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What Designates a Valid Type? A Christotelic, Covenantal Proposal

David Schrock

Calvary Baptist Church, Seymour, Indiana

Introduction

In the last decade a number of articles, chapters, and books have continued to debate the subject of typology.¹ In particular, they have sought to answer the question: “What makes a person, event, or institution a *type*?” Or more exactly, “What designates a type hermeneutically valid?” For instance, in *From Typology to Doxology: Paul’s Use of Isaiah and Job in Romans 11:34–35*, Andrew Naselli laments the typological “abuses” some theologians have committed by “read[ing] a full-blown doctrine into earlier Scripture.”² Against this anachronistic approach to typology, he gives four “clarifications” to secure a type’s “hermeneutical warrant.”³ In his clarifica-

¹ See most recently the essays in *Heaven on Earth: Theological Interpretation in Ecumenical Dialogue* (ed. Hans Boersma and Matthew Levering; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), as well as, G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), pp. 13–27; Benjamin J. Ribbens, “Typology of Types: Typology in Dialogue,” *JTI* 5 (2011): pp. 81–95; James M. Hamilton, “The Typology of David’s Rise to Power: Messianic Patterns in the Book of Samuel,” *SBJT* 16 (2012): pp. 4–25; A. B. Caneday, “Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured: ‘Which Things Are Written Allegorically’ (Galatians 4:21–31),” *SBJT* 14 (2010): pp. 50–77; Andrew D. Naselli, *From Typology to Doxology: Paul’s Use of Isaiah and Job in Romans 11:34–35* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012). For a history of interpretation related to typology, see Patrick Fairbairn, *The Typology of Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1956), 1:1–41; Richard Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical TYPOS Structures* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981), pp. 15–114.

² Naselli, *From Typology to Doxology*, p. 125.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 126–28. He argues that valid types are “textually rooted” and “differ from allegory because they arise from the “larger ‘promise-fulfillment’ framework extant in the canon. Second, types are prophetic “in the sense that the NT authors view the OT as pointing towards the future.” Third, types have varying “degrees of similarities and dissimilarities.” Fourth, types are usually recognized by New Testament authors, but should not be limited to the list of types mentioned by the apostles.

tions Naselli calls for methodological parameters for recognizing only those types which Scripture itself can validate.⁴ Writing as theologian, I affirm his concerns and aim in this article to present another methodological control unmentioned by him and most other biblical scholars—the progression of covenants developed in Scripture.

Following Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum’s approach that “the typological structures of Scripture are developed primarily through the covenants,”⁵ I will argue that, in addition to other hermeneutical “tests,” a type (e.g., person, place, institution, event, etc.) can only be verified when it is located in its covenantal context. Against a reading of Scripture that is satisfied with finding mere resemblances between type and antitype (i.e., “a doctrine of analogy”), I will argue that genuine types must arise from within the biblical text and be organically related to one another through the progressive covenants of the Bible.⁶ Consequently, what follows is a constructive effort to improve the best practices of biblical interpretation by paying greater attention to the biblical covenants. At the same time, this article stands against the intentional conflation of typology and allegory, what Christopher Seitz labels a “figural reading,” and what Hans Boersma, citing the “sacramental hermeneutic” of Henri DeLubac and Jean Daniélou, describes as a “return to mystery.”⁷

⁴ Cf. Beale, *Handbook*, pp. 19–22.

⁵ Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), p. 606.

⁶ Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology: A Return to Mystery* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 178–80. Though I appreciate much of Jean Daniélou’s work on typology, especially his cautions against allegory and his insistence on the historicity of biblical types, his definition that types are fundamentally “analogies” is insufficient (Jean Daniélou, *From Shadows to Reality: Studies in the Biblical Typology of the Fathers*, trans. Dom Wulstan Hibberd [Westminster, MD: Newman, 1960]). The onus of this article is to show how the biblical covenants help situate and certify biblical types.

⁷ Christopher Seitz, *Figured Out: Typology and Providence in Christian Scripture* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2001); Hans Boersma, *Nouvelle Théologie and Sacramental Ontology*. As to the historical ambiguity and overlap between allegory and typology in patristic interpreters, I am in basic agreement with Vanhoozer who argues that while the early church fathers may have conflated typology and allegory, there is today a need for “providing a better theological warrant” for discerning biblical types (“Ascending the Mountain, Singing the Rock,” p. 217). Though space does not

More narrowly, this article will restrict its attention to typological persons who prefigure Jesus Christ.⁸ My thesis is simple: To discern valid typological relationships we must consider how type and antitype relate to their respective covenantal contexts as elucidated in Scripture.⁹ In other words, in between the “exegetical-historical” and “theological-canonical” horizons, there is a third horizon that must be considered in triangulating the reality of a type.¹⁰ This third horizon is the epochal (or covenantal) horizon, which in the Bible is articulated by the progression of covenants that begin in Genesis and find their *telos* in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, in addition to Naselli’s four clarifications and Beale’s five criteria for a type (e.g., analogical correspondence, historicity, a pointing-forwardness, escalation, and retrospection as it concerns identifying types), I will argue that a valid Christological type must be *textual* in its origin, *covenantal* as to its theological import, and *Christotelic* in its teleological fulfillment.¹¹ As *textual*, the type must arise from the language, sequence, and storyline of the Bible itself. It cannot be imported from an “extratextual hermeneutical grid,” but must be verified by the Bible’s own language or imagery.¹² As *covenantal*, the type must not only arise within redemptive history in some generic fashion; rather, the interpreter must show from the text how the type corresponds to its covenantal context. In other words, types fill out the details of the covenants, and the covenants,

permit a full engagement on the subject of allegory and typology, this essay’s appeal to biblical covenants is of a piece with those scholars who require types to have textual warrant.

⁸ The argument made in this essay is limited to persons, but since covenants arise from events and create institutions there is reason to believe that recognizing covenantal contexts would improve all kinds of biblical types.

⁹ By covenantal backbone, I have in mind the covenantal framework of the Bible outlined by Gentry and Wellum.

¹⁰ On the “exegetical-historical” and “theological-canonical” horizons, see Darrell Bock, “Single Meaning, Multiple Contexts and Referents,” in *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), pp. 115–16.

¹¹ Beale, *Handbook*, p. 14. These three features (textual, covenantal, and Christotelic) do not replace the usual criteria for a type. Instead, they serve as crucial additions to the commonplace definition offered by the likes of Naselli, Beale, and Leonard Goppelt (*Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982], pp. 17–18).

