HE MAKES HER DESERT LIKE THE GARDEN OF YHWH: A TYPOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIRTH OF ISAAC AS RESURRECTION FROM DEATH

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by

Thomas John Sculthorpe

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APPROVAL SHEET

HE MAKES HER DESERT LIKE THE GARDEN OF YHWH:
A TYPOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIRTH
OF ISAAC AS RESURRECTION FROM DEATH

Thomas John Sculthorpe

Read and Approved by:

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For Allison, my beloved wife:

אַחַת הִיא יוֹנָתִי תַמָּתִי

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ABD	*The Anchor Bible Dictionary.* Edited by D. N. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992
ACCS	Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture
AdvRev	*Adventist Review*
AJBT	*American Journal of Biblical Theology*
ANE	Ancient Near East
AOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
AramBib	The Aramaic Bible
AUS	*Andrews University Studies*
BBC	*Broadman Bible Commentary*
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BDAG	Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000
BDB	Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs. *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1952
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BET	Biblical Exegesis and Theology
BHS	*Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*
BibArch	*The Biblical Archaeologist*
BibSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentary
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BTCB	Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible

BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
CAT	Commentaire de l'Ancien Testament
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CDCH	*The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.* Edited by David J. A. Clines. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
CTJ	*Calvin Theological Journal*
EBC	*The Expositor's Bible Commentary*
EBTC	Evangelical Biblical Theology Commentary
ESBT	Essential Studies in Biblical Theology
EvJ	*Evangelical Journal*
ExpTim	*The Expository Times*
FB	Focus on the Bible
FOTL	The Forms of the Old Testament Literature
GGRC	*God's Glory Revealed in Christ: Essays on Biblical Theology in Honor of Thomas R. Schreiner.* Edited by Denny Burk, James M. Hamilton Jr., and Brian Vickers. Nashville: B & H, 2019
HALOT	*The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001
IDBSup	*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia.* Edited by Keith Crum, Victor Paul Furnish, Lloyd Richard Bailey Sr., and Emory Stevens Bucke. Suppl. vol. Nashville: Abingdon, 1976
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
JNSL	*Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages*
JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JSJSup	Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism
JSNT	*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series

JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
JTI	*Journal of Theological Interpretation*
KEL	Kregel Exegetical Library
LHOT	Library of Hebrew/Old Testament Studies
LingBib	*Linguistica Biblica*
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NAC	New American Commentary
NCBC	New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NewCent	New Century Bible Commentary
NDBT	*New Dictionary of Biblical Theology: Exploring the Unity & Diversity of Scripture.* Edited by T. Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson, and Graeme Goldsworthy. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDOTTE	*New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*. Edited by Willem A. VanGemeren, ed. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	New International Version Application Commentary
NLH	*New Literary History*
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NovT	*Novum Testamentum*
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
OTL	Old Testament Library
PCRSL	Philosophical Classics, Religion of Science Library
ProEccl	*Pro Ecclesia*
SBJT	*Southern Baptist Journal of Theology*
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature

SBT	Studies in Scripture and Biblical Theology
SCS	Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SemeiaSup	Semeia Supplements
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SOTS	Society for Old Testament Study
SSBT	Short Studies in Biblical Theology
SSLL	Studies in Semitic Languages and Linguistics
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Edited and translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964
THOTC	Two Horizons Old Testament Commentary
TMSJ	*The Master's Seminary Journal*
TynBul	*Tyndale Bulletin*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*

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PREFACE

I "met" Dr. Hamilton as an online MDiv student at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in January 2019. I enrolled in his section of Introduction to the Old Testament II and found myself enraptured by this man who loved the Scriptures and who strongly exhorted all of us to pursue the same with devotion and diligence. I was especially intrigued by the way that he connected passages of Scripture across the canon with precision and care. Thus began my fascination with biblical theology, typology, the use of earlier biblical texts by later authors, and canonical-level interpretation. My sincerest thanks to Dr. Hamilton for sparking and fanning the flame and to many other professors who have done so along the way: Dr. Betts, Dr. Fuller, Dr. Garrett, Dr. Gentry, Dr. Gurtner, Dr. Howell, Dr. Schreiner, and Dr. Vickers. May YHWH continue to be with you to strengthen you for his glory.

I would also like to thank my beloved wife, Allison, and my children—Abigail, Tommy, Stephen, Emmarae, and Caroline—without whose support I could never have completed the PhD program. Many thanks as well to my parents, Tom and Donna Sculthorpe, for their support and encouragement, for reading my (less technical) seminar papers, and for numerous and necessary date nights out with my wife.

Finally, my classmates are worthy of my deepest gratitude for their invaluable help in my growth as a reader and writer: John Baker, Mark Kiefer, Scott McQuinn, Jonathan Ahlgren, Drake Isabell, and Zach Williams. Thank you for reading my work, for your productive criticism, and for your friendship. May YHWH bless your ministries and make them abundantly fruitful.

My intention in this project, and in whatever ministry the Lord Jesus assigns to me, is to build up the church through the ministry of the Word. May the people of

YHWH everywhere know, love, trust in, and obey our one God by knowing, loving, trusting in, and obeying his Word and his Word become flesh, Jesus Christ.

Tom Sculthorpe

Louisville, Kentucky

May 2024

CHAPTER 1

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY, TYPOLOGY, AND THE INTERPRETIVE HISTORY OF ISAAC'S BIRTH

In his recent book *Redemptive Reversals and the Ironic Overturning of Human Wisdom*, G. K. Beale argues that "God deals with humans in primarily ironic ways."[1] These dealings are often recorded in the Bible as "redemptive irony," in which "the faithful appear to be cursed, but as they persevere in faith, they are really in the midst of being blessed."[2] In other words, fallen realities present occasions for YHWH to do his wonders. One such fallen reality was Sarah's barrenness (Gen 11:30). About the redemptive irony in this circumstance of Abraham and Sarah's life, Beale writes, "Abraham believed, according to God's promises, in the opposite of what his eyes told him about his and Sarah's childbearing capabilities, so a child, Isaac, was born to the couple."[3] The topic of this dissertation is the paradigmatic nature and function of YHWH's redemptive reversal of barrenness to birth—of death to life—in the Bible.[4]

The title of this dissertation is a phrase from Isaiah 51:3 in which YHWH promises his faithful remnant that he will reverse their fortunes as he did for their ancestors. Their death in exile means resurrection, and the desolation of the promised land means restoration to Eden-like fertility. The intersection of these three redemptive reversals—

[1] G. K. Beale, *Redemptive Reversals and the Ironic Overturning of Human Wisdom*, SSBT (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 20.

[2] Beale, *Redemptive Reversals*, 20.

[3] Beale, *Redemptive Reversals*, 134.

[4] For recent works which focus on the theme of resurrection from death in the Old Testament, see Mitchell L. Chase, "Resurrection Hope in Daniel 12:2: An Exercise in Biblical Theology" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013); and Mitchell L. Chase, *Resurrection Hope and the Death of Death*, SSBT (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2022); Jeff M. Brannon, *The Hope of Life After Death: A Biblical Theology of Resurrection*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022).

birth from barrenness, restoration from exile, and resurrection from death—in the book of Genesis and in several later Scriptures forms a prospective typology intended to shape the imagination of the people of YHWH, excite their faith in his promise, and inspire hope in a wonderful future that often appears impossible in present circumstances. In the birth of Isaac, specifically, YHWH's promise that he would bless Abraham (Gen 12:2) by providing him with a physical heir (Gen 15:4) whom Sarah would bear despite her barrenness (Gen 17:16, 19) characterizes his covenantal loyalty as his ability and determination to enact redemptive reversal—to bring forth life from death.[5]

By recounting the reversal of Sarah's barrenness in the birth of Isaac, Moses crafts a prospective typology to excite faith and inspire hope.[6] By reminding YHWH's people of the miraculous reversal which led to their existence, Moses assures them that in faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham YHWH will restore them from death in exile in the future. By interpreting and further projecting this typology in their writings, later biblical authors comfort the people of YHWH with the promise that Eden, not exile, is their destiny. And in their presentation and interpretation of the Lord Jesus Christ—the

[5] YHWH's promise, "I will bless you" (Gen 12:2) is the same thing he did to the first humans after creating them (Gen 1:28). In each case the content of the blessing is the same: (1) place—a fruitful, well-watered garden and a land flowing with milk and honey; (2) progeny—fertility to multiply to fill the earth and a great, innumerable nation; and (3) vicegerency—rulership over creation and royal offspring. This threefold blessing shapes the contours of the entire Old Testament story. See Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003); and T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008).

[6] I affirm and assume Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch over and against speculative reconstruction of behind-the-text historical and compositional development. On the interpretation of canonical texts according to their final form, see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992). For presentations of the Documentary Hypothesis, see J. Wellhausen, *Die Composition des Hexateuchs und der historischen Bücher des alten Testaments*, 2nd ed. (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1889); and S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 9th ed. (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1913). For an argument in favor of compositional development, see John H. Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, and Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2009), 265, 282, 573–74. For example, Sailhamer writes, "The goal [of interpretation] must always be guided by the hope of catching a glimpse of the author at work" (282). By "author" Sailhamer means the final redactor. For helpful discussions of the authorship of Genesis see Kenneth L. Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, NAC, vol. 1A (Nashville: B & H, 1996), 68–85; John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary (*Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 23–25; and Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 22–29.

seed of the woman (Gen 3:15), the seed of Abraham (12:7), the Son of God and the true Israel (Exod 4:22), and the seed of David (2 Sam 7:12)—the apostles complete this typological trajectory and encourage the saints to the same faith and hope in our future redemptive reversal—resurrection from death to eternal life in YHWH's presence.

Thesis

In this dissertation I will argue that the birth of Isaac from Sarah's barren womb typifies resurrection from death. This typology is author-intended, prospective, and culminates in salvation history in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, resurrection from death as typified by Isaac's birth is the anticipated means by which YHWH will accomplish his promised destruction of the serpent (Gen 3:15) and restoration to life in his presence.

Methodology

The popular but debated two-word phrase *biblical theology* summarizes the methodology by which this dissertation will proceed. Thus, I will begin by defining biblical theology as an interpretive discipline. Then I will define typology—the feature of biblical revelation that creates unity across the canon and serves as the formal principle of biblical theology—with special emphasis on two complementary features: inspired authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation. I intend for the methodology of this study to contribute to the ongoing conversation regarding the nature of biblical theology as an interpretive discipline and to demonstrate the validity of my conception of biblical theology through my thesis regarding the typology of the birth of Isaac.

What Is Biblical Theology?

While many scholars identify the inaugural address of Johann Gabler at the University of Altdorf in 1787 as the beginning of the modern discipline of biblical theology—and Gabler as its father—such a determination depends heavily upon one's

definition of the discipline.[7] Gabler made a clear distinction at that time between biblical theology—the academic, historical, critical study of the content of the Bible—and dogmatic theology—the systematization of the Bible's teaching for the life of the church, a distinction that continues to influence scholarly thinking on the subject today.[8] For the two-hundred years following Gabler's address, biblical theology underwent significant shifts in theory and practice, including the so-called Biblical Theology Movement in the early twentieth century.[9] As a result of these developments—and in some cases in spite of them—biblical theology as a field or discipline in biblical scholarship is burgeoning today primarily in evangelical circles. Several publishers have their own series of studies in biblical theology, and the publication of tomes arguing for various biblical theological methodologies and theses regarding the "center" of biblical theology continues.[10] Definitions of the discipline are as variable as the authors themselves.[11] In this section I

[7] Johann Gabler's address is entitled "On the Correct Distinction Between Dogmatic and Biblical Theology and the Right Definition of Their Goals." See Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Editorial," *JETS* 55, no. 1 (2012): 1–5.

[8] More recently scholars have considered biblical theology a "bridge discipline" between exegetical study of Scripture and systematic theology rather than a separate, strictly historical discipline. For example, see Francis Watson, *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997). See also Joel B. Green, "Scripture and Theology: Uniting the Two So Long Divided," in *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies and Systematic Theology*, ed. Joel B. Green and Max Turner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 23–43.

[9] On the Biblical Theology Movement (BTM), see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1979), 14–49; and James K. Mead, *Biblical Theology: Issues, Methods, and Themes* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 47. For a critique of the BTM see James Barr, "Biblical Theology," in *IDBSup*, 105–6.

[10] Such series include the New Studies in Biblical Theology and Essential Studies in Biblical Theology by InterVarsity Press and Short Studies in Biblical Theology by Crossway. The most recent example of a whole-Bible biblical theology is Andreas J. Köstenberger and Gregory Goswell, *Biblical Theology: A Canonical, Thematic & Ethical Approach* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2023). For arguments that there is no center to biblical theology, see Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Diversity and Unity in the New Testament," in *Biblical Theology: Retrospect and Prospect*, ed. Scott J. Hafemann (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 154; and C. H. H. Scobie, *The Ways of our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 87.

[11] According to J. V. Fesko, "On the Antiquity of Biblical Theology," in *Resurrection and Eschatology: Theology in Service of the Church*, ed. Lane G. Tipton and Jeffrey C. Waddington (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2008), 443, Geerhardus Vos is the "father of Reformed biblical theology." Vos defined biblical theology as "the study of the actual self-disclosures of God in time and space which lie

will begin by setting my conception of biblical theology in an existing and historical evangelical vein. Then I will define and explain the discipline in that vein. This definition of biblical theology forms the methodological foundation for this dissertation.

The plethora of definitions of the phrase "biblical theology" indicates that many are likely thinking about the discipline in different, perhaps even irreconcilable, categories. The main divide is between those who consider biblical theology to be an academic discipline on the one hand and those who would define biblical theology simply as the interpretive practice of the faithful people of YHWH throughout history on the other. While the present study is certainly an academic one, and it stands on the shoulders of many academicians both contemporary and historical, I am seeking to practice biblical theology in the vein of the biblical authors themselves and faithful interpreters of the Scriptures after them. As James Hamilton proposed in 2010, "the history of biblical interpretation in the church is a history of more and less success in accurately understanding the interpretive strategies used by the biblical authors."[12] In other words, one's biblical theology is only as accurate and useful as it adheres to that of the inspired biblical authors. In this study I hope to demonstrate, as many others have, that an academically rigorous biblical theology in this vein is both possible and fruitful.

Hamilton later concisely defined biblical theology this way: "By the phrase *biblical theology* I mean the interpretive perspective reflected in the way the biblical authors have presented their understanding of earlier Scripture, redemptive history, and the events they are describing, recounting, celebrating, or addressing in narratives, poems,

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back of even the first committal to writing" in *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 4–5. While I affirm Vos's redefinition—in practice rather than theory—and acknowledge his positive impact on evangelical biblical theology, many who followed in his stead located revelation in the events behind the biblical text rather than the text itself. On this effect of Vos's work, and an argument that Vos did not intend this result, nor did he practice biblical theology in this manner, see Vern S. Poythress, "Kinds of Biblical Theology," *WTJ* 70, no. 1 (2008): 136.

[12] James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 42.

proverbs, letters, and apocalypses."[13] According to Hamilton, an "interpretive perspective" is "the framework of assumptions and presuppositions, associations and identifications, truths and symbols that are taken for granted" by the biblical authors.[14] In other words, the inspired biblical authors select, arrange, and communicate information from certain worldview commitments and in well-defined categories of thought. For interpreters of the Bible to understand their meaning, then, they must share this worldview. Biblical interpreters must allow the Scriptures to shape categories of thought and heart-level desires rather than imposing foreign worldview commitments onto the text of the Bible and seeking to interpret the Scriptures through those lenses.[15] While a kaleidoscope of biblical theologies is beneficial to the people of YHWH, those that depart from the interpretive perspective of the inspired men who wrote the primary sources detract from the goal of faith seeking understanding.[16]

Interestingly enough, this emphasis on authorial intent and interpretive perspective is precisely what Gabler was advocating for in his address, although he lacked certain—and necessary—evangelical commitments, and he conceived of biblical

[13] James M. Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology?* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 15–16. See also James M. Hamilton Jr., *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical* Theology, NSBT 32 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 21.

[14] Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*, 15.

[15] On the power of language and the post-Middle Ages movement regarding the function of language from "ontological referents" to "pragmatic significations," or from nominalism to realism, see Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences*, exp. ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2013), 134–52. On "mimesis" and "poiesis" as two different ways of thinking about the world—the former regarding the world "as having a given order and a given meaning," which requires humans beings to discover and conform themselves to it while the latter that the individual creates meaning and purpose for himself out of the "raw material" that is the world, see Carl R. Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 39–42. Nominalism and mimesis both characterize how we ought to approach and interact with Scripture.

[16] *Fides quaerens intellectum*, a Latin phrase meaning "faith seeking understanding" or "faith seeking intelligence," articulates the close relationship between faith and reason and was coined by Anselm of Canterbury in his work *Prologium*. See Anselm and Gaunilo, *Proslogium; Monologium: An Appendix, in Behalf of the Fool, by Gaunilon; and Cur Deus Homo*, trans. S. N. Deane, PCRSL 54 (Chicago: Opencourt, 1903).

theology as a merely descriptive exercise rather than a formative one. The beginning of his address is worth quoting at length.

> All who are devoted to the sacred faith of Christianity, most worthy listeners, profess with one united voice that the sacred books, especially of the New Testament, are the one clear source from which all true knowledge of the Christian religion is drawn. And they profess too that these books are the only secure sanctuary to which we can flee in the face of the ambiguity and vicissitude of human knowledge, if we aspire to a solid understanding of divine matters and if we wish to obtain a firm and certain hope of salvation. Given this agreement of all these religious opinions, why then do these *points of contention* arise? Why these *fatal discords* of the various sects? Doubtless this dissension originates in part from the occasional obscurity of the sacred Scriptures themselves; in part from that depraved custom of reading one's own opinions and judgments into the Bible, or from a servile manner of interpreting it. Doubtless the dissension also arises from the neglected distinction between religion and theology; and finally it arises from an inappropriate combination of the simplicity and ease of biblical theology with the subtlety and difficulty of dogmatic theology.[17]

I affirm Gabler's insistence that practitioners of biblical theology must seek to understand the theology of the biblical authors—that "the depraved custom of reading one's own opinions and judgments into the Bible" must be avoided—but this understanding must flow from a commitment to scriptural inerrancy and a posture of humility.[18] Biblical theologians must seek to be formed by the text, not critically stand above it.

Thus, for the purposes of this study, I offer the definition of biblical theology below. I am not doing this because I think there needs to be an addition to the sea of definitions of biblical theology nor even an improvement. This dissertation will proceed on the foundational principle that is Hamilton's definition above, but I want to emphasize several points of distinction between my view of biblical theology and that of other scholars that are implicit in Hamilton's definition. A definition that makes these distinctions explicit best suits my purpose and contributes to the ongoing conversation in

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[17] John Sandys-Wunsch and Laurence Eldredge, "J. P. Gabler and the Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology: Translation, Commentary, and Discussion of His Originality," *SJT* 33 (1980): 133, emphasis added.

[18] Gabler argued for a distinction between the divine and human in the Scriptures and asserted that the goal of biblical theology must be to separate the two to identify the biblical propositions fit to serve as the foundation for systematic theology. He explains, "Only from [biblical theology] can those certain and undoubted universal ideas be singled out, those ideas which alone are useful in dogmatic theology." Johann Gabler, translated in Sandys-Wunsch and Eldredge, "Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology," 143.

the most productive manner possible. Furthermore, greater sematic precision and closer correlation between description and practice will benefit all who participate in the discipline either actively or passively. Gabler advocated for interpretation according to authorial intent, but his biblical theology existed almost exclusively behind the text in historical critical speculation. Vos, on the other hand, advocated for historical event-oriented biblical theology but practiced the discipline with text-focused, exegetical precision. I hope to bring together the best of description and practice, both past and present, in this definition. I propose that biblical theology is the exegetical pursuit of the unity of progressive biblical revelation according to inspired authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation culminating in the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ.[19]

First, biblical theology is exegetical. Thus, throughout this dissertation I will give close attention to the verbal and literary features of various biblical texts. The biblical authors cover a tremendous amount of history with relatively few words, and those words—key words like "seed" (זֶרַע), "covenant" (בְּרִית), and "Eden" (עֵדֶן)—form and represent the categories in which they present revelation.[20] I am not advocating for assigning theological weight to every use of particular words in the Scriptures, a practice made popular by practitioners during the Biblical Theology Movement and heavily criticized by James Barr.[21] I am, however, advocating for an interpretive posture which acknowledges and submits to the worldview of the biblical authors as represented by the

[19] For a recent book-length argument that the ascension is an essential part of the gospel, see Patrick Schreiner, *The Ascension of Christ: Recovering a Neglected Doctrine*, Snapshots (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020).

[20] For instance, see Gordon J. McConville, "1382 בְּרִית," in *NIDOTTE*, 1:747–55. For in-depth analyses of the meaning of "covenant" (בְּרִית) based on its usage in the biblical text, see Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 841–904.

[21] For a critique of the BTM practice of deriving theological meaning from Hebrew and Greek morphology and syntax, see James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1961). For a helpful response to Barr, see Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, rev. and exp. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 18–32.

words they chose. The fact is that in the book of Genesis, the word "seed" (זֶרַע) *is* a theological word freighted with significance as opposed to simply a reference to physical progeny or vegetation, and "Eden" (עֵדֶן) *does* intend to call to mind a specific place with specific features and associations in the minds of readers.[22] If biblical theologians fail to see such things, the author's meaning will, to some degree, be elusive.

Furthermore, repeated phraseology and thematic content are tools the authors use to structure their presentations. Therefore, as I elaborate in the section "From Form Criticism to Literary Structure," form, or literary structure, conveys meaning and directs implications. The Scriptures are not a collection of historical works, so they ought not to be subjected to interpretive processes like historical criticism. Access to the process by which the books of the Bible came to be in their final form is subjective at best as evidenced by both the vast array of variations on the Documentary Hypothesis and its eventual demise.[23] A truly exegetical approach rather interprets the Scriptures in their present final form *as literature* with regard for the literary moves the authors make through structural cues and thematic connections. The Scriptures consist of theological literature intended to both inaugurate and buoy the faith of YHWH's people.

The fact that the Scriptures are theological does not, however, necessitate theological interpretation in the vein of advocates of Theological Interpretation of Scripture (TIS).[24] According to Daniel J. Treier, two of the main theses of TIS are, first, "Texts of

[22] According to Samuel Emadi, "seed" (זֶרַע) is a *Leitwort* in the book of Genesis that establishes the theme of numerous offspring, a theme that shapes the narrative of Genesis from creation through the Joseph story. Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022), 65–82. On "Eden" (עֵדֶן), see I. Cornelius, "6359 עֵדֶן," in *NIDOTTE*, 3:331–32.

[23] For helpful critiques of the Documentary Hypothesis, see Duane A. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 11–30; and T. Desmond Alexander, *Abraham in the Negev: A Source-Critical Investigation of Genesis 20:12–22:19* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 1997), 17–29.

[24] For an overview of the theological interpretation movement, see Daniel J. Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008). See also Kevin J. Vanhoozer, ed., *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005).

Scripture do not have a single meaning limited to the intent of the original author," and second, "Scripture calls the church to . . . continually fresh rereadings of the text in light of the Holy Spirit's ongoing work in the world."[25] In response, I contend that authorial intent is the only sound hermeneutical basis upon which to discern the validity of an interpretation of a biblical text and, while Treier attempts to distance himself from reader response hermeneutics, "continually fresh rereadings" is far too subjective regarding meaning.[26] Thus, I depart from Brian Rosner's definition of biblical theology in a nuanced but significant way. Rosner defines biblical theology this way:

> Biblical theology may be defined as *theological interpretation of Scripture* in and for the church. It proceeds with historical and literary sensitivity and seeks to analyze and synthesize the Bible's teaching about God and his relations to the world on its own terms, maintaining sight of the Bible's overarching narrative and Christocentric focus.[27]

Defining biblical theology this way certainly does not necessitate broad affirmation of TIS, but Rosner appears to be either proposing that biblical theology and TIS are interchangeable, or he is attempting to redefine theological interpretation.[28] I think, however, it is beneficial and necessary to highlight the subtle but significant difference between TIS and biblical theology as it is defined by Hamilton and practiced by Rosner, Gentry and Wellum, and others. Simply put, the biblical authors communicated their intended meaning through their texts, and that intended meaning is the object of exegesis.

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[25] Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, 200. He adopts nine theses—these two included—from the "Scripture Project," which consisted of four years of structured conversations compiled in Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 3–5.

[26] Here is one of the "influences broadly fitting the category of 'postmodern' that operate within the movement seeking theological interpretation of Scripture." Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, 33.

[27] Brian S. Rosner, "Biblical Theology," in *NDBT*, 10, emphasis added. See also Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 45.

[28] Treier understands Rosner to be redefining theological interpretation in accordance with "redemptive-historical biblical theology tied to progressive revelation." Treier, *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture*, 118. Thus, I affirm Rosner's conception of biblical theology, but greater care in the semantics of defining the discipline is necessary to clearly distinguish it from TIS.

Again, the Scriptures are theological, but interpreters need to be formed by the theology of the biblical authors rather than impose external theological commitments and categories onto the text. Thus, biblical theology is the exegesis of theological literature.

Second, the object of biblical theology is progressive biblical revelation. Furthermore, biblical revelation progresses according to the covenants YHWH cut and established with various people throughout salvation history.[29] The author of Hebrews opens his epistle, "After speaking in many parts and in many ways to our fathers long ago by the prophets, in these last days God has spoken to us in his Son" (1:1–2).[30] The thrust in this comparison seems to be the fragmented diversity of past revelation—"in many parts and in many ways"—as opposed to the culmination and completion of revelation in Jesus Christ. At the same time, the adverb translated "in many parts" (πολυμερῶς) also indicates the diachronic nature of revelation as several modern versions translate it "at many times."[31] Both translations are valid as the many parts of revelation through the prophets—the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible—came at many different times over approximately a one-thousand-year period.[32] The point is that the Scriptures were given over time. Revelation is *temporally* progressive.

[29] This is the thesis of Wellum and Gentry, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 31.

[30] Unless otherwise noted, all translations of the biblical text are my own.

[31] ESV, NKJV, NLT, NIV, and CSB read variations of "many times." NASB, LSB, NET, RSV, and ASV read variations of "many parts."

[32] For an argument in favor of interpreting the Old Testament according to the Hebrew canon, see James M. Hamilton, "Canonical Biblical Theology," in *GGRC*, 59–76; and Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 36–43. For an argument in favor of interpreting the Old Testament according to the historical progression of the covenants rather than a particular canonical ordering, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 121n31. Gentry and Wellum do not depart completely from a consideration of canonical ordering; rather, their distinctive contribution relative to Hamilton and Dempster is a departure from allowing a particular canonical ordering of the books of the Hebrew Bible to influence their interpretive conclusions. The controlling interpretive mechanism for Gentry and Wellum is "epoch"; that is, covenantal context, by which they seek to "read later texts in terms of earlier ones." For an extended argument that the Hebrew Bible was the early church's Scriptures, see Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and its Background in Early Judaism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1985). I will use "Hebrew Bible" and "Old Testament" interchangeably throughout this dissertation.

This progressive revelation consists in the canonical Scriptures—the twenty-four books of the Hebrew Bible and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.[33] When the resurrected Jesus said to his disciples, "everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled," he was referring to the entirety of the Hebrew Bible—the *Tanakh*.[34] The New Testament canon was recognized by the Fathers of the early church based on three general criteria: origin in the apostolic circle, continuous use, and orthodoxy.[35] According to Roger T. Beckwith, "Probably all these books were accepted as Scripture from an early period in some quarter of the church."[36] Therefore, I will consider progressive revelation according to this conception of the canon of Scripture: the Mosaic Pentateuch, followed by the Prophets and Writings, and then interpreted by the apostles.[37] Thus, for my purposes, canonical ordering generally corresponds with temporal progression.

The categorical foundation for the progressive nature of biblical revelation is covenant. YHWH initiated and established several covenantal relationships with various individuals or entities throughout salvation history and these covenants progressed toward culmination in the so-called "new covenant" (Jer 31:31). Thus, biblical revelation is

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[33] These fifty-one books correspond to the sixty-six books of the Bible as they are organized in the Western Protestant canon.

[34] See Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon*, 111–15. The transliteration *Tanakh* refers to the tripartite division of the Hebrew canon into *Torah*, Prophets (*Nevi'im*), and Writings (*Ketuvim*).

[35] Roger T. Beckwith, "The Canon of Scripture," in *NDBT*, 30.

[36] Beckwith, "The Canon of Scripture," 31. For an overview of the New Testament canon including recent developments, see Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origin and Authority of the New Testament Books* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012).

[37] While I affirm Childs's insistence on interpreting biblical texts in their final form, I will not be engaging in "canonical interpretation" like that proposed by Darian Lockett in a presentation to the 1892 Club at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary on March 30, 2022, in which he argued that canonization was a church-driven process and, therefore, the intended meaning of biblical texts is "not the property of the author but of the church." I would argue that the canonical arrangement of biblical texts is in keeping with both their chronological positions in progressive revelation and with their author-intended meanings. Canonical position ought not to impinge on the meaning of texts, but rather only on the development of their significance through inner-biblical interpretation.

materially progressive in addition to being temporally progressive. Each covenant builds on and develops those before it as evidenced by lexical points of contact, repeated phrases, and thematic correspondence based on similarity in sequence of events or "covenantal import."[38] The content of Scripture grows in specificity regarding the promised seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) and his restorative victory over the serpent proceeding from the Pentateuch, through the prophets and the writings, in the revelation of Jesus as the Christ in the Gospels, and the inspired interpretation of both Old Testament revelation and the Incarnation by the apostles in the New Testament epistles. It is the category of covenant, and the content of those covenants, that carries this progression forward in the pages of Scripture.

Third, the interpretive guardrails of biblical theology are both inspired authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation. I will cover both topics when I argue for typology as a feature of the biblical text below. Here, by way of preview, I propose that when interpreters pay close attention to the intent of the biblical authors, especially in how they quote, allude to, and otherwise make use of earlier—that is, canonically antecedent—biblical texts, the primary formal category that arises from the text is typology. Typology, the interpretive perspective of the inspired biblical authors, gives form to the progressive nature of revelation.[39] In other words, the progression of biblical revelation proceeds typologically. The Bible is temporally, materially, and *formally* progressive. Typology is the feature of the text in which all three of these intersect.

Finally, biblical theology entails both escalation toward, and culmination in, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is because biblical theology is typological, and

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[38] James M. Hamilton Jr. asserts that historical correspondence between types in Scripture is established by "(1) the re-use of key terms, (2) the quotation of phrases or lines, (3) the repetition of sequences of events, and (4) similarity in salvation-historical significance or covenantal import." James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 24

[39] My use of "the" here is on purpose. The interpretive perspective of the biblical authors *is* typology and thus is a feature of the text.

one of the main characteristics of typology is escalation. The entirety of the Old Testament anticipates restoration from sin and death through the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) and the New Testament presents Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of that anticipation.[40] Thus, the *telos* of progressive revelation is Christ, as he proclaimed, "I have not come to abolish [the law and the prophets] but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17; cf. Rom 10:4) and "It is finished (τετέλεσται)" (John 19:30). And, as Gentry and Wellum argue, Christ stands between Old Testament promises and the church: "All typological connections . . . either converge in or are mediated through Christ and his work."[41]

The Hermeneutics of Typology

Is typology[42] an author-intended feature of the text, or is it a reader-determined interpretive perspective? Can it be both? This is precisely the question Ardel B. Caneday seeks to answer in a recent contribution on typology in biblical theology.[43] He posits that "otherwise insightful, instructive, evocative, and even provocative discussions concerning biblical types falter to the degree that they feature *reception* of the OT rather than its *production*."[44] Interpreters feature reception when they "(1) define biblical typology as a species of hermeneutics, (2) tend to identify typology as *typological interpretation* or *figural interpretation*, and (3) present it as a 'reading strategy' or 'exegetical method.'"[45]

[40] See John H. Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 44, no. 1 (March 2001): 5–23. On the anticipatory nature of the Pentateuch specifically, see Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011); and Kevin S. Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019).

[41] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 133.

[42] Portions of this section were adapted from Thomas J. Sculthorpe, "*Plenior*, *Praegnans*, or Progressive: Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Authorial Intent," *SBJT* 26, no. 3 (2022): 50–70.

[43] 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 *GGRC*, 135–55.

[44] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 137, emphasis original.

[45] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 137, emphasis original. Caneday offers a lengthy footnote in which he gives several examples of contemporary biblical scholars—both inside and outside the Theological

In Caneday's view, featuring reception undermines the claim that biblical types are prospective in nature and that they are recognizable in the Old Testament before they reach fulfillment.[46] He concludes his argument with the following appeal to those engaged in biblical theological exegesis:

> If we persist in viewing the function of biblical types principally as a species of interpretation, we perpetuate confusion. To attach *typological*, *figural*, *figurative*, or *literal* as modifiers of interpretation improperly fixates the clash of ideas on hermeneutics rather than on the typological or prefiguring nature of divinely given revelation which the discussion should feature. The NT writers do not interpret the symbol-laden OT allegorically, figurally, figuratively, or typologically. None of these modifiers properly represents the interpretive activity of the NT writers nor should we use them to describe how NT writers read the OT. Rather, they are terms that properly describe *how God conveys his revelatory acts in history to foreshadow his consummating acts in Messiah*, revelatory acts that he authorized holy men of old to inscribe in Scripture for us on whom the ends of the ages have come.[47]

Overall, Caneday is gracious in his corrective appeal, and he highlights a significant nuance in the debate regarding typology. To orient typology in the realm of hermeneutics is to orient it in the realm of the reader. This is true even if readers reference the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors rather than their own. The biblical authors did not originate types in their writings, nor did they interpret earlier Scripture typologically, because they were taking up a particular hermeneutical stance regarding history and revelation. They read the Bible—the Scriptures available to them at their respective times—according to the authorial intent evident in the text. The Bible is typological because the inspired authors intended it to be so in what they wrote. With Caneday, I affirm that typology is a feature of revelation and "divine revelation, not human interpretation, is *where* we ought to locate our discussion of types."[48]

Interpretation of Scripture (TIS) movement—using these terms to characterize both the interpretive practices of the biblical authors and their own (137n12).

[46] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 141.

[47] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 154, emphasis original.

[48] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 147.

With that said, Caneday perhaps corrects too strongly away from hermeneutics. The interpretive perspective of the biblical authors is a feature of revelation because they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write what they wrote in the way they wrote it (2 Pet 1:21). Caneday refers to this repeatedly as "authorization." For instance, and with particular relevance to this dissertation, he writes, "God *imbued* both Israel and her experiences with typological significance to foreshadow corresponding things of the last days. God *authorized* Moses to inscribe these typologically infused events for our instruction at the ends of the ages."[49] But what about Moses's inscription of events prior to his own life? Moses clearly takes up a certain interpretive perspective regarding the creation, the fall in Eden, the flood, and the events of the lives of the patriarchs. One can rightly characterize his perspective—authorized by the Lord via inspiration—as typological. Moses's perspective does not imbue these antecedent events with typological nature or function, as surely the Lord ordained them as such when they occurred. But Moses's perspective on these events is the only access to knowledge of these events. His interpretive perspective on the life of Abraham, for instance, *is* revelatory, and it is typological.

Thus, while I affirm Caneday's correction and join him in calling for a more precise use of language regarding biblical typology, it remains appropriate to base an interpretation of the Old Testament on the perspective of the biblical authors. The perspective of the biblical authors is both revelatory and hermeneutical; therefore, the interpretive perspective of the inspired biblical authors must serve as the bedrock of a sound hermeneutic. The only access available to the events recorded in Scripture is their presentation by the inspired authors. For interpreters of the Bible today, it is the text of Scripture that is revelatory, not the events themselves. So, it seems best to, with Caneday, characterize revelation itself as typological, while at the same time acknowledging the

[49] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 149, emphasis added. With Caneday, I affirm the traditional view of Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. This view, along with opposing views developed by source critical examination of the Pentateuch, functions as a presupposition. In other words, presupposition regarding authorship determines interpretive approach. Because I affirm single, Mosaic authorship, I approach the text of Genesis, and that of the Pentateuch, as a literary unity, a whole composition of literary genius.

hermeneutical primacy of the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors and allowing their hermeneutical perspective to shape that of interpreters today. The foundation of this entire discussion is authorial intent; texts ought to be interpreted according to the intent of their authors. The subtitle of this dissertation—"A Typological Understanding of Isaac's Birth"—is not intended to evoke reader-oriented hermeneutics. Instead, typological understanding is based on typological reality: Isaac's birth is a type because the Lord ordained it so in history, he inspired the author to record it so in Scripture, and he inspired later authors to interpret it so in their texts.[50]

In my view, then, the answer to the question with which I began this section is this: biblical typology emerges from the text of Scripture because it is a feature of the text rather than serving as one among many possible hermeneutical approaches to Old Testament narrative. Typology emerges from Scripture through two complementary and necessary means—human authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation. Therefore, biblical types are both prospective and progressive.[51] 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.,

[50] Typically, the distinction between allegory and typology is historical correspondence. But discussions regarding allegory vs. typology are only relevant so far as both are interpretive practices rather than author intended features of texts. I do not want to allegorically interpret something that is not an allegory nor typologically interpret something that is not typology. The determinative factor is authorial intent. If the author intended allegory, his text must be interpreted accordingly, and likewise for typology. For a discussion along these lines regarding the Song of Songs, see James M. Hamilton Jr., *Song of Songs: A Biblical-Theological, Allegorical, Christological Interpretation*, FB (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2015), 28–33. For a helpful introduction to both typology and allegory, see Mitchell L. Chase, *40 Questions about Typology and Allegory* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2020). Chase offers a short discussion on the difference between typology and allegory (197). Chase labels both as species of "figural reading" which places them firmly in the realm of hermeneutics. Chase also writes, "Typology is an interpretive method rooted in exegesis," and "Typology is an attempt to interpret *what is there* in the text, not what is not there in the text" (71). This is precisely the confusion in terminology and expression Caneday is seeking to correct.

[51] For a helpful summary of the characteristics of biblical types, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant,* 133–37; cf. Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi offer five characteristics: biblical types must be (1) historical, (2) authorially-intended, (3) marked by escalation, (4) textual, and (5) covenantal. Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," *SBJT* 21, no. 2 (2017): 18–25. Caneday argues that the necessary, proper grounding for the assertion that typology is prospective is the characterization of revelation itself as typological rather than hermeneutical methodology. Caneday, "Biblical Types,"143–45.

in covenantal context)."[52] While biblical types are often discerned retrospectively, this is a function of an interpretive position in salvation history after closure of the canon.[53] 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 *nature* of the earlier text is typological, so later texts recognize, develop, and project the type into the future. The prospective and progressive natures of typology work together across the canon to prophesy the promised restoration of creation (Gen 3:15) and to identify Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of that promise.[54]

Returning to Caneday, he offers a helpful analogy regarding typology in which the Old Testament is like a fully furnished but dimly lit room.[55] 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. Again, the introductory statement in the book of Hebrews is relevant here: "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" (1:1–2). Caneday's illustration is helpful because it affirms both the prospective nature—

[52] Hamilton, *Typology*, 26. As with biblical theology, many have sought to define typology in the modern era. E. Earle Ellis writes that typology relates "the past to the present in terms of a historical correspondence and escalation in which the divinely ordered prefigurement finds a complement in the subsequent and greater event." E. Earle Ellis, *The OT in Early Christianity: Canon and Interpretation in Light of Modern Research* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 106. See also Leonard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002), 17–18; and R. M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1981). For a summary of the history of typology in biblical studies, see Goppelt, *Typos*, 1–26. For a recent critique of typology, see Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 12–23. For my response to Chen, see chap. 3 of this diss.

[53] G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 14; cf. Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant,* 132; Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis," 21.

[54] Hamilton argues that typological patterns in the Bible are all generally shaped by God's promise in Gen 3:15. Hamilton, *Typology*, 6–7.

[55] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 152.

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. Furthermore, the furniture in the room—correlative to meaning—does not change when the light is increased; rather, the clarity that comes from the light of the Incarnation is a change in the *significance* of the texts. Meaning is inextricably tied to authorial intent and thus does not change while significance—certainly derivative of meaning—depends upon the context in which the text is interpreted. More on this in the next subsection.

Therefore, biblical-theological exegesis—that is, exegesis attentive to the prospective and progressive nature of biblical texts—*is* the proper hermeneutical method to observe and interpret typological structures in Scripture. Instead of observing "organic development" of the *meaning* of texts through the canon, 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.[56] 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.[57] 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.[58] A biblical theology that is properly biblical is one that follows the hermeneutical example of the biblical authors—it reads the Bible on its own terms.[59]

Human authorial intent. 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

[56] Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis," 14.

[57] 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.

[58] Hamilton, *Typology*, 27–28; cf. Hamilton, *With the Clouds of Heaven*, 21–26.

[59] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 45–46, especially 46n32.

of Scripture is divine."[60] 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 wrote, "No prophecy of Scripture ever comes about from one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever carried along [ἠνέχθη] by the will of man; rather, men carried along [φερόμενοι] by the Holy Spirit spoke from God" (2 Pet 1:20–21). 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.

Insurmountable hermeneutical challenges arise, however, when the dual authorship of Scripture leads to multiple meanings and "fuller" senses.[61] Rather, while a full understanding of the mode of inspiration will largely remain a mystery—as the Chicago statement affirms—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.[62] 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.

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[60] "The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy," 1978, accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.etsjets.org/files/documents/Chicago_Statement.pdf.

[61] Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 18–19. I came to this conclusion independent of Chen, but his argument is very similar to mine. See also Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "The Single Intent of Scripture," 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), 55–69.

[62] 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.

To illustrate this point, consider Paul's statement in his epistle to the Galatian churches concerning the seed of Abraham: "Now to Abraham and to his seed [τῷ σπέρματι αὐτοῦ] the promises were spoken. [Scripture] does not say, 'and to the seeds [τοῖς σπέρμασιν],' referring to many, but referring to one, 'and to your seed [τῷ σπέρματί σου],' who is Christ" (Gal 3:16). Here Paul is closely examining the language of Genesis 12:7 which is later repeated several times (Gen 13:15; 17:7; 24:7).[63] The relevant portion of this text for my purpose here is the final clause in which Paul claims that the referent of "seed" throughout the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24) is Jesus Christ.[64] Instead of attempting to somehow attribute the Christ referent to Moses's intent in Genesis—which would be very difficult to impossible—or assigning a more developed meaning to the Genesis texts on the basis of "fuller" senses or Paul's apostolic office and authority, I would argue for a typological trajectory in the Old Testament as Paul's referent.[65] In the "seed" texts in Genesis, Moses anticipates the "seed" of the woman (Gen 3:15) who will triumph over the serpent and restore the pre-fall Edenic relationship between YHWH and humanity. This seed will arise from the lineage of Seth (Gen 5:3), Noah (Gen 5:29), Shem (Gen 9:26–27; 11:10), Abraham (Gen 12:7), Isaac (Gen 26:2–5), Jacob (Gen 28:13–15; 35:9–15), and Judah (Gen 49:8–12), and will fulfill the prophetic, priestly, and royal functions for which the first man was created.[66] Later Old Testament authors, especially the author of Samuel and several prophets, continue this anticipation through the lineage

[63] In each case the Hebrew text reads, "to your seed" (לְזַרְעֲךָ), and in each case, the LXX translates the promise with the singular "seed" (τῷ σπέρματι).

[64] On the debate regarding the nature of "seed" (זֶרַע) in Gen 3:15 and beyond as having a singular or plural referent, see Jack Collins, "A Syntactical Note (Genesis 3:15): Is the Woman's Seed Singular or Plural?," *TynBul* 48, no. 1 (1997): 139–48; and T. Desmond Alexander, "Further Observations on the Term 'Seed' in Genesis," *TynBul* 48, no. 2 (1997): 364–68.

[65] On "fuller" senses, see the subsection "Inner-Biblical Interpretation." For an argument that the apostolic mode of Old Testament interpretation is not reproducible by believers today, see Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999).

[66] On the first man as the prototypical prophet, priest, and king in Eden, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 64–65, 94, 148–49.

of David (2 Sam 7:12–16; cf. Isa 11:1; Jer 23:5). According to the Gospel writers, Jesus is this seed (Matt 1:1), and the inheritance to which Paul refers comes to the church—the new covenant counterpart of Israel and the secondary, plural referent of seed in some texts—only through the singular Christ.

Thus, Paul is not changing the meaning of the "seed" texts in Genesis; he is identifying and completing a typological trajectory that begins in Genesis and is fulfilled in Christ. After thousands of years, numerous and diverse additions to Scripture, and the Incarnation, the one whom Moses knew would be a royal, priestly, Judahite king Paul knew as the Lord Jesus Christ.

John Webster's conception of inspiration is helpful at this point. He argues for a notion of Scripture as a "sanctified creaturely reality."[67] Commenting on the same passage of Scripture (2 Pet 1:21), Webster argues, "Being 'moved' by the Spirit is 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."[68] 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; that is, 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."[69] 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-

[67] John Webster, *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2003), 21.

[68] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 39.

[69] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 30.

presentation.[70] Simply put, "a sanctified text is creaturely, not divine."[71] Webster argues further that a sanctified text is not a transubstantiated one—some kind of quasi-divine artifact.[72] 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.[73]

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.

The intersection between singular intent and progressive revelation is this: the revelation of Scripture progresses temporally, materially, and formally, but the *meaning* of individual texts of Scripture never changes. It is hermeneutically indefensible and unrepeatable to hold that textual meaning grows in clarity, fullness, or even that it changes such that texts mean something new when they are read in light of the Incarnation, or, in the context of the whole canon. The same is true of proposals that attempt to anchor change in meaning to the intent of the human author by attributing that development in meaning to the influence of the divine author on a text which is evident at the canonical level.[74] If this is the true nature of progressive revelation, how is it possible for uninspired interpreters

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[70] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 27.

[71] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 28.

[72] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 28.

[73] Webster, *Holy Scripture*, 30. Sanctification is unnecessary if Scripture is itself divine.

[74] For proposals along these lines involving the concept of *sensus praegnans*, see Douglas J. Moo, "The Problem of *Sensus Plenior*," in *Hermeneutics, Authority, and Canon*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 175–212; and Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis," 11–34.

today to replicate the interpretive practice of the biblical authors? As Richard Longenecker and others have argued, this is not possible.[75] Confidence and validity in interpretation are both tied to authorial intent, and a text can only have one intent: that of its human author carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Someone may respond to my question above by arguing that canonical revelation is closed, and thus biblical interpreters today must consider the whole of the canon when seeking the meaning of any single text. I agree in principle, but I would argue that this is a conflation of meaning and significance. It is the significance of biblical texts that is operative at the interpretive level of the whole canon, not their meaning. Biblical texts take on greater, more developed, even different significance when considered in light of the fullness of revelation, but their meaning never changes. The overarching and consistent intent of the divine author is evident in this significance—the application of earlier texts by later authors which many scholars today call inner-biblical interpretation.

Inner-biblical interpretation. At the outset, while this field has often been termed simply "intertextuality," I am setting that label aside in accordance with the position of scholars who have astutely recognized the hermeneutical problems associated with applying the literary theory of intertextuality to biblical interpretation.[76] These scholars have coined the phrase "inner-biblical exegesis" to refer to the use of biblical texts by other inspired authors via quotation, allusion, or echo.[77] Russell Meek defines inner-biblical exegesis, or interpretation, as later authors referring to a previous text "in order to explicate,

[75] See n65 above.

[76] Julia Kristeva coined the term "intertextuality" in "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Language and Art*, ed. L. S. Roudiez, trans. T. Gora, A. Jardine, and L. S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University, 1980), 64–91. Her conception of intertextuality is unconcerned with authorial intent, diachronic trajectory, or criteria for determining interdependency between texts.

[77] Michael Fishbane defines such inner-biblical interpretation as "aggadic exegesis" in *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1985), 281–91. For an argument in favor of the nomenclature I am using rather than "intertextuality," see Russell L. Meek, "Intertextuality, Inner-Biblical Exegesis, and Inner-Biblical Allusion: The Ethics of a Methodology," *Biblica* 95, no. 1 (2014): 280–91.

comment on, expand, or in some other way make it applicable to a new situation."[78] Therefore, the biblical interpreter today must seek to understand the meaning of the antecedent text and the later author's purpose in commenting on or applying it in his context.

E. D. Hirsch has described textual, or verbal, meaning as a "willed" or "shared" type, an entity that can be embodied in one or more instances and is common to both author and reader.[79] The multiple instances in which that type, or meaning, can manifest are implications of that meaning. Thus, implications are controlled by the author's intended meaning. Implications are the various ways the meaning of a text can be applied in other contexts, literary and temporal. This conceptual distinction between meaning and implication based on the concept of type 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 or 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. Implications, not meaning, are the hermeneutical basis for inner-biblical interpretation.

Another helpful distinction is that between meaning and significance. Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel 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 Old Testament text furnished by the rest of the canon of Scripture.[80]

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[78] Meek, "Intertextuality," 288.

[79] E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1967), 64, 66.

[80] Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis," 18.

This statement would be hermeneutically sound and much clearer if they discarded completely the notion of "pregnant sense" or any other "fuller" senses, essentially the relative clause I have set apart with dashes above. 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.[81] 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, the literary context in which all texts of Scripture are interpreted. Surely the *significance* of Old Testament texts changes when the entirety of revelation is considered, especially the event of the Incarnation, but the inspired human author's intended *meaning* in each antecedent text remains unchanged.

In this way, inner-biblical interpretation as defined previously serves as the main mechanism for progressive revelation in Scripture. Inner-biblical interpretation is the formal principle of progressive revelation. Later authors—both in the Old Testament and those interpreting the Old Testament in light of the revelation of Jesus Christ in the Incarnation in the New Testament—interpret, develop, and apply the implications of earlier texts under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in keeping with the inspired human author's intended meaning in those texts. Such inner-biblical interpretation impacts the *significance* of antecedent texts, not their meaning. And, as I argued, this inner-biblical interpretation is typological.

Conclusion. The hermeneutics of typology are the hermeneutics of inner-biblical interpretation, and the hermeneutics of inner-biblical interpretation consist of the author-intended meaning of inspired texts and the hermeneutical perspective of those inspired authors. The most consistent, logically sound, and defensible way to present and practice biblical-theological exegesis is based on a carefully defined distinction between meaning, implication, and significance and a direct correlation between meaning and

[81] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 8.

authorial intent. The meaning of a text is determined by the author who composed it and is accessible through a grammatical-historical examination of the words he wrote. Implications of that meaning are often numerous but are necessarily derivative of the meaning and provide the basis for development of an earlier text by later authors. Significance emerges as authors employ textual implications in new literary and historical contexts. Thus, the apparent shift in meaning of biblical texts is really a shift in significance.

Typology, then, is an author-intended feature of the text which is both present in meaning—typology is prospective and anticipatory—and in significance through the development of implications of typological people, institutions, and events by later authors. In this dissertation, I hope to model this understanding of hermeneutics and, by extension, biblical theology. First, I will pay careful attention to the text and literary features of Genesis to show that the author has constructed an intricate typology of resurrection from death through an intentional presentation of historical, miraculous reversals involving both restoration from exile and birth from barrenness. The birth of Isaac is a key manifestation of this typology in the Scriptures. Second, I will show how later biblical authors—namely the authors of Judges and Samuel along with Isaiah, Paul, and the author of Hebrews—develop and escalate the significance of this typology for their contexts, not to adjust the meaning of the texts in Genesis but to further anticipate the future restoration that the imminent seed of the woman would accomplish and describe its fulfillment in Christ. My hope is to sharpen the conversation concerning biblical typology in faithfulness to the biblical texts.

The Literary Structure of Genesis and Isaac's Birth

In a recent work on the *tôledôt* literary structure of Genesis, Matthew A. Thomas begins, "Studying how a work of literature is organized is of vital importance to

understanding what truth(s) it is attempting to communicate."[82] Likewise, L. Michael Morales succinctly asserts that "form conveys meaning," and regarding the Pentateuch specifically he writes, "By examining the highest macrostructural level of the Pentateuch, one is able to sound out the deepest level—the bedrock—of its meaning."[83] These recent sentiments reveal a general trend in the broader field of form criticism in biblical interpretation in the last half-century away from conjectural source analysis and toward an emphasis on the final form of biblical texts.[84]

The most prominent strain of form criticism in biblical studies was developed by Hermann Gunkel in the early twentieth century to pursue the identity and origins of Israel's religion—the history of religions approach to the Old Testament—by focusing on typical formal elements in Old Testament narratives.[85] In the midst of the domination of the Documentary Hypothesis and related proposals in biblical studies for well over a century, Gunkel's approach was a significant shift in methodology. Although he himself was not theologically conservative, Gunkel created the atmosphere in which scholars like Thomas and Morales have examined much larger bodies of text in the Scriptures and the way texts are shaped by their literary form and structure, literary context, and the historical context of their author(s), redactor(s), and readers.[86] What follows is a brief overview of the

[82] Matthew A. Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the 'toledot' Formula*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 551 (New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 1.

[83] L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord? A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*, NSBT 37 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 23.

[84] Since there are several "final forms" of the text of the Old Testament, referring to *the* final form may be a misnomer. However, the MT as the basis for the *BHS* is the form behind most modern translations of the Scriptures. Thus, throughout this dissertation "final form" will refer to the MT as reflected in the *BHS*. For a defense of this text as *the* final form, see Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 3–5.

[85] For a history of form-critical methodology after Gunkel, see Marvin A. Sweeney, "Form Criticism," in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*, ed. Stephen L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes, rev. ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999), 60–69.

[86] For a collection of various articles on the shift in form criticism to macro literary structure, see Marvin A. Sweeny and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003).

contributions of biblical scholars to this shift throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first. Although I do not intend to present my work in this dissertation as a contribution to form criticism, I acknowledge that the developments concerning the value of literary structure in exegesis originated in, and grew out of, form criticism.[87] The conception "form conveys meaning" serves as a significant hermeneutical presupposition for this dissertation, so it is necessary to set it in its context as the *telos* of a lengthy process of change. Following the history of literary structure in interpretation, I will give a brief history of interpretation of the birth of Isaac—its meaning, significance, and purpose in the book of Genesis and the canon of Scripture. These streams of scholarship are related in that one's hermeneutical approach to Genesis often determines the significance assigned to momentous narrative events like Isaac's birth.

From Form Criticism to Literary Structure: A History of Scholarship

"All literary compositions have structure."[88] So David A. Dorsey begins his proposal for the literary structure of the entire Old Testament. He bases this assertion on the text of the Hebrew Bible itself which contains various isolated Hebrew letters

[87] This is because form critical discussions often center on genre rather than literary structure. Genre categories inevitably break down because no biblical literature fits exclusively into the categories we would impose on it. On form as a "constellation" of genre categories, see Will Kynes, *An Obituary for "Wisdom Literature": The Birth, Death, and Intertextual Reintegration of a Biblical Corpus* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2019). I prefer simply to read and interpret biblical texts as literature with a formal emphasis on literary structure. For an early argument for literary structure in biblical interpretation, see David A. Dorsey, "Can These Bones Live? Investigating Literary Structure in the Bible," *EvJ* 9 (1991): 15–20. Thomas refers to literary structure as "surface structure" to distinguish it from behind-the-text, source-related investigations into structure. Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 14–15.

[88] David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 15. For several works that influenced Dorsey, see Jean Pigat, *Structuralism*, trans. Chaninah Maschler (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Robert C. Culley, "Structural Analysis: Is It Done with Mirrors?" *Interpretation* 28 (1974): 165–81; Robert M. Polzin, *Biblical Structuralism: Method and Subjectivity in the Study of Ancient Texts*, SemeiaSup (Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1977); and Anthony C. Thiselton, "Keeping up with Recent Studies II: Structuralism and Biblical Studies: Method or Ideology?" *Expository Times* 89 (1978): 329–35.

apparently intended to indicate open and closed sections in the text.[89] Modern chapter divisions, added by Archbishop of Canterbury Stephen Langton in the thirteenth century AD, were incorporated into Hebrew manuscripts around AD 1330, but versification predated the third-century AD Mishnah.[90] While these attempts to identify structure were not always helpful, they support Dorsey's assertion and the related idea that authors structure their material intentionally, and this intentionality contributes to their intended meaning for their composition.[91]

The earliest investigations into literary structure involved poetry because poetry is the most structured form of literature. Bishop Robert Lowth and his student John Jebb identified various structural features at the line and stanza level, as well as the chiastic structure, in Hebrew poetry.[92] D. H. Müller followed them, focusing primarily on the paragraph or strophic level and identifying the same patterns.[93] A. Condamin proposed a structural analysis of the book of Jeremiah, a move away from strictly poetry and a trend that would continue in several nations and would include virtually all the books of the Old

[89] Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, 18. Examples that predate the Mishnah (third century AD) include *setumâ* (ס) for shorter, closed sections and *petuah* (פ) for longer, open sections. For more on these markers as an early effort to identify the internal structure of the books of the Old Testament, see Emmanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 50–51. For an exhaustive, scholarly work on *setumâ* and *petuah*, see Josef M. Oesch, *Petucha Und Setuma: Untersuchungen Zu E. ÜBerlieferten Gliederung Im HebräIschen Text D. Alten Testaments* (Freiburg [Schweiz], Göttingen: Universitätsverlag; Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1979).

[90] Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 52.

[91] An example of a poor Hebrew division is Exod 6:28, and an example of a poor chapter division is Gen 2:1.

[92] See Bishop Robert Lowth, *Lectures on the Sacred Poetry of the Hebrews* (London: Tegg, 1835); and John Jebb, *Sacred Literature* (London: Cadell & Davies, 1820). Their proposals included synonymous, antithetic, and synthetic relationships between lines and stanzas.

[93] D. H. Müller, *Die Propheten in ihrer ursprünglichen Form* (Vienna: Hölder, 1896). He was also the first to draw attention to concatenation—the occurrence of the same feature at the end of one unit of text and at the beginning of another—as an intentional structural feature rather than evidence of shoddy redacting.

Testament throughout the twentieth century.[94] E. W. Bullinger published structural analyses of every book of the Bible across six volumes of his early twentieth century *Companion Bible*.[95] Later, Nils W. Lund did the same in the New Testament with a focus on chiastic structures.[96] At the time, many of these works were unconvincing and failed to shift the trajectory of form criticism, but they continuously raised awareness in biblical studies of the issue of literary structure in the Hebrew Bible. The relevant implication from this short survey is that there is a rich history of close attention to literary structure in modern biblical studies.

A dramatic increase in attention to literary structure began with James Muilenburg's 1968 presidential address to the Society of Biblical Literature.[97] This shift coincided with increasing criticism of the Documentary Hypothesis as a hermeneutical presupposition in Pentateuchal studies.[98] Calling for increased attention to the literary

[94] A. Condamin, *Le Livre de Jérémie,* Études Bibliques (Paris: Lecoffre, 1902). Later works in the same vein include Umberto Cassuto, "The Prophecies of Jeremiah concerning the Gentiles," *Biblical and Oriental Studies*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1973), 1:178–226; and Enrico Galbaiti, *La Struttura Letteraria dell' Esodo*, Scrinium Theologicum 3 (Rome: Paoline, 1956).

[95] E. W. Bullinger, ed., *The Companion Bible: Being the Authorized Version of 1611 with the Structures and Notes, Critical, Explanatory and Suggestive and with 198 Appendixes* (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University, 1932). For further examples of structural analyses of biblical texts from this general time period see John Forbes, *The Symmetrical Structure of Scripture* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1854); and his *Analytical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1868).

[96] Nils W. Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1942).

[97] Published as James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969): 1–18.

[98] For a concise, erudite overview of the development of the Documentary Hypothesis, see Alexander, *Abraham in the Negev*, 1–29. For fuller histories of Pentateuchal criticism see R. J. Thompson, *Moses and the Law in a Century of Criticism since Graf*, Vetus Testamentum Supplement 19 (Leiden: Brill, 1970); T. K. Cheyne, *Founders of Old Testament Criticism* (London: Methuen, 1893); and A. de Pury and T. Römer, eds., *Le Pentateuque en Question: Position do Problem et Brève Histoire de la Recherche* (Genève, Switzerland: Labor et Fides, 1989), 9–80. The most influential proponents of the Documentary Hypothesis include Henrich Graf, *Die Geschichtlichen Bücher des Alten Testament: Zwei Historisch-Kritische Untersuchungen* (1866); Abraham Kuenen, *De Gods Dienst van Israël* (1869–1870); and Julius Wellhausen, *Skizzen und Vorarbeiten*, vol. 2 (Berlin: G. Reimer, 1885), which was a reprint of his series of articles entitled "Die Composition des Hexateuchs," in *Jahrbücher Für Deutsche Theologie* (1876–1877). According to Alexander, "By the year 1890 the views of Graf, Kuenen, and Wellhausen gained almost total acceptance in the world of biblical scholarship." Alexander, *Abraham in the Negev*, 9–10.

features of biblical texts, Muilenburg asserted, "The correct analysis of the structure of a passage is of considerable consequence . . . for a grasp of the writer's intent and meaning."[99] What followed was a flood of scholarly responses to this call. Michael Fishbane highlighted the importance of literary structure for proper interpretation of Old Testament texts.[100] William H. Shea argued for a chiastic structure in the Song of Songs.[101] Adele Berlin and Meri Sternberg followed with works arguing for poetic features—such as repetition and antithetic parallelism—in biblical narrative.[102] Robert Alter made numerous helpful contributions along the same lines to the literary analysis of Old Testament narratives.[103] Finally, an important and significant recent achievement that exemplifies the shift from source analysis to literary analysis of the final form of biblical texts at primarily the book level is the volume of essays edited by English professor Leland Ryken and Old Testament scholar Tremper Longman III.[104] This overview barely scratches the surface, but the apparent trajectory is one of increasing attention to the literary features of the biblical texts in the form we have them today and the significance of these features for interpretation.

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[99] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," 9.

[100] Michael Fishbane, *Text and Texture: Close Readings of Selected Biblical Texts* (New York: Schocken, 1979).

[101] William H. Shea, "The Chiastic Structure of the Song of Songs," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wisenschaft* 92 (1980): 379–96.

[102] Adele Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Almond, 1983); Meir Sternberg, *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative* (Bloomington: Indiana University, 1985).

[103] Robert Alter, *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York: Basic Books, 1992); and *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic Books, 2011). See also Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, eds., *The Literary Guide to the Bible* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1987).

[104] Leland Ryken and Tremper Longman III, eds., *A Complete Literary Guide to the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993).

Chiasm, specifically, as a literary feature has garnered a fair amount of attention.[105] This is especially relevant for this dissertation because I am convinced that chiasm represents not just one of many literary forms at the disposal of authors but a pattern of thought in Hebrew culture that emerges in the biblical texts.[106] Yehuda T. Radday's contribution to John W. Welch's *Chiasmus in Antiquity* represents a watershed in chiastic interpretations of Old Testament narratives.[107] Furthermore, one of the goals of Welch's volume is to demonstrate the presence of chiasm in ancient literature from a wide variety of cultures, thus indicating that there may be something innate in human reasoning and communication that makes chiasm effective.[108] Criticisms that chiastic literary structure—especially in the macro sense—is in the eye of the beholder are plentiful, and the fact that several different interpreters can propose as many different structures for a given biblical text seems to undermine my claim.[109] What remains is to pay close attention to the text and make cogent arguments regarding both the literary structure and, by induction, the meaning of those texts and the books which contain them. In this dissertation I aim to contribute to this continuing emphasis on literary features in biblical interpretation

[105] The term *chiasm* or *chiasmus* derives from the crisscross shape of the Greek letter *chi* (X). Lund defines chiasm as "a literary figure, or principle, which consists of 'a placing crosswise' of words in a sentence. The term is used in rhetoric to designate an inversion in the order of words or phrases which are repeated or subsequently referred to in the sentence." Lund, *Chiasmus in the New Testament*, 31.

[106] For documented studies of chiasm in ancient literature such as Homer, the Bible, Zoroastrian literature, early and medieval Chinese literature, and thirteenth-century Persian poetry, see Mary Douglas, *Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2010).

[107] Yehuda T. Radday, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," in *Chiasmus in Antiquity*, ed. John W. Welch (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1981), 50–117.

[108] Compelling advantages of chiastic communication include beauty, coherence, a sense of completeness, a central pivot in a narrative, aid to memory, and opportunities to compare, contrast, reiterate, emphasize, explain, and illustrate parallel sections in a composition. See Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, 31; and Hamilton, *Typology*, 332–36. On the innateness of chiasm in human thinking and communication, see Douglas, *Thinking in Circles*, 12.

[109] For example, consider the notes on the literary structure of Gen 2:4–3:24 in chap. 2 of this diss., in which I refer to a multitude of varying proposals.

by demonstrating the validity of chiasm as an author-intended, structural feature of biblical literature at a macro level.

The Birth of Isaac: A Brief History of Interpretation

Isaac's birth is a significant event in the book of Genesis. For twenty-five years of Abraham's and Sarah's lives, and for some ten chapters of Genesis, YHWH's promise of seed—the heir of the land (Gen 12:7) and the vehicle by which blessing would be perpetuated (Gen 17:7)—is given, clarified, threatened, narrowed, and ultimately fulfilled in Isaac. Interpretations of the meaning and significance of this event vary widely in the history of biblical interpretation. In this section I will offer brief examples from various time periods and interpretive perspectives before culminating in an overview of modern evangelical interpretations of both Isaac's birth and of Sarah's response to YHWH's promise regarding his birth (Gen 18:12).[110]

Early Jewish interpretation. *Targum Onqelos*, a translation of the Pentateuch into Aramaic, represents a second century (AD 130) Jewish interpretation of Genesis.[111] While lacking in commentary, translations are inherently interpretive, so this resource offers a glimpse into how Jewish exegetes were thinking about the biblical text during the time of the early church. While there is nothing in the Targum to indicate a typological understanding of Isaac's birth or any significance beyond that of promise fulfillment, the

[110] Interpretation of Sarah's thoughts in Gen 18:12, particularly the word *'ednâ*, which is typically translated "pleasure," is germane to my thesis and constitutes a significant and important aspect of my central argument in chap. 4. Therefore, an overview of historical interpretations of this text is relevant. Most modern versions (NKJV, NLT, ESV, NASB, LSB, NET, RSV, ASV) translate the expression as "pleasure"—a reference to sexual pleasure based on the interpretation of BDB, 726. See also *CDCH*, 312; and *HALOT*, 2:793. The CSB translation reads "delight," while the NIV includes the demonstrative pronoun "this pleasure," which ties Sarah's prospective pleasure to YHWH's promise of conception. These two translations are more aligned with my understanding of the passage. While "sexual pleasure" may certainly involve conception as the desired result, especially in the case of Abraham and Sarah, there is nothing in the context to indicate any referent other than restored fertility evidenced by conception. For my full argument, see chap. 4 of this diss.

