

Jesus as Israel: The Typological Structure of Matthew's Gospel

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Articles on the structure of Matthew typically begin with a lament that scholars have reached no consensus concerning the structure of Matthew. This article is no exception. Chiastic outlines have been proposed,¹ and the indications of *inclusio* are hints in this direction.² M. D. Goulder's intricate liturgical-midrashic treatment fascinates but does not persuade.³ Recently, several scholars have applied narratological analysis to sketch the plot structure of Matthew,⁴ but narrative analyses suffer, as Christopher Smith has pointed out, from the fact that *nothing much happens* during long stretches of Matthew's gospel.⁵ Among the most popular schemes, however, has been that of B. W. Bacon, who proposed that the gospel was organized around five books, each of which consists of

¹ For a survey of chiastic approaches, see David R. Bauer, *The Structure of Matthew's Gospel: A Study in Literary Design* (JSNT Supplement #31; Sheffield: Almond Press, 1989), pp. 36-40. See Charles Lohr, "Oral techniques in the Gospel of Matthew," *CBQ* (1961), pp. 403-435, esp. pp. 427-431. The most elaborately defended chiastic outline is that of James B. Jordan, *The End of the World: A Commentary on Matthew 23-25* (Niceville, FL: Biblical Horizons), pp. 7-13. Other studies have discovered chiasms in smaller portions of the gospel: Daniel Boerman, "The Chiastic Structure of Matthew 11-12," *CTJ* 40 (2005), pp. 313-25; David McClister, "Literary Structure as a Key to Meaning in Matt 17:22-20:19," *JETS* (1996), pp. 549-58; John Paul Heil, "The Narrative Structure of Matthew 27:55-29:20," *JBL* 110 (1991), pp. 419-438.

² For instance: The name "Mary," used twelve times in the gospel, appears only once (13:55) between chapters 2 and 27. The gift of a rich tomb recalls the gifts of the magi at Jesus' birth. Herod's efforts to eliminate Jesus as a rival king are matched by Pilate's willingness to impede the spread of the message of resurrection, and the death of the innocents at the beginning of the book finds a striking analogy in the death of innocent Jesus. Many have noted the contrasting parallelism between the "blessings" of the Beatitudes and the "woes" of Matthew 23.

³ M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 1974).

⁴ Frank J. Matera, "The Plot of Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 49 (1987), pp. 233-53; Warren Carter, "Kernels and Narrative Blocks: The Structure of Matthew's Gospel," *CBQ* 54 (1992), pp. 463-81; Dale Allison, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*," in Allison, *Studies in Matthew: Interpretation Past and Present* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), ch. 7; Ulrich Luz, *Studies in Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), ch. 11; Mark Allan Powell, "Toward a Narrative-Critical Understanding of Matthew," *Interpretation* (1992), pp. 341-346.

⁵ Christopher R. Smith, "Literary Evidences of a Fivefold Structure in the Gospel of Matthew," *NTS* 43 (1997), p. 541.

narrative and an extended discourse.⁶ Bacon's theory has its defenders,⁷ and some, building on Bacon, have seen a typological re-writing of the Hexateuch in Matthew's five-book pattern.⁸ Bacon's proposal has been criticized on a number of points,⁹ but neither Jack Kingsbury's minimalist structure¹⁰ nor any alternative has won general acceptance.

The purpose of this essay is to offer yet another analysis of Matthew's structure that combines some of Bacon's insights with Dale Allison's more recent work on the Mosaic typology of Matthew. I first offer a brief defense of some of Bacon's suggestions, and a brief interaction with Allison's work. Then, I will survey the gospel in an effort to show that Matthew organized his account of the life of Jesus as an Irenaean recapitulation of Israel's history, in which Jesus replays both major individual roles of that history (Moses, David, Elisha, Jeremiah) as well as the role of the nation herself.¹¹

⁶ Bacon elaborated his theory in *Studies in Matthew* (London: Constable and Company, 1930), esp. pp. 145-261.

⁷ Allison, "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*," pp. 136-138; George Wesley Buchanan, *Typology and the Gospel* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1987), p. 40; Christopher R. Smith, "Literary Evidences," pp. 540-51; N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992), pp. 384-390.

⁸ See Austin Farrer, *St. Matthew and St. Mark* (2d. ed.; Westminster: Dacre Press, 1966), ch. XI; Buchanan, *Typology*, pp. 40-57; Buchanan, *The Gospel of Matthew* (2 vols; Mellen Biblical Commentary; Watson E. Mills, gen ed.; Lewiston, NY: Mellen Biblical Press, 1996), *passim*.

⁹ For summaries of the criticisms, see Dale C. Allison, Jr., *The New Moses: A Matthean Typology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), pp. 293-298; Bauer, *Structure*, pp. 27-35.

¹⁰ Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew: Structure, Christology, Kingdom* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975), ch. 1. Allison deftly summarizes the case against Kingsburg in "Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*," p. 136, most devastatingly in the comment that a structural analysis should provide some more illuminating conclusion than that a narrative has a beginning, middle, and end.

¹¹ Though I have not found any scholars who develop this theme as I have done, I make no claim to originality for my fundamental thesis. See Robert Horton Gundry, *The Use of the Old Testament in St Matthew's Gospel: With Special reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), p. 210. M. D. Goulder's suggestion (*Midrash and Lection*, p. 233) suggestion that Matthew's genealogy sketches the whole of the gospel as a repetition of Israel's history is even closer to my theory.

I.

Bacon suggested that the gospel was structured by an alternating pattern of narrative and five major discourses, which combine to form five “books.” Bacon’s point was in part redactional, emphasizing that Matthew modified Mark in order to show that “the chief duty of the twelve” was “to be ‘scribes made disciples to the kingdom of heaven,’” sent to teach the world to follow Jesus’ commandments. Matthew was “unmistakably . . . of Jewish origin and training, with unbounded reverence for the Law,” and, since Torah consists of five books with “each body of law introduced by a narrative of considerable length, largely concerned with the ‘signs and wonders’ by which Jehovah,” Matthew recapitulated this order in his gospel. Matthew was a “converted rabbi, a Christian legalist,” whose revision of Mark provided a “Compend of the Commandments of Jesus” under the headings of “Filial Righteousness (Matt 5-7), “Duty of Evangelists” (Matt 10), “Mystery of the Kingdom” (Matt 13), “Duty of Church Administrators” (Matt 18), and “Preparedness for the Coming” (Matt 23-25).¹² Matthew designed his gospel in this fashion as part of an anti-Jewish polemic and a Christian apologetic.¹³

Several of the criticisms of Bacon’s analysis are cogent. It will not do to label Matthew 1-2 “Prologue” and chapters 26-28 “Epilogue,” since both are deeply integrated into Matthew’s gospel story: Without a miraculous birth and a resurrection, the story of Jesus has little interest. Further, the lines between “narrative” and “discourse” are not so neat as Bacon assumes, and when Bacon suggests that each book of the Pentateuch alternates between narrative and “legal” material one wonders when he last glanced at Genesis. Nor, despite ingenious efforts to show otherwise, are there any obvious parallels

¹² Bacon, *Studies*, pp. 80-82.

¹³ Bacon, *Studies*, p. xvi.

between Jesus' discourses and the books of the Pentateuch. Other criticisms land only glancing blows. Kingsbury's suggestion that chapter 23 must be a separate discourse from 24-25 because of the change of location at 24:1, 3 is specious.¹⁴ No one, including Kingsbury, doubts that chapter 13 constitutes a single discourse, since the parable genre and the substantive concern with the "kingdom" runs through the chapter. Yet, Jesus moves from the boat to the house at 13:36.

Bacon's fundamental insight that Matthew, in contrast to the other synoptics, gathers Jesus' teaching into large "blocks" of teaching withstands these criticisms. That this was a deliberate device is evident from the repetition of the concluding (or "transitional") formula (7:28-29; 11:1; 13:53; 19:1; 26:1-2). Repetition as a structuring device is common in the Old Testament,¹⁵ and given Matthew's evident immersion in the Hebrew Scriptures it is entirely plausible that he would have borrowed this literary device, just as he cites Old Testament texts as prophetic types of Jesus. That Matthew employed this formula five times to mark off five sections of teaching also provides evidence that Matthew intended the structure of his gospel to underscore his theme that Jesus is the fulfillment of Torah (and of all the Scriptures).¹⁶

The value of Bacon's five-discourse structure is most evident when integrated with Matthew's typological hermeneutic, as examined in Dale Allison's richly detailed, deeply

¹⁴ Kingsbury, *Matthew*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁵ In narrative, see the "evening/morning" repetition of Gen 1, and, more broadly, the various formulae invoking "generations" that structure Gen as a whole (2:4; 5:1; 10:1; 11:10; etc.). Lev. 8 employs a "compliance formula" ("as Yahweh commanded Moses") to structure the account of Aaron's ordination. In legal texts, see "and Yahweh spoke to Moses, saying" that structures the tabernacle texts in Exod 25-31 as a series of seven speeches that recapitulate the words of creation (25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12). Prophetic texts are structured by "thus says Yahweh" or "oracle of Yahweh."