¹² Naselli, *From Typology to Doxology*, p. 126.

in turn, provide each type—I am thinking primarily in terms of persons here—the parameters in which they live, move, and have their being.¹³ In this way, the Bible’s typological and covenantal structures are interdependent. Together, they prepare the way for a superlative mediator of the new covenant, Jesus Christ.¹⁴ Finally, by *Christotelic*, I am suggesting that typology is eminently eschatological. While every type has its place in history, its historical locus is insufficient for discerning its final significance.¹⁵ Following Jesus’ own hermeneutic, the apostles make this assertion regularly: Christ is the end of the law (Rom 10:4), the fulfillment of every promise (2 Cor 1:20), the fullness of wisdom (Col 2:3), and the substance of the shadow (Col 2:17; Heb 10:1).¹⁶ In what follows, I will expound a textual, covenantal, Christological approach to discerning types in Scripture.

Linguistic Correspondence: Tethering Types to the Biblical Text

The first line of evidence for a type is textual. In contradistinction to allegory, biblical typology situates type and anti-type in the biblical narrative itself. It does not incorporate a philosophical ideology (e.g., platonic thought) or a “*this* (word) means *that* (concept).”¹⁷ Rather, true typology, “as a subset of predictive prophecy,” is the intratextual relationship between one historical figure in

¹³ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, pp. 602–11.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 604.

¹⁵ See the discussion of time’s effect on meaning in Peter Leithart, *Deep Exegesis: The Mystery of Reading Scripture* (Waco, TX: Baylor, 2009), pp. 40–44.

¹⁶ David Dockery, “Typological Exegesis: Moving Beyond Abuse and Neglect,” in *Reclaiming the Prophetic Mantle: Preaching the Old Testament Faithfully* (ed. George L. Klein; Nashville: Broadman, 1992), p. 174; see also George Smeaton, *The Apostle’s Doctrine of the Atonement* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1870; repr., Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1957), pp. 4–7.

¹⁷ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 102. In *From Shadows to Reality*, Jean Daniélou shows how many in the early church veered into allegory when they followed the formal principles, and sometimes the material arguments, of Philo. Speaking of the difference between typology and allegory in the Garden of Eden, Daniélou observes, “Under the guise of allegory Philo is therefore introducing Greek philosophy” (p. 58). This is one of the key differences between typology and allegory: the former restrains itself to the persons, events, and institutions of the biblical corpus; the latter seeks to import moral and philosophical ideals through the use of biblical narratives.

one biblical epoch and another later, (usually) greater historical figure.¹⁸

The process of verifying biblical types begins with this commitment to the Bible and proceeds by discovering what God's Word reveals. The task is multi-layered, and there is no singular method to seeing a type.¹⁹ However, if there is no singular way to see a type, there are a number of ways to prove the validity of a type.²⁰ The first of which is to consider the words used to describe the type and the sequential order of events related to the type's ontology and actions.

On this linguistic correspondence, James Hamilton has been most helpful. He suggests that Goppelt's criterion of significant correspondence can be improved by demonstrating "linguistic correspondence," "sequential event correspondence," and "redemptive historical import" between a type and its anti-type. Materially, he uses these three lines of evidence to show how the Davidic narratives (1–2 Samuel) build upon the life of Joseph, and from there, how Jesus is Joseph's ultimate antitype. Using these test cases, Hamilton successfully defends the relationship between Joseph, David, and Jesus.²¹

As to language and sequence, Hamilton provides a compelling argument for proving typological relationships. His final point, however, can be strengthened. Instead of determining a types' redemptive historical import in general, a covenantal approach relates the historical person (who is the potential type) to its immediate epochal context and covenantal setting. The cash value of this approach is that it compares the biblical type to the redemptive historical setting *as defined by the promises and stipulations of the covenant* before relating Old Testament types to the New Testament fulfill-

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 103.

¹⁹ This diversity in methodology is not the same as saying that there are "multiple layers of meaning" in a given text, as Peter Enns does (Peter Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation: Evangelicals and the Problem of the Old Testament* [Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005], p. 161). Rather, it is the recognition that in the hermeneutical spiral, awareness of a given type may be discerned at various points in the interpretive process.

²⁰ Rightly, Beale observes, "We must ... remember that the conclusions of all biblical interpretations are a matter of degrees of possibility and probability; the conclusions of typology must be viewed in the same way" (*Handbook*, p. 24).

²¹ James M. Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah? Tracing the Typological Identification between Joseph, David, and Jesus," *SBJT* 12 (2008): pp. 52–77.

ment. Accordingly, the following section will summarize Hamilton's argument and show how a covenantal approach provides further textual evidence for the Joseph-Jesus typology. I will also show how this covenantal approach proves fruitful for other typological relationships that find their *telos* in Jesus Christ.

Language, Sequence, and Redemptive Import

Concerning linguistic correspondence, Hamilton appeals to the literary nature of the Bible,²² postulating that “the authors of the biblical narratives ... make significant choices about which events or aspects of events to record, and they make linguistic choices regarding how to describe those events.”²³ In other words, typology in the Bible is a function of language. Failure to see typological structures is not simply a theological problem but a reading problem.²⁴

In the case of Joseph and David, he finds “sixteen points of linguistic contact.”²⁵ He uses these linguistic correspondences to support his case that Joseph was a type of David and therefore of Christ. In Hamilton's view, the likelihood of a person, event, or institution being a type increases with linguistic correspondence between the type and antitype. Speaking of the Joseph-David relationship, he writes, “Taken individually, these linguistic correspondences might seem threads too weak to tie up the case that the Joseph story was a formative influence on the author(s) of the narratives concerning David in Samuel. But taken all together we have a cord of far more than three strands ... one not easily broken.”²⁶

Complementing linguistic correspondence, Hamilton adds “sequential event correspondence” and “redemptive historical import.” Like linguistic correspondence, sequential event correspondence validates a type by means of literary detail. Whereas the for-

²² Concerning the Bible, Hamilton begins, “In this essay I will argue that earlier biblical narratives so impacted later biblical authors that their minds, their vocabulary, and their interpretive framework were all shaped by what they read in earlier biblical narratives, chiefly the Pentateuch” (*ibid.*, p. 52).

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 54.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55. Beale has helpfully explained that recognizing types in the Old Testament often requires the light of later revelation (*Handbook*, pp. 22–25). However, such epistemological awareness, brought on by later parts of the canon, does not override the prophetic or “pointing-forwardness” of the Old Testament text.