[111] Bernard Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos to Genesis*, AramBib 6 (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1988).

translation of Genesis 18:12 is peculiar. According to the translator, Sarah doubted the possibility of "youth" as opposed to the typical modern translation, "pleasure." A footnote indicates that this word choice was "out of respect for the Matriarch."[112] Thus, while it is difficult to discern the precise meaning of "youth" in this context, respectfulness may indicate that the idea of sexual pleasure was present in the translator's mind. It seems, therefore, that there is at least a degree of agreement between early Jewish interpretation of Genesis 18:12 and that of modern translators. The early Jewish understanding of Sarah's interpretation of YHWH's promise was associated to some degree with sexual pleasure.

Early Christian interpretation. Because of the controversy-oriented nature of the early church, there are few theologians and writers to look to for commentaries on Scripture and even fewer who had something significant to say about Isaac's birth. Two examples will suffice to characterize the interpretive perspective of the early Christians regarding Isaac. First, in his commentary on Genesis, Ephrem the Syrian (c. AD 306–373) translated Genesis 18:12 as follows: "After I have grown old, shall I [again] have youthfulness? My husband is also old."[113] His translation is formally equivalent to the original text as evidenced especially by the last clause. Specifically, his rendering "youthfulness"—lacking the respectfulness motive apparent in the Targum—indicates he has taken the context of the verse into account to a high degree. For Sarah to conceive would be for her to experience restored youthfulness. As with the Targum above, however, such an understanding also encompasses the modern notion of sexual pleasure, also typically associated with youth as opposed to old age. Other than this translation, however, Ephrem offered no substantial interpretation of Isaac's birth or the Abraham Narrative at large.

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[112] Grossfeld, *The Targum Onqelos*, 76n5.

[113] Ephrem the Syrian, "Commentary on Genesis," in *St. Ephrem the Syrian: Selected Prose Works*, trans. Edward G. Matthews Jr. and Joseph P. Amar, FC 91, ed. Kathleen McVey (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1994), 106–7. See also Mark Sheridan, ed., *Genesis 12–50*, ACCS 2 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 67.

John Chrysostom (c. AD 347–407), on the other hand, modeled a spiritual interpretation of Sarah's barrenness and subsequent conception. This is especially interesting because Chrysostom is typically considered a key member of the Antiochene school of interpretation, which was more literal in practice than the more spiritual—and often allegorical—Alexandrian school.[114] Positing a symbolic meaning of Sarah's barrenness, Chrysostom wrote, "Just as she gave birth in her old age when she was barren, so too the church, though barren, has given birth for these, the final times."[115] For Chrysostom, Sarah functions in Scripture as a symbol of the church.

While such a direct, symbolic connection is a significant departure from the author-intended typology for which I am advocating in this dissertation, later biblical texts, which connect the reversal of Sarah's fortune to the restoration of Zion after exile (Isa 54:1), lend a degree of credibility to Chrysostom's interpretation. If Sarah's experience is typical of a city's, why not of the church's as well? Furthermore, according to the apostles, as Christ is the fulfillment of the singular seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16–18), so the church is the fulfillment of the corporate seed of Abraham (Gal 3:29), the true Israel of God in the new covenant age (Gal 6:16), or "final times." Thus, although not explicit, there appears to be a covenantal flavor to his connection between Sarah and the church. On the other hand, such a symbolic connection bears marked similarity to connections the Roman Catholic church makes between Old Testament figures and Mary. In sum, Chrysostom appears to be highlighting the Lord's ability to bring forth life where there is none, namely from fallen humanity exemplified in both Sarah and the church. While theologically sound,

[114] For a helpful overview of these two schools and the differences between them, see Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 49–110. This example from Chrysostom indicates, however, that while this two-school characterization of early church hermeneutics is helpful, it is not always clear and clean.

[115] John Chrysostom, "*Non esse Desperandum*," columns 363–72, in *Opera Omina,* Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Graeca 51, ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris: Migne, 1857–1886), 368. See also Sheridan, *Genesis 12–50*, 90.

it is difficult to defend such an interpretation from the text of Genesis or even from the entire canon.

Even in just these two examples the variety of early church interpretive practices is evident. In these and elsewhere, however, rigorous attention to the typological intent of the biblical authors—especially the Old Testament—is lacking. Furthermore, Chrysostom's interpretation is representative of the often-specious nature of symbolic connections between the Old and New Testaments made by early church theologians.

Reformation. John Calvin is certainly the representative theologian of the Reformation period, so his comments on Isaac's birth, and specifically Genesis 18:12, will serve to characterize interpretation during the period. First, regarding Sarah's barrenness and the birth of Isaac, Calvin comments,

> Not only does [Moses] say that Abram was without children, but he states the reason, namely, the sterility of his wife; in order to show that it was by nothing short of an extraordinary miracle that she afterwards bare Isaac. . . . Thus God was pleased to humble his servant . . . yet God designed in his person, as in a mirror, to make it evident, whence and in what manner his Church should arise; for at that time it lay hid, as in a dry root under the earth.[116]

Calvin highlights the miraculous nature of Isaac's birth to draw a connection between that historical miracle and the miracle of the birth of the church after the ascension of Jesus. According to Calvin, the Lord humbled Abraham through his circumstances to incite trust in his promise, which for Christian readers functions as a "mirror" into which they can look and see themselves. Such a meaning "lay hid" at the time these things happened and at the time they were written, likely a reference to the New Testament concept of mystery revealed.[117] Calvin's statement "God designed in his person" betrays both the meticulous sovereignty of the Lord and, to use Caneday's language, that the correlation between

[116] John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. John King, *Calvin's Commentaries*, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), 337–38.

[117] Chen explains the mystery language in the New Testament as refers to Gentile inclusion in the people of God, a fact known by the prophets themselves but otherwise broadly unknown and unforeseen. Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 20n40.

barrenness, the birth of Isaac, and the church was "divinely appointed."[118] Furthermore, Calvin's illustration of a dry root under the earth—like Caneday's of a dimly lit, furnished room—indicates an acknowledgement of progression in revelation. Furthermore, Calvin comments, "Because, in [Isaac's] very birth, God has set before us a lively picture of his Church . . . Moses here commends that secret and unwonted power of God, which is superior to the law of nature."[119] Here, similar to Chrysostom, Calvin draws a direct, symbolic connection between Isaac and the church.

While Calvin's interpretation of the event appears to be a spiritual interpretation like that of Chrysostom, these aspects of his commentary demonstrate a more careful hermeneutic, if only by degree, according to the typological intent of the narrative. Calvin recognizes the principle that, as Paul writes to the Corinthians, "These things happened to them by way of example and were written down for our instruction" (1 Cor 10:11; cf. Rom 15:4). On the other hand, Calvin's typology is direct—that is, directly from Isaac to the church—rather than progressive, and his mirror analogy indicates a retrospective interpretation rather than a prospective one. These two concepts are complementary: it is easy for Christian readers to make connections between Old Testament figures and events and the church without proper attention to the breadth of revelation in between. Most importantly, perhaps, Calvin bypasses Jesus himself as the culmination of the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16–18) and proceeds directly to the church.[120]

Second, Calvin's translation of Genesis 18:12 reads, "After we are grown old, shall we give ourselves up to lust?"[121] While he does not comment on this verse further, his choice of "lust" is informative and gives further, historical weight to the common

[118] Caneday, "Biblical Types," 147.

[119] Calvin, *Genesis*, 537.

[120] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 133. Their proposal is a key methodological foundation for this dissertation.

[121] Calvin, *Genesis*, 474.

notion of sexual pleasure assigned to the verse in modern translations. Calvin translated the Latin word *voluptati* as "lust" rather than the broader term "pleasure."[122] Lacking further comment, it is difficult to say with certainty that Calvin intentionally added the sexual connotation in his interpretation. Perhaps Calvin was drawing attention to the necessity of intimacy between Abraham and Sarah to realize YHWH's promise and the likelihood that they had not experienced such intimacy for some time due to their age. Either way, Calvin's translation lacks awareness of the context regarding the promise of conception as the referent in Sarah's statement, and his attention to the Latin text rather than the Hebrew eliminates any possibility of recognizing a possible wordplay on the part of the author.

Modern Jewish interpretation. Nahum M. Sarna's commentary on Genesis from the Jewish Publication Society will serve as a representative example of modern Jewish interpretation of the Abraham narrative.[123] Sarna reads the text closely and makes many cogent and helpful insights. He argues that Sarah's barrenness refers to childlessness rather than infertility.[124] Lacking modern medicinal advancements, barrenness in the ancient world would be a deduction based on the visible evidence of childlessness rather than a causative condition. For Sarna, the narrative function of Sarah's barrenness and Isaac's birth is to highlight the striking contrast between the impending divine promises

[122] Calvin's translation is faithful to the Latin except *voluptati* means "pleasure" rather than strictly "lust." In translating "lust," Calvin appears to import the ideas of desire and of sensuality both of which are not apparent in the immediate context.

[123] For another modern Jewish source see Richard Elliott Friedman, *Commentary on the Torah with a New English Translation* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001). He does not comment substantively on Isaac's birth or on the meaning of Gen 18:12. As a commentator, Friedman operates based on source-critical presuppositions such that the post-exilic Deuteronomistic and Priestly sources were shaped by the experience of exile. Thus, the final form of the Pentateuch was shaped by the exile. See also Richard Elliott Friedman, *The Exile and Biblical Narrative: The Formation of the Deuteronomistic and Priestly Works*, Harvard Semitic Monographs 22 (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1981). For a collection of essays in the opposite hermeneutical direction, interpreting the exile of Judah in various modern contexts, see Brad E. Kelle, Frank Ritchel Ames, and Jacob L. Wright, eds., *Interpreting Exile: Displacement and Deportation in Biblical and Modern Contexts* (Atlanta: SBL, 2011).

[124] Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: JPS, 1989), 87.

to Abraham of abundant prosperity and the harsh and prolonged reality that tries his faith which is only terminated by a deliberate act of divine providence.[125] Sarna makes no comments indicating a metaphorical or symbolic intention in the narrative at any level.

Regarding Genesis 18:12, Sarna argues that the word typically translated "pleasure" (עֶדְנָה) is now known to mean "abundant moisture."[126] He does not offer any sources or further information to support this claim, so it is difficult to accept his assertion of such a shift in meaning. He further argues that the word is an exact antonym of "withered" but he does not provide the Hebrew word, or words, that he has in mind.[127] Sarna's claim coheres well with my argument concerning the meaning of Sarah's thought, but my approach is literary rather than purely lexical. Sarna's argument reveals, however, an implicit connection in his interpretation between Sarah's perception of what conception would mean to her—abundant moisture—and the conditions in the garden which YHWH planted in Eden—well-watered. Whether or not this implication is based on an etymological similarity between "pleasure" (עֶדְנָה) and "Eden" (עֵדֶן) is unclear.

Modern evangelical interpretation. The literature published on Genesis in the past one hundred years, commentaries and otherwise, is vast. My goal is to summarize prominent interpretations of the Abraham narrative and the scholars who hold to them. First, regarding the birth of Isaac, three major viewpoints are expressed by contemporary interpreters. George W. Coats argues that the narration of Isaac's birth in Genesis 21 is a mere "birth report."[128] By this he means that the text is background information for the author's actual main point, that being the Sarah-Hagar crisis and its resolution. While the

[125] Sarna, *Genesis*, 87.

[126] Sarna, *Genesis*, 130.

[127] Sarna, *Genesis*, 130. Hebrew words that mean "withered" include the adjective יָבֵשׁ (59 occurrences of the associated verbal root, first in Gen 8:7; 14 describing the waters drying up following the flood) and the verbal root צָנַם (Gen 41:23, a *hapax legomenon*).

[128] George W. Coats, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, FOTL 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 153.

conflict between Sarah and Hagar is certainly important given Paul's interpretation in Galatians 4, backgrounding Isaac's birth seems to be an overreaction.

The next interpretation of Isaac's birth is more aligned with the thrust of the book of Genesis—promise and fulfillment. Several scholars posit that the purpose of the reversal of Sarah's barrenness in the birth of Isaac is to demonstrate YHWH's faithfulness to keep his word even despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Gerhard von Rad, for instance, comments that the significance of Isaac's birth in Genesis 21 is informed by the context of YHWH's promises in Genesis 12, 15, 17, and 18.[129] Likewise, James McKeown argues regarding the introduction of Terah's family in Genesis 11: "The most significant biographical detail in this section is the statement that Sarai, Abram's wife, is barren (11:30). This barrenness is the backdrop against which all the promises of a multitude of seed are made to Abraham."[130] These commentators surely highlight an important significance of the Abraham narrative, but they fail to take the next interpretive step by considering this significance—via biblical-theological exegesis—in the context of the book of Genesis, the Pentateuch, or the Old Testament.

Finally, some commentators assign metaphorical significance to Isaac's birth. One of the earliest contemporary scholars to do so was Walter Brueggemann. He comments,

> Barrenness is the way of human history. It is an effective metaphor for hopelessness. There is no foreseeable future. There is no human power to invent a future. But barrenness is not only the condition of hopeless humanity. The marvel of biblical faith is that barrenness is the arena of God's life-giving action. . . . A proper hearing of the Abraham-Sarah texts depends upon the vitality of the metaphor of barrenness. It announces that this family begins its life in a situation of irreparable hopelessness.[131]

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[129] Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 231.

[130] James McKeown, *Genesis*, THOTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 73. See also Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis*, NCBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2009), 128.

[131] Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 116–17. See also Walter Brueggemann, "Impossibility and Epistemology in the Faith Tradition of Abraham and Sarah," *Zeitschrift Für Die Alttestestamentliche Wissenschaft* 94 (1982): 618.

For Brueggemann, barrenness is a metaphor for the hopeless state of fallen humanity and so, by implication, Isaac's birth is the reversal of hopelessness. Thus, the people of YHWH have cause for hope: YHWH will assure a future where there is none.

Brueggemann takes the metaphor a step further, writing,

> The son comes from the couple who is "as good as dead." There was in them no reason for hope. Kerygmatic faith rests on the candid affirmation that human reality does have within it ground for hope. That is why Paul (Rom 4:17) must link the birth of Isaac to (a) the creation of the world ex nihilo and (b) the resurrection of the dead . . . the peculiar power of God to evoke new life by his graciousness, not out of a "life-potential," but in a situation where there is nothing on which to base hope.[132]

Here Brueggemann connects the hope amidst hopelessness that Abraham and Sarah experienced with resurrection from death in agreement with the basic assertion of my thesis. And further, "Isaac is the end of every exile in the kingdom of necessity."[133] Brueggemann is worth quoting at length here because he makes the same threefold connection that I will argue for in this dissertation: birth from barrenness as a metaphor of restoration from exile and resurrection from death. He does so, however, without recourse to typology, inner-biblical interpretation and progressive revelation, or any sound hermeneutical basis at all. Instead, his comments, while insightful and, I would argue, accurate, appear to be more of a synchronic, theological interpretation of the Abraham narrative in light of New Testament revelation.

R. R. Reno also offers a metaphorical interpretation in the Genesis volume of the Brazos Theological Commentary on the Bible. Like Brueggemann he makes thematic connections between barrenness, exile, and death on the one hand and birth, restoration, and life on the other:

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[132] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 181–82.

[133] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 182. See also Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament, 4th ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917), 227. Gunkel observes a cause-effect connection in Ps 126:1–2 between "laughter" (שְׂחוֹק) and "restoring fortune" (בְּשׁוּב יְהוָה אֶת־שִׁיבַת צִיּוֹן) which is a common phrase denoting restoration from exile in Jeremiah's prophecy (Jer 29:14; 30:3; 33:7, 11, 26). Thus, Gunkel tentatively—because "laughter" in Psalm 126 is not the same expression as in Genesis in the context of Isaac's birth (צְחֹק)—connects the birth of Isaac with restoration from exile.

> The sometimes faithless and always fickle people of Israel in the wilderness, the idolatrous nation driven into exile, the restored temple overrun by moneychangers, the dead man Jesus on the cross . . . their unexpected spiritual fertility is prefigured in Sarah's pregnancy. . . . God gives life where only death seems to reign: first in the womb of Sarah, later in the history of the people of Israel, and most fully and literally in the death and resurrection of Christ.[134]

As a practitioner of TIS, Reno's interpretation is theologically sound, but it is *theological* rather than exegetical. While I agree with his sentiments, I will attempt to demonstrate that not only is there a sound, exegetical basis upon which to base such connections, but also that it is necessary to do so to stay anchored to authorial intent—and thus, the truth YHWH is communicating—rather than one's own thoughts about what is written.

Finally, and most recently, Kathleen M. O'Connor also proposes a metaphorical interpretation of Isaac's birth which demonstrates that "God brings life out of death."[135] "The literal story of barren ancestors bears metaphoric meanings. It asserts that God brings life from sterility, lifelessness, and death and creates out of that wild and hopeless place a life-giving future beyond human expectation. New life in Genesis begins in barrenness."[136] Echoes of Brueggemann and Reno are evident, but O'Connor incorporates one aspect of TIS in a way that others do not, namely, the role of the believing reader in interpretation. She assumes a post-exilic date for the composition of Genesis and therefore her conclusions are driven by speculative developments in significance over time:

> Rather than understanding Genesis as dictated directly to one writer such as Moses or Elijah, the theory of many sources points to the role of the faith community in receiving and expressing divine revelation. . . . Rather than limiting divine power, the theological process recognizes that God reveals the divine self in the midst of the created world and of human history and culture. God speaks to the people in the context of their lives.[137]

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[134] R. R. Reno, *Genesis*, BTCB (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010), 190.

[135] Kathleen M. O'Connor, *Genesis 1–25A*, Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2018), 184. For a "spiritual" interpretation of birth from barrenness as life from death, see Hemchand Gossai, *Barrenness and Blessing: Abraham, Sarah, and the Journey of Faith* (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2010).

[136] O'Connor, *Genesis 1–25A*, 184.

[137] O'Connor, *Genesis 1–25A*, 17. O'Connor expresses agreement with the presuppositions of critical source analysis without affirming the specific speculations of the Documentary Hypothesis. See O'Connor, *Genesis 1–25A*, 6–7. This is similar to von Rad's identification of Genesis as a narrative "saga,"

Thus, the metaphorical function of birth from barrenness in Genesis is the function of later compilers arranging sources in such a way to make them applicable to their contemporary audience. While this interpretive move may seem to be respectful of authorial intent—that of the post-exilic compiler—it is based on speculation, which controls interpretation rather than arriving at such a metaphorical understanding through exegesis of the final form of the text. In sum, my thesis most coheres with scholars who interpret the Abraham narrative metaphorically. The methodology by which we arrive at the same conclusions, however, is vastly different as I will seek to demonstrate throughout this dissertation.

Regarding the meaning of Genesis 18:12, there are two main views among scholars. First and most prominent is the position that Sarah has in mind sexual pleasure when YHWH promises conception. The consensus view of Hebrew lexicons is that the Hebrew term typically translated "pleasure" (עֶדְנָה) means sexual pleasure.[138] The UBS Handbook on Genesis follows suit, arguing that the term refers to "sensual pleasure" and further, "In some translations, a literal rendering of pleasure or a vague avoidance of its sexual reference leads the reader to understand the meaning as the pleasure of having a child, which is not what the text says."[139] Von Rad contends the same, and although he acknowledges that YHWH does not refer to pleasure in his restatement of Sarah's thought, he argues that this deletion was a "special nicety" by the narrator and thus has no exegetical significance.[140]

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the result of the conflagration of various traditions with varied histories over time which significantly effects meaning. See von Rad, *Genesis*, 32–38. See also Coats, *Genesis*, 5.

[138] See n110 of this chap. See also James D. Price, who lists *'ednâ* as a derivative of *'ēden* and defines it as "delight, pleasure." In the NIV translation he adds "[conjugal]" as an adjective modifying "this pleasure." James D. Price, "6357 עדן," in VanGemeren, *NIDOTTE*, 3:330.

[139] William D. Reyburn and Euan McG. Fry, *A Handbook on Genesis*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1997), 395.

[140] Von Rad, *Genesis*, 207. See also Clyde T. Francisco, "Genesis," in *BBC*, vol. 1, rev. ed., ed. Clifton J. Allen et al. (Nashville: Broadman, 1973), 157.

On the other hand, Victor P. Hamilton acknowledges the possibility of a different meaning in his commentary on Genesis. At the outset of his interpretation, and based on the Brown, Driver, and Briggs entry for "pleasure" (עֶדְנָה), he argues for a "strong connotation of sensual and sexual pleasure."[141] In the same footnote, however, Hamilton also asserts that Sarah's expression is "to be associated with the primeval garden, Eden, 'the garden of delight.'"[142] Furthermore, *contra* von Rad, he argues that YHWH's interpretive quotation of Sarah's thought in Genesis 18:13 indicates that the contextual meaning of "pleasure" is conception and birth.[143] Hamilton's willingness to subject the lexicons to reexamination on the basis of the literary context of Genesis 18 provides an opportunity for my thesis and my extended argument concerning Moses's presentation of Sarah's meaning in Genesis 18:12.

In conclusion, while my thesis is not unprecedented among contemporary scholarship on the book of Genesis, it is certainly in the minority. Moreover, hermeneutical methodology separates my thesis from the arguments of those with whom I agree regarding both the significance of birth from barrenness in Genesis and the meaning of Genesis 18:12. Through the course of this dissertation I hope to demonstrate the validity of my thesis and the interpretations of several contemporary scholars on the basis of sound, exegetical hermeneutics as I outlined previously.

Preview of Chiastic Argument

I intend to demonstrate my thesis in the following six chapters. I purposefully arranged the content of this dissertation in a concentric structure for two reasons: (1) to demonstrate a foundational presupposition of this study, namely, that literary form conveys

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[141] Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 5n13.

[142] Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 5n13. Both Price and Cornelius associate the verbal root *ʿdn* and its derivative words, including *ʿēden*, with "delight" and "pleasure." See *NIDOTTE*, 329–32.

[143] Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 13.

meaning, and (2) to emphasize chapter 4 as the center and heart of my argument. The surrounding chapters serve to both complement each other and to establish the main thesis of this dissertation: a typological understanding of Isaac's birth as restoration to Eden and, thus, resurrection from death.

In chapter 2, I will argue for a particular chiastic literary structure of Genesis 2:4–3:24. I say "particular" because my proposal is one of many—chiastic and otherwise—that have been offered by scholars and which have influenced my thinking to varying degrees. Based on my proposal, I will argue that Moses defines death as exile from YHWH's presence and the tree of life and, by implication, that resurrection—return to life from death—consists in returning to Eden. I will support my argument by appealing to the correspondence between Genesis and Deuteronomy apparent in the broad, concentric literary structure of the Pentateuch.[144] The purpose of this chapter will be to demonstrate that Moses inaugurated resurrection-from-death typology as exile and return early in his composition and associated return to life in Eden with resurrection from death.

In chapter 3, I will demonstrate how throughout Genesis Moses equates birth from a barren womb with resurrection from death. I will consider the validity of this analogy in the stories of Abimelech (Gen 20), Rebekah (Gen 25), Rachel (Gen 30), and in Jacob's prophecy concerning Joseph (Gen 49:25). The purpose of this chapter will be to establish the typological theme of birth from barrenness in Genesis as a literary, procreational manifestation of Moses's resurrection-from-death typology in the Eden narrative—and specifically in the lineage of promise—as a basis for the next chapter.

In chapter 4, I will focus on the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24) and the response of barren Sarah to YHWH's promise that she will bear a son. I will seek to establish Sarah as a typological Eve experiencing "pain in childbirth" (Gen 3:16) through barrenness (Gen 11:30). Then, I will argue based on the work of Jon D. Levenson that for Sarah her barrenness is equivalent to death—not just for her family but for YHWH's

[144] See Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?*, 23–38.

promise to Abraham as well, for how can a nonexistent seed inherit the land of promise (Gen 12:7)?[145] Moses's broader interpretive perspective on these events is evident in his lexical and syntactical choices (micro-level) and the literary relationship between Sarah and Lot's wife (macro-level) impinges on the traditional meaning of Sarah's response to YHWH's promise: "After I am worn out, and my lord is old, shall I have *pleasure* (עֶדְנָה)?" (Gen 18:12 ESV).[146] Thus, I will argue on the basis of paronomasia for a definition of *'ednâ* as "fertility," for Moses presents Sarah as understanding that for life to come forth from her barren womb is akin to restoration to fertility from desolation, to resurrection from death, to a return to Eden (עֵדֶן), the tree of life, and the life-giving presence of YHWH.

In chapter 5, complementary to chapter 3, I will argue that the literary structure of Genesis 23–25 emphasizes that in the book of Genesis progeny is equivalent to resurrection. For instance, each generation in Adam's genealogy (Gen 5) dies,[147] but life continues in the next generation. The family of Abraham—and YHWH's promise to him—will not die in the deaths of Sarah and himself; Isaac is born, and his wife Rebekah will "become thousands of ten thousands" (Gen 24:60). Therefore, procreation serves as the mechanism for the perpetuation of YHWH's promise of a seed who will crush the serpent and his works (Gen 3:15–16). Chapters 3 and 5 together constitute J. Hamilton's "micro-level" (chap. 3) and "macro-level" (chap. 5) criteria for determining authorial intent and for observing resurrection typology in Genesis. The purpose of chapters 3 and 5 together is to *support* my thesis in chapter 4.

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[145] Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2006), 122–55.

[146] On micro-level indicators and macro-level indicators of typology, see Hamilton, *Typology,* 3–4.

[147] I am aware that Enoch does not die (Gen 5:21–24). Amidst the refrain of "and he died" throughout the passage, Enoch's apparent translation gives hope that death is not the final word for YHWH's people and that they will once again "walk with God."

In chapter 6, complementary to chapter 2, I will demonstrate that my analysis of these typological structures in Genesis and my proposal for the meaning of *'ednâ* accord with both the forerunner type established by the authors of Judges and Samuel and Isaiah's understanding of the same in Isaiah 51:1–3 (cf. Isa 54:1–3). I will also refer to numerous New Testament passages in which the inspired authors refer explicitly to Abraham's and Sarah's prospect for procreation as dead and the birth of Isaac as akin to resurrection (Rom 4; Heb 11). These later authors are not adding new meaning to the book of Genesis, but rather are reading and understanding Genesis as Moses intended. In the same way that Genesis 2–3 provides a foundation for what follows (chap. 2), so later authors rightly understand and confirm what Moses has communicated (chap. 6). The purpose of chapters 2 and 6 together is to hermeneutically *validate* my thesis in chapter 4.

In chapter 7, I will synthesize my findings and state my conclusions, revisiting the issues I raised in the introduction (chap. 1) with a specific focus on retrospective typological discernment. I will argue that biblical types are best discerned by observing their development prospectively, from the Pentateuch forward in the canon, according to authorial intent and in line with the progression of revelation forward through both time and the canon. My hope is that my demonstration of this methodology throughout this dissertation buoys this assertion.

Thus, my argument will be structured according to the chiastic outline below. My hope is that this project demonstrates the function of macro-chiasm in emphasizing the main point and in communicating intended meaning through complementary pairs. Furthermore, I hope that my work demonstrates a sound hermeneutical basis for typology in the book of Genesis, the Pentateuch, and the Bible, namely, inner-biblical interpretation according to authorial intent.

A. Introduction: Typology & Inner-Biblical Interpretation

B. Foundations: Death and Resurrection Typology According to Moses

C. Micro-Level Indicators: Barrenness as Death in Genesis

X. The Birth of Isaac as Resurrection from Death

C'. Macro-Level Indicators: Progeny as Resurrection in Genesis

B'. Implications: Death and Resurrection Typology According to the Prophets

A'. Conclusion: Typology & Inner-Biblical Interpretation

CHAPTER 2

DEATH AND RESURRECTION TYPOLOGY: FOUNDATIONS IN THE PENTATEUCH

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the inauguration of author-intended death and resurrection typology in the Eden narrative (Gen 2:4–3:24) via exegetical and literary analysis.[1] I will argue that Moses equates death with exile in the Eden narrative, and thus, anticipation of return to Eden and access to the tree of life would be restoration from exile and, likewise, resurrection from death. Furthermore, I will argue that this metaphorical death and resurrection is typological in the context of the Pentateuch and the certainty of Israel's future exile and return in Deuteronomy. The expulsion of the first humans from the garden is paradigmatic for the exile of the Israelites from the promised land, so Moses's promise of future restoration represents restored access to what was lost in paradise: the tree of life and YHWH's unhindered presence. This typological anticipation of return to life in Eden from the death of exile is a literary foundation upon which my thesis concerning Isaac's birth from barrenness stands. Thus, the content of this chapter *validates* my thesis and main argument in chapter 4 apropos the meaning of Isaac's birth in Genesis.

Any argument regarding death and resurrection in the Eden narrative necessarily begins with the meaning of "you will surely die" (Gen 2:17). Therefore, this chapter opens with a brief overview of the main interpretive views of this verse. Second, I will offer an exegetical and literary analysis of the Eden narrative to substantiate my proposal that death in the Eden narrative—and in the Pentateuch—is a locative concept referring to eastward

[1] Portions of this chapter have been adapted from Thomas J. Sculthorpe, "Birth from Barrenness as Resurrection from Death: Typological Structures in Genesis," *Presbyterion* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 48–66.

exile from YHWH's presence. Third, I will substantiate my interpretation and demonstrate the typological nature of the Eden narrative through consideration of its literary position and function in the Pentateuch. Finally, I will conclude the chapter with an argument for metaphorical correspondence between anticipated return to Eden and resurrection from death that is typological in nature—that is, the Pentateuchal narrative as a whole is pessimistic regarding Israel's future and thus anticipates a seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) and a seed of Abraham (Gen 12:7; 22:17) who will overcome the death of exile and reopen Eden for YHWH's people.[2]

Summary of Interpretations of Genesis 2:17

In this section I will briefly summarize four contemporary interpretations of YHWH's threat, "you will surely die" (Gen 2:17). Robert P. Gordon represents the view that YHWH threatened the first human couple with metaphorical death. In other words, the penalty of death was realized in the drastic judgments carried out by YHWH on Adam and Eve after their disobedience.[3] YHWH's warning was a serious one, but they did not die immediately after their sin, so the humans were to suffer in such a way that their condition could be aptly described as "death."[4] This suffering included enmity with the seed of the serpent (Gen 3:15), procreational difficulty and marital conflict (Gen 3:16), agricultural difficulty (Gen 3:17–18), and the reality and unavoidability of physical death (Gen 3:19).[5]

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[2] The identity of this seed according to Moses is a royal, priestly, future descendant of Judah through whom the blessing of Joseph will be realized. Isaac, by way of his miraculous birth, is an anticipatory installment in the very lineage through which this seed will come.

[3] Robert P. Gordon, "The Ethics of Eden: Truth-Telling in Genesis 2–3," in *Ethical and Unethical in the Old Testament: God and Humans in Dialogue,* ed. Katharine J. Dell, LHOT 528 (New York: T & T Clark, 2010), 11–33.

[4] Gordon, "The Ethics of Eden," 19–22.

[5] James M. Hamilton Jr. lists "three categories of difficulties" in Gen 3:14–19: (1) enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, (2) reproductive pain and conflict between male and female, and (3) the curse on the ground. James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promised-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 41. Kenneth A. Mathews organizes them

Ellen A. Robbins has argued that the result of Adam's sin was the loss of potential immortality, a "middle ground" between the two options of original mortality and original immortality.[6] She proposes that the threatened death penalty is not actually carried out, but this does not make it an empty threat; rather, it results in the lost possibility of avoiding death by regularly partaking of the tree of life.[7] Simply put, the first human couple did not immediately die, but lacking access to the tree of life, their eventual death was certain.

Peter Machinist represents the popular view that death in Eden has to do with the loss of full immortality. He argues that the man and woman were never barred from eating of the tree of life; thus, it is reasonable to expect that they did so and thus had attained immortality prior to sinning.[8] He also argues that God's judgment on Adam that he would return to the dust from which he was formed (Gen 3:19) is a direct result of his disobedience rather than merely an indication of his original mortality and the culmination

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according to divine penalties and consequences levied against the serpent, the woman, and the man. Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, NAC, vol. 1A (Nashville: B & H, 1996), 243

[6] Ellen A. Robbins, *The Storyteller and the Garden of Eden* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 103. See also Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2006), 32; and James Barr, *The Garden of Eden and the Hope of Immortality* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), ix, 4. "Original mortality" means the first humans were mortal prior to their sin while "original immortality" means that in their original, created state they were unable to die. On this view, see also Clyde T. Francisco, "Genesis," in *BBC*, vol. 1 rev. ed., ed. Clifton J. Allen et al. (Nashville: Broadman, 1973), 131; and Richard Elliott Friedman, *Commentary on the Torah with a New English Translation* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001), 19.

[7] Robbins, *The Storyteller and the Garden of Eden*, 96, 103; cf. Mark S. Smith, *The Genesis of Good and Evil: The Fall(out) and Original Sin in the Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2019), 41, 59, 62, 65–66. Smith argues that immortality is a theoretical possibility for humanity before the Fall, and that afterwards they lose any potential for it so that physical death becomes an inescapable reality. Smith also leaves some room for metaphorical death in observing the drastically changed conditions of the couple after the fall, but he emphasizes that the culmination of their difficulties remains the certainty of death. While I affirm the connection these scholars make between the tree of life and immortality, I do not agree that YHWH threatened physical death and then did not carry it out.

[8] Peter Machinist, "How Gods Die, Biblically and Otherwise: A Problem of Cosmic Restructuring," in *Reconsidering the Concept of Revolutionary Monotheism*, ed. Beate Pongratz-Leisten (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 214; cf. Beate Ego, "Das Böse und der Tod in der Paradieserzählung: Biblische und Auslegungs- Geschichtliche Aspekte," in *Evil and Death: Conceptions of the Human in Biblical, Early Jewish, Early Christian, Greco-Roman and Egyptian Literature*, DCLS 18 (Berlin, Germany: de Gruyter, 2015), 3–20.

of his suffering.[9] Thus, the first humans had become immortal, but then returned to mortality after the fall.

Finally, Bruce Wells has published a recent article in defense of the view that the referent in Genesis 2:17 is physical death and that YHWH's statement to the couple is an example of a conditional verdict.[10] He finds ample parallels for such conditional verdicts from various time periods in Ancient Near Eastern history as well as in the Hebrew Bible.[11] Wells identifies twenty texts in the Old Testament in which the *Qal* infinitive absolute of the root "to die" (מות) is paired with the *Qal* imperfect form of the same root, and in each case he argues that the referent appears to be physical death, and even more specifically premature death in most cases.[12] A few of these cases also demonstrate that the death penalty can be avoided (1 Sam 14; 2 Sam 12).[13] Wells concludes that YHWH intended physical death to be the penalty for disobedience but that he "decided not to inflict the harshest penalty and chose instead to hand down a set of less severe punishments."[14]

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[9] Machinist, "How Gods Die, Biblically and Otherwise," 214.

[10] Bruce Wells, "Death in the Garden of Eden," *JBL* 139, no. 4 (2020): 639–60. David W. Cotter also argues for physical death without the necessity of immediacy. David W. Cotter, *Genesis*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2003), 31n8.

[11] Wells, "Death in the Garden of Eden," 646–50. Biblical examples include Exod 10:28 and 1 Kgs 2:36–37. The latter is a particularly apt parallel as the Hebrew phrase "in the day" (בְּיוֹם) is paired with the phrase "you will surely die" (מוֹת תָּמוּת) just as in Gen 2:17. In this case Shimei is not executed immediately but only after Solomon later learns of his offense. However, I will argue that the literary emphasis on disinheritance from the land in Gen 2–3 informs the meaning of Gen 2:17 much more so than a parallel with a later text. In fact, it is interesting that Solomon's conditional verdict involves crossing the Jordan River—that is, exiting Canaan to the east—just as Adam and Eve did. I would argue that 1 Kgs 2 is an instance of inner-biblical interpretation of Gen 2–3 that acknowledges the locative nature of life and death in Scripture. See my argument in chap. 1 regarding the proper direction to read and interpret instances of inner-biblical interpretation.

[12] Wells, "Death in the Garden of Eden," 652–53.

[13] Wells, "Death in the Garden of Eden," 654.

[14] Wells, "Death in the Garden of Eden," 657. Here Wells moves toward Gordon as summarized previously: the judgments levelled against Adam and Eve were not properly death but death-like. Wells does not, however, adopt a fully metaphorical view of "death." See also Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 95–96.

These proposals all offer penetrating insight into the passage and provide meaningful observations, especially the metaphorical death and the loss of potential immortality interpretations. They all fail, however, to allow the author of Genesis to direct readers to his intended meaning of life and death through literary means, and they fail to embrace the categories in which the Bible presents the concepts of life and death, namely, that life and death are *locations* with attendant consequences. Regarding literary analysis specifically, these scholars fail to give any meaningful attention to the literary structure of the passage and fail to recognize the significance of literary structure as a vehicle for meaning.[15] Those who acknowledge the literary unity of Genesis 2–3 have offered various proposals regarding the literary structure of the passage, and they all have their merits.[16] In the following section I will propose, based on a chiastic literary structure of Genesis 2–3, that YHWH's death sentence refers to expulsion from Eden, that is, from

[15] Wayne Brouwer, "Understanding Chiasm and Assessing Macro-Chiasm as a Tool of Biblical Interpretation," *CTJ* 53, no. 1 (2018): 99–127; Yehuda T. Radday, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," in *Chaismus in Antiquity: Structures, Analyses, Exegesis*, ed. John W. Welch (Hildesheim, Germany: Gerstenberg, 1981), 50–117. See also L. Michael Morales, who argues that "form conveys meaning," or, specifically, by examining the highest macrostructural level of the Pentateuch, one is able to sound out the deepest level—the bedrock—of its meaning. L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord? A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*, NSBT 37 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 23. Cotter opposes such notions, instead arguing that "these structures are generally speaking more in the exegete than in the text . . . in approaching a text, the exegete chooses to organize it somehow." Cotter, *Genesis*, xxix. For Cotter, literary structures are inherently subjective, a product of reader response. However, he goes on to align his commentary on Gen 2:4–3:24 with a literary structure like the one that I argue for below (citing Walsh) because it seems to him to be the best proposal. In doing so he exemplifies the subjectivity he critiques. For an argument tying meaning in Genesis to "composite artistry," or source-critical reading, as opposed to Mosaic authorship, see Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic, 2011), 175–83.

[16] See, for instance, scene-based proposals in Tryggve N. D. Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative: A Literary and Religio-Historical Study of Genesis 2–3* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 28; or Jerome T. Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24: A Synchronic Approach," *JBL* 92, no. 2 (1977): 161–77. Alan John Hauser argues for a two-dimensional thematic integration of the narrative around intimacy (Gen 2) and alienation (Gen 3) which, while differing in language, is similar to my own analysis. Alan John Hauser, "Genesis 2–3: The Theme of Intimacy and Alienation," in *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature*, ed. David J. A. Clines, David M. Gunn and Alan J. Hauser, JSOTSup 19 (Sheffield, England: JSOT, 1982), 20–36. Morales agrees, arguing, "The path of exile through Eden's gates was, therefore, a path from life to death, from light to darkness, from harmony to dysfunction and strife, from health to sickness, from security to violence, from compassion to inhumanity, from wholeness to brokenness, from peace with God to enmity—from a life of *friendship* with God to *alienation*." Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 9, emphasis added.

YHWH's life-giving presence and from access to the tree of life. In essence, Moses inaugurates life and death as locative concepts in Genesis which frame the Pentateuch with Israel's future exile and restoration in Deuteronomy. This exile implies the possibility—even the anticipation—of return.[17] Then, based on various exegetical implications in the passage I will argue that the hope for return is tied to the promised seed, will be perpetuated through procreation, and ultimately points to resurrection—reversal of exile—as the means of restoration, that is, victory over sin and death.

The Literary Structure of the Eden Narrative

According to the Eden narrative (Gen 2:4–3:24), the Lord God put the man whom he formed from the dust of the ground into the garden that he planted in Eden twice: "Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he *put* (וַיָּשֶׂם) the man whom he had formed" (v. 8 ESV), and, "The Lord God took the man and *put* him (וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ) in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it" (v. 15 ESV).[18] While the ESV translators minimize what appears to be an intentional lexical variation, this peculiarity in the narrative begs the question, why does God "put" the man in the garden twice? Adherents to the Documentary Hypothesis argue that such a narrative doublet indicates later redaction of

[17] Morales argues that this idea is crucial for understanding the theology of the entire Bible: "The expulsion from the Garden of Eden means that the restoration of humanity must be in the form of an exodus back to God, a deliverance out of exile." Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, 8. See also Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 56.

[18] I am citing the ESV translation in these cases to highlight the fact that variation in the Hebrew expression is not acknowledged in modern versions. This is likely due to the LXX translation of both Hebrew verbs as "put" (ἔθετο). I will argue that there is theological significance to the variation in Hebrew which is muted by the LXX and modern versions. While I am proposing something more than mere stylistic variation—and certainly not poor redaction of two sources—I am not arguing for etymological correlations to establish meaning in the Eden narrative. Rather, the basis for my proposal that many of these peculiar expressions in Gen 2–3 are freighted with theological significance is paronomasia, or wordplay, an especially cogent tactic for a primarily aural audience. For a critique of two-source redaction criticism of the Eden narrative, see Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 51–52. On wordplay as an intentional feature of the biblical text, see Ethan Jones, "Sound and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible: Implications for Exegesis," *JNSL* 47, no. 1 (2021): 19–36; L. J. de Regt, "Wordplay in the OT," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. K. D. Sakenfield (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 898–900; E. L. Greenstein, "Wordplay, Hebrew," in *ABD*, 968–71; and Isaac Kalimi, *Metathesis in the Hebrew Bible: Wordplay as a Literary and Exegetical Device* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2018).

two separate sources, but the current trend in Old Testament scholarship is to read passages such as the Eden narrative as literary wholes.[19] According to the latter, YHWH's double placement of the man in the garden is intentional and purposeful.[20]

YHWH God likewise expels the man and his wife from the garden twice at the conclusion of the Eden Narrative: "Then YHWH God *sent him out* (וַיְשַׁלְּחֵהוּ) from the garden in Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken" (Gen 3:23), and, "So he *drove out* (וַיְגָרֶשׁ) the man, and at the eastern side of the garden in Eden he placed the cherubim and the flame of the sword which turns every which way to guard the way to the tree of life" (Gen 3:24). These two doublets—placement and expulsion—frame the Eden narrative's concentric literary structure as depicted below.[21] In the rest of this section I will offer textual evidence for this proposed literary structure.

A. Double placement of the man in the garden (2:4b–17)

B. Creation of the animals and the woman (2:18–25)

C. Dialogue: the snake and the woman (3:1–5)

X. Sin (3:6–7)

C'. Dialogue: God, the man, and the woman (3:8–13)

[19] For a history of interpretation of the Eden narrative from the early church to the twentieth century, see Joseph Feldmann, *Paradies und Sündenfall: Der Sinn der biblischen Erzählung nach der Auffassung der Exegese und unter Berücksichtigung der Ausserbiblischen Überlieferungen*, Alttestamentliche Abhandlungen 4 (Münster, Germany: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1913), 501–605.

[20] Victor P. Hamilton proposes that the reason for the repetition is to provide specific information regarding the man's vocation in the garden. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 171. Hamilton's argument is in keeping with the literary structure of Gen 2–3 proposed by Stephen Kempf based on discourse analysis. See Stephen W. Kempf, "A Discourse Analysis of Genesis 2:4B–3:24 with Implications for Interpretation and Bible Translation" (PhD diss., Université Laval, Québec, 1995).

[21] I have developed and adapted my proposal based on similar structures in Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 184, Gordon J. Wenham, *Rethinking Genesis 1–11: Gateway to the Bible,* Didsbury Lecture Series 2013 (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015), 21, and Radday, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," 85. See also Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24," 165, who proposes the same concentric structure for the passage I am advocating for here, although on different terms and with different emphases. While there are variations in structural proposals, the consensus is that the Eden narrative is a highly structured work of literary genius.

B'. Disruption of creation relationships (3:14–21)

A'. Double exile of the man and woman from the garden (3:22–24)

These Are the Generations

Genesis 2:4 contains the first of ten *tôlĕdôt* (תּוֹלְדוֹת) headings which serve as literary markers introducing the narratives that follow.[22] In this instance, "the generations of the heavens and the earth" introduces the story of what became of the earth and the heavens, the totality of YHWH's very good creation (Gen 1:1–2:3).[23] The second half of verse 4 is a temporal clause providing the initial setting for the events that follow: "in the day YHWH God made the earth and heavens" (Gen 2:4b). This statement also forms a chiastic *inclusio* with the first half of the verse with "the heavens and the earth" (הַשָּׁמַיִם וְהָאָרֶץ) matching and inverting "the earth and heavens" (אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם).[24] Thus, verse 4, while not properly part of the narrative that follows due to its function as a heading, also introduces the timing of the series of "conjoined circumstantial clauses" that follows in verses 5–6.[25]

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[22] According to Samuel Emadi, the *tôlĕdôt* headings "provide a reading strategy for [Genesis] by signaling major plot developments while simultaneously tracing the development of the singular theme of redemption through the seed of the woman." Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022), 31. On the distinction between asyndetic and *waw*-initial *tôlĕdôt* and the covenantal function of the former, see Matthew A. Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the 'toledot' Formula*, LHOT 551 (New York: T & T Clark, 2011); and Jason S. DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis," *JETS* 56, no. 2 (June 2013): 219–47.

[23] While disagreement remains concerning whether the *tôlĕdôt* formula introduces a new section or concludes the former, I am following Mathews, who argues, "The *tôlĕdôt* phrase in Genesis serves as a linking device that ties together the former and the following units by echoing from the preceding material a person's name or literary motif and at the same time anticipating the focal subject of the next." Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 33–34. See also Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 37, and DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 222–25. For an argument in favor of reading Gen 2:4 as the conclusion to the creation account, see James McKeown, *Genesis*, THOTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 29.

[24] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 55; Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 191.

[25] Wenham describes the content of vv. 5–6 as "four conjoined circumstantial clauses." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 57, The *wayyiqtol* verb that begins v. 7—"And YHWH God formed" (וַיִּיצֶר)—is the beginning of the present-time narrative sequence; on this function of the *wayyiqtol* in biblical Hebrew, see Elizabeth Robar, *The Verb and the Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach*, SSLL 78 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 92–93; and Matthew H. Patton and Frederic Clarke Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew*

The next *tôlĕdôt* heading in Genesis 5:1 is structured similarly. The heading reads, "This is the book of the generations of man," which is followed by a similar temporal clause which states, "in the day when God created man." In both Genesis 2:4 and 5:1 the text contains the word בְּיוֹם, "in the day," followed by an infinitive construct. In this case, the narrative scope has narrowed to the lineage of the first man.[26] As in Genesis 2:5–6, the heading and temporal clause in Genesis 5:1 is followed by a series of two disjunctive, background clauses—and in this case, unlike Genesis 2:5–6, two *wayyiqtol* clauses follow—providing background information for the start of the narrative in verse 3 with, "Now the man was 130 years old."[27] Another *inclusio* brackets this introduction and sets it apart from the narrative that follows: immediately after the heading in verse 1 the text reads, "in the day when God created man" (בְּיוֹם בְּרֹא אֱלֹהִים אָדָם), and verse 2 concludes, "and [God] called their name Man in the day when they were created" (וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם אָדָם בְּיוֹם הִבָּרְאָם).[28] Therefore, while the similarities between the two passages are not exact, the best way to understand the function of Genesis 2:4 is a proper

Discourse: A Guide to Working with Hebrew Prose and Poetry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 70. On "preposing," or word order shifts in which the verb follows the subject, object, or adverbial modifiers, as a discourse marker indicating background information, see Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 94–95; and Stephen G. Dempster, "Linguistic Features of Hebrew Narrative: A Discourse Analysis of Narrative from the Classical Period" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1985), 65.

[26] On the narrowing function of the *tôlĕdôt* headings and their genealogical emphasis, DeRouchie argues, "The *toledot* are transitional headings that progressively direct the reader's focus from progenitor to progeny and narrow the reader's focus from all the world to Israel." DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 225. See also Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 87–95.

[27] In this case, the *wayyiqtol* verbs identify subsequent, sequential events to YHWH"s creative act. YHWH created them (בָּרָאָם) male and female, then he blessed them (וַיְבָרֶךְ), and then he called (וַיִּקְרָא) their name man. On this sequential, or "next event," function of the *wayyiqtol*, see Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 68.

[28] The content of Gen 5:1–2 is chiastically arranged similar to that of Gen 2:4; see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 126. Furthermore, Gen 5:3 begins, "And it happened" (וַיְחִי), which is a "special *wayyiqtol* verb," indicating a new discourse unit when followed by a temporal clause which, in this case, is Adam's age. See Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 71. On this word identifying a "preceding temporally anchored event," see Robar, *The Verb and Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew*, 84–85. See also Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2017), 190.

heading that also introduces the timing of the events of the Eden narrative. The events of Genesis 2–3 took place when YHWH God created the heavens and the earth.

Double Placement and Double Exile

As stated previously, Genesis 2:5–6 contains a series of three main disjunctive clauses that provide background information for the beginning of the narrative with the formation of man in verse 7. This information is summarized in table 1. The two-part כִּי clause in verse 5 provides the ground for the two clauses that precede it.[29] Table 2 shows the relationship between these two grounds and their respective outcomes.

Table 1. Disjunctive clauses in Genesis 2:5–6

Verse	Hebrew Text	Translation
2:5a	וְכֹל שִׂיחַ הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִהְיֶה בָאָרֶץ	Before there was any bush of the field in the earth,
2:5b	וְכָל־עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה טֶרֶם יִצְמָח	and before any plant of the field had sprouted—
2:6	וְאֵד יַעֲלֶה מִן־הָאָרֶץ וְהִשְׁקָה אֶת־כָּל־פְּנֵי־הָאֲדָמָה	And a spring would well up from the earth and water the whole surface of the ground,

The final background clause in verse 6 describes the relatively infertile state of the creation—the ground was "watered" (וְהִשְׁקָה) only when the underground spring would well up.[30]

[29] Wenham both translates the text this way and comments on it as causation. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 44, 58,

[30] Mathews writes, "There is a subterranean source of water (v. 6), but by itself is evidently insufficient to support plant life, leading to the critical missing item—the labor of a farmer. All this prepares the reader for the principal clause in v. 7, the creation of the first man." Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 193. See also Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 59.

Table 2. Causal relationships in Genesis 2:5

Verse	Associated כִּי Clause	Hebrew Text of כִּי Clause	Translation
2:5a	2:5c	כִּי לֹא הִמְטִיר יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים עַל־הָאָרֶץ	YHWH God had not caused it to rain on the earth,
2:5b	2:5d	כִּי וְאָדָם אַיִן לַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה	and there was no man to work the ground.

Thus, the Eden narrative properly begins with the statement, "YHWH God formed the man with dust from the ground" (Gen 2:7).[31] The narrative continues in verse 8 with YHWH God planting a garden in Eden where he then "put" (וַיָּשֶׂם) the man he had formed.

Furthermore, according to the structure of verses 4b–6, when YHWH God created the earth and the heavens, there were no wild plants because there was no rain, no cultivated plants had "sprouted" (יִצְמָח) because there was no man (וְאָדָם אַיִן) to care for them, and the ground was in a state of relative infertility.[32] Then, after YHWH placed the man whom he had formed (אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר יָצָר) in the garden he had planted (Gen 2:7–8), he caused all kinds of trees to "sprout" (וַיַּצְמַח) from the ground (Gen 2:9) and a river now flowed out of Eden to "water" (לְהַשְׁקוֹת) the garden (Gen 2:10), the man's dwelling place.

The preceding analysis of verses 5–7 is important in demonstrating the correlation between the framing sections of the Eden narrative. Recognizing that Genesis 2:5–6 consists of background information for the following narrative makes the thematic parallel between man's double placement (Gen 2:8, 15) and double exile (Gen 3:23–24) apparent: both occur very close to the proper beginning and end of the narrative itself. One glaring difference is, however, the rather significant gap between YHWH's two "placing" actions (Gen 2:10–14).[33] The information in these verses detailing the division

[31] The main verb in vv. 5–7 according to Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 46.

[32] Mathews highlights several points of contact between 2:5–7 and 3:17–19 and argues on this basis that the former is best understood in light of the latter. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 194. The language of 2:5–6 anticipates what happens to the land because of Adam's sin.

[33] Gen 2:10–14 begins with the *waw*-disjunctive "And a river" (וְנָהָר) indicating a digression from the main narrative. Mathews argues that these verses give supplementary information about the verdant

of the river from Eden into four headstreams which in turn watered the four corners of the known earth further emphasizes the life-giving function of Eden: it makes its garden and then the whole earth fertile and lush.[34] Into this place of fertility YHWH God "put" (וַיָּשֶׂם) and "caused to rest" (וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ) the man whom he had formed.[35] To be in Eden is to rest—as opposed to "painful toil" (Gen 3:17)—and live.[36]

Life in Eden was not without obligation, however. In verses 16–17 YHWH God commanded the man not to eat of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." If he does, YHWH God states, "in the day you eat (בְּיוֹם אֲכָלְךָ) from it you will surely die" (Gen 2:17). The temporal clause in verse 17 forms an *inclusio* with the similar phrase in verse 2:4b,

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beauty of Eden to communicate to the reader that the habitat God has prepared is bountiful and beautiful. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 207–8.

[34] Claus Westermann argues that the fourfold river indicates the completeness of the blessing of the garden and the transmission of that blessing to the four corners of the world. Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994), 215–17.

[35] All three Hebrew lexicons identify a distinction in the *Hiphil* forms of the verb נוּחַ "to rest." The form pointed with a long prefix vowel means "cause to rest" while the form pointed with a short prefix vowel and a doubled *nun* means "place, set down." See BDB, 628; *HALOT*, 1:679; *CDCH*, 264. While I do not disagree with this distinction, I have translated the verb in Gen 2:15 "caused him to rest" based on paronomasia rather than etymology. In doing so I am attempting to acknowledge what I believe to be Moses's intent without committing the "root fallacy." On the "root fallacy," see D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 28–33. Moses employs a wordplay here involving Noah's name and rest so that when Noah's father Lamech names him as the one who will bring comfort from "painful toil" (וּמַעִצְּבוֹן) because of the "ground which YHWH cursed" (מִן־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵרְרָהּ יְהוָה)—all clear references to the judgment on the first man in Gen 3:17—the referent is Eden. To be comforted is to be restored to Edenic conditions. For more on the validity of paronomasia in the Hebrew Bible at the book level, see Jones, "Sound and Meaning," 21–23; and Kline, who argues, "The literary device known as paronomasia is pervasive in the Hebrew Bible, and it functioned as a productive compositional factor on the level of phrases, sentences, paragraphs, *and even entire books*, especially in the poetic literature, but also, as recent studies have demonstrated, *in prose*." Meredith G. Kline, *Allusive Soundplay in the Hebrew Bible* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2016), 6, emphasis added. For an argument that the Hebrew Bible contains "extended wordplay," or paronomasia without close proximity, see Jack M. Sasson, "Wordplay in the Old Testament," *IDBSup*, 968–70. In arguing for this wordplay here I am not in any way invoking Sabbath. For an argument in favor of Sabbath rest in Gen 2:15, see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 39. For a response to Beale, see Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 382. For a further argument in favor of the notion of "rest" in Gen 2:15 but without reference to wordplay, see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 208–9; and Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011), 115, including n147-48.

[36] For a helpful study on the etymology of "Eden," see A. R. Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," *VT* 34 (1984): 103–6. He concludes that "Eden" means "the blissful paradise of God."

thus bracketing the included verses as the first section in the Eden narrative.

The concluding section of the Eden narrative (Gen 3:22–24) parallels the first primarily by containing two statements of the expulsion of the man and woman from Eden matching the two placements of the man in the garden. First, YHWH God "sent [the man] out" (וַיְשַׁלְּחֵהוּ) from the garden in Eden (Gen 3:23) so that he would not "stretch out" (יִשְׁלַח) his hand to eat from the tree of life leading to immorality (Gen 3:22).[37] Then, he "disinherited" (וַיְגָרֶשׁ) the man to the east of Eden in the next verse (Gen 3:24).[38] Rather than redaction of multiple sources or simple tautology, this double exile of humanity from Eden complements the opening section and thus closes the Eden narrative.[39] In each case, a rather straightforward expression using very common vocabulary is followed by a relatively rare, potentially much more theologically significant expression. The author's intention in doing thus may be to highlight the magnitude of these events and their paradigmatic function in the Pentateuch.

Table 3 summarizes further lexical evidence for the parallel relationship between these two sections. Most importantly, these two sections contain the only references to the

[37] Wenham writes, "God forestalls man's next step towards self-divinization by his own preemptive first strike." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 85.

[38] I have translated this phrase as "disinherited" for several reasons. In doing so I am not seeking to correct the consensus meaning "drive out." I am attempting to highlight what I believe to be the impact of Moses's use of this word in the Pentateuch on its contextual meaning. The primary reason I would assign a connotation of disinheritance to "drive out" (גָּרַשׁ) is its usage in Gen 21:10. For more on this, see the section entitled "The Abraham Narrative" in chap. 4. This verb appears only one other time in Genesis: Cain complained to YHWH, "you are driving me away (גֵּרַשְׁתָּ) from the face of the ground today" (4:14). Twelve uses in Exodus refer to Pharoah driving the Israelites out of Egypt (Exod 6:1; 11:1; 12:39) and YHWH driving the Canaanites out of the land (Exod 23:28–31; 33:2; 34:11). Three uses in Leviticus all refer to divorce (21:7, 14; 22:13). Three uses in Numbers refer to YHWH driving out the Canaanites (22:6, 11) and divorce (30:10). The only use in Deuteronomy refers to YHWH driving Israel's enemies away before them (33:27). Thus, in the Pentateuch this word almost exclusively occurs in contexts involving land or possessions, and most of the time it has to do with removing one people from a land so another can take its place. In Gen 3:24, then, YHWH God disinherits humanity from Eden, an action that the prophet Hosea says he will repeat in the exile: "From my house I will drive them out (אֲגָרְשֵׁם); I will no longer love them" (Hos 9:15). Mathews characterizes this statement in Gen 3:24 as "the language of . . . dispossession." Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 257.

[39] According to Wenham, the intensification between these two verbs means there is no need to postulate the existence of two sources behind vv. 23-24. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 86.

tree of life in the Eden narrative and a prevalence of references to "living" and "life."[40] Together with the stress on the life-giving function of Eden, as explained, the narrative begins by highlighting the privilege granted to the man to inhabit, work, and rest in such a place, and it ends by displaying the reality that now-sinful man is outside of and separated from such a place and the eternal life accessed through the tree of life.

Table 3. Lexical comparison of Genesis 2:5–17 and 3:22–24

Genesis 2:5–17	Genesis 3:22–24
and there was no man to work the ground (2:5) וְאָדָם אַיִן לַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה to work it and to guard it (2:15) לְעָבְדָהּ וּלְשָׁמְרָהּ	to work the ground from which he was taken (3:23) לַעֲבֹד אֶת־הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר לֻקַח מִשָּׁם
and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (2:7) וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיו נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה	and eat and live forever (3:22) וְאָכַל וָחַי לְעֹלָם
and the tree of life was in the midst of the garden (2:9) וְעֵץ הַחַיִּים בְּתוֹךְ הַגָּן	"and take also from the tree of life" (3:22) וְלָקַח גַּם מֵעֵץ הַחַיִּים to guard the way to the tree of life (3:24) לִשְׁמֹר אֶת־דֶּרֶךְ עֵץ הַחַיִּים
a garden in Eden, in the east (2:8) גַּן־בְּעֵדֶן מִקֶּדֶם	at the east of the garden in Eden (3:24) מִקֶּדֶם לְגַן־עֵדֶן

Simply put, YHWH God kept his word: the man and woman have passed from life to death because of their rebellion. Being outside Eden is to be dead and results in death.

Creation and Disruption

Moving to the next level of the structure of the Eden narrative, both Genesis 2:18–25 and 3:14–21 concern the relationships between the man, the woman, and the living things YHWH God created. Table 4 summarizes the lexical parallels between the two sections. While Genesis 2:18–25 consists primarily of narration and Genesis 3:14–21

[40] Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 13–14.

is mostly a divine monologue, the thematic correlation between the two is more hermeneutically significant than their difference in form.[41]

Initially, YHWH God created the man to "work" and "guard" the garden in Eden, the man named—and thereby exercised authority over—every living thing, and after YHWH God "built" the woman to be his suitable helper, the man named her as well.[42]

Table 4. Lexical comparison of Genesis 2:18–25 and 3:14–21

Genesis 2:18–25	Genesis 3:14–21
to all the beasts, and to the birds of the heavens and to every living thing of the field (2:20) לְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּלְעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וּלְכֹל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה	"more than all the beasts and more than every living thing of the field" (3:14) מִכָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה וּמִכֹּל חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה
she will be called woman because (2:23) יִקָּרֵא אִשָּׁה כִּי	the man called the name of his wife Eve because (3:20) וַיִּקְרָא הָאָדָם שֵׁם אִשְׁתּוֹ חַוָּה כִּי

Thus, according to the divine design of creation the man holds headship authority over the woman—she is a "helper corresponding to him" (Gen 2:18) in a way the animals do not—and together they exercise dominion over all the beasts of the field.[43]

After the fall into sin, however, this good design was severely disrupted. Instead of dominion over the animals, humans would experience enmity with them epitomized by

[41] For a scene-based literary structure that divides the narrative based on form, see Terje Stordalen, *Echoes of Eden: Genesis 2–3 and Symbolism of the Eden Garden in Biblical Hebrew Literature*, BET 25 (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 219–20. See also Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 17.

[42] On "work" and "guard" as priestly vocations, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 65–66. See also Gordon J. Wenham, "Sanctuary Symbolism in the Garden of Eden Story," in *I Studied Inscriptions from Before the Flood: Ancient Near Eastern, Literary, and Linguistic Approaches to Genesis 1–11*, ed. Richard Hess and David Toshio Tsumara (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 399–404. On "built" as an anthropomorphic expression complementary to "formed" (Gen 2:7), see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 218. On "built" as a providential analogy to a man building his house by taking a wife, see Vern S. Poythress, *Interpreting Eden: A Guide to Faithfully Reading and Understanding Genesis 1–3* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 200.

[43] On "helper" as an "indispensable partner," see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 214. Mathews argues, "There is no sense derived from the word linguistically or from the context of the garden narrative that the woman is a lesser person because her role differs." YHWH was a "helper" to Moses (Exod 18:4) and is often characterized as a "helper" to his people (Ps 20:2; 121:1–2; 124:8) so the word itself cannot carry a connotation of subordination. Paul bases male headship not on the woman's role as "helper" but on the fact that man was created first and woman was created from and for man (1 Tim 2:13).

enmity with the representative beast of the field in the Eden narrative: the serpent (Gen 3:15).[44] Furthermore, the relationship between the man and his wife would become a struggle for authority (Gen 3:16); she who was made from him (Gen 2:21–22) would now rebel against him by seeking to exercise control over him.[45] Finally, and analogously, the newly-cursed ground from which the man was taken—and which he and the woman were to subdue (Gen 1:28) and which he was commissioned to work (Gen 2:15)—would only yield produce fit for consumption among thorns and thistles through frustrating, painful toil (Gen 3:17–19).[46]

In addition to the lexical repetitions and thematic parallels, another doublet occurs in these sections that further demonstrates their complementary relationship: the man named his wife twice. First, he named her woman (אִשָּׁה) because he recognized that she was of the same substance as him and like him (אִישׁ) in a way that no other creature was (Gen 2:23).[47] Then, he named her "Eve," or "Life-giver," (חַוָּה) because her procreative function would not only ensure that life would continue despite death outside of Eden (Gen 3:16), but also that the promised restorative "seed" would come forth from her as YHWH God had spoken to the serpent (Gen 3:15).[48]

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[44] The serpent is one of the "animals of the field" (חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה) which the man had named (Gen 2:20; 3:1, 14), thereby exercising authority over it prior to his fall into sin.

[45] The meaning of "desire" (תְּשׁוּקָתֵךְ) in Gen 3:16 is highly disputed. The best way to interpret the woman's judgment is according to the meaning of "desire" (תְּשׁוּקָתוֹ) in Gen 4:7. Here and in 3:16 "desire" and "rule" occur together. The desire of the woman will be to control her husband just as sin's desire is to control Cain. See S. Foh, "What Is the Woman's Desire?" *WTJ* 37 (1975): 376–83.

[46] Mathews writes, "Ironically, the ground that was under the man's care in the garden as his source of joy and life (2:15) becomes the source of pain for the man's wearisome existence (v. 17)." Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 252.

[47] While the origination of the Hebrew words for "man" (אִישׁ) and "woman" (אִשָּׁה) is unclear, the aural agreement between the two indicates their attachment. The man explains this attachment in the next clause as indicating their sameness and man as woman's source.

[48] On the origin of the name "Eve" (חַוָּה) and the translation as "Life giver," see Scott C. Layton, "Remarks on the Canaanite Origin of Eve," *CBQ* 59, no. 1 (January 1997): 22–32. See also Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: JPS, 1989), 29.

Dialogues

The next level of the concentric structure of the Eden narrative consists of the two main dialogues between the various characters. The first occurs between the woman and the serpent (Gen 3:1–5) and the second between YHWH God, the man, and the woman (Gen 3:8–13). It is not direct speech that sets these sections apart in the narrative, for characters speak throughout the story; rather, it is that characters are engaging in conversation with one another, a unique feature of these two sections. Table 5 identifies the few textual points of contact between these sections.

A peculiar wordplay employed by Moses in this part of the Eden narrative begins with the "shrewdness" (עָרוּם) of the serpent (Gen 3:1) and "nakedness" (עֲרוּמִּים) of the man and woman before their fall (Gen 2:25). While the adjectives look the same—the former is singular while the latter is plural—they are actually from different roots. עֲרוּמִּים (Gen 2:25) is from the root עור which is a verb meaning "be exposed, bare" while עָרוּם (Gen 3:1) is from the root ערם, an adjective meaning "shrewd, crafty."[49]

Table 5. Lexical comparison of Genesis 3:1–5 and 3:8–13

Genesis 3:1–5	Genesis 3:8–13
"the tree which is in the midst of the garden" (3:3) הָעֵץ אֲשֶׁר בְּתוֹךְ־הַגָּן	in the midst of the trees of the garden (3:8) בְּתוֹךְ עֵץ הַגָּן
shrewd (3:1) עָרוּם	"naked" (3:10, 11) עֵירֹם

The disjunctive clause that begins in Genesis 3:1 commences a new section in the narrative, so this aural play on words serves to link the two scenes together on each side of an otherwise abrupt transition while at the same time indicating a turning point in the story.

[49] This is another aural wordplay employed by Moses to link the character of the serpent with the state of the humans after they sin. It also anticipates the association between nakedness and shame or guilt that permeates the rest of the Old Testament (1 Sam 20:30; Isa 20:4; Mic 1:11). For a more detailed and helpful explanation, see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 225.

