PROPHECY AND TYPOLOGY

I. Introduction

The Commission on Theology and Church Relations has been asked by the Missouri District of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) to respond to an overture to its 1988 district convention concerning the nature of prophecy in Holy Scripture. The overture raises questions about the nature of scriptural prophecy and about typological interpretations of messianic prophecy. It is the purpose of this document to address this issue.

The central question in the discussion and debate on the nature of prophecy concerns the relationship between prophecy and typology. To answer this question adequately, certain prior questions must be addressed and attendant assumptions described. How does one identify a prophecy? How does one identify a type? What hermeneutical rules guide the interpretation of prophecy? Of typology? How are these rules established? The effort to answer a very specific question brings very broad questions into view. Whatever one's answer to the narrow question, prior decisions will have been made and assumptions advanced on the larger questions, which are, in fact, key.

II. Common Postures

To clarify what points are at issue it is helpful to describe the broad areas in which there is agreement. LCMS theologians who take part in this discussion hold the following views in common:

A.   On Sacred Scripture

    1.   that it is the inspired and inerrant Word of God;
    2.   that no authority shall norm the Scriptures;
    3.   that the Lutheran Confessions are a correct exposition of the Scriptures (*quia* subscription; that is, we subscribe to them <u>because</u> they are in agreement with Scripture);
    4.   that the historical-grammatical rather than the historical-critical method is the appropriate vehicle for the interpretation of Scripture;
    5.   that the Scriptures are christocentric; and,
    6.   that Scripture interprets Scripture.

B.   On Typology

    1.   that the Scriptures describe and illustrate such a category;
    2.   that proper typology does not read into the Old Testament texts meanings that were not originally there, but rather reads out the full meaning God originally put into the prophet's words;
    3.   that typologies include persons, places, and events;
    4.   that the mere resemblance between two persons or events does not automatically make something a type;
    5.   that typology has described a broad variety of hermeneutical moves, some of

which are clearly supported by the Scriptures, others of which must be regarded as questionable or even in error; and,

6.   that the clarity of Scripture is not violated by proper scriptural types or by the proper use of typology.

C.   On Prophecy

1.   that biblical prophecy both foretells and forthtells;
2.   that *vaticinium ex eventu* (prophecy after the event) is not biblical, i.e., the prophets do not reflect on what has <u>already</u> transpired but are given God's guidance in describing future persons and events;
3.   that <u>the words</u> of Scripture themselves point to the future events, i.e., they are not applied in new and foreign ways to situations not envisioned by the text itself;
4.   that the prophetic messages of the Old Testament must be interpreted in their historical setting and context, and with an understanding of the New Testament fulfillment;
5.   that the Old Testament prophets were able to transcend their own time (1 Peter 1:10-12);
6.   that the perspective of the prophets often blended the near and distant future (what Theodore Graebner called "the prophetic perspective"[1]).

III. Unresolved Differences

Within this arena of consensus, disagreements in perspective or exegetical accent have emerged. The following may be noted:

A.   On Typology

The exact definition, nature and scope of typology are still somewhat in dispute. While all are agreed that where Scripture identifies a type it is to be acknowledged and taught as a type, there is some divergence on the question of identifying a type <u>apart from an explicit use of a vocable</u> such as τύπος or σκιά. One view is that to identify a type without such a vocable is to go beyond the Scriptures. To recognize a type in these circumstances is seen as speculation that is not biblical and probably erroneous. The other view is that typology describes a larger pattern and consistency about God's character, words, and actions which must be expounded if we are to be true to biblical revelation. To require the presence of a vocable for "type" or "shadow" before these patterns can be expounded is to reduce the grammatical-historical method to a mechanical

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[1]Theodore Graebner, *A Dictionary of Bible Topics* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1943), 66.

and wooden hermeneutic.[2]

Note: Both views reject any description of typology that would view the New Testament as reading new meaning into the Old Testament texts rather than reading out the full meaning which God's prophets conveyed in their words.[3] Even the prophets had to search their own writings for their full meaning (1 Peter 1:10-12).[4]

B.   On Prophecy

Here three differences are in evidence.