²⁵ Hamilton, “Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?": p. 57.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

mer makes contact on the basis of word selection, the latter makes a connection by means of sequential ordering. In this regard, sequential correspondence is both objective and necessary for proving that the type is in the text and not just in the imagination of the reader.²⁷

Still, it is Hamilton's third point of consideration—redemptive historical import—on which this essay builds. What Hamilton argues about redemptive history in general, I will unite with the covenantal structures of the Bible in particular.²⁸ As E. Earl Ellis framed it,

There is a pattern of correspondence between Old and New Covenants—the shadow and the true—so that the pattern outlines of the first may be imposed upon the second. NT typology does not, therefore, merely involve striking resemblances or analogies but points to a correspondence which inheres in the Divine economy of redemption. And this appears to be true not only in the Exodus typology, in which the two Covenants are so expressly contrasted, but in the other OT 'types' as well.²⁹

Though he doesn't mention Daniélou, Ellis's point improves upon his method. Ellis elevates genuine correspondence set within the "Divine economy of redemption" above "striking resemblances or analogies" between biblical characters. Instead of determining relations at the level of words or events, Ellis's argument aims at the level of macro-structures.³⁰ Geerhardus Vos makes a similar appeal, saying "The bond that holds type and antitype together must be a bond of vital continuity in the progress of redemption. Where this is ignored, and in the place of this bond are put accidental resemblances, void of spiritual significance, all sorts of ab-

²⁷ Hamilton's stated approach puts into theory what others often do often in practice. The benefit of tracing out "steps" for discerning types is that what earlier exegetes did on occasion, modern interpreters can and should do with intentionality and verification. Therefore, without casting aside the role of the Spirit to illumine the interpreter's mind, the hermeneutical spiral improves when reproducible methods replace inconsistent intuition.

²⁸ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 107.

²⁹ E. Earl Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (London: Oliver & Boyd, 1957), p. 128.

³⁰ Cf. Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, pp. 253–56.

surdities will result.”³¹ Thus, the goal in typology must be to compare forest with forest, not just isolated trees within the forest; or to put it back in biblical language, we must see how the types relate to the covenantal structures in order to validate their meaning.

Along these lines, it is significant that Hamilton grounds his redemptive historical points to the larger story of salvation outlined in the Old Testament. For instance, he traces the covenantal promises of God when he recounts the Patriarchal history leading up to Joseph, yet he does not make explicit mention to the biblical covenants. Hamilton convincingly proves the relationship between Joseph, David, and Jesus. Yet, greater support for Joseph’s status as a type of Christ can be found by relating Joseph and David to the covenantal structures of the Old Testament. Both figures, in different ways and at different times, carried on the Abrahamic promises of land, people, and blessing.

For example, Joseph lived, moved, and had his blessing under the stipulations of the Abrahamic covenant. His life preserved the nation of Israel and enabled the promises of Abraham to reach David—and later Jesus. The promises that “tested” Joseph as he suffered in prison were covenantal promises to Abraham (Ps 105:16–19). Upon his release and exaltation in Egypt, Joseph became the logistical means by which the covenant people of God entered Egypt. Providentially arranged, his life served to bridge the earlier covenant with Abraham and the latter covenant with Israel. In this way, Joseph’s typological import is upheld by more than a loosely-connected set of redemptive historical correspondences. His life is nested into the covenantal structure of the Old Testament. Rightly, Hamilton asserts that Joseph proves to be a type because he resides in the “redemptive historical stream that flows through the Bible.”³² And not to be missed, this is a covenantal stream. In fact, Psalm 78:56–72 traces how the covenantal promises to Abraham move from Joseph to David. Due to the sin of the priests at Shiloh (1 Sam 1–4), the location of the covenant and the tribe who officiates the covenant are transferred.³³ Therefore, returning to Joseph’s role as a type, he is both a reservoir that rests downhill from the headwaters of God’s covenant with Abraham,

³¹ Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948; repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2000), p. 146.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³³ Part of the transition from Joseph to David and Shiloh to Zion is the failure of the priests—Eli and his wicked sons (Ps 78:56–66).

and he is a tributary that runs into the later and greater streams of Moses and David—two other covenant mediators.³⁴

In sum, genuine typology must find its origin in the covenantal structures of the Old Testament and New Testament. *Real* typological correspondence is necessarily related to the unifying framework of the Bible—the biblical covenants. Therefore, typology finds license to operate only in an organic connection to these larger covenantal structures.

Rahab: What Shall We Say?

A contested example demonstrates the usefulness of this approach to typology. Consider Rahab. Is her scarlet thread mentioned in Joshua 2:18 a type of Christ and his cross? Or, do exegetes misconstrue this scarlet thread and, thus, make it an allegory when they relate it to the blood of Christ? My answer: It depends. Certainly, there is a wrong way to connect the scarlet cord to Christ's cross, but there may also be a legitimate way to maintain it as a typological emblem of Christ as the Passover lamb. What makes the difference is covenantal context. Does the event, along with its specific details, have a genuine relationship to God's covenant with Israel?

Significantly, the typological relationship cannot be based on the superficial basis of color, although it certainly may play a part.³⁵ Rather, the organic relationship runs along the covenantal promise of salvation to Israel and the mighty act of God to save Israel by means of the Passover. In other words, the faithful interpreter must first place Rahab's act of faith—offered in response Israel's spies—to the historically antecedent Passover. Then, and only then, can the interpreter move to Christ, who is the greater Passover lamb (1 Cor 5:7).

In this hermeneutical two-step, the cautious interpreter can move from the details of Rahab's story (e.g., the scarlet thread in

³⁴ This covenantal progression goes back to Adam, of whom Davidson says, "Like a hollow mold the OT representative man Adam is a *Nachbild* (of the divine design) which functions as a dynamic *Vorbild*, shaping the end (eschatological) product (Christ) so that it ineluctably (*devoir-être*) conforms to the (historical) contours of the *Vorbild* and surpasses it by fulfilling the (Christological-soteriological) purpose for which the *Vorbild* was designed" (*Typology in Scripture*, p. 311).

