greek term, the term type suggests, the usage of it suggests that it does not have a technical sense at all. Sometimes people like to wrestle over whether something is a type or not a type but simply an example. But there is no such need to do that. The term “type” is not a technical term at all. It's a word that simply means an example or a pattern. If you'll look up all the instances of “tupeos” type in the New Testament sometimes it's rendered by an example. You will discover that it is not a technical term at all it means simply an example, that's all. That's what a type is. It's a means by which certain truth is illustrated. It's an example.

Typology is the study of spiritual correspondences between persons, events, and things within the historical framework of divine revelation. Let me repeat again because this is, I think, an important thing to keep in mind. Typology is the study of the spiritual correspondence between persons, David a type of Christ, Adam a type of Christ and so on. Events, the Exodus of the Old Testament, the historical physical Exodus is illustrative of the spiritual exodus of a believer through the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. And things, the Tabernacle was an illustrative of certain New Testament truths. So

spiritual correspondence is between persons, events, and things within the historical framework of revelation.

Lying at its base as I mentioned a minute ago is the conviction that God controls history and that there is a consistency in his dealings with men. R. T. France an amillennial interpreter, a man who has spent a good bit of time in the study of this particular area has, I think, something very true to say about this. He says, “New Testament typology is, thus, essentially the tracing of the constant principles of God’s working in history revealing a recurring rhythm in past history which is taken up more fully and perfectly in the gospel events. Tracing of the constant principles of God’s working in history. The two great ideas of typology are these: Historicity, that is the event that is typical is a part of history and the anti-type, the fulfillment of it is or a further development of it is a historical event, person or thing as well. Historicity and correspondence that is it is a reflection of the fact that God operates according to the principles of the nature of his being and he operates in the same way in Old Testament times as he does in the New Testament times because he is the eternal, immutable God and he does not change. A type is not a prediction nor is an anti-type the fulfillment of a prediction. It’s rather the real embodiment of a principle which has been previously exemplified in the type. A prediction looks forward to and demands an event, which is to be its fulfillment.

Typology, however, consists essentially in looking back and discerning previous examples of a pattern now reaching its culmination. Exegesis is a pre-requisite of typology. Typology is not a method of exegesis. Typology is the theological interpretation of the Old Testament history as it is exegetically set out. In other words, when you do typology what you are doing is looking at the Old Testament and finding the evidences and examples of God’s working which are in accordance with his nature as he is revealed in Scripture and which find recurring fulfillment during the process of human history. Finding, of course, a great climax in the ministry of Lord Jesus Christ, but

there is evidence that certain types will only be fulfilled, ultimately, at the second Advent of the Lord Jesus and in the kingdom that follows. Typology is a valid biblical study necessary to biblical interpretation and that's clear to almost all responsible interpreters of the Bible. There is nothing in typology contrary to the grammatical, historical method of interpretation. So when you say this is a type of this don't feel that you have to apologize for it. Sometimes in our theological schools because some individuals have engaged in bizarre exegesis and engaged in bizarre typology and caused typology to have a bad name sometimes people hesitate to even use the term type. Let me assure you biblical scholars know better. They use the term type because you cannot understand the Bible if you don't understand typology. It is a significant part of the word of God.

Now, we come to Evangelical Hermeneutics Allegory and Spiritualization; with allegory we come to something a little different.

Capital A - Allegory in the Bible. An allegory is a fiction that teaches a moral truth. Perhaps the clearest illustration is one, I think, I mentioned last week Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress*. That is a lengthy allegory. It's not history but it is a story which is designed to illustrate a number of spiritual truths. All of those characters in Bunyan marvelous unfolding of aspects of Christian life and thinking and the events through which Christian passes illustrate great truths. Christians generations ago made Bunyan's "Pilgrims Progress" reading right by the side of the Bible. That's one reason why we are deficient in some of our theology. Bunyan was a very fine teacher of Christian theology and you would be profited if you not only read Bunyan's "Pilgrims Progress" but if you really became acquainted with it. If you read much of Mr. Spurgeon you'd know that it was one of his favorite books, which he read over and over and over again. And if you read his sermons those characters in Bunyan's *Pilgrims Progress* appear in his sermons over and over again because people in the audience were familiar with them. They knew about those characters and they knew about the events and they were marvelous

illustrations of the particular passage that Mr. Spurgeon was expounded. There is very little allegory in the Bible and none in the New Testament