1. The chief difference is <u>whether the **words** of one prophecy can have two referents</u> and, usually in connection with that, two somewhat different meanings, and, therefore, two fulfillments. For example, can the single vocable "son" in 2 Sam. 7:14 refer both to Solomon (2 Chron. 6:9) and to Jesus (Hebrews 1:5)? Can it mean "son" in a metaphorical sense in 2 Samuel 7 and "son" in a literal sense in Hebrews, and be fulfilled in both Solomon and in our Lord?

• The <u>exclusive rectilinear</u> point of view holds that **words** can *legitimately* point to and describe only one person or event as a fulfillment. All prophecies must be understood in this manner.

• The <u>typological</u> point of view holds that in the case of typological prophecies

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[2]It should be noted that even interpreters sympathetic to an exclusive rectilinear position may not assert that the presence of a specific vocable is necessary to identify a type. Raymond F. Surburg (*A Summary of Hermeneutical Principles* [Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1980], 11), e.g., says: "The mere fact that there is some resemblance between two persons does not make something a type. However, it is not necessary that Scriptures expressly state it, just so it is indicated in some way. Thus the whole Old Testament is spoken of as an adumbration of the New Testament, cf. Colossians 2:16-17."

[3]The position articulated by James Smart (*The Interpretation of Scripture* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961], 116, 123) would be such a position: "Typological exposition . . . sees, from the standpoint of the later event, a meaning in the Old Testament text that was not there for the original author . . . ." ". . . in the Old Testament passage there is no consciousness whatsoever of the future New Testament meaning. The Old Testament event is seen as a type only from the vantage point of the New Testament."

[4]The exegesis of the church fathers is viewed differently. On the one hand, their exegesis is viewed as frequently insightful and their writings as legitimate conversation partners in our present exposition of the Bible. Martin Chemnitz might serve as a paradigm for this methodology.

On the other hand, the Bible, with some attention to Luther, Walther, etc., is seen as the basic scope of theological exposition. There is such an emphasis on *sola scriptura* (Scripture alone
) that no effort is made to show continuity with the lower-case 'catholic' tradition. Here a variety of exegetes could be cited who consistently go directly from Bible to exposition without benefit of consulting the patristic and Reformation understandings of the texts.

the **words** point to the future fulfillment, but, depending upon the Old Testament context, may entail a contemporary or intervening referent, which referent itself is a foretaste of Christ.[5] Also, according to this viewpoint, all prophecies need not be of one type; there can be a mix of rectilinear and typological prophecies in the prophetic corpus.

Passages which would widely be acknowledged as exclusively rectilinear in character by exegetes in both categories would include: Gen. 3:15; 12: 1-3; Is. 9:1-7; 11:1-10; 52:13-53:12; Micah 5:1-3; Joel 3:1-5 (English—2:28-32); Job 19:23-27.

2. Closely intertwined with one (1) above is the question of <u>how the hermeneutical rule *sensus literalis unus est* (the literal sense is one) is to be understood.</u>

• On the one hand, this rule is applied in such a way as to preclude typology. "Son" must refer to either Israel or Jesus in Hosea 11:1. According to this view, to refer it to both Israel and Jesus is to violate the *sensus unus*.

• On the other hand, this rule is seen as compatible with the Scripture's inclusive perspective, i.e., the text is seen as <u>intended</u> to point to Israel and to Jesus. Jesus is Israel reduced to one. The disobedient firstborn (Israel) points to the obedient son (Jesus) by virtue of the Holy Spirit's guidance. Such a view understands the *sensus unus* principle to speak, not to the issue of prophecy and fulfillment, but rather to the matter of allegorizing (what was common in medieval exegesis), i.e., <u>finding referents for words on a different (e.g., spiritual) plane of reality</u> (e.g., seeing Abram's journey from Ur to Haran [Gen. 11:32] as referring both to an historical journey of people and to the "journey" of the soul from the spiritual "darkness" of unbelief and ignorance to the "light" of belief and understanding).[6]

3. Related to the two previous points is the matter of the **clarity** of Scripture.

• An <u>exclusive rectilinear</u> view tends to see a typological approach as violating the principle of the *claritas* (clarity) of Scripture, because such an approach is more or less complex.