³⁵ Contrast this approach with Ronald L. Cammenga, who suggests that the "red of the rainbow points to and is a sign of the blood of Jesus Christ" ("The Covenant with Noah: Common Grace or Cosmic Grace?" *PRTJ* 40 [2007]: p. 24).

the window, the family in house, safety given during an hour of death) *back in time* to the details of the Passover (e.g., the blood sprinkled on the doorposts, the family taking refuge behind the blood, life given in an hour of death) before moving forward in time to the person and work of Jesus.³⁶ By tying Rahab's cord to the historical details of the Passover, it protects her experience from becoming a mystical encounter with Christ.³⁷ Instead, as Hebrews observes, she had faith in the promises of God, communicated to her by the Israelite spies. In principle then, the interpretive movement that emerges looks like a quarterback in football taking a three-, five-, or seven-step drop. Before he throws the ball down field, he must move into territory previously claimed by his team.³⁸ By analogy, the faithful interpreter must move backwards in the covenantal history of Israel, before moving forward to the true Passover Lamb, Jesus Christ. This is the kind of covenantal correspondence I will now argue.

Covenantal Correspondence: Grounding Typology in the Framework of the Bible

A primary argument against typology is that interpreters who are prone to finding types are too quick to claim God's divine authorship to validate the ostensible connection between type and antitype. On this matter, Andy Naselli offers wise caution. Describ-

³⁶ Significantly, Hamilton's linguistic and sequential controls must also be considered. As to language, there are at least three linguistic connections relating Rahab to the Passover. First, the word "sign" (*oth*) is used in both passages to describe the blood (Exod 12:13) and the scarlet cord (Josh 2:12). Second, the verb "go out" (*ys'*) is used in both narratives, as the Israelites and Rahab are instructed to not "go out" of their houses (Exod 12:22; Josh 2:19). Third, the word "house" (*bayit*) is used in both accounts as the place or refuge for both delivered parties (Exod 12:22; Josh 2:19).

³⁷ For an account of some of the best and worst approaches to Rahab as a type, see Daniélou, *From Shadow to Reality*, pp. 244–60.

³⁸ Relying on Gerhard Von Rad, Beale makes a similar argument with Joshua and Noah (*Handbook*, pp. 20–21). He identifies both men as types of Christ on the basis of their respective relationships to Moses and Adam. He writes, "If it can be shown in the OT itself that a later person is seen as antitype of an earlier person, who is clearly viewed as a type of Christ by the NT, then this later OT person is also likely a good candidate to be considered to be a type of Christ" (*ibid.*, p. 21). Beale's point is well made, and is only strengthened by considering the covenantal context in which these men are situated.

ing a canonical approach to interpreting the Old Testament, something that often accompanies and depends upon typology, Naselli observes,

The canonical approach [to interpreting the Old Testament] ... is easily abused by interpreters who hold that god is Scripture's ultimate authority. Such interpreters rightly insist on Scripture's unity, but they may hastily and anachronistically skip from exegesis to systematic theology without anchoring a canonical approach to biblical theology. The result is a flat reading of Scripture without sufficient methodological controls.³⁹

The purpose of this article is to suggest a Christotelic, covenantal approach that interfaces with a thick exegesis of the text is a way forward in rightly discerning the hermeneutical warrant of a type. Therefore, the rest of this article will posit four foci to keep in mind when evaluating biblical types. They will follow a chronological trajectory that begins with the Old Testament text and moves to the person of Christ. In order, these steps consist of (1) determining the typological "mold," (2) relating the type to the appropriate covenantal structure(s), (3) tracing future installments of the type to see how later revelation develops earlier prefigurations, and (4) uniting every type to Christ.

A textual "mold" (*Vorbild*). In his discussion of typology, Geerhardus Vos stresses the necessity of determining the symbolic significance of a given type before making any sort of typological connection across the canon.⁴⁰ In other words, biblical interpreters must determine the "mold" of a biblical type from a grammatical-historical reading of the text *before* making any typological applications.⁴¹ Other responsible interpreters have made similar suggestions.

For instance, Richard Davidson calls this typological "mold" a *Vorbild* (impression) and the later antitype a *Nachbild* (image). In fact, using this impression-image distinction, he develops a whole schema of relating typological molds and the impressions they make on their image-bearing successors.⁴² While there are types that may not exactly 'fit' this mold (e.g., tropological examples and

³⁹ Naselli, *From Typology to Daxology*, p. 125.

⁴⁰ Vos, *Biblical Theology*, pp. 144–46.

⁴¹ This accords with Caneday's caution that typology is not a method of interpretation but a recognition of typology written in the original text ("Covenant Lineage Allegorically Prefigured," p. 66).

⁴² Davidson, *Typology*, p. 131.

homological patterns), Christological types are well-suited for this kind of description.⁴³

Using different vocabulary but similar concepts, Ribbens suggests that “ikonic *mimēsis* may offer a helpful category within which to think about typology, because typology can be conceived of as a ‘correspondence, not just at the verbal level, but at the level of mimetic sign.’”⁴⁴ Following the work of Frances Young, he distinguishes between ikonic *mimēsis* and symbolic *mimēsis*. The latter (“symbolic *mimēsis*”) approaches words as symbols which need to be “decoded” and lend themselves to allegory; the former discerns the contours of the type through a close reading of the text with its words, events, and actions.⁴⁵ Therefore, symbolic import (Geerhardus Vos),⁴⁶ *ikonic mimēsis* (Young, Treier, Ribbens), and *Nachbild-Vorbild* (Davidson) supply the exegete with conceptual tools to describe biblical types. The theological value is observed in an example given by Ribbens. He writes of the Day of Atonement,

Hebrews describes the sacrifice of the sin offering on the Day of Atonement as a type of Christ’s death, because there is a correspondence in both facts and significance (9:1–14). The blood of goats and bulls was spilled, just as Jesus’ blood was spilled, in order to atone for the sins of the people (Lev 16; Heb 2:17; 9:14). A dual correspondence such as this between fact and significance can appropriately be called ikonic *mimēsis*, because it re-presents, through a genuine likeness, the drama of levitical sacrifice in order to form the religious life of NT believers. Ikonic *mimēsis* stays true to the narrative sense and to the “significance” or “spiritual meaning” derived from the narrative. That is, it “does not read into the text a different or higher sense, but draws out from it a different or higher application of the same sense.”⁴⁷

⁴³ Ribbens, “Typology of Types,” pp. 92–94.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

⁴⁵ Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); cf. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “The Voice and the Actor: A Dramatic Proposal about the Ministry and Minstrelsy of Theology,” in *Evangelical Futures: A Conversation on Theological Method* (ed. John Stackhouse; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000).

