

Plenior, Praegnans, or Progressive: Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Authorial Intent

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Biblical typology¹ continues to be a hotly debated topic among interpreters of the Scriptures, especially among practitioners of the discipline of biblical theology.² Perhaps the most dominant question concerns the nature of typology itself: is it a feature that emerges from exegesis of the biblical text or a hermeneutical method that readers bring to bear on the biblical text?³ And further, if typology was intended by the biblical authors, how can interpreters account for the often seemingly specious connections made by New Testament (NT) authors between Old Testament (OT) people, events, and institutions and Jesus Christ? While various attempts have been made to account for biblical typology within an evangelical framework, the recent contribution of Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi demands attention.⁴ In order to account for biblical typology, and to interpret biblical texts in the context of the canon of Scripture, must evangelicals cling to a “fuller” sense of some kind, a meaning in the text emerging from divine intention not fully apparent to the human writing the words? Sequeira and Emadi

affirm such a “fuller” sense, arguing for a fine distinction between *sensus plenior* and what they have dubbed “*sensus praegnans*” based on consonance with human authorial intent. However, their proposal raises more questions than it answers.

I will argue that the typological development observable across the canon is the result of later, inspired, human authors closely reading and rightly understanding the meaning of earlier texts rather than the emergence of divinely hidden meanings. In short, the proper basis for biblical-theological exegesis and typology in Scripture is progressive revelation: the interpretation of biblical texts by inspired authors according to authorial intent across time. First, I will summarize Sequeira and Emadi’s *sensus praegnans* proposal. Then, I will critique *sensus praegnans* based on the hermeneutical categories of meaning and implication and the lack of meaningful difference from *sensus plenior*. Third, I will argue for progressive revelation in inner-biblical interpretation as the proper basis for biblical typology. Finally, I will demonstrate my approach by interpreting Matthew’s quotation of Hosea 11:1 (Matt 2:13–16).

While it remains imperative for evangelicals to affirm the dual authorship of Scripture, arguing for “fuller” senses in biblical texts is not necessary to continue to do so. Such an interpretive move creates more problems than it solves. Rather, human authorial intent *is* God’s intent in a given, dually authored biblical text.

SUMMARY OF *SENSUS PRAEIGNANS*

In their recent article in the *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*, Sequeira and Emadi offer a somewhat novel⁵ proposal for the hermeneutical warrant and exegetical verifiability of biblical typology. Specifically, they argue that biblical types are authorially-intended. Their argument is based on their perception of the “organic development” of the meaning of a text through the canon as later biblical authors interpret earlier texts. Such perception, or interpretation, is called “biblical-theological exegesis.”⁶ The goal of such exegesis is to expand the grammatical-historical exegesis of a text to include its wider redemptive-historical and canonical contexts, both of which “develop and constrain” its meaning.⁷ While the meaning of any text must be established by the intent of its human author,⁸ such development in meaning entails

“open-ended authorial intentions” and “extended meaning” by which the author may invest his words with meaning applicable in unforeseen future situations.⁹ These open-ended intentions and extensions in meaning are attributable to the dual authorship of Scripture.¹⁰

Because the Bible is dually authored, texts are embedded with “divine authorial intentions” that may surpass the intent of their human authors.¹¹ Such intentions—in other words, meaning—emerge only at the level of the whole canon through biblical-theological exegesis.¹² They also reside in the human author’s open-endedness, what Sequeira and Emadi call “hidden in plain view.”¹³ The dominant justification for such hidden meaning has been *sensus plenior*, or “fuller sense.”¹⁴ However, they take issue with the lack of exegetical verifiability and hermeneutical warrant that plagues *sensus plenior*. Thus, they propose a more nuanced understanding that constrains the divine authorial intention with both the intent of the human author and with canonical exegesis.¹⁵

Sequeira and Emadi call such a nuanced understanding *sensus praegnans*, or “pregnant sense.” They define *sensus praegnans* as “the full divinely intended meaning of Scripture” which is hidden but has now been revealed in light of the entire canon.¹⁶ Stated another way, the meaning of a text takes on a “deeper significance” as God’s plan unfolds across the canon.¹⁷ How is “pregnant” different from “fuller”? They center the difference in the function of the human author’s intention. While *sensus plenior* takes the form of a meaning that is completely hidden from the human author, *sensus praegnans*, while also not entirely foreseeable, remains consonant with the intent of the human author.¹⁸ Unlike *sensus plenior*, with *sensus praegnans* the words on the page do not function semiotically as signs that may be reassigned by the divine author to mean something of which the human author was never cognitive in any meaningful sense.¹⁹ While both are initially hidden, at least to some extent, the key distinction between the two is that while the fullness of the meaning of a text certainly exceeds the human author’s meaning, in *sensus praegnans* such a Spirit-given “fuller” sense organically arises from it, coheres with it, and never contravenes it.²⁰ *Sensus praegnans* is the “divinely-hidden meaning of a text that is deepened through redemptive-historical progression and literary-canonical development until it reaches its climax in eschatological fulfillment in Christ.”²¹

Thus, typology emerges from the biblical text through the process of assiduously uncovering an OT text's significance, or *sensus praegnans*, which is furnished by the rest of the canon.²² Simply put, *sensus praegnans*, or the divine authorial intent, serves as both the object of biblical-theological exegesis and the hermeneutical basis for typology that retains the necessary foundation of authorial intent in interpretation. With specific reference to NT use of the OT, *sensus praegnans* allows interpreters to maintain that Scripture often develops the meaning of a type beyond the original *intent* of the human author while in no way contravening his original *meaning*.²³ Such types exhibit creative theological and textual development across the canon which culminates in Christ and the new covenant. Therefore, Paul's notion of the "mystery" of the gospel (Rom 16:25; Eph 3:9; Col 1:26; 1 Tim 3:16) is retained in *sensus praegnans* as God's ultimate intention for a biblical type is hidden until the coming of Christ.²⁴ From the post-resurrection, privileged interpretive position that Christians enjoy, biblical types are only discernible retrospectively, but such retrospection does not create the type.²⁵ Rather, OT types were "hidden in plain view," only intelligible in light of later revelation which progressively gave birth to the *sensus praegnans* intended by the divine author.