¹⁶ Allison downplays the significance of the numerology by referring to the Jewish and Christian convention of organizing books into five sections (among others, the Psalter, *Jubilees*, the Megilloth), as well as the conventions of five-act plays and three-volume novels, but he admits that "some of the books

researched, and theoretically sophisticated study, *The New Moses*.¹⁷ Allison's book is not only stimulating, but utterly compelling. Typology is clearly central to Matthew's presentation of Jesus. Yet Allison does not, and does not intend to, provide an overall scheme for Matthew. The closest he comes is the suggestion that "the passages in which Moses' tacit presence is the strongest display an order which mirrors the Pentateuch." He makes the point with the following chart:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>The Pentateuch</i>	
1-2	Exod 1:1-2:10	infancy narrative
3:13-17	Exod 14:10-13	crossing of water
4:1-11	Exod 16:1-17:7	wilderness temptation
5-7	Exod 19:1-23:33	mountain of lawgiving
11:25-30	Exod 33:1-23	reciprocal knowledge of God
17:1-9	Exod 34:29-35	transfiguration
28:16-20	Deut 31:7-9	commissioning of successor
	Josh 1:1-9 ¹⁸	

Striking as some correspondences may be, Allison himself is hesitant to make "too much of this common sequence" because many passages are "out of order,"¹⁹ yet he

I have cited should perhaps be regarded as imitators of the Pentateuch's structure" (*New Moses*, pp. 296-97, including fn. 19).

¹⁷ I will take it as given that the writers of the New Testament employed a "typological" hermeneutics in their reading of the New Testament. On this, see G. W. H. Lampe. "The Reasonableness of Typology," in Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe, *Essays on Typology* (Studies in Biblical Theology; London: SCM, 1957), pp. 9-38; Richard M. Davidson, *Typology in Scripture: A study of hermeneutical TUPOS structures* (Andrews University Seminary Doctoral Dissertation Series; Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 1981). Less reliable, but still convincing in its main points, is Buchanan, *Typology and the Gospel*, pp. 1-39.

argues that “there is a rough chronological agreement between certain events in the life of Jesus and their typological cousins in the Tanak, and it is not trivial.”²⁰ One may agree with Allison’s comparatively modest claims for his overview, and still find it tantalizingly inadequate as a way of explaining Matthew’s ordering of his gospel. Half of the strongly Mosaic passages are exhausted by the end of Matthew 7, strongly Mosaic passages are scattered throughout the book, and large sections do not come into Allison’s purview at all. Besides, Bacon’s “five discourse” structure fits uneasily in this outline. It would seem that an evangelist who wanted to structure his gospel according to the chronology of the Pentateuch could have done so more straightforwardly. Strong as the Mosaic typology is in Matthew, therefore, it does not seem adequate to account for the gospel’s overall architecture.

Allison himself provides hints of a more compelling solution. He finds allusions to various passages in Deuteronomy in the closing section of the Sermon on the Mount,²¹ suggests that the “transitional formula” first used in 7:28-29 echoes Deut 31:1, 24; 32:45,²² and notes verbal and conceptual links between Matt 9:35-38 and Num 27:15-17 (“sheep without a shepherd”) that point to connections between Jesus’ commissioning of the twelve and Moses’ commissioning of Joshua (Matt 10:1-3 with Num 27:18).²³ Matthew 10:1-3 in fact conflates Num 27:18 with Num 13:1. From the latter it borrows “sending” (ἀποστέλον in both the LXX and Matthew), while from the former it borrows conferral

¹⁸ *New Moses*, p. 268.

¹⁹ He cites Matt 14:13-22 and 15:29-39, linked with manna; Matt 21:1-17, which alludes to Moses’ return to Egypt on a donkey, Exod 4:20; and Matt 26:17-25, which combines allusions to Passover and the covenant-making rite of Exod 24 (*New Moses*, p. 268). These exceptions are not fatal to Allison’s point, since the Mosaic resonances of all these passages is, in his judgment, comparatively faint.

²⁰ *New Moses*, p. 268.

²¹ *New Moses*, pp. 190-191.

²² *New Moses*, pp. 192-194

of authority (LXX: *δοξα*; Matthew: *εξουσια*). The twelve disciples-made-apostles are “spies” who see that the land can be conquered despite Satan’s presence and mastery; they are also “Joshuas” in their authority and faithfulness.

These hints suggest the possibility that the “Pentateuchal” section of Matthew’s gospel concludes somewhere near chapter 10, and from that point we move from a Moses/Exodus typology into a Joshua/conquest typology. Given the fact that Joshua is himself typologically compared to Moses,²⁴ it is not surprising that traces of Mosaic typology continue into chapter 10, but these traces become faint because Matthew has brought another typology to the forefront and allowed the Mosaic typology to recede to the background.²⁵ As Matthew’s story moves on, he makes similar transitions at various points, moving sequentially through the history of Israel with the five discourses, and the surrounding narrative, marking out major periods of Israel’s history.²⁶ This suggestion may not mark an epochal advance in Matthean studies, but it accounts more fully for the structure of Matthew than any alternative proposals yet made.²⁷

²³ *New Moses*, pp. 213-217. Allison considers these allusions fairly feeble: “the presence of a Moses typology in Matthew 10 is not forcibly felt, and it may not be there at all” (p. 217).

²⁴ See *New Moses*, pp. 23-28, and most commentaries on the book of Joshua.

²⁵ Nor is it surprising that Mosaic typology lingers in sections where Jesus is being describe as a new David or Jeremiah, since both these, and many others, are already described typologically as “new Moses” figures within the Old Testament. Cf. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, p. 228. Allison himself spend a good portion of his book examining the Mosaic typology within the Old Testament, and so it is surprising that he largely leaves this multi-layered Moses behind when he turns to Matthew.

²⁶ I am not claiming that these sections are neatly sealed off from one another. Jesus is identified as a “son of David” in 1:1, long before Matthew reaches Jesus’ recapitulation of the Davidic kingdom. Yet, typological references from different parts of the Old Testament cluster together, and mark out a sequence that runs throughout the gospel.

²⁷ Christopher Smith’s (“Literary Evidences”) defense of Bacon’s thesis and criticism of narrative approaches are welcome, but his argument fails at a number of points. Part of his “literary” evidence for five discourses is the observation that all but one discourse begins as well as ends with a stylized formula. The formula includes a reference to Jesus sitting, the disciples coming to Him, and a reference to the crowds. The exception is the discourse in 10:1, which covers the approach of the disciples by including Jesus’ command to the disciples to gather to Him. Chapter 13, likewise, does not begin with this formula; the disciples do not approach Him until 13:10, but that is appropriate since it initiates a “new beginning” of the discourse, now in the house with the disciples only. This becomes problematic when, based on this, Smith claims that the last discourse does not begin until Matt 24, but if the “opening

II.

The early chapters of Matthew provide *prima facie* evidence of the plausibility of this scheme. First, the sequence of events in Matthew 1-7 closely mimics the sequence of the Pentateuch. Matthew begins his gospel with an overt quotation from the LXX of Genesis: He is writing the βιβλος γενεσεωσ of Jesus, just as Genesis records the βιβλος γενεσεωσ of heaven and earth (Gen 2:4) and of Adam (5:1). Matthew follows with a genealogy, like the numerous genealogies of Genesis (4:16-26; 5:1-32; 10:1-32; 11:10-32; 36:1-43),²⁸ recounts a miraculous birth (cf. Isaac, Jacob) to a dreamer named Joseph.²⁹ Israel has become an Egypt, her king the child-slaying Herod, and Jesus has to escape “by night” (cf. Exod 12:30) to safety, an event that Matthew sees as a fulfillment of a passage from Hosea that speaks of the exodus (Matt 2:15; Hos. 11:1). After his water-crossing in baptism (3:13-17), He is tempted in the wilderness for forty days, where He quotes from passages referring to Israel’s forty-year sojourn (4:1-11). Ascending a mountain, He instructs His disciples in the righteousness that surpasses that of the scribes

formula” is broken in two in ch. 13, there does not seem to be any reason it could not be delayed to the middle of the final discourse. Further, he argues that narratives introduce the discourses, and that each narrative contains a theme that is picked up in the following discourse. Thus, for instance, the issue of Jesus’ authority comes up in chapters 8-9, and this keyword is employed at the beginning of the mission discourse in chapter 10. But this is quite arbitrary: There are numerous verbal and conceptual links between chapters 8-9 and chapter 10, and the issue of authority, as Smith acknowledges, has already come up before chapters 8-9 (cf. 7:29). Why then is “authority” the unifying keyword rather than “demon” or “leper” or “heal” or any number of common terms and themes? Similarly, he characterizes the fourth discourse, chapter 18, as concerned with the “family of the kingdom,” but also says that 12:46-50 is the “best introduction to this discourse,” even though that passage – introducing the theme of the *fourth* discourse – comes before the *third* discourse. Most fundamentally, Smith’s article does not account for Matthew’s own agenda because Smith employs the categories of contemporary narrative theory, rather than the categories Matthew himself would have employed – such as typology.

²⁸ Only Chronicles devotes so much space to genealogies as Genesis, and it is likely that Matthew is also consciously imitating the Chronicler, a point I hope to develop in a future article. For now, simply note that both Matthew and the Chronicler give genealogies that move to the post-exilic period.