⁴⁶ “Symbolic” as employed by Vos (and Lints) is not the same as Young’s “symbolic *mimēsis*.” Therefore, I affirm the former and deny the latter (cf. Ribbens, “Typology of Types,” p. 87).

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 88–89.

Observing the shape of biblical types *from within the text* is not optional or secondary; it is an essential part of reading the Bible and doing theology—especially Christology.

Richard Lints agrees, “To the extent modern readers have become oblivious to the theological significance of symbols, they have cut themselves off from a full understanding of individual texts.”⁴⁸ Consequently, only a “thick” reading of the Bible will unearth its riches. Defining terms, recognizing syntax, and locating the text in its cultural setting are only the first step in biblical exegesis. To understand how a biblical type points to Christ, the full theological import of the symbol must be grasped. Readers must observe the “latent potential” and “open-ended” possibilities that are present at the textual level.⁴⁹ In other words, they must discern the symbolic, or literary, meaning of the historic type. While some interpreters can go too far—assigning too much symbolism to a given type—many more do not go far enough. As a rule, we need to recognize that the thought-world of the biblical authors is filled with types, shadows, metaphors, and word pictures and that their words are filled with “latent potential” for knowing God and his Christ.⁵⁰

Covenantal correspondence. According to the New Testament, Christotelic typology began with Adam (Rom 5:14; 1 Cor 15:45; cf. 1 Tim 2:13–14).⁵¹ Imbedded in his DNA, as the *Imago Dei* and the covenantal head of the human race, Adam contains traces of every type to come.⁵² As many scholars have shown, Adam

⁴⁸ Lints, *The Fabric of Theology*, p. 300.

⁴⁹ Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text*, pp. 303–35.

⁵⁰ A superb example of this sort of “thick exegesis” is Beale’s analysis of Isaiah 22:22 (*Handbook*, pp. 135–38). Before making connections with Revelation 3:7, he thoroughly examines Isaiah’s original context.

⁵¹ For the protological and eschatological features of Gen 1–3, see J. V. Fesko, *Last Things First: Unlocking Genesis 1–3 with the Christ of Eschatology* (Fearn, Scotland: Mentor, 2007), and Warren Austin Gage, *The Gospel of Genesis: Studies in Protology and Eschatology* (Winona Lake, IN: Carpenter, 1984).

⁵² Looking back at the Old Testament through the eyes of Paul, Ellis describes the covenantal nature of typology: “In the Pauline writing two basic typological patterns appear—Adamic or Creation typology and Covenant typology. Each is related to a particular aspect of God’s redemptive purpose in Christ, and over all, they unite to form one interrelated whole. Thus, becoming a Christian is spoken of as a new birth (Exodus typology) and a new creation (Adamic typology); sometimes (e.g., Rom. 6:3) both ideas are apparently joined in the figure of resurrection” (*Paul’s Use of the*

functioned as God's vice-regent, exercising royal and priestly duties, dwelling in Yahweh's garden-temple, and enjoying the blessing of His presence.⁵³ Though he was dethroned by participation in a Satanic lie, Adam still functioned as the covenantal head of redemptive history.⁵⁴ He, along with Eve, received the promise that one day her seed would crush the head of the seed of the serpent, thus beginning a blessed hope in the human race (Gen 3:15). Suffice it to say, the way in which God would re-establish the rule of "man" (*adam*), was to bring to earth a second Adam, one who would succeed where Adam failed—obeying the law, atoning for sin, and destroying the devil. Thus, woven into the fabric of the biblical narrative is a covenantal-typological relationship that develops over time. Redemptive history and progressive revelation show an inter-relationship between the covenants and the covenantal mediators who typify the superlative mediator to come.

Consequently, when we look to establish a textual relationship between type and antitype we must not do so apart from covenantal structures. In fact, after assessing the textual mold, we must compare the person, event, or institution in question to the surrounding covenant(s) to discern significance. In the case of Rahab, her faith in the promises of made to Abraham and Israel; for Isaiah, the Immanuel should be understood in the context of the Davidic covenant. Problems occur when interpreters move directly from the type to Christ, without travelling along the path of covenantal progress. Such a hasty method, usually based on outward similarities or bare predictions, opens the door to allegory and unwarranted spiritualizing.

Edmund Clowney mandates something similar: "In developing the biblical-theological interpretation of a text, the aspects of epochal structure and continuity may be separately considered. The first step is to relate the text to its immediate theological horizon. The second step is to relate the event to the text, by way of its

Old Testament, p. 134.). In other words, entering into a covenantal relationship with God, "becoming a Christian," rests on a whole series of typological expressions.

⁵³ Meredith Kline, *Kingdom Prologue: Genesis Foundations for a Covenantal Worldview* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006), pp. 83–90; G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, (NSBT; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004); Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003).

⁵⁴ O. Palmer Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 1980), pp. 93–107.

proper interpretation in its own period, to the whole structure of redemptive history.”⁵⁵ Going a step beyond Clowney, this proposal seeks to let the structures of the covenant not just redemptive-history in general determine the significance of the type. This does not constrict typology to a rigid system. On the contrary, it merely serves as a conceptual tool to prove the validity of the type by comparing it to the covenantal structures of the type’s place in time and space.

Later installments. As the covenantal-typological structures unfold over time, something more than a simple type-antitype develops. As with the serial installations of the covenants, where each covenant organically expands (or restricts) the previous one, biblical types function in much the same way.⁵⁶ The typical pattern does move directly from type to antitype, like a non-stop flight from Washington, D.C. to Seattle, Washington. Instead, typological structures function with an archetype-ectype-antitype pattern, like an intercontinental railroad that makes many stops along the way. This pattern is based upon the covenantal heads as the archetypes and Jesus as the ultimate antitype, with other ectypes finding themselves as “little Adams” on the covenantal pathway to Christ.⁵⁷

This idea of later installments finds support from Goldsworthy’s macro-typology, where the archetype is revealed in salvation history, the ectype escalates the promise in later prophetic writings, and finally the antitypical fulfillment arrives in Christ.⁵⁸ Further attestation to this kind of typological structure is provided by Richard Davidson’s lexicographical work on *typos* structures in

⁵⁵ Edmund P. Clowney, *Preaching and Biblical Theology* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2002), p. 88.