The more significant thematic analog to עָרוּם (Gen 3:1), however, is the "nakedness" (עֵירֹם) of the man and woman after their sin (Gen 3:10, 11).[50] Moses uses a different adjective to describe the humans as naked after the fall (עֵירֹם) than he does before it (עֲרוּמִּים).[51] Both words originate from the same root (עור), but the variation suggests an intentional distinction between their "naked" state before and after their sin resulting from their interaction with—and submission to—the "shrewd" serpent. The man and woman become "naked" (Gen 3:10, 11) in a way that they were not prior to the fall because of the "shrewdness" (Gen 3:1) of the serpent.[52] This connection brings a cohesiveness to the narrative and establishes a strong complementary relationship between these two dialogue sections that bracket the fall of the man and woman into sin.

Finally, both dialogues center on the tree "in the midst of the garden," the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The woman refers to it in verse 3, and then YHWH God refers to it in his questioning of the man in verse 11. Curiously, this tree receives more attention in the text throughout the narrative than the tree of life which, as I noted, only appears in the first and last sections.[53] The prominence of the tree of knowledge, its function in the narrative as the object of testing in the garden, and its mention in these two dialogues concerning temptation prior to sin and its repercussions all serve to demonstrate my claim that the thematic focus of the Eden narrative is the sin of the man and woman in disobeying YHWH's command and their subsequent "death" in being sent east of Eden.[54]

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[50] Also appears in 3:7, but the form difference overrides the significance of the lexical point of contact. I am saying here that there is a strong aural wordplay between 3:1 and 10, 11 that is not present in 3:7 even though it is the same word; it is plural in 3:7 and singular in vv. 10 and 11.

[51] BDB, 735–36, lists these two words as different adjectives from the root עור.

[52] For a helpful argument connecting nakedness to exile and judgment, see Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 119. See also John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 103; and T. Desmond Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land: An Introduction to the Pentateuch*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 126–28.

[53] Mettinger, *The Eden Narrative*, 40.

[54] For a similar argument regarding the overall thrust of the Eden narrative as pessimistic rather than exhortative and optimistic, see Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 135. For an argument in favor of reading Gen 2–3 as a warning to the Israelites to keep the Sinai covenant, see C. John Collins, *Genesis 1–4: A Linguistic, Literary, and Theological Commentary* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2006), 33–35.

Sin

The Eden narrative centers on Genesis 3:6–7, which consists of a lightning-fast narration of the disobedience of the woman followed by the man with a quick succession of *waw*-consecutive verbs.[55] The list below shows the pyramid-like structure that centers on the phrase, "and he ate" (וַיֹּאכַל), a single word in the Hebrew text.[56]

And she saw (וַתֵּרֶא)

And she took (וַתִּקַּח)

And she ate (וַתֹּאכַל)

And she gave (וַתִּתֵּן)

And he ate (וַיֹּאכַל)

And they were opened (וַתִּפָּקַחְנָה)

And they knew (וַיֵּדְעוּ)

And they sewed (וַיִּתְפְּרוּ)

And they made (וַיַּעֲשׂוּ)

It was the man whom YHWH had commanded not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen 2:17), and here in a single word the central section of the Eden narrative—and thus the narrative as a whole—centers on his willful disobedience to that known command.[57]

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[55] Although v. 8 continues with two more *waw*-consecutive imperfect verbs, I am breaking this section at v. 7 because I am reading v. 8 as the narrative prelude to the dialogue in vv. 9–13. In other words, v. 8 sets the stage for the interrogation in vv. 9–13 rather than continues the action from vv. 6–7. Walsh agrees, "V. 8 is transitional between scenes 4 and 5. It is attached to scene 4 by its narrative form and its characters; but it prepares the imminent reentrance of Yahweh God in v. 9, and the point of departure for his question, viz., man's flight and concealment." Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24," 165–66.

[56] Walsh identifies vv. 6–7 as the center of the entire narrative based on "their rich, complex array of poetic devices." Walsh, "Genesis 2:4b–3:24," 166. The concentric structure, based on metric, highlights the sin of the man.

[57] The centering of the narrative on the disobedience of the man further demonstrates Postell's assertion that the Eden narrative is a prophecy that the Israelites would not keep the Sinai covenant. See Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 135. See the section "Death as Exile in the Context of the Pentateuch" where I argue that reading the Pentateuch as a whole both highlights correspondences between Eden and the promised land in Deuteronomy—and thus between Adam and Israel—and reinforces the pessimistic and prophetic character of the Eden narrative.

Working outwards from the center, the dialogue sections (C and C') focus on the object of the man's disobedience—the tree of knowledge. The next level (B and B') highlights the result of the man's sin by detailing the harmonious state of the creation and the relationships therein prior to the fall contrasted with the cursed reversals and judgments after. The frame (A and A') similarly shows both the abundant life that Eden provides, especially through the tree of life, and the removal of the humans from the place of life because of their sin, that is, from the garden and its eternal life-giving tree.

Therefore, the literary form of the Eden narrative conveys its meaning which in turn engenders an accurate interpretation of "you will surely die" (Gen 2:17). The man was given rest in the place of abundant life only to transgress YHWH God's clear command regarding the forbidden tree resulting in exile from that place. In the Eden narrative, the man "died" when he ate of the tree of knowledge and was barred from the tree of life: he would die when he ate from it (A), he ate from it (D), and he "died" when he was disinherited from Eden (A'). The death of his body—hundreds of years later and narrated separately (Gen 5:5)—is the result of the "death" of being exiled from Eden.[58]

Death as Exile in the Context of the Pentateuch

The macro-structure of the Pentateuch—and the resulting parallels between the content of Genesis and Deuteronomy—complements the conclusions I have drawn from the literary structure of the Eden narrative, further establishing the thematic parallel

[58] Levenson argues for a spatial understanding of life and death specifically with respect to the exodus. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 27–28. See also pp. 154–55 for a more general correlation of death with exile. Cf. Stephen G. Dempster, "From Slight Peg to Cornerstone to Capstone: The Resurrection of Christ on 'The Third Day' According to the Scriptures," *WTJ* 76 (2014): 371–409. See also Morales, where, interpreting the mountain-shaped, archetypal pattern of "cultic cosmology," he writes, "Movement away from God is therefore understood as a descent away from life (creation) toward death (chaos); and, conversely, movement toward God is expressed as an ascent from death to life." Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 49. Cf. Morales, *Exodus Old and New*, 9. See also G. K. Beale on ancient vs. modern cosmology and its relevance for interpreting life and death in the Eden narrative. G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 161–218. Death and Eden cannot be associated with each other as Joe Allston—the main character in *The Spectator Bird* by Wallace Stegner—laments, "Eden with graves is not Eden."

between exile from Eden—the well-watered place of fertility and life—and death. In this section I will propose, based on textual evidence of a high degree of similarity and repetition between the Eden narrative and the book of Deuteronomy, that the expulsion of the first humans from Eden should be understood as the death of exile.

The Pentateuch as Macro-Chiasm

In a recent work on the meaning and function of the book of Leviticus in the Pentateuch, L. Michael Morales argues convincingly for a broad, concentric literary structure of the Pentateuch.[59] The primary theme and theology of the Pentateuch is "YHWH's opening a way for humanity to dwell in the divine Presence," a theme that encompasses the narrative storyline of the first five books of the Bible.[60] Morales's proposal complements the meaning of the Eden narrative which I have explained: the death of the first humans in their exile from Eden and the implied anticipation of their return to life in YHWH's presence. Regarding this "primal exile" Morales writes,

> The movement of the Eden narrative, from intimacy (Gen. 2) to alienation (Gen. 3), focuses upon humanity's displacement as a major motif. Outside Eden, Adam is now an exile and a wanderer. Having lost the Presence of God, humanity has also lost its purpose. The children of Adam now sojourn outside the door of God's dwelling, outside the light of his countenance. This expulsion from the divine Presence is *the* central tragic event that drives the history of redemption, determining and shaping the ensuing biblical narrative.[61]

And, Adam's exile typifies the future exile of Israel from the promised land which Moses prophesies in Deuteronomy.[62] In both cases—the garden of Eden and the land of Canaan—

[59] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*. Morales is not the first to do so. See R. M. Davidson, "Assurance in Judgment," *AdvRev* 7 (1988): 20; and Arie C. Leder, *Waiting for the Land: The Storyline of the Pentateuch* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2010), 34–35.

[60] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 23. See also Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 110–11; and Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 161–72.

[61] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 55. On the theme of intimacy and alienation in the Eden narrative, see Hauser, "Genesis 2–3," 20–36.

[62] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 54. See also Sailhamer, who argues, "The penalty is identical to that established by the Mosaic Law: to be put to death ('he shall surely die') is to be 'cast off from the midst of one's people' (Exod 31:14)." Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 110.

YHWH's covenantal counterpart has a life-or-death decision to make in which the two trees and the law of YHWH function the same way. According to Morales, this life versus death dichotomy is at the heart of the Pentateuch's theology.[63]

Life and death spatially conceived as central to the theology of the Pentateuch is further evidenced by the way both Genesis and Deuteronomy conclude. In each case the main character dies outside of the land of Canaan—Joseph in Egypt (Gen 50:26) and Moses in Moab (Deut 34:5). And in both cases, death in exile anticipates a future return to life: a future move westward and renewed access to the tree of life. In fact, the movement of the bones of Joseph from Egypt to Shechem both anticipates the exodus (Gen 50:24–25) and concludes the conquest (Josh 24:32).[64] So, the narrative of Genesis begins the Pentateuch by moving from YHWH's presence in Eden to Joseph's death in Egypt, and Deuteronomy, as the chiastic complement to Genesis in the Pentateuch, anticipates the same move in Israel's future both explicitly and symbolically through the death of Moses outside the land.[65] On a smaller scale, in the following subsections I will attempt to show that there is a tight correspondence between exile from Eden and future exile from Canaan. Just as Adam disobeyed YHWH and then experienced the death of exile, so Israel will choose death by breaking covenant with YHWH and be exiled from the land.[66]

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[63] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 54.

[64] On Joseph as a type of Israel in his experience of suffering and exile and as a harbinger of Israel's exodus from Egypt, see Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 99–100. On the exodus of Joseph's bones as a type of resurrection from death, see Jeffrey Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection: Joseph as a Death & Resurrection Figure in the Old Testament & Second Temple Judaism*, SSBT (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 267–77.

[65] Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain?*, 49.

[66] As previously noted, I am following in the vein of Postell and Sailhamer here regarding the prospective nature of the Pentateuch. Postell, *Adam as Israel*; Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*. See also Brian S. Rosner where he interacts with and affirms Sailhamer's thesis regarding the prophetic nature of the Pentateuch. Brian S. Rosner, *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God*, NSBT 31 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 142–48, esp. 144–45.

Textual Evidence in Deuteronomy

In his commentary on the book of Deuteronomy, Duane L. Christensen offers the following concentric design for Deuteronomy:[67]

A. The eisodus into the promised land under Moses (1:1–3:22)

B. The covenant at Horeb—Moses and the Ten Words (3:23–7:11)

C. Life in the promised land the great peroration (7:12–11:25)

X. Moses proclaims the law: covenant stipulations (11:26–25:19)

C'. Worship and covenant renewal in the promised land (26:1–29:9)

B'. Appeal for covenant loyalty (29:10–30:20)

A'. Crossing over to part two of the eisodus under Joshua (31:1–34:12)

According to Christensen, the second level of this structure (B and B') is complementary in that Moses established the covenant between YHWH and the second-generation Israelites and then later exhorted them to choose life through faithfulness to the terms. Christensen writes, "The outermost frame moves from the presentation of the Ten Words (the Ten Commandments) at Mount Sinai, which constitute the essence of the covenant agreement between YHWH and his people Israel (3:23–7:11), to an appeal to the present and future generations for loyalty to that covenant agreement (29:10–30:20)."[68] In the subsections that follow I will offer textual evidence that largely aligns with Christensen's structural proposal.[69] My goal in doing so is to demonstrate the emphasis on future exile

[67] Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, 2nd ed., WBC, vol. 6A (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), xciv. Christensen adapted this structure based on the "menorah-pattern" proposed by C. J. Labuschagne, *Deuteronomium: Belichting van het Bijbelboek* (Brugge, Belgium: Uitgeverij Tabor, 1993), 16. Christensen's adaptation is based on the traditional lectionary cycle of weekly readings from the Torah which divides the book of Deuteronomy into eleven sections. In essence, he fit the eleven-part lectionary outline into a seven-part menorah pattern centered on the stipulations of the law.

[68] Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, xciv. I concluded that Deut 4:25–31 and 30:1–20 are largely parallel and complementary independent of Christensen's work. His work on the structure of the entire book validates the textual connections between the two passages that I make in the subsection "Correspondence with the Eden Narrative."

[69] There are several points of contact between Deut 4:25–31 and 31:28–29 which I delineate in table 7. While these connections do not fit nicely into Christensen's structure, I do not think they undermine it. The content of Deut 31:24–30 serves as narrative prelude to the Song of Moses (Deut 32:1–43), which focuses

in Deuteronomy, show the textual connections between exile in Deuteronomy and death in the Eden narrative, and thus further validate my claim that death and exile are metaphorically linked in the Pentateuch.

Exile in Deuteronomy. The certainty of exile "in the latter days" (Deut 4:30; 31:29) is a major theme in Deuteronomy.[70] Significant thematic correspondence along with unique clusters of various words and phrases between Deuteronomy 4:25–31 and both Deuteronomy 30:1–20 and 31:28–29 indicate that the main function of the law code (Deut 11:26–25:19) is to "testify" (עוד in Deut 4:25; 30:19; 31:28) to the unfaithfulness of the future Israelites and provide an objective basis for their expulsion from the Promised Land.[71] Tables 6 and 7 summarize this data.

This tremendous level of thematic and lexical repetition indicates a purposeful, literary parallel between the beginning of Deuteronomy and the conclusion that centers on future exile. Furthermore, several of these phrases are repeated in the lengthy section detailing the curses Israel will experience because of failure to maintain faithfulness to this covenant through obedience (Deut 28:15–68).[72]

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heavily on the future disobedience and exile of Israel. Thus, it is natural for Moses to repeat the prophetic language of Deut 4:25–31 in this context.

[70] On the eschatological significance of the phrase "in the latter days" (בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים) in the Pentateuch, see Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 192.

[71] For a detailed study of the text of Deut 4:25–31, see Kenneth J. Turner, *The Death of Deaths in the Death of Israel: Deuteronomy's Theology of Exile* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2011), 107–22; cf. Tvi Erlich, "The Story of the Garden of Eden in Comparison to the Position of Mount Sinai and the Tabernacle," *Alon Shvut for Graduates of the Har Eztion Yeshiva* 11 (1998): 20–34.

[72] These include "until you perish quickly (אֲבָדְךָ מַהֵר) because of the evil of your deeds" (Deut 28:20; cf. 4:26); the "possession" (לְרִשְׁתָּהּ) of the land (Deut 28:21, 63; cf. 4:26); the *Niphal* of "to destroy" (שָׁמַד) which appears only in these passages (Deut 28:20, 24, 45, 48, 51, 61, 63; cf. 4:26); "you will be left" (וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם) with few "men" (מְתֵי) (Deut 28:62; cf. 4:27); the *Piel* of "to drive" (נָהַג) which occurs only in these passages (Deut 28:37; cf. 4:27); and "you will serve (וְעָבַדְתָּ) there other gods (אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים) of wood and stone (עֵץ וָאָבֶן)" (Deut 28:36, 64; cf. 4:28). For a detailed study on the theme of exile in the text of Deut 28:58–68, including an argument for "resumptive exegesis" with Deut 4:25–28, see Turner, *The Death of Deaths in the Death of Israel*, 136–45.

Table 6. Lexical comparison of Deuteronomy 4:25–31 and 30:1–20

Deut 4:25–31	Deut 30:1–20
“I call to testify against you today the heavens and the earth that…” (4:26) הַעִידֹתִי בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ	“I call to testify against you today the heavens and the earth that…” (30:19; cf. 31:28) הַעִידֹתִי בָכֶם הַיּוֹם אֶת־הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת־הָאָרֶץ
Deut 4:25–31	Deut 30:1–20
“you will surely perish” (4:26) אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן	“you will surely perish” (30:18) אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן
“the land which you are crossing over the Jordan River to possess” (4:26) הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר אַתֶּם עֹבְרִים אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן שָׁמָּה לְרִשְׁתָּהּ	“the ground which you are crossing over the Jordan River to enter there to possess” (30:18; cf. 31:13) הָאֲדָמָה אֲשֶׁר אַתָּה עֹבֵר אֶת־הַיַּרְדֵּן לָבֹא שָׁמָּה לָרִשְׁתָּהּ
“you will not lengthen days” (4:26) לֹא־תַאֲרִיכֻן יָמִים	“you will not lengthen days” (30:18) לֹא־תַאֲרִיךְ יָמִים
“and YHWH will scatter you among the peoples” (4:27) וְהֵפִיץ יְהוָה אֶתְכֶם בָּעַמִּים	“and he will gather you from all the peoples where YHWH your God scattered you” (30:3) וְקִבֶּצְךָ מִכָּל־הָעַמִּים אֲשֶׁר הֱפִיצְךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ שָׁמָּה
“when you seek him with all your heart and with all your soul” (4:29) כִּי תִדְרְשֶׁנּוּ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ “and you return to YHWH your God, and you obey his voice” (4:30) וְשַׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְקֹלוֹ	“and you return to YHWH your God, and you obey his voice according to everything that I am commanding you today, you and your sons, with all your heart and with all your soul” (30:2) וְשַׁבְתָּ עַד־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְקֹלוֹ כְּכֹל אֲשֶׁר־אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךָ הַיּוֹם אַתָּה וּבָנֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ “to love YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (30:6) לְאַהֲבָה אֶת־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ “and you return, and you obey the voice of YHWH” (30:8) וְאַתָּה תָּשׁוּב וְשָׁמַעְתָּ בְּקוֹל יְהוָה “when you obey the voice of YHWH your God…when you return to YHWH your God with all your heart and with all your soul” (30:10) כִּי תִשְׁמַע בְּקוֹל יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ...כִּי תָשׁוּב אֶל־יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לְבָבְךָ וּבְכָל־נַפְשֶׁךָ
“and all these things find you” (4:30) וּמְצָאוּךָ כֹּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה	“And it will happen that all these things will come upon you” (30:1) וְהָיָה כִי־יָבֹאוּ עָלֶיךָ כָּל־הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה

Table 7. Lexical comparison of Deuteronomy 4:25–31 and 31:28–29

Deut 4:25–31	Deut 31:28–29
"you become corrupt" (4:25) וְהִשְׁחַתֶּם "and he will not destroy you" (4:31) וְלֹא יַשְׁחִיתֶךָ	"you will surely become corrupt" (31:29) כִּי־הַשְׁחֵת תַּשְׁחִתוּן
"and you do evil in the eyes of YHWH your God to enrage him" (4:25) וַעֲשִׂיתֶם הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה־אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְהַכְעִיסוֹ	"because you will do evil in the eyes of YHWH to enrage him" (31:29) כִּי־תַעֲשׂוּ אֶת־הָרַע בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה לְהַכְעִיסוֹ
"and there you will serve gods made by human hands" (4:28) וַעֲבַדְתֶּם־שָׁם אֱלֹהִים מַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵי אָדָם	"to enrage him with the work of your hands" (31:29) לְהַכְעִיסוֹ בְּמַעֲשֵׂה יְדֵיכֶם
"and all these things find you in future days" (4:30) וּמְצָאוּךָ כֹּל הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים	"and disaster will confront you in future days" (31:29) וְקָרָאת אֶתְכֶם הָרָעָה בְּאַחֲרִית הַיָּמִים

Moses bases such a heavy emphasis on unfaithfulness, disobedience, and resulting exile on two things. First, although YHWH brought the Israelites out of Egypt under the Passover lamb's blood and through the waters of the Red Sea, he has not granted to them the "circumcised heart" necessary to fulfill their covenantal obligations, namely, to love YHWH with their whole being (Deut 4:29; 6:5; 30:2, 6, 10).[73] Moses explains to the people that because YHWH has chosen them to be his special possession from among all the peoples they must "circumcise" their hearts and repent from stiff-neckedness (Deut 10:16). The physical sign of circumcision that YHWH instituted with Abraham (Gen 17) must take on an internal, spiritual reality if they are going to be successful in loving YHWH, serving him with their whole being, and obeying his commandments (Deut 10:12–13).

Moses, however, clearly indicates that such an internal renovation remains a future reality when he states that YHWH will accomplish "heart circumcision" on behalf

[73] For a helpful study on the presence of YHWH in the Old Testament and heart circumcision as the old covenant analogy to new covenant regeneration, see James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments*, NAC Studies in Bible & Theology (Nashville: B & H, 2006). See also John D. Meade, "Circumcision of Flesh to Circumcision of Heart: The Typology of the Sign of the Abrahamic Covenant," in *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies*, ed. Brent E. Parker and Stephen J. Wellum (Nashville: B & H, 2016), 127–58; and Kevin Samy Gabriel, "Regeneration and the Heart Under the Old Covenant: A Study in Deuteronomy and the Major Prophets" (ThM thesis, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2021).

of his people when he gathers them from exile (Deut 30:6).[74] If the exiled Israelites "turn" (שׁוב) to YHWH their God in their captivity (Deut 30:2), he will "turn" (שׁוב) and gather them even from the farthest edge of the heavens and return them to the land he has promised to them (Deut 30:3–5). Only after this "heart circumcision" will the Israelites love YHWH as he has commanded.[75] Only after the Abrahamic covenant reforms them from the inside out will they return YHWH's love and faithfulness with obedience.[76]

Correspondence with the Eden narrative. The second basis for Moses's certainty regarding the future exile of the Israelites from the promised land is the earlier exile of the first man and woman from the garden in Eden. Table 8 summarizes several lexical parallels between the Eden narrative and Moses's climactic plea to the Israelites to choose life through obedience (Deut 30:15–20). If the Israelites will love YHWH and obey his commandments (Deut 30:16), they will enter, possess, and enjoy perpetual life in the Promised Land (Deut 30:16, 20). But, if their hearts turn away from YHWH and they disobey him by worshipping other gods (Deut 30:17), they will "surely perish" (אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן): they will be expelled from the land (Deut 30:18). If they are "driven" (וְנִדַּחְתָּ) to idolatry (Deut 30:17; cf. Deut 4:19), they will find themselves "banished" (הִדִּיחַךְ) from the land (Deut 30:1; cf. 30:4).[77]

[74] Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, WBC, vol. 6B (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 738–39.

[75] Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, 739; cf. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, 204–6.

[76] I make this statement based on Paul's assertion that the blessing of Abraham (Gen 12:3) has come to the Gentiles in the form of the indwelling Holy Spirit (Gal 3:14). See Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence*, 61–62.

[77] For a comparison of the closing of Deuteronomy with Gen 1–3, see Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 135–45. For a comparison between the closings of both Genesis and Deuteronomy, see Christophe Nihan, *From Priestly Torah to Pentateuch*, Forschungen zum Alten Testament 2, Reihe 25 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 71–72. For a comparison of the prominence of exile as a consequence for breaking covenant in Deut 28 with expulsion from the garden of Eden, see Leder, *Waiting for the Land*, 27–62. For a comparison of Eden with the promised land, see William J. Dumbrell, *The End of the Beginning: Revelation 21–22 and the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985), 134. On Genesis and Deuteronomy as a literary pair, see Radday, "Chiasmus in Hebrew Biblical Narrative," 84. Further resources published recently that connect the Eden narrative to Deut 30, include R. R. Reno, *Genesis*, BTCB (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010),

Table 8. Lexical comparison of the Eden narrative and the appeal for loyalty

Genesis 2:4–3:24	Deuteronomy 30:15–20
the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (2:9) וְעֵ֣ץ הַדַּ֔עַת טֹ֖וב וָרָֽע	"I have set before you today life and good, death and evil" (30:15) נָתַ֤תִּי לְפָנֶ֙יךָ֙ הַיּ֔וֹם אֶת־הַחַיִּ֖ים וְאֶת־הַטּ֑וֹב וְאֶת־הַמָּ֣וֶת וְאֶת־הָרָֽע
"you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for in the day you eat from it you will surely die" (2:17) וּמֵעֵ֣ץ הַדַּ֔עַת טֹ֖וב וָרָ֑ע לֹ֣א תֹאכַ֔ל מִמֶּ֖נּוּ כִּ֣י בְי֣וֹם אֲכָלְךָ֔ מִמֶּ֖נּוּ מ֥וֹת תָּמֽוּת	"I declare to you today that you will surely perish" (30:18; cf. 4:26) הִגַּ֥דְתִּי לָכֶ֖ם הַיּ֑וֹם כִּ֥י אָבֹ֖ד תֹּאבֵדֻֽון

In Eden, the man received the commandment of YHWH and had a choice: obey and remain in the fertile, abundant garden where YHWH "moved about" (מִתְהַלֵּךְ) (Gen 3:8) and where he would have access to the tree of life and, as a result, immortality, or disobey and "surely die" (Gen 2:17), which turned out to be expulsion from Eden and exclusion from the tree of life.[78] By employing a subtle allusion to both of the trees in the garden in Deuteronomy 30:15—the choice in the promised land is between "life" and "death," "good" and "evil"—and by drawing an analogy between the consequences for disobedience in both—the certainty of death and perishing, both of which manifest in exile from their respective lands—Moses has placed the Israelites entering the promised land in the same position in which the first man found himself.[79] In fact, Moses clearly pairs "surely perish" (אָבֹד תֹּאבֵדוּן) from the land with "completely destroyed" (הִשָּׁמֵד

71; Jeff M. Brannon, *The Hope of Life After Death: A Biblical Theology of Resurrection*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022), 46–47; Oren R. Martin, *Bound for the Promised Land: The Land of Promise in God's Redemptive Plan*, NSBT 34 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 77–86; and Matthew S. Harmon, *Rebels and Exiles: A Biblical Theology of Sin and Restoration*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 62.

[78] Hamilton writes, "As Yahweh promised to walk among the people once they had the tabernacle (Lev 26:11–12; Deut 23:14), so he walked in the garden (Gen 3:8)." Hamilton, *Typology*, 227; cf. 233–34. See also Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 66, 111n68.

[79] The verb "to perish" (אָבַד) appears thirty-five times in the Pentateuch. In the *Qal* stem it refers to dying while in the *Hiphil* and *Piel* stems it refers to causing destruction, or "to destroy," often with respect to removal from the land. Thus, Moses's usage indicates a meaning of death associated with exile, or spatial displacement, whether it be the Canaanites or Israelites themselves.

תִּשָּׁמֵדוּן) earlier in Deuteronomy (Deut 4:26), a strong indication that he is teaching the Israelites that to be expelled from the promised land is to be destroyed.[80] If the Israelites fail to keep their covenantal obligations, they will die—they will be expelled from the land.[81]

Additional evidence. Several correlations between the content of the speeches in Deuteronomy and the narratives in Genesis serve to further demonstrate my argument that the certainty of Israel's future exile from the promised land is analogous to the exile of the first man and woman from Eden and that both are considered as death. First, early in his recitation of Israel's history Moses recalls YHWH declaring in anger following the bad report of the spies and the unbelief of the first generation, "And your children, whom you said would be as plunder, and your sons, who today do not know good and evil, they will enter [the land], and to them I will give it, and they will possess it" (Deut 1:39). I have displayed the rhetorical structure of this verse below. The parallelism between "children" and "sons," both references to the second generation of Israelites after the exodus, sets the two statements about them in parallel as well.

> And your children,
> whom you said would be as plunder,
> and your sons,
> who today do not know good and evil,
> they will enter it, and to them I will give it, and they will possess it.

Their parents refused to enter the land because they thought their children would suffer, perhaps even die, at the hands of the Canaanites (Num 14:31).[82] Young and innocent as

[80] The verb "to destroy" (שָׁמַד) appears thirty-two times in the Pentateuch, always in the *Hiphil* or *Niphal* stems and primarily in Deut. In some instances, it appears in close context with "to perish" (אָבַד) (Deut 4:26; 28:63). Like "perish," this expression connotes removal from the land or, in general, spatial displacement, as a metaphor for death.

[81] For a helpful argument in favor of a covenant between YHWH and the first man in the garden (Gen 2:17), see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 211–58.

[82] Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, 32.

they were at the time, however, according to YHWH's promise they would be the ones to enter and possess the land.

While the meaning of "good and evil" (טוֹב וָרָע) in this passage clearly refers to the age and maturity of the second generation of Israelites at the time of their parents' rebellion, this less-than-subtle wordplay also intentionally evokes the Eden narrative.[83] The only other places in the Pentateuch where this phrase occurs are with reference to the forbidden tree in the garden (Gen 2:9, 17; 3:5, 22), and only with "know" (ידע) referring to the post-fall state of the first humans (Gen 3:5, 22). Thus, while their progenitors came to "know good and evil" (לָדַעַת טוֹב וָרָע), a state which resulted in their exile from Eden, Moses's audience has in some sense not reached that state. They "do not know good and evil" (לֹא־יָדְעוּ...טוֹב וָרָע). Instead, they will "know" the promised land in a way their parents never would as YHWH declared at the time: "But your children, whom you said would be as plunder, I will bring them in, and they will know [וְיָדְעוּ] the land which you have rejected" (Num 14:31). These Israelites will enter the land as the first man was made to rest in the garden (Gen 2:15–17) with the same choice before them: choose life through obedience—prolonged days in the land—or death through unfaithfulness—exile.[84]

Second, Moses draws a parallel between the nakedness of the first humans after their fall into sin and the nakedness the Israelites will experience in exile. The only occurrences of the adjective "naked" (עֵירֹם) in the Pentateuch refer to the state of the first humans after their sin (Gen 3:7, 10) and to the future state of the Israelites in slavery to

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[83] Paul R. House writes, "Moses' review of Israel's past begins the process of biblical books reflecting on previous material. Such reflection does more than catalog past events. It assesses, interprets, and packages previous data in a way calculated to exhort, correct or instruct the new text's audience." Paul R. House, *Old Testament Theology* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998), 174.

[84] Although I came to this conclusion independently, Sailhamer also connects this passage to the Eden narrative: "Moses draws an important connection between entering the Promised Land and the original story of humankind in the Garden of Eden. It is as though Moses wants to show that this new generation is now in much the same position as the first man and woman in the Garden." Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 427.

their enemies if they fail to uphold their covenantal obligations (Deut 28:48).[85] The prophet Ezekiel later confirms this connection between nakedness and exile by twice referring to the state of Israel in exile and under the power of their enemies as "naked" (Ezek 16:39; 23:29).[86] Therefore, for Israel to be exiled from the promised land is analogous to the naked, exiled state of the first humans after their sin. And like the first humans, Israel will benefit from the fact that YHWH is the God who clothes the naked (Ezek 18:7, 16; cf. Gen 3:21).

Finally, Moses indicates that the idolatrous corruption of the Israelites and their resulting exile was typified in the destruction of Sodom. If the Israelites pursue idolatry by making an idol in the image of anything they will have "become corrupt" (וְהִשְׁחַתֶּם) and they will be "completely destroyed" (הִשָּׁמֵד תִּשָּׁמֵדוּן) as a result (Deut 4:25–26). On account of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, however, YHWH will not abandon or "destroy" (יַשְׁחִיתֶךָ) his people if they repent and obey him in their distress (Deut 4:31). Owing no such allegiance to Sodom, YHWH destroyed (בְּשַׁחֵת) it and Gomorrah completely and forever due to their sin (Gen 19:29; cf. 18:28, 31–32; 19:13–14). He did so with "sulfur" (גָּפְרִית), turning Lot's wife to "salt" (מֶלַח); it was a complete "overthrow" (הַהֲפֵכָה) (Gen 19:24, 26, 29). According to Moses in Deuteronomy 29, the future exile of Israel will be very similar: the land will be covered with "sulfur" (גָּפְרִית) and "salt" (וָמֶלַח), thus resembling the "overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah" (כְּמַהְפֵּכַת סְדֹם וַעֲמֹרָה) (Deut 29:22). The land will no longer "sprout" (תַּצְמִחַ) as Eden did with every kind of tree pleasing to look at and good for food (Deut 29:22; cf. Gen 2:9). In exile both land and people will be dead, destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah.[87]

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[85] See Postell, *Adam as Israel*, 119, and Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 103.

[86] As opposed to YHWH covering Israel's nakedness when he made a covenant with her (Ezek 16:8); see Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 503. This sequence of events may allude to the Eden narrative in that YHWH God found the first humans naked (Ezek 16:7) and then clothed them (Ezek 16:8; cf. Gen 3:21).

[87] Christensen argues, "The association of 'brimstone and salt' with the 'overthrowing of Sodom and Gomorrah' in this verse suggests that the curse is something along the lines of the story in Genesis in

Therefore, as I have endeavored to show in this section, Moses establishes a strong correlation between death and exile across the Pentateuch by closely tying together the content of the books of Genesis and Deuteronomy. The destruction of Israel in exile from the promised land is analogous to the expulsion of the first man from Eden. In the Pentateuch, death is locative: to be dead is to be physically separated from the bountiful presence of YHWH.[88]

Return to Eden Implied and Anticipated as Resurrection

If exile from Eden and the promised land metaphorically equates to death, this implies that a return to Eden—the place of abundant provision and the location of the tree of life—or to the promised land is nothing short of a return to life—resurrection from death. Subtle indications of this reality in the Eden narrative become explicit promises in Deuteronomy regarding return from future exile.

After the fall, there are three implicit, complementary indications in Genesis 3 that exile from Eden is not the final verdict for humanity. First, humanity's charge to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28) will still be realized—albeit with much trouble (Gen 3:16)—through physical procreation, suggesting that life will continue perpetually even in exile.[89] Second, when the man names his wife the second time, he calls her "Eve" (חַוָּה)

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which 'brimstone [sulfur] and fire' fell out of heaven on those cities (Gen 19:24)." Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, 726. On the connection between salt and infertility with respect to the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the death of Lot's wife, see chap. 4 of this diss.

[88] Turner writes, "We are *not* suggesting that exile constitutes complete dissolution of the covenant between Yahweh and Israel as an *historical actuality*. Such a literal reading would contradict the patriarchal promises, which ground the promise of restoration beyond exile. Rather, the *rhetoric* of death allows for a proper theological understanding of the *reality* of exile and, especially, restoration." Turner, *The Death of Deaths in the Death of Israel*, 225, emphasis original. For Turner, that "exile represents the death of Israel" is a "dynamic theological concept" that spans the Pentateuch.

[89] The command to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28) becomes a promise in YHWH's covenant with Abraham (Gen 17:2, 6). Only YHWH can overcome the pain in procreation that humanity will experience (Gen 3:16).

because she was the "mother of all the living" (אֵם כָּל־חָי) (Gen 3:20).[90] In doing so the man insinuates that the future of humanity is life rather than death. Third, and most importantly, a future seed of the woman will crush the serpent and its seed (Gen 3:15), likely the basis for the man's expression of hope for the future in naming his wife.[91] This destruction of the source of temptation and its evil works entails a cleansing of Eden and the reestablishment of locative fellowship between YHWH and humanity. Considered together, these three indications imply that return to Eden—accomplished through the seed of the woman—is the future of humanity.

This implied return to Eden is explicitly promised through the analogous return to the promised land following exile in Deuteronomy. First, the bountiful, well-watered conditions present in Eden characterize the promised land under the blessings of covenantal faithfulness.[92] According to Deuteronomy 28:1–14, the Israelites will experience a threefold blessing of fruitfulness in the land: the fruit of the womb, the fruit of the ground, and the fruit of their livestock (Deut 28:4, 11). They will also enjoy seasonal rains and the fertility that they bring (Deut 28:12), and their barns will be filled with plenty (Deut 28:8; cf. Prov 3:10). They will be blessed in the land that YHWH is giving to them (Deut 28:8), and they will be a people holy to YHWH (Deut 28:9) among all the nations of the earth (Deut 28:1, 12).[93] Entering the promised land, and enjoying the abundant prosperity therein, will be akin to reentering Eden to again enjoy the blessing of YHWH's presence.

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[90] Layton argues that the strangeness of Eve's name calls for the etymological explanation that follows. The name "Life giver" epitomizes the role of the first woman—and all subsequent women—in perpetuating life through procreation despite the judgment of death. Layton, "Remarks on the Canaanite Origin of Eve," 23. See also Francisco, "Genesis," 131; and Von Rad, *Genesis*, 96.

[91] Hamilton, *Typology*, 9, 67.

[92] Alexander, *From Paradise to the Promised Land*, 292–93; Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 471.

[93] Gentry argues that to be "holy" is to be in covenant with YHWH. See Peter J. Gentry, "The Meaning of 'Holy' in the Old Testament," *BibSac* 170 (October–December 2013): 400–17.

Second, to return to the complementary passages in Deuteronomy 4:25–31 and 30:1–20, although the death of Israel in exile is certain, YHWH will not finally destroy them (Deut 4:31).[94] If they seek YHWH from the nations where they have been driven and scattered (Deut 4:29; cf. 30:1, 3), if they return to him and obey him (Deut 4:30; cf. 30:2), they will be restored to the place of his life-giving presence. Having become men few in number in exile (Deut 4:27), they will again be numerous and prosperous, even more so than earlier generations (Deut 30:5). They will again enjoy the threefold blessing of fruitfulness: the fruit of the womb, of their livestock, and of the ground (Deut 30:9).

Finally, YHWH himself ties the certainty of Israel's future death in exile and resurrection in restoration to the land and its blessings to life and death when he says of himself in the song of testimony, "See now that I, I am he, and there is no god besides me. I kill and I cause to live, I crush and I heal, and there is no one who can deliver from my hand" (Deut 32:39).[95] In the context of the song—the occasion for which is the certain future corruption of the Israelites resulting in the disaster of exile (Deut 31:29)—YHWH "killing" is his "hiding his face" from Israel and giving them over to disaster in the form of oppression by their enemies (Deut 32:20–25). On the other hand, his "causing to live" is the salvation of Israel against the backdrop of his vengeance against their enemies (Deut 32:43). In doing so, YHWH shows himself to be a Rock unlike the gods of the nations (Deut 32:31). While YHWH will certainly judge his people for their rebellion (death in exile) he will just as certainly restore them to life (resurrection) in keeping with his

[94] Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, 96.

[95] The verb "to crush" (מָחַץ) first appears in Balaam's oracles (Num 24:8, 17) where it describes the Israelites' capacity to destroy their enemies because YHWH is with them, namely, the future king (see also Ps 110:5–6). This is the predominant use of the word in Scripture, but in this context in Deut it bridges YHWH's wrath against Israel for their idolatry (Deut 32:26–38) and his wrath against the enemies of Israel (Deut 32:40–43). It seems that YHWH will "crush" both, but only his covenant people will experience healing.

temporary wrath in conjunction with his infinite covenant loyalty as he revealed to Moses (Exod 34:6–7).[96]

Summary

In this chapter I endeavored to show that in the Eden narrative (Gen 2:4–3:24) Moses teaches that the promise of death as a result of disobedience (Gen 2:17) was realized in the expulsion of the first man and woman from Eden. I sought to demonstrate that literary indications in both the Eden narrative and more broadly in the Pentateuch parallel the certain future exile of Israel from the promised land with the death of the first humans. Finally, I attempted to validate an implied hope of return to Eden on the basis of the certainty of the return—resurrection—of Israel to the promised land in Deuteronomy. The basis for this hope is most clearly present in YHWH God's promise that a future offspring from the woman will bruise the serpent (Gen 3:15). In the Pentateuch, to die is to be exiled from sacred space, that is, from the presence of the living God with its attendant, abundant blessings. To live, on the other hand, is to be restored to that place.[97] To return to Eden is nothing less than to be resurrected from death.

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[96] On Exod 34:6–7 as a paradigmatic revelation of YHWH's character and the perfect balance between salvation and judgment therein, see James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 56–57, 104.

[97] For a locative understanding of life and death in Genesis, see Reno, *Genesis*, 96–97.

CHAPTER 3

BIRTH FROM BARRENNESS AS RESURRECTION FROM DEATH: MICRO-INDICATORS OF RESURRECTION TYPOLOGY IN GENESIS

In chapter 2 I argued that from the very beginning of the Scriptures life and death are locative concepts with the presence of YHWH as the reference point. To live is to be with YHWH while exile from the presence of YHWH is death. The abundant fruitfulness of the garden of Eden across from the wilderness to the east of Eden associates life and death further with fruitful land and desolate wasteland, respectively. Therefore, in the earliest chapters of Genesis Moses seeks to shape the imagination of YHWH's people by characterizing life and death in terms of land and location.

In this chapter my goal is to demonstrate through careful exegetical attention to the book of Genesis that Moses further develops the categories of life and death with respect to procreation. He does so by showing through the various narratives that a barren womb was equivalent to death and, therefore, birth from a previously barren womb was equivalent to resurrection from death. My hope is that my argument in chapters 2 and 3 serves to show that restoration from exile and birth from barrenness are complementary typological structures that are both author-intended and prospective and, further, that they both prophesy resurrection from death as the means by which the pre-fall Edenic conditions will be restored by the seed of the woman. Thus, the content of this chapter *supports* my thesis and main argument in chapter 4.

This chapter will begin by briefly surveying recent literature on criteria for determining typology in Scripture. I will also summarize the work of Jon D. Levenson regarding the Israelite conception of procreational barrenness as death which serves as a significant conceptual foundation for my argument. The bulk of this chapter will consist

of exegesis of several key texts in the book of Genesis focusing primarily on the relatively rare micro-level indicator "barren" (עֲקָרָה). By the end of this chapter, I hope to have shed light on one aspect of the holistic but varied tapestry that is resurrection from death typology in the book of Genesis.

Micro-Level Indicators of Typological Structures

Much ink has been spent in attempts to define criteria for identifying typology in Scripture.[1] I have adopted the phrase "micro-level indicators" from James Hamilton's recent work for two reasons.[2] First, the criteria Hamilton identifies self-consciously stands on the sound conceptual framework laid by those before him as far back as Melito of Sardis.[3] In doing so he shows the long history of acknowledgement of the typological nature of the Scriptures. Second, "micro-level" implicitly begs the existence of a "macro-

[1] E. Earle Ellis argues for two principles relating OT events to those in the new dispensation: historical correspondence and escalation. E. Earle Ellis, foreword to *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, by Leonard Goppelt, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), x. Richard B. Hays proposes several criteria for testing the presence of "scriptural echoes" in Paul's letters: availability, volume, recurrence, thematic coherence, historical plausibility, history of interpretation, and satisfaction. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1989), 29–32. John Strazicich offers standards for qualifying allusions in Scripture: tacit use of antecedent sources of which readers have knowledge, the author's deliberate use of distinctive and identifiable elements of precursor texts, and assignment of meaning by readers from the "evoked text" to the "alluding text" in accordance with the author's intention. John Strazicich, *Joel's Use of Scripture and the Scripture's Use of Joel: Appropriation and Resignification in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 27. Samuel Emadi most recently articulates several essential features of biblical types: they are historical, prospective, textual, they exhibit escalation, and they unfold through the covenants. Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 23. See also G. K. Beale, *Handbook of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 14; Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 130–37; and Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," *SBJT* 21, no. 2 (2017): 18–25.

[2] James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 28.

[3] See Stuart George Hall, ed., *Melito of Sardis on Pascha and Fragments: Texts and Translations* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1979). Melito affirms both historical correspondence and escalation in significance as essential features of typology in Scripture.

level," and this distinction is necessary and helpful.[4] Inspired Old Testament authors utilize both in tandem to highlight patterns in salvation history and prophetically anticipate their fulfillment in the promised royal seed.

"Micro-level indicators" of typology are literary features in the text that enable readers to identify, establish, and defend authorial intent in connecting two or more biblical people, places, events, or institutions typologically. Hamilton writes,

> The key features of typology are historical correspondence and escalation, and historical correspondence is established by: (1) the re-use of key terms, (2) the quotation of phrases or lines, (3) the repetition of sequences of events, and (4) similarity in salvation-historical significance or covenantal import. These means for establishing historical correspondence provide us with *criteria* that can be used to determine when later biblical authors mean to signal typological relationships with material in earlier passages of Scripture.[5]

In this chapter I will highlight instances of historical correspondence *within the book of Genesis itself* according to these criteria, especially the first three as enumerated by Hamilton. Covenantal import will become much more operative in my argument when I examine how later biblical authors interpret the birth of Isaac in chapter 6. By these criteria, biblical authors establish patterns, and patterns are inherently anticipatory in the context of promise. Hamilton writes further,

> Typological development functions as follows: when patterns of historical correspondences are repeated across narratives, expectations accumulate and cause escalation in the perceived significance of the repeated similarities and patterns. What [the biblical authors] instinctively understood and communicated, we can validate by means of these criteria.[6]

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[4] On "macro-level indicators" of typological structures in Gen, see chap, 5. See Hamilton, *Typology*, 331–32. Close attention to literary structures is, in my view, Hamilton's key contribution to the ongoing conversation regarding the validity of biblical typology.

[5] Hamilton, *Typology*, 24. For more on each of these criteria, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 20–23. On historical correspondence and escalation as the two key features of typology, see Ellis, foreword to Goppelt, *Typos*, x.

[6] Hamilton, *Typology*, 25.

In a recent monograph, Kevin S. Chen distinguished own interpretive method, which is focused on authorial intent and typology.[7] By "typology" Chen refers to the interpretive vein of Leonard Goppelt and R. M. Davidson.[8] In his critique, Chen argues that typology is a method of historical interpretation "that seeks historical analogies among *referents* of the biblical text (e.g., event, persons, institutions)."[9] His methodology, on the other hand, is exegetical and textual. Chen notes,

> Although typological patterns are suggestive and noteworthy, the important distinction is that this book approaches them in a different way. The present purpose is not to discover *historical* analogies but *textual* ones that can be shown to be part of an author's compositional strategy. Accordingly, rather than drawing comparisons between things in the Pentateuch and Christ regardless of whether the author of the Pentateuch intended them as such, authorial intent is treated as essential, a sine qua non.[10]

Thus, Chen is seeking to correct typological interpretive methodology that makes connections between Christ and various Old Testament referents without reference to the intent of the human author.[11] He argues against distinctions between human and divine authorial intent and seeks, rather, to live in the textual world of the Bible—specifically the Pentateuch—and its own compositional strategies.[12]

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[7] Kevin S. Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019).

[8] Goppelt, *Typos*; R. M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1981); see also Beale, *Handbook*; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*; Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis"; and Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*. All these scholars argue for typology in Scripture on the basis of authorial intent to some degree.

[9] Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 13, emphasis original. Here he is following David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship Between the Old and New Testaments*, 3rd ed. (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2010).

[10] Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 14, emphasis added.

[11] For an example of the interpretation of intertextual connections with little regard for authorial intent, see Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. See also Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2014).

[12] For examples of typological interpretation involving distinctions between human and divine authorial intent, see Raymond E. Brown, *The "Sensus Plenior" of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore: St. Mary's University, 1955); and Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis." Sequeira and Emadi propose *sensus praegnans* following Douglas J. Moo, "The Problem of *Sensus Plenior*," in *Hermeneutics, Authority,*

As I argued in chapter 1, I agree with Chen regarding authorial intent and am seeking to demonstrate an interpretive strategy in this dissertation that acknowledges typological structures in Scripture accordingly. Two points of critique are, however, in order. First, it is unnecessary to abandon typology in an effort to emphasize authorial intent in interpretation. Hamilton centers human authorial intent in his recent work, as does Samuel Emadi.[13] These recent efforts demonstrate an overall movement in biblical studies involving typology away from mere historical correspondence in the eye of the beholder and toward exegesis and literary analysis. Chen seems to distinguish between text and history, but this is fruitless because the only access interpreters have to salvation history is what is recorded by the biblical authors.[14] Historical correspondence and textual, author-intended correspondence are not mutually exclusive. On the contrary, they are complementary—often even indistinguishable—as inspired biblical authors recount YHWH's providence in history in such a way to indicate "promise-shaped patterns" textually.[15]

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and Canon, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 175–212. See also Gentry and Wellum, who argue for biblical theology according to "the Bible's own terms," which I understand to be conceptually the same as Chen's "compositional strategy." Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 45–46. On the textual world of the Bible, see Michael B. Shepherd, *The Textual World of the Bible*, Studies in Biblical Literature 156 (New York: Peter Lang, 2013).

[13] See Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 22, 24–26.

[14] For a cogent critique of Geerhardus Vos concerning the subject matter of biblical theology being the "History of Special Revelation" rather than the text of the Scriptures themselves, see Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 17n34. See Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1975), v.

[15] Hamilton defines "promise-shaped pattern" this way:

> The creating and promising word of God resulted in earlier biblical authors (beginning with Moses) discerning certain patterns in their material. The promises and the patterns then began to work together, and later biblical authors had not only the promises but the patterns they produced influencing their perception. These later authors, then, having discerned the author-intended and promise-shaped patterns in earlier Scripture, saw similar patterns, which they then included in their own material. (Hamilton, *Typology*, 5)

Second, Chen's repeated insistence that typology is an interpretive enterprise fails to account for the typological nature of Scripture itself.[16] He is caricaturing typology based on the work of a few rather than accounting for the more recent proposals that observe typological structures in Scripture exegetically. In reality, Chen's work stands on the shoulders of those whom he is critiquing while he makes cogent and necessary corrections regarding authorial intent. He reads the Pentateuch typologically because Moses intended it. This is precisely the approach of Hamilton and this dissertation. Therefore, as I observe textual indications of typological structures in Genesis in this chapter, I agree with Chen's approach. I am just not abandoning the nomenclature of "typology." Micro-level indicators of typology are both historical *and* textual, and they are author-intended.

My goal in this chapter, then, is to observe repeated key terms, quotations of lines or phrases, and the repetition of sequences of events in the book of Genesis that serve as micro-level indicators of a prospective typological structure. The key repetition is the adjective "barren" (עֲקָרָה), and the implied prospective typological structure is birth from barrenness.[17] The repetition of birth from barrenness in each of the three patriarchal generations is precisely the brand of historical correspondence that Hamilton and others identify as a key indicator of author-intended typology, and this within a single book of

[16] See my interaction with 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 *GGRC*, 135–55, on this point in chap. 1.

[17] This word appears only three times in Gen (11:30; 25:21; 29:31) and an additional three times in the Pentateuch (Exod 23:26; twice in Deut 7:14). In Gen it describes the three matriarchs Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, and serves as the main micro-level indicator of a typological pattern between them. The other three occurrences are promises that Israel will not experience barrenness in the promised land if they are faithful to their covenantal obligations. The other occurrences of "barren" (עֲקָרָה) in the Hebrew Bible include the description of Manoah's wife (Judg 13:2–3), Hannah's song (1 Sam 2:5), a description of Zion (Isa 54:1), a psalm praising YHWH's ability to reverse fortune (Ps 113:9), and a description of those whom the wicked oppress (Job 24:21). For more on the meaning and significance of this word, see Victor P. Hamilton, "6829 עָקַר," in *NIDOTTE*, 3:509–10.

the Old Testament.[18] The significance of the birth-from-barrenness type derives from a textual and theological association between barrenness and death.

Barrenness in Israelite Culture

In a recent monograph, Jon D. Levenson proposes a conception of life and death present in the Hebrew Bible based on a social, familial identity rather than an individualistic one:

> Death and life in the Hebrew Bible are often best seen as relational events and are for the selfsame reason inseparable from the personal circumstances of those described as living or dead. To be alive in this frequent biblical sense of the word inevitably entailed more than merely existing in a certain physical state. It also entailed having one's being within a flourishing and continuing kin group that dwelt in a productive and secure association with its land. Conversely, to be widowed, bereaved of children, or in exile was necessarily to experience death.[19]

Here Levenson summarizes three important points that serve as foundational biblical concepts for my argument in this chapter and throughout the remainder of this dissertation: the Israelite conception of identity, the resulting significance of barrenness, and the connection between promise and progeny.

First, Levenson demonstrates convincingly that in ancient Israelite culture personal identity was less individualistic and much more derivative of social and familial setting: "The self of an individual in ancient Israel was entwined with the self of his or her family" such that "Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob continue to exist after they have died, not . . . as disembodied spirits but as the people whose fathers they will always be."[20] This is

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[18] Against Chen who argues, "Typological arguments are more easily rejected by those who hold fast to the meaning of the Old Testament itself because such arguments appear to be more of an illegitimate Christian 'appropriation' of the Old Testament than a fair-minded exegesis of it. . . . Typological arguments are harder to make in terms of the Old Testament alone." Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 21–22.

[19] Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2006), 154–55. For a historical survey of the development of the individualistic, internally-referent conception of selfhood dominant in the postmodern context, see Carl R. Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self: Cultural Amnesia, Expressive Individualism, and the Road to Sexual Revolution* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020).

[20] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 109, 30.

the reason why, for instance, Jacob expects to follow deceased Joseph to Sheol upon hearing of his death (Gen 37:33–35).[21] He fears that in Joseph's untimely death his lineage—and thus his self—will cease to be. This conception of self is foreign to post-romantic Western philosophy in which inward-focused, consciousness-based selfhood dominates as in the famous words of René Descartes, "I think, therefore I am."[22] This is an important, foundational observation which, according to Levenson, shapes the conception of life and death in the Hebrew Bible.

If identity and selfhood are primarily familial in ancient Israel, then, second, barrenness functions as a sort of death, for if one's family ceases to continue through lack of progeny, then he himself has, in a sense, died. Levenson writes,

> Given the construction of personal identity in the Hebrew Bible, infertility and the loss of children serve as the functional equivalent of death. Striking at each generation of the patriarchs of Genesis, and then at Judah in the next, childlessness in one or both of these modes threatens to terminate the family, thus evoking the terror that later generations (including our own) feel in the face of their personal deaths.[23]

Levenson characterizes this as "functional equivalence," meaning that in both the Israelite mind and in the text of Genesis barrenness "functions" as a death sentence. This is why Rachel laments, "Give sons to me, and if there are none I am dying!" (Gen 30:1), and why Agur's oracle equates Sheol with the oppressed, or restrained, womb (Prov 30:15–16).[24]

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[21] For an argument that Sheol represents the abode of those who died untimely deaths and the prolongation of a life lived outside the blessing of God, see Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 67–81. For an argument for equivalence between the grave and Sheol, see Johannes Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture*, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 28 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1991), 460–70. For a broad, contextual study of Sheol in the Old Testament, see Philip S. Johnston, *Shades of Sheol: Death and Afterlife in the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 69–124.

[22] Translated from the Latin phrase *cogito, ergo sum* in René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, 4th ed., trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999).

[23] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 119–20.

[24] On Gen 30:1, see J. Gerald Janzen, who writes, "If [Jacob] is not able to give [Rachel] children, that is an indication . . . that she has not power to give life, her womb is not alive, she is generatively dead. But this means that, for her and in her, the reign of death is virtually absolute." J. Gerald Janzen, "Resurrection and Hermeneutics: On Exodus 3.6 and Mark 12.26," *JSNT* 23 (1985): 53.

For the patriarchal families in Genesis, to be barren was to experience a mode of death that is metaphorical rather than literal.[25]

Then, finally, if barrenness functions as death, reversal of barrenness in the form of birth, or "the return of fertility," functions like resurrection: it replaces death with life.[26] The emphasis on "seed" (זֶרַע) in Genesis indicates that "fertility and birth constitute the prime model of renewal" early in salvation history, not just of lineage but of promise as well.[27] Through progeny, YHWH can keep his promise to Abraham regarding inheritance in the land or to Israel regarding a Davidic king even after Abraham and David, as individuals, have both died.[28] Therefore, the threefold reversal of barrenness in Genesis tightly connects familial identity and progeny with the promise of a serpent-crushing seed (Gen 3:15) and represents resurrection from death, both of the seed lineage and its associated promise.[29] The seed of the woman will restore Edenic relationship between YHWH and man—life—but only by overcoming death.

In summary, Levenson's work is helpful in that he highlights a conceptual framework in the book of Genesis according to authorial intent and draws conclusions regarding the meaning of life and death in the Hebrew Bible. The Israelite conception of life and death was very different from ours today. Familial identity, barrenness as a functional equivalent of death, and the perpetuation of YHWH's promise through progeny

[25] Levenson argues, "Grave, pit, underworld, utmost bounds of the earth, engulfing waters, subterranean city, prison—all these metaphors communicate a mode of existence, one that, in fact, characterizes people who have not 'died' in our sense of the term at all." Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 45.

[26] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 170.

[27] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 145.

[28] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 113.

[29] On the connection between Gen 3:15 and the promise of progeny to Abraham in Gen 12:1–3, see James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Seed of the Woman and the Blessing of Abraham," *TynBul* 58, no. 2 (2007): 253–73.

all form an author-intended imaginary in the book of Genesis through which I will interpret the barren matriarch type.

Barrenness in Genesis

In the Patriarchal narratives—those covering the lives of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and spanning hundreds of years of history—not a single generation avoided the barrier to reproduction that was the barren womb.[30] Each of the matriarchs was "barren" (עֲקָרָה), resulting in a consecutive cycle of promise threatened followed by promise miraculously fulfilled. The great enemy in the book of Genesis is not death as one thinks of it today—the ceasing of certain physiological functions—but the death of lineage represented by the barren womb.[31] In this section I will examine the instances of barrenness in Genesis in the order in which they occur in the book: Sarai, Abimelech's house, Rebekah, and Rachel. I will conclude this section by observing the emphasis on fruitfulness in Jacob's blessing of Joseph in Genesis 49.

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[30] Relatively recent studies on barrenness in the Bible include Mary Chilton Callaway, "Sing O Barren One: A Study in Comparative Midrash" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1979); Martha Elizabeth Vetter, "From Barrenness to Blessing: An Examination of the Barren Woman in Scripture as a Model of God's Faithfulness to His Covenant" (MA diss., Trinity Episcopal School for Ministry, 1989); Kamila Abrahamova Blessing, "The Background of the Barren Woman Motif in Galatians 4:27" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1996); Elizabeth Ann Johnson, "Barrenness, Birth, and Biblical Allusions in Luke 1–2" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2000); Ruth Forsythe, "From Barrenness to Birth: Stories of Impossibilities and Life" (MCS diss., Regent College, 2000); Hemchand Gossai, *Barrenness and Blessing: Abraham, Sarah, and the Journey of Faith* (Cambridge: Lutterworth, 2010); Jessica L. Scott, "An Examination of the Barren Mother Stories of the Hebrew Bible" (MA thesis, University of Georgia, 2011); Blanche Clipper Hudson, *Barrenness: Journey to God's Divine Provision* (Bloomington, IN: WestBow, 2015); and Dale E. Kramer, "Barrenness: A Consideration of YHWH's Modus Operandi within Cultic Covenantal Renewal for the Establishment, Sustainability, and Fulfillment of Divine Purpose" (ThM thesis, Regent University School of Divinity, 2018). See also James G. Williams, "The Beautiful and the Barren: Conventions in Biblical Type-Scenes," *JSOT* 17 (1980): 107–19; Athalya Brenner, *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative* (The Biblical Seminar. Sheffield: JSOT, 1985); Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative* (New York: Basic, 2011), 58, 233–34; and Joel S. Baden, "The Nature of Barrenness in the Hebrew Bible," in *Disability Studies and Biblical Literature*, ed. Candida R. Moss and Jeremy Schipper (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 13–28.

[31] Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, 120.

Sarai

Even before the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24) properly begins Moses highlights the fact that Abraham's wife was unable to bear children. Terah fathered three sons: while Haran died in Ur, both Abram and Nahor married (Gen 11:28–29). Nahor's wife, Milcah, is named both here at the outset of the Abraham narrative and again at the conclusion where her numerous children are named. By contrast, the text of Genesis 11:30 emphatically draws attention to the fact of Sarai's barrenness: "But Sarai was barren (עֲקָרָה); she had no child."[32] What was perhaps a common occurrence in the lives of many women at the time—and remains so today—takes on heightened significance in the narrative not only because Moses states the fact twice and with varied expression but, more importantly, because of the immediate, apparently insurmountable problem it presents for YHWH's promise to Abram that he will make him a "great nation" (Gen 12:2).[33] The narrative tension is clear: how exactly will this foreigner and his barren wife, separated from his relatives and father's household and alone in a strange land, become a great nation according to YHWH's word?

This tension between barrenness and YHWH's promise of fruitfulness resulting in a great nation originated in Eden with the fall of the first man and woman. There YHWH blessed them by giving an abundantly fruitful place (Gen 2:8–10), enabling them to be fruitful and multiply to fill the earth (Gen 1:28), and setting them as rulers over creation

[32] Claus Westermann writes,

> The verse consists of two sentences with virtually the same meaning…we encounter in 11:30 the lapidary form of a well known and widespread narrative motif which generally functions as an introduction to a narrative. The sentence serves as the *exposition* of a narrative and acquires additional strength from the literary device of parallelism. . . . The sentence in 11:30, therefore . . . is an important witness for the significance of the narrative motif of the infertility of a wife. (Claus Westermann, *Genesis 12–36: A Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion [Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1985], 138–39, emphasis original)

[33] According to Gordon J. Wenham, "A large population, a large territory, and a spiritual character make a nation great." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 275. Here is the first instance in the Abraham narrative in which seed and land, or dynasty and dominion, are conjoined. On the controlling influence of the seed and land blessings on the storyline of the Old Testament, see Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003). For further on the meaning of "greatness" as "numerous," see my argument concerning Isa 51:2 in chap. 6.

in his image (Gen 1:28).[34] After their sin, this threefold blessing was upended in YHWH's judgment: their rulership over the animals of the field would be a struggle characterized by enmity (Gen 3:15), they were expelled from their place of life and provision (Gen 3:23–24), and the woman was promised that, while she would still bring forth children, she would do so with "pain" (Gen 3:16).[35]

According to YHWH's call, however, his blessing on Abram and Sarai would overcome all these things.[36] The land he will show Abram is Canaan, a good and broad land abundantly flowing with milk and honey (Gen 12:1; cf. Exod 3:8). Additionally, he and his wife Sarai—whose name means "princess"—are promised a royal lineage (Gen 17:6, 16). Finally, his offspring will be as numerous as the stars, a truly great nation (Gen 12:2; cf. 15:5). Sarai's barrenness, though, a reality before their pilgrimage and emphasized prior to YHWH's blessing in the narrative, stands as a barrier to all. Surely through a dead womb Abram cannot become a great nation from which kings are born, and he cannot enjoy or make efficient use of a broad, abundant land himself. In this way, Abram's family is dead before it even gets started. Doubt creeps into the situation—both in Abram and Sarai and in the minds of readers—that Abram later voices explicitly, saying, "Lord YHWH, what will you give me, since I continue to live childless, and the one who will acquire my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" (Gen 15:2). Since YHWH had not given

[34] God commanded humanity to "subdue" (כָּבַשׁ) the earth and "rule over" (רָדָה) its creatures (Gen 1:28). The first involves humanity bringing the earth under its control for its advantage (a nuance of "conquer" in Num 32:22, 29; Josh 18:1; 2 Sam 8:11; 1 Chron 22:18; Zech 9:18 and a nuance of "enslave" in Jer 34:11, 16; 2 Chron 28:10; Neh 5:5). The second involves humanity exercising royal dominion (Num 24:17–19; 1 Kgs 5:4; 9:23; Ps 72:8). The function of humanity in both is to exercise kingly authority over creation as God's image-bearers (Gen 1:26). See Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 56–62.

[35] There are two complementary descriptions of the judgment on Eve: YHWH God states, "I will greatly increase your pain (עִצְּבוֹנֵךְ) and your conception (וְהֵרֹנֵךְ)," a hendiadys describing physical and emotional distress throughout the reproductive process, and also, "with pain (בְּעֶצֶב) you will bear sons" (Gen 3:16). In essence, the imperative to "be fruitful and multiply" (Gen 1:28) will be severely impeded because of the fall. The repetition of barrenness in the matriarchs is an outworking of this judgment. See Hamilton, *Typology*, 41.

[36] Hamilton asserts, "The blessing of Abraham not only extends and elaborates upon God's blessing on Adam (Gen 1:28) and Noah (9:1), it also answers the judgment spoken after sin in 3:14–19 point for point." Hamilton, *Typology*, 41.

Abram a "seed" (זֶרַע), his lineage was dead, and his legacy would pass to a foreigner (Gen 15:3).

In the same way that hope for the first man and woman was tied explicitly to a "seed" (זֶרַע) in Eden (Gen 3:15), however, so also hope remained for Abram that his lineage would continue through innumerable "seed" (זֶרַע) (Gen 15:5). In consecutive interactions with YHWH, Abram learns that a son from his own body will inherit both his household and YHWH's promise (Gen 15:4) and that barren, ninety-year-old Sarah will be the one to bear this promised heir (Gen 17:19). While a barren womb stood as an apparently insurmountable obstacle to fulfillment of YHWH's promise, through procreation he will do the impossible: he will bring forth life from death.

Abimelech's House

The story of Abraham and Sarah's encounter with Abimelech in Gerar (Gen 20:1–18) details the second time in the Abraham narrative that he lied regarding his wife to preserve his life.[37] This episode is especially tense because of its timing: the reader is left to wonder if Abimelech might be the father of Sarah's promised son when he took her into his harem. In this sense, even when YHWH had promised to overcome Sarah's barrenness to bring forth Isaac, the obstacle of Abraham's fear remained. YHWH intervened, however, to ensure that Abimelech never touched Sarah, Abraham's wife, a fact stated emphatically at both the outset (Gen 20:2) and conclusion (Gen 20:18) of this pericope.[38] While it neither focuses on the healed barrenness of an Israelite matriarch nor

[37] For an argument that these two episodes indicate the existence of parallel documents in the redaction of Genesis, see Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), 168–69, 299; and Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 226, 270. For an argument that the second—and the third, in which Isaac does the same with Rebekah (Gen 26:1–13)—presupposes the first (Gen 20:1–18), see John van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1975), 167–91; and Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 187–88, 389–90, 516–17. For a critique of van Seters and Westermann, see T. Desmond Alexander, "Are the Wife/Sister Incidents of Genesis Literary Compositional Variants?," *VT* 42, no. 2 (1992): 145–53.

[38] Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, NAC, vol. 1B (Nashville: B & H, 2005), 260; Bruce K. Waltke, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan: 2001), 284.

includes the word "barren" (עֲקָרָה), this episode certainly demonstrates and emphasizes the healing of closed wombs and, as I will demonstrate, associates barrenness with death.[39] Then, immediately following the healing of Abimelech's house in the narrative, Sarah's own barrenness is healed in the birth of Isaac (Gen 21:1–2).

Genesis 20:1–18 is organized chiastically around the fear of Abimelech and his servants as depicted below.[40] Their fear is both the result of what precedes verse 8 in the narrative and the motivation for what follows.[41] Moving outward from the center, God's rebuke of Abimelech parallels Abimelech's rebuke of Abraham, and Abimelech's taking of Sarah matches her return. While the correlation between the first two and last two sections is less apparent, Abraham's lie in verse 2 ultimately results in both a monetary gift (Gen 20:16) and freedom to dwell in Abimelech's land unhindered (Gen 20:15), a turn of events which can be attributed solely to the grace of God. Furthermore, the result of Abraham's sojourn in Gerar (Gen 20:1) is his prophetic intercession on behalf of Abimelech leading to the healing of his house (Gen 20:17). Thus, although not immediately the case, the outcome of this story and Abraham's sojourn in Gerar was an outworking of YHWH's promise to Abraham that those who bless him would be blessed by YHWH and that through him all the families of the earth would receive blessing (Gen 12:3).[42] For Abimelech and his house that blessing was healed barrenness.