²⁹ Cf. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, pp. 235-239. The original Joseph ben Jacob is associated with three sets of dreams: He had his own dreams of supremacy over his brothers (Gen 37:5-11), and interpreted dreams for the baker and cup-bearer (40:1-23) and Pharaoh (41:1-36). Matthew’s Joseph (also ben Jacob, 1:16) has three dreams (1:20; 2:13, 19). Likewise, the original Joseph brings his family to Egypt, where they find food and safety, as does the later Joseph.

and Pharisees (Matt 5-7), laying before Israel the choice between life and prosperity, death and disaster, a choice between maintaining their “house” and seeing it dismantled by a rising “river” (cf. Isa8).³⁰ Schematically, the opening chapters follow the Pentateuch as follows:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>OT</i>
1:1: Book of genesis	Gen 2:4; 5:1
1:1-17: son of Abraham	Gen 12-26
1:18-25: Joseph the dreamer	Gen 37
2:1-12: Magi	Nations to Egypt for Joseph; promise to Abe
2:13-15: Herod kills children	Exod 1-2: Pharaoh kills children
2:14: Jesus rescued, flees	Exod 2: Moses rescued, flees
2:19-23: Jesus returns to Israel	Exod 3-4: Moses returns to Egypt
3:1-12: John announces judgment	Exod 5-12: Moses/Aaron bring judgment
3:13-17: Jesus passes through waters	Exod 16: exodus
4:1-11: temptation in wilderness	Exod 17-19: travel to Sinai
4:18-22: Jesus calls disciples	Exod 18: Moses appoints rulers
chs. 5-7	Sinai and the giving of Torah

Much of this is old hat, and so self-evident that even scholars who resist typological interpretation have a hard time ignoring it. What is often missed, however, is

³⁰ I agree with N. T. Wright’s suggestion that the “house” in view in 7:24-27 is the temple, and this suggests an important chiasmic link with Jesus’ Olivet Discourse describing the temple’s destruction.

what this implies about the logic of Matthew's typology. Though there are certainly "Mosaic" dimensions to the typology throughout these chapters, the typological thread that provides the continuity is overwhelmingly Jesus-as-Israel.³¹ Matthew 1:1-17 does not mention Moses, and its allusions to Genesis draw on the pre-Mosaic history of the people. Jesus is "son of Abraham" (1:1), who is the father of Israel (Rom. 4:1) and not the father of Moses. Though Allison is probably right to discern some hints of Mosaic typology in Matthew's birth narrative, the emphasis on Joseph's role keeps the later chapters of Genesis firmly in mind. Mosaic typology becomes stronger in chapter 2, but even here Jesus is as much Israel as Moses – He does not lead a people out of Egypt-Israel, but is an infant taken, like the surviving firstborn sons of Israel, out of the land.³² All Israel is baptized in the sea (cf. 1 Cor. 10:1-4), and all Israel is tempted in the wilderness. When He teaches from the mountain, He is surely a Mosaic figure, but He is also much more, for He does not deliver words from Yahweh but speaks with an apparently underived authority (7:29).

Not only does Matthew repeatedly treat Jesus as the embodiment of the nation, but the sequence of Matthew's narrative is following the order of Old Testament history quite exactly. A few pericopes, to be sure, have are more loosely connected to this typological sequence (e.g., John's ministry, 3:1-13), but all the sections that are evidently typological are arranged in the same order they are found in the Old Testament. Matthew

³¹ This point is emphasized by W. F. Albright, *Matthew: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Anchor Bible #26; New York: Doubleday, 1971), p. 18. Unfortunately, Albright sets this Israel typology in opposition to a "new Moses" typology, which is wholly unnecessary since Moses is the representative Israel.

³² In some respects, the Mosaic typology in fact works more smoothly for the whole gospel if we understand Matthew 2 not as a reference to the exodus but as a reference to Joseph's move to Egypt or as a typological retelling of Moses' escape to Midian. Judea is the Egypt of Matthew 2, and Jesus withdraws to the "Midian" of Galilee for much of the book, until he returns to "Egypt" in chapter 21, to

1-7 is the most obviously typological section of his gospel, and if in this section Matthew follows a Jesus-as-Israel typology that is, in its general outlines, chronologically arranged, it is plausible that he would continue that typology straight through.

My second piece of *prima facie* evidence is Matthew 2:15. The precise import of Matthew's use of Hosea is debated and difficult to establish. Whatever the precise nuances, however, one thing is evident: Matthew identifies the "Son" of Hosea 11:1 with Jesus, and Hosea 11:1 is talking about Israel. Were we looking for prooftexts, here it is: As R. T. France says, "Matthew's quotation . . . depends for its validity on the recognition of Jesus as the true Israel," and notes that Matthew 4 also equates Jesus and Israel through the use of the title "Son."³³ I am far from convinced by Kingsbury's argument that Matthew presents a predominantly "Son of God" Christology, but to the extent that he does, 2:15 indicates that a "Jesus as Israel" Christology is an integral part of any "Sonship" christology.

In addition to the evidence to be culled from the early chapters of Matthew, the overall arc of Matthew's plot provides a final piece of *prima facie* evidence. Matthew's opening line, we have seen, is quoted directly from the early chapters of Genesis, and Matthew 1 is largely occupied with a numerologically shaped genealogy for Joseph. Matthew clearly begins with echoes of Genesis. At the conclusion of His gospel, Jesus, now endowed with all authority in heaven and earth, commissions His disciples to "Go" to the Gentiles. According to the Massoretic organization, the Hebrew Bible ends with a similar commission, the decree of Cyrus. Cyrus, having received "all the kingdoms of the

offer Himself as the Passover Lamb. From this perspective, the "exodus" does not begin until Jesus sends His disciples out of Egypt following His great Passover sacrifice.

³³ R. T. France, *Matthew* (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries; Leicester: InterVarsity, 1985), p. 85.

earth” from Yahweh, God of heaven, commissions Israel to “go up” (αναβητω) to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple (2 Chr 36:23). In both Matthew 28:18-20 and 2 Chronicles 36:23, we have the following sequence:

Statement regarding universal authority

Statement regarding the source of authority

Commission to “go”

Jesus is greater than Cyrus, having received authority in *heaven* as well as earth from His Father, and in the light of that authority he commissions His disciples to “go” (πορευθεντες). Matthew’s gospel begins like Genesis and ends like Chronicles, and thus encompasses the entirety of the Hebrew canon.³⁴

III.

Examination of the discourses themselves provides further evidence of this structure. The connections between Jesus’ sermon on the mount and the revelation at Sinai are widely recognized, and need not be developed here. As I have suggested above, the second discourse (Matt 10) begins with a complex of allusions to the twelve spies of Number 13 and the commissioning of Joshua as Moses’ successor. Jesus’ observation that Israel is “distressed and downcast like sheep without a shepherd” (Matt 9:36), a phrase that

³⁴ This hints at a second analogy between Matthew and Chronicles: Chronicles begins with a genealogy and ends with a commission, and Matthew does the same. On Cyrus as a type of the Messiah, see Isa. 44:28, where Cyrus is pictured as a new Mosaic shepherd who will lead Israel through a dried-up sea; and 45:1, where Cyrus is explicitly described as the “anointed” of Yahweh who “subdues nations before him” and causes kings to shit in their britches. In response to lecture on this topic, James Jordan suggested caution about this canonical argument, pointing out that the order of the Old Testament canon is far from secure and that Ezra and Nehemiah might have been part of an original “Greater Chronicles.”

occurs near the end of Numbers (27:18), motivates the commissioning, and this suggests a situational analogy between the discourse of Matthew 10 and Moses' sermons to Israel in Deuteronomy: Like Moses, Jesus instructs the heads of a new Israel about their duties when they enter the land.

Jesus treats the mission of the Twelve as a quasi-military operation. The apostles are "sheep in the midst of wolves" (10:16), and should expect to face persecution and rejection (10:17, 23). Their ministry will create turmoil among their hearers, turning brother against brother and children against parents (10:21, 35-36). To fulfill their mission, the Twelve need to act with courage, trusting their Father and fearing God rather than man (10:28-29). Jesus announces that he has come to bring a "sword" rather than peace (10:34), and demands a total commitment from His disciples, including a willingness to die for His sake (10:37-39). In exhorting His apostles "Do not fear," Jesus is repeating the words of Moses and Joshua to Israel before the conquest (Num 14:9; 21:34; Deut 1:21; 3:2, 22; 31:8; Josh 8:1; 10:8, 25). The discourse anticipates that some will receive the Twelve, and promises that those who do will, like Rahab, receive a reward (10:40-42). Of course, this conquest is quite different from the original conquest. It is a conquest of liberation and life-giving – the sick healed, dead raised, lepers cleansed, demons conquered (10:8). If this is *berem* warfare, it is directed not against Canaanites, but against Satan and His demons. Like Moses, Jesus instructs and sends the Twelve into the land but does not accompany them (Matt 11:1).