⁵⁶ On this point, Wellum writes, “It is important to note how closely typological structures and biblical covenants are related. . . . to reflect upon typological structures and their development is simultaneously to unpack the biblical covenants across redemptive-history. . . . In all these covenant heads [i.e., Noah, Abraham, Israel, and David], the role of Adam is continued in the world, and each one of them points forward to the coming of the last Adam, who through his obedience accomplishes for us our redemption” (Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, p. 107).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 106; cf. *idem.*, “Baptism and the Relationship between the Covenants,” in *Believer’s Baptism: Sign of the New Covenant in Christ* (ed. Thomas R. Schreiner and Shawn D. Wright; Nashville: B & H Academic, 2006), pp. 126–32.

⁵⁸ Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, pp. 253–56. This typological development mirrors the progress of the covenants, as they progress in redemptive history.

the Bible, where Davidson posits a dynamic understanding of types and antitypes.⁵⁹ His suggestion is that an antitype (*Nachbild*) simultaneously functions as type (*Vorbild*), such that when the antitype consummates the typical expectation, it also points ahead to further installments or future antitypes. As a result, Davidson's point seems to be that there is a locomotive relationship between type and antitype, whereby later antitypes themselves serve as types and generate more antitypes to come. So then, typology is not a simple correlation of type to antitype (T_1 to T_2), but it is rather a series of escalating types, traveling on the covenantal path to prepare the way for Jesus (i.e., T_1 to T_2 to T_3 and so on, until it reaches T_{Christ}).

The end is Christ. Finally, in regards to the people and offices of the OT, every archetype in the OT that legitimately manifests covenantal prefigurations must find their *ultimate* consummation in Christ. This should not come as a surprise. Since the goal of human history is the person and work of Jesus Christ (Eph 1:10), it is appropriate that all Scripture be fulfilled in him (Luke 24:25–27; John 5:39). As Goppelt summarizes, “all that the Old Testament said and prophesied about the men of God and the messengers of God converge in him.”⁶⁰ With Christ as the end of the line, the culminating *telos*, it is only appropriate that we compare and contrast this *Christotelic* approach with two other approaches.

Christotelic Typology: All Types Lead to Christ

A covenantal, Christotelic typology is a *via media* approach to typology. It aims to chasten the fruitful imaginations of those who see Christ everywhere, while also giving biblical parameters for identifying types that go beyond a list of types collected from the

⁵⁹ Davidson, *Typology in Scripture*, pp. 115–90, esp. pp. 131–32.

⁶⁰ Goppelt, *Typos*, p. 97. Admittedly, there are types which do not resolve in Christ. For instance, Babel/Babylon (Gen 11:1–9; Isa 13:1–14:23; Rev 17–18) and Judas' betrayal (cf. Ps 41:9 cited in John 13:18; Pss 69:25; 109:8 cited in Acts 1:20) are both presented as typological, and both deny Christ. Nevertheless, it should be observed that both of these types find their significance in the way they oppose God's anointed one. They are not types of Christ *per se*, but their significance is found in their negative relationship to him. Still, acknowledging the existence of this other set of types, most types in the Bible will find their *telos* in Jesus, because all Scripture points to him (John 5:39). Accordingly, in regards to typology, it is important to see how the figures in redemptive history—make that covenantal history—prefigure the Son of God come to earth, the Lord Jesus Christ. Ultimately, he is the goal of the Bible and the *telos* of typology.

New Testament.⁶¹ Respectively, these two approaches might be labeled typological maximalism and typological minimalism. To conclude this study, I will argue that there are strengths and weaknesses in each of these positions, and that a view of typology that arises from the text and follows the contours of the biblical covenants must also await its eschatological fulfillment in Christ and not hurry the typological development by importing Christ back into the Old Testament.

Typological Maximalism

In his “Introductory Notes on Typology,” Gordon Hugenberger writes, “Evangelical scholars appear distrustful of typology largely because of the apparent subjectivism of this approach, its unfalsifiable and contradictory results, and the indisputable record of interpretive excess.”⁶² To this last plaint, he gives an example of James Jordan’s “interpretive ‘maximalism,’ which leads him to identify the attempted Sodomite rape of the Levite in Judges as a type of Christ’s sufferings.”⁶³ Typology of this sort, often associated with Origen and medieval allegory, has given typology a bad name. It therefore behooves the advocate of typology, to carefully explain what a type is and is not.

One who has done that, who might be described as a more sensible maximalist is Graeme Goldsworthy. An apologist for biblical

⁶¹ Kevin Vanhoozer rightly indicates that the hermeneutical divide also stands between Evangelicals and Catholics (“Ascending the Mountain, Singing the Rock: Biblical Interpretation Earthed, Typed, and Transfigured,” in *Heaven on Earth: Theological Interpretation in Ecumenical Dialogue*, ed. Hans Boersma and Matthew Levering (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), p. 207). In fact, part of the groundswell within the TIS movement comes from the way some biblical scholars have engaged with and adopted from Patristic theologians (e.g., Irenaeus of Lyons, Gregory of Nyssa, etc.) and Catholic interpreters (e.g., Henri DeLubac, Jean Danielou, etc.). As biblical scholars have escaped from the stranglehold of higher criticism, allegorical approaches and figural readings have been re-employed by many in the TIS movement (e.g., Matthew Levering, Christopher Seitz, Hans Boersma, Stephen Fowl, etc.). In this section, however, I will limit my interaction to those Evangelicals who are debating how to rightly discern biblical “types.” Space does not permit a full discussion on historical distinctions between typology and allegory.

⁶² Hugenberger, “Introductory Notes on Typology,” p. 335.

⁶³ *Ibid.* Other maximalists in the history of interpretation would include Origen, Coccieus, and Benjamin Keach. More recently, Peter Leithart and many within the TIS movement would qualify as typological maximalists.

theology, Goldsworthy has proposed a macro-typology “that goes beyond the usually identified elements of typology explicit in the New Testament application of the Old.”⁶⁴ In *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, Goldsworthy discusses the relationship between the Testaments, listing a plethora of “thematic polarities”⁶⁵ before concluding that, “macro-typology is the underlying principle of theological structure and biblical unity that makes possible all the various perspectives on the relationship of the Testaments.”⁶⁶ He lists eighteen typological structures and posits that “all” biblical texts (which he defines as “a meaningful portion of any given book understood as part of that book and its overall message”) speak about “God, human beings, or the created order, or they speak about some combination of these.”⁶⁷ Jesus Christ as the touchstone for each of these things—God, humanity, and creation—gives meaning to every portion of Scripture.