• A <u>typological</u> approach sees such an assertion as confusing clarity with simplicity, noting that there are many items in Holy Scripture which are not simple to interpret (cf. parables and the book of the Revelation of St. John), so that it is not proper criticism that a typological approach to prophecy is "too complicated."

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[5]According to this view, it is proper to understand the intervening referent as both a sign (Is. 7:14) pointing to, and a seal (Hag. 2:23) upon, the sure fulfillment in Christ.

[6]Thus, Robert Preus reminds us (*The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism: A Study of Theological Prolegomena* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970], 329), in discussing the interpretation of Hosea 11:1 and the differing views of Calov (rectilinear) and Michael Walther (typological): "In all the long discussions of the Lutheran theologians on allegory (always as an extended metaphor) and typology we notice that the basic principle of *sensus literalis unus est* is never violated or weakened."

IV. Summary and Evaluation

A.   On Typology

   1.   Introduction

   "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son . . . ." (Heb. 1:1-2a; RSV).

   The letter to the Hebrews begins by acknowledging the richness of God's witness through the prophets: "In many and various ways. . . ." (πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως) God spoke. As this epistle goes on to expound the significance of the person and work of Jesus Christ, specific examples of these "many and various ways" are provided: Christ is superior to angels (1:5-2:18), to Moses (3:1-4:13), to the Aaronic priests (4:14-17), and to the Old Testament priesthood and cultus (chapters 8-10). Yet, these Old Testament persons and institutions pointed to Christ as types or shadows (Heb. 8:5, 6; 10:1).

   2.   Two Key Terms

      a.   τύπος

   St. Paul uses the word for "type" in the plural (τύποι) in 1 Cor. 10:6 (cf. also the adverb τυπικῶς in 10:11) to refer to the warnings from Israel's history as reasons to withstand present temptations (1 Cor. 10:1-13). Twice he suggests that the things which happened to Israel happened (1 Cor. 10:6, 11) and were written down (v. 11) for his readers' instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have already come (v. 11). The apostle clearly perceives God's hand in both the events and in their scriptural record. These matters were not simply for the benefit of ancient Israel, but also occurred with a view to and as divine instruction for the church living already in the age to come.

   Similarly, Paul describes Adam as a type of Christ: "Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern (τύπος) of the one to come" (Rom. 5:14; NIV). The point of comparison is that while Adam brought universal death through sin, Jesus bestowed universal blessing by his life, death and resurrection.[7]

      b.   σκιά

   "Shadow" (σκιά) is also used to describe this theological pattern between the Old and New Testaments. It can be seen in Col. 2:16: "Therefore do not let anyone judge

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   [7]Paul (Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 1:7; 2 Thess. 3:9; 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7) and Peter (1 Pet. 5:3) can use the same word (τύπος) in the simple sense of an order or pattern of life which the Christians should exhibit. It is, however, clearly the broader usage of the word which is in view in the discussion on prophecy and fulfillment.

you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow (σκιά) of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ" (NIV). The book of Hebrews (cf. 10:11) makes use of this word in its discussion of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant and the fulfillment of these in the perfect sacrifice of Christ. The pattern of past events is, again, in the service of the New Testament readers. The God who ordered the past did so in a manner which pointed to and prepared for Christ.

3.   The Lutheran Approach

It should be noted that there is no hint in the passages which speak of τύποι or σκιαί that the author has been exhaustive in his enumeration of types or shadows from the Old Testament. Rather, the clear implication is that the entire Old Testament was punctuated with such patterns, from which the New Testament writers have provided select examples in accord with their theological aim. Indeed, John 3:14 would be such an example: "Just as (καθώς) Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so (οὕτως) the Son of Man must be lifted up" (NIV). Here the coordination of two historical actions (the movement of lifting up) is seen as expressing one theological truth (God's offer of deliverance) and is understood as divinely ordered. God's actions in the past are consistent with his present movement, for it is the same God working in the same way for the same purposes. God's character is not capricious. This means that the God who led the Israelites by a cloud for forty years can be recognized as the One who speaks from the cloud at Jesus' baptism and leads him into the wilderness for forty days. In the Old Testament, too, God binds his promises of Christ to historical actions (people, events, institutions, etc.), located within the real life history of his people.

