

## TPOLOGY: A SUMMARY OF THE PRESENT EVANGELICAL DISCUSSION

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The issue of what constitutes typology surfaces regularly in discussions of continuity and discontinuity and of the relationship between the OT and NT. It is also a major component in defining what we mean by literal hermeneutics. John Feinberg has stated that the debate between covenant theologians and dispensationalists over what constitutes literal hermeneutics stems from three fundamental and interrelated issues: "the relation of the progress of revelation to the priority of one Testament over the other, the understanding and implications of the NT use of the OT, and the understanding and implications of typology."<sup>1</sup> Mark W. Karlberg concurs with Feinberg's analysis: "Resolution of lingering differences of interpretation among evangelicals depends, to a large extent, on a proper assessment of the nature and function of OT typology."<sup>2</sup>

Others are even more outspoken on the importance of typology for understanding Scripture. Leonhard Goppelt argues that "typology is the method of interpreting Scripture that is predominant in the NT and characteristic of it."<sup>3</sup> S. Lewis Johnson says that "one of the happiest results of twentieth-century scholarship has been the rediscovery of the importance of typology for the understanding of the Bible. I am hopeful that evangelicals, who so often follow rather than lead in biblical scholarship, will follow once again, for in this case surely modern scholarship is right."<sup>4</sup>

There are several reasons for the current revival of interest in typology by critical scholars. (1) Francis Foulkes suggests it is because of the renewed interest in Biblical theology.<sup>5</sup> G. P. Hugenerger gives more specific reasons.

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<sup>1</sup> J. S. Feinberg, "Systems of Discontinuity," *Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Relationship Between the Old and New Testament* (ed. J. S. Feinberg; Westchester: Crossway, 1988) 74-75.

<sup>2</sup> M. W. Karlberg, "Legitimate Discontinuities Between the Testaments," *JETS* 28/1 (March 1985) 19.

<sup>3</sup> L. Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982) 198.

<sup>4</sup> S. L. Johnson, "A Response to Patrick Fairbairn and Biblical Hermeneutics as Related to Quotations of the Old Testament in the New," *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible* (ed. E. D. Radmacher and R. D. Preus; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984) 794-795.

<sup>5</sup> F. Foulkes, "The Acts of God: A Study of the Basis of Typology in the Old Testament," *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?* (ed. G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994) 342.

He suggests that the revival of interest in typology has been caused by the need to account for this methodology in the NT's use of the OT. Goppelt, Ellis and France are key figures here. (2) The stimulus for typology has come from OT theologians, like von Rad, Eichrodt and Wolff, who desire to make OT theology more relevant for Gentile readers to whom the OT cult and ritual do not apply. (3) The impetus may come from a growing awareness of the OT's own use of typology as is seen in the works of Lampe, Fishbane, von Rad and Daube.<sup>6</sup> It is important to note that for many the new typology does not presuppose God's sovereign control and ordering of the typological elements, or even the historicity of the type and antitype.

In more conservative evangelical circles a majority favor a "controlled typology (modeled on the sober typological method of the New Testament) as a part of the modern exegetical encyclopedia."<sup>7</sup> But some lack confidence in it because of the apparent subjectivism of the approach,<sup>8</sup> and some dispensationalists feel the use of typological principles in interpreting the OT is not consistent with grammatico-historical exegesis.<sup>9</sup>

The purpose of this paper is to survey four different views of typology in evangelicalism today: (1) the covenant view, (2) the revised dispensational view, (3) the progressive dispensational view, and (4) the view of Richard M. Davidson.<sup>10</sup> I will attempt to explain typology as it is understood by representatives of each of these views and then demonstrate how each view would (or would not) apply typology to explain the relationship between Israel and the Church.

