

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God

IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

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Second Order

He takes away the first in order to establish the second. (Hebrews 10:9 NASB)

From Genesis to Malachi, scripture is filled with what are called *types*. In this context, a *type* is defined as "a person, thing, or event that represents or symbolizes another, especially another that is to come; symbol; emblem; token, sign." The fulfillment of a type is called the *antitype*, defined as "the person or thing represented or foreshadowed by an earlier type or symbol."

The portion of scripture that is mischaracterized as the Old Testament is filled with types from beginning to end. The New Testament (also mischaracterized) is the unveiling or revealing of the antitype, that is, the reality that explains all the types. The term *mischaracterize* is used because scripture is not so much about old and new as it is about God's plan progressively unfolding down through history that is driving toward His ultimate purpose to be all in all in His entire creation, including all of mankind, none excluded. **God is love** is written over the entirety of man's history. It is a progressive love story that is built upon one line, not many, and that line is His Son, the Son of His love, our Lord Jesus. The writer of the letter to the Hebrews sums it up for us.

In many ways [or, Bit by bit] and in various ways in time past, God having spoken through the prophets, in these last days He spoke to us by [His] Son.... (Hebrews 1:1 ALT)

Until Christ came on the scene of world history 2,000 years ago, God spoke through the prophets to reveal in many ways His multi-faceted plan and His single, ultimate purpose. He spoke bit by bit, which is a way to say He spoke in fragments, meaning He didn't lay it all out in one neat package for all to understand. His plan and purpose were presented in types and shadows, which is another way of describing the types. A shadow is a reflection or an outline of the real thing.

It wasn't until the Father sent His beloved Son into the earth to live, die for the sin of the world, and be raised up from among the dead because of His sinless perfection and holiness that all these types began to come into focus and the shadows to vanish in the light of the life of the Son of God. God no longer speaks bit by bit nor does He veil His plan and purpose in shadows and types. All the types and shadows are explained through, by, and in Christ Jesus. God's progressive plan from antiquity to our day and on to the consummation of the ages is summed up in His Son; He alone explains the very nature and heart of God and His plan and purpose.

We could say that *the types* are *a* first order and *the antitype* is *the* second order. This is what the Hebrews epistle tells us in light of the Son's declaration that He came to do His Father's will. In light of this declaration, Hebrews reveals a principle or law of God: **He takes away the first in order to establish the second** (NASB). Another translation words it this way: **He abolishes the first so that He shall establish the second** (ALT). Still another translation words it: **He is habitually (or: progressively; or: presently) taking back up the first, so that He could make the second to stand (or: that He may place and establish the second)** (JM-NT). Notice the use of the word *progressively*, implying that God is pressing on toward His goal, just as Paul would tell us we need to be pressing on toward God's goal, as well (Philippians 3:11-14). All of this means that God has a second order in view. His first order is not the best, for it is simply a shadow of the real thing. The real deal is found in His Son and in nothing else.

For this reason, we are told that the first man, the first Adam, is a type of the one to come (Romans 5:14) who is the second man, the last Adam. This lays out the principle of the first being taken away in order to establish the second. Clearly, the second man's order is far superior (an understatement) to the first man's order. So, starting in

Genesis, the book of beginnings, we are presented with a shadow or type that points to the antitype that is of a second order.

We can trace the second order throughout scripture next with the account of **Cain and Abel**. Cain brought an offering to the Lord of the fruit of the ground, and Abel brought an offering of the firstlings of his flock and their fat portions (Genesis 4:3-4). Cain's offering was unacceptable to the Lord, for it was inferior fruit, not being the first fruits of the ground. Abel's offering was acceptable, for it was of the first of his flock. Notice that Abel, the second son of Adam, brought the acceptable offering, and Cain, the first-born son of Adam, brought the unacceptable offering. Abel was killed for his better sacrifice and his life still speaks (Hebrews 11:4), and yet, he too is simply a type of the greater sacrifice of Christ whose blood speaks better than the blood of Abel (Hebrews 12:24). But, there is more to the story. Cain was the first son and Abel was the second son; however, the second son was the only one to offer the first of his flock. Throughout scripture, God places a high value on the first born of men or firstlings of animals or first fruits of the ground. Yet, God often takes away the first in order to establish the second, and the second becomes the first. To prove the point, Jesus is the second man, but He is also the firstborn of all creation and the firstborn from the dead. Thus, the second is blessed as the first. By the way, this does not mean the first that is taken away is necessarily bad; it generally means that the second is better or superior. So, in this simple story, God established that the second order is superior to the first order, and the second order often takes on the blessing of the first order, as well.

The law or principle of the second order is revealed through some other sets of brothers. Consider **Ishmael and Isaac**. Ishmael was the first born of Abraham, but Sarah told Abraham: *Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac* (Genesis 21:10). The first born is generally the heir of a father's estate, but, in this case, it was the second born of Abraham that became the heir. He takes away the first to establish the second. However, God did not forget Ishmael, for He blessed him by making a great nation of him (Genesis 21:18). Through Isaac, Abraham's descendants would be named (Genesis 21:12). Next, we come to **Esau the first born and Jacob the second born**. Through deception, Jacob stole Esau's birthright and blessing of his father Isaac. As the first born, Esau was entitled to the birthright and blessing, but, like Cain, he was disqualified. According to the book of *Jasher* (Joshua 10:13), Esau sold his birthright to his younger brother for some red stew because he had just killed Nimrod for his coat (supposedly, the one worn by Adam) and Nimrod's men were out to kill him. Esau thought he was about to be hunted down and killed, so he considered his birthright of no use to him. God loved Jacob but hated Esau (Malachi 1:2-3). Next, we see two other brothers. Jacob had two wives, **the first wife Leah and the second wife Rachel**. Leah's first born was **Reuben**, and Rachel's first born was Joseph. Technically, Reuben was the first born of Jacob's sons and was eligible for the birthright and blessing. However, because he defiled his father's bed, he lost this right; consequently, it was given to **Joseph** and his sons (Genesis 49:4; 1 Chronicles 5:2). Joseph is also a type of Christ and His coming again to set up His Kingdom among the nations. Then, we come to Joseph's two sons, **Manasseh the first born and Ephraim the second born**. Jacob purposely gave the greater blessing to Ephraim; although he blessed Manasseh, as well. Through Ephraim came a multitude of nations (modern-day, through the British Empire) and through Manasseh came a great people (modern-day, through America) (Genesis 48). To these, we could add **King Saul and King David**, or **King David and King Solomon**, or **Aaron (his priesthood) and Melchizedek (Christ's priesthood)**. Or, we could add **Jerusalem and New Jerusalem**. The first city, which is the earthly, bloody city of men, has been taken away in order to establish the second city, which is the heavenly city of the living God and of His lamb (Galatians 5:21-31; Hebrews 12:22). In these and many more examples, we discover that the Lord takes away the first in order to establish the second, and this speaks of His Son. Consider **the second death of the second man**; it is far superior to the first death of the first man. If you haven't done so, read *Second Death—Lake of Fire* — <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art61.pdf>

God's second is always His best, and His best is always His last. There are no sloppy seconds, so to speak, with God. The Father reserves the best wine for the second order. Trace it out for your own edification. It all leads back to Jesus! In Jesus alone, we discover the far superior of God. **In His Son, God takes away the first to establish the second.** Praise God!