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[39] Sarah is "barren" (עֲקָרָה) in Gen 11:30, and in Gen 16:2 she says of herself, "Look, YHWH has prevented me (עֲצָרַנִי) from bearing children." This is the same term used in Gen 20:18 regarding infertility in Abimelech's house: "For YHWH had completely closed (עָצֹר עָצַר) every womb." For further discussion see Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, WBC, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 74–75. The absence of the micro-level indicator separates Abimelech's house from the typological progression of the matriarchs and, thus, mutes any possible covenantal significance outside the Abrahamic lineage.

[40] I have adapted this literary structure from Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 67–68. For an alternative chiastic proposal which also centers on v. 8, see Waltke, *Genesis*, 282–83.

[41] Gunkel, *Genesis*, 222.

[42] Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 75; Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 259–60; James McKeown, *Genesis*, THOTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 112.

A. Abraham sojourns in Gerar (20:1)

B. Abraham speaks to Sarah (20:2a)

C. Abimelech takes Sarah (20:2b)

D. God rebukes Abimelech in a dream (20:3–7)

X. Abimelech and his servants fear (20:8)

D'. Abimelech rebukes Abraham (20:9–13)

C'. Abimelech returns Sarah (20:14)

B'. Abimelech speaks to Abraham and Sarah (20:15–16)

A'. Abraham prays for Abimelech and his house (20:17–18)

Close attention to the fourth section (D) of the narrative demonstrates that the healed barrenness of Abimelech's house was akin to resurrection from death. Genesis 20:3–7 itself is rather tightly structured as a chiasm centered on verse 6 as shown below.[43] In God's interaction with Abimelech in the night, he began and concluded with the threat of death, first with respect to Abimelech himself (20:3), and then including all who belonged to him (20:7). While God affirmed Abimelech's claim to innocence, it was attributable only to God's intervention: he had not approached Sarah (Gen 20:4) because God had not allowed it (Gen 20:6). If Abimelech would heed God's command to return Sarah to Abraham he would live, but if not, his death and that of his household was certain (20:7).

A. Abimelech is a dead man (20:3a–b)

B. Because he has taken a man's wife (20:3c)

C. But he had not approached her (20:4a)

D. Will YHWH kill a righteous nation? (20:4b–5a)

E. Abimelech did this in the integrity of his heart (20:5b)

[43] I observed this structure independent of Alexander and Mathews who both propose a similar chiasm. See T. Desmond Alexander, *Abraham in the Negev: A Source-Critical Investigation of Genesis 20:12–22:19* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 1997), 39; and Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 250.

X. God spoke to Abimelech in a dream (20:6a)

E'. Abimelech did this in the integrity of his heart (20:6b)

D'. YHWH kept Abimelech from sinning (20:6c)

C'. YHWH did not let Abimelech touch her (20:6d)

B'. YHWH commands Abimelech to return the man's wife (20:7a)

A'. Abimelech and all who are his will surely die if he does not (20:7b)

God's highly rhetorical pronouncement to Abimelech, "Behold, you are dead" (הִנְּךָ מֵת), in verse 3 had been realized, readers find, in the barrenness of his entire household. The episode concludes with the healing of Abimelech, his wife, and his female slaves, resulting in their ability to bear children (Gen 20:17). The final verse details the occasion for such healing: "For YHWH had completely closed every womb in the house of Abimelech on account of the matter of Sarah the wife of Abraham" (Gen 20:18). This behind-the-scenes information indicates that Sarah had been in Abimelech's harem for several months before God came to Abimelech in the dream.[44] When he did, Abimelech was dead because his family was dead: there would be no children born to him.[45] According to the word of YHWH, Abimelech and his entire household would "surely die" (מוֹת תָּמוּת) because YHWH had "completely closed" (עָצֹר עָצַר) the wombs of every woman in his house (Gen 20:7, 18).[46] Thus, YHWH's healing of this barrenness was the reversal of his death sentence on Abimelech's family. Abimelech was a dead man (Gen 20:6), but at the word of YHWH's prophet he lived. The reversal of barrenness

[44] Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 74.

[45] Here I am reading the narrative according to the categories established by Levenson in *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*, which I summarized previously in this chap. See also Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 259.

[46] Each of these phrases consist of an infinitive absolute followed by an imperfect of the same verbal root, the only two such phrases in the pericope. Furthermore, "surely die" (מוֹת תָּמוּת) in v. 7 is a quotation of the same phrase in Gen 2:17. I am interpreting these features as indications of a strong, metaphorical corollary between barrenness, exile, and death in Genesis.

represented resurrection from death for Abimelech and his house, a reality soon to be realized for Abraham and Sarah as well.[47]

Rebekah

Following the death of Abraham, the "generations of Isaac" (Gen 25:19) begin with a brief rehearsal of his marriage to Rebekah at the age of forty (Gen 25:20). Then the text says, "And Isaac entreated (וַיֶּעְתַּר) YHWH on behalf of his wife because she was barren (עֲקָרָה). And YHWH was entreated (וַיֵּעָתֶר) to him, and Rebekah his wife conceived" (Gen 25:21).[48] This is the second of the three uses of the adjective "barren" (עֲקָרָה) in the book of Genesis. This statement of Rebekah's barrenness—which apparently lasted for the first twenty years of their marriage—clearly alludes to the similar statement regarding Sarai earlier in Genesis (Gen 11:30).[49] Furthermore, the verb "entreated" (עָתַר) is used by Moses in the account of the exodus from Egypt several times to refer to his own intercessory prayer on behalf of Pharaoh (Exod 8:25–26; 10:17–18). This emphasis on Isaac's intercession on behalf of Rebekah rather than Rebekah praying for herself resembles Abraham's earlier prophetic intercession regarding the barrenness of Abimelech's house (Gen 20:17). Altogether, very quickly Moses establishes Isaac as a

[47] Several commentators highlight the irony in this pericope regarding Abraham's successful intercession on behalf of Abimelech's household resulting in restored fertility and Sarah's continued barrenness as she departs. This irony heightens the impact of the birth of Isaac, which immediately follows in the narrative. See Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 71; McKeown, *Genesis*, 111; Waltke, *Genesis*, 288; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 74–5; Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 260.

[48] The verb "entreated" (עָתַר) commonly involves intercessory prayer on behalf of others and likens Isaac to Moses who would do the same (Exod 8:26; 17:15). The *Qal* form and the *Niphal* form of the verb create a "rhetorical feature" that "underscores the effectiveness of the patriarch's intercession and the responsiveness of his God." See Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 386, including n45.

[49] Isaac was 60 years old when the boys were born (Gen 25:26) and he was 40 years old when he married Rebekah (Gen 25:20). Abraham lived a total of 175 years (Gen 25:7) while Sarah lived 127 years (Gen 23:1), and Isaac was born when they were aged 100 years and 91 years, respectively (Gen 21:5; 17:17; 18:10). This means that Abraham witnessed the first 15 years of Jacob's and Esau's lives, and Sarah died when Isaac was 36 years old, prior to his marriage to Rebekah.

new Abraham facing the same barrier to promise that his father did, and in so doing he has inaugurated a typology of birth from barrenness.[50]

The obstacle that is Rebekah's barrenness stands in stark contrast to the blessing her family pronounced over her when she departed to marry Isaac. They sang, "Our sister, may you *become thousands of ten thousands*, and may your seed possess the gate of those who hate him" (Gen 24:60). This blessing bears a marked resemblance to the blessing YHWH promised to bestow upon Sarah, saying, "I will bless her, and she will *become nations*" (Gen 17:16). Furthermore, YHWH later promised Abraham, "Your seed will possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen 22:17). Thus, in being chosen by YHWH to be the wife of Isaac, Rebekah took her place in the lineage of the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) that would result in both many nations populated by innumerable people and a singular seed who would triumph over his enemies.[51] As Isaac is a new Abraham, Rebekah is the new Sarah. And, as YHWH overcame Sarah's barrenness to bring forth Isaac, so he did in Rebekah's case to bring forth Esau and Jacob. The promise of land, seed, and blessing, apparently dead again in another dead womb, was resurrected.

Rachel

After deceiving (רָמָה) Isaac and receiving the blessing intended for Esau (Gen 27:35), Jacob fled to Paddan Aram and there sought to marry his uncle Laban's daughter,

[50] I am basing this assertion on the textual indications listed previously in addition to others such as Isaac's "sister-fib" episode (Gen 26:7–11). The preponderance of textual repetition indicates a providential, historical correspondence between Abraham and Isaac. Such a historical correspondence is the basis for a typological pattern according to Ellis, foreword to Goppelt, *Typos*, ix–xx. See also Hamilton, who argues for textual repetition as the key indicator of historical correspondence. Hamilton, *Typology*, 20–23, 50, 97–105. Duane A. Garrett calls this "allusive patterns in narrative," and argues such patterns must be intentional, they must develop a theological theme, and they must be present in specific sections of a narrative. Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 272, see 285–89.

[51] The word "enmity" (אֵיבָה) in Gen 3:15 is a rare expression in the Hebrew Bible, occurring only four other times (Num 35:21–22; Ezek 25:15; 35:5). It is a derivative of the verbal root "to be an enemy to" (אָיַב). See *CDCH*, 14. The word "enemies" (Gen 22:17) is the plural participial form of the same verb and the much more common expression found throughout the Hebrew Bible. Thus, the promise that the seed of Abraham will overcome his enemies is patterned off the promised triumph of the seed of the woman in his hostility with the serpent.

Rachel. Instead, Laban deceived (רָמָה) Jacob into marrying his older daughter, Leah, first (Gen 29:25). After serving seven years for each, Jacob was able to marry Rachel as well, being the only one of the two he actually loved. According to Genesis 29:31, "YHWH saw that Leah was hated, so he opened her womb, but Rachel was barren [עֲקָרָה]." This is the third and final use of the adjective "barren" (עֲקָרָה) in Genesis, which brings to completion the procession of afflicted matriarchs prior to the emergence of Israel as a nation.[52] Like Rebekah, Rachel was discovered at a well (Gen 29:9–12; cf. 24:15–21) and married to the blessed son in Abraham's lineage, but she was unable to bear children (Gen 29:31; cf. 25:21).[53] Thus, in the text Rachel is now in the place of both Sarah and Rebekah who came before her as the barren matriarch.

The narration of the birth of eleven of Jacob's sons follows (Gen 29:32–30:24) culminating in the reversal of Rachel's barrenness and the birth of Joseph (Gen 30:22–24).[54] The content of this section is arranged concentrically as shown below.[55]

A. Leah's womb opened but Rachel barren (29:31)

B. Leah's four sons (29:32–35)

C. Rachel's barrenness and death (30:1–2)

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[52] Jacob is not mentioned in any acts of conception throughout the narration of the birth of his twelve sons. Certainly, his involvement is implied, but the emphasis is on YHWH's role in granting conception and birth to both Leah and, later, Rachel. See Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 266.

[53] On betrothal at a well as a literary type-scene in Genesis in which various conventions are modified to indicate plot points in the following narrative, see Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 63–67. In the instance of Rachel, Alter highlights the opposition Jacob faces in procuring water from the well as a foreshadow of the obstacle to procreation that is Rachel's barrenness. Alter argues that there is little evidence of intentional allusion in these instances (76).

[54] Here "God remembered (וַיִּזְכֹּר) Rachel" as he did Noah (Gen 8:1), Lot (Gen 19:29), and Israel in bondage (Exod 2:24). Wenham writes, "30:22 is parallel to 8:1 in not only grammar but in setting. Both stand at the turning points in their respective stories. It was God remembering Noah that led to the floodwaters declining; it was God remembering Rachel that led to her conceiving and Jacob returning to the land of promise." Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 236. In each of these cases, "remembering" signals a significant change in YHWH's dealings with the people for their good. See Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 490.

[55] For an alternative proposal based on the threefold repetition of "saw" and a final "remembered," see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 477–78.

D. Rachel gives Bilhah as a wife (30:3–8)

D'. Leah gives Zilpah as a wife (30:9–13)

C'. Leah's mandrakes and fertility (30:14–16)

B'. Leah's two sons and Dinah (30:17–21)

A'. Rachel's womb opened and the birth of Joseph (30:22–24)

The reversal of Rachel's barrenness frames the section along with the repeated phrase "and he opened her womb" (וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ) in both Genesis 29:31 and 30:22. The births of Leah's children form the next parallel level while the children born to Jacob through his wives' servant girls are at the center. Here both Leah and Rachel follow Sarah's problematic example when she first "gave [Hagar] to Abram her husband as a wife" (וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה) (Gen 16:3; cf. 30:4, 9). While this would seem to place both Leah and Rachel as new Sarah figures, only Rachel does this so that, in her words, "and I will be built [וְאִבָּנֶה], even I, from [Bilhah]" (Gen 30:3).[56] Her expression of hope amidst barrenness is remarkably similar to Sarah's in the same circumstance: "Perhaps I will be built [אִבָּנֶה] from [Hagar]" (Geb 16:2).[57] This serves as further evidence that it is Rachel, not Leah, who follows Sarah as the barren matriarch type.

Additionally, throughout the rest of the book of Genesis, Rachel is consistently referred to as the wife of Jacob rather than Leah. A short genealogy lists the members of Jacob's family who moved to Egypt (Gen 46:8–25), which includes the "sons of Leah" (Gen 46:15) alongside the "sons of Rachel *the wife of Jacob*" (Gen 46:19). The contrast between the two is rather striking: while Rachel is explicitly listed as Jacob's wife, Leah

[56] The households of both Sarah and Rachel are "built" (בָּנָה) by YHWH, just as YHWH God "built" (בָּנָה) the first woman to establish the first household (Gen 2:22). This textual connection places Sarah and Rachel in a patterned progression with Eve and, thus, connects both their barrenness plight with her "pain in childbirth" (Gen 3:16) and the miraculous births of Isaac and Joseph with the promise of restorative seed (Gen 3:15).

[57] Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 482; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 244; Westermann, *Genesis 12–36*, 474; Waltke, *Genesis*, 411; McKeown, *Genesis*, 146; Robert Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 159.

is named in the same way Zilpah (Gen 46:18) and Bilhah (Gen 46:25), the servant girls, are named.[58] Also, when Jacob was giving instructions regarding his imminent burial in Canaan, he said, "There they buried Abraham and Sarah *his wife*; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah *his wife*; and there I buried Leah" (Gen 49:31). Again, the contrast between Leah and the other two wives is striking. While Leah's position as wife could be implied, the succession of burials would read much more consistently if Jacob had said, "And there I buried Leah *my wife*."[59] The omission appears to be both intentional and significant.

After serving his first seven years for Laban, Jacob said, "Give me my wife" (Gen 29:21), referring to Rachel, although Laban gave Leah to him at that time. After an additional seven years of service, Laban gave Rachel to Jacob "as a wife" (Gen 29:28). Even Bilhah and Zilpah were each given to Jacob "as a wife" (Gen 30:4, 9; cf. 37:2). Leah, however, is never explicitly referred to as Jacob's wife in the text. Several references to Jacob's wives in the plural appear scattered throughout the narrative, but the text clearly presents initially barren Rachel as the wife of Jacob.[60] The purpose of this subtle distinction between Leah and Rachel is to establish Jacob and Rachel in the Abraham-Sarah type and, thus, Joseph as a fulfillment of the promised seed.[61]

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[58] Mathews acknowledges this but does not assign any significance to it. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 833. Hamilton points out several more features that set Rachel's section of the genealogy from the others. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 597.

[59] Mathews does not acknowledge this as an omission nor consider it significant, calling Leah Jacob's "wife" in his commentary on this verse. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 914.

[60] Jacob asks Laban for permission to leave with, in his words, "my wives" (Gen 30:26), which after the narration of the birth of his children immediately preceding in chap. 30 where both Bilhah and Zilpah are given to him "as a wife" (Gen 30:4, 9), likely refers to all four women. He places his "wives" and children on camels to depart (Gen 31:17), and since in both cases the children include those born to the female servants, "wives" would include their mothers as well. Laban, however, refers to only his daughters as Jacob's wives (Gen 31:50), and a distinction is made between Jacob's "two wives" and his "two female servants" at Peniel (Gen 32:23). These few, implicit references are far outweighed, however, by the evidence included here and the fact that Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah (Gen 29:30), a fact evident in his placing Leah closer to danger than Rachel when he was approaching Esau (Gen 33:1–2). All things considered, in the book of Genesis, Rachel is the "wife" of Jacob in a way that Leah is not.

[61] On Joseph as a fulfillment of the Abrahamic hope, see Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 99–100, 120.

Finally, the (C and C') sections in the above literary structure form an interesting parallel that further develops the significance of Rachel's barrenness in the Jacob narrative (Gen 25:12–35:29). On the one hand, in her distress over her barrenness Rachel exclaimed to Jacob, "Give sons to me, and if there are none I am dying!" (Gen 30:1). Rather than interceding before YHWH on her behalf like his father did (Gen 25:21), Jacob became angry and dismissive (Gen 30:2). Rachel's recourse was to give Bilhah to him as Sarah gave Hagar to Abraham. On the other hand, Rachel bargained a night with Jacob in exchange for Reuben's mandrakes—another attempt at overcoming her barrenness—but the result was precisely the opposite of her intentions.[62] In that single night Leah conceived while the mandrakes apparently did nothing for Rachel.

Two things stand out in these short episodes. First, the connection between agricultural fertility (mandrakes) and human fertility continues the same vein from the Eden narrative. The garden was well-watered and contained abundant provision (Gen 2:9–10)—a perfect place for the first human couple to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28)—but after their sin and outside Eden procreation would be difficult (Gen 3:16) if not impossible, as in the case of Abraham and Sarah (Gen 11:30), Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 25:21), and now Rachel. This association between woman and land—both barren and fertile—is significant in Genesis and serves as the typological basis for the same association in the prophetic expectation for restoration from exile.[63]

Second, as was the case in the previous two generations, only YHWH was able to overcome this impossibility and grant conception. Mandrakes did not help Rachel, but YHWH did when he remembered her, resulting in the birth of Joseph (Gen 30:22–24). The fact that Leah became pregnant in that one night with Jacob only heightens this fact.

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[62] The Greeks equated "mandrakes" (דּוּדָאִים) with Mandragora, a family of plants with a legendary reputation as an aphrodisiac. For several resources on plant classifications in the Bible, see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 486–87 and nn294–97.

[63] For a detailed defense of this assertion, see chap. 4 concerning the literary foil between Sarah and Lot's wife and chap. 6 on Isaiah's interpretation of Genesis (Isa 51:1–3).

Barrenness stood as an obstacle to the accomplishment of YHWH's promise, and YHWH himself overcame it in each subsequent generation to ultimately bring forth Joseph as the seed of Abraham through whom all the families of the earth would be blessed.[64]

Jacob's Blessing on Joseph

Before the death and embalming of both Israel and Joseph in Egypt (Gen 50:2, 26), Jacob gathered his sons together to bless them. Genesis 49:1–28 is a concentric unit framed by references to "Israel" (יִשְׂרָאֵל) as the "father" (אָב) of the twelve tribes (Gen 49:2, 28).[65] The structure of the passage is depicted below. Jacob's blessings are centered on his statement in verse 18: "For your salvation I will hope, YHWH."[66] Three tribes each before and after this statement separate the two tribes over whom Jacob pronounces the longest and most positive blessings: Judah (C) and Joseph (C').

A. Assemble and listen to Israel your father (49:1–2)

B. Reuben, Simeon, and Levi (49:3–7)

C. Judah (49:8–12)

D. Zebulun, Issachar, Dan (49:13–17)

X. Hope in YHWH's salvation (49:18)

D'. Gad, Asher, Naphtali (49:19–21)

C'. Joseph (49:22–26)

[64] For an argument that Joseph serves as the covenantal conclusion of the Genesis narrative, see Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 99–100. For an argument that the return of Joseph's bones to the land of promise completes "a downward/upward move and a death-and-resurrection submotif" that begins in Genesis, see Jeffrey Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection: Joseph as a Death & Resurrection Figure in the Old Testament & Second Temple Judaism*, SSBT (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 11.

[65] For an alternative proposal for the literary structure of Gen 49:1–28 based on the various mothers, see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 870–71. Further evidence for my proposal includes Dan biting at the "heels" (עָקֵב) at the end of section D (Gen 49:17) and Gad attacking at the "heels" (עָקֵב) at the beginning of section D' (Gen 49:19), and the overall negativity of sections B and B'. For an example of "wolf" (זְאֵב) imagery as negative, see Jer 5:6 and Ezek 22:27.

[66] This is the only occurrence of "to wait, hope" (קָוָה) in the Pentateuch. Other instances of the root "to hope" together with the root "to save" (יָשַׁע) in the Hebrew Bible include Isa 8:17; 25:9; 33:2; 51:5; 59:11; Ps 25:5; Prov 25:22; Lam 3:24–26. Isa 25:9 is especially relevant as it follows on the heels of the conquering and reversal of death (Isa 25:8).

B'. Benjamin (49:27)

A'. The blessings of Israel their father (49:28)

Jacob's blessing on Joseph begins with a promise of fruitfulness (Gen 49:22) and concludes with a sixfold expression of blessing that sets Joseph apart from his brothers (Gen 49:25–26).[67] Jacob prophesies that God Almighty will bless Joseph with "blessings of the heavens above, blessings of the deep which lies underneath, and blessings of breasts and womb" (Gen 49:25). The aural wordplays between "heavens" (שָׁמַיִם) and "breasts" (שָׁדַיִם) and between "deep" (תְּהוֹם) and "womb" (וָרָחַם) closely link these two expressions.[68] The first pair carries creation overtones (cf. Gen 1:1–2) while the second refers to procreation and the nurturing of children. Thus, Joseph—through his sons, especially Ephraim (אֶפְרַיִם), through whom God made Joseph fruitful (הִפְרַנִי אֱלֹהִים) and whom Jacob blessed over his older brother (Gen 41:52; 48:20)—will experience blessing associated with both agricultural prosperity and procreational abundance.

Such an association between agricultural and procreational abundance further develops the theme illustrated by the mandrakes episode (Gen 30:14–16) and inaugurated in the Eden narrative. While pain and trouble in conceiving, birthing, and rearing children is associated with the judgment of being driven out of the garden in Eden, the blessing of fruitfulness is implicitly associated with the agrarian abundance in Eden. In the blessing of fruitfulness in spite of the judgment meted out to Eve, it is as if Joseph—again, primarily through his son, Ephraim—will experience a return to Eden-like fertility. After generations of barrenness as an obstacle to YHWH's promise of land, seed, and blessing, Joseph's

[67] Matthews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 907; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 486–87; Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 685–86. On the translation issues in v. 22, see Wenham, 484–85; and Hamilton, 683–84.

[68] Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 908; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 486–87. On aural wordplay as a common literary device in the Hebrew Bible, see Ethan Jones, "Sound and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible: Implications for Exegesis," *JNSL* 47, no. 1 (2021): 19–36; L. J. de Regt, "Wordplay in the OT," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. K. D. Sakenfield (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 898–900; E. L. Greenstein, "Wordplay, Hebrew," in *ABD*, 968–71; and Isaac Kalimi, *Metathesis in the Hebrew Bible: Wordplay as a Literary and Exegetical Device* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2018).

fruitful bough will—by necessity due to extreme growth—extend beyond its place (land) through the blessing of the womb (seed).[69] Thus, Joseph's blessing is a picture of fulfillment of the promise YHWH gave to Abraham regarding numerous offspring and is akin to returning to Eden. The thorns and thistles of a cursed land become a fruitful bough and barren wombs give birth abundantly. Through Joseph, the third miracle son of barrenness in Genesis, the sons of Israel will realize life from death in procreational fruitfulness "in future days" (Gen 49:1).[70]

Summary

In this chapter I argued for typological repetition in the book of Genesis based on "micro-level indicators." Such textual indicators include the re-use of key terms, the quotation of phrases or lines, the repetition of sequences of events, and similarity in salvation-historical significance or covenantal import. Furthermore, such indicators establish narrative patterns that form the basis for prospective typology. The biblical author interprets history in such a way to highlight correspondence in people, places, events, and institutions. That correspondence serves a prophetic role in establishing hope for the future, greater, and final salvation among YHWH's people in which Jacob hopes (Gen 49:18). In short, as YHWH providentially acted to fulfill his word in the past, so he will in the future.

[69] See Isa 54:1–3 for the prophetic anticipation that the post-exilic people of YHWH—those associated with barren Zion—will burst from the bounds of the land demanding expansion of borders and tents. On Joseph as a harbinger of this future reality. See Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 93–95; and G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), 96–97.

[70] On the eschatological function of this phrase in the Pentateuch, see John H. Sailhamer, who writes, "One of the central concerns lying behind the final shape of the Pentateuch is an attempt to uncover an inherent relationship between the past and the future." John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 36–37. See also John H. Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, and Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 323–48; Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011), 39; Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch*, 32. Initial fulfillments of fruitfulness "in future days" include the multiplication of Israel in Egypt (Exod 1:7) and the population of Israel in the first census (Num 1:32–35).

The narrative of Genesis moves from rest, agricultural abundance, prospective multiplication, and life to exile, barrenness, and death as the book begins in well-watered, bountiful Eden with the human vocation to exercise dominion over creation through procreative multiplication and ends with Israel embalmed in Egypt. The thread that ties the book together, however, is YHWH's covenant with Abraham centered on the promise of land, seed, and blessing.[71] In essence, YHWH has promised Abraham that he will restore Edenic conditions for his collective seed. Thus, on the way to death in Egypt are several glimmers of hope, indications that death in Egypt is not the final word for this people. The generational repetition of the "barren" woman (עֲקָרָה) is matched by the generational birth of miracle sons, each one serving as subsequent installments in the "seed" type inaugurated by YHWH's promise in Eden (Gen 3:15).[72] In each instance YHWH's promise of land, seed, and blessing to Abraham's family is dead on arrival as there can be no family from a barren woman and, consequently, there can be no blessing on the rest of the families of the earth. But YHWH consistently keeps covenant by granting birth. In each generation YHWH reverses the death of his chosen lineage through barrenness—and, consequently, the death of his promise—by opening the dead womb: birth from barrenness is resurrection from death.

As I demonstrated in chapter 2, while many people die in the book of Genesis, they do so because they cannot access the tree of life. In Genesis, death is a locative concept: to be dead is to be exiled from Eden.[73] Together with the literary function of

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[71] On the Abrahamic covenant as key to the plot of Genesis, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 260. See also Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 44; and N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, COQG 1 (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 262. On land, seed, and blessing as the threefold promise to Abraham, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 271–74; Hamilton, *Typology*, 41; and Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 77–85.

[72] The connection I am making here is based on the repetition of "seed" throughout Genesis and barrenness as a specific manifestation of "pain in childbirth."

[73] See chap. 2. Characterizing death in Genesis as a locative, or spatial, concept is not to characterize YHWH God's response to sin the garden as "metaphorical death." Rather, through the narrative the biblical authors are shaping our imaginations and categorizing life and death in terms of proximity to

barrenness as death, therefore, it is valid to draw a close typological connection between exile and barrenness. In short, if death is exile, and death is barrenness, then barrenness is a type of exile.[74] For Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, to be barren is not just an obstacle to the fulfillment of YHWH's covenantal promise; their barrenness—like physical death—is derivative of their location outside of Eden.

Further, textual details in both the Jacob narrative and the blessing Jacob pronounced over his son, Joseph, indicate a close literary connection between human procreative fruitfulness and agricultural fruitfulness.[75] An abundant land is akin to fertile humanity and a fruitful bough is akin to a numerous people. Here, then, is the implicit typological link in the narrative between birth from barrenness and return to Eden: YHWH's promise to his covenant people is to multiply them exceedingly in the eschaton, and such fruitfulness in procreation is akin to the abundant fruitfulness in Eden. For Abraham's family to move from barren to fruitful is for them to move from exile to Eden. Sarah's move from barren to fertile is akin to the transformation of a land from desolate to fruitful. And, since death is exile from Eden, to move from barrenness to fruitfulness is to move from death to life: resurrection.

In conclusion, by examining the details of the text of Genesis in this chapter and the preceding one, two literary metaphors for death emerge: exile from Eden and the barren womb. Moreover, their counterparts serve as metaphors for resurrection: return to Eden and birth from barrenness. These two pairs function typologically to seed hope for future restoration for Abraham's seed: because YHWH granted seed despite barrenness,

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YHWH. This is how YHWH's people ought to think about life and death in this age over and above physiological indications of viability.

[74] My reasoning here is an example of a hypothetical syllogism with identity relations in formal logic or, more relevant for me personally, the transitive property of equality in arithmetic.

[75] The Hebrew root "to bear fruit, be fruitful" (פָּרָה) is first used with reference to plants (the derivative noun "fruit" [פְּרִי] in Gen 1:11–12) before animals (Gen 1:22) and then humans (Gen 1:28). Along with "seed" (זֶרַע), which also first refers to plants (Gen 1:11), Moses appears to have drawn a metaphorical relationship in the text between agricultural and human procreation.

so he will reopen access to the tree of life through the victory of the promised seed. As I will argue in the next chapter, in the book of Genesis Isaac functions as the inaugural and most prominent type of this seed, and his birth represents the means of the promised seed's triumph over the serpent: resurrection from death.

CHAPTER 4

HE MAKES HER DESERT LIKE THE GARDEN OF YHWH: THE BIRTH OF ISAAC AS RESURRECTION FROM DEATH

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate the essence of my thesis—that the birth of Isaac is a type of resurrection from death *in the Genesis narrative*. In the text of the Abraham narrative and the circumstances of Isaac's birth Moses interconnects the two metaphors for death, which I observed in chapters 2 and 3. Therefore, birth from barrenness and restoration to Eden become in the birth of Isaac an interdependent typological structure that anticipates resurrection from death as the future means of crushing the serpent.

After proposing and defending a literary context and structure for the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24), I will argue for a literary parallel between Sarah and her associated land and Lot's wife and her associated land. In Genesis 13–14, Lot's wife is married with children in the abundant Jordan River valley—compared to the garden of YHWH (Gen 13:10)—while Sarah is barren in the comparatively desolate Hebron. Then, in Genesis 18–19, Lot's wife becomes a pillar of salt and the Edenic valley is destroyed while Sarah conceives Isaac in Canaan, the land of promise. This literary reversal informs the intended meaning of "pleasure" (עֶדְנָה) in Genesis 18:12, a *hapax legomenon* in the Hebrew Bible. Thus, I will conclude this chapter by arguing for a subtle, aural wordplay in Genesis 18:12 that likely would have been apparent to original readers: Sarah's "pleasure" is restored fertility analogous to the well-watered abundance of Eden. According to Moses, for Sarah to conceive in her barren state and give birth to Isaac is to be restored to a fertile, well-watered, Edenic condition. And, as I demonstrated in previous chapters, to return to Eden—to be restored from exile—is to move from death to life. Thus, the birth of Isaac

from barrenness represents a metaphorical move from death to life and typologically anticipates future resurrection from death.

The Literary Structure of the Abraham Narrative

The book of Genesis—itself an integral part of the broader compositional whole that is the Pentateuch—is a literary masterpiece, a multi-faceted narrative that spans thousands of years of history.[1] Yet, at various key points, Moses slows down tremendously to recount in detail the story of a particular person or family. One of those instances is the story of YHWH's call of Abram and his subsequent sojourn in the land of Canaan. To pursue the meaning of the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24), it is imperative to examine not only the literary structure of that text itself but also its position in the structure of the book of Genesis.[2] Thus, in this section I will begin with the literary structure of Genesis according to its *tôlĕdôt* headings and then consider both the place of the Abraham narrative in this structure and the literary structure of the Abraham narrative itself. The purpose of this section is to establish a foundation upon which I will base conclusions regarding the meaning and significance of both Sarah's barrenness and the birth of Isaac.

The *tôlĕdôt* Structure of Genesis

Scholars such as Matthew A. Thomas, Jason S. DeRouchie, and Samuel Emadi have all recently made significant contributions to the function of the *tôlĕdôt* headings in

[1] For an argument in favor of reading the Pentateuch as a compositional whole, see John H. Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative: A Biblical-Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992), 1–2; and *Genesis*, in *EBC*, vol. 1, *Genesis–Leviticus*, ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 23–44. For a brief response regarding the necessity of interpreting Genesis as a literary unity unto itself within the unified Pentateuch, see Jason S. DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis," *JETS* 56, no. 2 (June 2013): 219n3.

[2] For a collection of various articles on the value of macro literary structure in interpretation, see Marvin A. Sweeny and Ehud Ben Zvi, eds., *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003). Recent examples include L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord? A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*, NSBT 37 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 23–38; and James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 331–47.

the book of Genesis. Thomas was the first to publish a full monograph devoted to interpreting the book of Genesis according to five main sections based on a distinction between major and minor *tôlĕdôt* sections.[3] According to Thomas, major headings are marked by syntactical asyndeton while minor sections begin with the *waw*-conjunction.[4] DeRouchie followed by closely examining the implications of the distinction in headings on the structure and message of Genesis.[5] He argues, "The five major toledot divisions witness a progressive narrowing that places focus on the line of promise and the centrality of Israel in God's kingdom-building program," and "The author of [Genesis] intended the reader to view Genesis 5 and 11 as the beginnings of two parallel sections."[6] Thus, the main *tôlĕdôt* units in Genesis 5–50 unpack the hope for divine blessing through the chosen lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.[7] Finally, most recently Emadi further developed their work with specific reference to the Joseph narrative to suggest that "the Joseph story is the climax of [the] genealogical unfolding" represented by the *tôlĕdôt* formula in Genesis and the progression of the main, asyndeton headings.[8]

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[3] Matthew A. Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the 'toledot' Formula*, LHOT 551 (New York: T & T Clark, 2011). For an overview of the history of scholarship regarding the function of the *tôlĕdôt* headings in Genesis, see Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 25–31. Other works that have distinguished between major and minor *tôlĕdôt* headings in Genesis include Umberto Cassuto, *A Commentary on the Book of Genesis*, trans. Israel Abrahams (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1964), 2:188; and Peter Weimar, "Die *Toledot*-Formel in der Priesterschriftlichen Geschichtsgarstellung," *Biblische Zeitschrift* 18 (1974): 73–75.

[4] Thomas, *These Are the Generations*, 61–73.

[5] DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 219–47.

[6] DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 235, 242.

[7] DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 244. In the linear genealogy from Adam to Noah (Gen 5:3–32), Noah is tenth from Adam, he fathers three sons, and he represents hope for relief from the curse on the ground (Gen 5:29; cf. 3:17). In the linear genealogy from Shem to Terah (Gen 11:10–26), Terah is the tenth from Noah, he fathers three sons, and thus his son Abram—in the same position as Shem, the blessed son of Noah—represents the same hope as YHWH's call is a "direct answer" to the fall in Eden. On this last point, see James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Seed of the Woman and the Blessing of Abraham," *TynBul* 58, no. 2 (2007): 253–73.

[8] Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 36.

My examination of the Abraham narrative in this section follows the work of these three scholars regarding the structure and function of the *tôlĕdôt* headings in Genesis.[9] The Abraham narrative is set in the fourth major section of the *tôlĕdôt* structure of Genesis, which begins with the linear genealogy of Shem and concerns YHWH's covenant with Abraham. The literary structure of this fourth section is depicted here.

A. Genealogy: The Seed of the Woman (11:10–11:26)

B. Abraham Narrative (11:27–22:24)

X. Isaac and Rebekah (23:1–25:11)

B'. Jacob Narrative (25:12–35:29)

A'. Genealogy: The Seed of the Serpent (36:1–37:1)

Genealogies of the two post-fall denominations of humanity frame this major *tôlĕdôt* section: the first is a linear genealogy detailing the lineage of the seed of promise culminating in Abram, while the second is a segmented genealogy focused on the descendants of Esau who represent the seed of the serpent.[10] Narratives focused on Abraham and Jacob bracket a central section portraying both death and life, the passing of the first generation of promise—first Sarah and then Abraham—and the acquisition of a wife for Isaac. The succession of YHWH's covenantal promise in Isaac, ensured through marriage and the expectation of progeny, is flanked on each side by death. Although there is no minor *tôlĕdôt* marker in Genesis 23:1, I set this section apart from the Abraham

[9] See chap. 5 for my proposal for the literary structure of the book of Genesis which generally aligns with the *tôlĕdôt* headings while also accounting for prominent literary features and plot developments.

[10] According to Emadi, "The linear genealogies delineating the royal line of blessing in Genesis trace the development of God's covenantal promises through specific family lines in exclusion to all others," while the segmented genealogies detail the lineages of those outside the covenant. See Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 33. DeRouchie argues that the inclusion of segmented genealogies is missiological, giving "ever-present reminders to Israelite readers that their image-bearing purpose is for the sake of the nations." DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission," 240–41.

narrative because from a literary standpoint it serves a different purpose in the book of Genesis and because I believe Genesis 23:1–25:11 is the literary center of the book.[11]

Both the Abraham and Jacob narratives serve to explain the genesis and purpose of the nation of Israel as the vehicle by which YHWH will accomplish his seed promise (Gen 3:15).[12] Abraham is the initial recipient of the promise of land, seed, and blessing, and his grandson, Jacob, becomes the direct progenitor of the nation through his twelve sons as tribal heads. This progression is most clearly demonstrated in the promises YHWH makes to both men: the very things YHWH promises to Jacob are those he had earlier promised to Abraham.[13] Table 9 summarizes the high degree of similarity between a key promise passage in each narrative.

Therefore, the Abraham narrative serves to unfold the initiation of both the fulfillment of YHWH's promise to restore creation through a future royal seed of Abraham and the mechanism by which YHWH will accomplish it: the nation of Israel which springs from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob. [14]

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[11] See Hamilton for a literary structure of Genesis centered on Genesis 23–25. Hamilton, *Typology*, 336. Again, see chap. 5 for my proposal for the literary structure of the book of Genesis.

[12] The collective sense of "seed" is clear in Gen 17:9. For more on the ambiguity of "seed" in Genesis, see Jason S. DeRouchie and Jason C. Meyer, "Christ or Family as the 'Seed' of Promise? An Evaluation of N. T. Wright on Galatians 3:16," *SBJT* 14, no. 3 (2010): 36–48; Jack Collins, "A Syntactical Note (Genesis 3:15): Is the Woman's Seed Singular or Plural?," *TynBul* 48, no. 1 (1997): 139–48; T. Desmond Alexander, "Further Observations on the Term 'Seed' in Genesis," *TynBul* 48, no. 2 (1997): 363–67; John C. Collins, "Galatians 3:16: What Kind of Exegete Was Paul?," *TynBul* 54, no. 1 (2003): 75–86.

[13] Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 382. See also Gerhard von Rad, who argues, "Apparently a primary concern for our text is to show that the promise to Abraham was renewed completely to Jacob." Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 339. See also John H. Walton, *Genesis*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 632, and his comparison table on pp. 460–61.

[14] The name typically translated "God Almighty" (אֵל שַׁדַּי) appears five times in Genesis, all in contexts referring to life and fertility. In both references in table 9 (Gen 17:1; 35:11), YHWH appears to the patriarch, announces himself as "God Almighty," and promises fruitfulness and multiplication. In Gen 28:3, Isaac prays that "God Almighty" would bless Jacob by making him fruitful and multiplying him. In Gen 48:3, Jacob recalls "God Almighty" appearing to him at Bethel where he promised numerous descendants (cf. Gen 28:14). Finally, in Gen 43:14 Jacob asks "God Almighty" to grant mercy so that Benjamin is spared in Egypt. This last occurrence is not as obvious, but Jacob considered Benjamin to be the only remaining son of favored Rachel (Gen 42:38). In some sense he would have considered himself bereaved if Benjamin, too, was

Table 9. Lexical comparison of YHWH's promises to Abraham and Jacob

Genesis 17:1–8	Genesis 35:9–13
And YHWH appeared to Abram (17:1) וַיֵּרָא יְהוָה אֶל־אַבְרָם	And God appeared to Jacob (35:9) וַיֵּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶל־יַעֲקֹב
and he said to him, "I am God Almighty" (17:1) וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו אֲנִי־אֵל שַׁדָּי	And God said to him, "I am God Almighty" (35:11) וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ אֱלֹהִים אֲנִי אֵל שַׁדָּי
"and I will multiply you exceedingly, exceedingly" וְאַרְבֶּה אוֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד "and I will cause you to be fruitful exceedingly, exceedingly" (17:2, 6) וְהִפְרֵתִי אֹתְךָ בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד	"Be fruitful and multiply" (35:11) פְּרֵה וּרְבֵה
"and your name will no longer be Abram, but your name will be Abraham" (17:5) וְלֹא־יִקָּרֵא עוֹד אֶת־שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָם וְהָיָה שִׁמְךָ אַבְרָהָם	"Your name will no longer be Jacob, but Israel will be your name" (35:10) לֹא־יִקָּרֵא שִׁמְךָ עוֹד יַעֲקֹב כִּי אִם־יִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה שְׁמֶךָ
"and you will be a father of a multitude of nations" (17:4) וְהָיִיתָ לְאַב הֲמוֹן גּוֹיִם	"A nation and an assembly of nations will come from you" (35:11) גּוֹי וּקְהַל גּוֹיִם יִהְיֶה מִמֶּךָּ
"and I will make you into nations and kings will come from you" (17:6) וּנְתַתִּיךָ לְגוֹיִם וּמְלָכִים מִמְּךָ יֵצֵאוּ	"and kings will come from your loins" (35:11) וּמְלָכִים מֵחֲלָצֶיךָ יֵצֵאוּ
"and I will give to you and to your seed after you the land of your sojourning—all the land of Canaan" (17:8) וְנָתַתִּי לְךָ וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֵת אֶרֶץ מְגֻרֶיךָ אֵת כָּל־אֶרֶץ כְּנַעַן	"and to your seed after you I will give the land" (35:12) וּלְזַרְעֲךָ אַחֲרֶיךָ אֶתֵּן אֶת־הָאָרֶץ

The Abraham Narrative

The Abraham narrative itself exhibits a chiastic literary structure centered on the birth of Ishmael. Several scholars have proposed similar structures for this portion of the book of Genesis.[15] My proposal is depicted as follows:

deceased. In Exod 6:3 YHWH tells Moses that the patriarchs knew him as "God Almighty," the one who granted fertility in otherwise barren situations.

[15] For other proposals for the literary structure of the Abraham narrative, see Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, NAC, vol. 1B (Nashville: B & H, 2005), 89–90; Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, WBC, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 256–64; Hamilton, *Typology*, 340–42. For an argument based on literary structure that the four different expressions of covenant are complementary and elucidate a single covenant between YHWH and Abraham, see Byron Wheaton, "Focus and Structure in the Abraham Narratives," *Trinity Journal* 27, no. 1 (2006): 143–46. For an argument that YHWH's dealings with Abraham entail two separate covenants, see Paul R. Williamson, *Abraham, Israel, and the Nations: The Patriarchal Promise and Its Covenantal Development in Genesis* (Sheffield: Sheffield, 2000).

A. Genealogy (11:27–32)

B. Promise: Land, Seed, Blessing (12:1–3)

C. Obedience (12:4–6)

D. To Your Seed I Will Give This Land (12:7)

E. Sarai as Sister-Wife: Egypt (12:8–13:4)

F. Lot and the Jordan River Valley (13:5–14:24)

G. Covenant Initiated (15:1–21)

X. Ishmael (16:1–16)

G'. Covenant Ratified (17:1–27)

F'. Lot and the Jordan River Valley (18:1–19:38)

E'. Sarah as Sister-Wife: Abimelech (20:1–18)

D'. Isaac Not Ishmael and the Well at Beer Sheba (21:1–34)

C'. Obedience (22:1–14)

B'. Promise: Land, Seed, Blessing (22:15–19)

A'. Genealogy (22:20–24)

Genealogies tangential to Abraham's immediate family frame the narrative, both of which name Milcah, Abraham's sister-in-law (Gen 11:29; 22:20). In the first instance, Milcah appears to contrast with Sarai's barrenness, and in the second instance her function appears to be the same. She bears eight children to Nahor, Abraham's brother, while Sarah birthed only Isaac.[16] While human procreation is essential to YHWH's promise of a restorative seed, he will triumph in the manner of Isaac: according to promise rather than human schemes and effort and overcoming the death of barrenness.

Williamson follows T. D. Alexander's two-part literary structure of the Abraham narrative. See T. Desmond Alexander, "A Literary Analysis of the Abraham Narrative in Genesis" (PhD diss., University of Belfast, 1982).

[16] This consistent comparison of Sarah to Milcah serves to emphasize the fact that YHWH"s promise regarding a great nation will only come to fruition by his own will and power. What appears to be a fledgling family with an only child will surely become more numerous than the sand and the stars (Gen 22:17).

Several additional features of the Abraham narrative make this literary structure plain. First, the sister-wife episodes (E and E') stand out as a complementary literary couplet.[17] Together with the framing genealogies, these two pericopes serve as the most prominent and apparent indicators of a concentric literary structure. In both stories, Abraham misrepresents the nature of his relationship to Sarah to foreign kings to preserve his life, actions which were apparently premeditated before they even began sojourning in the promised land (Gen 20:13). In each case, YHWH intervenes to both rescue Sarah and to enrich Abraham. And further, the prophet Abraham (Gen 20:7), who himself experienced a death-to-life reversal in his "exodus" from Egypt, effected the same blessing for Abimelech—a representative of "all the families of the earth" (Gen 12:3)—when he prayed that barrenness in his house would be healed.[18]

Genesis 12:10–20 is often considered the first sister-wife pericope, but here I expanded the unit by several verses on each side.[19] The text recounts that Abram embarked on a general movement downward—southward—from his initial sojourn at Shechem (Gen 12:6) to the hill country between Bethel and Ai, then further south into the Negev (Gen 12:8–9). Finally, occasioned by severe famine in Canaan, Abram "went down to Egypt"

[17] Scholarly attempts harmonize these two accounts are legion. For instance, assuming Documentary Hypothesis categories, von Rad asserts that Gen 12:10–13:1 is Yahwistic while Gen 20:1–18 is Priestly. Von Rad, *Genesis*, 167–68, 226. For a response to the Documentary Hypothesis regarding Gen 20, see T. D. Alexander, "Are the Wife/Sister Incidents of Genesis Literary Compositional Variants?," *VT* 42, no. 2 (1992): 145–53; cf. T. Desmond Alexander, *Abraham in the Negev: A Source-Critical Investigation of Genesis 20:12–22:19* (Carlisle, England: Paternoster, 1997). John van Seters argues that Gen 12:1–10 appears to be the earliest form and that Gen 20:1–18 is an adaptation. John van Seters, *Abraham in History and Tradition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1975). Walter Brueggeman argues that Gen 20:1–18 is an alternative version of 12:1–20. Walter Brueggeman, *Genesis*, Interpretation (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 177. E. A. Speiser attributes these episodes to Hurrian influence on the biblical author. E. A. Speiser, *Genesis*, AB, vol. 1 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983), 91–94,

[18] Abram's experience in Egypt (Gen 12:10–13:1) foreshadows the experience of Israel, his seed, in the exodus. Both went down to Egypt because of famine (Gen 12:10; 46:6), Pharaoh took Sarah and enslaved Israel (Gen 12:15; Exod 1:11), Pharaoh enriched Abraham and Israel plundered Egypt (Gen 12:16; Exod 12:35–36), and YHWH liberated Sarah and Israel both by plagues (Gen 12:17–20; Exod 7–12). For more on this, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 256–58; and Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 123.

[19] For a sampling of interpreters who consider this pericope to be Gen 12:10–20, see Walton, *Genesis*, 395; Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 379; Speiser, *Genesis*, 89; and Brueggeman, *Genesis*, 126–27.

(Gen 12:10). After YHWH intervened to save Sarai and Pharaoh sent Abram away with all his possessions (Gen 12:20), Abram essentially retraced his steps upward—northward—until he arrived back in the hill country between Bethel and Ai (Gen 13:3). He "went up from Egypt" (Gen 13:1), through the Negev, and once again "called on the name of YHWH" (Gen 13:4; cf. 12:8) at the altar he had built there. Furthermore, immediately following Abram's return and repeated worship, a disjunctive clause fronting Lot (Gen 13:5) shifts the narrative to the separation between the two men.[20] Therefore, a pericope including Genesis 12:8–13:4 better fits the features of the text and better accounts for Abram's round trip journey to Egypt.

Second, the next level toward the center—inside the sister-wife episodes—consists of two lengthy sections (F and F') that focus on Abraham's relationship with his nephew, Lot.[21] In the first, Abram and Lot separate because the size of their flocks negates proximity. This separation quickly removes Lot from consideration regarding Abram's promised heir who will inherit the land of Canaan (Gen 12:7; cf. 13:15).[22] Abram then comes to Lot's rescue when his proximity to Sodom results in his kidnapping at the hands of a conglomerate of four kings (Gen 14:11–12). In the second, Abram intercedes for Sodom and Gomorrah—and Lot who dwells in Sodom—before YHWH (Gen 18:23–33).

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[20] Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze write, "The fronted constituent signals the activation or reactivation of an identifiable entity or entities. The entity is (re-) activated to signal a topic or topic shift in a context where it is part of a set of entities that are involved in the same discourse context." Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2017), 500. In this case Lot is fronted to indicate a shift in focus to the conflict between him and Abram. For more on word order as a discourse function, see Matthew H. Patton and Frederic Clarke Putnam ,who list Gen 13:5 as an example. Matthew H. Patton and Frederic Clarke Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse: A Guide to Working with Hebrew Prose and Poetry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2019), 89. Lot is mentioned in Gen 13:1, but this is irrelevant regarding discourse and paragraphing.

[21] This correspondence was first pointed out to me by James M. Hamilton Jr. in a sermon at Kenwood Baptist Church at Victory Memorial. See also Hamilton, *Typology*, 341.

[22] As Hamilton argues, "In choosing [a territory outside the borders of Canaan], Lot effectively removes himself from any possible consideration as the one who shall inherit the land promised to his uncle." Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 393. See also Larry R. Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot: Its Significance in the Patriarchal Narratives," *JSOT* 26 (1983): 80–82; and Rashi, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch*, selected and trans. Chaim Pearl (New York: W. W. Norton, 1970), 40–41.

Lacking even ten righteous people, both cities are destroyed by fire from heaven (Gen 19:24–25), but YHWH delivers Lot and his daughters on behalf of Abraham. Lot's story ends in Zoar where he fathers future enemies of Israel, Moab and Ammon, by his daughters (Gen 19:36–38).[23] These sections are marked especially by Abraham's intercessory actions on behalf of Lot.

Third, the two explicitly covenantal sections (G and G') both inaugurate and establish YHWH's relationship with Abraham. In the first, "YHWH cut (כָּרַת) a covenant (בְּרִית) with Abram" (Gen 15:18). This covenant concerned the land inheritance that YHWH had promised to Abram's seed: "To your seed I give this land" (Gen 15:18; cf. 12:7). In the second, YHWH "confirmed" (וְאֶתְּנָה in Gen 17:2; וַהֲקִמֹתִי in Gen 17:7) his covenant with Abraham, this time with an emphasis on multiplication of seed: "I will multiply you exceedingly, exceedingly" (Gen 17:2) and "You will be the father of a multitude of nations" (Gen 17:4).[24] Abraham's seed—those who will inherit the land as an eternal possession—will be identified by the sign of circumcision (17:10). In these two complementary passages, then, Moses recounts YHWH ratifying his earlier promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1–3): first, he guarantees that Abraham's descendants will live in the promised land (Gen 15:18–21), and second, he assures Abraham that he will multiply him exceedingly and that possession of the land will be perpetual (Gen 17:4–8).[25]

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[23] Moab and Ammon are excluded from the assembly of Israel perpetually because of their lack of hospitality toward Israel during the wilderness wandering and because they hired Balaam against Israel (Deut 23:3–4).

[24] For more on "confirm" indicating that God is "affirming and fulfilling in the life of someone who is already a covenant partner his promise given in the covenant initiated previously," see Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 187–88. See also William J. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation: An Old Testament Covenant Theology* (Devon, England: Paternoster, 1984), 42–43. For a counterargument basically equating "cut" and "confirm," see Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 181–88.

[25] Robert B. Chisholm, Jr., "Evidence from Genesis," in *A Case for Premillennialism*, ed. Donald K. Campbell and Jeffrey L. Townsend (Chicago: Moody, 1992), 35–54.

The centering of the narrative on the birth of Ishmael (Gen 16) is surprising.[26] Given the overall emphasis on promise and blessing in the narrative and the joy associated with the birth of Isaac, it seems odd that the literary center and turning point is the birth of the *other* son. Just as the literary center of the Eden narrative was the sin of the first man and woman (Gen 3:6–7), however, so here the focal point of the Abraham narrative is Abram and Sarai's failure to trust in the sure word of YHWH.[27] After a restatement of Sarai's barrenness, she suggests that Abram accomplish YHWH's promise of seed through her Egyptian servant, Hagar (Gen 16:1–2). The text states that in response, "Abram listened to the voice of Sarai [וַיִּשְׁמַע אַבְרָם לְקוֹל שָׂרָי]" (Gen 16:2). This is remarkably similar to YHWH's statement to the first man in Eden following his transgression: "Because you listened to the voice of your wife [שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתֶּךָ]" (Gen 3:17).[28] Thus, Abram fell as the first man did: he failed to believe, and patiently wait on, the word of YHWH.[29]

The rest of Genesis 16 recounts YHWH's merciful response to this situation. Hagar conceived as intended, but as a result she elevated herself above her mistress and despised her.[30] Sarai oppressed (וַתְּעַנֶּהָ) Hagar in response (Gen 16:6), and when Hagar fled, the angel of YHWH heard "[her] affliction (עָנְיֵךְ)" (Gen 16:11). He instructed her to

[26] In his literary structure of the Abraham narrative, Hamilton has Genesis 15–17 all at the center as "human sin wrapped in the grace of God." Hamilton, *Typology*, 341–42.

[27] R. R. Reno proposes, "The promised future cannot be made real by our own schemes and plans." R. R. Reno, *Genesis*, BTCB (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2010), 164. Sarah wanted to be "built" (אִבָּנֶה) through Hagar (Gen 16:2), but YHWH God himself "built" (וַיִּבֶן) Eve (Gen 2:22).

[28] Hamilton points out this connection without assigning any significance to it. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 442. See also Hamilton, *Typology*, 15n17.

[29] For more on Abram as a new Adam, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 40–51. See also Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 79.

[30] Here the expression is "despised" (וַתֵּקַל) in the *Qal* stem and in Gen 12:3 YHWH says, "The one who despises you (וּמְקַלֶּלְךָ) I will curse" in the *Piel* stem. Although the stems are different, the second instance is simply transitive. See *CDCH*, 395–96. Thus, Hagar is one who stands under YHWH's curse because of her posture toward Sarah, an early indication that her child will be outside of the covenant lineage in Genesis. For more on this, see the excursus in Hamilton, *Typology*, 43–45, and Matthew Y. Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory, Typical Typology, or Intertextual Interpretation? Paul's Use of the Pentateuch in Galatians 4:21–31," *BTB* 43, no. 1 (2013): 18.

return to Sarai and "be oppressed under her hand [וְהִתְעַנִּי תַּחַת יָדֶיהָ]" (Gen 16:9), but he also promised to "greatly multiply [הַרְבָּה אַרְבֶּה]" her seed so that they "cannot be numbered (יִסָּפֵר) because of abundance" (Gen 16:10; cf. Gen 22:17). Innumerable descendants are precisely what YHWH promised Abram outside his tent as he gazed at the stars: "count [וּסְפֹר] the stars, if you are able to count [לִסְפֹּר] them . . . so your seed will be" (Gen 15:5). Thus, as Hagar obeyed YHWH, returned to Sarai, and gave birth to Ishmael (Gen 16:15), the narrative seems to indicate that YHWH's promise in Genesis 15 will be realized in Ishmael. Although Abram and Sarai failed to trust YHWH and fell into sin as a result, YHWH mercifully and faithfully remained true to his promise to multiply and bless Abram as the means by which he would restore creation. Taken as a whole, however, Genesis 15–17 indicates that YHWH will do so by his own will and power through a son of promise rather than the product of Abram and Sarai's attempt to accomplish YHWH's blessing on their own through the son of a slave woman (cf. Gal 4:21–5:1).[31]

Finally, the sequence of events in Genesis 12:1–7 (B, C, and D) and in Genesis 21:1–22:19 (B', C', and D') both occur in reverse order and also serve to definitively identify the seed of Abraham who will receive the promise and inherit the land. When YHWH called Abram from Haran, he received YHWH's promise concerning land, seed, and blessing (Gen 12:1–3) and then he obeyed YHWH's command to go to Canaan: "And Abram went just as YHWH had spoken to him" (Gen 12:4). Upon Abram's arrival at Shechem, YHWH appeared to him and assured him: "To your seed I will give this land" (Gen 12:7). Therefore, at the outset the narrative recounts promise (B) followed by obedience (C) and then land inheritance (D).

In the parallel sections this order is reversed. First, in Genesis 21:1–21, the seed to whom YHWH will give the land of Canaan as an inheritance is finally and definitively

[31] For further on Paul's use of this text in Galatians, see my argument in chap. 6. See also Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory, Typical Typology, or Intertextual Interpretation?" 18–22; Kamila Abrahamova Blessing, "The Background of the Barren Woman Motif in Galatians 4:27" (PhD diss., Duke University, 1996); Joel Willitts, "Isa 54,1 in Gal 4,24b–27: Reading Genesis in Light of Isaiah," *Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 96, nos. 3–4 (2005): 188–210.

identified: it will be Isaac, not Ishmael (D'). After Isaac's birth (Gen 21:1–7), conflict arose again in Abraham's house, this time between the boys themselves.[32] In response, Sarah demands that Abraham "drive out" (גָּרֵשׁ) the slave woman and her son because Ishmael must not "inherit" (יִירַשׁ) along with Isaac (Gen 21:10). This aural wordplay indicates a connotation associated with the verbal root גָּרַשׁ in the *Piel* stem that involves disinheritance.[33] YHWH "drove out" (וַיְגָרֶשׁ) the first humans from Eden after their sin (Gen 3:24), disinheriting them from both the garden and the tree of life, and then he "banished" (גֵּרַשְׁתָּ) Cain further eastward to a life of homeless wandering after he murdered his brother (Gen 4:14).[34] Throughout the Pentateuch the same expression often describes the disinheritance of the Canaanites from the promised land as YHWH repeatedly promises to "drive out" those tribes so that Israel can inherit the land (Exod 23:28–31; cf. 33:2; 34:11). Thus, the seed of Abraham to which YHWH will give the land (Gen 12:7) is Isaac.

The rest of this section (Gen 21:22–34) concerns the land Isaac will inherit. The conflict between Abimelech and Abraham over the well at Beer Sheba resulted in a covenant between the two acknowledging both YHWH's blessing on Abraham and Abraham's ownership. Abraham said to Abimelech, "Take seven ewe lambs from my hand so that you will be a witness for me that I dug this well" (Gen 21:30). He then planted a tamarisk tree there, indicating his intent to remain in the land for an extended time, and he worshipped YHWH the "eternal God" (Gen 21:33), who can accomplish his eternal purpose: that Abraham's seed would inherit the promised land forever (Gen 13:15; cf.

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[32] Ishmael was "mocking" (מְצַחֵק) Isaac, so Sarah wanted Abraham to banish him (Gen 21:9–10). In the *Piel* stem the root צחק means "to laugh mockingly." See *CDCH*, 378. Paul interprets Ishmael's behavior as "persecution" (ἐδίωκεν) in Gal 4:29.

[33] Hamilton highlights uses of "to drive out" (גָּרַשׁ) in Exod 6:1; 10:11; 11:1; 12:39 regarding the expulsion of the Israelites from Egypt. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 80. See also Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory, Typical Typology, or Intertextual Interpretation?" 18.

[34] See chap. 2 for more on disinheritance with respect to the garden of Eden.

17:7–8; 48:4).[35] And Abraham's worship here is described the same way as in Genesis 12:8: "There he called on the name of YHWH." Therefore, this section of the Abraham narrative (D') brings clarity and definition to YHWH's promise in Genesis 12:7: "To your seed I will give this land."

Second, in the next two sections Abraham first obeys YHWH's command to sacrifice Isaac (C') and then receives confirmation of YHWH's promise (B'). In Genesis 22:1–14, YHWH tested Abraham's trust in him by commanding him to go to Moriah and sacrifice the son of promise, his only son now remaining in his household (Gen 22:1–2).[36] Without question Abraham arose early in the morning and did just as he was commanded, only to be halted at the final moment by YHWH's messenger (Gen 22:11–12). Having succeeded in demonstrating his faith in YHWH through obedience, Abraham received not just a reiteration of the earlier promise but an oath (Gen 22:15–19). YHWH swore by himself to bless Abraham, exceedingly multiply his seed, and make his seed a great nation who "will inherit the gate of his enemies" and whose name will be on the lips of all the nations of the earth as they bless one another (Gen 22:17–18).[37] The multiplication, divine blessing, and international renown YHWH promised when he called Abram has now been ratified by his oath on account of Abraham's faithful obedience.

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[35] Walton argues for perpetuity rather than eternality—that is, that the land promise remains in effect as long as the covenant remains in effect—and that the theological point of this text is that YHWH holds Abraham's destiny, and that of his seed, in his hands. Walton, *Genesis*, 497–98.

[36] The Abraham narrative begins and ends with YHWH commanding him to "Go" in both Gen 12:1 (לֶךְ־לְךָ) and 22:2 (וְלֶךְ־לְךָ).

[37] The verb "to bless" (בָּרַךְ) is active in the *Piel* stem and passive in the *Pual* stem. See BDB, 138–39. It appears in Gen 22:18 in the *Hithpael* stem, which several modern versions translate as the passive "will be blessed" (ESV, NKJV, ASV, NLT, NIV, CSB, NASB) following the LXX translation (ἐνευλογηθήσονται), although some (NASB, NIV, CSB) include a footnote. The *Hithpael* would be better translated with the Greek middle voice, giving the sense that that nations will bless one another in the name of the seed of Abraham. For more on the reflexivity of the *Hithpael* stem, see van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 85–86. Gentry argues that the *Hithpael* of *bārak* is "a reflexive of the declarative-estimative function found in the base form, the *Piel*. Thus, the *Hithpael* of *bārak* should mean, 'to consider or declare oneself blessed." See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 324. Gentry's argument supports my translation as I am arguing that in Gen 22:18 the nations declare themselves blessed to one another.

Summary

In this section I purposed to demonstrate that the literary structure of the Abraham narrative contributes significantly to its meaning. The tripartite theme of land, seed, and blessing carries the story forward, and while the culmination of Abraham's life of faith is his reception of a deposit on YHWH's promise in the birth of Isaac and his obedience at Moriah, the literary emphasis is on his failure to trust in YHWH's will and the birth of Ishmael. Although Ishmael will be blessed on account of his relationship to Abraham, he will not inherit YHWH's covenantal promise. That remains for Isaac, the son of promise whom YHWH himself brought forth. Thus, Abraham and Sarah together could not accomplish YHWH's promise—they could not resurrect the hope of YHWH's word which was obstructed by the deadness of Sarah's barrenness. Only YHWH himself can do the impossible, the exceedingly wonderful (Gen 18:14). Only YHWH can beget life from death.

Sarah and Lot's Wife: A Literary Reversal

In this section I intend to narrow my focus to the two complementary sections in the Abraham narrative that concern Abraham's relationship with Lot (F and F'). In these two sections the text draws together two interdependent reversals that highlight YHWH's unique ability to both kill and give life (Deut 32:39), to bring down to Sheol and to raise up (1 Sam 2:6), to deteriorate the woman with many children and to open the womb of the barren woman (1 Sam 2:5).[38] First, the fertile land of the Jordan River Valley (Gen 13:10) becomes a desolate wasteland (Gen 19:23–28), and second, Lot's wife turns to a pillar of salt (Gen 19:26) while barren Sarah is promised that she will give birth to a son (Gen 18:10).[39] These correlative reversals function to metaphorically connect for readers

[38] Hannah virtually quotes Deut 32:39 in her song of praise (1 Sam 2:6), comparing YHWH's power to raise up from Sheol with his power to grant birth to the barren woman. See chap. 6 for more on the interaction between these texts.

[39] While I came to these conclusions independently, for a detailed and helpful analysis of the textual and literary relationship between Gen 13–14 and 18–19, see Nachman Levine, "Sarah/Sodom: Birth, Destruction, and Synchronic Transaction," *JSOT* 31, no. 2 (2006): 131–46.

agricultural fertility with human fertility and to further the literary connection between resurrection from death and birth from barrenness.[40]

Literary Structure

Several features of the text of Genesis 13:5–14:24 and 18:1–19:38 clearly indicate their function as complementary, parallel sections in the Abraham narrative. First, several comprehensive thematic emphases join them together. Both units focus on the relationship between Abraham and his nephew, Lot. Both describe Abraham acting on behalf of Lot, first by deferring to him regarding land choice (Gen 13:9) and by rescuing him from Kedorlaomer's cohort (Gen 14:12, 16), and second by interceding before YHWH for Sodom and Gomorrah resulting in Lot's salvation from Sodom prior to its destruction (Gen 19:29). Finally, both sections progressively distance Lot from Abram as a possible heir.[41] While early indications in the text—the combination of Sarai's barrenness (Gen 11:30) and Lot's accompaniment of Abram to Canaan from Haran (Gen 12:4)—indicate a trajectory toward Lot succeeding Abram as the one through whom YHWH would make Abram a great nation, Lot's story instead concludes when he incestuously fathered nations that became both close neighbors and perennial enemies of the nation of Israel (Gen 19:30–38).[42]

Second, various lexical connections also join these two sections together. The description of the destruction (בְּשַׁחֵת) of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:1–29) is foreshadowed in Genesis 13:10 by the parenthetical note, "before YHWH destroyed [שַׁחֵת]

[40] See chap. 3 for more on the relationship between human and agricultural fertility in Genesis as evidenced especially in Jacob's blessing on Joseph (Gen 49:22–26).

[41] Fraternal separation entails covenantal distinction in Genesis. Abram and Lot "separate" (פָּרַד) in Gen 13:9, 11, 14 (specifically "a man from his brother" in Gen 13:11) indicating that Lot is outside the line of promise. Jacob and Esau, actual brothers, are likewise "separated" (פָּרַד) in Gen 25:23. In each instance one represents the royal seed lineage while the other does not. For more on this, see Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot," 77–88.

[42] See Harold G. Stigers, *A Commentary on Genesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976), 146; Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot," 81–82.