Typological Minimalism

In contrast to Goldsworthy, typological minimalists reduce the role that typology plays between the Testaments. For instance, Paul Feinberg writes, “While types and analogies are appropriate ways of understanding the relationship between the two Testaments, typical and analogical hermeneutics are not. . . . The sense of any OT prediction must be determined through the application of historical-grammatical hermeneutics to that text.”⁶⁸ Though Feinberg will make room for types in his grammatical-historical exegesis, they require an undefined set of “special rules [for] interpretation.”⁶⁹ Typology is permitted but only under house arrest. Moreover, as recent hermeneutical works have shown, Feinberg’s radical distinction between text and typology is not necessary, nor ultimately helpful in discerning meaning.⁷⁰ Instead, it reflects vestiges of critical scholarship that muzzles the divine author.

⁶⁴ Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics*, p. 251.

⁶⁵ These include “salvation history and eschatological consummation,” “type and antitype,” “promise and fulfillment,” “*sensus literalis* and *sensus plenior*,” “old covenants and new covenant,” “law and gospel,” “Israel and the church” (ibid., pp. 241–45).

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 251.

⁶⁷ Ibid., pp. 251, 256.

⁶⁸ Paul Feinberg, “Hermeneutics of Discontinuity,” in *The Right Doctrine for the Wrong Texts?*, pp. 122–23.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 123.

⁷⁰ Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993); Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There Mean-*

How should we adjudicate these two positions? On the one hand, minimalists ground meaning in the text of Scripture and look for analogy and eternal principles that can be gleaned for Christian use.⁷¹ On the other hand, the maximalist, appealing to an apostolic hermeneutic, aims to unite all the Old Testament with Jesus Christ. In truth, both approaches need qualification. While Goldsworthy's Christocentric hermeneutic has earned him the reputation as one who turns everything into a type,⁷² it is a needed corrective to those interpreters who merely moralize the text with exemplary principles for living.⁷³ Goldsworthy is correct when he argues that typology plays an integral part of the biblical testimony and needs to inform

ing in this Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), esp. pp. 303–35; Grant Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2006), pp. 325–409; Dennis Johnson, *Him We Proclaim: Preaching Christ from All the Scriptures* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2007), pp. 198–271.

⁷¹ For example, see Walter Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents: Accurate and Authoritative Citations of the Old Testament by the New Testament," in *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. Kenneth Berding and Jonathan Lunde; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007), pp. 45–89.

⁷² "Despite the qualities of [Goldsworthy's] work, not all will agree with the different threads that are weaved into it. One of them is that the New Testament authors all shared the gospel-centered hermeneutics described by Goldsworthy. After all, when Jesus explains all things in the Scriptures that concerned him (if Luke 24:27 is referred to on p. 252), it does not necessarily mean that every text of the Scriptures talks about him" (Erwin Ochsmeier, "Review of Graeme Goldsworthy, *Gospel-Centered Hermeneutics: Foundations and Principles of Evangelical Biblical Interpretation*," RBL 11 (2007) [on-line]; accessed 13 January 2013; available from http://www.bookreviews.org/pdf/5878_6224.pdf; Internet).

⁷³ David Baker's essay on typology is a case in point. After limiting the prospects of predictive typology, he discusses the value of typology for the believer: "Is not the Lord Jesus Christ the supreme 'example' and 'pattern' for Christians (Matt. 11:29; John 13:15; Phil. 2:5; 1 Pet. 2:21)? Perhaps those interested in typology should concern themselves less with looking for types of Christ and more with presenting Christ *himself* as the supreme 'type' for Christians and the world" ("Typology and the Christian Use of Scripture," p. 330). Baker's point is not without merit; it simply misses the main point, the finished and accomplished work of Jesus. His conclusion demonstrates how minimalistic approaches to typology can result in appeals to moralism, instead of standing in awe of what God has done in Christ.

the way that we read the Scriptures and understand the gospel preached beforehand (cf. Gal 3:8).

Christotelic Typology

A *via media* is needed, one that takes the best of both approaches. This approach affirms an apostolic model of interpretation, one that takes its cues from the hermeneutical methods of the New Testament.⁷⁴ Yet, it also upholds the literary context and epochal situation of a given type so that unwarranted speculation is minimized. This textual priority accords with the history of redemption and progress of revelation, so that Jesus of Nazareth is not unwittingly transported back in time. Consequently, this approach reads the Old Testament at the textual, epochal, and canonical levels,⁷⁵ allowing each to inform the other in a way that finds its completion in Jesus Christ.⁷⁶ In the end, this mediating approach is closer to the “Christotelic” model of G. K. Beale and Peter Enns than the “Christocentric” presuppositionalism of Goldsworthy.⁷⁷ It seeks to read the biblical first text in its grammatical-historical sense, but not without also recognizing how the Bible, unlike any other literature, “requires us to expand our notions of historical context, recognizing that later readers also figure among the divine address-

⁷⁴ For a recent survey of the New Testament methods for interpretation, see Beale, *Handbook*, pp. 55–93.

⁷⁵ See Lints, *The Fabric of Theology*, pp. 293–309.

⁷⁶ Much has been written on this in recent years, two “multi-view” books survey the landscape well: Gundry, *Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*; Gary Meadors, ed., *Four Views on Moving Beyond the Bible to Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009).

⁷⁷ Though I take issue with Enns’ aberrant view of Scripture, the eschatological hermeneutic which leads him to see Christ as the end of the OT witness is helpful because of the way it holds in tension textual and canonical horizons. For a thorough critique of Enns’ doctrine of Scripture, see G. K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2008). Remarkably, Beale agrees with Enns in regard to his Christotelic definition. Beale speaks positively: “I like this term *christotelic* better than *christocentric*, since it refers more explicitly to approaching Old Testament texts without attempting to read Christ into every passage—something which some wrongly construe to be a Christocentric reading. The goal of the whole Old Testament is to point to the eschatological coming of Christ, and, therefore, I think Enns has made a very helpful improvement on a Christian approach to the Old Testament” (p. 86).

ees.”⁷⁸ In short, typology is literal interpretation at the canonical level.⁷⁹

An example will help at this point. In the case of priestly typology, Jesus fulfills all the types and shadows of the biblical office (see Heb 5-10). Yet the shape of his priestly office is not defined by New Testament testimony but Old Testament typology. For instance, nowhere in the Gospels is Jesus labeled a “priest,” but as a few scholars have begun to observe Jesus performs priestly functions during his earthly ministry.⁸⁰ This is not evident from a linguistic word-study, but it is evident from a close comparison between Mosaic Law and the Gospels (cp. Lev 13:1–14:57 and Matt 8:1–4). More broadly, biblical types find their shape by the textual propositions, stipulations, and requirements in the Old Testament. Since the priesthood goes back to creation and is developed through the canon, it is possible to discern continuity and discontinuity, reinforcement and deviation, as the type moves toward its *telos* in Christ. This inner-canonical development helps us to discern how Christ fulfills the priestly type and even provides a rubric for evaluating theological models of Christ’s priesthood.