Part of the problem in coming to a unified view on the subject of typology is the lack of a definition that is acceptable to all.<sup>11</sup> There are several characteristics of typology, however, that are widely acknowledged, and it may be helpful to list them before proceeding with the discussion. Since Goppelt is

<sup>6</sup> G. P. Hugenberger, "Introductory Notes on Typology," *Right Doctrine* (ed. Beale) 331–341. He refers to the following works to support his thesis: Goppelt, *Typos*; E. E. Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1957); R. T. France, *Jesus and the Old Testament* (London: InterVarsity, 1971); G. von Rad, "Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament," *Essays on Old Testament Hermeneutics* (ed. C. Westermann; Atlanta: John Knox, 1960) 17–49; *Old Testament Theology* (1965) 319–429; W. Eichrodt, "Is Typological Exegesis an Appropriate Method?," *Essays* (ed. Westermann) 224–245; H. W. Wolff, "The Hermeneutics of the Old Testament," *Essays* (ed. Westermann) 160–199; G. W. H. Lampe, "The Reasonableness of Typology," *Essays on Typology* (SBT 22; Naperville: Allenson, 1957) 9–38; M. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (London: SCM, 1967); D. Daube, *The Exodus Pattern in the Bible* (London, 1963).

<sup>7</sup> Hugenberger, "Notes" 334.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* 335.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 334–335. P. D. Feinberg, "Hermeneutics of Discontinuity," *Continuity and Discontinuity* (ed. J. S. Feinberg) 123, writes that "typological or analogical hermeneutical principles in interpreting the OT . . . [come] close to spiritualizing the OT."

<sup>10</sup> R. M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical Typos Structures* (Berrien Springs: Andrews University, 1981).

<sup>11</sup> See the definitions in Hugenberger, "Notes" 337, and R. Youngblood, "A Response to Patrick Fairbairn and Biblical Hermeneutics as Related to the Quotations of the Old Testament in the New," *Hermeneutics, Inerrancy and the Bible* (ed. Radmacher and Preus) 781–782.

generally recognized as a standard authority on this topic I will use his discussion as a basis for these characteristics. They can be limited to three.<sup>12</sup> (1) There must be an identifiable Scriptural pattern or correspondence between the OT type and the NT antitype.<sup>13</sup> (2) The OT type and NT antitype must be based on “historical facts—persons, actions, institutions,” not hidden meanings found in the text.<sup>14</sup> (3) There must be an escalation or heightening from the OT type to the greater NT antitype.<sup>15</sup>

I. TYPOLOGY IN THE COVENANT TRADITION

Basic to the understanding of typology in the covenant tradition<sup>16</sup> is the conviction that history is salvation history or redemptive history. All Biblical history moves forward toward Christ and his work of redemption and is fulfilled in Christ and the Church.<sup>17</sup> H. K. LaRondelle writes: “The typological approach of the New Testament is motivated by the idea of fulfillment in salvation history. Typology is a theology of the progression of God’s acts of salvation through Jesus Christ.”<sup>18</sup> Karlberg asserts that “typology deals with the relation between distinct yet inseparable epochs of redemptive revelation.”<sup>19</sup>

Covenant theologian Edmund P. Clowney has attempted to explain a method of controlled typology. His discussion will be used as a model for this tradition.<sup>20</sup> For Clowney, Biblical history is structured prophetically since it points forward to fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the one who fulfills all the promises of the OT. Therefore the literal meaning of God’s dealings with Israel does not exhaust its significance in the context of redemptive history. The

<sup>12</sup> Since this is an in-house discussion for evangelicals, the only description of typology to be considered is what Hugenberger calls the “redemptive-historical view,” which understands the type and antitype to be historical realities. Other views are the “literary view,” in which a type is simply a person, event or institution in Scripture in terms of which a later Biblical author presents his account, and the “historical interpretation view,” where a type is merely an event in Scripture perceived by the modern interpreter to correspond to a later event (Hugenberger, “Notes” 337). Cf. Davidson’s discussion of postcritical neotypology (*Typology* 51–80, 410).

<sup>13</sup> This characteristic is basic to the word *typos* and is accepted by all.

<sup>14</sup> Goppelt, *Typos* 17.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 18; cf. Hugenberger, “Notes” 338. Although I am using an OT/NT paradigm, typology could be found within one of the Testaments.

<sup>16</sup> I mean by this classification covenant amillennialism. In a theological tradition as large as this (and some of the following ones) I can only choose some representatives.

<sup>17</sup> B. Waltke, “Kingdom Promises as Spiritual,” *Continuity and Discontinuity* (ed. J. S. Feinberg) 279.