Sodom and Gomorrah." The sinfulness of Sodom is also foreshadowed and later confirmed: in Genesis 13:13 the text reads, "The men of Sodom were exceedingly (מְאֹד) wicked sinners [וְחַטָּאִים] against YHWH," and later YHWH states, "The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great and their sin [וְחַטָּאתָם] is exceedingly [מְאֹד] heavy" (Gen 18:20). Both texts explicitly refer to Sodom and Gomorrah as "the cities of the plain" (Gen 13:12; 19:29).[43] Lot "lifted up his eyes" (וַיִּשָּׂא־לוֹט אֶת־עֵינָיו) to observe the Jordan River Valley and saw that it was like the garden of YHWH (Gen 13:10), and Abraham "lifted up his eyes" (וַיִּשָּׂא עֵינָיו) to see YHWH visiting him (Gen 18:2).[44] While lifting of the eyes is a common phrase in the Old Testament, these occurrences indicate a reversal: Lot thought the valley was blessed, but it was to Abraham at the oaks of Mamre in the land of Canaan that YHWH appeared (Gen 18:1) while the valley became a smoking ruin. These chapters contain concentrated references to Zoar (צֹעַר)—the town to which Lot fled—which is otherwise sparsely mentioned in the Hebrew Bible (Gen 13:10; 14:2, 8; 19:22, 30).[45] And, both times Lot's rescue involved flight to surrounding hills: some survivors "fled [נָּסוּ] to the hills [הֶרָה]" upon the defeat of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Valley of Siddim (Gen 14:10), and then when YHWH's two messengers urged Lot to "Escape to the mountains [הָהָרָה]" (Gen 19:17; cf. 19:19), he responded, "Look, this city is near enough to flee [לָנוּס] to" (Gen 19:20). Furthermore, references to Sodom (סְדֹם) and Gomorrah (עֲמֹרָה) in the Abraham narrative only occur in these chapters.[46] The settings of both sections are the

[43] This phrase "the cities of the plain" is unique to Gen 13 and 19. The Hebrew noun "circle" (כִּכָּר) occurs in contexts in which it refers to the Jordan River Valley sparingly otherwise (Deut 34:3; 2 Sam 18:23; 1 Kgs 7:46) and only with "city" (עִיר) in a reference to Jericho (Deut 34:3).

[44] For a primer on the trinitarian implications of this passage, see Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, ed. John E. Rotelle (Hyde Park, NY: New City, 1991), 111–12. See also C. Kavin Rowe, "Biblical Pressure and Trinitarian Hermeneutics," *ProEccl.* 11, no. 3 (2000): 295–312.

[45] Zoar appears elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible only in Deut 34:3; Isa 15:5; Jer 48:34.

[46] Sodom (Gen 13:10, 12–13; 14:2, 8, 10–12, 17, 21–22; 18:16, 20, 22, 26; 19:1, 4, 24, 28) and Gomorrah (Gen 13:10; 14:2, 8, 10–11; 18:20; 19:24, 28). Sodom and Gomorrah also both appear in Gen 10:19 as one of the borders of Canaan, the extent to which the cursed descendants of Ham spread and settled. This reference to both cities appears to function the same way as that in Gen 13:10, namely, to immediately

same: Abram lived by the oaks of Mamre in Hebron after Lot separated from him (Gen 13:18), which is the same location that YHWH appeared to him in Genesis 18:1.

Thus, such a high degree of correspondence between these two sections of the Abraham narrative, both thematic and lexical, indicates both a close correlation between these two episodes in Abraham's life and further demonstrates the proposed chiastic literary structure for the Abraham narrative above.[47] This close literary correlation informs the same between two complementary features in the text. First, the relationship between the Jordan River Valley—the "cities of the plain"—and the land of Canaan YHWH continually promises as an inheritance to Abraham's family, and second, the relationship between Sarah and Lot's wife. The first informs the second and impinges on the meaning and significance of Sarah's response to YHWH's promise of Isaac's imminent birth in Genesis 18:12.

The Jordan River Valley and the Promised Land

After resettling between Bethel and Ai following his sojourn into Egypt, Abram and his nephew Lot found themselves having to settle quarrels between their respective herdsmen. The text twice states that they were unable "to dwell together" (לָשֶׁבֶת יַחְדָּו) because their possessions were so great and because "the Canaanites and Perizzites were living in the land at that time" (Gen 13:5–7). Abram's solution to this problem was to allow Lot to select his desired portion in the land so that they might separate and live peaceably. This is clear in his rhetorical question, "Is not the whole land before you?" (Gen 13:9). Abram did not intend for Lot to leave the land of Canaan, but rather for them to both

raise in the minds of readers the known fate of those cities in association with the cursed line from Noah and being outside the land of promise.

[47] For more on this, see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 89–90, 130–31, especially, "The Lot episodes come short of explicitly stating the inclusion or exclusion of Lot as a potential heir, but they present a pattern of events that shows his illegitimacy" (90).

continue to dwell in the land YHWH had promised to Abram's seed.[48] Abram's intent, rather, was to preserve relations and proximity with Lot as his supposed heir and the one through whom YHWH would fulfill his promise to make Abram a great nation. Since Sarah was barren and had no child (Gen 11:30), early in the narrative Lot serves as the supposed means to Abram's future greatness.[49]

When Lot lifted his eyes, however, he saw not the promise of YHWH and its associated land but "the whole valley of the Jordan" to the west of the Jordan River, outside the land of Canaan (Gen 13:10). He saw that it was "well-watered [מַשְׁקֶה] . . . like the garden [כְּגַן] of YHWH" and he saw that it was like "the land of Egypt" (Gen 13:10). First, this is a clear reference to the garden (גַּן) YHWH planted in Eden (Gen 2:8), which was watered (לְהַשְׁקוֹת) by a river flowing from Eden and bountiful enough to split into four heads to presumably water the whole of the earth (Gen 2:10).[50] Such a well-watered land would certainly be attractive to a man with such great possessions as Lot. At the same time, a reference to Eden here indicates that Lot thought his move across the Jordan River would bring him closer to the blessing of YHWH. He "saw" (וַיַּרְא) the Jordan River Valley (Gen 13:10) the same way that Eve "saw" (וַתֵּרֶא) the fruit of the prohibited tree in Eden (Gen 3:6)—something desirable, but something inconsistent with YHWH's revelation. Just as eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was disobedient and resulted in exile from Eden, so was Lot's move toward the cities of the valley a spurning of YHWH's

[48] If Abram is facing east, then left and right would be north and south, respectively, and both still within the land of promise. See Helyer, "The Separation of Abram and Lot," 79.

[49] Lot appears early in the Abraham narrative several times (Gen 11:27, 31; 12:4–5; 13:1) alongside Sarah's barrenness (Gen 11:30). A probable implication is that Lot, himself an orphan (Gen 11:28), traveled with Abram to Haran and then to Canaan to inherit.

[50] Both "to water" (לְהַשְׁקוֹת) in Gen 2:10 and "well-watered" (מַשְׁקֶה) in Gen 13:10 are expressions derived from the root "to cause to drink" (שָׁקָה), which only occurs in the *Hiphil* and *Pual* stems in the Hebrew Bible. See *CDCH*, 477. The first (Gen 2:10) is a *Hiphil* infinitive construct identifying the purpose of the river while the second (Gen 13:10) is a noun—with the morphology of a *Hiphil* participle—that typically means "cupbearer," or "one who gives drink" (Gen 40:1, 5). I have translated it "well-watered" in this context because it is the predicate noun in a verbless כְּ clause describing the land. The phrase "the garden of YHWH" (גַּן־יְהוָה) only appears elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible in parallel with "Eden" (Isa 51:3).

promise of blessing upon Abram and the land inheritance he had promised him. This is confirmed by the text's emphasis on Lot's migration "toward the east" (מִקֶּדֶם), which was the same direction both that the first man and his wife were exiled from Eden (מִקֶּדֶם) and that Cain was further driven after he murdered Abel (קִדְמַת־עֵדֶן) (Gen 13:11; cf. 3:24; 4:16).[51] The pericope concludes with definitive separation: Lot "settled" (יָשַׁב) among the cities of the valley and "pitched his tent" (וַיֶּאֱהַל) near Sodom—the wickedness of which is explicitly and parenthetically noted by the author (Gen 13:13)—while Abram "settled" (יָשַׁב) in the land of Canaan and "pitched his tent" (וַיֶּאֱהַל) in Hebron (Gen 13:12, 18). Ultimately, Lot continued his eastward migration figuratively as he moved from pitching his tents *among* the cities in the Jordan River Valley to dwelling *in* the city of Sodom itself (Gen 14:12).

Furthermore, the comparison to the land of Egypt serves a twofold purpose. First, Lot had just returned to Canaan from Egypt where presumably he, along with Abram, had been materially enriched (Gen 12:16; 13:2). Thus, Lot saw the Jordan River Valley as an opportunity to return to the bountiful provision he found in Egypt.[52] But second, in the context of the Pentateuch a desire for Egypt takes on a decidedly negative connotation as the future Israelites will repeatedly look to throw off the authority of Moses and go back to the place of their enslavement because they remember it not as a place of suffering but as a place of provision and life (Exod 14:12; 16:3; 17:3; Num 11:5, 18, 20; 14:2–4; 20:5; 21:5).[53] Thus, the reference to Egypt here shapes how readers should understand the

[51] See Walton, *Genesis*, 415. Hamilton proposes an intentional connection between "saw" (וַיַּרְא) in Gen 13:10 and the same in Gen 3:6; 6:2. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 392. Such a connection would characterize Lot's actions as having the same character as Eve's and as the rebellious sons of God.

[52] See also Deut 11:10–12 where Moses explicitly states that the promised land is *not* like Egypt from where the Israelites came. Rather, v. 12 states that the promised land is a land "which YHWH your God looks after."

[53] Other supporting observations in Genesis include: (1) Egypt was a son of cursed Ham (Gen 10:6); (2) Ishmael, the son of Abraham outside the covenant, married an Egyptian (Gen 21:21) and "fell upon the face of all his brothers" toward the Egyptian border (Gen 25:18); and (3) YHWH explicitly commanded Isaac to avoid Egypt when he experienced famine (Gen 26:2).

attractiveness of the Jordan River Valley and the comparison to Eden. The well-watered fertility of the valley and the prominence of cities as opposed to the word of YHWH's promise is a lie which will not last.[54] This reality is foreshadowed when Lot first moves near Sodom (Gen 13:12) and fulfilled when YHWH destroyed the cities of the Jordan River Valley in which Lot had lived (Gen 19:29). Sodom and Gomorrah, once reminiscent of the garden of YHWH, were destroyed in like manner to Egypt.[55]

After Lot separated from Abram and, thus, from the blessing and promise of YHWH, Abram received reaffirmation of YHWH's promise of land inheritance in Canaan along with an explicit promise of innumerable descendants. YHWH said to Abram, "All the land which you see I will give to you and to your seed forever," and, "Arise, walk in the land to its length and breadth, for I will give it to you" (Gen 13:15, 17). In between these two land promises YHWH stated, "I will make your seed like the dust of the earth which, if a man is able to count the dust of the earth, your seed can also be counted" (Gen 13:16). Abram believed YHWH's promise and was not enticed by the cities of the valley, choosing rather to remain in the apparently less desirable land of Canaan. Abram "the Hebrew" (הָעִבְרִי) then enacted beforehand his seed's conquest and inheritance of the land when he pursued and "defeated" (וַיַּכֵּם) Kerdolaomer and his conglomerate, driving them

[54] It appears that in Genesis there is a literary contrast between cities and tents. Cursed Cain migrated east of Eden and built a city (Gen 4:17), cursed Ham's descendant Nimrod built the great city Nineveh (Gen 10:11), and the post-flood generation gathered in Shinar to build a city rather than populate the earth as YHWH commanded (Gen 11:4). Furthermore, the city Sodom was destroyed by YHWH (Gen 19:14), and Lot left that city only to take up residence in Zoar, another city (Gen 19:20–22). Finally, Esau was a hunter like the city-builder Nimrod, but Jacob was a tent-dweller (Gen 25:27; cf. 10:9). On the other hand, Abraham (Gen 12:8; 13:3; 18:1–2), Isaac (Gen 26:25), and Jacob (Gen 31:25; 33:19:35:21) dwelt in tents in Canaan. This contrast may be behind the author of Hebrews' commendation of the patriarchs for their contentment to dwell in tents on the earth while they awaited the city built by *God* (Heb 11:9–10).

[55] According to L. Michael Morales, "The exodus of Lot out of Sodom is imbedded within the story of Abraham and laced with Passover terminology and themes." L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 25. See also Jeffrey C. Geoghegan, "The Abrahamic Passover," in *Le-David Maskil: A Birthday Tribute for David Noel Freedman*, ed. David Noel Freedman, Richard Elliott Freedman, and William Henry Propp (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2004), 47–62; and Rashi, *Commentaries on the Pentateuch*, 194.

out of the land of Canaan to the north (Gen 14:15).[56] Lot, on the other hand, experienced first a kidnapping at the hands of the invaders and subsequent rescue by Abram (Gen 14:11–16) and then last minute deliverance as fire fell from YHWH in heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:15–17).[57] The region that appeared to hold the promise and blessing of Eden became a smoking desolation while YHWH's chosen land and the one through whom he would bless all the families of the earth prospered. This clear reversal in fortune regarding the land informs a less apparent—but equally important—reversal concerning two women: Abraham's wife, Sarah, and Lot's wife.

Sarah and Lot's Wife

While neither Sarah nor Lot's wife appear in Genesis 13:4–14:24, they both figure prominently in the parallel section (Gen 18:1–19:38). At the conclusion of Genesis 14, Abram and Sarai apparently remained settled in Canaan while Lot returned to his home in Sodom. Neither is stated explicitly, but Abram had identified Eliezer of Damascus, a servant in his house, as his heir (Gen 15:2). This indicates that Lot remained in the same position he was in Genesis 13:12—separated from Abram, no longer a candidate for heir to Abram's house and YHWH's promise and dwelling in the Eden-like Jordan River Valley. While these chapters focus heavily on land and location, they do include a reaffirmation of YHWH's promise concerning seed. After Lot departed, YHWH promised to make Abram's seed "like the dust of the earth" (Gen 13:16) and he restated his promise from Genesis 12:7—"all the land which you see, to you I will give it, and to your seed, forever" (Gen 13:15).

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[56] The root "to pass over" (עָבַר) is prominent and thematic throughout the book of Joshua, occurring fifty-six times, and the noun typically translated "Hebrew" (עִבְרִי) may be related; thus, Abram would be "one who passes through" (cf. Gen 12:6) the promised land before his seed does. Furthermore, in Josh 12:1, 7 the author opens and closes a summary of the conquest with the phrase, "These are the kings of the land whom [Joshua and] the sons of Israel *defeated* (הִכּוּ and הִכָּה)." Both Abraham and his seed defeated enemies in Canaan.

[57] For more on this, see Augustine, *The Trinity*, 112–13.

This seed promise is matched by YHWH's word in Genesis 18 that in a year's time Sarah would give birth to a son. He visited Abraham in the same location—by the oaks of Mamre (Gen 18:1; cf. 13:18)—and said, "I will certainly return to you, as the time of the living, and look, a son will be for Sarah your wife" (Gen 18:10).[58] This statement itself is a reaffirmation of the first time YHWH promised to give Abraham a son through Sarah. Not long before the appearance in chapter 18, YHWH appeared to Abraham and said, "I will bless [Sarah], and also I will give you a son from her" (Gen 17:16), and further, "Sarah your wife will give birth to a son for you" (Gen 17:19), and finally, "My covenant I will establish with Isaac whom Sarah will bear for you at this appointed time in the next year" (Gen 17:21). Thus, the seed to whom YHWH will give the land of Canaan as a perpetual inheritance will be a son born to Abraham through barren Sarah, a tremendous and miraculous reversal.[59]

The other wife in this section of the Abraham narrative, Lot's wife, experienced her own tremendous and miraculous reversal, but from life to death. A mother of at least two daughters (Gen 19:15), she was with Lot at dawn when the two visitors grabbed their hands, brought them out of Sodom, and placed them outside the city (Gen 19:16).[60] One of the angelic visitors said to Lot, "Escape for your life! Do not gaze (אַל־תַּבִּיט) behind you (אַחֲרֶיךָ) and do not stand anywhere in the valley! To the mountains escape lest you be swept away!" (Gen 19:17).[61] Lot reached Zoar with his family as the sun rose, and YHWH

[58] "As the time of the living" (כָּעֵת חַיָּה) is likely a reference to the spring season. It is interesting that YHWH promises birth from barrenness at the time each year during which everything revives after winter. See BDB, 312.

[59] See G. K. Beale, *Redemptive Reversals and the Ironic Overturning of Human Wisdom*, SSBT (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 134.

[60] The verb "placed" (וַיִּנְּחֻהוּ) here is the same expression as that in Gen 2:15 (וַיִּנְּחֵהוּ). In both cases the person is moved to a place of life. The aural wordplay with "Noah" (נֹחַ) links both as survivors by YHWH's mercy.

[61] The imperative "gaze" (תַּבִּיט) here does not mean a short glance but rather stopping to look intently. This is precisely what Lot's wife does in the plain resulting in her death (Gen 19:26). See Jackie A. Naudé, "5564 נבט," in *NIDOTTE*, 3:8–10.

rained down sulfur and fire on Sodom and Gomorrah, completely destroying the cities, the entire Jordan River Valley, and all the vegetation that grew there.[62] But, "[Lot's] wife gazed (וַתַּבֵּט) behind him (מֵאַחֲרָיו), and she became a pillar of salt" (Gen 19:26).[63] Her apparent identification with the condemned city resulted in her destruction.

Her manner of death, however, is peculiar, not just in Genesis but in the entire Old Testament, and thus warrants close attention. The only two references to salt (מֶלַח) in Genesis appear in these two complementary sections of the Abraham narrative. The Valley of Siddim—the location where the cohort of five kings gathered to oppose Kerdolaomer's four king conglomerate—is also called "the Sea of Salt" (יָם הַמֶּלַח) (Gen 14:3). This is a reference to what the valley would become—and how readers would know and refer to this area—following the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. It is also another instance of foreshadowing what was to come later in the narrative. The other reference is the one quoted previously, referring to the final state of Lot's wife as a "pillar of salt" (נְצִיב מֶלַח) (Gen 19:26). Thus, it is as if the final state of Lot's wife matches that of the city and region to which she gazed back so longingly. They both became salt.[64]

Several additional references to the Sea of Salt occur in the Pentateuch (Num 34:3, 12; Deut 3:17) along with descriptions of salt's function in various offerings (Lev 2:13; Num 18:19).[65] But regarding the future destruction of the land and the exile of the

[62] The noun "vegetation" (צֶמַח) here (Gen 19:25) is etymologically related to the verb "to sprout" (צָמַח), which described the garden of Eden (Gen 2:9). See M. G. Abegg Jr., "7541 צמח," in *NIDOTTE*, 3:815–17. The valley "like the garden of YHWH," rich in vegetation "sprouting" from the ground like Eden (Gen 2:9), has been completely destroyed, becoming like the earth before YHWH created man (Gen 2:5).

[63] While the *BHS* apparatus recommends an emendation from "behind him" to "behind her" here, I have translated the text as-is, understanding the masculine singular pronominal suffix to indicate that Lot's wife was following behind him and from this position she stopped in the valley to gaze back.

[64] Hamilton writes, "Sodom is overturned and Lot's wife is metamorphosed." Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 48. Walton argues that she actually returned to the city and that is why hers and the city's fate were the same. Walton, *Genesis*, 480.

[65] For more on the covenantal import of the sacrificial function of salt in Matt 5:13, see Colin J. Smothers, "Salt and Light: A Canonical Reading of Matt 5:13–16 and Isaiah 42:6" (Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, Fort Worth, TX, November 14, 2021).

people of Israel, Moses proclaims in Deuteronomy, "The whole land will be burning sulfur and salt [גָּפְרִית וָמֶלַח שְׂרֵפָה]. It will not be sown, and it will not sprout, and no grass will come up in it. It will be like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, which YHWH overthrew in his wrathful anger" (Deut 29:22; cf. Gen 19:24). Therefore, one of the functions of salt in the Old Testament is to signify desolation, infertility, barrenness, and death as a result of divine judgment, as it does in both the naming of the Salt Sea after the destruction of the Jordan River Valley and in the death of Lot's wife.[66]

This connection between salt and barrenness is evident in several later texts in the Old Testament as well. Abimelech sowed salt (מֶלַח) over Shechem after he captured it and killed all the people there (Judg 9:45).[67] In addition to depriving the soil of fertility and preventing people from inhabiting the city in the future, this was likely a symbolic indication of curse. Jeremiah compares those who trust in nations rather than YHWH for their strength and security to shrubs trying to grow in "a land of salt" (אֶרֶץ מְלֵחָה) where no one can live (Jer 17:6).[68] Zephaniah pronounces future, permanent desolation for Moab and Ammon, the two nations that sprang from Lot through incest: they will be "a pit of salt" (וּמִכְרֵה־מֶלַח) like Sodom and Gomorrah (Zeph 2:9). Finally, the psalmist compares the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of the people of Judah to turning "a fruitful land into a salty wasteland [לִמְלֵחָה]'" (Ps 107:34). Thus, in certain contexts salt indicates

[66] See Victor P. Hamilton, "4873 מלח," in *NIDOTTE*, 2:948. See also E. P. Deatrick, "Salt, Soil, Savior," *BibArch* 25, no. 2 (May 1962): 41–48; and F. C. Fensham, "Salt as Curse in the Old Testament and the Ancient Near East," *BibArch* 25, no. 2 (May 1962): 48–50.

[67] One of the curses in the Aramaic Sefire treaty states concerning Arpad: "May Hadad sow in them salt and weeds, and may it not be mentioned again." See J. A. Fitzmeyer, *The Aramaic Inscriptions of Sefire*, rev. ed. (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical, 1995), 15, 53. Nahum M. Sarna connects salt in Gen 19 to Deut 29:22 (cf. Zeph 2:9) and Judg 9:45, all of which connect salt and desolate land. Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: JPS, 1989), 138.

[68] The word in Jer 17:6 is a different word (מְלֵחָה) that only occurs two other times in the Hebrew Bible (Ps 107:34; Job 39:6). It is typically translated as "salt land." The "arid rift valley" (עֲרָבָה) to which the "salt land" is compared refers to the valley which contains the Dead Sea. See *CDCH*, 343.

barrenness and desolation, as it does in reference to both the destruction of the cities of the Jordan River Valley and the death of Lot's wife in the Abraham narrative.

On the one hand, the fertile, Edenic valley that caught Lot's eye became a salty desolation, and Lot's wife likewise became salt, symbolic of barrenness and death. On the other hand, barren Sarah became fertile at the promise of YHWH that she would give birth to a son for Abraham who would inherit both the land of promise and YHWH's covenant. This redemptive reversal involves both seed and land: Sarah's barrenness in Canaan became fertility while Lot's wife and the lush land of the Jordan River Valley both became a salty desolation. The place of life is the promised land, and the lineage of the seed will come through Abraham and Sarah.

Summary

The promise of land inheritance and seed are integrally related and inseparable in the Abraham narrative, the book of Genesis, and throughout the Old Testament.[69] The complementary, miraculous reversal of both land and wife which YHWH effects in the lives of Abraham and Lot illustrates the certainty of YHWH's promise to Abraham and the exclusivity of his ability to accomplish it. This literary reversal also informs the meaning, implications, and significance of Sarah's thought in response to YHWH's word regarding the imminent birth of Isaac (Gen 18:12). In so doing, the author draws together the themes of life from death, return from exile, and birth from barrenness into an interconnected triad that typologically anticipates the very means by which YHWH will fulfill his Messianic promise in Eden (Gen 3:15).

Sarah's Restored Fertility as Return to Eden

When YHWH appeared to Abraham while he was living in Hebron, he said, "I will certainly return to you, as the time of the living, and look, a son will be for Sarah

[69] See Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 47–50.

your wife" (Gen 18:10).[70] Before recounting Sarah's response, the author provides two important pieces of information. First, Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent and heard this promise herself (Gen 18:10). Thus, this instance is distinct from the same promise in the previous chapter in which YHWH first told Abraham that Sarah would give birth to a son (Gen 17:16, 19, 21). Second, Abraham and Sarah were both old, and "a way like women" had long ceased to characterize Sarah, a reference to fertility (Gen 18:11).[71] In essence, Sarah had been barren, the reasonable conclusion given she had not given birth to any children (Gen 11:30), and now, when Abraham was ninety-nine years old (Gen 17:1), she had long since passed menopause, so childbirth was physically impossible.

Sarah laughed and thought to herself in response, "After I am worn out, will there be for me *'ednâ*, and my lord is old?" (Gen 18:12). Most English translations render the Hebrew word *'ednâ* as "pleasure" with a sexual connotation.[72] But as this word is a *hapax legomenon* in the Old Testament, I will argue for a meaning of "fertility" based on close attention to context in the passage.[73]

Meaning

First, Sarah's statement itself is chiastic, with references to obstacles framing the object of her desire and her restatement of what YHWH has promised. Sarah is "worn out" (בְּלֹתִי), an expression that appears three other times in the Pentateuch, each time referring to deteriorated clothing or shoes that are no longer fit to serve their intended purpose (Deut

[70] Portions of this section have been adapted from Thomas J. Sculthorpe, "*Plenior*, *Praegnans*, or Progressive: Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Authorial Intent," *SBJT* 26, no. 3 (2022): 50–70.

[71] Sarna argues for a reference to the feminine menstrual cycle (cf. Gen 31:35). Sarna, *Genesis*, 130. Hamilton argues for a reference specifically to menopause. Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 12. See also Gentry and Wellum, Kingdom through Covenant, 318. Both fall under the umbrella of feminine fertility-related issues.

[72] See chap. 1n110.

[73] Here I am seeking to understand the author-intended meaning of a *hapax legomenon* according to literary context and aural wordplay rather than appeals to ANE cognates and etymological connections.

8:4; 29:4).[74] Sarah considers herself no longer physically fit to fulfill the woman's function in a family, that of bearing children. On the other side of the verse, Abraham is "old" (זָקֵן), which simply means that Sarah considers her husband too aged to be able to fulfill his function in the procreative act. In the center, Sarah's *'ednâ* is the foil of the combination of her and Abraham's physical states. On the other side of the impossibility of conception due to her and her husband's deterioration and age is the possibility that both might be overcome by YHWH. This is why Sarah laughed, because such a prospect was so outrageous.

Second, the next verse clearly indicates what Sarah meant by *'ednâ*. YHWH apparently heard Sarah's laughter outside the tent and said to Abraham, "Why this? Sarah laughed, saying, 'Indeed, truly, will I give birth [אֵלֵד], and I am old?'" (Gen 18:13). When YHWH restated Sarah's thought to Abraham, "will there be for me *'ednâ*" became "will I give birth." This clearly indicates that Sarah was concerned with her fertility rather than sexual pleasure. Surely the procreative act—and her and her husband's ability to successfully engage in it—is tangential, but it is the purpose and desired result of that act that is the focus of her thoughts and of the broader context. For there to be *'ednâ* for Sarah, she would give birth to a son. Thus, in the context of Genesis 18, *'ednâ* means restored fertility, and moving forward I will translate it as "fertility."[75]

Therefore, it is plausible, if not probable, that Sarah's thought to herself upon hearing YHWH's promise has to do with fertility and conception rather than sexual pleasure, and therefore the Hebrew word *'ednâ* in Genesis 18:12 ought to be translated "fertility."

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[74] See BDB, 115; and Paul D. Wegner, "1162 בלה," in *NIDOTTE*, 1:661–62.

[75] For more on this, see Shalom M. Paul, Michael E. Stone, and Avital Pinnick, eds., *'Al Kanfei Yonah: Collected Studies of Jonas C. Greenfield on Semitic Philology* (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Magnes, 2001), 2:219–24. Especially, "There can be no doubt, however, that what is meant here is not 'pleasure' but in contrast to *bêlōtī* "I am withered" *'ednā* indicated the lubricious quality of the skin due to its being moist and freshened" (223). The contrast is between withered and dry and moist and watered.

Implications

According to E. D. Hirsch, discerning the implications of a text is "the knottiest problem of interpretation."[76] Implication belongs to verbal meaning as a part belongs to a whole, and that whole is a "willed type," which Hirsch defines as a convention shared between author and reader or interpreter.[77] This shared convention 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 a text carries.[78] And further, implications are limited by authorial intent.[79]

At several points in this dissertation, I have argued for intentional implications based on aural wordplay. For instance, while the plain meaning of Genesis 2:15 is the placement of the first man in the garden, an implication arises based on the aural wordplay between "rested" (וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ) and "Noah" (נֹחַ), the one who would affect "comfort" (יְנַחֲמֵנוּ) from painful toil (Gen 5:29). The implication involves the hope of return to Eden where the first man worked the ground without pain, a hope that is evident to readers who are very familiar with the text of the Pentateuch in its original language and thus share Moses's "willed type."

The question is, then, does Sarah's expression have anything to do with "Eden" (עֵדֶן), the word and root to which "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) bears the highest degree of aural and

[76] E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1967), 27.

[77] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 51, 64, 66. He develops the "shared" aspect of type as "intrinsic genre," which is the common literary convention that exists between author and interpreter which makes interpretation possible.

[78] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 62.

[79] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 63. Therefore, implications are only valid to the degree that they arise from author-intended meaning. It is unnecessary to assign implications to a second author via "fuller senses" when they properly arise from the text and the shared literary convention and common experience of author and reader. For an argument in favor of *sensus plenior*, or "fuller sense," see Raymond E. Brown, *The "Sensus Plenior" of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore: St. Mary's University, 1955). For an argument in favor of *sensus praegnans*, or "pregnant sense," an attempted correction to *sensus plenior*, see Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," *SBJT* 21, no. 2 (2017): 11–34.

etymological resemblance and the location of the garden in which the tree of life grew and from which the first human couple had been exiled? In answering this question, it is important to avoid the kinds of lexical fallacies which James Barr highlighted in his influential work *The Semantics of Biblical Language*.[80] At the same time, aural wordplay can function as an implication of a text to communicate meaning via shared type between author and audience.[81] Therefore, I will argue that Sarah's expression is a reference to Eden based on a shared type between the author of Genesis and his Israelite audience. That shared type is the association of the well-watered garden in Eden and its tree of life with abundant fertility and life. This is precisely the association Moses intended to activate in the minds of his audience.[82]

Barr's purpose was to "criticize certain methods in the handling of linguistic evidence in theological discussion."[83] Quoting Barr's description of the problem at length is worthwhile:

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[80] James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1961). For the identification of common fallacies in semantics and refutations, see also D. A. Carson, *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996), 28–64; and Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, rev. and exp. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 137–70.

[81] For more on wordplay as a valid and frequent literary device in the Hebrew Bible, see Ethan Jones, "Sound and Meaning in the Hebrew Bible: Implications for Exegesis," *JNSL* 47, no. 1 (2021): 19–36; L. J. de Regt, "Wordplay in the OT," in *The New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, ed. K. D. Sakenfield (Nashville: Abingdon, 2009), 898–900; E. L. Greenstein, "Wordplay, Hebrew," in *ABD*, 968–71; and Isaac Kalimi, *Metathesis in the Hebrew Bible: Wordplay as a Literary and Exegetical Device* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2018).

[82] For more on how literature intentionally forms the imaginations of readers through symbolism and how the biblical authors wrote from a "shared interpretive perspective," see James M. Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 15–21.

[83] Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 6. He argues that the popularity of the methods he criticizes is particularly great in the Biblical Theology Movement as exemplified in *TDNT*. For a definition and survey of this movement followed by a critique, see Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 1979), 14–85. See also James K. Mead, *Biblical Theology: Issues, Methods, and Themes* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 47. For a critique of Barr and Childs, see James D. Smart, *The Past, Present, and Future of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979), 7–16, 85–86; and Francis Watson, *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 19–26. For a defense of "theological lexicography," see Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*, 22–28.

> The problem here is not the relation of religious thought generally to religious language, but the question whether there is a relation between the religious structures found to exist within one particular linguistic group and the linguistic structure of the language of that group; and further, the question of whether and how the transference of religious structures and thoughts to another linguistic group is affected by the change of linguistic structure involved in the use of a new language.[84]

Specifically, Barr argues that in biblical interpretation and theological discourse one must account for linguistic gaps between Semitic, Indo-European, and modern languages along with the corresponding cultural gaps between the Ancient Near East, the Roman Empire, and the modern world.[85] Mid-twentieth-century practitioners of biblical theology, according to Barr, who connected a valid contrast in Hebrew and Greek thought with differences in their respective languages, did so unsystematically and haphazardly. They failed to examine the Hebrew and Greek languages in their totality, and they failed to articulate a general semantic method related to general linguistics.[86] Essentially, they are theologians, not linguists, which limits their ability to analyze languages astutely.[87]

For my purposes specifically, the following summation by Barr is particularly relevant: "It is the sentence (and of course the still larger literary complex such as the complete speech or poem) which is the linguistic bearer of the usual theological statement, and not the word (the lexical unit) or the morphological and syntactical connection."[88] While I am considering the meaning and theological import of a particular word in this section, I am doing so according to its near literary context, its position in a broader literary

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[84] Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 1.

[85] Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 4.

[86] Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 21.

[87] Barr writes, "The modern linguists who have worked on the grammar of Hebrew have said comparatively little that fits in with the modern theological assessment of the Hebrew language in its supposed relation to Hebrew thought." Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 21. Thus, according to Barr, erroneous linguistic theory dominates the derivative theological viewpoints.

[88] Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 263–64. Barr continues, "The attempt to read off a theological structure or pattern from a survey of the lexical stock in general or . . . from that part of the lexical stock which showed clearly the 'language-moulding [sic] power' of the religion, is a misguided one, and one which if carried out only leads to a distortion of the linguistic material in the interests of the theological pattern" (264).

structure, and prominent usage of paronomasia in the relevant corpus. According to my understanding of Barr's project—which has been received favorably in broader biblical scholarship and was vindicated by the quick demise of the Biblical Theology Movement—my close examination of the text of Genesis is in keeping with his exhortation to derive theological implications from the sentence or larger.[89] With that said, I would argue that the theological method best in keeping with the intent of the biblical authors is not the historical criticism of Barr but rather allowing the literature of the Scriptures to form one's worldview, thought categories, and definitions. The implications of "fertility" in Genesis 18:12 will further this proposal.

The proper place name "Eden" (עֵדֶן) occurs in the Pentateuch six times, all in Genesis 2–3, and it appears in the prophets a total of eight times, all referring to the location of the garden YHWH planted when he created.[90] Words derived from the root *'dn* appear an additional two times in the Pentateuch.[91] The first is the word under consideration in Genesis 18:12. The second is "delicacies" (מַעֲדַנִּים) in Jacob's blessing of Asher (Gen 49:20).[92] The fruit of Asher's land will be "rich" (שְׁמֵנָה), plentiful, and of high quality, so much so that it will be fit for royalty: "And he will give kingly delicacies" (מַעֲדַנֵּי־מֶלֶךְ). In a play on Asher's name, it appears Jacob associates blessedness here with agricultural abundance and royalty, two themes intimately connected to Eden.[93] When

[89] For a concise critique of Barr's work, see Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*, 18–22. See especially n9 and p. 19 for a reference to nearly forty published reviews of Barr's book.

[90] Isa 51:3; Ezek 28:13; 31:9, 16, 18; 36:35; Joel 2:3.

[91] There are 46 occurrences of words derived from the *'dn* root in the Old Testament. Here I am focusing on how the author of the Pentateuch uses it. For more on the meaning of the root itself, see Paul, Stone, and Pinnick, *'Al Kanfei Yonah*, 2:219–24; and A. R. Millard, "The Etymology of Eden," *VT* 34 (1984): 103–6.

[92] See BDB, 726; and *CDCH*, 232, both of which relate this noun to the root "to luxuriate" (עדן).

[93] In Gen 1:28, YHWH's blessing involves delegated dominion over the earth and creatures, and then in v. 29 he provides abundantly for their food. And in Gen 2, the first man named the living creatures (2:19–20) and was placed in the garden of Eden, which was full of trees for food (2:9, 17).

YHWH God planted the garden in Eden, he "caused every tree desirable in appearance and good for food to sprout from the ground" (Gen 2:9) and he commanded the man, "From every tree in the garden you may eat freely" (Gen 2:16). Furthermore, the first man was a royal figure in the garden: he was given dominion over the earth and all its creatures, to rule over and subdue them (Gen 1:28), and he exercised that dominion in naming the creatures YHWH God had made: "Whatever the man called a living creature, that was its name" (Gen 2:19).[94] Such thematic parallels indicate a possible, subtle but intentional aural wordplay on the proper name Eden, the place of royal abundance, in Asher's blessing.

Thus, the eight occurrences of words derived from the *'dn* root in the Pentateuch all appear in Genesis and all either explicitly refer to Eden or thematically correspond to the characteristics of Eden: fertility and life (עֶדְנָה) and royal abundance (מַעַדַנֵּי־מֶלֶךְ). For biblical interpreters, there is a way to both heed Barr's warning concerning lexical fallacy while also acknowledging author-intended implications via aural wordplay. I am not arguing that every one of the forty-six occurrences of words derived from the *'dn* root in the Hebrew Bible refer to Eden and thus carry an associated theological import.[95] I am arguing that *in Genesis* the author intends to recall in his readers' minds the place of fertility and life in association with Sarah's miraculous conception and to associate blessedness with the conditions in the garden. The resulting implication of "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) in Genesis 18:12 is this: for Sarah to give birth—for life to come forth from her long-barren, dead womb—is metaphorically akin to the restoration of humanity to Eden.

[94] For more on the first man as a royal figure, see Hamilton, *Typology*, 148; and Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 56–62. On the intersection of royal and priestly imagery and function in Adam, see Matthew Emadi, *The Royal Priest: Psalm 110 in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 60 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 25–38.

[95] According to Robert L. Plummer, "illegitimate totality transfer" is when an interpreter "takes the totality of what a word *can* mean and reads that potentiality as a reality in every word occurrence." Robert L. Plummer, *40 Questions about Interpreting the Bible*, 2nd ed., 40 Questions Series (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2021), 133–34. See also Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning*, 25–26; and Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, 218. I am striving to avoid this error by arguing on the basis of implication via shared symbolism between author and reader and intentional aural wordplay.

Significance

According to Hirsch, "Significance always entails a relationship between what is *in* a man's verbal meaning and what is *outside* it."[96] The correlative in contemporary parlance would be "application." In other words, an author's intended meaning takes on a particular significance according to how it is understood by readers. Thus, the progression from meaning to implication to significance is imperative. Significance is valid insofar as it is derived from the implications of the text which necessarily flow from the shared imagination between author and reader. Specifically for my purpose here, the implication of Sarah's utterance in Genesis 18:12 is significant to those who have been formed by the Scriptures—especially Genesis 1–3 and the Abraham narrative—in a way that it is not for those unfamiliar with Moses's depiction of Eden and the significance of seed for the fulfillment of YHWH's covenantal promise (Gen 12:7). Therefore, although significance necessarily involves the audience, significance and meaning are inseparable and connected through implication.

The above implication regarding "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) in Genesis 18:12 assigns a great significance to the birth of Isaac in the book of Genesis. As I argued in chapter 2, the author of the Pentateuch draws a close, metaphorical connection between death and exile from Eden: YHWH God carried out his death sentence "in the day" that the first man and woman ate of the forbidden tree by "disinheriting" (וַיְגָרֶשׁ) them from the garden (Gen 3:24). The counterpart of disinheritance was for humanity to be given rest (Gen 2:15) in Eden with free access to the tree of life. This was the blessed state of the first couple in the garden, and it was to this end that YHWH God promised the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) as the agent of restoration. Thus, for humans, to live is to be in Eden partaking of the tree of life and to die is to be driven out of the land of the living and barred from accessing the tree.

[96] Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 63, emphasis added.

In chapter 3 I argued that throughout Genesis the generational barrenness of the matriarchs of Israel was associated by the author with death. I also argued that the repeated pattern inaugurated a prospective typology concerning resurrection from death. Thus, for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the land, seed, and blessing promised by YHWH and the birth of the promised great nation were all contingent on YHWH granting birth from barrenness—YHWH bringing forth life from death. It was as if the promise was dead in each barren womb and YHWH resurrected it by making those dead wombs alive. The threefold birth from the barrenness motif in the book of Genesis leading to the creation of the nation of Israel functions metaphorically as a threefold resurrection from the death pattern that anticipates a greater future fulfillment.

Therefore, when the author of Genesis emphasizes Sarah's response to YHWH's promise as evoking Eden, as I have proposed in this chapter, he is further activating this conceptual connection between the barren womb and death, and furthermore between miraculous birth and resurrection. Especially in a literary context in which both the Edenic Jordan River Valley and Lot's wife become salted desolations in complementary sections of the narrative, Moses presents Sarah as understanding the promise of birth from her long-barren womb to be nothing less than a promise of return to Eden itself. This is the opposite movement from that which the cities of the Valley underwent. As return to Eden represents movement from death to life, so the birth of Isaac is a metaphorical resurrection from death, both of Sarah's womb and of the promise of YHWH that the seed of Abraham would inherit and dwell in the land of Canaan. By summoning Eden in his readers' minds and hearts concerning the birth of Isaac, Moses portrays his birth as an anticipatory type of resurrection from death.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to demonstrate that the birth of Isaac is a type of resurrection from death in the Genesis narrative. I began by proposing a chiastic literary structure for the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24) in which the separation of Abram

and Lot and YHWH's subsequent promise to Abram concerning the land of Canaan complements the promise of Isaac's birth and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. As the Jordan River Valley moves from a well-watered, Edenic paradise to a salted, smoking desolation under YHWH's judgment, Sarah, on the other hand, moves from worn out and barren to fertile according to YHWH's blessing. While Lot's wife parallels Lot's land choice—from mother to pillar of salt—Sarah is her literary foil, moving from having no child to conception, a transformation into what she called "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) in Genesis 18:12, a wordplay reference to Eden intended to evoke in readers' minds associated life and death symbolism. Thus, according to Moses, for Sarah to give birth is to return to Eden, to be resurrected from death.

I am proposing that the significance of Sarah's utterance in Genesis 18:12, the entire literary context involving birth from barrenness in the book of Genesis, and the life and death imagery associated with both Eden (Gen) and the promised land (Deut) in the Pentateuch functions typologically both for the author of the Pentateuch and in the canon of Scripture. Typology is anticipatory. The fact that, in the Pentateuchal narrative, YHWH's promises remain only partially realized means that fulfillment remains a future reality.[97] Specifically, with respect to Isaac, YHWH promised Abraham that his seed would inherit the land of Canaan, but Isaac failed to do so. He lived a nomad's life just as his father did. So, while Isaac's birth did fulfill YHWH's promise to give Abraham a son from both his own body and from Sarah, he was not *the* seed, the one who would fully, finally, and eternally take possession of the promised land, and the one who would crush the head

[97] On the prophetic, anticipatory nature of the Pentateuch, see Sailhamer, *The Pentateuch as Narrative*, 36–37; and John H. Sailhamer, *The Meaning of the Pentateuch: Revelation, Composition, and Interpretation* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009), 323–48. See also Sailhamer's students, Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011), 39, and Kevin S. Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2019), 32. For a positive critique of Sailhamer's position see Brian S. Rosner, *Paul and the Law: Keeping the Commandments of God*, NSBT 31 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2013), 142–48, especially 144–45.

of the serpent, restoring what was lost in Eden.[98] Thus, the literary significance of his birth is more than just a metaphor for resurrection from death; it also anticipates the means by which *the* seed of Abraham—the Messianic seed—will fully, finally, and eternally receive YHWH's promise and inherit the land of the living.[99] In this way, Isaac's birth is typological: it teaches both the means and the end of the future seed's victory. Through resurrection from death, he will reopen Eden and access to the tree of life for YHWH's people.

[98] On escalation as a necessary aspect of typological progression, see E. Earle Ellis, foreword to *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, by Leonard Goppelt, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), x; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 134–35; Hamilton, *Typology*, 23.

[99] This is the one desire of David in Ps 27:4: "One thing I have asked from YHWH, the only thing I seek: for me to live in the house of YHWH all the days of my life."

CHAPTER 5

PROGENY AND PROMISE: MACRO-LEVEL INDICATORS OF RESURRECTION TYPOLOGY IN GENESIS

The purpose of this chapter is to argue for an overall, macro-level emphasis on progeny in the book of Genesis as the mechanism by which YHWH will bring his restorative promise (Gen 3:15) to fulfilment. The literary structure of the book of Genesis highlights the marriage of Isaac (Gen 24)—framed by the deaths of his mother (Gen 23) and father (Gen 25)—as the central and most significant episode in the patriarchal narratives.[1] This indicates that procreation serves as a means not just to overcome death, but also, and more importantly, to perpetuate YHWH's covenant with Abraham. Simply put, for YHWH's covenantal promises to Abraham to continue after Abraham's death, he must have a lineage that continues through marriage and procreation. That progeny perpetuates promise in Genesis—that procreation overcomes the death of the one to whom the promise was made so that the promise continues generation to generation—further supports my thesis that the birth of Isaac typifies resurrection from death. In essence, the seed promise dies and is raised again as the promise-bearer dies and is succeeded by his son in each generation. The content of this chapter *supports* my thesis and main argument in chapter 4.

After briefly explaining the nature and function of macro-level indicators of typology, I will propose and defend a chiastic literary structure for the book of Genesis centered on the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah (Gen 24). My purpose in doing so is to

[1] This is not to say that there are not several episodes of significance in the book. Rather, I am arguing that close attention to the literary structure of Genesis indicates author-intended emphasis. Readers would do well to allow these emphases to guide their interpretation. Often these emphases are surprising; see the previous chapter on the birth of Ishmael (Gen 16) as the literary center of the Abraham narrative.

demonstrate that the parallel sections of the book elucidate the themes of creation, salvation, and covenant, all of which shape both the significance of the center of the book and the anticipation of the promised restorative seed. I also intend to explain how the predominance of land and seed in the literary structure of the central section of Genesis (23:1–25:11) frames the marriage of Isaac and connects it to Genesis 3:15.

Second, I will examine the linear genealogy in Genesis 5 with its characteristic repetition of "and he died" to argue that the author's subtle intent is to tie procreation to resurrection. In essence, lineage—and its associated marriage covenant—overcomes death through procreation. Finally, this chapter will conclude by highlighting several additional features of the Genesis narrative that indicate a close metaphorical connection between progeny and overcoming death. The text of Genesis anticipates, in interesting and varied ways, future victory over the serpent, sin, and death through progeny.

Macro-Level Indicators of Typological Structures

In chapter 3 I highlighted the relative prominence of the micro-level indicator "barren" (עֲקָרָה) in the book of Genesis along with other associated phraseology. I argued that intentional repetition indicates intended implications. Those implications included a metaphorical association between barrenness and death and, thus, an implied association between birth and resurrection. Here I want to shift to what James M. Hamilton has called "macro-level indicators" as an intentional means by which authors "forge typological connections."[2] According to Hamilton, "Micro-level indicators work with macro-level indicators to communicate an author's intended message. In Genesis, Moses has *structured* his narrative to provoke recognition of similarities between people and events, creating typological patterns that later biblical authors develop."[3] So, for Hamilton, macro-level indicators occur at the level of literary structure. As I argued in chapter 1, there is a long

[2] James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 331.

[3] Hamilton, *Typology*, 332, emphasis added.

and varied history of biblical scholarship in which interpreters have both paid close attention to literary structure and drawn conclusions concerning meaning and significance based on literary structure.[4] Scholars outside biblical studies have acknowledged the same in the literature of the world throughout history.[5] Thus, in analyzing and synthesizing based on literary structure, I stand on their shoulders.

At several points in this dissertation already I have drawn interpretive conclusions regarding typological significance based on how Moses arranged material in Genesis. The structural parallel involving Sarah and the Jordan River Valley (Gen 13; 18–19) highlights the reversal of each—Sarah from barrenness to fertility and the cities of the plain from Eden-like to desolation. Together with this macro-level indication, details in the text indicate a thematic connection between return to Eden—that is, restoration from exile—and birth from barrenness that anticipates resurrection from death. In this way, the structure of the narrative conveys author-intended typology. Another example was the structural parallel between the sister-wife episodes (Gen 12:8–13:4; 20:1–18). In the first, the prophet Abraham (Gen 20:7) underwent a pre-exodus descent into Egypt during a famine only to be enriched and expelled by Pharaoh due to a judgment of plagues and

[4] See my survey of scholarship on the relationship between literary structure and meaning in chap. 1. See especially Matthew A. Thomas, *These Are the Generations: Identity, Covenant, and the 'toledot' Formula*, LHOT 551 (New York: T & T Clark, 2011), 1; L. Michael Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord? A Biblical Theology of the Book of Leviticus*, NSBT 37 (Downers Grove. IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 23; and David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 15. See also Jean Pigat, *Structuralism*, trans. Chaninah Maschler (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Robert C. Culley, "Structural Analysis: Is It Done with Mirrors?," *Interpretation* 28 (1974): 165–81; Robert M. Polzin, *Biblical Structuralism: Method and Subjectivity in the Study of Ancient Texts*, SemeiaSup (Missoula, MT: Scholars, 1977); and Anthony C. Thiselton, "Keeping Up with Recent Studies II: Structuralism and Biblical Studies: Method or Ideology?," *Expository Times* 89 (1978): 329–35.

[5] I am referring specifically here to chiastic, or concentric, literary structures. Mary Douglas writes, "Why is ring composition practiced all over the world? What is it for? So many people! So many epochs! They could not all have learned it from one another. Its robustness over thousands of years supports the theory that something in the brain preserves it, and yet we know that it can fade out so completely that new readers miss it altogether." Mary Douglas, *Thinking in Circles: An Essay on Ring Composition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2010), 12. For a helpful discussion on the history of scholarship concerning criteria for discerning chiastic literary structure, see Wayne Brouwer, "Understanding Chiasm and Assessing Macro-Chiasm as a Tool of Biblical Interpretation," *CTJ* 53, no. 1 (2018): 99–127. See also David J. Clark, "Criteria for Identifying Chiasm," *LingBib* 5 (1975): 63–72.

return to the promised land. In this Abraham experienced a movement from death (Egypt) to life (Canaan).[6] Then, he effected the same for Abimelech—a representative of all the families of the earth (Gen 12:3)—by praying to YHWH resulting in the healing of barrenness for his entire household. Not only does this episode represent another death-to-life reversal, but together these parallel narratives anticipate the prophet like Moses who will do likewise—follow his own "exodus" with prophetic intercession so that a people from all the families of the earth will experience resurrection.

In this chapter, my aim is to zoom out to consider literary structure at the book level. I will argue both that the book of Genesis is intentionally and intricately structured and that the macro-level features of the narrative contribute to the typological structure for which I have been arguing in this dissertation—namely, that resurrection from death is a major thematic and anticipatory feature of the Genesis narrative, which is closely tied to human procreation.[7]

The Literary Structure of the Book of Genesis

In the previous chapter I overviewed recent research regarding the *tôlĕdôt* structure of the book of Genesis and proposed a significance for the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24) based on its position in that structure. While the *tôlĕdôt* structure is clearly an explicit indication of literary structure in the book of Genesis, the content of the book also proceeds thematically according to a chiastic arrangement that, for the most

[6] For more on Abraham's exodus out of Egypt, see L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 22–23; Hamilton, *Typology*, 256–58. Commentators also point out this correspondence, such as Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, NAC, vol. 1B (Nashville: B & H, 2005), 123; and Gordan J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), 291. For a dissertation-length argument that this episode, and several others life it in the Pentateuch, constitutes a movement from life to death, see Mitchell Lloyd Chase, "Resurrection Hope in Daniel 12:2: An Exercise in Biblical Theology" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2013).

[7] The close link with human procreation for which I am arguing is in keeping with Hamilton's thesis that the restorative seed promise shapes typological anticipation in Genesis, the Pentateuch, and beyond. See Hamilton, *Typology*, 6–17. See also Kevin S. Chen, *The Messianic Vision of the Pentateuch* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2019), 35–66.

part, aligns with the *tôlĕdôt* headings. My proposal for this chiastic literary structure of the book of Genesis is depicted below.

A. Creation of Adam (1:1–4:26)

B. Noah: Salvation from the Flood (5:1–11:9)

C. Abraham: Covenant Inaugurated (11:10–22:24)

X. Isaac and Rebekah: Marriage Framed by Death (23:1–25:11)

C'. Jacob: Covenant Confirmed (25:12–37:1)

B'. Joseph: Salvation from Famine (37:2–46:27)

A'. Creation of Israel (46:28–50:26)

In this section my goal is to argue for the above literary structure of the book of Genesis to demonstrate intentional emphasis on the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah at the literary center of the book.[8] As I outlined, macro-level indicators are generally thematic in nature rather than lexical. Thus, my arguments in this section will be much broader than many of those found in the previous three chapters. I will argue that the author of Genesis centers the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah—both in the book as a whole and between the deaths of Abraham and Sarah—to indicate that progeny is the means appointed by YHWH by which both death is overcome from generation to generation and also his covenant with Abraham will perpetuate and ultimately be fulfilled. In short, progeny is a form of

[8] Dorsey does not propose a literary structure for the book of Genesis by itself. Rather, he argues that Genesis–Joshua is a single composition—the "book of the law"—in three parts: the historical introduction to the Sinai covenant (Gen 1:1–Exod 19:2), the Sinai covenant (Exod 19:3–Num 10:10), and the historical conclusion (Num 10:11–Josh 24). Dorsey, *Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, 47–48. Arguments in favor of a so-called "Hexateuch" appear to have been prominent in the first half of the twentieth century. See S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, 9th ed. (Edinburgh: Clark, 1913), 116–59; and Robert H. Pfeiffer, *Introduction to the Old Testament* (New York: Harper, 1948), 129–30, 293–412. For a summary of the various proposals regarding the macro-structure of the Old Testament narratives, see Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 119–28. For arguments more aligned with mine regarding both the structure of the Pentateuch and the book of Genesis, see Morales, *Who Shall Ascend the Mountain of the Lord?*, 23–38; and Hamilton, *Typology*, 336–47.

resurrection.[9] In each generation, death is overcome by procreation so that the lineage of the anticipated seed and YHWH's promise of restoration continue.

Creation and Israel

At first glance, the first and last sections of the book of Genesis do not appear to have much in common. The first covers hundreds of years of history while the last is a comparatively short period of time. The first describes the beginning of all things, YHWH's unique creative act, and the fall of creation into sin, while the last describes the deaths of Jacob and Joseph and the blessing of the tribes that would become the nation of Israel. Several thematic parallels between these two sections, however, demonstrate their complementary function.

Antecedent to those parallels, however, is the rationale for dividing the final *tôlĕdôt* at Genesis 46:27–28. The Jacob *tôlĕdôt* (37:2–50:26) has been widely considered cohesive literary unit.[10] A significant plot development occurs, however, that warrants the thematic division I have proposed. Early in the Joseph narrative, his brothers sell him to a caravan of Ishmaelite traders and "they brought Joseph to Egypt" (37:28). For the next twenty years Jacob's family is separated. Then, after Joseph reveals his identity to his brothers, Jacob's entire family relocates to Goshen in Egypt: "[all of the people of the house of Jacob] came to the land of Goshen" (46:28). Thus, Jacob's entire family was reunited in one place.[11] This event marks the formation of the Israelite nation in the land

[9] For more on this, see Jon D. Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel: The Ultimate Victory of the God of Life* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 2006), 113, 145, 170; and my summary of Levenson's argument in chap. 3.

[10] For more on the literary coherence of the Joseph narrative, or the Jacob *tôlĕdôt*, including extensive notes on the history of scholarship, see Samuel Cyrus Emadi, "Covenant, Typology, and the Story of Joseph: A Literary-Canonical Examination of Genesis 37–50" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2016), 41–48. For a reading of the Joseph narrative as a "unified theological narrative" on the basis of TIS presuppositions, see Jeffrey Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection: Joseph as a Death & Resurrection Figure in the Old Testament & Second Temple Judaism*, SSBT (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 56–61; see especially p. 38 for a list of Pulse's hermeneutical presuppositions.

[11] The text of Genesis numbers the household of Jacob at seventy persons (Gen 46:27). There are seventy-one descendants listed in Gen 46:8–25 in addition to Jacob himself, including Dinah, Joseph,

of Egypt, the land from which YHWH would soon deliver them by his strong right arm. From this point on—except for the short sojourn of Jacob's sons back to Canaan to bury him after his death (50:7–14)—Israel's family is together in Egypt. Therefore, the transition from Genesis 46:27–28 represents the constitution of the nascent Israelite nation, the creation of Israel.

The first and most significant thematic parallel between the framing sections of my proposed literary structure for Genesis (A and A') is the overall plot movement of both sections. While the Creation section (A) moves toward violence, the Creation of Israel section (A') moves toward reconciliation. In the beginning, God saw (וַיַּרְא אֱלֹהִים) that everything he had created was "very good" (1:31), but not long after the sin of the first humans (3:6–7), the state of creation is described thus by the author of Genesis: "YHWH saw (וַיַּרְא יְהוָה) that the wickedness of humanity had become great in the earth and every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time" (6:5) and further, "The earth was corrupted before God, and the earth was filled with violence" (6:11). In a rather short narrative space, the state of creation moved from blessed and very good to corrupted and violent.

On the other hand, the Creation of Israel section (A') moves in the opposite direction. The end state of humanity—represented by Israel—is reconciliation and peace as opposed to violence. "When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, 'What if Joseph bears a grudge against us? And he thoroughly repays to us all the evil with which we rewarded him?'" (50:15). Joseph's brothers thought his previous expression of forgiveness (45:14–15) was a ruse for the sake of their father.[12] Joseph

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and Joseph's two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. Er and Onan, Judah's two oldest sons, were deceased when the family relocated to Egypt. Stephen's numbering of seventy-five people among the relatives of Jacob (Acts 7:14) follows the LXX tradition that added several additional descendants to the sons of Joseph in Egypt (Gen 46:20 LXX). For more on this, see I. Howard Marshall, "Acts," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 559; and J. W. Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, SCS 35 (Atlanta: Scholars, 1993), 786.

[12] This point is significant with respect to harmonizing the two different instances in which Joseph forgives his brothers. Initially, the text states that Joseph's brothers talked with him (45:15) after

responded, however, by twice telling them to not fear, by promising to provide for them and their families, and by setting their hearts at ease (50:19–21). At the conclusion of Genesis, the state of Jacob's family is as it has never been since the narrative began: his sons are at peace with one another without fear of reprisal, and then they receive a reaffirmation of YHWH's land promise from Joseph before he dies. They will go up from Egypt as a nation to inherit the promised land.

Second, these movements toward and away from violence occur between brothers in both sections. In the Creation section (A), Cain's murder of his brother Abel is the first violence in history which then burgeons in Cain's family and ultimately characterizes the whole of humanity. In the Creation of Israel section (A'), the violence is perpetrated against Joseph by his brothers. The reconciliation between the sons of Israel at the conclusion of Genesis is a fitting resolution to a post-fall story that began with fratricide and indicates the future result of the restorative work of the promised seed of the woman: brothers will dwell in unity (Ps 133:1).[13]

Third, while there are several instances in Genesis in which a second-born or younger son is elevated over the firstborn, both sections (A and A') feature such an occasion.[14] YHWH accepted Abel's offering and rejected Cain's (4:4–5), the first of these

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being unable to do so previously as a result of their hatred (Gen 37:4), which would indicate a significant change in the state of their relationship. And yet, after Jacob's death, they seem in some sense to doubt Joseph's sincerity. I would argue that reconciliation is not complete until Gen 50:19–21 when the brothers no longer harbor any fear of reprisal. This full, complete reconciliation parallels and resolves the fratricide of Abel in Gen 4.

[13] Referring to the repeated instances of fraternal conflict throughout Genesis, James Hamilton writes, "Reflection on these past difficulties between brothers makes the unity between brothers celebrated in Ps 133:1 seem like something to be hoped for in the age to come, enjoyed in the present only as an anticipation of a better day." James M. Hamilton Jr., *Psalms*, vol. 2, *Psalms 73–150*, EBTC (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 424–25. For more on Ps 133, including a structural argument centered on the priestly ministry of Aaron as the basis for the blessing of unity, see Allen P. Ross, *A Commentary on the Psalms: 90–150*, KEL (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2016), 747.

[14] The reason for God's acceptance of Abel's offering and his refusal of Cain's has been a topic of debate among commentators on Genesis. For an argument that God preferred blood sacrifice to grain offering, see John Skinner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Genesis*, International Critical Commentary (New York: Charles Scribner's, 1910), 105–6. For an argument in favor of divine disapproval of farming as opposed to shepherding, see Hermann Gunkel, *Genesis*, Göttinger Handkommentar zum Alten

reversals in the book. Later, Jacob crossed his hands to bless Ephraim over Manasseh (48:14) despite Joseph's objection. And finally, both sections feature blessings. Again, blessing is a key theme throughout the book of Genesis, but these two sections contain the first instance and the last. When YHWH created humanity, he blessed (וַיְבָרֶךְ) them (1:28), granting them the capacity to be fruitful and thus to exercise dominion over the earth and its creatures as his viceregents.[15] Before he died, Jacob blessed (וַיְבָרֶךְ) his sons as "the twelve tribes of Israel" (49:28), the first such time Jacob's family is called this in the Old Testament. This designation is a significant development in the narrative as it serves as the beginning of the fulfillment of YHWH's promise to Abram to make him a great nation (12:2). What began as one man with a barren wife has become a nation of twelve heads: the nation of Israel.

Noah and Joseph

The next level in the literary structure of Genesis includes parallel sections that focus on Noah (B) and Joseph (B'). The main thematic correlation between the two is the function of these two men in their respective narratives and in the book of Genesis: each one serves to preserve life so that YHWH's restorative program on earth can continue.

First, despite YHWH's regret over making humanity due to their corrupting influence in the earth, "Noah found favor in the eyes of YHWH" (6:7–8). This favor manifested in YHWH commanding him to construct an ark for the salvation of himself,

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Testament (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1910), 41–43. For an argument in favor of the mystery of divine election and thematic correlation with other instances in which the second-born is favored over the first, see Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis*, rev. ed., OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1972), 104–5. For an argument in favor of different motives—namely, Abel's offering was "by faith" (Heb 11:4)—see S. R. Driver, *The Book of Genesis*, 12th ed. (London: Methuen, 1926), 64. The most common view is that the quality of their gifts reflected a difference in their approach to worship and only Abel's approach—the giving of his "firstlings" and "fat portions" (Gen 4:5)—was commended. See Kenneth A. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, NAC, vol. 1A (Nashville: B & H, 1996), 267–68; and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 104.

[15] For more on humans as divine viceregents, or "viceroys," see T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 76–79. See also Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 49.

his family, and the creatures of the earth from the coming deluge (6:11–21). Two times in this context YHWH states the purpose of the ark and of Noah's obedience in building it: "to keep alive" (לְהַחֲיֹת) the pairs of creatures with Noah and his family.[16] After the waters subsided, Noah, his family, and the living creatures disembarked (8:18–19) after YHWH commanded them to "be fruitful and multiply on the earth" (8:17; cf.1:22, 28). Thus, YHWH's grace toward Noah together with his obedience in building the ark resulted in salvation through judgment and the renewal of creation and the creation mandate.[17]

Later, Joseph serves a complementary function in preserving the lives of not only his family but also those of the Egyptians and the known world at the time through his shrewd management of Egypt's assets during the famine. The emphasis in the text, however, is on the salvation of Israel.[18] As in the case of Noah, a particular family chosen by YHWH is preserved alive to perpetuate his restorative program through the promised seed to come. Two separate occasions, separated by some time in the narrative, repeat the same phraseology from the Noah story. First, during his initial revelation of his true identity to his brothers, Joseph said, "God sent me before you to make for you a remnant

[16] This word is the *Hiphil* infinitive construct of "to live" (חיה), which means "to preserve alive" and expresses purpose. The *Piel* stem of the same infinitive in Gen 7:3 has essentially the same meaning. See *CDCH*, 114; and BDB, 311. While the occurrences in Gen 6:19, 20 have different spellings—the first includes a *holem* while the second has a *holem waw*—there is no difference in pronunciation or meaning. See Christo H. J. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 2nd ed. (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2017), 22–23.

[17] For more on the theme of salvation through judgment as central to the biblical storyline, see James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 47–59. On the creation mandate being renewed in Noah as a new Adamic figure, see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 192; and Hamilton, *Typology*, 36–40.

[18] Gen 47:13–26 narrates the effects of the famine in Egypt and Joseph's shrewd measures to alleviate their plight. According to Gordon J. Wenham, this episode "shows how divine blessing came to Egypt." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, WBC, vol. 2 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000), 452. The Egyptians exclaim, "You have saved our lives" (הֶחֱיִיתָנוּ) in Gen 47:25, which is a *Hiphil* perfect expression analogous to the infinitives in Gen 6:19–20; see n16 above. Thus, while the salvation of Egyptians takes center stage in this passage, Joseph is fulfilling the promise of Gen 12:3 that in the seed of Abraham all the families of the earth would be blessed; see Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 92; and Duane A. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis: The Sources and Authorship of the First Book of the Pentateuch* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1991), 176.

on the earth and to keep you alive [וּלְהַחֲיוֹת לָכֶם] by a great deliverance" (45:7).[19] After Jacob's death, Joseph reiterated, "As for you, you intended evil against me, but God intended it for good to do, like this day, to keep alive [לְהַחֲיֹת] many people" (50:20). The repetition of the *Hiphil* infinitive construct "to keep alive" (לְהַחֲיֹת) closely associates these two characters in Genesis and these two complementary sections of the book.[20]

The Joseph narrative serves to narrow YHWH's preservative and restorative program in the Noah narrative to the seed of Abraham, both the "many people" or "great nation" he will become—the nation of Israel represented by Jacob's family—and the singular seed through whom YHWH will accomplish restoration—the one whom Joseph typifies.[21] On the other hand, the Noah narrative serves to color Joseph's preservation of Jacob's family with creational overtones so that readers of Genesis understand the birth of the nation of Israel as an act of creation by YHWH. As Noah functioned as a new covenantal head, so the nation of Israel will function as the same in the Sinai covenant.[22] Thus, both Noah and the nation of Israel are installments in the Adam type, YHWH's covenantal counterpart and federal representative of humanity.[23] Furthermore, the seventy post-flood nations named in Genesis 10 match the seventy-person family of Jacob that

[19] "Remnant" (שְׁאֵרִית) and "deliverance, survivors" (לִפְלֵיטָה) occur in parallel in Isa 37:32 describing the survival of the faithful people of YHWH despite threatened annihilation. The zeal of YHWH accomplishes this along with raising up the seed of David to reign forever (Isa 9:6). Thus, Joseph is an early type of the future royal seed of Abraham fulfilled through the Davidic lineage and ultimately in Jesus Christ.

[20] This phrase also occurs in Gen 19:19 describing Lot's rescue from Sodom. The purpose of this is likely to connect Lot's rescue to Noah's salvation and, furthermore, the destruction of the cities of the plain to the flood. See n12 above on the twofold reconciliation between Joseph and his brothers.

[21] For more on Joseph as a messianic, seed-of-the-woman type, see James M. Hamilton Jr., "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah? Tracing the Typological Identification between Joseph, David, and Jesus," *SBJT* 12, no. 4 (2008): 52–77.

[22] For a book-length argument supporting this kind of progression in the biblical covenants, see Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018).