Mystery According to D. A. Carson

A key component of Sequeira and Emadi's argument is a particular understanding of "mystery" that they adopt from D. A. Carson. Carson argues that divine intentionality is revealed through the prospective announcements built into, and developed by, progressive, written revelation.²⁶ Such divine intentionality serves as the basis for Paul's Christian reading of the OT.²⁷ Thus, Paul insists on both textual grounding and the revelation of mystery in his reading of the OT.²⁸ According to Paul's biblical-theological exegesis, then, the predictions of the OT authors are fulfilled in Christ while simultaneously revealing mysteries hidden therein. The cross, resurrection, and pouring out of the Spirit function together as new revelation that illuminates previous revelation and reveals the fullness of meaning in the text.²⁹ Simply put, Paul, under the inspiration of the Spirit, accesses the *sensus praegnans* of OT texts as he reads them as a Christian. This is precisely why he comes to drastically different conclusions than his Jewish counterparts regarding the meaning of the OT and the significance of Christ.

CRITIQUE OF *SENSUS PRAEGNANS*

While Sequeira and Emadi are right to critique *sensus plenior*, their notion of *sensus praegnans* simply redefines it such that the distinction lacks a meaningful difference. At the outset, such a distinction without a difference is clear in the following as they label *sensus praegnans* a “fuller sense”:

The biblical-theological approach therefore rejects notions of *sensus plenior* that assert a divine authorial intent completely unknown to the human author and incongruent with his meaning. The words on the page do not function semiotically as signs that may be reassigned by the “divine author” to mean something that the human author was never really cognitive of in any meaningful sense (*sensus occultus*). Rather, OT texts have a *sensus praegnans*—a divinely hidden meaning that is deepened through redemptive-historical progression and literary-canonical development until it reaches its climax in eschatological fulfillment in Christ. This Spirit-given “fuller sense,” or *sensus plenior* certainly exceeds the human author’s meaning, but organically arises from it, coheres with it, and never contravenes it.³⁰

I will consider their proposed distinction between exceeding meaning while at the same time cohering with it according to E. D. Hirsch’s categories of meaning and implication. Then, I will briefly summarize Raymond E. Brown’s definition of *sensus plenior* to show that *sensus praegnans* retains the aspects of *sensus plenior* that make it hermeneutically problematic. Then, I will argue that *sensus praegnans* fails to offer the best account of Paul’s “mystery” language in the NT.

Implications and Emergence of Divine Meaning

First, can divine authorial intent exceed human authorial intent while at the same time arising from it, cohering with it, and never contravening it? Is the emergence of divine meaning necessary to account for such a distinction? In his seminal work on hermeneutics, E. D. Hirsch Jr. argues for a distinction between meaning, implication, and significance. First, he asserts that the interpretive enterprise has as its exclusive object the verbal meaning of the text.³¹ To interpret a text is to elucidate its author-intended meaning, while discussions regarding significance properly belong in the realm of criticism. “Significance always entails a relationship between what is *in* a man’s verbal

meaning and what is *outside* it.”³² Implication, on the other hand—the knot-tiest problem in interpretation, according to Hirsch³³—belongs to verbal meaning as a part belongs to a whole, and that whole is a “willed type,” a convention shared between author and interpreter.³⁴ The willed type serves as the basis for determinacy of meaning and as the controlling factor in identifying implications. Thus, implications are sub-meanings of the whole, specific implied meanings that exist within the whole array of sub-meanings that a text carries.³⁵ The most important thing to note is that implications are limited by authorial intent.³⁶

Hirsch also specifically takes up *sensus plenior* and his comments are particularly applicable for my purpose. Assuming dual-authorship of Scripture, he argues for a hard distinction between the human and divine authors such that, for a given text, readers must seek to interpret either the intention of one or the other.³⁷ If the human author’s willed meaning is perceived to exceed his willed type, recourse to a divine author—and, by extension, divine willed type—is necessary and the human author’s willed type becomes irrelevant. For Hirsch, the notion of a sense beyond the author’s is illegitimate. While critiquing Hirsch’s conception of inspiration is beyond the scope of this paper, his emphasis on authorial intention serves as a corrective to the “fuller sense” aspect of *sensus praegnans*. In fact, Hirsch directly confronts the attempted marriage of divine intent exceeding and simultaneously cohering with human intent. The two are necessarily unrelated.

Therefore, the distinction that *sensus praegnans* makes between the human and divine authors of Scripture—and their intentions, or willed meanings—muddles the interpretive enterprise. It is unclear precisely whose intent ought to be the object of interpretation at a given time, especially given the fact that there is only one text. Furthermore, might the supposed emergence of divine meaning be better conceived as the emergence of implications under the control of the human author’s willed meaning? It is unnecessary to assign implications to a second author when they properly arise from the “shared type,”³⁸ the common experience of the author and reader. Thus, what appears to be the emergence of divine authorial intention at the canonical level can be attributed simply to the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors and their elucidation of the implications inherent in the meaning of earlier texts.