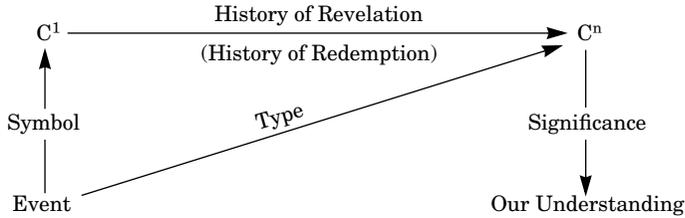
<sup>18</sup> H. K. LaRondelle, *The Israel of God in Prophecy: Principles of Prophetic Interpretation* (Brien Springs: Andrews University, 1983) 44.

<sup>19</sup> M. W. Karlberg, “The Significance of Israel in Biblical Typology,” *JETS* 31/3 (September 1988) 261.

<sup>20</sup> E. P. Clowney, “Interpreting the Biblical Models of the Church: A Hermeneutical Deepening of Ecclesiology,” *Biblical Interpretation and the Church: The Problem of Contextualization* (ed. D. A. Carson; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1984) esp. 83–95. Cf. also Hugenberger’s summary of Clowney’s approach (“Notes” 339–341).

forms given to Israel are preparatory forms. The history of redemption uses a rich variety of figures and forms to carry along key concepts. Many of these forms and figures also point to the fulfillment of God's promises (cf. the exodus, Isa 40:3). For Clowney "the N.T. interpretation of the O.T. is grounded in this typological structure. The O.T. history is not complete in itself, but provides analogies that anticipate the greater realization of the New"<sup>21</sup> (cf. Matt 12:42).

Clowney expounds his ideas by using the following chart.



He explains:

We may represent the history of revelation as a horizontal line. Along that line concepts such as the "dwelling of God" motif move forward. Many figures and metaphors are used to represent these concepts. The figures add to the elaboration and communication of the concepts. We may therefore project a line of symbolism in which a particular event, ceremony, or role points to the concept being revealed. In the fullness of revelation the concept reaches its realization in Jesus Christ. Therefore wherever the line of symbolism exists in the history of revelation, the line of typology can also be validly drawn. There are no concepts that drop out of the plan of redemption. In one way or another all point forward to Christ. A concept in the first stages of revelation we may call  $C^1$  ( $C$  to the first power). That concept as fulfilled in Christ is  $C^n$  ( $C$  to the  $n$ th power). The significance of the event for our understanding is not to be read directly across the bottom of the rectangle. That does not take seriously the presence or absence of symbolism in the O.T. text, nor the development of the history of revelation. Similarly, the full significance of the concept  $C^1$  will escape us if we fail to carry it forward to its realization and fulfillment in Christ.<sup>22</sup>

For Clowney the OT is telling the story of God's salvation in the perspective of his promise. In the OT "God continually foreshadows his final and full salvation in his incarnate Son."<sup>23</sup> With this understanding of typology there are many types. They are certainly not limited to what the NT explicitly calls a type. Exactly how to determine what is a legitimate type is a major problem.<sup>24</sup> This approach also naturally leads to the possibility of multiple,

<sup>21</sup> Clowney, "Interpreting" 90.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid. 90–91.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. 92.

<sup>24</sup> Hugenberger, "Notes" 341.

or at least double, fulfillments of the original type as the concept recurs throughout the history of redemption.<sup>25</sup>

Covenant typology also emphasizes the fact that “typology is analogical on both its vertical, cosmological axis and on its horizontal, temporal axis.”<sup>26</sup> In at least some instances the OT type is a shadow of the heavenly reality (cf. Heb 10:1).<sup>27</sup> This emphasizes the temporary and inferior nature of the OT economy. Bruce Waltke explains:

Israel’s cultus—its sacred site (Mount Zion), seasons (sabbaths, holy days, and festivals), persons (priests, Levites, king), institutions (sacrifices, ceremonial cleansings, and blowing of horns)—although symbolizing the heavenly originals (Exod. 25:9, 40; 26:30; I Chron. 28:1–12; Heb. 8:5), also contains earthly dross that has been done away. Heb. 8:1–10:18 aims to show that Christ’s present reign as king-priest at the right hand of God eschatologically fulfills the inferior types of the old age that are passing away as stars fade before the rising sun.<sup>28</sup>