The third discourse has multiple links to the wisdom literature and to Solomon in particular. Jesus begins to speak in "parables," a word first used in 13:3, and used twelve

times in the chapter.³⁵ The LXX employs *παραβολη* to translate the Hebrew *mashal*, a wisdom term that can be used both of pithy two-line proverbs and extended allegorical narratives.³⁶ In this chapter above all Jesus employs a wisdom “genre” associated with Solomon. Immediately after Jesus finishes his parabolic teaching, he goes to His home country to teach, and the people are astonished at His “wisdom” (13:54). Apart from this reference, “wisdom” is used only in 11:19 and 12:42, the latter a reference to the wisdom of Solomon that so impressed the queen of Sheba. Not only the form but the sapiential content of Jesus’ teaching in Matthew 13 is associated with Solomon. Finally, Jesus’ parables reveal, for those with ears to hear, the mysteries of the “kingdom of heaven” (13:11), and many of the parables are metaphors of the kingdom (13:24, 31, 33, 44, 45, 47). Though the terminology of the kingdom is widely distributed throughout the gospel, chapter 13 most thoroughly describes the dynamics, future, and demands of the kingdom of heaven.³⁷

Skipping Matthew 18 for the moment, we turn to the fifth discourse, which includes both Jesus’ polemic against the scribes and Pharisees and His eschatological discourse concerning the temple and Jerusalem (Matt 23-25). Jesus acts as a prophet in the tradition of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, so that this discourse corresponds to the prophetic works that emerged latter days of the kingdom of Judah. On the face of things, Jesus, like Jeremiah, engages in verbal combat with the priests and leaders of His time, and gives an

³⁵ The only other uses of the word are in Matthew 15:15; 21:33, 45; 22:1; 24:32. Chapter 13 is, at least in terms of the distribution of the term, *the* chapter of parables.

³⁶ See Hauck, “παραβολη,” in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (10 vols.; Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, eds.; Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), vol. 5, pp. 747-751.

³⁷ Goulder (*Midrash and Lection*, p. 364, 388) links Matthew 13 with the harvest feast of tabernacles, which was the setting for the temple dedication in 1 Kings 8.

extended prophecy concerning the destruction of the temple by the Romans.³⁸

Rhetorically, Jesus' style is very similar to the style of Old Testament prophets. Chapter 23 contains Jesus' most extended and intense condemnation of scribes, Pharisees, and hypocrites, in which He declares eight woes that contrast to the eight Beatitudes of chapter 5. No setting is explicit, but the narrative indicates that this speech takes place in the temple: Jesus arrives in the temple in 21:23, tells parables and engages in debate, but never changes location until the beginning of chapter 24. The temple setting establishes a strong link to the temple sermons of Jeremiah 7, 26. His condemnation of the scribes and Pharisees as "hypocrites" who maintain ceremonial purity while indulging injustice and sin is reminiscent of Jeremiah's "den of robbers" condemnation (Jer 7:11), which Jesus quotes upon His arrival in Jerusalem (21:13). Like the "weeping prophet," Jesus laments the rebellion of the city he condemns (23:37-38), and warns Jerusalem she will be left to desolation (23:38; cf. Jer 22:5). 24:1 records Jesus' final departure from the temple, reminiscent of the departure of the glory of Yahweh from the temple in Ezekiel 8-11.

From this sketch, we discover the following sequence:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
Sermon on Mount, 5-7	Sinai Revelation
Mission of Twelve, 10	Deuteronomy: Preparation for conquest
Parables of Kingdom, 13	Wisdom of Solomon
Eschatological doom, 23-25	End of Judah; Babylonian exile

³⁸ I am convinced that Matthew 24 is about the temple's destruction and not about the end of the space-time universe. For defense, see Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (London: SCM, 1996), pp. 339-

If this scheme works, then the fourth discourse, chapter 18 should have some relation to the divided kingdom period of Israel's history. Though I give a fuller defense of this thesis in the next section, a few hints can be given here. Chapter 18 is often describes as the “community rule” for Jesus' disciples, in which He emphasizes that His disciples will be characterized by childlike humility and faith (18:1-3), and warns the community to avoid causing little ones to stumble (18:5-14). Verses 15-20 sketch out the procedures for dealing with sin among the brothers, and Jesus' final parable describes the spirit of forgiveness that must characterize the church (18:21-35).

The discourse assumes that Jesus' disciples will function as a community separated from Israel as a whole. **ἐκκλησία** is virtually unique to this chapter. In 16:18, the word refers to Jesus' own temple-community that He intends to build on the rock of Peter, and the word has the same connotation in 18:17. Used in the LXX to refer to the “assembly” of Israel (cf. Deut 4:10), Jesus uses it to refer to the “new Israel” of His disciples, in contrast to the “Gentiles” outside. 18:17 goes beyond 16:18, however, in indicating that the new **ἐκκλησία** will have its own structures of authority to enforce the community's standards. In short, Jesus is forming an Israel in the midst of Israel, just as Elijah and Elisha had done during the Omride dynasty.³⁹

All this may seem a thin reed on which to lean a large theory, but it is a small beginning. Not despising the day of small beginnings, I turn to a more elaborate defense of the thesis, focusing on the narrative of Matthew's gospel to show that his thematic and plot development en flesh the skeleton of the discourses.

368, and Jordan, *The End of the World*.

IV.

As noted, the Mosaic character of the early chapters of Matthew are evident not only in the mountaintop setting of Matthew 5-7 but in the narrative that precedes the Sermon. If Matthew's typology works out his typology consistently, then we should expect that the narrative between the Sermon and the Mission Discourse would also prepare for a Deuteronomic conquest speech, and the narratives that intervene between the other discourses would also fit into the typological sequence. As will become clear in the discussion below, some of these narrative sequences more evident than others, and there are more "gaps" in subsequent chapters than in chapters 1-4. Yet, there is sufficient evidence, in my judgment, to conclude that Matthew continues his typological program throughout the book.

In the following pages, I examine the narrative sections between the discourses in turn: Matthew 8-9, 11-12, 14-17, 19-22, and then make a few suggestions about chapters 26-28.

A. Matthew 8-9.

In discussing the sequence of ten miracles in these chapters, Bacon cites the *Pirqe Aboth*, which claims that "Ten miracles were wrought for our fathers in Egypt, and ten by the sea. . . . Ten miracles were wrought in the Sanctuary." On this basis, it has been suggested that Jesus performs ten mighty works in imitation of Moses in Egypt and at the Red Sea. Bacon concludes that Matthew did not intend the parallel, because he judges the ninth and tenth miracles (9:27-34) as an "afterthought" because they come after the

³⁹ For more on the typological dimensions of the Elijah-Elisha narratives, see my *1-2 Kings* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006).

“proper climax” of resurrection (9:24-26).⁴⁰ Allison likewise argues that a Mosaic typology is doubtful in this section; there are only nine miracle stories, since 9:18-26 combines two healings in one narrative. He admits that the plagues, like the miracles of Jesus, are grouped into three sets of three, but after analyzing the plague narratives he finds the connections with Matthew’s gospel fairly weak.⁴¹

Despite Bacon’s and Allison’s reservations, I think Matthew intended to present ten miraculous signs in chapters 8-9. Though the stories of the official’s daughter and the woman with an issue of blood are intercalated, they are distinct miracles, unlike the healing of the two blind men (9:27-31). Whether the series is to be understood as antitypical to the plagues is another question. There is, after all, another sequence of ten in the Pentateuch, the “ten” rebellions of Israel in the wilderness (Num 14:22). That there are ten rebellions as well as ten plagues is significant: It shows that Israel does not remain faithful to the covenant, which is the only way they can avoid suffering the plagues of Egypt (Deut 28). Unlike the ten plagues, many of the ten rebellions take place after Moses receives the law on Sinai, just as the ten miracles of Jesus take place after the Sermon on the Mount. The parallel can be made more precise. In the Pentateuchal narrative, Israel remained at Sinai from Exodus 19 through Leviticus, and into the early chapters of Numbers. Numbers 10:11 records: “Now it came about in the second year, in the second month, on the twentieth day of the month, that the cloud was lifted from over the tabernacle of the testimony; and the sons of Israel set out on their journeys from the wilderness of Sinai.” This is the first time Israel follows the pillar of cloud from Sinai into

⁴⁰Bacon, *Studies*, p. 188. Against Bacon, it might be argued that the sequence following the resurrection of the official’s daughter actually matches the end of Matthew’s gospel quite neatly: After Jesus resurrection, His disciples come to faith (healed blindness) and go out to preach (healed dumbness).

⁴¹*New Moses*, pp. 207-213.

the wilderness, and, similarly, in Matthew 8:1 Jesus comes down from the mountain with “great multitudes” following Him. Here he is not only Moses, but Yahweh’s pillar that leads Israel during their wilderness sojourn. From this perspective, Matthew 5-7 recapitulates not only the “civil” and “moral” legislation of Exodus 20-24, but the “ceremonial” legislation of Exodus 25-20, Leviticus, and Numbers 1-10. Appropriately, Jesus instructs His disciples not only about how to live but how to worship (6:1-18). Some of the “ten rebellions” occur before Israel ever got to Sinai, but Matthew alters the sequence to record ten miracles after Jesus’ Sinai.