A Distinction Without a Difference

Second, how different from *sensus plenior* is *sensus praegnans*? Raymond E. Brown defines *sensus plenior* as “that additional, deeper meaning, intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, which is seen to exist in the words of a biblical text (or group of texts, or even a whole book) when they are studied in light of further revelation or development in the understanding of revelation.”³⁹ According to Brown, such deeper meaning presupposes the literal sense of the text, or the human author’s direct, proximate, and intended meaning, but exists in the words themselves.⁴⁰ Specifically, the “general *sensus plenior*” is “the homogenous enrichment in meaning that a text assumes when it is placed in its setting in the whole Bible.”⁴¹ In other words, a given passage means more in the context of the whole canon than it does in its own immediate context; since the Bible is the work of a single divine author, “the totality should enable better understanding of the parts.”⁴²

Brown argues that while those who demand full consciousness of meaning on the part of the human author fear that without it the sense of Scripture would cease to be inspired, inspiration in no way requires consciousness of the full sense of the text by the human author.⁴³ Rather, “vague awareness” is sufficient to account for inspiration. The human author, without foreseeing the future in detail, had a premonition or even certitude that what he was writing would have a more important role in God’s plan than its contemporaneous function. In some undetermined way he knew that it would one day reach its fulfillment.⁴⁴ While generally aware of the complete meaning of his text, the human author could be moved to express something which he understood only partially but which God understood fully.⁴⁵

Sequeira and Emadi are right to highlight Brown’s emphasis on the words of the text which at the same time express the human author’s intent and take on a semiotic function in the wider canonical context, signifying something outside of the human author’s intended meaning.⁴⁶ Such a distinction between the words themselves and their meaning seems to set *sensus praegnans* apart from *sensus plenior*, but is there really a difference between them hermeneutically? Both affirm a meaning in the text that was “not entirely foreseeable”⁴⁷ by the human author, something which he understood “only partially.”⁴⁸ If *sensus praegnans* arises from, coheres with, and never contravenes the human author’s intent, and yet at the same time exceeds it, how does it not assign additional meaning to the words of the text? The words then become, as in

sensus plenior, signs that can be assigned meaning by different authors. This is precisely why Hirsch's critique of *sensus plenior* is so cogent, and why it applies to *sensus praegnans* as well. The words of a text carry no meaning in themselves; meaning flows from an author, an intent.⁴⁹ Separation between human and divine intent in a text jumbles the hermeneutical enterprise and treats the words on the page as signs whether that separation is a "fuller" or "pregnant" sense. *Sensus praegnans* appeals, through cleverness in name, to the emergence of something new but not different, to the birth of full but consonant meaning in the context of the canon. But such a distinction between human intent and hidden divine meaning is not different enough from *sensus plenior* to be truly distinct.

"Mystery" and Hidden Meaning

Finally, does *sensus praegnans* offer the best account of Paul's "mystery" language in the NT? The Incarnation and the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ was certainly surprising in many ways and many people who witnessed these things did not understand or believe them. However, this reality does not necessitate that the *meaning* of OT texts was hidden. Such a necessity is only valid if one assumes a distinction between human and divine intent in an antecedent text. Carson argues that if either Jews or Greeks would have *foreseen* the coming of Christ and the revelation of the gospel, they would not have crucified Christ (1 Cor 2:8).⁵⁰ But there is a difference between *foreseeing* and *understanding*. Certainly, Paul and his Jewish counterparts *foresaw* the coming of Messiah prophesied in the text of the OT, and yet Paul *understood* while many of them did not. Rather than a *sensus praegnans* in the text, the hiddenness of the gospel can best be accounted for by the contrast between the natural and the spiritual, with only the latter able to *understand* such spiritual things (1 Cor 2:11–16). The ability to understand the testimony of the Scriptures and to believe in Jesus as their fulfilment is a spiritual matter enabled by the Holy Spirit. Such understanding need not be attributed to a distinction in meaning between the divine and human authors of Scripture.

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION AND INNER-BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

In this section I will propose an account of typological development in the canon that acknowledges progressive revelation without appealing to a “fuller” sense in the meaning of biblical texts based on a distinction between human and divine authorial intent. At the outset, it is imperative to affirm the dual authorship of Scripture.

Inspiration as Dual Authorship

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy identifies the Holy Spirit as Scripture’s “divine author” and states, “Inspiration was the work in which God by His Spirit, through human writers, gave us His Word. The origin of Scripture is divine.”⁵¹ Thus, while human authors wrote the Bible, both the words on the page and the authors themselves were so superintended by the Holy Spirit that the product can rightly be called God’s Word. Such a confession is derivative of the teaching of Scripture itself. Peter writes, “No prophecy of Scripture ever comes about from one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever *carried along* (ἡνέχθη) by the will of man; rather, men *carried along* (φερόμενοι) by the Holy Spirit spoke from God” (2 Pet 1:20–21).⁵² Over and against the destructive heresies of false teachers (2 Pet 2:1), the reliable, fully confirmed prophetic Word of God concerning Jesus Christ is not the product of humans but of the Holy Spirit. While the human authors do the speaking or writing, it is the Holy Spirit that “bears them along” in doing so.