This leads to perhaps the most controversial aspect of covenant typology: the belief that, in Karlberg’s words, “the earthly promises associated with the Mosaic economy, [are] symbolic and typical (and thus fulfilled by Christ in two phases: first, in the new, semi-eschatological age of the Spirit, and second, in the new heavens and the new earth yet to come).”<sup>29</sup> He writes elsewhere that “Israel as the Old Covenant people of God served a temporary purpose in God’s plan of salvation.”<sup>30</sup> The Christian Church is therefore “the true people of God, with the privileges, the responsibilities, and the destiny of Israel. . . . [It is they who] assume and carry to completion the destiny which in the Old Testament was to be Israel’s.”<sup>31</sup>

Thus the whole OT economy and Israel’s experiences *in toto* are symbolic, temporary, preparatory and typical. They are taken as a type of the true spiritual reality found in Christ and the Church. In Meredith Kline’s words, the Israelite theocracy is “the provisional prefiguration of the eternal kingdom of the new covenant.”<sup>32</sup> Applying these beliefs to the OT, covenant theologians believe that since the Church has replaced Israel in God’s program, specific and direct prophecies made to Israel are only fulfilled typologically in the Church—that is, there will be no application of even direct OT prophecies to ethnic, national Israel in the future. In their opinion such a fulfillment to Israel would require a move backward in God’s program of

<sup>25</sup> Cf. D. McCartney and C. Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand: A Guide to Interpreting and Applying the Bible* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1994) 153–155, 220–221.

<sup>26</sup> Waltke, “Kingdom” 279.

<sup>27</sup> G. Vos, *The Teaching of the Epistle to the Hebrews* (Nutley: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1956) 57.

<sup>28</sup> Waltke, “Kingdom” 276.

<sup>29</sup> Karlberg, “Legitimate” 19.

<sup>30</sup> Karlberg, “Significance” 263.

<sup>31</sup> France, *Jesus* 61, 65.

<sup>32</sup> M. G. Kline, “Genesis,” *New Bible Commentary* (rev. ed.; ed. D. Guthrie and J. A. Motyer; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970) 80.

salvation history and is not necessary since some OT prophecies for Israel are applied to the Church in the NT.

Some questions come to mind concerning this approach. Is Israel in every aspect of its existence a type of the Church, or only in specific instances and experiences where the Bible develops a typological connection? If Israel is a type of the Church, does that require that Israel "no longer retain any independent status whatever," as Karlberg claims?<sup>33</sup> If so, why is that necessary since types are always historical realities pointing to a later historical reality? Specifically, are the promises to Israel that are sometimes applied to the Church in the NT not to be taken as historically true in their original context? If they were real promises, how can they be annulled?

## II. THE REVISED DISPENSATIONAL VIEW<sup>34</sup>

Dispensationalists have traditionally viewed history as kingdom history. History is not primarily a history of God's redemptive activity as much as it is a history of the establishment of his rule on earth.<sup>35</sup> In their system of interpretation shadow and reality are not nearly as important as in the covenant system because for the dispensationalist all the OT promises to Israel will be fully realized in a one-thousand-year millennium on earth. The Church age is a parenthetical period in God's kingdom program with Israel. The promises to Israel are not typically fulfilled in the Church in this age. They can only be literally fulfilled in national, ethnic Israel in the future. Where promises to Israel are applied to the Church in the NT this is done by analogy, because the Church could in no way fulfill or be the recipient of promises made to Israel.

Since the truths concerning Israel in the OT do not find their fulfillment in the Church, interpreters from this tradition tend to find fewer types in the OT. Here it is proper to note that among previous generations of dispensationalists some attempted to find types everywhere in the OT. This was done to find a spiritual meaning in OT passages. But in more recent times because of the great emphasis on literal interpretation by dispensational interpreters it is no longer common for interpreters from that tradition to find types everywhere in the OT.<sup>36</sup> Some would limit types to instances where they are explicitly identified as such in Scripture. Others allow more than that (Joseph as a type of Christ is a popular example). Roy Zuck's definition is representative of those who take the more limited position: "A type may be defined as an Old Testament person, event, or thing having historical

<sup>33</sup> Karlberg, "Significance" 259.