Thus, typology expresses the unity of the Scriptures and the consistency of God's character. He is true to his promise. The life of Israel, with its many facets, points to the life of Jesus even as specific prophecies within that history speak of Jesus (Gen. 3:15; 12:1-3). And this patterning was not lost on the exegetes of the Lutheran tradition. Luther used typology throughout his life, with a particular emphasis on christological types. A good example of his approach is his presentation of the Passover as a type of Easter (*LW* 13:363; *WA* 31:393).[8]

The Confessors were equally sympathetic to the broader typological reading of the Old Testament. Two passages from the Apology of the Augsburg Confession are

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[8]Additional examples are surveyed by Paul Althaus in *The Theology of Martin Luther* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 96-102. See Friedrich Ohly, "Die Typologies in Luthers Schriftauslegung," *Gesetz und Evangelium. Zur Typologie bei Luther und Lucas Cranach. Zum Blutstrahl der Gnade in der Kunst* (Munster: Aschendorff, 1985), 11-15. E.g., Luther encourages Christians to pray Psalm 111, a Passover psalm, upon reception of the Lord's Supper, and he views the physical sufferings of the people of Israel as a symbol of the sufferings endured by the Christian church.
      An even fuller treatment of the Reformer's typological methodology is Akira Takamori's dissertation "*Typologische Auslegung des Alten Testaments? Eine wortgeschichtlich Untersuchung.*" Unpublished Dissertation. University of Zurich, 1966. See also Günther Bornkamm, *Luther and the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969).

representative:

> The same thing happened among the people of Israel. The
> majority of the people believed that they merited the forgiveness of
> sins by their works, and so they multiplied sacrifices and
> devotions. The prophets, on the contrary, condemned this opinion
> and taught the righteousness of faith. The history of the people is
> a type of what was to happen in the church of the future (Ap IV,
> 395; Tappert, 167).

> And the type aptly represents not only the ceremony, but also the preaching of
> the Gospel. In Num. 28, 4f. three parts of that daily sacrifice are represented,
> *the burning of the lamb, the libation, and the oblation of wheat flour.* The Law
> had pictures or shadows of future things. Accordingly, in this spectacle Christ
> and the entire worship of the New Testament are portrayed. The burning of
> the lamb signifies the death of Christ. The libation signifies that everywhere
> in the entire world, by the preaching of the Gospel, believers are sprinkled
> with the blood of that Lamb, i.e., sanctified, as Peter says, 1. Ep. 1, 2: *Through
> sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus
> Christ.* The oblation of wheat flour signifies faith, prayer, and thanksgiving in
> hearts. As, therefore, in the Old Testament, the shadow is perceived, so in the
> New the thing signified should be sought, and not another type, as sufficient
> for a sacrifice (Ap XXIV, 36, 37; *Triglot*, 397).[9]

The Confessions can also speak about the Old Testament as a shadow (*umbra*) of things
to come.

> But the Gospel brings not merely the shadow of eternal things, but the eternal
> things themselves, the Holy Ghost and righteousness, by which we are
> righteous before God (Ap VII, VIII; *Triglot*, 231).

Lastly, the use of "image" (*imago*) can serve as the metaphor to describe the relationship
of the Old Testament sacrifices to the sacrifice of Christ.

> For the Levitical sacrifices for sins did not merit the remission of sins before
> God; they were only an image of the sacrifice of Christ, which was to be the
> one propitiatory sacrifice, as we have said above (Ap XXIV, 53; *Triglot*, 403).

If one looks to Post-Reformation Lutheranism, the influential hermeneutics of
Solomon Glassius has an extensive discussion of typology.[10] Here the question is not
whether typology is scriptural or not, but when can it be rightly used rather than abused.
Similar treatments are found in Johann Gerhard (1582-1637), an earlier dogmatician who

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[9]Wherever "type" is used in the translation, the Latin equivalent is
typus.