As I have argued above, insurmountable hermeneutical challenges arise when the dual authorship of Scripture leads to multiple meanings and “fuller” senses. Rather, while a full understanding of the mode of inspiration will largely remain a mystery—as the Chicago statement affirms⁵³—the most hermeneutically sound conception of meaning and the dual authorship of Scripture is to consider the intent of the human and divine authors as a single intent. Simply put, the human author’s intent in a text *is* God’s intent.⁵⁴ The Holy Spirit does not properly *mean* anything beyond what the human author whom he carries along means in the text he is writing. The human author means precisely what the Holy Spirit inspired him to mean.

John Webster’s conception of inspiration is helpful at this point. He argues for a notion of Scripture as a “sanctified creaturely reality.”⁵⁵ Commenting on

the same passage of Scripture (2 Pet 1:21), Webster argues, “Being ‘moved’ by the Spirit in not simply being passively impelled; the Spirit’s *suggestio* and human authorship are directly, not inversely, proportional; the action of the inspiring Spirit and the work of the inspired creature are concursive rather than antithetical.”⁵⁶ In other words, Spirit and creature cooperate in the production of the holy text. It may be possible to conceive of different intentions cooperating behind one text, but there would be no access to the Spirit’s intent apart from the text and the author behind it, or, the intent of the creature writing.

Thus, the doctrine of inspiration is the specific textual application of the broader notion of sanctification as the “hallowing of creaturely realities to serve revelation’s taking form.”⁵⁷ As the work of the Spirit, sanctification integrates communicative divine action and the creatureliness of those elements which are appointed to the service of God’s self-presentation.⁵⁸ Simply put, “a sanctified text is creaturely, not divine.”⁵⁹ Webster argues further than a sanctified text is not a transubstantiated one—some kind of quasi-divine artifact.⁶⁰ To assign divine intention to a text in some “fuller” sense apart from—even if coherent with—human authorial intent is to abolish its creatureliness, at least to a degree. And according to Webster, the sanctification inherent in the doctrine of inspiration *establishes*, rather than abolishes, the creatureliness of the text of Scripture.⁶¹

Therefore, it is possible and necessary to maintain the dual authorship of Scripture while at the same time arguing for the locus and extent of meaning of a text arising from the intent of the inspired—sanctified—human author. The Holy Spirit carried him along to write the Word of God. The human author means in his text precisely what the Holy Spirit inspired him to mean.

Inner-Biblical Interpretation

How does such an understanding of dual authorship and inspiration account for the many instances in which a biblical author interprets another biblical text? Especially those instances in which said interpretation appears to surpass the meaning of the earlier text, what Sequeira and Emadi call the emergence of “divinely hidden meaning”⁶² in the NT use of OT texts? The phrase “inner-biblical exegesis”⁶³ has been coined to refer to the use of biblical texts by other inspired authors. Russell Meek defines inner-biblical exegesis, or interpretation, as later authors referring to a previous text “in order to

explicate, comment on, expand, or in some other way make it applicable to a new situation.”⁶⁴ Therefore, the biblical interpreter must seek to understand the meaning of the antecedent text and the later author’s purpose in commenting on or expanding it.

Hirsch has described textual, or verbal, meaning as a “willed” or “shared” type, an entity that can be embodied in one or more instance and is common to both author and reader.⁶⁵ The multiple instances in which the type, or meaning, can manifest are implications of that meaning. Thus, implications are controlled by the author’s intended meaning. This construction is helpful in instances of inner-biblical interpretation because it provides a hermeneutically sound foundation that respects the nature of Scripture without resorting to “fuller” senses or hidden meaning. The later inspired author “earnestly and carefully searched” (1 Pet 1:10) the things concerning salvation in the Scriptures available to him, arriving at the meaning, or shared type, of the earlier author and then expanded on, explained, or applied one more implications of that meaning for his sanctified, inspired purposes in his text. It is these implications that organically arise from, cohere with, and never contravene the human author’s willed meaning while perhaps appearing to—but not actually—exceeding it.

Another helpful distinction is that between meaning and significance. Sequeira and Emadi argue that typological structures—which emerge fully at the canonical level by observing the *sensus praegnans* of individual texts—materialize in the *significance* of an OT text furnished by the rest of the canon of Scripture.⁶⁶ This is a hermeneutically sound statement that has nothing to do with “fuller” senses. To those who argue that the meaning of a text changes over time, Hirsch responds that it is not the meaning of the text which changes, but the significance.⁶⁷ Significance always implies a relationship between the author-intended meaning of the text and something else: a reader, situation, or, in the case of Sequeira and Emadi, the canon of Scripture. Surely the *significance* of OT texts changes when the entirety of revelation is considered, especially the event of the Incarnation, but the inspired human author’s intended *meaning* in a given antecedent text remains unchanged.

In this way, inner-biblical interpretation as defined above serves as the main mechanism for progressive revelation in Scripture. Later authors—both in the OT and those interpreting the OT in light of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Incarnation—interpret, develop, and apply the implications

of earlier texts under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the human author's intended meaning. Such inner-biblical interpretation impacts the *significance* of antecedent texts, not their meaning.

Typology

Biblical typology emerges from the text of Scripture as a result of human authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation. Thus, biblical types are both prospective and progressive.⁶⁸ James Hamilton defines typology as “God-ordained, author-intended historical correspondence and escalation in significance between people, events, and institutions across the Bible’s redemptive-historical story (i.e., in covenantal context).”⁶⁹ While biblical types are often discerned retrospectively,⁷⁰ this is a function of an interpretive position in salvation history after closure of the canon. The reality is that biblical authors that develop types do so because they discern the prospective nature of the type in the earlier text itself according to the intention of the earlier author. The prospective and progressive natures of typology work together across the canon to prophesy the promised restoration of creation (Gen 3:15)⁷¹ and to identify Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of that promise.