Now, I know, that a person might say what about Galatians, chapter 4 in verse 24? Now, that is a rather interesting passage and I would be the first to grant that it is. And there are one or two things about it that I don't understand yet. I hope I understand them before I get to Heaven but time is growing short and so I have to apply myself more directly to this. But I have, you know, the first commentary I ever wrote on the Greek text of the book of the Bible was done on Galatians as a graduate student. I wrote a commentary on a Greek text of the Epistle of the Galatians then later on taught this epistle a number of times at the theological seminary exegeting the Greek text. I understand a whole lot more about it now than I did then but there are things about this particular passage that are not easy. And one of the statements that puzzled me for a little while was the statement in verse 24, where Paul says, “Which things are allegoromena” Now, that's the Greek word, that's participle. Allegoromena, now, you can see if I just pronounce that a few times knowing no Greek you'll recognized that's the word from which we get allegory. And some people have sought to translate this, therefore, which things are being allegorized because the English allegory is derived from the Greek word. That's a simple philological mistake to make. That is that a word's meaning is determined by its root. A word's meaning is always determined by the usage of the term. That's why when a person says this term is made up of these two roots which mean such and such and then begins to interpret a passage based on the meaning on the roots of the word he might be right sometimes. There are a few cases where that is true but he also might be very wrong because words change meanings through usage. If I say, for example, Elijah was a neat prophet. Now, you wouldn't think would you that Elijah was a person who was careful to have no specks of food on his clothes or anything like that and he never had anything but a crease in his pants and was generally clean and well coiffed, whatever you might say. No, you know, the term “neat” has come to have a new meaning even in

our time. Neat, a great prophet, very interesting prophet, great prophet that's the way the kids use the term Now, we use it, neat prophet. So terms derive their meaning from usage.

Now, this particular term which things are being allegorized should never have been translated that way. Modern scholarship agrees I'm not giving you something unique. This is a term for typology. Which things are being allegorized that's what Paul does here? He takes this incident in Genesis 21, and he speaks of it as a typical incident. Why, well because allegory by definition is non-historical. But Paul is talking about historical events that are recorded in Genesis 21.

Now, there are lots of fine points about this and I just read a book on Old Testament interpretation, in fact, I've got a chapter or so to finish the book. It's a recent one written in 1984. In this particular book this author contends that while it's characteristic of allegory to be non-historical it's not necessarily so. But then he has no illustrations of that and, in fact, the only illustration that I could possibly find is an illustration not of allegory but what I would call typology, maybe a not so very obvious one, an unusual one. But, I think, it is fair to say that allegory is non-historical.

But Paul is talking about historical events. So this word should be translated typologically interpretative. For example, Bishop Lightfoot a long time ago offers a comment that is typical. He says, “Allegorea,” St Paul uses “allegorea” that's the noun, here much in the same sense as he uses type. Not denying the historical truth to the narrative but superimposing a secondary meaning.” In other words Paul looked at the incident recorded in Genesis and then he says that as typical of important truths and found, of course, as you know, the important truth that he says in it had to do with law and grace. And that's why he winds up the section by saying, “Wherefore brethren we are not children of the bondmaid but we are children of the free. And since we are not children of the bondmaid we are not under the law as a code. We are free, therefore, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free and be not entangled again

with a yoke of bondage. Don't put yourself back under the Old Testament law as Israel was then.” Read Galatians through and I don't think you'll have a lot of difficulty with it. The closest thing to allegory in the New Testament is Paul's use of Deuteronomy 25:4, and 1 Corinthians 9:8 through 10. Some of you know, I've written a chapter in a little book of lectures on that particular use of the Old Testament which I show that that is not allegory at all but rather a treatment again of a passage inner logically.

Now, symbolism in the Bible I want to try and give you a few minutes to ask questions. Symbolism in the Bible is generally recognized that scientific procedures are to be observed in the interpretation in the figures of speech. Correct identification of them, identifying the function of them identifying the meaning of a figure and so in biblical symbols. When you look at the symbols of the Bible it's necessary to analyze them carefully see the way in which Scripture has used them and seek to come to an interpretation of their meaning. The Book of Revelation is a book in which the author tells us right at the beginning that this is a book that contains symbols. In fact, in chapter 1 verse 1, in the use of the term “signified” in the very first verse we have the Greek verb from which we get the English from which we get the noun “semeion” which means sign used by John in his gospel of the events that our Lord performed in his life which had spiritual meaning, symbols.

Now, if I have a symbol it's in perfect harmony with grammatical, historical method of interpretation because truth may be expressed either directly or indirectly. So literary style or form does not affect the truth or falsity of the content.

The headline, “Crimson Tide swamps the Volunteers,” that may be obscure to the less fanatical but it makes excellent sense to a University of Alabama football fan. And, in fact, even some of those individuals who criticize some people for seeing symbolism in the Bible might understand that. If we see “Longhorns corral Mustangs,” that wouldn't go too well but ah, ah something else we can make excellent sense out of that. Those

symbolic ways of expressing things were referred to specific historical events. So symbolism is just a different literary style of saying something.

And, finally, spiritualization in the Bible. Debate continues over this the amillennialists and the historical pre-millennialists not quite so radically being in the forefront of the opposition but I just do not believe that spiritualism, spiritualizing, spiritual symbolism does, spiritualizing exists in the Scriptures. But this can only be answered by what I said last week, suggested by Greg Bonson’s terms, “by hand to hand combat over the exegesis of individual text.” We cannot settle this by general statements. We must look at this text and this text and this text and this text and after we’ve looked at the way Scripture uses the Old Testament reach our conclusion.

