

## “Figures,” “Shadows,” “Patterns,” “Copies”

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by Bill Crews

In the Hebrew epistle many things of the old covenant are portrayed as “figures,” “shadows,” “patterns,” “copies” of things in the new covenant. Here are the words used and the places that use them:

1. **PARABOLE**. The word is usually rendered “parable” (in Matthew, Mark, Luke). *Vine’s Expository Dictionary* defines it: “a casting or placing side by side (*para*, beside, *ballo*, to throw) with a view to comparison or resemblance.”

It is the word translated “figure” in Hebrews 9:9: “Which is a figure for the time present; according to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices, that cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect.” It is also used in Hebrews 11:19 on a different subject.

2. **SKIA**. The word is always translated “shadow” and is used literally and metaphorically. Hebrews 8:5: “Who serve that which is a copy and shadow of the heavenly things.”

Hebrews 10:1: “For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, not the very image of the things.”

See also Colossians 2:16-17: “Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a feast day or a new moon or a sabbath day: which are a shadow of the things to come; but the body is Christ’s.”

3. **TUPOS**. The word is variously rendered “print,” “figure,” “fashion,” “manner,” “form,” “example,” and “pattern.” The Greek word came from a word meaning “to strike” and referred originally to an impression, the mark of a blow.

It is translated “pattern” in Hebrews 8:5: “Even as Moses is warned of God when he is about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith he, that thou make all things according to the pattern that was showed thee in the mount.”

4. **HUPODEIGMA**. It is translated “example,” “pattern,” and “copy.” *Vine’s* says: “lit., that which is shown (from *hupo*, under, and *deiknumi*, to show), hence, (a) a figure, copy, (b) example (for imitation or for warning).” To show one thing under the figure of another.

It is translated “copy” or “example” in Hebrews 8:5: “Who serve that which is a ~ (or example) and shadow of the heavenly things.” It is translated “copies” or “patterns” in Hebrews 9:23: “It was necessary therefore that the copies (or patterns) of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these” (that is, with the blood of animal sacrifices rather than with the blood of Christ — **BC**). See also Hebrews 4:11 where it is translated “example.”

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