In a recent work on typology, Ardel B. Caneday argues that the OT is like a fully furnished but dimly lit room.⁷² When the light of the revelation of the Incarnation is brought into the room, nothing is added that was not already there, but the light dispels shadows and things shrouded emerge with clarity. In short, what was there all along is made clear. As the author of Hebrews writes, “After long ago speaking at many times and in many ways to our fathers through the prophets, in these last days God has spoken to us through his Son” (Heb 1:1–2). Caneday’s illustration is helpful because it affirms both the prospective nature—the furniture is present in the room, placed there by earlier authors—and the progressive nature—understanding increases until the room is fully visible in Christ—of typology.

Therefore, biblical-theological exegesis *is* the proper hermeneutical method to observe and interpret typological structures in Scripture. Rather than observing “organic development” of the *meaning* of texts through the canon,⁷³ though, the *significance* of earlier texts sharpens as later authors develop the implications of those texts according to the prospective intent of the earlier inspired human authors. Progressive revelation, then, occurs in the sound interpretation and application of earlier texts by later authors in the

Bible both before and after the Incarnation.⁷⁴ And further, the discipline of biblical theology—the foundation for biblical-theological exegesis—is rightly understood as embracing this interpretive perspective modeled by the biblical authors as both valid and normative.⁷⁵

CASE STUDY: MATTHEW'S USE OF HOSEA 11:1⁷⁶

In this section I intend to interpret Matthew 2:13–16 as a case study in the validity of the principles that I have laid out above. The typological structure that Matthew claims as fulfilled in Christ in this text spans the entire OT, so I will begin with the earliest text and proceed forward through the canon. I am arguing that Matthew understands Jesus to be the true Israel and the true Adam, both installments in the Son of God type that Moses prophetically inaugurates in the Pentateuch.

Adam: The Son of God

In his inspired account of creation Moses⁷⁷ describes the nature of humanity as after God's image (צֶלֶם) and likeness (דְמוּת) (Gen 1:26). Then, at the outset of his genealogy from Adam to Noah, Moses writes, "In the day when God created man, God made him in his likeness (דְמוּת)" (Gen 5:1) and then, "And Adam lived 130 years, and he fathered a son in his likeness (דְמוּת), according to his image (צֶלֶם)" (Gen 5:3). While the positions of "image" and "likeness" are switched between the two passages—man is created "according to [God's] likeness" in Genesis 1:26 and Seth is born "according to [Adam's] image" in Genesis 5:3—the parallel between them is unmistakable. Thus, Moses is drawing an analogy between the father-son relationship of Adam and Seth with that of God and Adam. In a sense, God "fathered" Adam in the same way that Adam fathered Seth. As Seth is Adam's son, so Adam is God's son. It is on the basis of this analogy that Luke identifies Adam as God's son in Jesus' genealogy (Luke 3:38).

Furthermore, Adam, as God's son, serves as his covenantal⁷⁸ counterpart. YHWH establishes a covenant with Adam when he places him in the garden (Gen 2:15) and prohibits him from partaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17). The relationship between the two is defined by YHWH's gracious provision in the garden and Adam's obedience to YHWH's command, and the relationship will continue on the basis of the faithfulness

of the two parties to their respective covenantal obligations. When Adam transgresses YHWH's command (Gen 3:7), he is exiled from the garden and no longer has access to the tree of life by which he would have lived forever in YHWH's presence (Gen 3:22–24). The covenant is broken. Therefore, Moses inaugurates the son of God, covenantal counterpart type early in Genesis in the person of Adam. And further, Adam's failure implicitly anticipates a son of God to come—a seed from the woman (Gen 3:15)—who will keep covenant and restore access to YHWH's life-giving presence.

Israel: The Corporate Son of God

Later in the Pentateuch Moses explicitly identifies the nation of Israel as God's son when he records YHWH stating, "Israel is my son, my firstborn" (Exod 4:22). In the context of Exodus 4 YHWH means that Israel is properly his possession and thus it is right for them to serve him rather than Pharaoh (Exod 4:23). The parallel is between the firstborn son of God and the firstborn son of Pharaoh in a foreshadow of the Passover event: Israel, the son of God, will be redeemed from Egypt while the firstborn of Egypt will die. At the same time, Moses makes use of the "son" language to establish a typological relationship between the nation of Israel and Adam, the son of God. Both serve as covenantal counterparts to YHWH. He says to Israel, "If you indeed hear my voice, and you keep my covenant, then you will be my special possession out of all the peoples" (Exod 19:5). Thus, Israel stands in the same position as Adam did in the garden: God's son and covenant partner.