Now, there are a lot of people, you’re going to think I’m very arrogant when I say this, but it is true. There are a lot of people who talk a lot about this who have not investigated the use of the Old Testament and the New Testament in Scripture. But I have. Now, I don’t say that I have investigated every place because it would be a life-long study. But for twenty-five years I have studied the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Taught five courses in that subject, five different courses in that subject in theological seminaries. What I had in that little book of six lectures represents six of a hundred fifty lectures that I have given on that topic. In fact, I’ve given more than that but a hundred fifty lectures that I have worked at on that topic. So I am speaking from experience. I may be wrong but I am speaking from experience. I have sought to look at these texts. But there are a lot of people who pronounce upon them who have not looked at those texts. Many of whom pronounce upon them cannot read Greek or Hebrew, do not even know, how to look at the Septuagint or the Seriac or the various other types of texts that must be looked at in the analysis of the use of the Old Testament and the New Testament. And I don’t say that I am right. A man may, of course, look at these things and come to the wrong conclusion. But that’s the first thing that a person ought to do before he speaks with certainty. I just don’t think that spiritualization exists

in the Bible. There does exist analogy and occasionally analogy is very close to what some people think of as spiritualization. But analogy is really a good bit different and as we go along we will be able to see some of that.

Let me conclude. The ultimate solution of these questions rests in the use of Scripture by the authors of Scripture and it's to be hoped that the Evangelical Church and you, particularly, will get on with the job of discovering a way in which the Bible uses Scripture. I think that there will result from this a more evident sense of the continuity between the testaments. This continuity is often word in both pre-millennial and amillennial thought. The pre-millennialists often fails to see that there is continuity in the divine program of the ages, continuity in the people of God in the program of God. Amillennialists have often failed to see the promises and the fulfillment literally in history. So our job is to continue to listen to the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture. May the Lord help us all to study the Scriptures in that way.

Now, we have just five minutes, I'm sorry. But if next week if we finish our study early you can come back and answer any questions about this. May we have just a few questions that you would like to ask and I'll try to answer them if I can hear them?

Yes Bob. [question inaudible] Is there what? [Inaudible] There's no term but the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. It's the study of the citations or quotations and allusions. When one studies this you don't study simply the quotations or citations you study the quotations and the allusions from the Old Testament in the New Testament. That's [inaudible] No, analogy is a particular form of the use of a passage from the Old Testament in the New Testament. You can talk about a comparison of the text if you like but the term that is commonly used by people is the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. And since also you have the use of the Old Testament in the Old Testament because some of them the later writers in the Old Testament times use earlier writing like Moses. Moses' writings will appear in Isaiah for example. Zachariah uses Isaiah. And then in the New Testament we have John in the Book of Revelations citing

and using symbols not simply from the Old Testament but also from our Lord's Olivet discourse. So probably it is just better to say the use of Scripture by the authors of Scripture. That's what it is. I'm sorry I can't give you any particular term but that's the common term is the use the most common way in which scholars speak of this study is the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Now, Bob you look as if you are still a little puzzled.

[Inaudible] The grammatical, historical method is the general hermeneutical method. This is a special application of it to the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Now, you see your grammatical, historical method that may be applied to the study of Moses, the study of the prophet, the study of the gospels, and the study of the Pauline epistles and so on. That would be more, that's inclusive of all interpretation, the method of interpreting. But the other is an area of studying of which the application of hermeneutics is made to that particular sphere of study. Does that help?

Yes, Randy, speak loud enough so that I can hear. [Question inaudible] Randy, if I did that as you can probably see what we would be doing would be here for ten years because there are three hundred texts that are cited in the New Testament specifically cited with introductory formula. There are literally hundreds and hundreds of other passages which are not introduced by introductory formulae but clearly are allusions to the Old Testament. Even down to a couple of words and sometimes only one word. So no I cannot, don't have time to do that. But if you want to come to me about a specific passage giving me a little time ahead of time I'll look over my notes on it because I don't carry everything in my head at every moment you know,. I would be glad to discuss any of it an I will tell you the ones that puzzle me, there are a few that still puzzle me but if you are looking for the passages over which there is debate some of them I can, you know, I deal with that in theological seminary when you are dealing with a different subject. But this is the Diving Purpose of the Ages so I don't want to get bogged down on that because as I say it would take weeks and weeks. You're the kind of person who

is interested in those detail and that is a good point. Let me suggest some books for you to read. If you want to read a beginning approach would be R.V.G. Tasker's and it's something like the Old Testament in the New Testament. Something a little more complicated would be Earl Ellises' "The Use of the Old Testament in Paul." I think he calls use of the Old Testament. One also very capably done is done by Robert Gundry its "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament." Those are volumes which just certain areas of this study are studied and worked out and I'd suggest to you, you know, begin to do some of that studying and you can do it. You have the ability to do that.

Well our time is up, so let's close with a word of prayer;

[Prayer] Father we are grateful to thee for the privilege of study and we know, Lord that this has been rather heavy. We pray that our understanding of Scripture has been helped and perhaps we pray Lord that some of the issues that lie before us may have been unfolded a bit to encourage to dig more deeply into thy word. Help us to do it fairly. [End of tape]