To reiterate what was argued above, biblical types provide divinely designed “molds” for all future types. As ectypes (intermediate types that stand between the original type and Christ) adhere to the mold, they are judged to be good and true. When such ectypes deviate from the original, however, they can also be condemned on the basis of the earlier model. Christ ultimately “breaks the mold,” as he becomes the final instantiation of the typological pattern. Upon his arrival all previous types and shadows can be reevaluated on the basis of his perfect substance. This is the point Beale makes about seeing types retrospectively.⁸¹

⁷⁸ Kevin J. Vanhoozer, “Ascending the Mountain, Singing the Rock,” p. 214. Significantly, Vanhoozer reminds us that biblical typology is a matter of “special rather than general hermeneutic[s]” because of “the divine authorial discourse and [the Bible’s] organic unity” (ibid.).

⁷⁹ Hans Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974), p. 2.

⁸⁰ Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 1,” *JHSJ* 4 (2006): pp. 155–58; idem, “Jesus as the High Priestly Messiah: Part 2,” *JHSJ* 5 (2007): pp. 57–79; cf. J. P. Heil, “Jesus as the Unique High Priest in the Gospel of John,” *CBQ* 57 (1995): pp. 729–45; André Feuillet, *The Priesthood of Christ and His Ministers*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975).

⁸¹ Beale, *Handbook*, pp. 15–16.

Still, such epistemological commerce between the testaments is not enough. Because of the way typology has been abused in the past, it is vital to ground types in more than the superficial features of the text. Valid types must possess linguistic *and* covenantal correspondences.⁸² While Goppelt and others have argued that valid types require significant correspondence, it has been argued here that significant correspondence can be achieved by looking at type's linguistic correspondence, sequential order, and covenantal context. When the antitype is Christ himself, it is possible to see a long line of mini-types proceeding from the first historical type to Christ himself. Such a process does not arise randomly, however. It follows the trajectory of the biblical covenants, which also move from Adam to the Second Adam. Thus, just as the biblical covenants are intended to lead to Christ and his new covenant, so the biblical types are instantiated to point to Christ, the goal of creation.⁸³ As Vanhoozer puts it, "the original meaning" of the Old Testament type "has finally achieved its Christological *telos*."⁸⁴

Summary

In the end, discerning and defining types in Scripture continues to be an art and a science. As Graham Cole wisely observes about typology, reason and imagination are both necessary for faithful interpretation.⁸⁵ Biblical caution should be exercised when making typological connections, but not at the expense of vision. And of course, biblical vision comes from a reading of the text that pays close attention to the textual, epochal, and canonical horizons. Therefore, in pursuit of rightly dividing the word of truth, this essay has suggested biblical covenants are an essential element for discerning biblical types.

I have argued that situated between typological maximalism and typological minimalism, a *Christotelic* approach understands 'types' first in their historical period and then following the temporal contours of biblical storyline to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

⁸² Louis Berkhof wisely cautions, "Accidental similarity between an Old and New Testament person or event does not constitute the one a type of the other. There must be some Scriptural evidence that it was so designed by God" (*Principles of Biblical Interpretation: Sacred Hermeneutics*, 2nd ed. [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952], p. 145).

⁸³ Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, pp. 21–26.

⁸⁴ Vanhoozer, "Ascending the Mountain, Singing the Rock," p. 218.

⁸⁵ Graham A. Cole, *The God Became Human: A Biblical Theology of Incarnation* (NSBT; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), pp. 91–92.

In this approach, I have affirmed the original intention of the biblical author, but I have also argued that the author's original intention could only be fully perceived at the final revelation of God (Heb 1:1–3). Due to the progressive nature of biblical revelation and the fact that behind the individual human authors stand a single divine Author, it is appropriate to speak of typology in terms of Christotelic trajectories that would have exceeded the expectations of the original author and audience. In the Old Testament Christ was both hidden and revealed by the prophetic witness.⁸⁶ Therefore, only in partnership with the New Testament do we behold the glory of Christ in the Old Testament. But with the New Testament witness in place, it is “magnificently obvious” that Israel's persons, events, and institutions are divinely designed types of Christ—types that we should be aware of as we read and preach the Old Testament.⁸⁷

On this point, the covenantal framework of the Bible aids our ability to understand what information the biblical authors had and when. In other words, by relating types to the biblical covenants, biblical interpreters are better able to understand the amount of antecedent knowledge each biblical authors had. Moreover, because the Scriptures are framed by multiple, escalating covenants, the textual correspondence that is necessary to affirm a connection between type and antitype is improved. That is to say, by including the biblical covenants in our consideration of any given type, the biblical interpreter has more data to examine. His conclusions about Rahab can be based on more than what is found in Joshua, for instance. By paying closer attention to the covenantal framework of the Bible, he can evaluate the plausibility of a type that might otherwise be dismissed as only a superficial similarity.

In conclusion, adding covenantal correspondence to the battery of tests for hermeneutical warrant is desirable for three reasons: (1) because of the prevalence of covenants in the Bible (e.g., they inform every period of redemptive history), (2) because of the way persons, events, and institutions are organically related to these biblical structures (e.g., every Old Testament saint and New Testament disciple is in a covenantal relationship with God), and (3) because of the way the covenants mediate blessing and cursing in the lives of God's people. The enduring value of relating types to

⁸⁶ D. A. Carson, *Jesus the Son of God: A Christological Title Often Overlooked, Sometimes Misunderstood, and Currently Disputed* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), p. 82.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

covenants is that instead of settling for some general redemptive connection between type and antitype, the biblical covenants give greater specificity. They function like infrared vision in the darkness of the Old Testament. To say it another way, because biblical covenants unify the canon without reducing Scripture's epochal diversity, they form an appropriate biblical backdrop for testing the validity of any typological relationship. Therefore, as more articles, chapters, and books are written on the subject of typology, they need to include discussion of how types relate to the biblical covenants, and how types and their respective covenants foreshadow Jesus Christ, the substance to which all types point. This will not only improve our interpretive methods; it will also increase our passion for the Christ to whom all Scripture speaks (John 5:39).