Moses confirms his typological intent further in Deuteronomy. First, he again employs son language explicitly with reference to YHWH's provision for Israel in the wilderness: "you saw YHWH your God carrying you as a man carries his son" (Deut 1:31). Second, he compares the present generation of Israelites, those about to enter into and possess the Promised Land, to Adam before he sinned in garden, before he rebelliously acquired the knowledge of good and evil: "And your little ones, who you said would be a prey, and your sons, who today *do not know good and evil*, they will enter there, and to them I will give [the land], and they will possess it" (Deut 1:39). Finally, at the conclusion of his final speech Moses sets before Israel the same choice that faced Adam in the garden: to obey the command of YHWH or not. This is apparent in the creative, if awkward, reference to the forbidden tree in the garden when Moses says, "I have set before you today life and *good* and death and *evil*" (Deut 30:15) and in

the consequences of disobedience: “If your heart turns away and does not obey, and you are drawn away, and you worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today that *you will surely perish*” (Deut 30:17–18). This warning is very similar to YHWH’s warning to Adam in the garden: “in the day you eat from it *you will surely die*” (Gen 2:17). If Israel disobeys YHWH as Adam did, they will suffer exile from the place of YHWH’s presence as Adam did. Therefore, in a corporate sense Israel is an installment in the son of God type, another Adam, YHWH’s new covenantal counterpart.

Unfortunately, Moses makes it clear that Israel will certainly recapitulate the failure of Adam by breaking covenant with YHWH and, as a result, will be exiled from the land (Deut 31:16–18). Moses reinforces this fact in the song he teaches Israel before his death which serves as a witness against them when they sin (Deut 31:19; 32:1–43). Thus, the sure failure of Israel functions typologically—prospectively—with the failure of Adam in the garden by anticipating a son of God, a covenantal partner, to come who will succeed where Adam and Israel failed, who will keep covenant with YHWH and enjoy the presence of YHWH in the land.

The Final Exodus of the Son of God

Moses projects the typological function of Israel explicitly into the future in the mouth of the pagan prophet Balaam when he says, “God brings *him* out of Egypt” (Num 24:8). In the context of Balaam’s third oracle, Israel is compared to the garden of Eden—their tents are like gardens (גַּנִּים) planted (נָטַעַ) by YHWH (Num 24:6; cf. Gen 2:8)—and to the king from Judah’s line prophesied by Jacob in Genesis 49:8–12 as a lion’s cub (גֹּיֵר אֲרִיָּה) and a lioness (לְבִיאָה) (Num 24:8). “The scepter (שֵׁבֶט) will not depart from Judah” (Gen 49:10), and in Balaam’s fourth oracle the same “scepter (שֵׁבֶט)” will arise from Israel and crush the forehead of Moab (Num 24:17; cf. Gen 3:15). This future king of Israel is the “him” of Numbers 24:8 whom God brings out of Egypt. Thus, here in Numbers 24 Moses typologically marries Edenic imagery referring to Adam with Israel’s exodus from Egypt and the future king from Judah’s line. In so doing, readers anticipate the future exodus of the antitype of Adam and Israel, YHWH’s royal, faithful covenantal counterpart who will accomplish his promised redemption. The future king will both undergo, and lead his people in, a new exodus.

Moses’ intentional, prospective typological structure in the Pentateuch supplies the implications by which the prophet Hosea anticipates the same

future exodus. Referring to the exodus from Egypt he writes, “When Israel was a young man I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son” (Hos 11:1). Hosea goes on to prophesy Israel’s “return to Egypt” in their exile to Assyria (Hos 11:5) in fulfillment of YHWH’s promise that they would perish from the land if they turned and worshipped other gods (Hos 11:2; cf. Deut 30:17). Shortly after, Hosea 11:10–11 prophesies a second exodus from Assyria like the first from Egypt:

“They will follow YHWH, like a lion (אֲרִי) he will roar; when he roars his sons will come trembling from the west. They will come trembling like birds from Egypt and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will cause them to dwell in their homes,” declares YHWH.

Hosea has accurately interpreted Moses’ intent in the Pentateuch concerning the son of God type and has cast it further into the future. The son of God, his covenantal partner, will experience a future exodus, a return from exile, just as Israel did.

Furthermore, here YHWH himself is the lion of Judah leading his people to their home. There is no confusion between the singular and plural; Moses initiated this conflation of the individual and the congregation in his referring to the nation of Israel as the singular son of YHWH (Exod 4:22). Thus, the son of God—representing YHWH himself—will lead the sons of God in a new exodus, a return from exile to dwell in the land of YHWH’s presence. This Adamic figure will be faithful where Israel and Adam were not and will reopen the way to Eden and the tree of life.

Jesus the Son of God

Matthew 2:13–15 says,

After [the wise men] had departed, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph saying, “Arise, take the child and his mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod seeks the child to destroy him.” After he arose, Joseph took the child and his mother at night and departed to Egypt, and he stayed there until the death of Herod so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

For Matthew, Jesus's "exile" in Egypt as a youth followed by his return to Nazareth (Matt 2:21) fulfills Hosea 11:1. In the same way that Israel—the seed of Abraham—left the Promised Land for Egypt (Gen 46:5–7; Exod 1:1–7) and then returned in the exodus, so Jesus leaves the Land for Egypt and later returns. This not because the revelation of the Incarnation has resulted in the need to "re-read"⁷⁹ and re-interpret relevant OT texts, nor does Matthew's testimony change the meaning of the text to which he refers. Matthew's point is that Jesus—as God's counterpart in the new covenant—is the fulfillment of Moses' son of God type. He now stands in the place of Israel and Adam. Analogous to Israel's forty year wandering in the wilderness, Jesus will shortly wander in the wilderness for forty days, but he will trust in the Lord without wavering and succeed where Israel failed in true escalating fashion (Matt 4:1–11).⁸⁰ Jesus is God's Son according to the type established in Adam and Israel and at the same time in ways that Adam and Israel were not.