<sup>34</sup> Here I am using the categories in C. A. Blaising and D. L. Bock, *Progressive Dispensationalism* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993) 9–57. They divide dispensationalism into classical, revised, and progressive camps. Some of the more well-known revised dispensationalists include A. J. McClain, J. Walvoord, C. Ryrie, J. D. Pentecost and S. Toussaint (p. 22).

<sup>35</sup> J. S. Feinberg, "Systems" 85.

<sup>36</sup> Blaising and Bock, *Progressive* 35. For an example of a dispensationalist who found types everywhere in Scripture see W. L. Wilson, *Wilson's Dictionary of Bible Types* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957).

reality and designed by God to prefigure (foreshadow) in a preparatory way a real person, event, or thing *so designated in the New Testament* that corresponds to and fulfills (heightens) the type.”<sup>37</sup>

Proponents of this view acknowledge that aspects of the OT economy labeled as shadows in the NT, such as the law (Heb 8:5; 10:1; Col 2:16–17), are dim and transitory and only a sketch or image of better things to come in Christ.<sup>38</sup> They recognize that OT institutions are canceled where the NT explicitly states that such is the case. But in this tradition there is a distinction between types and shadows. Furthermore it is demanded that the meaning of the type not be annulled by the antitype. John Feinberg writes:

Nondispensational systems stress that the type is shadow and the antitype is reality; therefore, the meaning of the antitype supersedes and cancels the meaning of the type in its own context. Dispensationalists do not think types necessarily are shadows, and they demand that both type and antitype be given their due meanings in their own contexts while maintaining a typological relation to one another.<sup>39</sup>

He adds:

Proper understanding of typology informs us that even if the NT interprets the OT typologically and even if we are to do so, that does not allow us to ignore or cancel the meaning of the type or substitute the meaning of the antitype for it. If types were allegories or symbols, that could be done. But they are not. They are concrete historical events, persons, promises. They look to the future, but not in a way that makes their meaning equivalent to the antitype. Moreover, if the NT antitype cancels the meaning of the OT type, the NT must tell us so. NT reinterpretations of OT passages are neither explicit nor implicit cancellations of the meaning of the OT. Likewise, NT antitypes neither explicitly nor implicitly cancel the meaning of OT types. Thinking they do misunderstands typology.<sup>40</sup>

For John Feinberg an OT institution is canceled if the NT explicitly rejects it, but at the same time he argues that OT promises need not be repeated in the NT for them still to be true and operative. He emphasizes that the meaning of both the OT and NT passages must be maintained.

Paul Feinberg stresses that the relationship between OT types and NT antitypes is not a prediction/fulfillment relationship.<sup>41</sup> He uses the quotation from Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15 as an illustration of an analogy between the life of Christ and the history of the nation of Israel. In spite of the fulfillment formula that introduces the quotation, he questions whether this could

<sup>37</sup> R. B. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth* (Wheaton: Victor, 1991) 176 (italics mine). Zuck discusses what a valid type is on pp. 179–181. He believes that “Colossians 2:16–17 suggests that all of the religious festivals were ‘a shadow of things that were to come’” in spite of the fact that only the Passover “is specifically pointed up as a type” (p. 181). For example, he suggests that the Feast of Unleavened Bread is a type of the believer’s holy walk.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 171–172.

<sup>39</sup> J. S. Feinberg, “Systems” 78.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* 78–79.

<sup>41</sup> P. D. Feinberg, “Hermeneutics” 120.

be a fulfillment because proper exegesis or understanding of the OT text would not give information about the future. He emphasizes that “predictions or prophecies are not identical with types and analogies,”<sup>42</sup> and predictions about Israel cannot be fulfilled in the Church. If predictions about Israel would be fulfilled in the Church it would be a violation of the OT meaning. He believes that “types and analogies between institutions, persons and things are justified in that such relationships are made in Scripture itself.”<sup>43</sup>

In this tradition there is also the recognition that sometimes in the outworking of historical events there is a double fulfillment of OT prophecies when a pattern is repeated. Paul Feinberg even argues that the Joel 2 prophecy is fulfilled in Acts 2.<sup>44</sup> He does this because he is convinced that the Joel passage indicates it extends beyond the ethnic bounds of the nation (2:28: “I will pour out my Spirit on all people”). Therefore

Acts 2:16–21, as a fulfillment of Joel 2:28–32, is *one* referent of Joel 2:28–32.