Other details of the narrative support these suggestions. Jesus’ first miracle after descending the mountain was to heal a leper (8:1-4), and one of the first rebellions after Sinai was led by Miriam, who was made a leper – and healed! (Num 12:1-15).⁴² The ten rebellions culminate with Israel’s refusal to enter to conquer the land, as Matthew’s ten miracles lead into Jesus’ commission to the Twelve to “spy out” and heal Israel. Jesus’ reference to “sheep without a shepherd” echoes, as we have seen, Numbers 27:18, the end of the period of Israel’s wandering. Between the judgment and healing of Miriam and the commission of Joshua, Moses faces opposition from Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Num 16-17), and Jesus faces mounting hostility from the Pharisees and scribes (climaxing in 9:34).

⁴² See Bacon, *Studies*, pp. 187-189. Leprosy is strongly associated with the Pentateuch. Moses is the first man in the Bible to have a kind of leprosy (Exod 4:6), but Moses’ leprosy is for demonstration purposes only. Miriam is the first to suffer actual leprosy (Num. 12). Leviticus 13-14 give detailed attention to the diagnosis and cleansing of leprosy (cf. Deut24:8) and lepers are excluded from the camp of Israel (Num. 5). After the Pentateuch, however, there is not another leper in the Hebrew Bible until Naaman (2 Kgs. 5; cf. the curse in 2 Sam. 3:29). In short, leprosy is a concern in the law, but rarely mentioned elsewhere in the Hebrew Bible. Matthew 8:1-4 is the only account of the healing of an individual leper in the entire gospel (cf. 10:8; 11:5; 26:6). That Jesus begins His ministry of healing with the cleansing of a leper suggests that the typological background is Pentateuchal.

Both historically and literarily, the function of Jesus' miracles corresponds to the logic of the "ten rebellions" in the wilderness. Yahweh's judgments on Egypt introduced Pharaoh to the power of Yahweh (cf. Exod 5:2), and the judgments on Israel were intended to manifest Yahweh's character to His own people. Within Israel many lust to return to slavery, so that Israel in the wilderness is all too often a little outpost of Egypt, complete with golden calves. Likewise, Jesus performs ten signs that demonstrate the character of the God of Israel and manifest the nature of His kingdom, but these signs are performed before an uncomprehending Egypt-Israel that fails to recognize Jesus or His Father. Matthew persists in identifying Israel with Egypt (cf. 2:1-15), but in this he is drawing on an Old Testament parallel that manifests this same identity.

By what logic does a series of ten rebellions find a typological antitype in a series of ten miracles, mostly healings? There are three lines of response. First, even in Numbers, the rebellions are often accompanied by miraculous signs, provisions, and even healings. Soon after the exodus, Israel grumbles about the lack of food in the wilderness, and Yahweh gives bread and meat from heaven (Exod 16:1-21). Israel quarrels with Moses at Rephidim and Yahweh provides water from the rock (Exod 17:1-7). Miriam is stricken with leprosy when she and Aaron question Moses' leadership, but she is rapidly healed (Num 12:1-16). Jesus' miracles thus highlight the mercy Yahweh showed to Israel in the face of repeated rebellion.

Second, Matthew does not in any case present Jesus as a "straight-line" fulfillment of Old Testament law and prophets. He teaches the counterintuitive message that one should love enemies and accept a second blow on the cheek. In both life and teaching His fulfillment brings the delight of surprise. Israel, not Egypt, is ruled by the child-killer (Matt 2), Jesus' baptismal exodus is a departure from *Israel* (Matt 3), and Jesus, the true Israel,

does not fall to the temptations of Satan in the wilderness but resists and triumphs. It is consistent with Matthew's overall program (and Jesus' too), for Jesus to bring healings rather than judgments on the Israel that is wandering like sheep without a shepherd.

Finally, and most decisively, Matthew evidently read the wilderness period through the lens of Isaiah. The one fulfillment formula in these chapters (8:17) introduces a quotation from Isaiah 53:17, an indication that Matthew sees Jesus' healing ministry as bringing the final restoration from exile promised in Isaiah. Later (11:4-5), in response to John's inquiry, Jesus Himself cites a related passage from Isaiah (35:5-6) to show that He fulfills the prophet's expectations concerning the healing of blind, lame, lepers, and deaf. Significantly, Isaiah 35 begins with a declaration concerning the desert: "The wilderness and the desert will be glad" (v. 1). The new wilderness experience of Israel will not be one of judgment and destruction but of healing and restoration. As in Israel's first passage from Egypt, but more, "waters will break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the Arabah. And the scorched land will become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water" (vv. 6-7; cf. Exod 17:1-7). Isaiah prophesied that the wilderness of Israel would become fruitful; Matthew writes of the fulfillment of Isaiah's hopes.

In sum, Matthew's typological recapitulation in these chapters can be charted this way:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
8:1: leave mountain with crowds	Numbers 10:11: Israel leaves Sinai, following cloud
8:2-4: heal a leper (healings)	Numbers 12:1-16: Miriam cleansed of leprosy Wilderness with overlay of Isaiah 35)
10 miracles	Numbers 14:22: 10 rebellions

9:34: opposition from Pharisees	Num 16: opposition from Korah, Dathan, Abiram
9:36: sheep without shepherd	Numbers 27:27: “sheep without shepherd”
10:1f: authority to apostles	Numbers 27:18-24: glory to Joshua
(12 sent into land	Double overlay: 12 spies of Numbers 13-14)
ch. 10: discourse on mission	Deuteronomy: instructions for conquest

B. Matthew 11-12.

When Matthew 11 opens, we are still in the world of Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua. Expanding on his explanation to John’s disciples, Jesus condemns, for the first time in the gospel, “this generation” of Israel (11:16). It is possible that He is comparing His contemporaries to the Exodus generation, for that generation above all saw the work of God and failed to respond faithfully. Jesus’ quotation from Malachi 3:1 in 11:10 confirms this suggestion. Behind Malachi’s reference to the “Messenger” (αγγελος) who will “prepare your way” is Yahweh’s promise of an Angel to lead Israel to the land (Exod 33:2).⁴³ John came as a messenger to lead Israel from exile, but Israel refused to mourn when John played his dirge. Now Jesus comes to offer rest, but they will not dance to His piping.

If the sequence continues, Matthew 11-12 should move forward from the wilderness into the conquest and monarchy period of Israel’s history, preparing for the Solomonic “wisdom” discourse in chapter 13. The most striking thing about these chapters is the emphasis on rest and Sabbath.⁴⁴ Jesus offers to give rest to those who

⁴³ See the superb discussion of Mark’s use of Malachi 3:1 in Rikki Watts, *Isaiah’s New Exodus in Mark* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997), pp. 53-90.

⁴⁴ Boerman, (“Chiastic Structure,” pp. 316, 320) suggests that the Sabbath dispute in 12:1-8 forms the chiastic center of chapters 11-12, pointing to Jesus’ authority over the Sabbath as the main theme of the

come to Him (11:25-30), and the rest theme continues into the following chapter, where Jesus engages in conflicts with the Pharisees that center on the question of the Sabbath (12:1, 10). Of the ten uses of the word “Sabbath” in Matthew, eight are in chapter 12.⁴⁵ While Jesus invokes a Mosaic/exodus theme,⁴⁶ in that Moses was (as a new Noah) the rest-giver to oppressed Israel, rest is also prominent in the narrative of the conquest of Canaan and the stories of David. Because of Israel’s rebellions, Moses never rested in the land and never gave the people rest in the land; “that generation” never entered rest (cf. Psalm 95). Rest from enemies is promised to Israel (Deut 12:10) and achieved by Joshua (Josh 11:23; 14:15). The erection of the sanctuary in the land was to be the sign of rest (Deut 12), and in Joshua the construction of the sanctuary at Shiloh is the structural center of the second half of the book (Josh 18:1-7).⁴⁷ Now that the “ten rebellions” of Israel have been reversed, Jesus can offer the genuine rest dimly achieved by His namesake, Joshua. After the missionary discourse (=Deuteronomy conquest discourse) of Matthew 10 Jesus offers the gift of rest.

Israel comes to final rest in the land only after the conquests of David during the reign of Solomon. Joshua’s rest was short-lived, soon collapsing into the chaos of the period of the judges, but David was able to achieve “rest on every side from all his enemies” (2 Sam 7:1, 11), a rest preserved for his son Solomon (1 Kgs 5:4). Appropriately, Solomon marks the achievement of rest by building a temple, as Moses had prophesied

section.

⁴⁵Both numerical indications are significant. The “Ten Words” of Exodus have been repeated as ten Sabbaths in Matthew’s account, and the number eight is frequently associated in the Old Testament with moments of new birth. In place of the week-ending Sabbath of the Old Covenant, Jesus brings a new beginning, the first day of a new week.

⁴⁶Allison, *New Moses*, pp. 218-233. In support of this, cf. the crucial position of the Sabbath commands in Exodus 31:12-17; 35:1-3.

⁴⁷For the structural analysis, see David Dorsey, *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament: Genesis to Malachi* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), p. 94.