Therefore, in Jesus the anticipation that Moses typologically sowed and Hosea typologically watered has come to full bloom. Hosea interpreted the Pentateuch, including Moses' son of God typology, according to Moses' intended, prospective meaning, and Matthew interpreted Hosea's text likewise, likely with the Pentateuch in view. As I proposed above, this is precisely the mechanism by which readers of the Bible observe progressive revelation. As Hosea, and later Matthew, develop Moses' son of God type, it escalates in significance until that significance is fully realized in Christ. Neither Moses' nor Hosea's *meaning*, however, is changed at any point in this progression. The intention of the divine author, the Holy Spirit, is evident precisely in what Moses and Hosea intended in their respective texts, and Matthew, likewise inspired and in light of the Incarnation, closed the typological trajectory in complete coherence with the implications of the meanings of those previous texts.

CONCLUSION

In an effort to contribute to the ongoing conversation regarding the hermeneutical basis for typology, I have argued that the typological development observable across the canon is the result of later, inspired, human authors closely reading and rightly understanding the meaning of earlier texts rather

than the emergence of divinely hidden meanings. Simply put, I have proposed progressive revelation based on inner-biblical interpretation as the proper basis for author-intended typology apart from any “fuller” senses.

Such an approach is essential for a biblical hermeneutic that upholds biblical authority, is rooted in authorial intent, and faithfully serves the church. Why? Because although the Bible is surely of a different nature—“God-breathed” (θεόπνευστος)—than any other literature in history (2 Tim 3:16), the fear of YHWH demands a consistent, rational hermeneutic, an interaction with his Word that is constrained by his sanctified intent as revealed through his inspired prophets and apostles. Arguments for “fuller” senses, in spite of their stated goals, drift away from authorial intent and towards reader response because the so-called “divine intent” arises more from the consciousness of the reader than the text under consideration and the inspired author who wrote it. Biblical typology understood according to the principles that I have proposed here best witnesses to the reality of Jesus Christ as Messiah and the glory of God’s salvation planned and accomplished in and through him from the foundation of the world.

¹ For recent works on biblical typology see L. Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (trans., by D. H. Madvig; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); R. M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures* (Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981); D. L. Baker, “Typology and the Christian Use of the Old Testament,” in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed. G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 313–30; G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 13–27; C. A. Evans and L. Novakovic, “Typology,” in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (2nd ed.; ed. Joel B. Green, Jeannine K. Brown, and Nicholas Perrin; Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2013), 986–90; Stephen J. Wellum and Peter J. Gentry, *Kingdom Through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants* (2nd ed.; Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 129–37; Ardel B. Caneday, “Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed—“These Things Occurred Typologically to Them and Were Written Down for Our Admonition,”” in *God’s Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner* (eds., Denny Burk, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Brian Vickers; Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2019), 135–55; James M. Hamilton, Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible’s Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2022).

² For an overview of the history of biblical theology, see C. H. H. Scobie, “History of Biblical Theology,” in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity & Diversity of Scripture* (eds., T. Desmond Alexander, et al.; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000), 11–20. For a helpful discussion on the diverse approaches to biblical theology, see Edward W. Klink III and Darian R. Lockett, *Understanding Biblical Theology: A Comparison of Theory and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012). I approach the discipline of biblical theology according to Hamilton’s definition: “Biblical theology is the attempt to understand and embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors,” in James M. Hamilton, Jr., *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology* (NSBT 32; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press,

- 2014), 21. For complementary definitions of biblical theology, see Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Edinburgh, Scotland: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), 12; Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," in *NDBT*, 3–11.
- 3 For an argument for typology as an author-intended feature of the biblical text, see Caneday, "Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed— 'These Things Occurred Typologically to Them and Were Written Down for Our Admonition,'" 135–55. For an argument for typology as an externally oriented, "figural" reading of the Bible, see Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 2; cf. David I. Starling, *Hermeneutics as Apprenticeship: How the Bible Shapes Our Interpretive Habits and Practices* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 147–62.
- 4 Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," *SBJT* 21.1 (2017): 11–34.
- 5 The novelty of their proposal lies in their creation of *sensus praegnans* as a category which is based on a number of presuppositions that are adopted from elsewhere.
- 6 Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," 14; cf. G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 15.
- 7 Sequeira and Emadi, 14.
- 8 E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967), 5. Hirsch writes, "To banish the original author as the determiner of meaning was to reject the only compelling normative principle that could lend validity to an interpretation."
- 9 Sequeira and Emadi, 15; cf. Robert L. Plummer, "Righteousness and Peace Kiss: The Reconciliation of Authorial Intent and Biblical Typology," *SBJT* 14/2 (2010): 54–61. Plummer argues for biblical authors such as Hosea standing on a stairway looking backwards (downwards) at typological structures in previous revelation and then turning forwards (upwards) to project into the future the same typological trajectory, giving implicit permission to future authors to interpret his words as they see fit based on their time, place, and proximity to Messiah.
- 10 As stated in "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago_Statement.pdf.
- 11 Sequeira and Emadi, 15.
- 12 Sequeira and Emadi, 15; cf. Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 264.
- 13 Sequeira and Emadi, 15; cf. D. A. Carson, "Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul's Understanding of the Old and the New," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism: The Paradoxes of Paul* (eds., D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Siefred; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004), 397.
- 14 Raymond E. Brown, *The "Sensus Plenior" of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore: St. Mary's University, 1955), 92–3.
- 15 For an argument in favor of a "canonical approach" to interpreting the NT use of the OT, see Douglas J. Moo and Andrew David Naselli, "The Problem of the New Testament's Use of the Old Testament," in *The Enduring Authority of the Christian Scriptures* (ed., D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 737–46.
- 16 Sequeira and Emadi, 17.
- 17 Sequeira and Emadi, 16; cf. Moo and Naselli, 736.
- 18 Sequeira and Emadi, 17.
- 19 For further explanation of words as signs, see Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, translated by R. P. H. Green (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1999), 30–32.
- 20 Sequeira and Emadi, 17–18. Observe here how the authors conflate "pregnant" with "fuller" to some extent.
- 21 *Ibid.*, 17.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 18.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 19, emphasis mine. As I argue below, here especially the authors would be helped by Hirsch's distinction between meaning and implication; see Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 61–7.
- 24 Sequeira and Emadi, 21.
- 25 *Ibid.*, 21.
- 26 Carson, "Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul's Understanding of the Old and the New," 409.
- 27 *Ibid.*, 411–12.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 433.