This is supported by the introductory formula “this is that” (Acts 2:16). Second, Acts 2:16–21 is not the *complete* referent (fulfillment) of Joel 2:28–32.<sup>45</sup>

Several issues in the revised dispensational scheme raise questions. What is the difference between shadows and types? Why must typology only be limited to persons, institutions and things and not ever used as a hermeneutical category, especially in situations like the quotation from Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15 where the nation of Israel, the son of God in the OT, appears to have a typological relationship with Christ, the Son of God? Is not the principle of literal hermeneutics being violated when the relationship between these passages is called merely an analogy, even though they are introduced by a fulfillment formula? And is there any prophetic element in a typological relationship?

### III. THE PROGRESSIVE DISPENSATIONAL VIEW<sup>46</sup>

Here my discussion will be much shorter because the writings explaining this view are limited and because this position is very similar to the revised dispensational view. I will attempt to explain this view of typology by commenting on the particulars in which it differs from the revised dispensational view.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Ibid. 122.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid. 123.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid. 124–128, 118; cf. J. S. Feinberg, “Systems” 77, on double fulfillment.

<sup>45</sup> P. D. Feinberg, “Hermeneutics” 126. This is an unusual interpretation for this tradition; most interpreters in this tradition see no fulfillment of Joel 2 in Acts 2.

<sup>46</sup> See Blaising and Bock, *Progressive* 52–53. I have attempted to apply the ideas described here in “The Israelite Imagery of 1 Peter 2,” *Dispensationalism, Israel and the Church* (ed. C. A. Blaising and D. L. Bock; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992) 156–188, and “The People of God in Romans 9:25, 26,” *BSac* 152 (January–March 1995) 42–59.

<sup>47</sup> Although I am describing dispensational interpreters (revised and progressive) as limiting types to those so designated in the NT, I realize that this is a generalization and that not all interpreters in either of these classifications would be willing to limit types to this degree.

Progressive dispensationalists understand history as kingdom history, but they do not see the present age as a parenthesis in that history. Instead it is an initial stage in the establishment of Christ's kingdom.<sup>48</sup> Many of the promises that will be completely fulfilled in Christ's visible future reign on earth are now being initially fulfilled during his invisible reign in the Church. Since this is an age of initial fulfillment many of the uses of the OT in the NT that revised dispensationalists call analogy, such as the use of Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15, are called typological-prophetic by progressive dispensationalists. This is done on the basis of a typological relationship between the experience of Israel as described in Hos 11:1 and the experience of Christ in Matt 2:15. This understanding agrees with Matthew's fulfillment formula and demonstrates that for those taking this position fulfillment does not require a direct prophecy.

Proponents of this position argue that some prophecies concerning Israel that are applied to the Church in the NT actually realize an initial fulfillment in the Church. The "people of God" quotations in Rom 9:25–26 and 1 Pet 2:9–10 illustrate this.<sup>49</sup> Such an interpretation necessitates allowing God's intended meaning in the OT passages quoted in the NT to extend beyond the literal meaning connected with the human author's perceived intentions. The basis for this initial fulfillment is the application to the Church in NT contexts of fulfillment of promises for Israel from the OT. NT believers participate in these promises through their relationship with Christ. This fulfillment and relationship is a mystery not understood in the OT.

Proponents of this view also believe that the initial application to the Church of OT promises to Israel does not and cannot annul the ultimate fulfillment of those promises to Israel. The initial fulfillment in the Church is an addition to the originally understood application, but it cannot abrogate the original application to Israel. The basis for this future fulfillment is the original contextual meaning of promises to Israel and the number of other promises of a future for Israel in the OT and NT.

Some of the questions proponents of this approach are being asked are: Can a prophecy for Israel find typological fulfillment in the Church? If so, does it not violate the OT meaning? If a prophecy for Israel finds an initial typological fulfillment in the Church, what basis is there for arguing that it should still be fulfilled in the future for Israel? Does the progress of revelation or the canonical process allow for the additional meaning progressive dispensationalists allow in the OT text as it is used in the NT?

