

Reading Exodus as Christ-Typology

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1. To the Jews who were trying to kill Him, Jesus says:

And **the Father** who sent me **has himself borne witness about me**. His voice you have never heard, his form you have never seen, and you do not have his word abiding in you, for you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search **the Scriptures** because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that **bear witness about me**, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life. (John 5:37-40)

2. After His resurrection, Jesus graces His disciples with lessons in Christ-centered Old Testament interpretation:

[On road to Emmaus:] Jesus said to them, “O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?” And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself. (Luke 24:25-27)

Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24:44-45)

3. The Apostles, taught by Christ Himself, proclaimed Jesus as the center and ultimate Subject of God’s one story of the cosmic restoration/redemption through Israel. They could declare that Jesus is our Passover Lamb (1 Cor. 5:7), that the “prophet like Moses” or greater Joshua (Acts 3:22) is fulfilled both at Jesus Transfiguration (Luke 9:35) and through His resurrection (Acts 3:15,26), that Moses’ ministry is taken up and superceded by Christ—as is the God-given role of the High Priest, the sacrifices, the Sabbath, the festivals, etc. (Hebrews, Colossians 2:17).

4. In reflecting on these “foreshadowings and pictures” of Christ in the Old Testament, we should consider that God is the Lord of history, shaping events from the beginning to the end of the world. He has directed and shaped Israel’s story in such a way that it testifies to Christ because **God has known and planned the redemption of the world through the saving death and resurrection of Christ since before the foundation of the world**.

Ephesians 1:3-4 (ESV) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him **before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

Revelation 13:8 (ESV) And all who dwell on earth will worship [the beast], everyone whose name has not been written **before the foundation of the world** in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain. (ESV)

Revelation 13:8 (NIV) All inhabitants of the earth will worship the beast-- all whose names have not been written in the book of life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.

5. Melito of Sardis (c. 100-190), in his Easter homily *On Pascha*, while affirming the vivid historical reality of the Exodus events, still finds the deepest realities of God’s “B.C.” redemption of His people in the person and work of Christ—incarnate. He describes the saving “effect” of the blood of the Passover lambs in Exodus, for example, as depending not on the lamb-blood alone, but as already bearing the saving power of the Lord Jesus. He calls this a “mystery.” Speaking of the Passover, Melito writes:

Tell me angel, what turned you away? The slaughter of the sheep or the life of the Lord? The death of the sheep or the type of the Lord? The blood of the sheep or the spirit of the Lord?

It is clear that you turned away **seeing the mystery of the Lord** in the sheep and the life of the Lord in the slaughter of the sheep and the type of the Lord in the death of the sheep. **Therefore** you struck not Israel down, but made Egypt alone childless. (*On Pascha*, 30–33)