[10]*Philogia Sacra*, Leipzig: 1713, especially pp. 441-71.

sought to distinguish typology from allegory,[11] as well as in later dogmaticians such as Abraham Calov (1612-1686), who included the matter in a discussion of the so-called "mystical" senses of Scripture (*sensus mysticus*),[12] and David Hollaz (1646-1713). Indeed, Michael Walther, writing in the eighteenth century, provides an extensive discussion of the ways in which Moses is and is not a type of the coming Christ.[13]

Significant for this discussion is the fact that, in our own country and Synod, the hermeneutical posture described above was followed by D. C. G. Hoffman in his *Institutiones Theologiae Exegeticae* (Saint Louis: *Ex Officini Synodi Missouriensis Lutheranae*, 1876). This volume was the hermeneutics text in use during C. F. W. Walther's presidency and contains some twenty pages on the proper interpretation of types. According to Hoffman, genuine types can be divided into three categories: 1) persons; 2) institutions and laws; and, 3) historical events. Specific examples are then provided:

> With respect to *personal types*, it can be said that they extend to the persons of the high priest, especially Aaron, Melchizedek, etc. With respect to the *laws*, similarly, it refers to the ceremonies and the entire worship of God in Leviticus, with all the laws which constitute its make up, such as the sacrifices, the tabernacle with its appointments, the temple, the priesthood, the sacraments, the feasts, the jubilee years, the sabbaths, the new moons, and in like manner, the combined Mosaic law and other ceremonies. With respect, finally, to *historical events* as types, examples are the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt, the return of the same people from the Babylonian captivity, the weeping of Rachel, etc. (49-50)

This paragraph with its many examples and openness to other examples (note the repeated "etc.") suggests that typological exegesis had a significant place in the synodical

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[11]A type sets forth some fact from the Old Testament which prefigures or foreshadows an episode or event in the New Testament. Allegory expounds a matter from the Old or the New Testament in a new sense or adapts it to a spiritual doctrine or a facet of spiritual life. Typology consists in the comparison of facts. Allegory is not so much concerned with facts as with their arrangement, from which it draws out a useful or hidden doctrine. *Loci Theologici* (I. Tubingen: I. B. Cotta, 1762), 69.

[12]The *mystical sense*, as it may be loosely styled, is divided by the Lutheran theologians into allegorical, typical, and parabolical. It is called the *allegorical sense* when a Scriptural historical narrative of things that really occurred is applied to a certain mystery or spiritual doctrine by the intention of the Holy Spirit in an allegorical manner; it is *typical* when, under external called facts or prophetic visions, things hidden, either present or future, are prefigured, or especially matters related to the New Testament are shadowed forth; and *parabolical* when something is described as having really occurred, and yet applied to designate something else that is spiritual. *System Locorum Theologicorum* I, 665.

[13]See *Harmonia Biblica sive Brevis et Plana Conciliatio Locorum Veteris et Novi Testamenti Apparenter sibi Contradicentium* (Nuremberg, 1645), 204-206.

seminarian's study of the Bible in the middle of the 19th century.

B.   On Prophecy

Given typology—the existence of types/shadows in the Old Testament and their coming to "fulfillment"/reality in the New—it is not surprising what we find with respect to biblical prophecy. The New Testament writers appeal to both exclusively rectilinear and typological prophecies in their texts. Exclusive rectilinear prophecies (Micah 5:2; Matt. 2:6) are not set in antithesis to typological prophecies (2 Sam. 7:14; Heb. 1:5). The two types of prophecy complement rather than stand in tension with one another. And the fathers of our own LCMS agree, as evidenced in their approaches. Several examples can be given. The first is *The Concordia Bible With Notes*, revised by J. T. Mueller (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1946). This work interprets a number of the Old Testament prophecies in typological fashion (e.g., Hos. 11:1, 2 Samuel 7, Psalm 8). Whether or not one agrees with each instance of such interpretation, the publishers (CPH) recommend this Bible to the reader with the words: "The present edition embodies the results of thorough Biblical scholarship and reflects the conservative, fundamental viewpoint" (Preface). Second is the inductive study of Walther R. Roehrs, "The Typological Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," *Concordia Journal* 10 (1984), 204-216. In this article the author expounds the biblical texts in a way which shows the nature of and appropriate place for typological exegesis and prophecy. Finally, we may note the treatment given by William F. Arndt to Jesus' prediction of the final judgment in Luke 21:32 and the relationship these words have to the historical fall of Jerusalem:

> After all, it seems best to follow Pl [Plummer] and Stoeckhardt and to take γ. [γενεά] in the usual sense, considering the destruction of Jerusalem as a type, sign, and prelude of the beginning of the final global collapse and to say that symbolically and embryonically the prophecies of Jesus were fulfilled when Jerusalem was struck by the lightning of divine wrath. Jesus, one may suggest, employs the so-called prophetic perspective, in which events, far removed from one another in time, are seen as being close together, as forming one unity.[14]

It must be acknowledged, particularly in reaction to the rise of historical-critical scholarship, that certain Lutheran exegetes have taken a very cautious view toward typology and typological prophecy. Ludwig Fuerbringer, George Stoeckhardt, Walther A. Maier I, and Theodore Laetsch would be the most prominent critics of typological prophecy within Missouri Synod exegetical tradition.[15] The objections these men had to

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[14]William F. Arndt, *Commentary on Luke* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1956), 427.

[15]Fuerbringer, L., *Einleitung des Alte Testament* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1913); Stoeckhardt, G., *Christ in Old Testament Prophecy* (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1984); Maier, W., *The Psalms* (Saint Louis: Concordia Seminary Mimeo Co., n.d.); Laetsch, T., *Bible Commentary: Jeremiah* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1952).

typological prophecy, however, were really a reaction to a different position than that elucidated in this paper. The kind of typological prophecy they rejected out of hand—and which the Commission rejects—declared that Christ was not spoken of in the Old Testament prophecies, that these supposed prophecies were read into the Old Testament Scriptures by the New Testament writers, and that the original prophecies were not prophecies at all but were statements which simply referred to something that was happening in the day of the prophet (cf. footnote 3, above). This view denied that the Old Testament prophets could look into the future. To make their rejection of that kind of typology and typological prophecy a rejection of the proper scriptural position laid out in this paper is to misapply their writings. It is interesting to note that when Ludwig Fuerbringer reviewed August Pieper's *Isaiah II*, a volume with a significant amount of typological interpretation, he expressed differences only at the level of specific exegetical decisions.[16] And this reaction should not be surprising, for as William J. Hassold showed in his survey of LCMS and Wisconsin Synod attitudes on the issue of prophecy and fulfillment,[17] while each synod may have tended in one direction or another on the matter, neither condemned the other's position. In other words, <u>if confessional assumptions are not compromised, whether a particular prophecy is typological or exclusively rectilinear is an exegetical question which must be decided on a case by case basis</u>.[18]

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[16]See *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 66 (1920), 132-35.

[17]William J. Hassold, "Rectilinear or Typological Interpretation of Messianic Prophecy?" *Concordia Theological Monthly* 38 (1965), 155-67.

[18]Thus, the overture to the 1965 synodical convention "To Petition the Detroit Convention to Reaffirm the Historical Christian Doctrine that the Old Testament Directly Predicts a Personal Messiah," which sought to legislate the exegesis of certain passages, was given the response of Resolution 2-26, "To Reaffirm Our Belief that the Old Testament Prophecies of the Savior Are Fulfilled in Jesus Christ." Resolution 2-26 resolved that "we reaffirm our belief that the Old Testament prophecies of the Savior find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of sinners." No specific prophecies are articulated.
    Indeed, it is clear that a simplistic, surface reading of the New Testament evidence about the fulfillment of specific prophecies may lead one astray. For example, it is sometimes objected that the speakers in the New Testament negate the possibility of the fulfillment of an Old Testament passage/prophecy prior to the fulfillment in Christ. See, e.g., Acts 2:34-36:

> For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (NIV).