#### IV. RICHARD M. DAVIDSON'S VIEW

Davidson has observed the repeated failure of previous major works on typology "to allow the structure of typology to emerge from within the biblical text."<sup>50</sup> After surveying literature on the subject of typology and studying

<sup>48</sup> Blaising writes: "Progressive dispensationalists put primary emphasis on the eternal kingdom for understanding all previous forms of the kingdom including the Millennium" (*Progressive* 54).

<sup>49</sup> See Glenn, "Israelite Imagery" and "People."

the etymological background and semantic range of *typos*, he examines six NT *typos*-passages that have an OT/NT hermeneutical significance (1 Cor 10:6, 11; Rom 5:14; 1 Pet 3:21; Heb 8:5; 9:24).

One key contribution from his survey of the use of *typos* is the fact that the word can mean “(1) the matrix or *Vorbild*, i.e., what leaves its impress; (2) the impression or *Nachbild*, i.e., the result of the impress or blow, or what is produced by the matrix; and (3) the matrix or *Vorbild* which is *at the same time* an impression of *Nachbild*.”<sup>51</sup> This last definition, which is widely disregarded by lexicographers, is found in moral contexts in the NT (cf. Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:5–7)<sup>52</sup> where it means a person (or persons) modeled after an ultimate model (Christ) or superior model (Paul) who in turn, after modeling, themselves become a model to others.<sup>53</sup> This concept of a repeated pattern has important implications for the possibility of the continuing repetition of a type (i.e. more than simply type and antitype).

Davidson follows closely Ladd’s salvation-historical perspective of the NT.<sup>54</sup> He defines typology as

a study of the Old Testament salvation historical realities or “types” (persons, events, institutions) which God has specifically designed to correspond to, and predictively prefigure, their intensified antitypical fulfillment aspects (inaugurated, appropriated, consummated) in New Testament salvation history.<sup>55</sup>

There are five key elements in Davidson’s understanding of Biblical typology.<sup>56</sup> (1) The historical element: Both type and antitype are historical realities with historical correspondence between them and escalation or intensification from the type to the antitype. (2) The prophetic element: The OT type is a divinely-designed advance presentation or prefiguration of the NT antitype, and there is a “must be” quality about the OT type that gives it the force of a predictive foreshadowing of the NT fulfillment. For Davidson this means that there is some indication of the existence and predictive quality of OT types before their antitypical fulfillment—otherwise they are not predictive. He believes this allows an inner Biblical control on the identification of typology before type meets antitype. This prophetic control allows not only OT/NT typology but also inner-NT typology (Matthew 24). (3) The eschatological (end-time) element: The OT realities are linked to their eschatological fulfillment in Christ’s first coming (inaugurated), the Church (appropriated), and/or Christ’s second coming (consummated). (4) The Chris-

<sup>50</sup> Davidson, *Typology* 6.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* 131. G. Osborne also sees this possibility (“Type,” *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* [ed. W. A. Elwell; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984] 1117–1119).

<sup>52</sup> Davidson, *Typology* 187.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* 156–157, 160 n. 1, where Davidson demonstrates that in Phil 3:17 Paul’s model, patterned after Christ (the ultimate model), is a model for his followers. In 1 Thess 1:5–7 the Thesalonians, “stamped with the likeness of Christ, become themselves a die for stamping others.”

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.* 390–394.

<sup>55</sup> R. M. Davidson, “The Hermeneutics of Biblical Typology: Internal Controls for Identifying and Interpreting Scriptural *Typoi*” (unpublished).

<sup>56</sup> Since Davidson does not develop or emphasize the Israel/Church relationship of typology I will not deal with it in this section.

tological (Christ-centered), soteriological (salvation-centered) element: The OT types are salvific realities, and their ultimate focus or fulfillment is Christ and/or gospel realities brought about by Christ. (5) The ecclesiological (church-related) element: Individual worshipers, the corporate community, or the sacraments (baptism and Lord's supper) may be involved in the typological fulfillment.