(Deut 12). Jesus offers rest, then, not merely as new Moses and new Joshua, but more importantly as David and as the Son of David, the greater Solomon.⁴⁸ The Davidic typology becomes explicit in the initial Sabbath debate, in which the Pharisees attack Jesus' disciples for picking grain on the Sabbath, an activity that the Pharisees classify as a form of reaping or harvesting. Jesus responds by appealing to the example of David and his companions, who ate consecrated shewbread from the sanctuary at Nob (12:1-8; cf. 1 Sam 21). As N. T. Wright has suggested, this response assigns roles to each of the characters in the conflict: The Pharisees are in the position of persecuting Saul or spying Doeg the Edomite; the disciples are the companions of David; Jesus is David Himself.⁴⁹ During this encounter, Jesus quotes Hosea 6:6: "I desire compassion, and not sacrifice." Behind Hosea is the prophet Samuel, who cut through Saul's pious – we might even say, Pharisaical – excuses with "obedience is better than sacrifice" (1 Samuel 15:22-23).⁵⁰ After Saul slaughters the priests at Nob, David, knowing Saul will kill him, flees to Philistia until Saul dies (1 Sam 26-31). Following David, Jesus, knowing the Pharisees are plotting

⁴⁸ Jesus offers rest using the image of an easy "yoke" and a light "load." The "yoke" image is sometimes used in the Bible to describe submission to the Torah (cf. Acts 15:10), and thus Jesus might be presenting Himself as a better Moses who delivers His disciples from the Egyptian hardships imposed by the Pharisees and scribes. Yet, the yoke image is also used to describe the rule of Yahweh or of a king (Jer 5:5, where Yahweh is the king; 27:1-22, where Israel is to bear Nebuchadnezzar's yoke). This is the force of the image in 1 Kings 12, where the word is used eight times to describe the "heavy yoke" of Solomon, who had become Pharaoh-like in his oppression of Israel (1 Kgs. 12:4, 9-11, 14). Not only does this text share the image of "yoke" with Matthew 11, but both texts oppose "light" and "heavy" burdens and both speaks in terms of a son's relation to a father (Jesus-the Father, Rehoboam-father Solomon). Jesus thus describes His own work in direct opposition to the description of Solomon in 1 Kings 12. He presents Himself as a better Solomon, as He has shown Himself to be a better Moses and a better Israel. He is no Rehoboam come to whip Israel with scorpions; nor is He a Solomon who burdens His people with a heavy yoke nor load them down under heavy burdens, as the original Solomon did. He is a true king who offers genuine rest. The association of 11:25-30 with David and Solomon becomes even stronger if we accept Celia Deutsch's suggestion that the pericope is shaped by a "Wisdom Christology" (*Hidden Wisdom and the Easy Yoke: Wisdom, Torah and Discipleship in Matthew 11.25-30* [JSNT Supplement #18; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1987], p. 142).

⁴⁹ Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God*, pp. 393-394.

⁵⁰ Hosea's and Jesus' gloss of Samuel is significant, for both translate "obedience" as "compassion."

murder, “withdraws” after the encounter with the Pharisees (Matt 12:14-15).⁵¹ Like David, Jesus is approved by the crowds, but opposed by the leaders of Israel (cf. 1 Sam 17-18).⁵² Jesus’ reference to rescuing sheep in the second Sabbath dispute (12:11) may be inspired by the earlier reference to David, drawn from the fold to shepherd Israel.⁵³

In the ensuing debates with the Pharisees, Jesus twice mentions the “kingdom” in contexts of violent conflict. His claim that “the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force” has been interpreted in a variety of ways, but G. R. Beasley-Murray’s argument that it refers to the violent progression of the gospel and the violent opposition of the scribes and Pharisees has much to commend it.⁵⁴ The conflict of kingdoms comes up again when the Jewish leaders accuse Jesus of exorcising demons by the power of Satan. That Jesus casts out demons by the Spirit is a sign that the kingdom has come, and Jesus as the greater David is conquering (12:22-28), as the multitudes ask whether His signs show He is “the Son of David” (12:23).⁵⁵ There is perhaps a reference to the Spirit-filled David’s musical triumph over Saul’s “evil spirit” in Jesus’ claim to cast out demons by the Spirit (12:28; cf. 1 Sam 16:13-23). In his climactic condemnation, Jesus explicitly mentions Solomon in His condemnation of the cities who rejected Him and His

⁵¹ Jesus’ kingship is also evident in His “Solomonic” judgment that David’s violation of the rules governing showbread was licit. Kingship means making judgments in cases without precedent (cf. 1 Kgs. 3:16-28). As Carl Schmitt put it, sovereignty is the authority to rule on exceptions.

⁵² Lohr (“Oral Techniques,” p. 411) notes the intensifying reaction to Jesus throughout these chapters, and claims that the rejection of Jesus is the chief theme of the section.

⁵³ Goulder, *Midrash and Lection*, pp. 328-329.

⁵⁴ *Jesus and the Kingdom of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), pp. 91-96. It is possible that Matthew is showing a progression in the arrival of the kingdom. Early on, John and Jesus warn that the kingdom is “near” (3:2; 4:17, both using ἤγγικεν). In 12:28, in what I am suggesting is the “kingdom” section of the gospel, Jesus speaks of the kingdom as already arrived (εφθασεν).

⁵⁵ On Jesus’ miracles as signs of Davidic kingship, see especially Lidija Novakovic, *Messiah, the Healer of the Sick: A Study of Jesus as Son of David in the Gospel of Matthew* (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 2. Reihe, #170; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003). Novakovic points out that the *Testament of Solomon* describes Solomon as an exorcist (pp. 101ff.).

ministry, and claims superiority to Israel's most accomplished king: "something greater than Solomon is here" (12:42).

Again, these parallels can be charted as follows:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
11:1-19: "this generation"	Num 13-14: Exodus generation fails to enter rest
11:25-30: Jesus offers rest	Joshua 11:23: Joshua achieves rest
12:1-8: Jesus as David	1 Samuel 21: David and showbread
12:7: compassion, not sacrifice	1 Samuel 15:22-23: obedience not sacrifice
(Jesus persecuted by leaders	David persecuted by Saul)
12:14: Pharisees plot murder	1 Samuel 27:1: Saul plots to kill David
12:15: Jesus withdraws	1 Samuel 27:2: David withdraws to Philistia
12:23: "Son of David"	David as warrior
12:27-28: exorcisms by Spirit	1 Samuel 16: David calms Saul because of Spirit
12:34: mouth speaks from heart	1 Samuel 24:13: wickedness comes from wicked
12:42: Greater than Solomon	1 Kings 3-4: Solomon's wisdom
ch 13: Parables of kingdom	1 Kings 4:32: "Parables" of Solomon

C. Matthew 14-17.

As soon as Jesus finishes His parables of the kingdom, we read the story of John's martyrdom at the hands of Herod. Jesus has already been separating from Israel, but this is the first time we see a direct contrast of Herod's and Jesus' rule. Earlier in the gospel, Herod the Great functioned as a Pharaoh-like figure, but here Herod Antipas is clearly an Ahab. He attacks and kills a prophet, as Ahab permitted the murder of prophets and

Naboth (1 Kings 21) and the unsuccessful attempt to kill Elijah (Matt 14:1-12; 1 Kgs 18:4; 19:1-2). Like Ahab, Herod is egged on to attack the prophet by his bloodthirsty wife (Matt 14:6-8; 1 Kgs 18:4; 19:1-2). Like Ahab, Herod is ambivalent, personally reluctant to kill the prophet but too weak to stand up to his wife (Matt 14:9; cf. 1 Kgs 21).

Contrasting to Herod's kingdom is the kingdom that Jesus has described in the parables and which He enacts in the feeding of the five thousand. While Herod serves up prophet's head as the last course of his banquet, Jesus feeds five thousand men, along with women and children, with fives loaves and two fish. That the community gathering around Jesus is the core of a new "Israel" is also evident in the Passover-Exodus sequence: Jesus serves a meal to the multitude (14:13-21), and then crosses the sea at night, walking on the water and joining His disciples in the boat (14:22-33), a sequence repeated a chapter later (15:32-39). This is a "Mosaic" sequence, but in the context of Herod's murder of John, it is an indication that Jesus is the anti-Herod, head of the kingdom of the "true Israel."

Though Jesus is a true Shepherd and king in contrast to Herod, these chapters highlight especially Jesus' role as prophet, specifically as what has come to be called a "leadership prophet," forming a faithful community within a faithless Israel. John has been an Elijah figure from the beginning of the gospel, ministering in the wilderness and adopting Elijah's sartorial sense (3:4). He is again Elijah in the episode with Herod, and Jesus explicitly describes him as Elijah after the transfiguration (17:9-13; cf. 11:14). Elijah appears in his own person at the transfiguration (17:1-8), and of the nine uses of the name Elijah in Matthew, six are in chapters 16-17 (16:14; 17:3-4, 10-12). This cluster of references to Elijah places us in a divided kingdom context, canonically near the center of

the book of 1-2 Kings. In one incident, Jesus Himself is an “Elijah-like” figure.⁵⁶ When Yahweh sends Elijah from the land, He goes to the region of Sidon, where he assists a widow who has little food and a son to feed, providing food and raising her son from the dead (1 Kgs 17:9-24). Similarly, when Jesus goes into the “district of Tyre and Sidon,” a Canaanite woman comes seeking help for her possessed daughter. Jesus rebukes her by saying that the bread He brings is for the “children,” but she responds by expressing her hope to be among the dogs under the table who receive scraps (15:26-27). Marveling at her persistent faith, Jesus heals her daughter with a word (15:28).