It should be noted, however, that on the surface Scripture negates statements or ideas that are clearly true. St. Paul presents an interesting example in 1 Cor. 9:9-10a, with the interpretation of Deut. 25:4: "For it is written in the Law of Moses: 'Do not muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.' Is it about oxen that God is concerned? Surely he says this for us, ..." (NIV). Surely it is not right to understand Deut. 25:4 simply and only as a text referring to New Testament proclaimers of the Gospel and not to the treatment of animals of labor. No Old Testament Jew would have

V. Conclusion

This brief survey suggests that Lutheran exegesis has, within confessional boundaries and under the authority of Sacred Scripture, exhibited a disciplined use of typology and of a typological understanding of prophecy. Speculations which drift far from the text (cf. medieval exegesis) are rare. Serious exegesis which beholds types and shadows of Christ and the church is more frequent.

Ultimately, understanding the Scriptures as containing numerous types and as containing typological prophecies is an expression of the fundamental unity of the Scriptures. The God who called Israel to be his chosen people and a royal priesthood (Exodus 19) has also sent his Son to redeem and constitute a "new" Israel, the church (Eph. 2:20). And he has given prophecies consonant with this outlook.

If there are diverse perspectives on when a type or a typological prophecy is in view, appeals should be made to the total scriptural text and context, rather than to a dogmatic assumption that this category is limited to those instances when the biblical text explicitly indicates it. To make this latter sort of appeal does, in fact, reduce that exegetical richness of Lutheran orthodoxy considerably, and it is for this reason that we do not believe that a specific exegesis of given prophetic passages (as requested in the overture) can be legislated. Rather, when all acknowledge the authority of the Scriptures and subscribe without reservation to the Lutheran Confessions in a *quia* manner, a lengthy and mutually beneficial conversation can be engaged in on the part of all who are called to "search the Scriptures."

From Luther to the present, the unity of the Scriptures for a Lutheran is, essentially, christological.[19] Over and over the Lutheran fathers find types of Christ and typological prophecies of his work.[20] They do so not because they qualified the *sola*

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been allowed to muzzle his livestock while working, on the basis of the argument that the words of this text were not talking about muzzling livestock at all but only about activity related to the preaching of the Gospel in the time following the coming of the Messiah, when apostles, evangelists, and other proclaimers of the Good News would appear! Paul's point is that the Old Testament referent of this text is of penultimate concern. This construction has been called dialectical negation, i.e., one in which one possibility is denied to emphasize and to highlight what is finally important, and to bring that point into focus.

[19]See e.g., Charles P. Arand and James W. Voelz, "The Lutheran Confessions as Normative Guides for Reading Scripture," *Concordia Journal* 21 (1995), 371-75.

[20]See Robert Preus, *The Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism*, 2:328. Here Preus states: "With its emphasis on types in the Old Testament (Melchizedek, Adam, the stairs of Jacob, the sacrifices, the crossing of the Red Sea, the manna, the fiery serpent, etc.) and on direct predictive prophecy where the prophetic words themselves pointed directly to Christ, classical Lutheranism shows that in a sense it regarded the entire Old Testament as typological, as a foreshadowing and a blueprint, as it were, for the work of Christ and the coming of His kingdom. This would account for the fact that the New Testament so often and at times with apparent caprice finds allusions

scriptura principle, but because they believed that the Scriptures themselves require such an interpretation.

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and types and prophecies of Christ throughout the Old Testament. The same Spirit of God is author of the Old Testament Scriptures, which point to the coming Christ and prepare for Him, and of the New Testament Scriptures, which testify of the Christ who has come according to the promises. Still, the old Lutherans were very cautious and generally did not find types lurking within every Old Testament figure; nor did they seek to discover or make anything of prophecy in the Old Testament where the New Testament did not find it. They were careful, too, not to confuse type and prophecy, although to them type was a kind of prophecy.
    There were times, however, when agreement could not be reached over the classification of certain passages. For instance, Hos. 11:1 . . . . ."