Probably the most controversial and innovative aspect of Davidson's theory of typology is his belief that types are predictive and that there must be some indication of the existence and predictive quality of OT types before their antitypical fulfillment—otherwise they cannot be predictive. If this is the case he should be able to demonstrate it from the six hermeneutical *typos*-passages he studies, which are the clearest examples of the OT/NT typology pattern in Scripture. He does not, however, use the Adam-Christ (Romans 5) or the Israel-Church (1 Corinthians 10) pattern in his charts showing how Scripture indicates that types are predictive before their fulfillment in the NT. He does include 1 Pet 3:21 on his chart and suggests that the typological pattern is the flood and baptism. Then he supports the fact that the flood was to be understood as a type of baptism from only one passage (Isa 54:9–10, which mentions the promise God made after the flood as an illustration of the certainty of the new covenant). Exactly how this passage demonstrates that the flood was predictive of baptism is unclear. Therefore I would like to see more proof that the Scriptures do clearly indicate the predictive quality of these OT types before their fulfillment. Another questionable aspect of Davidson's proof of the fact that there is an indication of the predictive quality of OT types before their fulfillment is his illustration of this fact from Moses and Elijah. The Scriptural indication he gives for the fact that Moses is a type and is predictive of Christ is the prophecy in Deuteronomy 18. The indication that Elijah is a type and is predictive of John the Baptist is the prophecy in Mal 4:5–6. In both instances he uses what I would call direct prophecies to prove that previous types were predictive or prophetic. One might ask why we need the types if we have direct prophecies that indicate the predictive quality of the types. Are the direct prophecies given to clarify the types, and is the NT a fulfillment of the type (Moses and Elijah) or of the direct prophecies about them, or of both? Such a scenario also means that the types are not predictive until the later indication of their predictive quality occurs. (In the Elijah type it is much later.)

Davidson is to be commended for his attempt to develop the structures of typology from the Biblical text. His attempt to find OT indications of a predictive element in types is helpful. But perhaps we need to look further at fulfillment in Scripture. Must there be a clear indication of prediction in the OT in order to find later fulfillment in the NT context? Is the nature of typology such that the people, events and institutions that comprise them in the OT are not always clearly understood at the time of their original existence to foreshadow a later, greater truth? Since Davidson bases fulfillment on indicators elsewhere in Scripture, must those indicators be limited to Scripture that precedes the NT application of the OT text? Could not the NT context be a sufficient indication of fulfillment?

## V. SUMMARY

This paper has surveyed four views of typology. Covenant theologians often use typology to describe the relationship between the OT institutions and people of God (Israel) and the NT institutions and people of God (the Church or the new Israel). For them typology describes the progression of salvation-history from the old covenant to the new.

For the revised dispensationalist, typology is limited to specific persons, events or institutions of the OT that are designated as types in the NT. It does not describe the relationship between the old and new covenant. It describes the relationship between specific entities so designated in Scripture.

Progressive dispensationalists agree with the revised dispensationalists' understanding of typology but go beyond that in allowing some of the OT promises for Israel to find a typological fulfillment in the Church age. For them typology is one of many hermeneutical classifications describing the use of the OT in the NT. It involves an initial fulfillment but does not annul the original OT meaning for Israel.

Richard Davidson has developed a comprehensive system of typology involving historical, prophetic, eschatological, Christological and ecclesiological elements. Perhaps most unique about his view is his insistence that typology has a predictive-prophetic element and that the indication of this predictive quality of OT types must exist before the antitypical fulfillment.

The first step in finding the answers is asking the right questions. From my perspective there are several questions we need to address. What is the Biblical conception of history? If types are historical realities, are they annulled or crossed out of God's program by the antitype? If the institutions and people of the OT (Israel) are types of the institutions and people in the NT (the Church), does that mean that every experience or aspect of the type is related to a corresponding aspect of the antitype? If not, as I suspect most would say, are we perhaps too broad in our categorizing of types when we use people and institutions? Would it be better to speak of specific events and experiences in the history of those people and institutions as types and antitypes?

Furthermore, what does fulfillment mean in the NT? Do antitypes fulfill types? Does fulfillment of a type require an indication before the fulfillment (in the antitype) that the type was a prediction?

What part does Christ have in the correspondence between Israel and the Church? Or—to try to word this question more clearly—how does the Church's "in Christ" relationship help explain the application to the Church of OT promises for Israel?

All of these questions and more need to be addressed. The way ahead is to keep going back to the text of Scripture to work out the details passage by passage, perhaps beginning as Davidson has done with clear hermeneutical *typos*-passages. The widely recognized importance of this topic and the great differences of opinion concerning it today demand that it be a priority in our studies in the days ahead.