[23] For more on Adam specifically as a foundational covenantal head after whom Noah and Israel follow, see Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011).

descends into Egypt (Gen 46:27), indicating that Israel as a nation functions, according to Mathews, as "a representative nation of the world of nations whom the Lord will bless."[24]

Finally, both Noah and Joseph experience a sort of "resurrection" in their saving roles. In other words, their actions to "keep alive" entail a passing through or descent into death followed by a reemergence into life. In Noah's case, the floodwaters completely overwhelmed and inundated the earth, destroying every living thing, but the ark "went upon the face of the waters" so that "only Noah and those who were with him in the ark were left (וַיִּשָּׁאֵר)" (Gen 7:18, 23). Later in Deuteronomy this expression refers to those who survive the death of exile: "YHWH will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left (וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם) few in number among the nations where YHWH will drive you" (Deut 4:27) and, "You will be left (וְנִשְׁאַרְתֶּם) with very few even though you were as the stars of the heavens for a multitude" (Deut 28:62).[25] While death surged all around, the ark kept Noah and everything in it alive through the judgment. Thus, it is as if the ark preserved Noah through death, and when the floodwaters receded, he and those with him disembarked into new life blessed by YHWH (Gen 9:1).

In Joseph's case, he continually descended into locations akin to death only to be raised up by YHWH. In his recent monograph, Jeffrey Pulse fully develops the death-and-resurrection motif in the Joseph narrative:

> There are certain narratives and characters in the Old Testament in which the death-and-resurrection motif manifests itself more powerfully. This is particularly the case in the Joseph narratives. I would argue that no other figure in the Old Testament canon provides as strong a case for the complexity of the Hebrew understanding of, and belief in, the idea of resurrection from the dead. . . . No fewer than twelve

[24] Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 836. For more on Israel as a representative nation, see Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 442. See also Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 596–99.

[25] Duane L. Christensen argues for covenantal fidelity as the basis for YHWH's preservation of a remnant of Israel in the exile amidst his reversal of their blessed multiplication. Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 1–21:9*, 2nd ed., WBC, vol. 6A (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001), 95–96; and *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, WBC, vol. 6B (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 701.

> manifestations of the motif of death and resurrection may be discerned in the [Joseph narratives].[26]

Relevant manifestations of the death-and-resurrection motif highlighted by Pulse for my argument here include Joseph's being cast into a pit and then being raised up, being thrown into prison and then being released, and going down to Egypt and then returning.[27] In each case the locative concept of life and death in Genesis is apparent, and moreover Joseph's repeated movement from death to life blesses himself along with his family and the people of Egypt. Thus, as YHWH preserved both Noah and Joseph alive, he did so for those associated with them as well, all for the purpose of both bringing the nation of Israel into existence and perpetuating hope of restoration through the promised seed.

Abraham and Jacob

I explained and demonstrated the complementary function of the Abraham narrative (C) and the Jacob narrative (C') in chapter 4, so here I will reiterate the purpose of these two sections together in the book of Genesis and overview their covenantal emphasis. These two narratives serve to initiate and continue the Abrahamic covenant specifically with respect to the nation of Israel. So, the Abraham narrative details the threefold covenantal promise of land, seed, and blessing with which YHWH calls and sustains Abraham as the Adamic head through whom he will accomplish his restorative program. In short, the promised seed of Abraham is the seed of the woman who will restore creation.[28] The Jacob narrative, then, specifies the seed of Abraham with whom YHWH would covenant; namely, the nation of Israel nascent in his twelve tribal-head sons. Setting

[26] Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection*, 163–64. The twelve manifestations of the death-and-resurrection motif are separation and reunion, three-day/three-stage separation and restoration, the barren womb and the opening of the womb, being cast into a pit/Sheol and being raised up/lifted up, going down to Egypt and up to Canaan/the promised land, slavery and freedom, thrown into prison and released from prison, famine and deliverance, seeds/planting and growth/fertility/fruitfulness, going down into the water/being drowned and being brought up out of the water/new life, exile and return, and stripped and clothed.

[27] For explanations of each of these manifestations, see Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection*, 163–95.

[28] For more on this, see John H. Sailhamer, "The Messiah and the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 44 (2001): 5–23; and Hamilton, *Typology*, 40–51.

aside both Ishmael and Esau, through Isaac Abraham's offspring were named (21:12) and the younger Jacob would be served by his older brother (25:23). The Abrahamic covenant is the mechanism by which YHWH will bring forth the woman's seed and fulfill his promise to crush the serpent and restore creation from sin and its curse.[29]

Isaac and Rebekah: Promise through Progeny

The literary center of the book of Genesis is a sort of epilogue to the Abraham narrative within the Terah *tôlĕdôt* (11:27). It consists of three main episodes broadly arranged in a chiasm as depicted below. The deaths of both Sarah (23:1–20) and Abraham (24:62–25:11) flank the lengthy account of the acquisition of a wife for Isaac from among Abraham's extended family members in Haran (24:1–61).[30] In this section I will propose literary structures for each of these three sections and demonstrate how the emphases apparent in these structures centers the theme of resurrection from death in the book of Genesis. As the birth of Isaac functioned as a type of resurrection from death for both lineage and promise, so his marriage to Rebekah does the same despite the deaths of those to whom YHWH made those promises. Through Isaac the seed of Abraham will be named (21:12) and YHWH's restorative promise will continue.

A. The death of Sarah (23:1–20)

X. A wife for Isaac (24:1–61)

A'. The death of Abraham (24:62–25:11)

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[29] For more on this function of the Abrahamic covenant in the book of Genesis, see Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince*, 39–44; and Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 260–64.

[30] Hamilton also interprets the literary structure of Genesis and its central section in this manner. He writes, "The problem of death and the promise of life are centered in the literary structure of the book of Genesis." Hamilton, *Typology*, 342. Dorsey centers Gen 24:1–67 in his "Isaac" section (Gen 21:8–28:4) and frames it with the death of Sarah (Gen 23:1–20) and the death of Abraham (Gen 25:1–10). Dorsey, *Literary Structure of the Old Testament*, 57. For an argument that Gen 22:20–25:11 serves as an epilogue to the Abraham narrative, see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 306–7.

First, the peculiar episode in Genesis 23 backgrounds Sarah's death amidst a detailed recounting of a land purchase transaction between Abraham and Ephron of the sons of Heth, a people group descending from Canaan the son of Ham (10:15).[31] In the narrative the death of Sarah serves as the occasion for this land acquisition, and Abraham's procurement of this burial plot near Hebron was one of his only official claims of ownership in the land which YHWH swore to give to his descendants.[32] I have outlined the chiastic literary structure of the story below. Sarah (שָׂרָה) is named several times only at the very beginning of the story (23:1–2) and again at the conclusion (23:19). The location also frames the episode: Sarah died in Kiriath Arba (23:2) and Abraham buried her near Mamre (23:19), both of which are referred to by the parenthetical note, "that is, Hebron" (הִוא חֶבְרוֹן) and both of which are "in the land of Canaan" (בְּאֶרֶץ כְּנָעַן) (23:2, 19).

A. The death of Sarah (23:1–2)

B. Abraham requests a burial site (23:3–6)

X. The field and the cave which is in it (23:7–12)

B'. Abraham purchases a burial site (23:13–16)

A'. The burial of Sarah (23:17–20)

Furthermore, in addition to framing the story the final section itself is a self-contained summary emphasizing the key points of the episode. That "the field arose" (וַיָּקָם הַשָּׂדֶה) to Abraham "and the cave which is in it" (וְהַמְּעָרָה אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ) frames the section (23:17, 20) which is the literary emphasis of the story (23:11).[33] Additionally, two

[31] The "sons of Heth" are most likely not the same people group as the Hittites. See H. A. Hoffner, "The Hittites and Hurrians," in *People of Old Testament Times*, ed. D. J. Wiseman, SOTS (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 197–221; and Bryant Wood, "Hittites and Hethites: A Proposed Solution to an Etymological Problem," *JETS* 54, no. 2 (June 2011): 239–50. All named Hittites in Genesis have Semitic names indicating no connection to the Hittites of Asia Minor. See Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 126.

[32] The other is the well at Beer Sheba in Gen 21:22–34. See chap. 4 for more on this episode.

[33] There is no article on "field" in Gen 23:17 because it is in construct with Ephron, "the field of Ephron," or "Ephron's field" (שְׂדֵה עֶפְרוֹן). Van der Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze write concerning indefinite nouns: "An article or pronominal suffix is not affixed to it and *it is not followed by a definite noun in a*

complementary phrases referring to witnesses of the event are reiterated: Abraham finalized his purchase of the field and its cave "in the eyes of all who entered the gate of [Ephron's] city" (בְּכֹל בָּאֵי שַׁעַר־עִירוֹ) (23:18; cf. 23:10) and "in the eyes of the sons of Heth" (לְעֵינֵי בְּנֵי־חֵת) (23:18; cf. 23:11).[34] The repetition of these phrases along with the emphasis on Abraham's acquisition of both the field and its cave at the conclusion of the story help to identify the center as Genesis 23:7–12.

The next level of the story (B and B') details Abraham's initial request before the sons of Heth (23:3–6) and his purchase of the field and cave from Ephron (23:13–16). In each case, Abraham initiates a step in the negotiation, and in each case the people of the land respond. These two sections serve to bracket the main part of the episode in which Abraham narrowed his initial request to a particular cave owned by a particular citizen among the sons of Heth and received much more than he intended.

The center section (X) is framed by instances in which Abraham "bowed down" (וַיִּשְׁתַּחוּ) before those with whom he was negotiating (23:7, 12).[35] The main progression in this section of the story consists in a shift from the cave of Machpelah to the field in which the cave sits. After Abraham entreated Ephron indirectly for his cave, Ephron responded, "No, my lord, hear me: I give the field to you along with the cave that is in it. I give it to you in the eyes of the sons of my people. Bury your dead" (23:11). The literary emphasis of the story, then, is the inaugural ownership of a portion of the land of Canaan—the field in which the cave of Machpelah sits—by Abraham, to whose seed YHWH

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construct relation." Merwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 215–26, emphasis added. The definite noun that follows in construct is the proper name Ephron.

[34] The analogous phrase in Gen 23:11 is, "in the eyes of the sons of my people."

[35] The scholarly consensus regarding Abraham's repeated gesture of bowing before the sons of Heth is that he is doing so out of humility and gratitude. See Nahum M. Sarna, *Genesis*, JPS Torah Commentary (Philadelphia: JPS, 1989), 158; Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 134–35; Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 127; and Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 318. In Genesis otherwise, Abraham only bows before YHWH (Gen 18:2; 19:1), and in this episode the people of the land call him "lord" three times (Gen 23:6, 11, 15). There appears to be mutual respect between all parties. I would argue that Abraham's bowing is a shrewd posture of humility before the sons of Heth and, by extension, before YHWH who has promised this land to him. Only YHWH's favor through Ephron will begin to bring it to pass.

promised to give the land (12:7). Abraham was not merely borrowing a cave from a Canaanite; this was a down payment on YHWH's promise to bring Abraham's descendants back to this land hundreds of years in the future (15:16).

Three times in this story—once in each of the three central sections—Abraham is told by the sons of Heth to bury his dead (23:6, 11, 15). Although Sarah is not mentioned in the main body of the episode, this repeated phrase serves to maintain in the minds of readers the occasion for the land acquisition; namely, the death of Sarah, albeit in the background. As those with whom YHWH covenanted directly approach death with the land promise unfulfilled, Abraham's acquisition of Ephron's field and the cave of Machpelah serves to perpetuate the covenant and its associated land promise. Death not only failed to prevent YHWH's faithfulness to his word; it was the occasion for his faithfulness to manifest.[36] The dead state of Sarah's barren womb likewise both failed to prevent YHWH's faithfulness to his seed promise and was the occasion for his faithfulness to manifest along with his power and intention to overcome death.

Second, the short pericope that details the death of Abraham and his burial in the same cave of Machpelah (25:9; cf. 23:17–18) complements the death of Sarah and concludes the Terah *tôlĕdôt*. I have outlined the literary structure of this section below. References to Isaac dwelling in Beer Lahai Roi (בְּאֵר לַחַי רֹאִי) in the Negev frame the section (24:62; 25:11) along with references to Sarah, Isaac's mother (24:67) and Abraham's wife (25:10).[37] Furthermore, Isaac's marriage comforted him after Sarah's

[36] I would argue for the prominence of this general theme throughout the Pentateuch. Death serves as the necessary occasion for YHWH's promise-fulfilling acts. YHWH directs Jacob to Egypt during the famine according to his word (Gen 15:13–16) only to then bring them out in the exodus. In other words, for the exodus to occur, and for the land promise to be fulfilled, Israel must first pass into and out of Egypt, the land "down there" akin to Sheol, the dwelling of the cursed dead. The later Babylonian exile and promised return—a second exodus—are patterned likewise. It is as if YHWH providentially did so to prophetically anticipate the necessity of the cross and the certainty of resurrection according to Paul's word to the Corinthians that the resurrection of Christ was "according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor 15:4).

[37] Isaac "took (וַיִּקַּח) Rebekah, and she was a wife (לְאִשָּׁה) to him" (Gen 24:67) and Abraham "took (וַיִּקַּח) a wife (אִשָּׁה)" (Gen 25:1), which ties the marriage of Isaac closely to the second family of Abraham. Furthermore, Abraham commanded his servant to "take" (וְלָקַחְתָּ) a wife for Isaac, and the servant

death (24:67) and "God blessed Isaac" after Abraham's death (25:11). God's blessing here is a preview of his reiteration to Isaac of the covenantal promises he made to Abraham. YHWH "appeared" to Isaac as he had to Abraham (26:2; cf. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1) and promised him land, seed as numerous as the stars, and both the divine blessing of his presence and blessing on the nations because of him (26:2–4).[38] In this episode the literary structure ties this blessing of God to Isaac's marriage to Rebekah. He is comforted and blessed despite the death of his parents because God provided a wife for him through whom the promises of seed and land will be realized. The promise of YHWH will continue in the next generation because Isaac has married.

A. Isaac takes a wife (21:62–67)

B. Abraham's sons from Keturah (25:1–4)

X. Abraham gave all he had to Isaac (25:5)

B'. Abraham's sons from concubines (25:6)

A'. Isaac blessed after Abraham's death (25:7–11)

Immediate tension arises in the narrative, however, as Abraham takes another wife and fathers several sons through her (25:1–4). In the complementary section (B') the text clearly states that before his death Abraham sent all these other sons away from Isaac. This action recalls Abraham's dismissal of Ishmael after Isaac's weaning because YHWH affirmed Sarah's desire that "the son of this slave woman must not inherit with my son, with Isaac" (21:10).[39] Furthermore, Abraham sent (וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם) them "to the east [קֵדְמָה], to the land of the east (אֶל־אֶרֶץ קֶדֶם)" (25:6), an emphatic expression which has these men headed in the same direction as the first humans after the fall (3:24), as Cain after he murdered

"took" (וַיִּקַּח) Rebekah to that end (Gen 24:4, 61). These parallel actions of the servant, along with the connection between Isaac and Abraham, are some of the reasons why I have sectioned the narrative as I have.

[38] For more on the significance of "appeared" in the patriarchal narratives, see Sarna, *Genesis*, 91–92.

[39] An implication might be, then, a further emphasis on Isaac—the miracle child born from barrenness—as the representative of promise as opposed to any others. For more on this, see chap. 2n38.

Abel and was banished (4:16), as those who built the tower at Babel (11:1), and as Lot when he separated himself from Abram (13:11).[40] In each case the people in question moved away from YHWH's presence, covenant, and blessing. And finally, the text makes a clear distinction between Isaac and the rest. While the rest of Abraham's sons were "sons of Keturah" (25:4) or "sons of the concubines who were Abraham's" (25:6), they went away from "Isaac [Abraham's] son" (25:6).[41]

At the center of this passage and amidst the sons of Keturah only Isaac is called a son of Abraham, and after the rest were sent away, only Isaac remained to inherit all Abraham had (25:5), which is the literary center and emphasis of this section of the narrative.[42] Isaac, the son born from barrenness according to YHWH's promise and power, is the heir Abraham so desired (15:2–3), the one through whom YHWH's covenant and blessing will continue in spite of Abraham's death (25:11), and together with Rebekah his new wife, the one through whom the promised seed will come.

Finally, the lengthy account of Abraham's servant's travel to Haran to procure a wife for Isaac serves as the literary center of this broad section of the Terah *tôlĕdôt*. The chiastic literary structure of this passage is depicted below. Framed by accounts of the deaths of Abraham and Sarah, this central portion details the means by which YHWH will perpetuate his covenant with Abraham, namely, progeny. The length of the account communicates its importance not only in the Terah *tôlĕdôt* but also in the book of

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[40] Mathews argues that "sent" (וַיְשַׁלְּחֵם) here purposefully evokes the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden (Gen 3:23) and the eviction of Hagar and Ishmael from Abraham's household (Gen 21:14). Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 355.

[41] The LXX, Syriac version, and the Samaritan Pentateuch all insert "his son" after Isaac's name in v 5 apparently to match the same in v. 6, a change that only further highlights the distinction between Isaac and the rest and also validates my argument.

[42] On Ishmael's appearance at, and participation in, Abraham's burial, Mathews writes, "Other than the Chronicler's genealogy (1 Chr 1:28), this is the only place where the names [Isaac and Ishmael] occur in tandem. The presence of Ishmael after so many years indicates the love shared by father and son (17:28; 21:11); although Isaac takes first place ('the beloved son,' 22:2), the rejected son also benefits from Abraham's blessing (21:13)." Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 356. YHWH is gracious toward Ishmael, but only Isaac will carry on and experience the covenantal blessing of the seed lineage, the land promise, and YHWH's special presence.

Genesis.[43] If Isaac does not have a wife—and he must not marry a Canaanite—the promise of land, seed, and blessing cannot continue as there will be no descendants of Abraham to whom to give the land as an inheritance. YHWH's covenant does not die with Abraham; YHWH has made full and perfect provision to ensure marriage for Abraham's blessed heir and continued dwelling in the promised land of Canaan.[44]

A. "Go and take a wife for my son Isaac" (24:1–9)

B. Abraham's servant meets Rebekah at a well (24:10–27)

X. Laban (24:28–33)

B'. Abraham's servant recounts meeting Rebekah (24:34–49)

A'. "Take her and go and let her be a wife for Isaac" (24:50–61)

This narrative is broadly chiastic in structure with a literary emphasis on the introduction of Laban in the center section (X) who will play a major role in the following macro-level section of Genesis, the Jacob narrative.[45] The framing sections recount Abraham's command to his servant (A) and then his servant's success, granted by YHWH, in finding and taking Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, to be a wife for Isaac (A'). Both contain parallel statements with repetitive language as follows: Abraham said to his servant, "To my land and to my relatives you will go [תֵּלֵךְ], and you will take [וְלָקַחְתָּ] a wife [אִשָּׁה] for my son Isaac" (24:4), and then Laban and Bethuel said to the servant, "Take [קַח] [Rebekah] and go [וְלֵךְ] and let her be a wife [אִשָּׁה] for the son of your master" (24:51). Furthermore, the opening section of the narrative is framed by references to the

[43] Wenham writes, "The very fullness with which this episode is related indicates just how important it was to the author of Genesis." Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 138. For an interpretation that sees this episode as more isolated in the book of Genesis on the basis of Documentary Hypothesis presuppositions due to its exceptional length, see George W. Coates, *Genesis with an Introduction to Narrative Literature*, FOTL 1 (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1983), 167.

[44] Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 137–38.

[45] See Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 145–46; Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 337. On Laban's apparent greedy motivation for hospitality as a preview for his dealings with Jacob, see Sarna, *Genesis*, 166. For an interpretation that does not highlight greed but reads Laban as sincere, see Hamilton, *Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, 152–53.

peculiar, hand-under-thigh manner of oath which Abraham requires of his servant (24:2, 9), and the closing section begins and ends with the characteristic "take" and "go" language in this narrative (24:51, 61).

In the next level of the story, the servant's encounter with Rebekah at the well is across from his recitation of that event for Rebekah's family members. References to the covenant loyalty (חֶסֶד) of YHWH characterize these two sections. In the first (B), the servant prayed, "Show covenant loyalty [וְעֲשֵׂה־חֶסֶד] to my master Abraham" (24:12) and "By this I will know that you have shown covenant loyalty [עָשִׂיתָ חֶסֶד] to my master" (24:14).[46] Later, when the servant was conveying the story to Bethuel and his family (B'), the servant said to them, "And now, if you will show covenant loyalty [עֹשִׂים חֶסֶד] and faithfulness to my master, declare it to me" (24:49). These two parallel sections contain the main content of this story both narrated and then reiterated to highlight YHWH's faithfulness to his covenant with Abraham.[47] In leading the servant to Rebekah and showing "covenant loyalty" (חֶסֶד) to Abraham by providing a wife for Isaac, YHWH has ensured that Abraham's heir will inherit and perpetuate the covenantal promises of land, seed, and blessing.

The center section of the story (X) introduces Laban, Rebekah's brother, who will become a key character in the Jacob narrative to follow. He enters the narrative in a

[46] For an exhaustive and helpful article on the usage and meaning of "covenant loyalty" (חֶסֶד) in the Hebrew Bible, see D. A. Baer and R. P. Gordon, "2874 חסד," in *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, ed. Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 2:211–18. The authors translate the word as "loyalty, faithfulness, goodness" (211) and assert that it "more frequently describes the disposition and beneficent actions of God toward the faithful, Israel his people, and humanity in general" (212). For a book-length argument in favor of covenant as the context in which divine "covenant loyalty" operated, see Nelson Glueck, *Hesed in the Bible*, trans. Alfred Gottschalk (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1967).

[47] Wenham writes,

> The servant's long speech goes over the events already related in vv 1–27. But this is not mere repetition for the sake of repetition; Hebrew storytellers were usually very sparing with their words, so the fullness of the servant's recapitulation of events shows it has a most important function. The first account shows how the servant discovered Rebekah and became convinced that she was Isaac's chosen bride. But now he has to persuade her family that it is right for her to marry Isaac . . . in convincing Laban of the rightness of the marriage, the narrator at the same time confirms in our minds that God is indeed in control, answers prayer, and fulfills his promises. (Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 146)

parenthetical disjunctive clause identifying him as Rebekah's brother (24:29) followed by his running out to meet the servant.[48] The author wastes no time revealing Laban's true character: when he saw his sister wearing the servant's gifts, he exclaimed, "Come, you who are blessed by YHWH!" (24:31). For Laban, YHWH's blessing and material wealth go hand in hand, and his behavior here foreshadows his interactions with Jacob in the future.[49] The short section ends with Laban granting permission to the servant to speak (24:33).[50]

While the overall emphasis of this story certainly lies in YHWH's covenant loyalty and faithfulness in leading Abraham's servant to a bride for Isaac—evident in the telling and retelling of those events—the center section is significant as the author seeks to wrap up the Terah *tôlĕdôt* and move on to Jacob. This is not the last time in Genesis that someone from the covenant lineage will travel north from Canaan to Aram Naharaim and encounter Laban. Fleeing his brother's wrath, Jacob dwelt with Laban for twenty years (31:38) during which time YHWH multiplied and enriched him, and then Laban reluctantly allowed Jacob to separate from him after he had departed secretly. Jacob's request, "Send me away [שַׁלְּחֵנִי] so that I may go [וְאֵלְכָה] to my place and to my land" (30:25) is very similar to the servant's, both speaking to Laban: "Send me away [שַׁלְּחֵנִי] so that I may go

[48] Several commentators point out that in running to meet the visitors Laban appears to be acting like Abraham (Gen 18:2), but his greed is immediately apparent and thus Laban is not positively compared to Abraham but rather is a literary foil, a contrast; see n45 above. Therefore, here Moses contrasts Laban with Abraham before the conclusion of the Abraham narrative to further inform the proper interpretation of Abraham's prior actions while at the same time offering a preview of Laban's role in the upcoming Jacob narrative.

[49] Wenham, *Genesis 16–50*, 146.

[50] Laban is not named after v. 29, and there is some ambiguity regarding the subject of the verbs in vv. 32–33. Several versions (NIV, NAB, REB, NJPS, CSB, NET) interpret these verbs as indefinite and thus translate them as passives, while the others assume the subject to be Laban (NASB, RSV). The ESV is even more vague such that it appears that the servant unharnesses and feeds his own animals. All agree that the singular subject of "and he said" in v. 33 is Laban granting permission for the servant to speak. For a fuller discussion, see Mathews, *Genesis 11:27–50:26*, 338–39.

[וְאֵלְכָה] to my master" (24:54).[51] Here also with Abraham's servant Laban was reluctant to allow the man from Canaan to depart with his tremendous wealth (24:55–57). In both cases, YHWH's faithfulness to his chosen lineage—the seed of Abraham—included protection from Laban's wealth-seeking schemes and return to the promised land of inheritance.

Summary

Given the overall anticipatory thrust of both Genesis and the Pentateuch, the literary and thematic design I have outlined is the essence of an author-intended, macro-typological structure.[52] Accordingly, resurrection from death is the means by which YHWH will restore what was lost in the fall, and he will do it through the promised seed of the woman.

While an entire volume could certainly be devoted to establishing the macro-level literary structure of the book of Genesis, the content of this section is sufficient to demonstrate the legitimacy of the seven-part chiasm I have proposed. Taken as a whole, broad themes of creation (A and A'), salvation (B and B'), covenant (C and C') and progeny overcoming death (X) come to the fore. In each of these complementary sections of Genesis resurrection from death plays a prominent role. Disinheritance from Eden (3:24) together with YHWH God's promise to crush the serpent (3:15) implies a future return to the rest the first humans enjoyed in the garden. Noah entered the ark and was preserved through the floodwaters of YHWH's judgment to disembark as a new Adamic figure on a new earth (8:16–17; 9:1–3) and Joseph descended into death-like circumstances several times only to be raised up to prominence because YHWH was with him (39:2, 21). YHWH

[51] When Laban catches up to Jacob, he says he would have sent (וָאֲשַׁלְּחֲךָ) Jacob off with celebration (Gen 31:27), but Jacob says that Laban would have sent him away (שִׁלַּחְתָּנִי) empty-handed had YHWH not been with him (Gen 31:42). Readers are compelled to agree with Jacob here due to Laban's previous behavior both toward Abraham's servant (Gen 24) and toward Jacob (Gen 29–31).

[52] See chap. 4n97 for resources affirming and demonstrating an overall anticipatory thrust of the Pentateuch and a pessimism toward the ability of Israel to serve as a faithful covenantal head and accomplish restoration.

blessed both Abraham (21:1–5) and Isaac (25:21) in granting birth despite barrenness, and later when Jacob's beloved wife Rachel was barren, YHWH granted her conception as well leading to the birth of Joseph (30:22–24), the one who would save Jacob's family in the famine.[53] Finally, at the center of the book of Genesis, the deaths of both Sarah and Abraham were unable to cancel YHWH's covenant as he provided both a wife for Isaac (Gen 24) and ownership in the land of promise (23:20) to perpetuate his covenant.[54] In these various stories the author of Genesis has consistently woven a typology of resurrection from death that sets an anticipatory tone for the future of Abraham's seed.

Given this overall anticipatory nature of the book of Genesis, and of the Pentateuch, the literary and thematic design explored functions typologically. The history recorded in Genesis is not merely historical. The patterns set forth in the book of Genesis and in the Pentateuch are paradigmatic for the rest of the Old Testament as YHWH's prophets look ahead to the promised seed of Abraham who will restore what was lost through the fall.[55] The consistent emphasis on resurrection from death in the macro-level structures of the book indicate a prophetic expectation on the part of Moses that this promised seed will both conquer death himself and lead the people of God in the same. Resurrection from death is the means by which YHWH will crush the serpent and his works and restore creation through the seed of the woman.

"And He Died": Resurrection through Progeny

In this section I will demonstrate that the first linear genealogy in the book of Genesis (5:1–32) depicts progeny as a type of resurrection from death. In each entry the

[53] In Joseph the seed lineage becomes more than merely the physical lineage by which the promise of restoration to Eden will be accomplished. Joseph is also the royal deliverer, the one who himself moves from death to life and then effects the same for Israel as he saves them from famine.

[54] Thus, seed and land—dynasty and dominion—take center stage throughout the book of Genesis. On the controlling influence of the seed and land blessings on the storyline of the Old Testament, see Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 47–51.

[55] See James M. Hamilton Jr., "The Seed of the Woman and the Blessing of Abraham," *TynBul* 58, no. 2 (2007): 253–73.

current generation dies only to be succeeded by the next. Thus, in each entry anticipation regarding the promised seed of the woman simultaneously dies and then is raised.

Genesis 5:1 begins the *tôlĕdôt* of Adam, the first man. A concise review of creation states that God created man "in the likeness [בִּדְמוּת אֱלֹהִים] of God," that he created them male and female, that he blessed them, and that he "called the name of them [וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמָם] man" (5:1–2). In essence, God himself is the first father in this genealogy, and the first man is his son.[56] Then Adam "fathered" a son "in his own likeness [בִּדְמוּתוֹ], according to his own image [כְּצַלְמוֹ]" in the same manner that God created him (5:3; cf. 1:26–27), and Adam "called his name [וַיִּקְרָא אֶת־שְׁמוֹ] Seth." The similarity between God's creation of Adam and Adam's fathering of Seth in manner—in his likeness—and in the naming convention indicates two things. First, previously stated, there is an analogy between the father-son relationship of Adam and Seth and the creator-creature relationship of God and Adam. Second, human procreation functions as a kind of creative act. That Adam "fathered" Seth is akin to God "creating" Adam.[57] The pattern of fathering and naming continues throughout the genealogy, and although "in his likeness" is not repeated, the continued characterization of the human father-son relationship in this manner is implied.

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[56] While the text shifts to a plural meaning of "man" (אָדָם) in Gen 5:2, the statement in v. 1 regarding God creating "man" (אָדָם) in his likeness has the masculine singular object pronoun, "in the likeness of God he made him (אֹתוֹ)." The NET translates v. 1 as a plural because of v. 2, but such a translation mutes the distinction between the first man and all humanity in these verses. The father-son likeness relationship which characterizes Adam and Seth (Gen 5:3) only exists between God and the first man. Thus, against progressive notions of the "universal fatherhood of God," all humans are not sons of God; only Adam was, and according to Luke's genealogy (Luke 3:23–38), Jesus Christ is the Son of God and second Adam (cf. Rom 5:12–21). For a critique of the "universal fatherhood of God," see J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism*, 100th anniv. ed. (Philadelphia: Westminster Seminary, 2023), 55–70.

[57] Vern S. Poythress builds his interpretation of the creation accounts on the concept of "providential analogy." Vern S. Poythress, *Interpreting Eden: A Guide to Faithfully Reading and Understanding Genesis 1–3* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2019), 137. In the context of Gen 5:1–3, God created the first man, a unique divine act, which correlates to our present-day experience of God's providential governance of creation in which humans procreate. Thus, Adam's fathering of Seth is analogous to God's creation of Adam.

The other repetitive expression throughout the genealogy is the report that, after fathering sons and daughters and living for an extraordinary length of time, each man died. In a single word the text repeatedly states, "And he died" (וַיָּמֹת) (5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 27, 31). This repetition recalls YHWH's threat of death in Eden prior to the fall (2:17; cf. 3:3–4). Thus, in this first genealogy readers see the effect of humankind living outside of Eden and without access to the tree of life. Everyone dies.[58] Physical death presents an immediate threat to hope for restoration because YHWH God promised in the garden that restoration would come through a "seed," or offspring, of the woman. While the serpent had deceived the woman resulting in her sin and disinheritance from Eden, her future offspring would return the favor by crushing the serpent's head (3:14–15). Cain murdered Abel, so neither one of them were the promised seed, but in Seth's lineage sons were born to fathers generation after generation. Although each father died, humanity—literally "Adam" (אָדָם) in the text—continued through his son. The death of the father was overcome in the birth of his son. The threat to YHWH's promise that death represented was overcome through procreation.[59]

A further indication in this genealogy that death would not be the final word for humanity comes in the person of Enoch (5:21–24). The account of Enoch is patterned after the accounts of the generations before him almost exactly until, after stating the length of his life, the text does not say, "And he died." Instead, the author writes, "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, because God took him" (5:24).[60] Rather than "And he

[58] The verb "to die" (מוּת) does not appear between the threat of death (Gen 2:17) and the repetition of death in the generations of Adam (Gen 5:1–32) despite the fact that Abel died along with, presumably, numerous others. Rather, the verb "to slay" (הָרַג) characterizes Abel's demise (Gen 4:8, 25) and occurs several times otherwise (Gen 4:14–15, 23). From this observation flows both a distinction between natural death and murder and an intentional emphasis on the metaphorical connection between "die" and exile in the heavens and earth *tôledôt* (Gen 2:4–4:26).

[59] For more on this, see Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*; and my interaction with this work in chap. 3.

[60] The prophet Elijah was translated in like manner according to his own description of the event before it happened, "If you see me taken (לָקַח) from you" (2 Kgs 2:10). Like Enoch, he went to the heavenly dwelling place of YHWH. Enoch's walking with God prefigures both Noah (Gen 6:9) and Abraham (Gen

died," the text states that Enoch "walked with God," and as a result, he experienced a sort of disappearance rather than death. For Enoch, "And he died" became "God took him." God "took" (לָקַח) Enoch like he "took" (וַיִּקַּח) the first man and then placed him in the garden in Eden, implying that Enoch again enjoyed the life represented by Eden (5:24; cf. 2:15; cf. Ps 49:16).[61] Simply put, God bypassed, or overruled, death for Enoch who lived in close fellowship with him. In drawing attention to Enoch's avoidance of death, the author communicates a future-oriented hope that those who "walk with" God will meet the same end: taken by God and planted in the place of his life-giving presence—returned to Eden.[62]

Finally, the birth of Noah provides another indication that restoration involves resurrection from death. Lamech named his son Noah, a variation on the Hebrew word meaning "to rest" (נוּחַ). Noah's name is both an allusion to YHWH God causing the first man to rest in the garden (וַיַּנִּחֵהוּ in 2:15) and an aural wordplay with the "comfort" (יְנַחֲמֵנוּ), which Lamech believed the birth of his son portended (5:29).[63] Specifically, "comfort" for Lamech was relief from "painful toil" (וּמֵעִצְּבוֹן) resulting from YHWH's curse (אֱרֻרָה) upon the ground (5:29). This is an explicit allusion to the aftermath of the fall into sin in Eden when YHWH God promised the first man, "Cursed [אֲרוּרָה] is the ground because

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17:1) doing the same, a description in Genesis of the activity of the faithful who by YHWH's favor overcome death and walk with him in Eden again; see n61 below.

[61] YHWH God "walked" (מִתְהַלֵּךְ) in the garden (Gen 3:8); he promised to "walk among" (וְהִתְהַלַּכְתִּי) the Israelites by dwelling in the tabernacle (Lev 26:12); and he promised to "walk in the midst" (מִתְהַלֵּךְ בְּקֶרֶב) of the Israelite camp to confirm their sure victory over their enemies (Deut 23:15). Furthermore, YHWH said to Eli through a man of God, "I surely said that your house and the house of your father [Levi] would walk (יִתְהַלְּכוּ) before me perpetually" (1 Sam 2:30), a description of the priestly ministry in the tabernacle, and YHWH characterized his time of dwelling in the tabernacle during the wilderness wandering to David as, "I walked [הִתְהַלַּכְתִּי] among all the sons of Israel" (2 Sam 7:7). For more on this, see G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 66, 111n68; and Hamilton, *Typology*, 227, 233–34.

[62] The prophetic expectation is that YHWH will "plant" (נָטַע) his people in his land again after exile (Jer 1:10; 24:6; 31:28, 41; Ezek 36:36; Amos 9:15). See also Num 24:5–6 where Balaam compares Israel itself to a garden which YHWH planted.

[63] See chap. 2 on Gen 2:15.

of you; in painful toil [בְּעִצָּבוֹן] you will eat from it all the days of your life" (3:17). It appears that Lamech prophesied his son's Adamic function in his "walking with" (הִתְהַלֶּךְ) God (6:9), covenanting with YHWH, preserving life by constructing the ark, and multiplying to fill the renewed earth after the flood (8:17, 9:1). All these reversals—toil turning to rest, curse turning to comfort—entail a return to Edenic conditions pre-fall, and to return to Eden is to move from death to life.[64]

Therefore, this first genealogy is bursting with expectation that YHWH will conquer death. As in each progressive generation the death of the father is overcome by the life of his son, and so the lineage carries on from Adam to Noah, so the anticipation of the seed of the woman is both threatened and reinforced. Unique departures from the pattern with respect to both Enoch and Noah bring this theme into sharper focus as Edenic imagery and lexical points of contact with Genesis 2–3 anticipate a future return to Eden. Altogether, the author communicates clearly that death is not the final word for humanity or for YHWH's promise to restore humanity to life and to right relationship with him. In each generation the people of YHWH can see that death is overcome and YHWH's promise will be realized through resurrection.

Progeny as the Mechanism for Promise Fulfilment

In this section my aim is to briefly revisit several features of the narrative of Genesis to show how they contribute to and support Moses's macro-level intentions for which I have argued thus far in this chapter. These features are the naming of Eve, the prominence of genealogy, and barrenness as the obstacle that must be repeatedly overcome for YHWH's promise to continue. I intend to demonstrate that in each of these features the mechanism for the fulfillment of YHWH's promise of restoration to the land of the

[64] A question that remains is why the repetitive "and he died" chorus in Gen 5 is not repeated in the parallel linear genealogy in Gen 11. Certainly, the death of each subsequent generation is implied, so perhaps it is explicit in Gen 5 to highlight the apparent translation of Enoch.

living through a seed of the woman is covenant marriage and resulting procreation, the very literary center of the book of Genesis.

First, after their sin (3:7) and YHWH's promise of a restorative seed (3:15), Moses narrates, "The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living" (3:20). The text features a paronomasia, or aural wordplay, between the name "Eve" (חַוָּה) and the adjective "living" (חָי) in the explanation of the name.[65] Thus, the name means what it sounds like: "Life-giver." Despite the judgment of exile which fulfills YHWH's threat of death, life will continue outside Eden through the woman and, per the promise of a future serpent-crushing seed, will ultimately be restored to Edenic conditions. And for this to happen, humanity will need to do precisely what YHWH commanded before their fall into sin: multiply (1:28). In naming his wife "Eve," therefore, the first man understood the connection between progeny and promise in YHWH's redemptive program.

Second, genealogies play an important structural and thematic role in the book of Genesis, a scholarly consensus with which I have interacted at several points in this dissertation.[66] The two main linear genealogies—both listing ten generations and culminating in a father of three sons (5:1–32; 11:10–26)—move the narrative from the first humans in Eden to Abraham in Canaan from whom the royal seed of the woman will come.[67] Two features in these genealogies are relevant to my purpose here. First, the temporary remedy for physical death outside Eden is procreation. The lineage of Adam continues despite the refrain, "And he died," because each generation has children. In this sense, progeny overcomes death as the next generation lives on while the previous is no

[65] For an explanation of the etymology of the name "Eve," see Scott C. Layton, "Remarks on the Canaanite Origin of Eve," *CBQ* 59, no. 1 (January 1997): 22–32. The name preserves an older version of the verb "to live" (חיה) in which the second consonant is *waw* rather than *yod*; see J. Heller, "Der Name Eva," *Archiv Orientální* 26 (1958): 636–56.

[66] See chap. 4.

[67] On the significance of linear versus segmented genealogies in Genesis, see Jason S. DeRouchie, "The Blessing-Commission, the Promised Offspring, and the Toledot Structure of Genesis," *JETS* 56, no. 2 (June 2013): 219–47.

more.[68] Second, the literary parallel between Noah and Terah, along with the fact that Abraham is the tenth-generation descendant of Shem, indicates a possible parallel between Shem as the blessed son of Noah in whose tents God will dwell (וְיִשְׁכֹּן) (9:27) and Abraham with whom YHWH's presence is manifest (21:22).[69] Just as Canaan will be the slave of Shem (9:27), so the royal seed of Abraham will "possess the gate of his enemies" (22:17).

The relevance of this connection between Shem and Abraham in the context of their genealogical link is the implication that continued human procreation, particularly in this single lineage, will bring about the fulfillment of YHWH's promise. In this context the promise entails the presence of YHWH and the ceasing of hostilities, both of which flow from the promise of Genesis 3:15 and implied restoration to Eden. The purpose of the detailed genealogies in Genesis, then, is to display the connection between progeny and promise. As the seed of Abraham multiply—specifically Judah and, ultimately, David—the promise of YHWH draws nearer to fulfillment.

Finally, the repetition of barrenness in the patriarchal generations supports the connection between progeny and promise. As I proposed in chapter 3, barrenness threatened the viability of YHWH's promise of a restorative seed of the woman (3:15) in each generation leading up to the nation of Israel. When in each case YHWH overturned barrenness and granted conception, he was displaying his faithfulness to his promise to Abraham that his seed would inherit Canaan (12:7). In each case, YHWH brought life from death to perpetuate his promise. Isaac was born from barrenness in the Abraham narrative (B), and then both Jacob and Joseph were born from barrenness in the Jacob narrative (B'). These events frame the marriage of Isaac at the literary center of Genesis, indicating that the promised seed and his victory over the serpent will come through

[68] See Levenson, *Resurrection and the Restoration of Israel*; and n9 in this chap.

[69] Later YHWH dwells among the Israelites, the seed of Abraham, in the tabernacle: "And I will dwell [וְשָׁכַנְתִּי] in the midst of the sons of Israel, and I will be to them God. And they will know that I am YHWH their God who brought them out from the land of Egypt, so that I might dwell [לְשָׁכְנִי] in their midst. I am YHWH their God" (Exod 29:45–46).

progeny.[70] Thus, in the birth-from-barrenness pattern in Genesis, Moses shaped the expectation of the people of YHWH: their God would fulfill his promise of seed and land, he would do it through progeny, and it would entail a reversal of death to life.

Conclusion

In my parallel chapters 3 and 5, my intention was to show how the micro-level and macro-level features of the text complement each other in support of my thesis. To that end, in this chapter I sought to examine the macro-level structure of the book of Genesis as a basis for my thesis that the birth of Isaac functions as an intentional, anticipatory, resurrection-from-death type in Genesis. I argued for a chiastic literary structure of Genesis centered on the marriage of Isaac to Rebekah, a marriage framed by the deaths of his parents but, more importantly, by developments in YHWH's seed and land promise. The death of Sarah served as the occasion for Abraham to obtain the field of Ephron, a down payment on the promised inheritance of Canaan by his descendants. Abraham's death occasioned a final distinction among his seed—to Isaac he gave all he had while the rest of his sons migrated eastward. Thus, Moses structured the book of Genesis to teach two complementary, formative ideas. First, that YHWH would establish his seed-and-land covenant through Isaac, the son of promise, the one whom he himself miraculously brought forth from a dead womb. Second, that marriage and progeny—the mechanism by which the restorative seed would come—overcome death, and thus, the restorative seed himself, when he comes, would overcome death. YHWH will restore Edenic bliss between himself and man through a life-from-death reversal of the seed of Abraham.

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[70] Furthermore, Gen 24:1–61 inaugurates a type in Abraham's servant. According to Hamilton, "Moses intended his audience to understand that the sending of the servant for a covenant partner in Genesis 24 typified the sending of Moses to Egypt for Israel. Malachi understood this pattern, and he employed the same strategies to prophesy of the new covenant (Mal 3:1). Mark presents John the Baptist as the messenger sent to prepare the way before Jesus (Mark 1:2), where fulfillment is inaugurated." Hamilton, *Typology*, 360.

Restoration from exile—return to the well-watered abundance of Eden, restored access to the tree of life, and close proximity to the life-giving presence of YHWH—and birth from barrenness—reversal of family death through miraculous birth so that YHWH's promise continues—are woven together in the book of Genesis in both the details of the text and in the structure of the entire book. In the context of the Pentateuch, the narratives of Genesis instill in YHWH's people a hope for the future after exile. The desolation of exile will not be the last word. The next chapter will show how later biblical authors in both the Old and New Testaments developed this expectation in the history of Israel and claimed its fulfillment in the Lord Jesus Christ. In the resurrection of Christ—the seed of Abraham (Gal 3:16)—is the ultimate exodus, the ultimate birth from barrenness, the ultimate death-to-life reversal.

CHAPTER 6

DEATH AND RESURRECTION TYPOLOGY: INNER-BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION IN THE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES

The purpose of this chapter is to examine interpretations of the anticipatory birth-from-barrenness typology in Genesis by later biblical authors.[1] Multiple Old Testament prophets interpret birth from barrenness as a reversal of death in the context of the arrival of the promised royal seed of Abraham and the restoration of YHWH's people from exile. Then, several New Testament authors interpret and apply the progressive Old Testament pattern of birth from barrenness as it pertains to the arrival of *the* seed of Abraham and *the* son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, examination of these texts offers the opportunity to demonstrate the validity of my argument concerning the typological nature of Scripture and the worldview of the biblical authors, the meaning and significance of Isaac's birth, and the correlation between resurrection from death, return to Eden, and birth from barrenness.

[1] I will pursue this end according to the hermeneutical principles I laid out in chap. 1 and summarized below *contra* proposals involving Midrashic exegesis. For scholarly works that consider later canonical applications of the birth-from-barrenness motif in Genesis according to midrash see Mary Chilton Callaway, "Sing O Barren One: A Study in Comparative Midrash" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1979); and Elizabeth Ann Johnson, "Barrenness, Birth, and Biblical Allusions in Luke 1–2" (PhD diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 2000). Johnson defines "comparative midrash" as early Jewish sources engaging in comparison and contrast between various interpretations of biblical texts that make use of earlier traditions. Such interpretive activity acknowledges that "the meaning of Scripture is manifold" and interdependent with the situations of readers. Johnson, "Barrenness, Birth, and Biblical Allusions," 12. Further applications of midrash in biblical interpretation include John Strazicich, *Joel's Use of Scripture and the Scripture's Use of Joel: Appropriation and Resignification in Second Temple Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 15–18; Paul Morris, "Exiled from Eden: Jewish Interpretations of Genesis," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, JSOTSS 136 (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1992), 117–66; and Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology*, JSNTSup 12 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 55–59. For a collection of essays overviewing midrash as an interpretive stance, see Geoffrey H. Hartman and Sanford Budick, eds., *Midrash and Literature* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1986).

Together with chapter 2, the content of this chapter *validates* my thesis and main argument in chapter 4. In the same way that Moses intentionally initiated the correlation between restoration from exile, return to Eden, and resurrection from death antecedent to the Abraham narrative, later authors continue and escalate that correlation in their texts. Therefore, my interpretation of Isaac's birth in particular, including its implications and significance based on the micro-level and macro-level features of Genesis, is validated by both antecedent and subsequent texts.

I will begin this chapter with a brief review of the relationship between inner-biblical interpretation and typology with an emphasis on progressive revelation as the vehicle of typological progression in the Scriptures. Then I will consider Hannah's song (1 Sam 2:1–10) and a portion of Isaiah's prophecy (Isa 51–55) as examples from the Prophets in which the contents of Genesis play a key hermeneutical role. In these canonically subsequent texts, birth from barrenness, restoration to Eden, and resurrection from death intersect with greater significance for the future of the people of YHWH.[2] Finally, I will briefly observe several texts in the New Testament in which the apostolic witness concerning Christ involves the culmination of this typological progression. These texts include Luke's infancy narrative (Luke 1–2), several Pauline epistles (Rom 4:13–25; Gal 4:21–5:1), and the commendation of Abraham's and Sarah's faith by the author of Hebrews (11:8–22). I hope to demonstrate that typology—the formal principle of progressive revelation—emerges from the text of Scripture and escalates via inner-biblical interpretation.

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[2] I am assuming the traditional threefold division of the Hebrew Bible into "Law" (תּוֹרָה), "Prophets" (נְבִיאִים), and "Writings" (כְּתוּבִים) and considering how inspired authors in the second division interpret and apply texts in the first. For further on the value of the tripartite canon of the Hebrew Bible in interpretation, see James M. Hamilton Jr., "Canonical Biblical Theology," in *GGRC*, 59–73; and Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 37–43. Dempster writes, "The overall design of the Tanakh provides a hermeneutical lens through which its content can be viewed. Canonization provides a literary context for all the texts, creating one Text from many." Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 43. For a defense of the tripartite canon as historically valid, see Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and its Background in Early Judaism* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1985), 110–234.

Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Typology

I proposed in chapter 1 that inner-biblical interpretation—the interpretation and application of the implications of earlier canonical texts by later inspired authors—is the mechanism by which typological significance develops, or escalates, both chronologically and canonically. That Moses's intent in the Pentateuch was typological is apparent in the repetitive nature of the narratives in both repeated phraseology and sequences of events. It is also apparent in YHWH's promises left unfulfilled. Surely Isaac as the seed of Abraham is a fulfillment of the seed promise of Genesis 3:15, but he neither crushes the serpent nor inherits the land (Gen 12:7). The reconciliation between brothers accomplished through Joseph's forgiveness is the reversal of the violence that plagued the earth before the flood, but the people of Israel reject Moses in like manner only generations later, a point highlighted by Stephen in his defense before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:25–41). Repetition together with partial fulfillment are inherently anticipatory. From the perspective of Moses and other biblical authors, in the future YHWH will save as he has in the past, but with greater significance and lasting effect.

Later biblical authors reveal as much as they both look back upon the patterns established in the Pentateuch and then prophesy future restoration according to the same patterns. The exodus of Israel from slavery in Egypt is prefigured in the flood and in the lives of Abraham and Jacob and, according to the prophets, anticipates future, final salvation through the blood of the lamb of God (John 1:29, 36) and the judgment of the two-edged sword of his mouth (Rev 19:15, 21).[3] For my purposes, the birth of Isaac from barrenness—a life-from-death reversal akin to restoration from exile—anticipates the restoration of the desolate land and her exiled people to Edenic conditions. YHWH both kills and makes alive (Deut 32:39). He did so in Eden when the first humans sinned; he

[3] For more on the exodus as paradigmatic for salvation through judgment, see James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment: A Biblical Theology* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 90–91, 106–7; Bryan D. Estelle, *Echoes of Exodus: Tracing a Biblical Motif* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2018); and L. Michael Morales, *Exodus Old and New: A Biblical Theology of Redemption*, ESBT (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020).

did so when he restored Sarah's fertility; he did so when the exiles returned to Judah; and he did so in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

This canonical repetition of life-from-death reversal is the object of inquiry in this chapter. While I have demonstrated in previous chapters that *in the book of Genesis* the birth of Isaac is intentionally typological, later installments of the type validate such a reading.[4] In other words, repetition through inner-biblical interpretation satisfies both historical correspondence and escalation in significance. And such typological progression in Scripture accords with the progressive nature of Scripture.

Progressive Revelation

That the Scriptures are progressive in nature is evident in Hebrews 1:1–2. God spoke in various portions at many times (πολυμερῶς) and in various ways (πολυτρόπως) through his inspired prophets. The result is the sixty-six books of the Bible. I argued in chapter 1 that the Bible displays the progressive nature of revelation in three ways: temporally, materially, and formally. The focus of this chapter is the material and formal aspects of progressive revelation evident in the development of the birth-from-barrenness type by later authors. This repetitive pattern is best observed and interpreted according to the progression of revelation—that is, according to the threefold canon of the Hebrew Bible followed by the New Testament. Biblical types are inaugurated in the Pentateuch. They are developed, interpreted, and applied by the Prophets and the Writings with a view to future fulfillment. They culminate in the testimony of the apostles concerning Jesus Christ, the antitype, in the New Testament.[5]

[4] What I am calling "installments" are called "ectypes" by James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 28, including n50. Benjamin J. Ribbens calls this "patterning." Benjamin J. Ribbens, "Typology of Types: Typology in Dialogue," *JTI* 5, no. 1 (2011): 81–96.

[5] I am not advocating for a specific ordering of the books within these three divisions, as there have been many proposals; see Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty*, 51, for an example of a particular ordering of the Hebrew Bible informing interpretation of its parts. Rather, I'm acknowledging the historical and traditional veracity of both the contents and tripartite ordering of the Hebrew Bible. See n2 above.

My observation of the birth-from-barrenness type and its applications will proceed accordingly. After examining several installments in the Prophets, I will observe apostolic references to Isaac's birth specifically. In doing so I aim to demonstrate the validity of my approach not just in this specific instance but for biblical interpretation and New Testament use of the Old Testament more broadly.[6] Biblical types were revealed progressively and thus ought to be observed and interpreted likewise.

The Time of the Judges

The authors of both Judges and Samuel highlight the correspondence between both Manoah's wife and Hannah with the matriarchs in Genesis in interesting and provocative ways. They bring together birth from barrenness with the Nazirite vow to form what I am calling the "forerunner" type, an interpretive move that is not innovative but rather has hermeneutical warrant in the text of Genesis itself.[7] This development in the progression of revelation establishes implications upon which Luke builds his infancy narrative.

The Birth of Samson

The next child born from a barren mother, proceeding canonically through the Old Testament, is Samson. In the context of forty years of oppression at the hands of the Philistines, the author of Judges reports hope for the wayward Israelites in the form of an imminent birth: "The angel of YHWH appeared to [Manoah's wife] and said to her, 'Look,

[6] For helpful resources on the New Testament's use of the Old Testament, see G. K. Beale, *Handbook of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012); C. A. Evans, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *NDBT*, 72–80 which includes a helpful bibliography); G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007); and G. K. Beale et al., eds., *Dictionary of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Nashville: Baker, 2023).

[7] My use of "forerunner" throughout this chapter is informed by prophetic expectation of the arrival of Elijah as the forerunner to Messiah (Mal 3:23–24; Matt 17:10). See Anthony Ferguson, "The Elijah Forerunner Concept as an Authentic Jewish Expectation," *JBL* 137, no. 1 (2018): 127–45. I am arguing that forerunner expectation originates in the canon earlier than Elijah. While examination of the narrative in 1–2 Kings is outside the scope of this dissertation, the birth of a son to the barren Shunamite woman (2 Kgs 4:11–17) under Elisha's ministry would be a worthy topic for further research.

you are barren [עֲקָרָה] and you have not given birth [וְלֹא יָלַדְתְּ], but you will conceive and you will bear a son'" (Judg 13:3). YHWH will reverse her barrenness with conception, and a son will erase her childlessness. This twofold description of barrenness recalls the same of Sarah when she was introduced by the author of Genesis: "But Sarai was barren [עֲקָרָה] she had no child [אֵין לָהּ וָלָד]" (Gen 11:30). Thus, the author of Judges intends for his readers to see YHWH's promise to Manoah and his wife as a typological extension of his promise to Abraham and Sarah. Isaac was born from barrenness—and thus he was a fulfillment of YHWH's promise of seed to Abraham—but he did not inherit the land of promise (Gen 12:7) nor did he "possess the gate of his enemies" (Gen 22:17). Through this Danite couple, now, YHWH will bring dominion and victory to fruition.

The author of Judges, however, applies the significance of Isaac's birth for his readers in a novel way. Rather than signifying the perpetuation of YHWH's covenantal promises through progeny, birth from barrenness in the context of Judges signifies the imminent arrival of the promised royal seed.[8] In other words, the miraculous birth and dedication of Samson serves as a *forerunner* to the fulfillment of the seed promise and, thus, restoration from exile-like oppression at the hands of the Philistines. For the angel of YHWH, in his birth announcement to Manoah's barren wife, said, "He will begin to save Israel from the hand of the Philistines" (Judg 13:5). The one who would finish saving Israel from the Philistines would be the king so desperately needed in the land as evidenced by the repetition of the summary statement, "In those days there was no king in

[8] Scholars tend to agree that the reversal of barrenness leading to Samson's birth both looks back to the Genesis accounts of Sarah, particularly, and also Rebekah and Rachel and anticipates the final destruction of the Philistines under David. Trent Butler writes, "In 13:5 the beginning points to a conclusion under David." Trent Butler, *Judges*, WBC, vol. 8 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 326. Daniel I. Block states, "The Philistines will remain a problem during the tenures of Samuel and Saul . . . the final solution will not be achieved until the reign of David." Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, NAC, vol. 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 404. See also Barry G. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 352. For an article-length argument that Samson is a key figure who serves to establish the Davidic kingship, see John Roskoski, "Isaac and Samson: Sons of the Promises," *AJBT* 2, no. 4 (Dec 2019): 198–215.

Israel. Each man was doing what was right in his own eyes" (Judg 17:6; cf. 18:1; 21:25).[9] By implication, the presence of a righteous king would end the cycle of idolatry and oppression in Israel, and it is this figure whom Samson's birth portended. He would begin to deliver YHWH's people, and the future king—the seed of the woman, the royal seed of Abraham, the Judahite from whom the scepter would not depart, the law-loving king of Deuteronomy 17—would finish it.[10]

Several details in the text indicate that Samson was intended to be a Nazirite for his entire life.[11] Table 10 shows the four main textual parallels between the institution of the Nazirite vow (Num 6:1–8) and the announcement of Samson's birth (Judg 13). They include abstention "from wine and strong drink" (Num 6:3), abstention "from anything that is produced from the vine of the grape" (Num 6:4), avoidance of "uncleanness" through contact with corpses (Num 6:7), and the requirement that "a razor not pass over upon his head" (Num 6:5). The author of Judges repeats all four of these requirements as he explains how the boy to be born must be dedicated to YHWH. Thus, Samson—the forerunner who would begin to deliver the Israelites from the Philistines—was to be a Nazirite from birth.

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[9] The repetition of this phrase serves to connect Judg 17–21 to what has come before as Samson was the first to demand what was "right in [his] eyes" (Judg 14:3). Webb argues that this phrase "hints at the next major development to take place in Israel's development as a nation—the emergence of kingship—and in effect offers an apology for it. The institution of the monarchy was needed to bring some kind of order out of the religious chaos of the judges period." Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 426. For more on this, see A. E. Cundall, "Judges—An Apology for the Monarchy?," *ExpTim* 81, no. 6 (March 1970): 178–81.

[10] The emphasis on the spiritual desolation of Israel without a king in Judges followed by the reign of David appears to draw on the anticipation of a righteous king in Balaam's oracle (Num 24) and in Deut 17.

[11] The noun "Nazirite" (נָזִיר) is relatively rare in the Hebrew Bible. Gen 49:26 refers to Joseph as a "Nazirite" among his brothers (cf. Deut 33:16); see below for more on this. Other occurrences include references to consecrated vines that were to remain unpruned on the Sabbath (Lev 25:5, 11), and later, prophetic references to those among the Israelites who had taken the Nazirite vow (Amos 2:11; Lam 4:7). A "Nazirite" is an Israelite specially devoted to YHWH. For more on this word group, see Jackie A. Naudé, "5692 נזר," in *NIDOTTE*, 73–74.

Table 10. Lexical comparison of the Nazirite vow and Samson's birth annunciation

Numbers 6:1–8	Judges 13:2–5, 14
"To vow the vow of a Nazirite, to dedicate to YHWH" (6:2) לִנְדֹּר נֶדֶר נָזִיר לְהַזִּיר לַיהוָה	"For a Nazirite to God the youth will be from the womb" (13:5) כִּי־נְזִיר אֱלֹהִים יִהְיֶה הַנַּעַר מִן־הַבָּטֶן
"From wine and from strong drink he must separate" (6:3) מִיַּיִן וְשֵׁכָר יַזִּיר	"Do not drink wine or strong drink" (13:4) וְאַל־תִּשְׁתִּי יַיִן וְשֵׁכָר
"From anything that is produced from the vine of the grape, from seeds to skin, he must not eat" (6:4) מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר יֵעָשֶׂה מִגֶּפֶן הַיַּיִן מֵחַרְצַנִּים וְעַד־זָג לֹא יֹאכֵל	"From anything that comes out from the vine of the grape she must not eat" (13:14) מִכֹּל אֲשֶׁר־יֵצֵא מִגֶּפֶן הַיַּיִן לֹא תֹאכַל
"A razor must not pass over upon his head" (6:5) תַּעַר לֹא־יַעֲבֹר עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ	"And a razor must not go up upon his head" (13:5) וּמוֹרָה לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ
"He must not make himself unclean" (6:7) לֹא־יִטַּמָּא	"Do not eat anything unclean" (13:4) וְאַל־תֹּאכְלִי כָּל־טָמֵא

While Samson did indeed begin to deliver the Israelites from Philistine oppression by exacting significant defeats upon them several times (Judg 14:19; 15:7, 15; 16:30), he did not uphold his Nazirite devotion.[12] He contacted the corpse of a lion and thus became unclean (Judg 14:8–9), he allowed his hair to be cut (Judg 16:17–19), and although not explicit, it is contextually likely that he consumed alcoholic beverages during his wedding feast (Judg 14:10).[13] Samson's failure leads to the dire condition of Israel in the concluding chapters of the book of Judges: "In those days there was no king in Israel. Each man did what was right in his eyes" (21:25). Although Samson's birth from barrenness was miraculous and he did accomplish great victories against the Philistines, his lack of devotion to YHWH caused his function as forerunner to be an abortion. Instead

[12] For a helpful overview of the scholarly debate regarding Samson's Nazirite status, see Butler, *Judges*, 324–25. Several scholars argue that only the razor requirement applies to Samson. While the razor plays a prominent role as it is the final regulation broken by Samson which leads to his defeat in chap. 16, I find arguments assigning lifelong Nazirite status to Samson to be most convincing.

[13] For more on the meaning of "wedding feast" (מִשְׁתֶּה), see Robert H. O'Connell, "9272 שׁתה," in VanGemeren, *NIDOTTE*, 260–62. Block writes, "The word for feast . . . in this context refers to a seven-day drinking bout at the home of the bride's parents." Block, *Judges, Ruth*, 415

of the king following in his stead, Israel remained kingless and astray like sheep without a shepherd.[14]

The Birth of Samuel and Hannah's Song

The next book in the canon of Scripture opens by introducing the next barren woman: Hannah, the beloved wife of Elkanah, an Ephraimite.[15] The text says of Hannah, "But to Hannah there were no children" (וּלְחַנָּה אֵין יְלָדִים) (1 Sam 1:2). Like the introduction of Manoah's wife, this description bears resemblance to that of Sarah: "But Sarai was barren; there was no child to her" (וַתְּהִי שָׂרַי עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ וָלָד) (Gen 11:30). While the author refrains from assigning the adjective "barren" (עֲקָרָה) to Hannah in this context, she sings of the reversal of barrenness in her song of praise (1 Sam 2:5) after Samuel's birth. Thus, like the author of Judges regarding Manoah's wife, the author of Samuel here sets Hannah in line with Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel, the barren matriarchs in Genesis, and also with Manoah's wife.

Furthermore, like Samson, the son that Hannah requests of YHWH will be dedicated to YHWH from birth. Hannah "vowed a vow" (וַתִּדֹּר נֶדֶר) at the tabernacle in the presence of the high priest, Eli, in which she asked, "Give [וְנָתַתָּה] your handmaid a seed of men, and I will give him [וּנְתַתִּיו] to YHWH all the days of his life, and a razor will not go up upon his head [לֹא־יַעֲלֶה עַל־רֹאשׁוֹ]" (1 Sam 1:11; cf. Judg 13:5).[16] While the

[14] Moses asked YHWH to appoint a man over Israel who would "go out before them and go in before them" and who would "lead them out and bring them in" so that "the congregation of YHWH would not be as sheep without a shepherd" (Num 27:17). The answer to Moses's prayer was Joshua whom YHWH made strong "to go out and to come in" (Josh 14:11). Later David "went out and came in before the people" (1 Sam 18:13, 16). In all these references the context is military leadership with royal overtones.

[15] Thus, Elkanah is of the lineage of Joseph who was the first Nazirite (Gen 49:26). See the section "Joseph, the First Nazirite" in this chap. for more on this connection.

[16] While the phrase "seed of men" (זֶרַע אֲנָשִׁים) appears to be unique and, thus, possibly significant, commentators agree that it simply refers to a male child. See Robert D. Bergen, *1, 2 Samuel*, NAC, vol. 7 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1996), 68–69; Ralph W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, 2nd ed., WBC, vol. 10 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2000), 7–8; and David Toshio Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 117–18. For an alternative proposal, see Michael Carasik, "Why Did Hannah Ask for 'Seed of Men'?" *JBL* 129, no. 3 (Fall 2010): 433–36. For a response to Carasik, see Shalom M. Paul, "A Rejoinder Concerning 1 Samuel 1:11," *JBL* 130, no. 1 (Spring 2011): 45.

term "Nazirite" (נָזִיר) does not appear in noun or verb form with reference to Samuel, the statement regarding the razor is a direct quotation from Judges 13:5 and being "given" to YHWH for Samuel's lifetime is akin to Samson being "a Nazirite" to God from birth to the day of his death (Judg 13:5, 7). It appears that for Hannah, if YHWH "gives" her a son, she will "give" him back to YHWH. Additionally, like Manoah's wife, Hannah stressed her avoidance of alcoholic beverages when she emphatically stated to Eli, "Wine and strong drink I have not drunk" (וְיַיִן וְשֵׁכָר לֹא שָׁתִיתִי) (1 Sam 1:15; cf. Judg 13:4, 14). Thus, Hannah "gave" Samuel to YHWH as a Nazirite in the same way Manoah and his wife "dedicated" Samson, and therefore, Samson, too, was intended to function as a forerunner to the king.[17] Unlike Samson, however, Samuel maintained his dedication throughout his life and anointed David, the man of YHWH's choosing, king over Israel.[18]

The narrative introducing Hannah and describing her vow before YHWH and the birth of Samuel bears much more textual resemblance to narratives in Genesis than it does to the story of Samson's birth in Judges 13.[19] Elkanah had two wives (1 Sam 1:2) and his household was characterized by dysfunction (1 Sam 1:4–7), a fact that immediately recalls both the strife between Sarah and Hagar in Abraham's house and Jacob's two wives, Leah and Rachel. In both cases, the initial state of things matched that of Elkanah's house: one wife was barren—Sarah, Rachel, and Hannah—while the other bore children—Hagar, Leah, and Peninnah. Furthermore, the barren wives, Rachel and Hannah, were the loved wives over and against the wives who had borne children, Leah and Peninnah. Table 11

[17] Similar debates to those concerning Samson exist regarding the Nazirite status of Samuel. For a brief overview, see Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 118, including nn80–82.

[18] David F. Payne argues for an intentional contrast between Samuel and Samson on the part of the author of Samuel. He writes, "Very possibly a contrast is intended with Samson, a Nazirite who did not fully maintain his consecrated state." David F. Payne, *I & II Samuel*, DSB (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982), 8. See also Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, 118–19.

[19] Robert Alter argues, "The pairing of an unloved wife who is fertile with a barren, beloved co-wife sets the stage for a familiar variant of the annunciation type-scene (as in the story of Peninnah and Hannah in 1 Samuel 1)." Robert Alter, *Genesis: Translation and Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1996), 155.

summarizes several more connections between these three biblical narratives. In light of these lexical points of contact and the situational correspondence, the author of Samuel appears to be connecting Hannah and the birth of Samuel to the barren matriarchs in Genesis—specifically the births of both Isaac and Joseph—in a way that the author of Judges did not connect the birth of Samson. While the author of Judges clearly connected Samson's birth to the Nazirite vow, the only clear connection to the Genesis narratives is the adjective "barren" (עֲקָרָה) and the description of Manoah's wife as explained previously.[20] Thus, while both Manoah's wife and Hannah were childless like Sarah, the author's intentional connections with the Genesis narratives, or lack thereof, indicate both Samson's failure as forerunner and Samuel's future success as the same. In other words, the explicit and dominant patterning of Hannah after the Genesis narratives indicates a greater typological correspondence than Manoah's wife with the same.