- ²⁹ Ibid., 432, 435.
- ³⁰ Sequeira and Emadi, 17–18.
- ³¹ Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 57.
- ³² Ibid., 63, emphasis mine.
- ³³ Ibid., 27.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 51, 64, 66. Hirsch develops the “shared” aspect of type as intrinsic genre, the common literary convention between author and interpreter that makes interpretation possible.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 62.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 63.
- ³⁷ Ibid., 126n37.
- ³⁸ Ibid., *Validity in Interpretation*, 66.
- ³⁹ Brown, *The “Sensus Plenior” of Sacred Scripture*, 92.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 92.
- ⁴¹ Ibid., 97.
- ⁴² Ibid., 97–8.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 107n59.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 107n61. See also Plummer, “Righteousness and Peace Kiss: The Reconciliation of Authorial Intent and Biblical Typology,” 57. He writes, “though Hosea does not apparently consciously know of the Messiah’s coming flight into Egypt, he gives implicit permission for later readers who witness subsequent divine revelation to find that correspondence in his text,” emphasis original.
- ⁴⁵ Brown, 129–30.
- ⁴⁶ Sequeira and Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” 17.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 17.
- ⁴⁸ Brown, 130.
- ⁴⁹ Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 27.
- ⁵⁰ Carson, “Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul’s Understanding of the Old and the New,” 397.
- ⁵¹ The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, 1978, accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago_Statement.pdf.
- ⁵² All translations of biblical texts are my own unless otherwise noted.
- ⁵³ The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, Article VII.
- ⁵⁴ Whether one refers to the human intent or divine intent as *the* intent of the text is irrelevant when they are equated as I argue for here. The important thing is that there is a single authorial intent determining the meaning of the text. I will refer to the meaning of the text as derivative of human authorial intent because God’s intent is realized in creation through the inspired human author and the human author is the one who wrote the words on the page.
- ⁵⁵ John Webster, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 21.
- ⁵⁶ Ibid., 39.
- ⁵⁷ Ibid., 30.
- ⁵⁸ Ibid., 27.
- ⁵⁹ Ibid., 28.
- ⁶⁰ Ibid., 28.
- ⁶¹ Ibid., 30.
- ⁶² Sequeira and Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” 17.
- ⁶³ See Russell L. Meek, “Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology,” *Biblica* 95.1 (2014): 280–91 for an argument in favor of this nomenclature. Michael Fishbane further defines such inner-biblical interpretation as “aggadic exegesis” in *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 281–91.
- ⁶⁴ Meek, “Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology,” 288.
- ⁶⁵ Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 64, 66.
- ⁶⁶ Sequeira and Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” 18.
- ⁶⁷ Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 8.
- ⁶⁸ For a helpful summary of the characteristics of biblical types, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 133–7; cf. Sequeira and Emadi, 18–25, who offer five characteristics: biblical types must be 1)

- historical, 2) authorially-intended, 3) marked by escalation, 4) textual, and 5) covenantal.
- 69 Hamilton, *Typology*, 26.
- 70 Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 14; cf. Gentry and Wellum, 132; Sequeira and Emadi, 21.
- 71 Hamilton, *Typology*, 6–7, argues that typological patterns in the Bible are all generally shaped by God’s promise in Gen 3:15.
- 72 Caneday, “Biblical Types: Revelation Concealed in Plain Sight to be Disclosed— ‘These Things Occurred Typologically to Them and Were Written Down for Our Admonition,’” 152.
- 73 Sequeira and Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” 14.
- 74 The Incarnation itself is the pinnacle of revelation and causes the most significant impact to earlier textual significance compared to the interpretation of earlier texts by later authors.
- 75 Hamilton, *Typology*, 27–28; cf. Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 21–6.
- 76 The literature that has been produced addressing this text is voluminous. For a sampling, see Tracy L. Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: An Alternative Solution,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* Oct–Dec (1986): 314–28; Dan McCartney and Peter Enns, “Matthew and Hosea: A Response to John Sailhamer,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001): 97–105; G. K. Beale, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: One More Time,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 55/4 (2012): 697–715.
- 77 I am assuming Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. For a discussion of the authorship of Genesis see Kenneth L. Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26* (NAC, vol. 1A; Nashville, TN: B&H, 1996), 68–85; cf. John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 23–5, and *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, and Interpretation* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2009), 22–9.
- 78 For a defense of covenant in the garden, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 211–58; for the opposite view, see Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020), 181–8.
- 79 What Carson calls “typology with teeth” in “Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul’s Understanding of the Old and the New,” 433.
- 80 Escalation is a key characteristic of biblical typology; see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 134–5; Sequeira and Emadi, “Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology,” 21–2; Hamilton, *Typology*, 23–4.