Predominantly John, not Jesus, is Elijah, and if John the forerunner is Elijah, then Jesus, his successor, is another Elisha. Even in the incident with the Canaanite woman, Jesus is Elisha. Elisha too was faced with a woman seeking help for a child, a woman who threw herself at Elisha’s feet in the way that the Canaanite woman prostrates herself before Jesus (Matt 15:25; cf. 2 Kgs 4:27). Elisha’s ministry revolves around the gift of food, as he heals Jericho’s waters (2 Kgs 2:19-22), provides food for the sons of the prophets (2 Kgs 4:38-41), multiplies loaves to feed a multitude (2 Kgs 4:42-44), gives bread to Aramean soldiers (2 Kgs 6:20-23), and prophesies an end to the famine during the siege of Samaria (2 Kgs 7:1, 18-20). Jesus’ ministry is characterized by eating and drinking throughout Matthew (cf. 11:19), but food takes on prominence in chapters 14-16. Jesus feeds five thousand (14:13-21) and shortly after feeds another four thousand (15:32-39).⁵⁷ His dispute with the Pharisees centers not on Sabbatical practices but on cleansing rites before meals (15:1-2). When He is not serving a meal, He is using bread as an image, either of the blessings He brings to the children of Israel (15:26), or the teaching of the Pharisees and

⁵⁶ Buchanan, *Gospel of Matthew*, p. 669.

⁵⁷ Buchanan, *Gospel of Matthew*, 641, recognizes the Elisha typology.

Sadducees (16:5-12). Of the twenty-one uses of *αρτοσ*, fifteen are in chapters 14-16 (14:17, 19 [2x]; 15:2, 26, 33-36; 16:5, 7-12). Like Elisha, Jesus performs bizarre miracles – not only multiplying loaves for a multitude but walking on the water and causing Peter to defy gravity (cf. 2 Kings 6:1-7) and sending him to find a coin in the mouth of a fish (17:24-27).

Elisha's ministry involves the formation of a community, known as the "sons of the prophets," an alternative Israel within the idolatrous Israel of Ahab and Jezebel. Elisha ministers life within a culture of death, a ministry of life that divides Israel in two. While Elijah was famously a solo prophet, Elisha is constantly surrounded by "disciples."⁵⁸ So also, Jesus organizes a community of disciples and followers around meals, offering them life, within an Israel that is ruled by a murderous son of a murderer.⁵⁹

Elisha has his Gehazi, the bumbling sidekick who gets in the way, cannot manage the miracles of the master, and misconstrues the master's instructions. Gehazi pushes the Shunammite aside when she comes to Elisha for help (2 Kgs 4:27) and is unable to help the Shunammite's son (2 Kgs 4:31). He greedily takes Naaman's silver and clothes, and as a bonus also receives the Gentile general's leprosy (2 Kgs 5:20-25). He is likely the man of little faith who cannot see the fiery chariots around Elisha and who fears the Aramean

⁵⁸ For more on Elisha, see my *1-2 Kings* (Brazos Press, 2006).

⁵⁹ Cf. P. F. Ellis's comment that Matthew's gospel divides at 13:35, from which point Jesus turns His attention more exclusively to the Twelve: "Up to 13.35 Jesus speaks to all the Jews. After 13.35, as in Mk. 8:27-46, Jesus bestows the major part of his attention upon the disciples, who, in contrast to the Jews, listen and understand him. Thus, in ch. 13, Jesus turns from the pseudo-Israel which will not accept him (cf. chs. 11-12) to the Church, the true Israel, which believes in him" (*Matthew: His Mind and His Message* [Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1974], p. 13, quoted in Bauer, *Structure*, p. 37). Allison ("Structure, Biographical Impulse, and the *Imitatio Christi*, p. 140) makes a similar point: "after so many within corporate Israel have, at least for the time being, forfeited their expected role in salvation-history, an alternative institution is needed. So Jesus establishes his church. That the *ecclesia* is indeed the most important subject of this section appears not only from the ever-increasing focus upon the disciples as opposed to the crowds but also from Peter's being the rock upon which the church is built, because it is precisely in this section that Peter comes to the fore." He cites 14:28-33; 15:15; 16:13-20; 17:24-27 as evidence.

soldiers as a result (2 Kgs 6:8-17). Yet, he remains enamored of Elisha, and boasts of his master's exploits before the king (2 Kgs 8:1-6).

In many respects the disciples resemble Gehazi. When the Canaanite woman seeks help from Jesus, they push the woman away (15:23). Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, but immediately protests, Satanically, when Jesus begins speaking of His death (Matt 16:13-28). When Jesus comes down from the mount of Transfiguration, he finds disciples at the foot of the mountain ineffectually attempting to cast out a demon (17:14-21), intriguingly the last reference to exorcism in the gospel. Peter, the spokesman of this Keystone Kop band of disciples, becomes prominent only in chapter 14, where his effort to walk on water nearly ends fatally (14:22-33). Prior to that incident, Peter is never singled out for special attention, and this is also the only time in the gospel any individual is described as a man "of little faith" (14:31; cf. 6:30; 8:26). In this "Elisha" sequence, Peter becomes "chief Gehazi."

The two most prominent incidents in this section of Matthew are Peter's confession (16:13-20) and Jesus' transfiguration (17:1-13). The latter is explicitly linked with the Elijah-Elisha narratives by the presence of Elijah, but deeper connections suggest themselves. Peter confesses Jesus as the "anointed One" (Χριστος), and among the prophets Elisha alone is said to be "anointed" (1 Kgs 19:16). Elisha, further, appoints Jehu and Hazael to take vengeance against the house of Ahab (2 Kgs 8:7-15; 9:1-10), and Jehu is the only king of the Northern kingdom to be anointed (2 Kgs 9:6). In the next section, we will see that Jesus the Christ is a new "Jehu," the madman riding into the city with zeal for the honor of God. The transfiguration might be connected with Elijah's

ascension in a whirlwind (2 Kgs 2), or with the glory of angels that surround Elisha (2 Kgs 6:15-17). Like Elisha, Jesus tells His disciples to “fear not” (Matt 17:12; 2 Kgs 6:16).

Though the order of events in Matthew does not match the order in the Elijah-Elisha narratives and though there are Elijah references outside this section, there is a cluster of Elijah/Elisha connections, sufficient to show that Matthew is continuing to show how Jesus recapitulates all Israel’s history:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
14:1-12: Herod kills John	1 Kings 19: Jezebel tries to kill Elijah; 1 Kgs 21: Naboth
John’s death (Herod v. Jesus)	2 Kings 2: Elijah’s departure Divided kingdom; Omrides v. prophets)
14:13-21: Jesus multiplies loaves	2 Kings 4:42-44 Elisha multiplies loaves
14:22-33: Jesus rescues Peter	2 Kings 6:1-7: Elisha makes axehead float
15:14: blind leading the blind	2 Kings 6:8-23: Elisha blinds and gives sight to Aramean soldiers
15:21-28: Syro-Phoenician woman	2 Kings 4:8-37: Elisha raises Shunammite’s son
15:23: disciples keep her away (Syro-Phoenician woman)	2 Kings 4:27: Gehazi pushes Shunammite away overlay with Elijah: raises son in Sidon, 1 Kings 17)
15:29-31: healing on mountain	2 Kings 4:27: Elisha on mountain when Shunammite seeks help; cf 2 Kgs 1:9: Elijah sitting on mountain; sick king
15:32-39: 4000 fed	2 Kings 4:38-44: Elisha’s food miracles
16:5-12: leftover bread/leaven	2 Kings 4:42-44: leftover bread

16:13-20: Peter's confession (announcement of death)	Jesus compared to "Elijah" Jesus suffers like prophets, Elijah and John)
16:16: "the Christ" ("anointed for entry to city)	Elisha is only anointed prophet, 1 Kgs 19:16 Jehu is the only anointed N king)
16:24: "follow me"	2 Kings 2: Elisha following Elijah
16:28: "Son of Man" in glory	2 Kings 2: ascension of Elijah
17:1-13: transfiguration (Elijah and Moses outside the land - now on mountain inside the land)	2 Kings 2: Elijah's departure; John as Elijah
17:1-13: transfiguration	2 Kings 6:15-19: Elisha surrounded by angels
17:12: "do not fear"	2 Kings 6:16: "do not fear"
17:14-21: disciples fail to heal	2 Kings 4:29-31: Gehazi fails to heal
17:24-27: fish and tax money	Elisha's odd miracles
ch. 18: community discourse	rules for the "sons of the prophets"

D. Matthew 19-22.

One of the key shifts that takes place at the beginning of Matthew 19 is geographical.⁶⁰ From the beginning of Jesus' life, Judea has been dangerous (2:1-18), and at the beginning of His ministry, Jesus withdraws into Galilee when He hears of John's imprisonment (4:12-13). Throughout the intervening chapters, Jesus has been in Galilee (4:23), in Gadara east of the Sea of Galilee (8:28-34), Caesarea Philippi (16:13), occasionally

⁶⁰ After the fourth discourse, Jesus engages in a debate with the Pharisees concerning divorce. Why is this discussion here? If the typological scheme of Jesus-as-Israel works, then the reference to divorce is apt. While Torah regulates divorce (Deut24), many of the Old Testament references to divorce concern Yahweh's divorce of adulterous Israel (Isa. 50:1; Jer 3:1, 8; possibly Mal. 2:16). With chapter 18, then, Matthew's gospel moves into an apocalyptic mode in which Jesus announces the Lord's divorce of His bride, who has rejected her husband.

as far as Tyre and Sidon (15:21), but never Judea. Judea is mentioned eight times in the gospel, but never between 4:25 and 19:1. For Jesus, after His Galilean ministry as “Elisha,” there is no “Northern kingdom” left, and He turns His attention exclusively toward Jerusalem and Judea. With chapter 19, He turns toward the South, and from there until the final chapter of the gospel He is in Judea and frequently in Jerusalem itself.