[20] Manoah prayed to YHWH (Judg 13:8) like Abraham (Gen 20:17) and Isaac (Gen 25:21), but he did not do so to relieve barrenness. Manoah also sought to show hospitality to his visitor (Judg 13:15) as Abraham did (Gen 18:3–5).

Table 11. Lexical comparison of wife pairs in Genesis and Samuel

Hannah & Peninnah	Sarah & Hagar	Rachel & Leah
[Elkanah] had two wives (1 Sam 1:2) וְלוֹ שְׁתֵּי נָשִׁים	And Sarai the wife of Abram…gave [Hagar] to Abram her husband as a wife (Gen 16:3) וַתִּתֵּן אֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָם אִישָׁהּ לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה	And [Jacob] took his two wives (Gen 32:23) וַיִּקַּח אֶת־שְׁתֵּי נָשָׁיו
And there were children to Peninnah (1 Sam 1:2) לִפְנִנָּה יְלָדִים		And [YHWH] opened [Leah's] womb (Gen 29:31) וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ
But to Hannah there were no children (1 Sam 1:2) וּלְחַנָּה אֵין יְלָדִים	But Sarai was barren. There was no child to her (Gen 11:30) וַתְּהִי שָׂרַי עֲקָרָה אֵין לָהּ וָלָד	But Rachel was barren (Gen 29:31) וְרָחֵל עֲקָרָה
For Hannah he loved (1 Sam 1:5) כִּי אֶת־חַנָּה אָהֵב		[Jacob] also loved Rachel more than Leah (Gen 29:30) וַיֶּאֱהַב גַּם־אֶת־רָחֵל מִלֵּאָה
For YHWH had closed [Hannah's] womb (1 Sam 1:5, 6) וַיהוָה סָגַר רַחְמָהּ		And YHWH saw that Leah was hated, and he opened her womb (Gen 29:31) וַיַּרְא יְהוָה כִּי־שְׂנוּאָה לֵאָה וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ And God listened to [Rachel], and he opened her womb (Gen 30:22) וַיִּשְׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ
"If you truly look on the affliction of your slave woman" (1 Sam 1:11) אִם־רָאֹה תִּרְאֶה בָּעֳנִי אֲמָתֶךָ	"For YHWH listened to your affliction" (Gen 16:11) כִּי־שָׁמַע יְהוָה אֶל־עָנְיֵךְ "Drive out this slave woman" (Gen 21:10) גָּרֵשׁ הָאָמָה הַזֹּאת	For [Leah] said, "YHWH has looked on my affliction" (Gen 29:32) כִּי אָמְרָה כִּי־רָאָה יְהוָה בְּעָנְיִי And [Rachel] said, "Here is my slave woman Bilhah" (Gen 30:3) וַתֹּאמֶר הִנֵּה אֲמָתִי בִלְהָה
"And you remember me, and you do not forget your slave woman" (1 Sam 1:11; cf. 1:19) וּזְכַרְתַּנִי וְלֹא־תִשְׁכַּח אֶת־אֲמָתֶךָ		And God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her, and he opened her womb (Gen 30:22) וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־רָחֵל וַיִּשְׁמַע אֵלֶיהָ אֱלֹהִים וַיִּפְתַּח אֶת־רַחְמָהּ

Table 11 continued

Hannah & Peninnah	Sarah & Hagar	Rachel & Leah[21]
[Hannah] made numerous prayers before YHWH (1 Sam 1:12) וְהָיָה כִּי הִרְבְּתָה לְהִתְפַּלֵּל לִפְנֵי יְהוָה	Abraham prayed to God, and God healed Abimelech…and his slave women (Gen 20:17) וַיִּתְפַּלֵּל אַבְרָהָם אֶל־הָאֱלֹהִים וַיִּרְפָּא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־אֲבִימֶלֶךְ וְאֶת־אִשְׁתּוֹ וְאַמְהֹתָיו וַיֵּלֵדוּ	
The woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him (1 Sam 1:23; cf. 1:22, 24) וַתֵּשֶׁב הָאִשָּׁה וַתֵּינֶק אֶת־בְּנָהּ עַד־גָּמְלָהּ אֹתוֹ	The child grew and was weaned, and Abraham made a great feast on the day Isaac was weaned (Gen 21:8) וַיִּגְדַּל הַיֶּלֶד וַיִּגָּמַל וַיַּעַשׂ אַבְרָהָם מִשְׁתֶּה גָּדוֹל בְּיוֹם הִגָּמֵל אֶת־יִצְחָק	
YHWH visited Hannah (1 Sam 2:21) כִּי־פָקַד יְהוָה אֶת־חַנָּה	And YHWH visited Sarah (Gen 21:1) וַיהוָה פָּקַד אֶת־שָׂרָה	

Of particular significance is how the author of Samuel describes Hannah in terms that align her with all these women in Genesis rather than only the childless ones. Initially, Hannah is in Rachel's position as the beloved but childless of two wives. Furthermore, YHWH "remembered" Hannah and granted her conception just as he had "remembered" Rachel and opened her womb (Gen 30:22). On the other hand, Hannah bears more resemblance to Hagar than Sarah as she refers to herself as a "slave woman" (אָמָה) and is "afflicted" (עֳנִי) by Peninnah's mistreatment (1 Sam 1:11; cf. Gen 21:10, 12–13; Gen 16:6, 11).[22] And yet, the description of Hannah is clearly intended to evoke Sarah in the minds of readers. For instance, YHWH "visited" (פָּקַד) Hannah in granting her children to replace Samuel whom she gave to YHWH (1 Sam 2:21) just as he "visited" (פָּקַד) Sarah in the birth of Isaac (Gen 21:1). Together with the author's peculiar avoidance

[21] According to Victor P. Hamilton, YHWH "saw" (וַיַּרְא) that Leah was unloved (Gen 29:31) just as he "saw" (רֳאִי) Hagar (Gen 16:13) and Hagar "saw" (וַתֵּרֶא) a well of water (Gen 21:19) indicating further correspondence between Hagar and Leah. Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 18–50*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 267.

[22] The noun form of "afflicted" (עָנְיֵךְ) appears in Gen 16:11 and 1 Sam 1:11 while the verb form (וַתְּעַנֶּהָ) appears in Gen 16:6. See also "my affliction" (בְּעָנְיִי) describing Leah in Gen 29:32 (cf. 1 Sam 1:11).

of the term "barren" (עֲקָרָה) to characterize Hannah's condition, I propose that he intended to draw a line of correspondence between these narratives that centers on miraculous reversal of misfortune which then serves as the theme of Hannah's song of praise following the birth of Samuel. The structure of her song is displayed below.[23]

A. YHWH elevates the weak and humiliates the strong (2:1)

B. Who is YHWH? (2:2–3)

C. Strong humiliated and weak elevated (2:4–5)

X. Who is YHWH? (2:6–7)

C'. Weak elevated and strong humiliated (2:8a)

B'. Who is YHWH? (2:8b–9)

A'. YHWH humiliates the strong and elevates the weak (2:10)

Sarah was childless, but YHWH granted her conception; Hagar was afflicted by her counterpart, but YHWH twice heard her and blessed her lineage through Ishmael; Leah was unloved, but YHWH granted her many sons; and Rachel was barren, but YHWH remembered her and opened her womb. Hannah's circumstances resemble each of these scenarios. She was childless and afflicted by Peninnah her counterpart, but YHWH reversed her fortunes by giving her Samuel—and several additional children (1 Sam 2:21)—and raising her up from slave woman to bearer of the forerunner to the king.[24]

Hannah frames her song around the identity of YHWH as the God of reversal—he elevates the weak and humiliates the strong. The song is bracketed by parallel statements regarding the raising (רוּם) of a horn (קֶרֶן) (1 Sam 2:1, 10). In the first instance,

[23] I developed this structure based on observations of the text of the song and through interaction with André Caquot and Philippe de Robert, *Les Livres de Samuel*, CAT 6 (Genève: Labor et Fides, 1994), 60.

[24] Klein writes,

> The motif of a barren wife who is given a child by Yahweh and whose child plays an important role is quite frequent in the OT. . . . The importance of these stories is to underscore the importance of the son who is born and to indicate the fact that he is God's gift. . . . Lending poignancy to the stories about barren women is the frequent presence of a rival wife, who has borne children and who uses her fertility to irritate the barren woman. (Klein, *1 Samuel*, 4,)

YHWH has raised Hannah's horn, and in the second he raises the horn of his anointed one, his king, despite both Hannah's enemies (1 Sam 2:1) and those who contend with YHWH (1 Sam 2:10). Thus, in YHWH reversing her plight of childlessness Hannah sees a characteristic response of YHWH to his afflicted people and she casts her own experience of YHWH's mercy into the future typologically. YHWH will reverse the fortune of his afflicted king just as he has done for Hannah and the barren women before her. In this sense the author of Samuel casts Hannah and her miracle son as the forerunner to the king.

Three sections focused on the identity of YHWH frame the song. YHWH is the holy one (2:2) and the God of knowledge (2:3); he reverses death and impoverishment (2:6–7); and he is the creator and thus sovereign over the destiny of both the faithful and the wicked (2:8b–9). These identity statements form the foundation for the certainty with which Hannah claims the reversals described in the alternating sections of her song. Those who are weak will be elevated; those who are strong will be debased. YHWH alone knows the difference between the two, and he alone judges the ends of the earth.

The central point of emphasis in the song is YHWH's power to reverse death: "YHWH kills and gives life; he brings down to Sheol and brings up" (1 Sam 2:6). Poetic parallelism in this verse indicates that to bring down to Sheol is to kill, and to bring up from Sheol is to give life. In this context life and death are locative in nature. The giving of life constitutes resurrection from death, or movement from the place of death to that of life. Hannah's praise, "There is no Rock (צוּר) like our God" (1 Sam 2:2) calls to mind Moses's Song in which he refers to YHWH five times as "Rock" (צוּר).[25] Additionally, Hannah virtually quotes Moses's Song when she sings, "YHWH kills [מֵמִית] and gives life (וּמְחַיֶּה)" (1 Sam 2:6), which in Deuteronomy reads, "I kill [אָמִית] and give life (וַאֲחַיֶּה)" (Deut 32:39). Furthermore, resurrection from death in Hannah's song is in close context with both birth from barrenness (1 Sam 2:5) and disinheritance (1 Sam 2:7).

[25] See Deut 32:4, 15, 18, 30–31. Also, other gods are referred to as "rock" (Deut 32:31, 37). See also "there is no other god besides me" (Deut 32:39; 1 Sam 2:2) for a further connection between the Song of Moses and Hannah's Song.

Therefore, together with the numerous textual connections between Hannah and the barren matriarchs in Genesis—especially Sarah—these explicit allusions to Moses' Song in Deuteronomy in the context of possession of, and exile from, the land of promise draw together the thematic and typological strands for which I have argued. By centering the song on resurrection from death, with birth from barrenness and disinheritance serving as tangible examples in the same language as Moses's Song, the author of Samuel has equated resurrection from death with birth from barrenness and return from exile. YHWH killing and bringing to life in Deuteronomy 32 refers to the exile and restoration of his people with respect to the promised land, a locative concept of life and death in the same vein as the death of the first man and woman in their expulsion from Eden. For Hannah, YHWH killing and bringing to life is the reversal of her closed womb in the birth of a son in the same vein as YHWH's visitation to Sarah with the same result. For Hannah—that is, for the author of Samuel—these are two sides of the same coin: exile and barrenness are tantamount to death while restoration and birth are tantamount to life.

Furthermore, the fact that Hannah characterizes YHWH's raising her horn with reference to the future king, along with the author of Samuel's characterization of Hannah in line with the matriarchs in Genesis, indicates that this correspondence between restoration, birth, and resurrection is more than thematic. It is typological. The biblical authors, namely those of the Pentateuch and Samuel, have cast both the past and the future of salvation history in the same categories so that those who hear, read, understand, and believe the word of YHWH can expect salvation in the same manner as Sarah and Hannah, but in escalated fashion with eschatological, "latter days" implications.

Finally, perhaps the best explanation for the textual correspondence between Hannah and earlier characters such as Hagar and Leah who were not barren is the intersection between Hannah's son as forerunner and the anticipatory nature of her song.[26]

[26] David G. Firth writes regarding the birth of Samuel and Hannah's song, "This is also a story preparing for the move to kingship. . . . These events point beyond themselves to the greater purposes of

Both Hagar and Leah were the first "wives" of their respective husbands and their sons were set aside in favor of Isaac, the second-born, and Joseph, the eleventh-born, regarding covenantal blessing. The elevation of the second is a tremendously prominent motif in the book of Genesis—YHWH had regard for Abel's offering but not Cain's (Gen 4:4–5); the seed of Abraham were named in Isaac, not Ishmael (Gen 21:10–12); the older Esau served the younger Jacob (Gen 25:23); Perez emerged from the womb before the technical firstborn Zerah (Gen 38:27–30); and Jacob crossed his hands to bless Ephraim rather than Manasseh (Gen 48:14–20).[27] Paul exhorted the Christians in Galatia not to forsake Christ and the new covenant based on the elevation of Isaac over Ishmael (Gal 4:21–5:1), and the author of Hebrews wrote concerning the covenants, "If that first covenant has been faultless, no place would have been sought for a second" (8:7), and, "He abolishes the first to establish the second" (10:9).[28] These apparent interpretive connections between reversal of primogeniture and supersession of the old covenant with the new are, according to Paul, present in the text of Genesis and intended by Moses.

Matthew Emerson's work on the text of Genesis 16, 17, and 21 is helpful on this point.

> The promises made to Hagar/Ishmael, along with the covenant made to Israel at Sinai, are essentially *promises made in the desert/wilderness to Egyptian slaves fleeing from a master who cast them out*. These promises are thus in contrast to the life-giving covenant that is received by Abraham (Gen 15:6) and those under the new covenant (Deuteronomy 30, Jeremiah 31, Ezekiel 36) in the land.[29]

God. . . . Samuel is not the first king . . . but kingship will finally come through him. . . . Hannah's song, with its triumphant closing reference to Yahweh's anointed, *prepares for the king*." David G. Firth, *1 & 2 Samuel*, AOTC, vol. 8 (Nottingham: Apollos, 2009), 62, emphasis added.

[27] I would add here that the phrase "church of the firstborn" (Heb 12:23) may be an allusion to primogeniture reversal throughout the Patriarchal narratives in the context of a stark contrast between the Sinai and new covenants. Benefactors of the new covenant—the second—through faith in Christ are now blessed as the firstborn.

[28] See below regarding Paul's argument in Galatians. To "establish" (ἵστημι) the second, or new, covenant is a phrase often used in the LXX with reference to YHWH establishing his covenant with Noah and Abraham (Gen 6:18; 9:11; 17:7, 19, 21) and then with Israel (Exod 6:4; Deut 9:5).

[29] Matthew Y. Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory, Typical Typology, or Intertextual Interpretation? Paul's Use of the Pentateuch in Galatians 4:21–31," *BTB* 43, no. 1 (2013): 18, emphasis original.

Emerson demonstrates this thesis through careful attention to linguistic and thematic connections between (1) the promises made to Isaac and Ishmael (Gen 17) and the "disinheritance" of Adam and Eve (Gen 3:24), Cain (Gen 4:24), and Hagar with Ishmael (Gen 21:10) from their respective lands; (2) the wilderness plight of Hagar and Ishmael (Gen 16, 21) and the exodus of Israel from Egypt (Exod 10–19); and (3) the wandering of Hagar and Ishmael in Paran (Gen 16) and that of Israel in Kadesh (Num 13, 20, 27, 32).[30] Emerson's goal is to defend Paul's hermeneutic as "allegory" not to "indicate that [Paul] is moving from a textual reading to one that ignores the Pentateuch's plain sense, but only to note that he is expounding on the full sense and interconnectedness of these related passages."[31] The relevant point for my purpose is that, according to Paul's inspired perspective, Moses has inaugurated the forerunner type *in Genesis*, which has covenantal implications regarding both the covenant itself—old as forerunner to the new—and those who will benefit from it in the seed lineage—the second-born from barrenness rather than the first.

Therefore, Hannah bears textual resemblance to Hagar and Leah because her son Samuel serves as an installment in the forerunner type. Like Ishmael and Joseph's brothers, he comes before—and anoints to succeed him as leader—the royal seed of Judah to whom YHWH's covenantal blessings will fall. Hannah bears textual resemblance to Sarah and Rachel, especially in the reversal of her barrenness, because YHWH's mercy toward her signifies that restoration—that is, reversal of death and exile (1 Sam 2:6; cf. Deut 32:39)—is on the horizon, not through her forerunner son, but through the king who follows him.

By way of summary, the thematic correspondences between the persons of Samson and Samuel include (1) birth from a previously barren mother (Judg 13:3; 1 Sam 1:2, 5); (2) the Nazirite vow (Judg 13:4–5; 1 Sam 1:11); and (3) the office of judge (Judg

[30] See the data tables in Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory," 18–20.

[31] Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory," 20. I would add that the "full sense" is the fullness of Moses's intent in the Pentateuch.

15:20; 1 Sam 7:6, 15–16). Their correspondence in person correlates with their correspondence in function. They both anticipate kingship. As the final installment in the repetitive cycle of idolatry and judges in the book of Judges, Samson's life exemplifies the necessity of a righteous king in Israel. And Hannah praises YHWH, just as he reversed her fortunes in the birth of Samuel, so he will do for his anointed king. The Nazirite born from barrenness is the forerunner to the king.

Joseph, the First Nazirite

As I asserted at the outset of this section, the coupling of the Nazirite vow with birth from barrenness in the narrations of the births of Samson and Samuel is not without interpretive warrant. Jacob concluded his blessing of Joseph, "[The blessings] will be on the head of Joseph and on the brow of the *nāzîr* [נָזִיר] of his brothers" (Gen 49:26; cf. Deut 33:16). This is the first occurrence of the rare Hebrew noun *nāzîr* in the Bible. It appears a total of sixteen times. Two instances refer to consecrated or unpruned vines during the Sabbath year (Lev 25:5, 11). Six times the word refers to the Nazirite vow in Numbers 6 (vv. 2, 13, 18–21). Finally, in addition to the three explicit references to Samson as a Nazirite (Judg 13:5, 7; 16:17), three occurrences in the prophets characterize the pre-exilic sin of Israel as corruption of the Nazirite vow (Amos 2:11; Lam 4:7). Thus, the majority of the references occur in the Pentateuch and in the Samson narrative and most often refer to a man set apart as holy to YHWH.

Joseph is called a *nāzîr* twice, in the blessings of Jacob (Gen 49:26) and Moses (Deut 33:16), a repetition that likely indicates significance.[32] The implication of characterizing Joseph as a Nazirite becomes clear when considered in conjunction with his narrative function in the final *tôlĕdôt* of Genesis. As a "narrative prefigurement" of

[32] In fact, Moses's blessing of Joseph (Deut 33:16) virtually quotes the final clause of Jacob's (Gen 49:26), which appears to be a unique feature among Moses's blessings on the tribes of Israel in Deuteronomy.

the future royal seed of Judah, Joseph serves as a sort of "forerunner" to the king.[33] That is, in Joseph readers glimpse the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham that will ultimately be fulfilled in the future seed of Judah.

Joseph's function as a forerunner is most apparent in the blessing of Judah where Jacob states, "Your father's sons will bow down [יִשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ] before you" (Gen 49:8). It was before Joseph, not Judah, that his brothers both were prophesied to bow down (Gen 37:7, 9) and actually did, as Moses narrates: "Joseph's brothers came and bowed down before him [וַיִּשְׁתַּחֲוּוּ־לוֹ] with their faces to the ground" (Gen 42:6; cf. Gen 43:26, 28).[34] In the future, however, the preeminent one among the Israelites will be the royal seed of Judah.[35] Therefore, in the Joseph narrative, Joseph's life rather than Judah's typifies that of the promised royal seed to come.[36]

This is why Moses identifies Joseph as a *nāzîr* twice in the Pentateuch—the consecrated brother is the forerunner to the king who fulfills the seed promise. This is the narrative pattern that the authors of Judges and Samuel evoke in their presentations of Samson and Samuel as forerunners to David, the Judahite king. Moses inaugurates the forerunner pattern in the Joseph narrative using the micro-level indicator *nāzîr*, it is further developed in the characters of Samson and Samuel, and, as I will argue in the upcoming section "Luke's Birth Narrative," it culminates in John the Baptist, the Nazirite forerunner

[33] Samuel Emadi writes, "Joseph is a 'narrative prefiguration' of Judah's seed . . . should the [original audience] ask what the coming Judahite will look like, they have an answer provided in Genesis 49:8—he will look like Joseph." Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022), 61. See also nn78–79.

[34] Several other narrative parallels between Judah and Joseph include (1) both "went down" (Gen 38:1; 39:1), (2) they both had two sons whose birth order was reversed (Gen 38:27–30; 48:13–20), and (3) both experienced sexual temptation but responded differently (Gen 38:15–19; 39:7–10). For further on the comparison between Gen 38 and the rest of the Joseph narrative, see Jeffrey Pulse, *Figuring Resurrection: Joseph as a Death & Resurrection Figure in the Old Testament & Second Temple Judaism*, SSBT (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 56–59, 80–89.

[35] For later canonical validation of this assertion, see Ps 78:67–72.

[36] While Joseph certainly typifies the royal aspect of the promised seed, I would argue that both Joseph and Judah together typify the seed. Judah's role is intercessory resulting in reconciliation between the brothers (Gen 44:16–34).

to *the* royal seed of Judah, Jesus Christ. This is precisely the hermeneutic for which I am arguing in this dissertation. Later biblical authors observe prospective, author-intended typological patterns in the Pentateuch and develop them in their own texts in a way that anticipates future fulfillment.

Finally, is the Nazirite vow in Numbers 6 anticipatory? In other words, do those who take the vow place themselves in the position of Joseph, the first *nāzîr*? It appears that, in Israelite religious observance, "to vow a vow" (לִנְדֹּר נֶדֶר in Num 6:2) was an action akin to sacrifice in that people would repeatedly do so.[37] Thus, the repetition of vows as a religious observance was anticipatory in the same way that the repetition of atoning sacrifices and feasts was. In the specific case of the Nazirite vow, then, Israelites who consecrated themselves to YHWH in that way, generation after generation, anticipated *the* Nazirite to come, the set-apart forerunner who would anoint the promised king. In this way, yes, Nazirites were in the position of Joseph as forerunner installments. The repetition of this practice would both teach the Israelites about the function of a *nāzîr* and help them recognize the promised royal seed to come. Furthermore, the two Nazirites highlighted in salvation history—namely, Samson and Samuel, in escalated fashion as Nazirites from birth—form an intentional, anticipatory trajectory fulfilled in John the Baptist, the final Nazirite born from barrenness under the old covenant who baptized *the* king, Jesus, when he was anointed by the Holy Spirit.[38] The repetitive vow was instructional for Israel at large in the same way as the sacrificial system, and the heightened instances in Joseph, Samson, and Samuel form the forerunner type in the canon of Scripture.

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[37] In the Pentateuch, "vow" (נֶדֶר) appears in several related categories: (1) verbal vows to YHWH (Gen 28:20; 31:13; Num 21:2; 30:3–15); (2) votive offerings (Lev 7:16; 22:18; 23:38; Num 15:3, 8; 29:39; Deut 12:6, 11, 17, 26; 23:19, 22); (3) special vows (Lev 22:21, 23; 27:2); and (4) the Nazirite vow (Num 6:2, 5, 21), which appears to be a case of special vow because of the use of the Hiphil imperfect verb "to be extraordinary" (יַפְלִא) (cf. Lev 27:2).

[38] See below for more on John the Baptist as Nazirite forerunner. For an argument connecting Joseph's Nazirite status to Jesus, who abstains from wine under the new covenant (Mark 14:25), see Roger D. Aus, "Jesus as a Nazirite in Mark 14:25 par., and Joseph's Reunion Meal in Judaic Tradition," in *Searching the Scriptures: Studies in Context and Intertextuality*, ed. Craig A. Evans and Jeremiah J. Johnson, LNTS (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2015), 81–127.

New Exodus and Resurrection in Isaiah

The prophet Isaiah refers to the birth of Isaac twice in his prophecy in the section that spans Isaiah 51:1–55:13. This section is broadly chiastic in structure as YHWH promises future salvation and announces its accomplishment on each side of the fourth servant song which details the penal substitutionary ministry of the Servant of YHWH.[39] This macro-level structure is depicted below. My goal in this section is to examine how Isaiah interprets and applies the birth of Isaac.

A. Salvation Promised (Isa 51:1–52:12)

X. Salvation Accomplished (Isa 52:13–53:12)

A'. Salvation Announced (Isa 54:1–55:13)

First, I will observe the new exodus imagery that permeates this whole section and which Isaiah employs to characterize YHWH's future salvation of his people. This is relevant to my thesis because I argued that Moses joined nascent exodus imagery—disinheritance from Eden and implied return—with birth from barrenness in Genesis as metaphorical examples of resurrection from death. Second, I will argue for the literary structure of this portion of the book of Isaiah by demonstrating how various themes introduced in the promise of salvation (Isa 51:1–8) are revisited after the accomplishment of salvation through the Servant when salvation is announced (Isa 54:1–55:13). Finally, I will propose a detailed exegesis of Isaiah 51:1–3 in which the prophet names Sarah and ties birth from barrenness explicitly to return to Eden. This inspired interpretation of the Genesis narrative validates my thesis regarding the meaning and significance of Isaac's birth and the meaning of "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) in Genesis 18:12.

[39] My aim here is simply to highlight that the fourth Servant Song is framed by promises and announcements characterized by repeated words and phrases and imagery. For alternative proposals regarding the literary structure of this portion of the book of Isaiah, see David A. Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis–Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 227; Peter J. Gentry, "The Literary Macrostructures of the Book of Isaiah and Authorial Intent," in *Bind Up the Testimony: Explorations in the Genesis of the Book of Isaiah*, ed. Daniel I. Block and Richard L. Schultz (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2015): 249–50; J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 289; and John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 7–9. My three-part proposal most aligns with that of Oswalt.

Isaiah's New Exodus

Literature on new exodus imagery in Isaiah is prolific.[40] My goal here is to observe the new exodus language present in this relatively short portion of Isaiah's prophecy, especially in Isaiah 51:9–16. This passage opens with YHWH's faithful people calling on the "arm of YHWH" to "Awake," to act on their behalf to accomplish the salvation just promised in verses 1–8 (Isa 51:9). YHWH's "arm" (זְרוֹעַ) repeatedly refers to his display of power in redeeming the Israelites from Egypt in the exodus (Exod 6:6; 15:16) and in Moses's recounting of those events in Deuteronomy: "Remember that you were slaves in the land of Egypt and that YHWH your God brought you out from there with a strong hand and an outstretched arm (זְרוֹעַ)" (5:15; cf. 4:34; 7:19; 9:29; 11:2; 26:8). Furthermore, according to Moses YHWH brought the Israelites out of Egypt "like an eagle which stirs up [יָעִיר[its nest" (Deut 32:11). Thus, for YHWH's people to implore him to "Awake" (עוּרִי) as he did on behalf of former generations is to ask him to effect the outcome of the exodus once again.[41] Isaiah is encouraging the future Babylonian exiles to cry out to YHWH for salvation based on his past deliverance in the exodus.

Four rhetorical questions follow, all of which refer to the salvation of the Israelites and the judgment on the Egyptians at the Red Sea. YHWH's arm is the one that "smashed [הַמַּחְצֶבֶת] the proud one," and that "pierced [מְחוֹלֶלֶת] the sea serpent" (Isa 51:9). In this context, as in Isaiah 30:7, "proud one" (רַהַב) refers to Egypt, as does "sea serpent" (תַּנִּין).[42] His arm is also the one that "dried up [הַמַּחֲרֶבֶת] the sea, the waters of the great

[40] For an exemplary discussion along these lines, see Bernhard W. Anderson, "Exodus Typology in Second Isaiah," in *Israel's Prophetic Heritage: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*, ed. Bernhard W. Anderson and Walter Harrelson (New York: Harper, 1962), 177–95. See also Barry G. Webb, "Zion in Transformation: A Literary Approach to Isaiah," in *The Bible in Three Dimensions: Essays in Celebration of Forty Years of Biblical Studies in the University of Sheffield*, ed. D. J. A. Clines, Stephen E. Fowl, and Stanley E. Porter, JSOTSup 87 (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1990), 65–84.

[41] The verb occurs in the *Hiphil* stem in Deuteronomy and the *Qal* stem in Isaiah. There is no demonstrable variation in meaning between the two stems. See BDB, 734–35. On the other hand, David J. A. Clines defines the *Hiphil* in Deuteronomy 32:11 as "guard, watch." *CDCH*, 316.

[42] Here I have adopted the reading from Qumran scroll 1QIsa[a] which has "smash" (מָחַץ) rather than the MT "cut into pieces" (חָצַב). Job 26:12 also contains both "smash" and "sea monster." Oswalt, *Isaiah:*

deep [תְּהוֹם רַבָּה]," and that "made a way in the depths of the sea for the redeemed [גְּאוּלִים] to pass over [לַעֲבֹר]" (Isa 51:9–10). According to Psalm 106:9, in the exodus YHWH rebuked the Red Sea "and it dried up" (וַיֶּחֱרָב), and he "led them through the depths [בַּתְּהֹמוֹת]" to safety.[43] Furthermore, after the Red Sea crossing the Israelites sang to YHWH, "by your great arm [בִּגְדֹל זְרוֹעֲךָ] [the Canaanites] will be still as a stone until your people pass by [יַעֲבֹר]" (Exod 15:16). In this context, as the arm of YHWH redeemed (וְגָאַלְתִּי) the Israelites from slavery in Egypt (Exod 6:6; cf. 15:13), so it will grant them victory in the promised land over their enemies.[44] This historical outcome forms the basis for the cry of the faithful exiles in Isaiah's prophecy that "those whom YHWH ransomed" (וּפְדוּיֵי יְהוָה) return to and enter Zion "with a shout of joy" (בְּרִנָּה) (Isa 51:11).[45] They call upon YHWH to act as he did in the past, to effect an exodus and return to the land by his strong arm in which he smashes their oppressors and gives them cause for unending joy.[46]

Finally, the passage concludes with a poignant reference to the main, covenantal purpose of the exodus: exclusive, devoted relationship between YHWH and his people. YHWH puts his words in the mouth of his servant to say to Zion, "You are my people" (Isa 51:16).[47] Likewise, YHWH had promised the Israelites through Moses, "I will take you to myself as a people, and I will be to you as God" (Exod 6:7). This is the essence of

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Chapters 40–66, 339n36, prefers the more difficult MT reading. See other uses of "Proud One" (רַהַב) and "sea monster" (תַּנִּין) referring to Egypt in the exodus and Red Sea crossing in Pss 87:4; 89:10.

[43] See also "great deep" (תְּהוֹם רַבָּה) in Gen 7:11. Isaiah here joins Red Sea crossing and the flood as examples of salvation through judgment for which the faithful are crying out to YHWH in this passage.

[44] For this observation I am indebted to James M. Hamilton Jr., "Author-Intended Typology in the Chiastic Structure of the Song of the Sea (Exodus 15:1–21)" (presentation given at the 75th Annual Meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society on November 15, 2023).

[45] In Exod 13:15 "ransom" (אֶפְדֶּה) refers to those saved through the Passover and YHWH promised that his people would "return" (תָּשׁוּב) after exile in Deut 30:8.

[46] Isaiah calls on the exiles to trust in YHWH and not fear their oppressors (Isa 51:12–15). In v. 13 in particular he is the one who both created Israel and the earth. The combination of these two roles of YHWH matches the broad chiastic structure of Genesis for which I argued in chap. 5.

[47] Motyer writes concerning v. 16, "This verse describes the equipment, security, and task of the Servant." Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 412.

covenant between YHWH and man: exclusive relationship.[48] YHWH's people are his special possession among all the peoples, and YHWH is their only God. Thus, the exiles in Babylon cry out to YHWH to restore covenant between himself and them, and his servant will confirm to them that this is precisely the purpose for his ministry. The servant will accomplish a new and lasting exodus on behalf of YHWH's people.

Salvation Promised and Announced

This new exodus salvation that YHWH promised (Isa 51:1–8) is announced to the whole world (Isa 54:1–55:13) following its accomplishment by the Servant (Isa 52:13–53:12). My purpose here is to demonstrate the literary correlation between promise and announcement on either side of accomplishment to support my broad chiastic proposal for the literary structure of the passage. Three main thematic parallels connect promised salvation to the announcement of salvation in this passage. The first is Eden restored. Isaiah writes, "And [YHWH] will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert plain like the garden of YHWH" (Isa 51:3). Restoration from exile here is compared to transforming a desolate, arid wasteland into a well-watered, abundant garden. Likewise, at the conclusion of the passage Isaiah states, "In place of the thorn bush an evergreen will go up, and in place of the nettle a myrtle tree will go up" (Isa 55:13).[49] While specific lexical points of contact with Genesis 2–3 are lacking, the correlation is clear: the judgment consisting in thorns and thistles (Gen 3:18) will be overturned and replaced with beauty and life. Restoration from exile will be like Eden restored.

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[48] Prior to the exodus YHWH promised, "I will take you for myself as a people, and I will be for you as God" (Exod 6:7), which is very similar to YHWH's covenantal promise to Abraham (Gen 17:7). This statement becomes the foundation upon which Israelite hope after exile is founded (Jer 7:23; 11:4; 30:22; Ezek 36:28). This promise entails exclusive devotion between the two parties, which is the main point of the Israelite confession, "YHWH is our God, YHWH alone (יְהוָה אֶחָד)" (Deut 6:4).

[49] For more on "myrtle trees" as an image intended to evoke Eden because they flourish near water, see Michael Zohary, *Plants of the Bible: A Complete Handbook to All the Plants with 200 Full-Color Plates Taken in the Natural Habitat* (London: Cambridge University, 1982), 119.

Furthermore, the image of birth from barrenness appears in both contexts as well. A call to remember how YHWH turned the lone Abraham and Sarah into a blessed multitude (Isa 51:2) parallels a call to the barren woman—Zion, in this context—to shout for joy at her numerous children (Isa 54:1). In fact, her fortunes will be so reversed that her tents will have to be stretched to accommodate her offspring (Isa 54:2–3). Birth from barrenness and restoration of Eden are intertwined here as the basis for both YHWH's promise and announcement of salvation, of return from exile.

The second is universal revelation. YHWH demands the attention of his people as he promises, "instruction will go out from me, and I will establish my justice as a light for peoples" (Isa 51:4). And he continues, "My righteousness is near, my salvation will go out, and my arms will do justice for peoples. In me the coastlands will hope, and for my arm they will wait" (Isa 51:5). YHWH's restoration of his people from exile—here justice, righteousness, and salvation—will serve as a testimony to the nations to his covenant loyalty and faithfulness. His "instruction" (תּוֹרָה) will go out, causing many peoples to stream to Zion to participate in justice and righteousness (Isa 2:2–5). This promise is matched by Isaiah's announcement to those who are hungry and thirsty to come to YHWH who will "cut an eternal covenant" with them "on the basis of the trustworthy covenantal loyalties of David" (Isa 55:1–3). In essence, YHWH announces a new covenant that is both the fulfillment of his covenant with David and the means by which his covenantal loyalty toward David transfers to the whole of his people.[50] Just as David was a witness, ruler, and commander to peoples, so the benefactors of YHWH's salvation will be glorified by YHWH resulting in the calling and running of an unknown nation to them (Isa 51:4–5). The new covenant between YHWH and his people accomplished by the Servant will universally reveal YHWH's righteousness and justice in the world resulting in multinational salvation.

[50] For a full defense of my translation, see Peter J. Gentry, "Rethinking the 'Sure Mercies of David' in Isaiah 55:3," *WTJ* 69 (2007): 279–304. For further discussion of the interpretive options here, see Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 453–54; and Oswalt, *Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, 437–39.

The third is certain fulfillment. YHWH calls on his people "who have [his] law in their heart" to refuse to fear or be discouraged in response to the reproach and reviling of their enemies (Isa 51:7). Those who abuse them are temporary—they will be devoured like garments by moths. But YHWH's righteousness will be permanent, and his salvation will be from generation to generation (Isa 51:8). YHWH's promised salvation ought to give his people certain hope that they will be vindicated. Likewise, YHWH's word does not return to him empty, which means having accomplished nothing (Isa 55:11). Rather, what YHWH promises he does: his word accomplishes what he desires and always succeeds in that for which it was sent (Isa 55:11). YHWH compares certain fulfillment of his word in this context to the effectiveness of rain in watering and bringing forth fruit-bearing crops from the earth (Isa 55:10). Thus, certain fulfillment of YHWH's salvation on behalf of his people characterizes both his promise before, and his announcement after, the ministry of his Servant.

Isaiah 51:1–3

All three of these thematic parallels are present in both Isaiah 51:1–3 and Isaiah 54:1–3, two passages joined on either side of the accomplishment of salvation by the Servant by the imagery of a barren woman giving birth.[51] Here I will offer an exegesis of Isaiah 51:1–3 to demonstrate how Isaiah interprets various aspects of the Genesis narrative. Then I will explain how his application of the significance of the birth of Isaac in Genesis to his exilic audience in this context draws together the themes of exile and return, birth from barrenness, and resurrection from death. Isaiah's application of these themes from Genesis indicates not only that the birth of Isaac functions typologically for Isaiah but that, as I argued in chapter 4, Isaac's birth was an author-intended, anticipatory type in Genesis itself.

As I explained, the thematic thrust of Isaiah 51:1–3 is Eden restored. This short

[51] Portions of this section have been adapted from Thomas J. Sculthorpe, "Birth from Barrenness as Resurrection from Death: Typological Structures in Genesis," *Presbyterion* 48, no. 2 (Fall 2022): 48–66.

passage has a tightly packed chiastic structure which is shown below.[52] The main point of emphasis comes in the third and fourth lines of verse 2 in which Isaiah writes, "For I called [קְרָאתִיו] [Abraham] as one, so that I might bless him [וַאֲבָרְכֵהוּ] and multiply him [וְאַרְבֵּהוּ]" (Isa 51:2). The author of Genesis often uses the verb "to call" (קָרָא) to refer to the naming of characters.[53] For instance, YHWH changed Abram's name to Abraham by saying, "Your name will no longer be called [וְלֹא־יִקָּרֵא] Abram, but your name will be Abraham" (Gen 17:5), and likewise he renamed Sarai, saying to Abraham, "You must not call [לֹא־תִקְרָא] her name Sarai, for Sarah is her name" (Gen 17:15).[54] They were a barren married couple—only "one"—when YHWH changed their names to indicate future fruitfulness and royal lineage. The conjunction of "bless" (בָּרַךְ) and "multiply" (רָבָה) is common in Genesis as well, both in the creation narrative (Gen 1:28) and in subsequent covenantal contexts involving Noah (Gen 9:1), Abraham (Gen 22:17), Isaac (Gen 26:3–4, 24), and Jacob (Gen 28:3; 35:9–12). God's initial covenantal blessing of humanity entailed potent reproductive ability, and this characterized his covenantal blessing of Noah and Abraham as well. Based on his covenant with Abraham, YHWH repeated this blessing to Isaac and Jacob, ultimately bringing it to fruition in the nation of Israel. Thus, Isaiah's central point in this passage is the historical connection between covenantal blessing and reproductive fruitfulness in Genesis, especially in the case of Abraham and Sarah.

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[52] My proposal for the literary structure of this unit of text agrees with Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 403.

[53] Gen 3:20; 4:25; 5:3, 29; 16:11, 15; 17:5, 15, 19; 19:37–38; 21:3; 25:25–26; 29:32–35; 30:6, 8, 11, 13, 18, 20–21, 24; 35:10, 18; 38:3–5, 29–30; 41:51–52.

[54] Jacob (Gen 32:28) and Joseph (Gen 41:45) are also renamed in the book of Genesis. Thus, there may be a connection between renaming and the royal aspect of the promise to Abraham. For more on this, see Daniel S. Diffey, "The Royal Promise in Genesis: The Often Underestimated Importance of Genesis 17:6, 17:16 and 35:11," *TynBul* 62, no. 2 (2011): 313–16.

A. YHWH's faithful people hear his promise of salvation (51:1a–b)

B. YHWH made Israel from barren Abraham and Sarah (51:1c–2b)

X. The blessing of YHWH (51:2c–d)

B'. YHWH will make the wastelands of Zion like Eden (51:3a–d).

A'. YHWH's faithful people will sing in response to salvation (51:3e–f)

In the sections that immediately frame the central statement concerning the blessing of YHWH (B and B'), Isaiah draws a typological connection between YHWH's covenantal blessing of Abraham and Sarah resulting in the reversal of Sarah's barrenness through the birth of Isaac and the covenantal blessing that he will enact on his people and their land in restoring them from Babylonian exile.[55] First, Isaiah writes, "Look to the rock [צוּר] from which you were hewn, and to the excavation of the pit [בּוֹר] from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who bore you [תְּחוֹלֶלְכֶם]" (Isa 51:1–2).[56] Several lexical touchpoints indicate an intentional allusion to the song of Moses in which YHWH said, "You neglected the Rock [צוּר] who begot you, and you forgot the God who bore you [מְחֹלְלֶךָ]" (Deut 32:18). Here the Israelites were indicted for idolatry (Deut 32:16–17), and YHWH promised exile in return (Deut 32:22–25). Thus, Isaiah appears to be exhorting the exiles to reverse course: rather than neglecting their Rock, the God who brought them into being as a nation, they must look to him for salvation. Furthermore, Isaiah shifts focus to the very beginning of the nation, the barren couple through whom YHWH first enacted his promise of a great nation: Abraham and Sarah. In doing so, Isaiah closely associates YHWH with his mighty acts, namely, the

[55] As Douglas J. Moo points out, this is the only place in the Old Testament where Sarah is named outside the book of Genesis. Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 307. See also Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC, vol. 41 (Dallas: Word, 1990), 215.

[56] Isaiah's use of "pit" (בּוֹר) here is a subtle allusion to the place of death. It appears throughout the Joseph narrative referring to both the pit into which his brothers threw him (Gen 37:20, 22, 24, 28–29) and the Egyptian prison where Potiphar incarcerated him (Gen 40:15; 41:14). On this basis, in several places later authors associate "pit" with "Sheol" (שְׁאוֹל) (Isa 14:15; Ps 28:1; 30:4; 88:5; 143:7; Prov 1:12). Thus, Isaiah is saying that Isaac's birth from barrenness was a birth from death.

birth of Isaac, through whom the nation of Israel would come. In looking to the wonderful things YHWH did in creating them, the exiled Israelites remember YHWH and hope for the same in the future.[57]

Second, Isaiah parallels Abraham and Sarah in this passage with, "For YHWH will comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places, and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert plain like the garden of YHWH" (Isa 51:3). Isaiah refers to the exilic condition of the land of Israel with three terms: "waste places" (כָּל־חָרְבֹתֶיהָ), "wilderness" (מִדְבָּרָהּ), and "desert plain" (וְעַרְבָתָהּ). YHWH promised that covenantal disobedience would lead to the cities of Israel becoming "waste" (חָרְבָּה) (Lev 26:31, 33). "Wilderness" is a common term in the Old Testament for a dry, arid, but not necessarily sandy place where there is not much potential for agricultural growth.[58] The final term is perhaps the most theologically significant. Geographically speaking, "desert plain" (עֲרָבָה) refers singularly to the entire valley region from Mount Hermon to the Gulf of Aqaba.[59] In the Pentateuch—namely, Numbers and Deuteronomy—this word always appears in the plural (עֲרָבֹת) and refers to the portion of the valley immediately to the north of the Dead Sea.[60] For instance, the Israelites arrived and camped "in the desert plains [בְּעַרְבוֹת] of Moab across the Jordan River from Jericho" (Num 22:1). Furthermore, on several occasions the "sea of the desert plain" (יָם הָעֲרָבָה) refers to the Dead Sea (Deut 3:17; 4:49; Josh 3:16).[61] Thus, Isaiah may be drawing here on a close connection between the "desert

[57] Another image Isaiah may be intending to activate in the minds of his readers is twofold: male and female physiological imagery in Abraham as a rock and Sarah as a hole or cistern and both being as dead as rocks. James M. Hamilton Jr. shared this observation with me in a personal conversation in October 2023.

[58] See BDB, 184–85; and *CDCH*, 203.

[59] See, for instance, Deut 3:17, where Moses states, "The desert plain [וְהָעֲרָבָה], and the Jordan [River] as a border, from Kinnereth to the sea of the desert plain [הָעֲרָבָה], that is, the Sea of Salt [יָם הַמֶּלַח]."

[60] See Num 22:1; 26:3, 63; 31:12; 33:48–50; 35:1; 36:13; Deut 1:1, 7; 2:8; 3:17; 4:49; 11:30; 34:1. This area of the "desert plain" is arid and wilderness-like.

[61] In both Deut 3:17 and Josh 3:16 the "sea of the desert plain" is also called the "Salt Sea." In Gen 14:3 the "Valley of Siddim," the location of the battle between the four- and five-king conglomerates, is

plain" region and the Dead Sea, especially in a context in which he names Abraham and Sarah, for they were there when YHWH turned that region into a desolate wasteland in his judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah.[62]

YHWH's promise in this verse, then, is to restore the land from its desolate state in exile. He will comfort Zion's cities made waste by turning wilderness to Eden.[63] Poetic parallelism between "wilderness" and "desert plain" in the last two lines of the verse matches the same between "Eden" and "the garden of YHWH." Thus, while Isaiah is certainly saying that the entirety of the land—represented by the "desert plain" that stretches from the northernmost portion of the land to the southernmost—will be restored, his emphasis is on the portion of the plain that is characteristically arid and desolate, namely, the region of the Dead Sea. Referring to the region of the Dead Sea across from "the garden of YHWH" (כְּגַן־יְהוָה) appears to be an intentional allusion to Lot's separation from Abraham in which "Lot looked up and saw the whole plain of the Jordan, that all of it was well-watered . . . like the garden of YHWH [כְּגַן־יְהוָה]" (Gen 13:10).[64] In promising a reversal from desolation to Eden-like conditions across from the example of Abraham and Sarah, Isaiah is drawing together the themes of restoration from exile and birth from barrenness in an anticipatory, or typological, way. Just as YHWH brought forth Isaac from Sarah's dead womb—and, by extension, the nation of Israel—so he will restore the land of Israel made desolate by exile so that it is like the garden in Eden: well-watered and abundant in life. The deadness of rock and cistern will become the liveliness and abundance of garden.

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also called the "Salt Sea." All of these refer to the same place, that is, the Dead Sea, the location of Sodom and Gomorrah.

[62] For other instances of the restoration of "desert plain" (עֲרָבָה) in Isaiah, see Isa 33:9; 35:1, 6; 41:19. Note also the three words that refer to desolate places in Isa 35:1: "wilderness" (מִדְבָּר), "dry land" (צִיָּה), and "desert plain" (עֲרָבָה).

[63] For a complementary prophecy of reversal of "desert" (מִדְבָּר) to blooming, see Isa 32:15–16.

[64] These are the only instances of the phrase "the garden of YHWH" (כְּגַן־יְהוָה) in the Hebrew Bible, and both occur with the כְּ preposition.

Hermeneutically speaking, Isaiah is interpreting the meaning of the Genesis narrative according to the intent of its author and bringing its significance forward for the purpose of application in the lives of both his current, pre-exilic audience and those in exile who will read his words. It is as if Isaiah is saying, just as YHWH brought forth life from death in the past, when he created you, so he will do again in the future when he restores you. Just as YHWH reversed the fortunes of both Sarah and Lot's wife, turning Sarah's desolation to fruitfulness and Lot's wife and her garden-like land into a pillar of salt, so he will reverse your fortunes for good.

Finally, as is often the case throughout Isaiah's prophecy, the people of YHWH are exhorted to sing in response to his salvation.[65] In this context, as a result of his restorative comfort of Zion, YHWH promises, "Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the sound of song" (Isa 51:3). When those who faithfully seek YHWH consider his mighty acts on behalf of his people in the past (Isa 51:1), they have cause for celebration because YHWH's purpose for them is the same. He will comfort them as he did Sarah in her barrenness, and they will rejoice as a result as she did when she laughed with joy at Isaac's birth (Gen 21:6). As Sarah exclaimed at the time, "Everyone who hears [about what YHWH has done for me] will laugh with me." So those who pursue righteousness during the time of the Babylonian exile will sing with joy at what YHWH does for them.

Thus, the chiastic literary structure of this short passage, together with several intentionally allusive elements and its contribution to the broader context of Isaiah 51–55,

[65] See Isa 12:1–8; 14:7; 24:14; 26:19; 35:10; 42:10; 44:23; 49:13; 51:11; 53:9; 54:1; 55:12. Barry G. Webb posits the pattern of singing in the book of Isaiah as marking climax. Barry G. Webb, *The Message of Isaiah: On Eagles' Wings*, BST (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1996), 77. See also John N. Oswalt, who highlights this pattern as the response of those who trust in YHWH and, therefore, experience his salvation. John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 291.

indicate a particular interpretive perspective on the Genesis narrative.[66] Isaiah's marriage of exilic imagery with birth from barrenness coupled with his literary parallel of Sarah with Eden does not constitute a novel interpretive approach to the Abraham narrative. Rather, by naming Sarah—the only time she is named in the Old Testament outside of Genesis—across from Eden, the location of YHWH's well-watered, abundant garden, Isaiah calls the people of YHWH to hope in a future restoration that only he can accomplish and that is akin to both reopening the way to Eden and bringing forth life from Sarah's barren womb. Furthermore, Isaiah's marriage of these two movements—return to an Edenic state and fruitfulness from barrenness—establishes the validity of my proposal regarding the "fertility" (עֶדְנָה) wordplay in Genesis 18:12. Sarah understood the promise of conception and birth to be akin to returning to Eden, and the inspired prophet Isaiah shows that to be the author's intent in Genesis by applying it the way he does in his message to YHWH's people. Finally, Isaiah's use of the Abraham narrative in this context is typological in that he calls readers to consider a past pattern as a basis for hope for the future. While Isaac's birth—like the births of Jacob and Joseph after him—was certainly miraculous and constituted a metaphorical reversal of death to life, humanity did not return to Eden at that time. Thus, Isaac's birth constituted a partial fulfillment of the promise of seed and restoration which inherently, then, anticipated a consummative fulfillment in the future. Isaiah continues this anticipatory trajectory by explicitly calling on YHWH's people to hope for that future, final restoration on the basis of the past type. As YHWH overcame

[66] For several variable but complementary perspectives on this passage and its interaction with the book of Genesis, see Kevin L. Jackson, "The Intertextual Use of Genesis in Isaiah" (PhD diss., Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), 84–89; Ben Witherington III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 235–36; Allan Harman, *Isaiah: A Covenant to be Kept for the Sake of the Church*, FTB (Fearn, Scotland: Christian Focus, 2005), 399; and John Goldingay, *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2014), 73.

the death of barrenness in the past, so he will restore the desolation of exile to Edenic life in the future.[67]

New Testament Applications

The purpose of this section is to demonstrate interpretation and application of the typological progression for which I have been arguing in this dissertation by New Testament authors. Neither my selection of passages nor my analysis of each of them will be exhaustive. Rather, I hope to further defend my proposed hermeneutic on the basis of the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors and validate my arguments regarding the intended meaning and implications of the Genesis narratives for which I have argued in previous chapters. To this end I have chosen to examine the birth narrative of John the Baptist in the Gospel according to Luke, two texts from Paul's epistles, and the interpretation of the birth of Isaac by the author of Hebrews. In these texts I intend to elucidate the culmination of the reversal-of-barrenness typological trajectory in the arrival of Jesus Christ and the inauguration of the new covenant.

Luke's Birth Narrative

Luke begins his Gospel with a birth annunciation to an old, barren couple and concludes it with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead and the dawning of the new covenant era. Thus, birth from barrenness portends resurrection from death here just as I argued it did in the Pentateuch. In other words, in the same way John's birth from barrenness anticipates the arrival of Messiah, so it anticipates Messiah's resurrection at the conclusion of the Gospel. While interpretive perspectives on Luke's use of the Old Testament appear as proliferate in contemporary literature on the subject as the literature itself, the interpretive vein that recognizes an overall Old Testament atmosphere to Luke's

[67] See also Isa 26:13–19 for a complementary prophecy of hope that marries birth from barrenness and resurrection from death in context with the promise that YHWH will "swallow up death forever" (Isa 25:8). For an overview of the interpretive options, see Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 218–20.

birth narrative apart from direct, typological connections to specific texts or persons is most aligned with authorial intent.[68] As Kenneth Litwak argues, "Even though Luke 1 does not explicitly quote any intertext, the Scriptures of Israel resonate through Luke 1."[69]

That Luke 1:5–79 is a literary unit is apparent on the front side by the clear shift in Greek style between the preface and the beginning of the narrative in verses 4–5. There is a discourse break at the end of Zechariah's hymn with the fronting of "the child" (τὸ δὲ παιδίον) in verse 80.[70] The literary structure of this passage is a chiasm centered on the reaction of Elizabeth and John to Jesus, as shown below.[71] Such a structural emphasis clearly indicates John's role relative to Jesus: John is the forerunner whose presence prepares the way while Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed one whom the Lord will raise up.

[68] For helpful works along these lines, see Michael Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke*, trans. Wayne Coppins and Christoph Heilig (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2016), 1:63; Robert H. Stein, *Luke*, NAC, vol. 24 (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 69; John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, WBC, vol. 35A (Dallas: Word, 1989), 13–25; Kenneth Duncan Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts: Telling the History of God's People Intertextually*, JSNTSup 282 (London: T & T Clark, 2005), 47–67; Stephen Farris, *The Hymns of Luke's Infancy Narratives: Their Origin, Meaning and Significance*, JSNTSup 9 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1985), 152–54; Konrad Schmid and Odil Hannes Steck, "Restoration Expectations in the Prophetic Tradition of the Old Testament," in *Restoration: Old Testament, Jewish, and Christian Perspectives*, ed. James M. Scott, JSJSup 72 (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 41–82; Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 55–59; Mark Coleridge, *The Birth of the Lukan Narrative: Narrative as Christology in Luke 1–2*, JSNTSup 88 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1993), 31–36; Sarah Harris, *The Davidic Shepherd King in the Lukan Narrative*, LNTS 558 (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 41–43; C. T. Ruddick Jr., "Birth Narrative in Genesis and Luke," *NovT* 12, no. 4 (Oct 1970): 343–48; Richard J. Dillon, "A Narrative Analysis of the Baptist's Nativity in Luke 1," *CBQ* 79 (2017): 240–60; Bettina Fischer, "Dialogic Engagement Between the Birth Stories in Luke 1 and 2 and Selected Texts from the Hebrew Bible: A Bakhtinian Investigation," *Scriptura* 94 (2007): 128–42; Joel B. Green, "The Problem of a Beginning: Israel's Scriptures in Luke 1–2," *BBR* 4 (1994): 61–86; Pablo T. Gadenz, "The Akedah and the Crucifixion: Isaac Typology in Luke's Gospel?" *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 31, no. 4 (2021): 478–96.

[69] Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke-Acts*, 110.

[70] In keeping with the shift to Semitic style, this is akin to a disjunctive clause in Hebrew whereas Luke 2:1 continues the narrative with a consecutive conjunction and aorist form of "to be, become" (γίνομαι) akin to a *waw*-consecutive imperfect form in Hebrew. On Luke's shift to Semitic style at v. 5, see Stein, *Luke*, 71–72; and Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 3–13. On the paragraph-level function of the *waw*-consecutive imperfect in Hebrew, see Elizabeth Robar, *The Verb and the Paragraph in Biblical Hebrew: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach*, SSLL 78 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 104–12.

[71] My proposal generally agrees with Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1:55. I observe discourse breaks at Luke 1:26, 39, and 57 which support my proposal. There appears to be another discourse break at 1:67 that divides John's birth from Zechariah's song, and the birth of John is included in section A' with no complement in A. These two aspects of the narrative undermine my structural proposal but do not, in my opinion, invalidate it.

When Elizabeth encountered Mary carrying Jesus in utero, John, also in utero, leaped in the womb and Elizabeth exclaimed, "Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke 1:43).[72] The parallel panels of the passage set annunciations across from their respective responses so that, although the passage narrates the birth of John and is framed by texts that focus on him, he is clearly not himself the Messiah, as his father sings, "And you, [John], will be called prophet of the Most High, for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways" (Luke 1:76).[73]

A. Birth annunciation to Zechariah (1:5–25)

B. Birth annunciation to Mary (1:26–38)

X. John and Elizabeth respond to Jesus (1:39–45)

B'. Mary responds with song (1:46–56)

A'. Zechariah responds with song to John's birth (1:57–79)

John's forerunner function is confirmed by the tremendous number of allusions to the Greek text of several Old Testament narratives, many of which are summarized in table 12. While the contents of table 12 are certainly not exhaustive, the data indicates that Luke purposefully framed his infancy narratives according to textual features in the Old Testament books of Genesis, Judges, and Samuel.[74] In doing so, Luke intends to

[72] John's leaping in the womb is the first fulfillment of his prophetic role as prophesied in Luke 1:15.

[73] This allusion to Mal 3:1 (cf. 3:23 MT) indicates that Luke interprets John as the Elijah-like forerunner to Messiah, which is borne out in the narrative by the fact that the first half of Zechariah's song is about Jesus rather than John. Cf. Wolter, *The Gospel According to Luke*, 1:65–68, 110–11. For more on the Elijah-Elisha connection in Luke 1–2, see Ferguson, "The Elijah Forerunner Concept," 127–45; and Thomas L. Brodie, "Luke's Use of the Elijah-Elisha Narrative," in *The Elijah-Elisha Narrative in the Composition of Luke*, ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Joseph Verheyden, LNTS 493 (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 6–29. For a resource detailing the Samuel-Kings background of Luke 1–2, see Christopher Jero, "Mother-Child Narratives and the Kingdom of God: Authorial Use of Typology as an Interpretive Device in Samuel-Kings," *BBR* 25, no. 2 (2015): 155–69.

[74] Litwak calls this "framing in discourse" based on the work of Deborah Tannen, *Framing in Discourse* (Oxford: Oxford University, 1993). See Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke–Acts*, 56–60. Litwak closely analyzes the intertextual echoes in Luke–Acts to see how those echoes contribute to Luke's framing

communicate that the angelic visitations, the reversal of Elizabeth's barrenness, and the birth of John first followed by Jesus all portend the culmination of the anticipatory trajectory of the Old Testament.[75] Jesus is the long-awaited Seed of David—the Seed of the woman through whom YHWH's promises to Abraham will be fulfilled.[76]

It is interesting that Luke's allusions to Old Testament texts are similar in character to those employed by the author of Samuel. Rather than drawing direct connections to one person or event, he narrates the annunciation and birth of John and the annunciation of Jesus's birth with language that recalls *all* of the birth-from-barrenness episodes in the Old Testament. By doing this Luke is evoking in his readers' minds the story of Israel, a story characterized by gracious reversal from death to life and anticipation of the one to come who would restore YHWH's people once for all. John, the Elijah-like forerunner, and Jesus, the promised seed of David, Abraham, and the woman, together portend the culmination of salvation history.[77] Luke is proclaiming that the antitype has arrived.

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in discourse, and he shows how those intertextual frames provide interpretive guidance or create expectations for Luke's audience.

[75] Litwak writes, "Luke 1–2 is deeply influenced and shaped by the Scriptures of Israel, in spite of the lack of direct quotations from the Scriptures . . . the scriptural echoes in Luke 1 serve primarily to provide framing in discourse, which serves primarily in Luke 1 to show continuity with God's people in the Scriptures, which provides validation for Luke's audience as members of God's people." Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke–Acts*, 67. See also Bock, who argues, "The context of John's coming is clearly seen to be that of the reawakening of God's saving action on behalf of his people. God is working to fulfill his promise to deliver his people." Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern*, 57–58.

[76] See especially Luke 1:32–33, 54–55, 69–72; 2:11. For a helpful resource on the content and function of the hymns in Luke 1–2, see Farris, *The Hymns of Luke's Infancy Narratives*, 108–26 on the Magnificat and 127–42 on the Benedictus.

[77] See n68n73 above.

Table 12. Key Old Testament allusions in Luke's infancy narrative[78]

Gospel of Luke	Genesis, Judges, and Samuel
And [Zechariah and Elizabeth] did not have a child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in their days (Luke 1:7) καὶ οὐκ ἦν αὐτοῖς τέκνον, καθότι ἦν ἡ Ἐλισάβετ στεῖρα, καὶ ἀμφότεροι προβεβηκότες ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῶν ἦσαν.	And Sarai was barren, and she was not bearing children (Gen 11:30) καὶ ἦν Σαρα στεῖρα καὶ οὐκ ἐτεκνοποίει Now Abraham and Sarah were old and advanced in days (Gen 18:11) Αβρααμ δὲ καὶ Σαρρα πρεσβύτεροι προβεβηκότες ἡμερῶν And his wife was barren and was not bearing children (Judg 13:2) καὶ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ στεῖρα καὶ οὐκ ἔτικτεν
But the angel said to him, "Do not fear, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear a son to you, and you will call his name John" (Luke 1:13) εἶπεν δὲ πρὸς αὐτὸν ὁ ἄγγελος μὴ φοβοῦ, Ζαχαρία, διότι εἰσηκούσθη ἡ δέησίς σου, καὶ ἡ γυνή σου Ἐλισάβετ γεννήσει υἱόν σοι καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰωάννην And the angel said to [Mary], "Do not fear…And look, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you will call his name Jesus (Luke 1:31)[79] Καὶ εἶπεν ὁ ἄγγελος αὐτῇ μὴ φοβοῦκαὶ ἰδοὺ συλλήμψῃ ἐν γαστρὶ καὶ τέξῃ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν	And the angel of YHWH said to [Hagar], "Now you have in your womb, and you will bear a son, and you will call his name Ishmael" (Gen 16:11) καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ ὁ ἄγγελος κυρίου Ἰδοὺ σὺ ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχεις καὶ τέξῃ υἱὸν καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ισμαηλ And God said to Abraham, "Look, Sarah your wife will bear a son to you, and you will call his name Isaac" (Gen 17:19) εἶπεν δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῷ Αβρααμ Ναί ἰδοὺ Σαρρα ἡ γυνή σου τέξεταί σοι υἱόν, καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ Ισαακ The angel of YHWH appeared to the woman and said to her, "Look, now you are barren and you have not given birth, but you will have in your womb, and you will bear a son" (Judg 13:3) καὶ ὤφθη ἄγγελος κυρίου πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς αὐτήν Ἰδοὺ δὴ σὺ στεῖρα καὶ οὐ τέτοκας· καὶ ἐν γαστρὶ ἕξεις καὶ τέξῃ υἱόν

[78] Throughout this table I have referenced the Greek text of the Nestle-Aland 28th ed. of the New Testament and the 2nd ed. of Rahlf's *Septuaginta*.

[79] See also Isa 7:14, which reads, "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: Look, the young woman will soon conceive, and she will bear a son (καὶ τέξεται υἱόν), and you will call his name (καὶ καλέσεις τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ) Immanuel."

Table 12 continued

Gospel of Luke	Genesis, Judges, and Samuel
Zechariah said to the angel, "How will I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in her days" (Luke 1:18; cf. 1:7) καὶ εἶπεν Ζαχαρίας πρὸς τὸν ἄγγελον κατὰ τί γνώσομαι τοῦτο; ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι πρεσβύτης καὶ ἡ γυνή μου προβεβηκυῖα ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις αὐτῆς	And Abram fell on his face and laughed and said in his mind, saying, "If to a hundred-year-old man will be born, and if Sarah who is ninety years old will bear?" (Gen 17:17) καὶ ἔπεσεν Αβρααμ ἐπὶ πρόσωπον καὶ ἐγέλασεν καὶ εἶπεν ἐν τῇ διανοίᾳ αὐτοῦ λέγων Εἰ τῷ ἑκατονταετεῖ γενήσεται, καὶ εἰ Σαρρα ἐνενήκοντα ἐτῶν οὖσα τέξεται; And Sarah laughed to herself, saying, "On the one hand it has not yet happened to me until now, and on the other hand my lord is old" (Gen 18:12) ἐγέλασεν δὲ Σαρρα ἐν ἑαυτῇ λέγουσα Οὔπω μέν μοι γέγονεν ἕως τοῦ νῦν, ὁ δὲ κύριός μου πρεσβύτερος
After these days [Zechariah's] wife Elizabeth conceived, and she was hiding herself for five months, saying, "Thus to me the Lord has done in the days when he watched over me to take away my disgrace among men" (Luke 1:24–25) Μετὰ δὲ ταύτας τὰς ἡμέρας συνέλαβεν Ἐλισάβετ ἡ γυνὴ αὐτοῦ καὶ περιέκρυβεν ἑαυτὴν μῆνας πέντε λέγουσα ὅτι οὕτως μοι πεποίηκεν κύριος ἐν ἡμέραις αἷς ἐπεῖδεν ἀφελεῖν ὄνειδός μου ἐν ἀνθρώποις	And God remembered Rachel, and God heeded her, and he opened her womb, and after conceiving she bore to Jacob a son. And Rachel said, "God has taken away my disgrace" (Gen 30:22–23) Ἐμνήσθη δὲ ὁ θεὸς τῆς Ραχηλ, καὶ ἐπήκουσεν αὐτῆς ὁ θεὸς καὶ ἀνέῳξεν αὐτῆς τὴν μήτραν, καὶ συλλαβοῦσα ἔτεκεν τῷ Ιακωβ υἱόν εἶπεν δὲ Ραχηλ Ἀφεῖλεν ὁ θεός μου τὸ ὄνειδος And [Elkanah] knew Hannah his wife, and YHWH remembered her, and she conceived (1 Sam 1:19–20) καὶ ἔγνω τὴν Ανναν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐμνήσθη αὐτῆς κύριος, καὶ συνέλαβεν
Now the time was fulfilled for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son (Luke 1:57) Τῇ δὲ Ἐλισάβετ ἐπλήσθη ὁ χρόνος τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτὴν καὶ ἐγέννησεν υἱόν	And [Rebekah's] days were fulfilled to give birth, and there were twins in her womb (Gen 25:24) καὶ ἐπληρώθησαν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ τεκεῖν αὐτήν, καὶ τῇδε ἦν δίδυμα ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ αὐτῆς
And it happened that on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child (Luke 1:59) Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῇ ⸂ἡμέρᾳ τῇ ὀγδόῃ⸃ ἦλθον περιτεμεῖν τὸ παιδίον	And Abraham circumcised Isaac on the eighth day just as God had commanded him (Gen 21:4)[80] περιέτεμεν δὲ Αβρααμ τὸν Ισαακ τῇ ὀγδόῃ ἡμέρᾳ, καθὰ ἐνετείλατο αὐτῷ ὁ θεός

[80] Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day (Gen 21:4) while Ishmael was circumcised as a teenager (Gen 17:25).

Table 12 continued

Gospel of Luke	Genesis, Judges, and Samuel
And the child was growing and becoming strong in spirit (Luke 1:80) Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ηὔξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πνεύματι	And the child grew and was weaned (Gen 21:8) Καὶ ηὐξήθη τὸ παιδίον καὶ ἀπεγαλακτίσθη
And the child was growing and becoming strong, being filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him (Luke 2:40) Τὸ δὲ παιδίον ηὔξανεν καὶ ἐκραταιοῦτο πληρούμενον σοφίᾳ, καὶ χάρις θεοῦ ἦν ἐπ' αὐτό	And YHWH blessed [Samson], and the child grew, and the Spirit of YHWH began to go with him (Judg 13:24–25) καὶ ηὐλόγησεν αὐτὸν κύριος, καὶ ηὐξήθη τὸ παιδάριον, καὶ ἤρξατο πνεῦμα κυρίου συμπορεύεσθαι αὐτῷ
And Jesus was increasing in wisdom and in height and in favor with God and men (Luke 2:52) Καὶ Ἰησοῦς προέκοπτεν ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ καὶ ἡλικίᾳ καὶ χάριτι παρὰ θεῷ καὶ ἀνθρώποις	And the boy Samuel was going and growing up and good both with YHWH and with men (1 Sam 2:26) καὶ τὸ παιδάριον Σαμουηλ ἐπορεύετο καὶ ἐμεγαλύνετο καὶ ἀγαθὸν καὶ μετὰ κυρίου καὶ μετὰ ἀνθρώπων

Just as in the birth of Samuel and the anticipation of the anointed king the forerunner type and resurrection from death intersected, so also Luke constructed his narrative in similar fashion. I am not claiming that Luke has drawn a specific connection between Ishmael, Samson, or Samuel and John and, thus, that in this text John as the forerunner represents the old covenant.[81] I am arguing with Litwak that "God is showing his faithfulness to his people by working once again as he did in the Scriptures of Israel to bring deliverance and salvation to his people. . . . [and] By showing the connections between the past and present, the annunciations and their participants stand in continuity with those in Israel's past."[82] And one of the ways Luke has connected present to past is by giving significant narrative space to the birth of the forerunner John, something the other Gospel writers do not do. In this Luke has made clear that Jesus, the one who

[81] However, that John is the forerunner to Messiah is clear in Luke 7:27 where Jesus quotes Mal 3:1 (with influence from Exod 23:20) with reference to John. In the following verse Jesus appears to make a distinction in salvation history between John and all those born prior to him and "the kingdom of God" (Luke 7:28). This shift in era may correspond to the shift in covenants from Sinai to new. Thus, John, as forerunner to the Messiah and new covenant mediator, is greatest under the old order.

[82] Litwak, *Echoes of Scripture in Luke–Acts*, 71.

comes after John, is Messiah. And John's birth from barrenness anticipates Jesus's better and more significant resurrection from death.

Finally, in his narration of Jesus's transfiguration on the mount, Luke writes, "[Moses and Elijah], having appeared in glory, were speaking about Jesus' *exodus* [τὴν ἔξοδον], which he was about to fulfill in Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31). Here the only two men who spoke with YHWH on Mount Sinai do so again as they speak with Jesus who is YHWH Incarnate. Furthermore, both played a forerunner role in their respective narratives—Moses died outside the land while Joshua conquered and distributed inheritance to Israel, and Elijah passed his mantle to Elisha through whom YHWH did twice the miracles. Thus, in this scene Luke portrays these two forerunners stepping aside so that Jesus can take his proper place, as the voice from the cloud exclaimed, "[Jesus] is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to *him*" (Luke 9:35). Additionally, calling Jesus's death and resurrection an "exodus" explicitly ties together restoration from exile and resurrection from death. Jesus's death is akin to Adam and Eve's disinheritance from Eden, Israel's descent into Egypt, and the exile of Judah to Babylon, while his resurrection is like restoration to the land, the conquest of Canaan, and the reopening of Eden. This is an especially relevant interpretive move by Luke given the intersection of birth from barrenness and restoration from exile in Isaiah 51:1–3.[83]

Therefore, Luke's presentation of Jesus as Messiah—that is, the culmination of Old Testament anticipation—brings to fulfillment the typological trajectory involving the intersection of birth from barrenness, restoration from exile, and resurrection from death.[84]

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[83] According to Peter Mallen, that Isaiah plays an important role in Luke's narrative (including Acts) is indicated by the number, accuracy, and location of quotations from Isaiah through the narrative (Luke 3:4; 4:17; Acts 8:28, 30; 28:25). Furthermore, "Luke has consciously taken up a dialogue with the writings of Isaiah in order to clarify certain theological themes and to support the rhetorical aims of the narrative." Peter Mallen, *The Reading and Transformation of Isaiah in Luke–Acts*, LNTS 367 (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 198,

[84] That Luke views Jesus as the culmination of Old Testament anticipation is clear at the conclusion of his Gospel in statements like, "Beginning from Moses and from all the prophets [Jesus] explained to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24:27), and, "It was necessary

In doing so, Luke not only highlights the fulfilment of the Abrahamic promises in Christ, but he also inspires hope for those who trust in him that they will share in the same blessings anticipated by birth from barrenness throughout salvation history: resurrection and restoration.

The Apostle Paul

Paul quoted Old Testament texts more than ninety-two times throughout his epistles.[85] That impressive figure does not include his numerous additional allusions to people, places, and events in the Old Testament.[86] Two texts relevant to my purposes here are those in which Paul explicitly refers to the reversal of fortune experienced by Abraham and Sarah in the birth of Isaac: Romans 4:13–25 and Galatians 4:21–5:1. I will briefly observe each in turn.

Romans 4:17–25. Paul makes three main points in Romans 3:27–31. First, since the righteousness of God saves by faith alone, there is no basis upon which anyone can claim a works-based righteousness (3:27–28). Second, since Jewish boasting is excluded, there is no ethnic advantage for Jews in the gospel; rather, all people, both Jews and Gentiles, become righteous by faith (3:29–30). Third, the gospel of salvation by faith alone does not cancel the law, but rather it establishes the law on its proper foundation

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that everything written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms about [Jesus] be fulfilled" (Luke 24:44).

[85] See the enumeration in Douglas J. Moo, *A Theology of Paul and His Letters: The Gift of the New Realm in Christ*, BTNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021), 18. See also Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture: Citation Techniques in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature*, SNTSMS 69 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1992). On the general subject of Paul's use of the Old Testament, see Steve Moyise, *Paul and Scripture: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010).

[86] According to Richard B. Hays, "echoes" are allusions to Scripture which may not be intended by the author. Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1989), 14–29. I would argue that this definition of "echo" is not a helpful category by which to consider Paul's use of Old Testament texts. See also A. Andrew Das, *Paul and the Stories of Israel: Grand Thematic Narratives in Galatians* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016), 4–16; and Matthew Scott, *The Hermeneutics of Christological Psalmody in Paul: An Intertextual Enquiry*, SNTSMS 158 (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2014), 11–18.

(3:31).[87] Paul then seeks to confirm that righteousness is by faith alone and that this applies to all people by considering the example of Abraham (4:1–25). As Schreiner argues, "Paul wants to demonstrate that Abraham, the fountainhead of the Jewish people, was justified by faith and that it was always God's intention to bless the gentiles through Abraham."[88]

The specific passage under consideration explains that for one to become a child of Abraham and, thus, share in the blessing of Abraham, he must possess the same kind of faith as Abraham. Abraham "believed in a God who raises the dead [τοὺς νεκρούς]" (4:17).[89] Paul's referent here is clearly the physical incapacity of Abraham and Sarah to fulfill the Lord's promise of innumerable offspring and land inheritance (4:18–19). According to Paul, Abraham "considered his own body as dead [νενεκρωμένον], because he was about one hundred years old, and the deadness[(τὴν νέκρωσιν] of Sarah's womb" (4:19).[90] Abraham observed reality, but it did not cause him to be "weak in faith" (ἀσθενήσας τῇ πίστει); rather, he was "strengthened in faith" (ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει) on the basis of the Lord's promise (4:19, 20). Abraham was "fully convinced that what [God] promised he was also able to do" (4:21). And what did the Lord do? Paul implies

[87] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, 2nd ed., BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 184. See also Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 218.

[88] Schreiner, *Romans*, 218.

[89] Schreiner argues for a thematic transition between vv. 16–17 despite v. 17 continuing the sentence begun in v. 16: "Paul glides . . . from the fatherhood of Abraham to the kind of faith that made Abraham a suitable father." Schreiner, *Romans*, 243. Moo, on the other hand, argues that "while Paul's focus does shift at this point from a polemical contrast between law and faith to a more positive portrayal of Abraham's faith, the theme of promise runs throughout vv. 13–22, binding them together in an overall unity." Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 272.

[90] Paul's point here is especially poignant when considered with YHWH's words to Abraham: "But instead, he who comes from your belly, he will inherit you" (Gen 15:4). The focus in Genesis is on Abraham's body, which is matched by Paul in this passage.

that "God who raises the dead" did just that in reversing the deadness of both Sarah's womb and Abraham's old age in the birth of Isaac.[91]

Paul concludes the passage by exhorting his readers to learn from the example of Abraham and to be "those who believe in the one who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead [ἐκ νεκρῶν]" (4:24). Abraham believed that the Lord was able to bring forth the promised seed from barrenness, and the Lord brought forth Jesus from the tomb alive. The former anticipated the latter. According to Paul, birth from barrenness was resurrection from death.[92]

Galatians 4:21–5:1.[93] Historical and contemporary literature addressing this passage is legion.[94] My goal here is simply to observe the manner with which Paul interprets the Abraham narrative broadly.[95] Paul argues that the two prominent women in

[91] Schreiner writes, "Abraham believed in the God who could infuse life where there was none by his resurrecting power." Schreiner, *Romans*, 244. Moo agrees, "Paul is thinking to some extent of God's bringing life from the body of Abraham and the womb of Sarah." Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 280–81.

[92] Schreiner states, "The element of continuity is that both Abraham and Christians believed in the God who resurrects the dead and in a God who fulfills his promises." Schreiner, *Romans*, 250. Moo writes, "Abraham's faith in God had to do not just with the miraculous creation of life where there was 'deadness,' but with the fulfillment of God's promise to bless the world through him . . . the ultimate object of faith has always been the same." Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 288.

[93] I consider Gal 5:1 to be a concluding exhortation to the preceding argument rather than an introductory statement for what follows. For a supporting argument, see Bradley R. Trick, *Abrahamic Descent, Testamentary Adoption, and the Law in Galatians: Differentiating Abraham's Sons, Seed, and Children of Promise*, NovTSup 169 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 327. For an argument in favor of Gal 4:31 as the end of the passage, see James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 258–59.

[94] For a helpful survey of the history of scholarship on this passage, see the recent dissertation by John Jarrett Ford, "Paul and Allegory: Galatians 4:21–31 Revisited" (PhD diss., The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2022), 22–123.

[95] I understand Paul's stated hermeneutic, "allegorically" (ἀλληγορούμενα), in Gal 4:24 to mean that his argument is based on, and in agreement with, the author-intended implications of the Genesis–Exodus narrative and the metaphorical function of Sarah and Hagar *in Genesis*. For an overview of this issue, see Ford, where he concludes that Paul meant "these things are metaphorical." Ford, "Paul and Allegory," 124–49.

the Abraham narrative, Sarah and Hagar, are "two covenants" (4:24).[96] The distinction between the two in Genesis is that Hagar's son was born "according to the flesh," while Sarah's son was born "through promise" (4:23). Both Isaac and Ishmael were born naturally, so the contrast here is between human will and effort as opposed to divine enablement. The "slave woman" Hagar bears children for slavery—the children of Mount Sinai and the earthly Jerusalem (4:25)—while Sarah the "free woman" bears children for freedom corresponding to the heavenly Jerusalem (4:26).[97] Thus, the two lines of correspondence are Hagar, the Sinai covenant, and slavery, or Sarah, the new covenant, and freedom.[98]

As I previously argued, Emerson has offered convincing evidence *from the text of the Pentateuch* that Hagar is intended to function as an anticipatory type of Israel's exodus from Egypt. This is the basis upon which he defends Paul's hermeneutic as sound and in keeping with authorial intent.[99] Thus, Paul is arguing that the Abraham narrative teaches two complementary things consistently developed by later Old Testament authors

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[96] Paul never explicitly identifies the covenant that contrasts with the Sinai covenant in the passage. Douglas J. Moo argues that Sarah represents the Abrahamic covenant rather than the new covenant given Paul's focus on the Abrahamic covenant in Gal 3. Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians*, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), 301. I would argue that the Abrahamic covenant and the birth of Isaac anticipate the new covenant and that Paul elucidates this anticipation by quoting Isa 54:1 in this context. Trick argues that δύο διαθῆκαι means "two testaments" rather than "two covenants," thus providing a sound basis for typology rather than arbitrary allegory. Trick, *Abrahamic Descent*, 256–97. A stated assumption on Trick's part, however, acknowledges "the problems inherent in trying to persuade his audience through a nontypological appeal" (293). I would argue based on a non-technical use of "allegorical" (ἀλληγορούμενα) that Paul's hermeneutic *is* typological with reference to covenants. Furthermore, I disagree with Trick where he makes a distinction between text and event, asserting, "The correlations between past and present that Paul draws in 4:21–31 therefore depend not on the specific wording of scripture but on the underlying situation those scriptural words portray" (294). For more on the invalidity of distinguishing between text and event, see Michael B. Shepherd, *The Textual World of the Bible*, SBL 156 (New York: Peter Lang, 2013).

[97] Moo helpfully points out, "[Paul] is the one who has brought the language of 'freedom' into the story: Sarah is never designated as a 'free' woman in the OT." Moo, *Galatians*, 294. He points to Paul's own contrast between "freedom we have in Christ Jesus" and "slavery" imposed by false teachers through their insistence on circumcision as a precursor (Gal 2:4). See also Trick, *Abrahamic Descent*, 294.

[98] I understand slavery and freedom in this context with reference to death (cf. Heb 2:15).

[99] With Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory"; contra Moo, who writes, "There is little in the OT to back up [Paul's] identification" of Hagar with Sinai. Moo, *Galatians*, 304.

and relevant for Christians today. First, that divine promise trumps human effort, and that the former corresponds to the second-born. Ishmael was born first while Isaac, the son according to promise, was miraculously born second. So also, the Sinai covenant, which preceded the new covenant in Christ, enslaves its adherents to the futility of human effort and the certainty of death.

Second, that the content of the Abrahamic blessing—seed and land—develops as a correlation between human and agricultural fertility. This is why Paul quotes Isaiah 54:1.[100] As I previously argued, Isaiah expects restoration from exile to reverse the fortunes of both people and land. The desolate land will be restored to Edenic bliss, and it will stretch afar so that there is enough room for the innumerable seed of the barren woman. Furthermore, Isaiah explicitly compares the restoration of the land to the restoration of fertility.[101] Paul, following Isaiah, is correlating restoration from exile with birth from barrenness just as Moses did in the Abraham narrative. And only the new covenant in Christ produces this effect in the lives of its adherents, an effect absent from the Sinai covenant. As he urges the Galatian Christians at the close of the passage, "Do not be entangled again with the yoke of slavery" (5:1).[102]

Paul's use of Old Testament texts in this passage is an excellent example of the hermeneutic for which I am arguing in this dissertation. Or, to put it a better way, my hermeneutical proposal is an attempt to, with Hamilton, "understand and embrace the

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[100] Moo asserts, "Paul's quotation of Isa. 54:1 in this verse provides the lens through which he interprets and applies the narratives about Hagar and Sarah." Moo, *Galatians*, 306. I have attempted to demonstrate precisely the opposite in this chapter, that the typological progression is canonically forward, and Paul is reading that progression and finishing it.

[101] Susan Grove Eastman writes concerning two parallel and complementary reversals: "The barren and desolate woman becomes a joyful mother and the ravaged city becomes a nurturing metropolis overflowing with inhabitants." Susan Grove Eastman, *Recovering Paul's Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 129.

[102] According to G. Walter Hansen, Paul's allegorical interpretation is "presented as a first step towards identifying the troublemakers with Hagar's children so that he can apply the imperative of Gen. 21.10 to the crisis in Galatia." G. Walter Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians: Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts*, JSNTSup 29 (Sheffield: JSOT, 1989), 148,

interpretive perspective of the biblical authors."[103] Paul reads the Abraham narrative closely according to Moses's intent; he observes how Isaiah interprets and applies that intended meaning in his context to further anticipate the promised seed; and he demonstrates how the typological significance of these antecedent texts is fulfilled in the new covenant in Christ and is relevant for Christians. For Paul, the new covenant in Christ fulfills the consistent Old Testament anticipation of future restoration from exile, which was typified in the birth of Isaac, the son of promise, from barrenness, and which was inaugurated in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus from death and will be completed when the children of the free woman join him in the heavenly Jerusalem, restored Eden.

The Author of Hebrews

The author of Hebrews refers explicitly to the birth of Isaac in Hebrews 11:11–12.[104] These verses fit into the broader context of Hebrews 11 according to the literary structure depicted below.[105]

A. Elders attested for their faith (11:1–2)

B. Creation, Abel, Enoch, Noah (11:3–7)

C. Abraham (11:8–22)

C'. Moses (11:23–31)

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[103] James M. Hamilton Jr., *With the Clouds of Heaven: The Book of Daniel in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 32 (Downers Grove. IL: InterVarsity, 2014), 21.

[104] The authorship of Hebrews has been debated throughout church history and a consensus remains elusive. For the most recent defense of Pauline authorship, see Francis D. Nichol, ed., *The Seventh Day Adventist Bible Commentary* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald, 1953), 7:387. Ultimately, the identity of the author of Hebrews is unknown, so I refer to him as "the author of Hebrews" throughout this section. For recent discussions regarding authorship, see William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1–8*, WBC, vol. 47A (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), xlvii–li; Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 3–21; and Gareth Lee Cockerill, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 2–11.

[105] The repetition of "were attested" (ἐμαρτυρήθησαν) in Heb 11:2 and "attested" (μαρτυρηθέντες) in Heb 11:39 forms an inclusio that frames the passage (A and A'). The central sections, which focus heavily on Abraham and Moses (C and C'), each have seven "by faith" (πίστει) statements, giving them a similar form.

B'. Judges, Samuel, David, Prophets (11:32–38)

A'. These were attested for their faith (11:39–40)

The theme of resurrection from death runs throughout this section of the epistle. “Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen” (Heb 11:1), and those of old who had faith did not receive what was promised (11:39) and will not until all of God’s people do so together (11:40). Abel “continues to speak though dead” (11:4), Enoch “did not see death” (11:5), Noah built the ark “for the salvation of his family” (11:7), “women received their dead from resurrection” (11:35), and others endured suffering “so that they might obtain a better resurrection” (11:35), the one in which all the faithful hope but cannot yet see. Finally, the one man Abraham, “as good as dead” (11:12), fathered innumerable descendants and believed that God could “even raise [Isaac] from the dead” (11:19). And Moses both kept the Passover, “so that the one who destroyed the firstborn would not touch [the Israelites]” (11:28) and crossed the Red Sea alive where the Egyptians were “swallowed up” (11:29). Therefore, the things hoped for but not yet seen—the heavenly land (11:16), the city whose architect and builder is God (11:10)—involve resurrection from death.

A particular instance of the faithful experiencing a sort of resurrection from death was the birth of Isaac. “By faith, even Sarah herself being barren, received power unto the foundation of seed, even being past the time of normal age” (Heb 11:11).[106] This clause is structured very similarly to Genesis 18:12. In both, the physical inability of both Abraham and Sarah frame the desired but unlikely outcome, namely, procreation.[107] The author continues, “Therefore, even from one (ἑνὸς) they were born, and indeed being dead

[106] For a helpful discussion concerning the grammatical difficulties of this verse, see Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 590; *BDAG*, 515. While Ellingworth argues for Abraham as the unnamed subject of the verb “received power,” Sarah is the nearest noun in context and a reference to the reversal of her barrenness in the center of the verse matches the same in Gen 18:12.

[107] See my exegesis of Genesis 18:12 in chap. 4.

(νενεκρωμένου)" (Heb 11:12). The "one" is Abraham, a likely allusion to Isaiah 51:2 where "when [Abraham] was one (εἷς) [YHWH] called him."[108] The grammatical agreement between "one" and the participle indicates that it is Abraham who "considered his own body as dead [νενεκρωμένον]" (cf. Rom 4:19). The trustworthiness of God reversed Abraham's and Sarah's dead conditions resulting in offspring "just as the stars of heaven in number and as the sand, which is beside the shore of the sea, which is innumerable" (Heb 11:12).[109]

There are two significant conclusions to be drawn from these observations for my purposes. First, the author of Hebrews interprets the birth of Isaac as a type of resurrection from death along the same lines as Paul in Romans 4. Second, he does so in keeping with the typological trajectory for which I have argued in this chapter. The combination of implicit indications in the text of Genesis itself with the interpretation of the Abraham narrative by Isaiah led the author of Hebrews to exhort his audience by way of illustration to entrust themselves to the God who resurrects the dead and to hope in this certain future amidst suffering. The restoration from death to life of both seed and land blessed the Patriarchs and the nation of Israel, and faithful Christians will experience the same in Christ who was raised from the dead in future resurrection to eternal life in the better, heavenly land.

Conclusion

My goal in this chapter was to observe applications of birth-from-barrenness typology by later biblical authors. In doing so, two distinct yet complementary interpretive

[108] Ellingworth identifies Isa 51:2 as a possible allusive reference as well. Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews*, 590.

[109] Here the author of Hebrews evokes portions of the LXX translation of several Old Testament texts (Gen 22:17; 32:13; Exod 32:13; Deut 1:10; 3:36; 10:22). For further on OT references in this passage, see George H. Guthrie, "Hebrews," in Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 984–85; and P. Eisenbaum, "Heroes and History in Hebrews 11," in *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel: Investigations and Proposals*, ed. C. A. Evans and J. A. Sanders, JSNTSup 148 (Sheffield: Sheffield, 1997), 380–96.

streams are evident, and both originate in the birth-from-barrenness typology in Genesis. First, a strong connection between reversal of barrenness and restoration from exile is apparent in Isaiah and the epistle to the Hebrews. Second, the forerunner type inaugurated in Joseph and prominent in the repetition of primogeniture reversal throughout the Patriarchal generations is developed by the authors of Judges and Samuel and culminates in Paul's interpretation of the Abraham narrative in Galatians and Luke's presentation of John the Baptist as the forerunner to Jesus Christ.

I demonstrated a metaphorical connection in the Pentateuch between death and resurrection and both exile and restoration and barrenness and birth in chapters 2 and 3. Then, I showed in chapter 4 that Moses tied these three reversals together in his narration of the birth of Isaac. Thus, Isaiah's interpretation of Genesis and his application of the birth-from-barrenness reversal to the future restoration from exile of Judah is in keeping with the intended meaning and implications of the text of Genesis. For Isaiah, desolate Zion is in the same position as barren Sarah, but she will sing for joy because YHWH will reverse her misfortune in the same way he did for Abraham and Sarah. The dead in exile will be restored to Edenic life. The author of Hebrews, likewise, in explicitly referring to the Abraham narrative and alluding to Isaiah 51, identifies true Christian faith as trust in the word of YHWH who brought life out of death in the birth of Isaac and, by implication, the Lord Jesus, the antitype. Paul, in Romans 4, does the same, arguing that the faith of Abraham—that is, belief in YHWH's power to raise the dead to life—is the same faith that saves Christians and will result in their own resurrection from death.

On the other hand, for the authors of Judges and Samuel birth from barrenness is a sign. The miracle son is the forerunner—the one who will begin to deliver YHWH's people and who will anoint the royal seed of Judah, the king who will complete it. Resurrection from death is not absent here as is evident in Hannah's song of praise nor is this an innovative interpretive move or application of an idea in Genesis. These authors simply emphasize a different implication of the typology in Genesis, namely, the

connection between Joseph's birth from barrenness, his position as a Nazirite among his brothers, and the generational repetition of the degradation of the firstborn. Joseph—as the literary forerunner to the seed of Judah before whom his brothers would bow down—is *the* forerunner type. Samson and Samuel are installments in this pattern that culminate in John the Baptist who was born from barrenness and prepared the way for YHWH Incarnate. Luke makes this clear by framing the beginning of his Gospel with numerous allusions to the Patriarchal narratives, Judges 13, and 1 Samuel 1–2. Paul's illustration in Galatians 4 complements this trajectory with an emphasis on the supersession of the new covenant over the old. For Paul, Ishmael—the firstborn according to the flesh—is the forerunner while Isaac—second-born according to promise—is the vehicle for the blessing of Abraham to come to the nations. In both cases, later authors interpret and apply typology in Genesis in keeping with the intended meaning and implications of its author.

Therefore, based on these observations, two conclusions appear abundantly clear. First, my proposed hermeneutic in chapter 1 is valid and best elucidates authorial intent together with the progression of revelation evident in the Scriptures. Second, the most hermeneutically sound way to observe, interpret, and apply typology in Scripture is by *reading forward* as opposed to reading backward or reading with no acknowledgement of progression at all. This is how the inspired biblical authors read what they received, so as practitioners of biblical theology we would do well to understand and embrace what they modeled for us.

CHAPTER 7

TYPOLOGY AND BIBLICAL-THEOLOGICAL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING ISAAC'S BIRTH

As I noted in chapter 1, the title of this dissertation is a phrase from Isaiah 51:3 intended to excite faith and inspire hope. Such prophetic encouragement was always based on the wonders YHWH had done on behalf of his faithful people in the past. In this case, according to the prophet Isaiah, the hopeful expectation that YHWH would restore Zion to Eden-like fertility after exile was based on his gracious reversal of Sarah's barrenness in the birth of Isaac. Among the several later biblical authors who develop this trajectory, Isaiah especially called upon his audience to look to Abraham and Sarah because of the intersection between birth from barrenness and restoration from exile in the book of Genesis and the Pentateuch which Moses intentionally composed. The Genesis narratives are not in the Bible merely to recount history; they are there to anticipate future redemption in the form of resurrection from death, the typological anticipation of both birth from barrenness and restoration from exile. Isaiah read the Pentateuch in this manner—in accordance with authorial intent—and if biblical theology involves the embrace of his interpretive perspective, then so should we.[1] YHWH's people today, on the basis of the typological function of the Genesis narratives and their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, have the same basis for hope of future resurrection: as exiles on the earth (1 Pet 1:1; 2:11), Christians look to the things YHWH has done in the past to shape their desire for eternal

[1] James M. Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014), 15–16.

life in his presence—the New Jerusalem, the restored Zion, the antitype of Eden, in which the tree of life stands to heal the nations of sin and death (Rev 22:1–5).[2]

Whether according to speculative source criticism or anachronistic readings of the biblical texts according to modern historical considerations, commentators often bring an external hermeneutical grid to bear on the Scriptures.[3] I have sought in this dissertation to model a reading of the Scriptures more aligned with the intent of the inspired men who wrote them. That intent is typological, and therefore is prospective and progressive. That intent is also formative at the worldview level. In this concluding chapter I will review my argument, summarize the biblical-theological function of the Abraham narrative, argue for a prospective reading of typology according to canonical progression, and offer some suggestions for further research. I intend for the content of this chapter to complement that of chapter 1. I hope that my summary of the biblical-theological import of Isaac's birth contributes to the history of interpretation of Genesis in chapter 1. Furthermore, having demonstrated a prospective and progressive interpretive strategy throughout this dissertation, I will finish the discussion of the hermeneutics of typology that I began in chapter 1. I conclude with a call to further research along these lines so that the biblical narratives excite faith and inspire hope in the church with scholastic rigor and unashamed devotion to Jesus Christ, the one whom they anticipate.[4]

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[2] For more on this, see T. Desmond Alexander, *From Eden to the New Jerusalem: An Introduction to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 155–57; and G. K. Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission: A Biblical Theology of the Dwelling Place of God*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 170–71.

[3] For an example of speculative source criticism, see Claus Westermann, *Genesis 1–11: A Continental Commentary*, trans. John J. Scullion (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994). For an example of reading Genesis as history, see John van Seters, *Prologue to History: The Yahwist as Historian in Genesis* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1992).

[4] According to D. A. Carson, liberal arts dissertations are either thesis-driven or evidence-driven, that is, either deductive or inductive. D. A. Carson, review of *Judgment and Justification in Early Judaism and the Apostle Paul*, by Chris VanLandingham, *RBL* 12 (2007), http://s3.amazonaws.com/tgc-documents/carson/2007_review_VanLandingham.pdf. My project began as the second as I studied the book of Genesis, but as I transitioned to later canonical texts I shifted to the first. My hope is that my desire to adhere to the intentions of the biblical authors via sound exegesis has guarded me from "the temptation to domesticate the evidence in order to defend the thesis."

Review of Chiastic Argument

In chapter 1, I defined biblical theology as the exegetical pursuit of the unity of progressive biblical revelation according to inspired authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation culminating in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The unity of biblical revelation consists in the progression of the covenants on the basis of prospective typological correspondence. Typology emerges from the text of Scripture through close, exegetical attention to, and literary analysis of, the intent of the inspired human authors and the interpretive perspective of later biblical authors regarding earlier texts, especially those in the Pentateuch. I argued for the importance of literary structure in determining the meaning of texts, and I overviewed the history of interpretation of the birth of Isaac to set my thesis in the context of existing scholarship, some of which interpreted Genesis similarly although on different methodological bases. I set forth the thesis that the birth of Isaac from Sarah's barren womb typifies resurrection from death, and this typology is author-intended, prospective, and culminates in salvation history in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the anticipated means by which YHWH would accomplish his promised destruction of the serpent (Gen 3:15) and restoration to life in his presence.

In chapters 2 and 6, I sought to validate my thesis by examining texts that are both canonically antecedent and subsequent to the narration of Isaac's birth. In chapter 2 I focused on the Eden narrative (Gen 2:4–3:24) in the context of the Pentateuch to show that, based on the literary structure of the passage, Moses defines life and death as locative concepts: to be alive is to be in Eden, with access to the tree of life, where YHWH is, the Most Holy Place; while to be dead is to be exiled, outside of Eden, in desolate wilderness. In chapter 6 I focused on several texts canonically subsequent to the Pentateuch in which YHWH reversed barrenness as he did for Sarah. In the case of Manoah's wife and Hannah, the biblical authors develop the forerunner type inaugurated in the relationship between Sarah and Hagar to prophetically anticipate both the insufficiency of the Sinai covenant to effect restoration and the future new covenant in which the death and resurrection of the seed of Abraham would succeed where the law did not. On the other hand, Isaiah draws

together birth from barrenness and restoration from exile to excite faith and inspire hope for future redemption from sin and death through the substitutionary ministry of the Servant of YHWH. For Isaiah, resurrection from death and restoration from exile are synonymous, and both were typologically prefigured by the seed of Abraham from barrenness. Finally, I argued that several New Testament authors—namely Luke, Paul, and the author of Hebrews—present Jesus Christ as the fulfillment of this anticipatory, typological, three-strand cord of birth from barrenness, restoration from exile, and resurrection from death.

In chapters 3 and 5, I sought to defend my thesis by closely examining the text of Genesis. In chapter 3, I argued for a thematic correlation between birth from barrenness and resurrection from death in the patriarchal narratives. Moses highlights the repeated death of the seed lineage and YHWH's associated covenantal promise in the barren wombs of his chosen family followed by YHWH's blessing of life and the perpetuation of his promise to build resurrection from death anticipation associated with the promise of a future "serpent-slaying seed."[5] In chapter 5, I showed how the same typological structure emerges from the text of Genesis at the macro-level. I proposed a chiastic structure for the book of Genesis and argued for the intentional centering of the book on the marriage of Isaac and Rebekah framed by the death of his parents. Through procreation YHWH will bring forth the seed of promise, and in Genesis, procreation happens through birth from barrenness, through resurrection from death. Therefore, the seed promise and its associated victory over the serpent would come about through the same.

Finally, in chapter 4, the structural center of this dissertation, I focused on the Abraham narrative (Gen 11:27–22:24). Based on the chiastic literary structure of the narrative, Moses casts both land and woman as literary foils. In Genesis 13, Lot chose to settle in the Jordan River Valley, a land like Eden, leaving Abram, barren Sarai, and

[5] I have adapted this phrase from the recent publication by Andrew David Naselli, *The Serpent and the Serpent Slayer*, SSBT (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020).

YHWH's blessing in Canaan. In Genesis 18–19, then, that Eden-like land became a desolate, smoking, salt hole and Lot's wife became a salt pillar while barren Sarah was promised conception, and equally staggering reversal but from death to life. This reversal informed my proposal for Moses's meaning in Genesis 18:12 in which Sarah considers conception to be akin to restoration of Eden-like fertility. Thus, Sarah's single statement draws together birth from barrenness, restoration to Eden from exile, and, therefore, resurrection from death in a typological structure that anticipates YHWH's future and final restoration through the promised seed of which Isaac is a type. This interpretation of Genesis 18:12 is supported by the micro- and macro-level content of Genesis and validated by earlier and later texts in Scripture. In short, in my thesis I am understanding and embracing the interpretive perspectives of both Moses and, in particular, Isaiah and the author of Hebrews. The content of this dissertation is summarized below.

A. Introduction: Typology & Inner-Biblical Interpretation

B. Foundations: Death and Resurrection Typology According to Moses

C. Micro-Level Indicators: Barrenness as Death in Genesis

X. The Birth of Isaac as Resurrection from Death

C'. Macro-Level Indicators: Progeny as Resurrection in Genesis

B'. Implications: Death and Resurrection Typology According to the Prophets

A'. Conclusion: Typology & Inner-Biblical Interpretation

Biblical-Theological Conclusions: Isaac's Birth

The story of Isaac's birth is a story of life from death, a theme that permeates the Scriptures from beginning to end. I have attempted to demonstrate how Moses established this theme as an anticipatory type in the Pentateuch, how later prophets interpreted and developed this typology in their own contexts, and how the authors of the New Testament explained its fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the one who overcame death and, thus, the one through whom YHWH's people do the same. In this section, I will summarize the

significance of the birth from barrenness typology in Genesis in the context of the canon of Scripture.

As I argued in chapter 1, when interpreting the Bible at the "canonical horizon," that is, when interpreting individual texts in the context of the entire canon of Scripture, it is not the *meaning* of those individual texts that changes, develops, or thickens; rather, it is the *significance* of those texts that fully blossoms.[6] In his narration of Abraham's life, and particularly the birth of Isaac, Moses was already loading it with theological significance with the intent of shaping the Israelites' beliefs and desires at the worldview level. Moses was certain of Israel's future: they would enter and take possession of the land of promise (Deut 4:22), but they would soon turn after other gods (Deut 4:23–25), spurn the covenant YHWH had made with them (Deut 31:29), and experience the Deuteronomic curses culminating in the desolation and death of exile for both people and land (Deut 28:15–68). This inspired, prophetic certainty influenced how Moses crafted the book of Genesis. The exile of the first man and woman from Eden, the barrenness of Sarah and the other matriarchs, and famines in the land all highlight the desolate state of fallen creation and the apparent hopelessness for a better future.

But Moses was certain of something else. He was certain of future restoration—of restoration from exile (Deut 30:1–10), of life after death. The promise of a serpent-crushing seed and the woman's new name, Eve, inspires hope that the cherubim would not bar the way to the tree of life forever. The well-watered fertility of Eden which humanity enjoyed in the beginning would be their ultimate destiny. The birth of Isaac

[6] On the textual, epochal, and canonical "interpretive horizons," see Richard Lints, *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon to Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 293–310. See also Edmund Clowney, *Preaching and Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1961), 16. On reading biblical texts "thickly," Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum, write, "It is not enough to read Scripture in a 'thin' manner, that is, as isolated texts apart from the whole. Instead, we must read texts in a 'thick' way, that is, in light of the entire canon of Scripture. . . . It is only by reading Scripture 'thickly' that we discover its true meaning—that is, God's intent—and how Scripture applies to us today." Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant: A Biblical-Theological Understanding of the Covenants*, 2nd ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018), 111. For further discussion on "thick" and "thin" interpretation, see Kevin J. Vanhoozer, "Exegesis and Hermeneutics," in *NDBT*, 61–62.

despite Sarah's barrenness displays YHWH's ability to reverse desolation and death, to bring forth life where there is none. This redemptive reversal characterizes the Abrahamic covenant: land, royal seed, and blessing are things that YHWH will grant to his people despite their sin and fallenness. Thus, when Israel experiences future exile, the faithful survivors can cling to the word of YHWH with the same hope that Abraham and Sarah did. They can cling to the promise that while the land was made desolate, it will be Eden-like again, and while only a remnant of them remains, they will be a fruitful bough again (Gen 49:22), their land will stretch afar (Isa 33:17), and their tents will be enlarged to house their innumerable seed (Isa 54:2–3). Sarah, the barren woman, typifies the future of both the dominion (land) and dynasty (royal seed) of YHWH's people.[7] The desert will become a garden. Death is the pathway to eternal life for both seed and land.

The life-from-death Abrahamic covenant was the basis upon which future generations of YHWH's people could hope for "the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25; cf. Isa 40:1; 49:13; 51:3; 57:18; 61:2). John the Baptist, born from barrenness as the forerunner in fulfillment of the one who would prepare the way for YHWH's new exodus like Samson and Samuel before him, heralds the arrival of the seed of Abraham, the Lord Jesus, who himself both pioneered the way from death to life and leads those united to him by faith in the same.[8] The Sinai covenant, on the other hand, is differentiated from the covenant with Abraham through the literary contrast between Sarah and Hagar. YHWH promised physical protection to Hagar and Ishmael in the wilderness, Egyptian slaves fleeing their master who cast them out, but this was a far cry from the life-giving covenant YHWH made with Abraham (Gen 15:6).[9] The Sinai covenant is similar to the promises to Hagar:

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[7] See Stephen G. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty: A Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, NSBT 15 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003).

[8] Texts that explicitly anticipate a forerunner to Messiah include Isa 40:3–11 and Mal 3:1, 23. New Testament interpretations of these texts include Mark 1:2–3, Matt 3:3, and Luke 1:17, 76; 3:4–6.

[9] For more on this, see Matthew Y. Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory, Typical Typology, or Intertextual Interpretation? Paul's Use of the Pentateuch in Galatians 4:21–31," *BTB* 43, no. 1 (2013): 14–22.

YHWH promises physical protection with attendant physical blessing and curse to the Israelites who are Egyptian slaves fleeing their master who drove them out into the wilderness.[10] In short, there is no promise of life from death in the Sinai covenant, a fact Moses makes clear throughout Deuteronomy; rather, life from death will come on the basis of the Abrahamic covenant.

YHWH's covenant with David bore resemblance with both Abraham and Sinai, but most importantly it contained the promise of a future royal seed who would reign perpetually (2 Sam 7:13, 16). David himself understood the circumstances of his life and rise to the throne to be akin to resurrection from death.[11] Being constantly threatened and pursued by Saul and hiding in caves was like death, but David hoped in YHWH's anointing and saw his preservation as restoration to life. In Psalm 16, David wrote, "For [YHWH] will not abandon my life to Sheol; you will not grant to your faithful follower to see the Pit. You cause me to know the path of life; fullness of joy is with your face; pleasant things are in your right hand forever." These statements are interpreted by Peter (Acts 2:27–28) and Paul (Acts 13:35) to be typological in relation to the resurrection of Christ—that David foresaw future events and spoke of Jesus's resurrection. David did so by speaking of himself and his own experience as the royal seed of Abraham (Gen 17:6, 16), the king from Judah's line (Gen 49:10; Num 24:17). David's failure in the matter of Uriah and the subsequent failure of his lineage activated the promised divine discipline with the "rod of men" (2 Sam 7:14), but the eternal promise remained, hope in which was inspired by the release of Jehoiachin from Babylonian prison and his prosperity in the

[10] Emerson, "Arbitrary Allegory," 18.

[11] See James M. Hamilton Jr., *Psalms*, vol. 1, *Psalms 1–72*, EBTC (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021), 217–18; cf. James M. Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022), 185–91.

foreign court.[12] David himself experienced a type of resurrection from death, as did his lineage and as did his seed, Jesus Christ, the fulfillment of the Davidic covenant.

Resurrection from death, or restoration to life, characterizes the progression of the covenants in Scripture culminating in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The inspired biblical authors construct, or form, this progression using typology, the formal principle of progressive biblical revelation.[13] The birth of Isaac from barrenness in the context of the Abrahamic covenant typifies the future resurrection from death of *the* seed of Abraham, Jesus Christ, as I have sought to demonstrate throughout this dissertation. What remains is to finish the hermeneutical discussion I began in chapter 1 by discussing the typological feature of escalation as it pertains to new covenant fulfillment.

The Hermeneutics of Typology

I argued in chapter 1 that typology is the formal principle of progressive biblical revelation. It is the author-intended feature of the text of Scripture which orders, organizes, and shapes progression. Thus, for biblical interpreters to access the intended meaning of texts, they must pay close attention to typological structures in the Bible, the canonical position of their various installments, and the relationship between those installments. I argued in chapter 1 that human authorial intent and inner-biblical interpretation together constitute the hermeneutical basis upon which to do so. In this section I will highlight the final piece of the hermeneutics of typology and the final phrase in my definition of biblical theology: culmination in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, or, in short, escalation.

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[12] For more on this, see Samuel Emadi, *From Prisoner to Prince: The Joseph Story in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 59 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2022), 115–19.

[13] Contrasted with the material principle of progressive revelation, that is, the progression of the covenants in the metanarrative of Scripture. For more on this, see below and "What Is Biblical Theology?" in chap. 1 for my explanation of the threefold progressive nature of biblical revelation.

New Covenant Fulfillment

According to scholarly consensus, escalation is a key feature of typology in Scripture.[14] Peter Gentry and Stephen Wellum write, for instance, that an important characteristic of typology "is its a *fortiori* (lesser to greater) quality, or the fact that it exhibits *escalation* as the type is fulfilled in the antitype."[15] And, as I made explicit in my definition of biblical theology in chapter 1, "escalation fully occurs with Christ's coming."[16] James Hamilton puts it this way: "When key terms, quotations of earlier material, and similarities in salvation-historical and covenantal import draw our attention to repeated installments in patterns of events, our sense of importance of those patterns increases."[17] This, for Hamilton, is "escalation in significance," a key feature of typology. I especially appreciate Hamilton's wording here because he highlights that it is the *significance* of biblical types that escalates as revelation progresses, not the *meaning* of texts.[18]

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[14] For more on this, see Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 1–22, including the foreword by E. Earle Ellis, x; R. M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A Study of Hermeneutical ΤΥΠΟΣ Structures*, Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series 2 (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University, 1981); F. Foulkes, "The Acts of God: A Study of the Basis of Typology in 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), 342–71; G. K. Beale, *Handbook of the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 19; Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 134–35; Hamilton, *Typology*, 23–24.

[15] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 134.

[16] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 135.

[17] Hamilton, *Typology*, 25.

[18] For more on the difference between meaning and significance in interpretation, see E. D. Hirsch Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University, 1967), 61–67. For a modification of his earlier work expanding meaning to include "broad and continuing future applications," see his more recent work, E. D. Hirsch Jr., "Transhistorical Intentions and the Persistence of Allegory," *NLH* 25 (1994): 549–67. See also Kevin J. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 259–65. Vanhoozer writes, "The meaning/significance distinction is fundamentally a distinction between a completed action and its ongoing intentional or unintentional consequences" (262) and later elaborates concerning unintended consequences and "fuller meaning" in biblical literature, "to say that the Bible has a 'fuller meaning' is to focus on the (divine) author's intended meaning at the level of the *canonical* act" (265, emphasis original). I agree in principle with Hirsch's modification and Vanhoozer's canonical reading, but as I argued in chap. 1, hermeneutical validity depends on interpreting texts according to their inspired human authorial intent as

I argued in chapter 1 that the material principle of progressive revelation is covenant. This is in basic agreement with Gentry and Wellum who write that typology "develops through covenantal progression."[19] And again, Hamilton agrees, asserting that the escalation in typology develops "across the Bible's redemptive-historical story (i.e., in covenantal context)."[20] In short, covenantal progression and typology are features of biblical revelation and are complementary: they cannot be separated. While Gentry and Wellum emphasize covenantal progression on the one hand, I agree with Hamilton on the other hand that typology gives form to progressive revelation, which consists materially in the redemptive-historical story of the progression of the covenants.[21] Gentry and Wellum clarify,

> We affirm that the Bible's metanarrative unfolds *through the progression of the covenants* and that typology develops through this same covenantal progression. What "establishes" the divine plan is the unfolding of the covenants, not typology . . . and typology develops from type to antitype in and through the storyline of the biblical covenants.[22]

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they appear in a *progressive* revelatory act (the canon of Scripture). To use Vanhoozer's example, the intended referent in Isa 53 does not have to be Jesus on the basis of a "fuller meaning." Rather, Isaiah's anticipated Servant is the promised seed of David of whom Jesus is the later fulfillment. Isaiah's text does not mean something new in the context of the canon; rather, it takes its place in the divinely ordained progression of revelation which began with the promise of restoration (Gen 3:15) and culminated in the Incarnation and the apostolic witness concerning Christ.

[19] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 135.

[20] Hamilton, *Typology*, 26.

[21] Hamilton writes, "The phrase 'promise-shaped typology' attempts to capture what happens when God makes a promise that results in those who know him interpreting the world in the terms and categories either communicated in the promise or assumed by it. . . . God's promises shaped the way the biblical authors perceived, understood, and wrote." Hamilton, *Typology*, 4. Typological progression evident in "promise-shaped patterns" *forms* Old Testament revelational progression and escalation toward Christ. For an alternative proposal for election as the formal principle of Old Testament revelation and its intersection with covenant, see Duane A. Garrett, *The Problem of the Old Testament: Hermeneutical, Schematic, & Theological Approaches* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2020), 175–216.

[22] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 135n73, emphasis original. They are responding in this footnote to Craig Blaising who argues in his review of *Kingdom through Covenant* that Gentry and Wellum believe that "typology is the progressive movement which directs the narrative from promise to fulfillment." See Craig Blaising, "A Critique of Gentry and Wellum's *Kingdom through Covenant*: A Hermeneutical-Theological Response," *TMSJ* 26, no. 1 (2015): 111–27. Blaising's reading of Gentry and Wellum is inaccurate, but his reading of them is essentially what I am proposing in this dissertation.

It appears that for Gentry and Wellum, to use my own categories, covenant is the formal principle of progressive revelation while typology is the material principle. I agree that the story of salvation history proceeds from Eden to the cross to the New Jerusalem according to the covenants YHWH made and established with various human representatives. But I agree with Hamilton that the seed promise in Genesis 3:15 shapes the imagination of the biblical authors and, by extension, their writings in which typological patterns escalate toward fulfillment in Christ. The covenants drive the story—the material—and thus provide the contexts for various typological installments, but typology gives form to progressive escalation. To put it another way, the covenants themselves are typological.[23] In fact, Gentry and Wellum's phrase "progressive covenantalism" aligns with my proposal in this section. "Progressive" modifies "covenant" in the same way that "typological" might because typology is intentionally and inherently progressive. That the covenants in Scripture are typological is built into their own position. Typology, therefore, as a feature of divine revelation, *forms* or defines the boundary lines of the metanarrative of Scripture that contains covenantal progression.

With that said, Gentry, Wellum, Hamilton, and I agree that progressive revelation culminates in the new covenant. The new covenant is anticipated by those before it and it is the context in which biblical types are fulfilled. As I argued in chapter 6, several New Testament authors present the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus as the typological fulfillment of the birth from barrenness type in Genesis. As Isaac was the seed of Abraham—and as Jacob and Joseph were further installments in the seed type in Genesis—so Jesus is *the* seed of Abraham, the one

[23] For example, the covenant at creation is presented in the text as a type of the Sinai covenant. The first man, in the place of Israel, receives abundant provision and a prohibition from YHWH, and his remaining in the garden depends on his obedience. The goal of both covenants was rest in their respective sacred spaces as the author of Hebrews argues (3:12–4:13). Such intentional patterning *forms* revelation of which the covenants serve as the *material*. For more on the correspondence between creation and Sinai, see Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 244–54; and Seth D. Postell, *Adam as Israel: Genesis 1–3 as the Introduction to the Torah and Tanakh* (Eugene, OR: PickWick, 2011), 76–115.

through whom the promises anticipated in the Abraham narrative, namely, resurrection from death, are realized.

Several contemporary scholars contend that progressive revelation—both covenantal progression and typology—is discerned retrospectively. For instance, G. K. Beale proposes "retrospection" as an "essential characteristic" of biblical types. He explains further, "By 'retrospection' is meant the idea that it was after Christ's resurrection and under the direction of the Spirit that the apostolic writers understood certain OT historical narratives about persons, events, or institutions to be indirect prophecies of Christ or the church."[24] Beale continues, "Therefore, NT writers may interpret historical portions of the OT to have a forward-looking sense in the light of the whole OT canonical context."[25] Gentry and Wellum follow Beale in characterizing typology as "indirect prophecy" that is epistemologically retrospective. They write,

> Given its *indirect* nature, not only does typology require careful exegesis in its immediate context, but it also may not be fully recognized as a type until later authors pick up the pattern and it becomes more clearly known. Yet in an ontological sense, typology is *in* the text, exegetically discovered, while in the epistemological sense, it is recognized for what it is only as *later* Old Testament authors pick up the pattern. Then in Christ, the veil is removed, and the pattern is finally seen in all its undiminished glory.[26]

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[24] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 14.

[25] Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 15. He qualifies his definition of retrospection: "Recent ongoing research is finding that in the context of some of these OT passages viewed as types by the NT, there is evidence of the foreshadowing nature of the OT narrative itself, which then is *better understood* after the coming of Christ" (14–15, emphasis added.)

[26] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 132. My issue with this argument is that if typology is in the text and thus "exegetically discovered," but it is *only* recognizable in light of later revelation, then the typology cannot be discernible in the antecedent text *itself*. It is only exegetically discovered in the context of the canon, not according to the original author's intent. As Gentry and Wellum might put it, typology is given by the author in the text, but it is not operative at the textual or epochal levels, only the canonical level. This requires two things: the biblical authors were not fully aware of what they were writing, and typology must then be oriented in an interpretive context separate from the human author. In essence, this is an argument for a "fuller sense" of some kind intended by the divine author. See also Aubrey Sequeira and Samuel C. Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis and the Nature of Typology," *SBJT* 21, no. 2 (2017): 11–34. Gentry and Wellum, along with Sequeira and Emadi, pursue hermeneutical consistency by asserting that "fuller senses" expand upon but never contravene human authorial intent, but according to Hirsch, a text has an author, and that author has an intended meaning. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 25. It seems much more consistent to me to assign typological escalation evident in inner-biblical interpretation to the realm of significance rather than meaning. This, I think, is the best way to

The distinction between ontology and epistemology regarding biblical types is helpful and is a distinction Beale would likely affirm. By identifying typology as prophetic, these scholars affirm the prospective nature and function of typological Old Testament narratives, but the notion that biblical types are discerned retrospectively needs some refinement.[27] I argued in chapter 1 that for Bible readers today, while biblical types are often discerned retrospectively, this is a function of an interpretive position in salvation history after the closure of the canon. Christians today have the benefit of observing progressive revelation with its *telos* in view, namely, Jesus Christ and the new covenant. I think this is what Beale, Gentry, and Wellum are saying, and with this I agree. They are also saying, however, that within the Old Testament itself typological progression—while ontologically prospective and progressive—was epistemologically discerned retrospectively by the prophets themselves.[28]

And further, Gentry and Wellum argue, "As authors who wrote under divine inspiration, what they wrote was God given, true, and authoritative. Yet they probably did not understand where the entire revelation was going, since God had not yet disclosed all the details of his plan," and "the New Testament's interpretation of the Old may

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understand Caneday's illuminated furniture metaphor. The light of later revelation—namely, the incarnation—illuminates the full significance of typological progression in the canon without assigning new meaning to earlier texts. Earlier texts can be fully, intentionally typological, both ontologically and epistemologically, and can also ascend to greater significance in the context of the canon. See my discussion of "seed" in Gal 3 in chap. 1.

[27] Richard B. Hays argues that "figural interpretation" need not presume that the OT authors—or the characters they narrate—were conscious of predicting or anticipating Christ. Rather, "the *discernment* of a figural correspondence is necessarily retrospective rather than prospective." Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University, 2014), 2, emphasis added. Here Hays makes the same distinction between ontology and epistemology. Gentry and Wellum's proposal is a good correction, but issues remain.

[28] Gentry and Wellum clarify, "Later authors recognize the types as God-intended patterns by interbiblical development. . . . As later Old Testament authors reflect on earlier texts and as God reveals more of his plan, they begin to 'see' how God's plan is unfolding. Due to interbiblical development *in the Old Testament*, the prophets see more clearly the *significance* of various types and how they fit in God's plan leading us to Christ." Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 132n64, emphasis original. I agree with this statement in principle, but later they seem to conflate this development of significance with textual meaning (see n29 below). Meaning and significance are not the same thing and must be clearly distinguished in hermeneutics. See n18 above.

expand the previous author's *meaning* by seeing new implications and applications" without contravening the integrity of earlier texts but by developing them.[29] I argued in chapter 1 for a clear distinction between meaning and significance in hermeneutics. It is not a previous author's *meaning* that is expanded by later authors; the meaning of an earlier text remains static because meaning and human authorial intent are inseparable. The *significance* of the earlier text, on the other hand, along with the typological trajectory to which it belongs, is developed and expanded in new literary contexts. If one must speak of divine authorial intent, it is operative through the inspiration of later human authors who develop the significance of typological trajectories. Lack of clarity in one's use of hermeneutical terminology leads to the very confusion regarding retrospective discernment to which I am responding. My response is this: biblical theology—and its formal principle, typology—is best pursued and discerned by following anticipatory typological progression from the beginning of the canon forward giving due attention to both the meaning of texts in their original context and the progression of their significance in the canon. Progressive revelation occurs with relation to *significance*, not *meaning*. I have attempted to demonstrate this throughout this dissertation by first interpreting Isaac's birth, among other texts, in the book of Genesis, then later Old Testament texts involving barren women, then references to Sarah in the book of Isaiah, and finally, the apostolic perspective on these things in light of the

[29] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 146n99, emphasis added. Here Gentry and Wellum quote and affirm G. K. Beale, "Positive Answer to the Question Did Jesus and His Followers Preach the Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts?," in Beale, *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts*, 393. Beale argues further, "the Old Testament authors did not exhaustively understand the meaning, implications, and possible applications of all that they wrote" (393). As I argued in chap. 1, meaning derives from intent and intent originates with an author and is evident through the words on the page. Implications, on the other hand, while bounded by intended meaning, can be numerous, allowing for development of *significance* in different contexts along the trajectory of progressive revelation. This development in significance in no way impacts the intended meaning of earlier texts. Escalation in significance always coheres with human authorial intent in the earlier text. The hermeneutical issue in Beale's statement, and in Gentry and Wellum's affirmation, is the conflation of meaning, implication, and significance. I made the same critique of Sequeira and Emadi, "Biblical-Theological Exegesis," in Thomas J. Sculthorpe, "*Plenior*, *Praegnans*, or Progressive: Inner-Biblical Interpretation and Authorial Intent," *SBJT* 26, no. 3 (2022): 50–70.

incarnation as revealed in the New Testament.[30] I hope that I have shown that it is both possible and preferrable to do so without impacting the *meaning* of earlier texts. When the light of the incarnation shines on the Old Testament, the divinely-inspired significance of typological progression is fully visible as each piece of furniture in the room—the meaning of each text along the trajectory—takes its proper place.

I think the scholars with whom I am interacting would agree with what I have written. Gentry and Wellum affirm the primacy of immediate context in interpretation and directly connect meaning to inspired human authorial intent.[31] They also argue for the importance of inner-biblical interpretation in observing and interpreting the progressive nature of the Bible.[32] My response, thus, centers on two issues. First, as I explained in chapter 1, the formal principle of progressive revelation is *typology*, not *covenant*. In this assertion I follow Hamilton. Second, meaning and significance must be properly differentiated in hermeneutics. Doing so allows for a reading strategy of progressive revelation aligned with its intent—forward rather than retrospective, both ontologically and epistemologically. There are instances in the Bible in which authors appear to be retrospectively identifying typological structures. For instance, Moses's characterization of Abraham's sojourn in, and departure from, Egypt (Gen 12:10–13:2) as foreshadowing the same for his seed, Israel, is retrospective. Moses did not witness those events in

[30] I also do this with the Son type concerning Matthew's use of Hos 11:1 in Sculthorpe, "*Plenior*, *Praegnans*, or Progressive," 62–66.

[31] Gentry and Wellum affirm Lints's "textual horizon" as "seeking to discern God's intent through the human author's intent by putting the text in its historical setting, understanding the rules of language the author is using, and analyzing the syntax, textual variants, word meanings, figures of speech, and the literary structure, including its literary form and genre. By paying careful attention to the text, a reader discovers what authors are seeking to communicate." Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 119–20. On the "textual horizon," see Lints, *The Fabric of Theology*, 295–300.

[32] Gentry and Wellum affirm Lints's "epochal horizon" as reading "texts in light of where they are located in God's unfolding plan. Since Scripture in a progressive revelation, texts do not come to us in a vacuum; rather, they are embedded in a larger context of what has come *before* them. . . . Later authors . . . develop these patterns in ways that God intends and that do not contravene earlier texts." Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 120–21, emphasis original. That human authors "develop" *in ways that God intends* perfectly elucidates the meaning of Peter's statement regarding divine inspiration (2 Pet 1:21). On the "epochal horizon, see Lints, *The Fabric of Theology*, 300–303.

person. He wrote about them after the fact as one who had experienced Israel's exodus, including Pharoah's command "take and go" (Gen 12:19; cf. Exod 12:32), "expulsion" (Gen 12:20; cf. Exod 12:33), and enrichment at the Egyptians' expense (Gen 12:16; 13:1–2; cf. Exod 12:35–36). On the other hand, Moses's inspired perspective is the only access to the events preceding his life. Thus, it is impossible to discern whether his sources—oral or written—indicated typological function. It is best, therefore, to avoid speculation regarding the events behind the text. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Moses intentionally inaugurated every typological trajectory in the Bible as he crafted the Pentateuch.[33] There is no revelation that precedes Moses *textually*, so there is nothing to observe retrospectively.

On the other hand, there are instances in which biblical authors cast themselves and their circumstances as typological *presently*. Consider Moses again. He promised Israel that a prophet *like him* would arise from among them in the future (Deut 18:15, 17).[34] Moses knew that his life and prophetic, mediatorial role was revelational and typological *while he was living it*, knowledge he wrote into the Pentateuch.[35] This anticipatory nature of his composition makes it typological without reference to later texts. So, when later prophets like Isaiah and Jeremiah presented themselves as installments in the prophet-like-Moses type, they did not do so based on retrospective discernment. They understood Moses's typological intent at the "textual level" and its prospective trajectory up until their own time. Isaiah proclaimed, "Look, I and the children whom YHWH has given to me are signs and object lessons in Israel" (Isa 8:18), and Jeremiah wrote of himself, "I do not

[33] Defending this assertion would be a dissertation-length endeavor unto itself. I understand this to be an implication of the "promise-shaped pattern" thesis of Hamilton, *Typology*, and I have attempted to demonstrate that this is true in this dissertation in one example, that being the birth-from-barrenness typology. Further work along these lines is necessary to establish this assertion as generally valid.

[34] See also the similar statement in Deut 34:10 that implicitly anticipates a future prophet like Moses who will know YHWH face-to-face in a new a greater way.

[35] See Seth D. Postell, "Reading Genesis, Seeing Moses: Narrative Analogies with Moses in the Book of Genesis," *JETS* 65, no. 3 (2022): 437–55.

know how to speak, for I am a youth" (Jer 1:6; cf. Exod 4:10).[36] As I pointed out previously, because of the post-resurrection position of Christians in salvation history their perspective on these things is unavoidably retrospective. Bible readers hold inspired evidence of the completed typological trajectories physically in their hands. But hermeneutically speaking, the meaning of texts must be pursued according to human authorial intent, that is, in the same direction in which they were given—from the Pentateuch forward. A retrospective salvation-historical position ought not to impact sound hermeneutical principles, which are logical, reasonable, and universally valid and applicable.

In conclusion, then, while I differ with Gentry and Wellum concerning the respective functions of covenant and typology and the hermeneutical mechanics of escalation, I affirm "progressive covenantalism" as the clearest and most hermeneutically sound way to account for new covenant fulfillment in Christ.[37] The new covenant represents the culmination of the story of the Bible, and Jesus Christ is *the* covenantal head, the "only true and fully obedient covenant keeper," the "greater Adam, Israel, and Davidic king."[38] Specifically concerning resurrection from death, I have sought to demonstrate that Isaac's birth from barrenness is an anticipatory type of the resurrection of Jesus, the seed of Abraham to whom the promise of life in YHWH's presence in a present reality. The typological intersection of birth from barrenness, restoration from exile, and resurrection from death in the pages of Scripture gives form to the narrative progression from the Abrahamic covenant (birth from barrenness), through the Sinai covenant (restoration from exile) and the Davidic covenant, and finally culminating in the

[36] Another example of this is David in Ps 8. See Hamilton, *Psalms*, 1:149–58.

[37] For a primer on progressive covenantalism and attendant perspectives on various perennial interpretive issues, see Stephen J. Wellum and Brent E. Parker, eds., *Progressive Covenantalism: Charting a Course between Dispensational and Covenant Theologies* (Nashville: B & H, 2016).

[38] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom through Covenant*, 158.

new covenant (resurrection from death).[39] In this way, biblical theology and its formal principle, typology, culminates in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Suggestions for Further Research

There are three veins that I would like to explore further or see explored further by others. The first is the assertion that Moses inaugurates all typological trajectories in the Pentateuch. My own research called this into question regarding the forerunner type until I observed Joseph as the first Nazirite (Gen 49:26). I continue to be increasingly convinced of this as I study and research further. It would be beneficial to pursue ends similar to those in this dissertation, namely, explorations of other specific typological trajectories in Scripture on the basis of the same hermeneutical commitments. For instance, Matthew Emadi's recent contribution to the New Studies in Biblical Theology series considers the royal priest of Psalm 110 in biblical theology.[40] He covers king-priest figures in Genesis and in the Sinai covenant, but the question regarding David in the books of Samuel remains unaddressed. Hermeneutically and canonically, it would be beneficial to consider in detail how the author of Samuel develops the royal priest type in the character of David before considering Psalm 110 and its use in the New Testament. This is just one example of many. While scholars have addressed most, if not all, of the variegated typological patterns in the canon, doing so according to the hermeneutic I have proposed herein would be a worthy enterprise for both academy and church.

Second, my proposition in chapter 2 that life and death are locative realities in the Hebrew Bible is worthy of further research. David writes in Psalm 5, "For you are not a God who delights in wickedness; evil may not dwell with you. . . . But I, because of the abundance of your covenant loyalty, will enter your house" (vv. 4, 7). Like statements are

[39] David often describes YHWH's deliverance from enemies as deliverance from death, Sheol, and the pit (Pss 28:1; 30:4; 40:3; 88:5, 7; 143:7), which is interpreted in the New Testament as fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ. See n11 above.

[40] Matthew Emadi, *The Royal Priest: Psalm 110 in Biblical Theology*, NSBT 60 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2022).

prominent throughout the Psalter. I am not arguing for one metaphor for life and death among many; rather, proximity is the controlling metaphor for life and death at the worldview level for the biblical authors.[41] For the desolate land to be made like Eden entails more than well-watered fertility and abundance—it evokes the presence of YHWH who "moved about" in its midst (Gen 3:8). The emphasis on the physiological in today's scientific age functions as an interpretive roadblock for many seeking to embrace the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors and thereby grow in their knowledge of the Holy One.[42] A whole-canon exploration of life and death as proximity to the presence of YHWH would go a long way to clearing that road.

Finally, and more specifically, my section in chapter 6 regarding the textual correspondences between Sarah and Hagar, Rachel and Leah, and Hannah and Peninnah may be worthy of a dissertation-length project of its own. Questions remain in my own thinking regarding precisely what the author of Samuel is doing there. Specifically, why the author casts Hannah as both the beloved, barren wife and the oppressed slave woman. Such an investigation would contribute much to any questions regarding the validity of my hermeneutic and the value of reading inner-biblical interpretation and typology forward through the canon.

James Hamilton has propelled the conversation regarding typology forward by clearly defining it. I have attempted to contribute to this conversation by sharpening the requisite hermeneutical commitments and demonstrating them through the specific example of the birth of Isaac. What remains is for others to pursue like demonstrations through the manifold types in Scripture for the glory of YHWH.

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[41] On biblical theology as a formative discipline intended to shape the imaginations and thought categories of YHWH's people, see James B. Jordan, *Through New Eyes: Developing a Biblical View of the World* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1999); and Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?*

[42] By "scientific age" I mean our post-Enlightenment context in which the empirical trumps the revealed. In my view, science pursued as creatures in the physical universe the Lord created is compatible with, and complementary to, biblical faith.

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ABSTRACT

HE MAKES HER DESERT LIKE THE GARDEN OF YHWH:
A TYPOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE BIRTH
OF ISAAC AS RESURRECTION FROM DEATH

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The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2024
Chair: Dr. James M. Hamilton Jr.

This dissertation argues that the birth of Isaac from Sarah's barren womb typifies resurrection from death. This typology is author-intended, prospective, and culminates in salvation history in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, resurrection from death as typified by Isaac's birth is the anticipated means by which YHWH will accomplish his promised destruction of the serpent (Gen 3:15) and restoration to life in his presence. To defend this thesis, I argue that Moses inaugurates death and resurrection typology in the Eden narrative (Gen 2:4–3:24) with the disinheritance of Adam and Eve from the garden alongside the anticipation of return and renewed access to the tree of life through the promised seed (Gen 3:15). This promised return to Eden as resurrection from death is developed both in Deuteronomy's expectation of exile and return for the people of Israel (Deut 30–31) and in Sarah's veiled reference to Eden regarding YHWH's promise of restored fertility (Gen 18:12). Additionally, textual indications in the accounts of Abraham's encounter with Abimelech (Gen 20) and the barrenness of Rebekah (25:21) and Rachel (Gen 29:31) together with the macro-literary structure of Genesis further support the connection between barrenness and death and between birth and resurrection in the book of Genesis. The interpretive perspectives of both the prophet Isaiah and the author of Hebrews, among several other later biblical authors, further join the barrenness of Sarah to the desolation of exile and the birth of Isaac to restoration from exile to the fertility of Eden (Isa 51:1–3). This dissertation seeks to demonstrate the prospective

nature of anticipatory typological structures and the hermeneutical primacy of inner-biblical interpretation based on authorial intent in biblical theology.

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