The turn to Judea conflates two moments in the history of Israel and Judah. On the one hand, Jesus’ entry to Jerusalem clearly replicates the march of Jehu to Samaria. Like Jehu (2 Kgs 9:13), Jesus rides to Jerusalem over a carpet of garments (Matt 21:8), and both are acclaimed king by their followers (2 Kgs 9:13; Matt 21:5, 9). As soon as He enters Jerusalem on Palm Sunday (21:1-11), He goes to the temple to enact its coming destruction (21:12-16).⁶¹ One of the central events of Jehu’s reign was the destruction of the temple of Baal in Samaria (2 Kgs 10), and the comparison of Herod’s temple to Ahab’s is not a compliment to Herod. Following Jehu’s massacre of the house of Ahab, Joash narrowly escapes death and comes to reign in Jerusalem, where he famously attends to the disrepair of the temple (2 Kgs 12).

Though the triumphal entry clearly has royal overtones (“behold your king is coming,” 21:5), the multitudes who announce Jesus’ arrival at the capital proclaim Him as “the prophet Jesus” (21:11). For the next several chapters, Jesus is the apocalyptic prophet in the temple. As noted above, this setting connects Jesus with the prophets of the late history of Judah, particularly Jeremiah, who prophesied against the temple in the temple courts (Jer 7, 26).⁶² Jesus’ cursing of the fig tree is typologically linked to Jeremiah 8:12,

⁶¹ I am persuaded by Wright’s interpretation of this event. See *Jesus and the Victory of God*.

⁶² In the following, I am particularly dependent upon Michael Knowles, *Jeremiah in Matthew’s Gospel: The Rejected Profit [sic!] Motif in Matthaean Redaction* (JSNT Supplement Series #68; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993).

and the vineyard parable draws not only on Isaiah 5, but on Jeremiah 12:10-11.⁶³ Jesus' parable refers to "servants" (=prophets) being "beaten" (Matt 21:35), and Jeremiah was the only prophet beaten in the Old Testament (Jer 20:2).⁶⁴ Those were not far off who Believed Jesus to be "Jeremiah, or one of the prophets" (16:14).

The very imagery of Jesus' parables is taken from prophecies concerning Israel's and Judah's destruction. Twice Jesus tells parables about a vineyard owner (20:1-16; 22:33-44) and another about a father who sends his sons to work in the vineyard (21:28), and these chapters contain all ten uses of the word "vineyard" in Matthew's gospel. Matthew 21:33 is clearly quoting from Isaiah 5:1-2, and it's likely that the other reference to vineyards, their owners, and their workers allude to this and similar prophetic texts (cf. Ps. 80:8-19; Isa3:14; Jer 12:10; Hos. 2:12). In many cases, the vineyard serves as metaphor for Israel: Planted in the land, cared for diligently by her Lord, but, because it fails to produce fruit, the Lord breaks down every wall of protection and leaves the vineyard to the ravages of the Gentiles. Jesus employs the vineyard imagery in the same way, as an image of an unfruitful Israel whose caretakers will be replaced and destroyed. Jesus warns the Jewish leaders of a judgment that will make the Babylonian exile pale by comparison. The fig tree episode (21:18-22), in context clearly an image for Israel's failures, is similarly drawn from apocalyptic texts of the Old Testament (Isa 34:1-15; Jer 8:13-17; Mic. 7:1-8).

Matthew uses this combination of geographic/spatial arrangement, imagery, and content to place Jesus as a prophetic figure, a Jeremiah, in a "late monarchy" context, in which he prophesies the coming destruction of the temple and city.

⁶³ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, pp. 176, 180.

⁶⁴ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, pp. 181-182.

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
19:1: into Judea	Southern kingdom
20:17: preparing for Jerusalem	2 Kings 11-12: Joash cleansing temple
20:29-34: healing at Jericho	2 Kings 2:19-22: heals waters at Jericho
21:1-11: triumphal entry	2 Kings 9: Jehu rides on robes
21:12-13: temple action	2 Kings 10: Jehu destroys temple of Baal; Joash;
21:13: robbers' den	Jeremiah 7:11: robbers' den
21:18-21: withered fig tree	Jeremiah 8:13: "no figs"; "leaf shall wither"
21:33-46: parable of vineyard	Jeremiah 12:10-11: "ruined my vineyard"
21:35: beaten servant	Jeremiah 20:2: Jeremiah beaten
ch 23: temple discourse	Jer 7, 26
ch 24-25: Olivet discourse	Ezek 8-11 (Jer 7:14 with 24:2)

E. Matthew 26-28.

As Michael Knowles has pointed out, the Jeremiah references continue into the final chapters of Matthew:

<i>Matthew</i>	<i>Old Testament</i>
26:28: blood of covenant	Jeremiah 31:27-40 (with Exod 24:8) ⁶⁵
26:28: "remission of sins"	Jeremiah 31:34 ⁶⁶
26:50-66: Jesus falsely accused	Jeremiah 26: Jeremiah falsely accused ⁶⁷
27:3-10: Judas recants	Jeremiah 18, 32 (with Zechariah 11): explicit

⁶⁵ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 207.

⁶⁶ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 208.

fulfillment⁶⁸

27:4, 24: “innocent blood”	Jer 26:15: “innocent blood” ⁶⁹
27:25: blood on heads	Jer 51:35: blood on Chaldea ⁷⁰
27:34: gall	Lam 3:19: “wormwood and bitterness” ⁷¹
27:39: abuse from those who pass	Lam 2:15: “all who pass . . . shake their heads” ⁷²

As the references to Lamentations show, Matthew presents Jesus in the final chapters not merely as the suffering prophet, but as the embodiment of the suffering city, bereft of inhabitants. As a result, the final chapters show that Jesus experiences the exile and restoration of Israel herself in His death and resurrection. The disciples, particularly Peter, play an important role in these chapters; they flee from Jesus, leaving Him wholly isolated before the combined forces of the Jewish Sanhedrin and the Roman Pilate (cf. 26:56; 26:58-75). Jesus is subjected to the Gentile power, as Israel was to the Babylonians, and on the cross He cries out that He has been forsaken even by His God (27:46). As N. T. Wright has argued on other grounds, on the cross Jesus suffers the curse of Israel’s, and humanity’s, exile, in order to bear that curse away and return humanity to the presence of God.

If the death and burial of Jesus is the exile of Jesus, the resurrection of Jesus is His return from exile. Explicit resurrection texts are comparatively rare in the Old Testament (though Israel always trusted a God who raises the dead), and one of the most prominent

⁶⁷ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 200.

⁶⁸ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, pp. 53-81.

⁶⁹ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 201.

⁷⁰ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 202.

⁷¹ Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 205.

⁷² Knowles, *Rejected Prophet*, p. 203.

is Ezekiel 37, explicitly a prophecy about Israel's restoration from the grave of exile.

Finally, the gospel of Matthew ends, as Israel's Scriptures do, with a commission. Matthew has brought us around to the end: Jesus has recapitulated Israel's history in righteousness, and now sends the new Israel to proclaim this news to the Gentiles.

V.

In all the gospels, Israel rejects her Messiah, but Matthew's typological plot shows that this history of rejection is consistent with Israel's entire history. Jesus comes as the new Moses, and is resisted; as was Moses. Jesus comes as a greater David, but is resisted by the leaders of Israel; as was David. Jesus teaches with a wisdom greater than Solomon, but many in Israel refuse his yoke; as they did with the house of David. Jesus is a prophet like Elisha, offering life to Israel, but many prefer Herod-Ahab; as they did in the time of Elisha. Jesus is Jeremiah, and like Jeremiah, is a suffering prophet.

What Matthew makes explicit is that in rejecting these servants, Israel was rejected the Lord who sent them. What makes Matthew good news is that the God of Israel refuses to let Israel's rejection stand. When Israel has done her worst, and demanded that her Messiah be nailed to a Roman cross, still He will not let Israel have the final say, for He raises Jesus from the dead.