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This book has a simple argument: Contemporary Catholic and Protestant Thomistic Christology is an immensely promising development, and it should now be enhanced by a fuller integration of biblical typologies (the New Adam, New Isaac, New Moses, New Joshua, and New David) in order to do justice to the New Testament's eschatological portraits of Jesus.

When I first conceived this book, I intended to argue that Thomas Aquinas should have included more attention to the New Testament's Christological typologies in his *tertia pars*, because this would have allowed him to do fuller justice to the eschatological character of Jesus' identity and mission. Aquinas knew these typologies well, and he could have integrated them into his *tertia pars*. On reflection, however, I realized that my concern is not actually with Aquinas himself in his time and place but with contemporary Thomistic Christology. In order to fully convey Jesus' eschatological identity and mission, Thomistic Christology needs to incorporate the typological materials found especially in Aquinas's biblical commentaries. This is not a competition between the *tertia pars* and the biblical commentaries, since, as we will see, the eschatological insights conveyed by the typologies are present in their ontological core within the *Summa theologiae*. The reconfiguring that I propose in this book is a matter of figural enhancement and augmentation, not of laying new foundations. My proposal accords with Thomas Joseph White's call for theologians to "seek a progressive unification of classical Christological 'science' and modern

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historical study,” in order to integrate the results of historical and dogmatic approaches “into one coherent narrative.”¹

Given an understanding of history that allows for God’s providence, the fact that the divine Messiah recapitulates the central figures of Israel’s Scriptures will come as no surprise.² Among the Church Fathers, Irenaeus is representative in teaching that “the treasure hid in the Scriptures is Christ, since He was pointed out by means of types and parables.”³ For their part, contemporary biblical scholars recognize that for Second Temple Jews and for the New Testament authors, “God is the mastermind of a vast divine economy that includes both external past-tense events and their inscripturation.”⁴ The New Testament portrays Jesus as the “new” or eschatological Adam, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, and David. For Christians, just as the “New” Testament fulfills but does not negate or replace the “Old,”

¹ Thomas Joseph White, O.P., “The Precarity of Wisdom: Modern Dominican Theology, Perspectivalism, and the Tasks of Reconstruction,” in *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments, and the Moral Life. Essays in Honor of Romanus Cessario, O.P.*, ed. Reinhard Hütter and Matthew Levering, 92–123, at 116–17. Among the questions that White raises is one at the heart of my project: “What is the relation between his [Jesus’s] eschatological message concerning the Kingdom of God and the revelation of his own identity as the Son of God?” (116). As White emphasizes in his *The Incarnate Lord: A Thomistic Study in Christology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2015), 61, appreciation for historical research into Jesus does not here substitute for the gift of faith by which Jesus is known personally.

² In the New Testament (and, even more, in the Church Fathers and Aquinas), Jesus eschatologically recapitulates the male figures, while Mary/Church recapitulates the central female figures, beginning with Eve. It could also be argued that Jesus eschatologically recapitulates various female figures in the Old Testament, but this is not the path taken by the New Testament. For discussion of Mary and typology, see Joseph Ratzinger, *Daughter Zion: Meditations on the Church’s Marian Belief*, trans. John M. McDermott, S.J. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983); and Louis Bouyer, *The Seat of Wisdom: An Essay on the Place of the Virgin Mary in Christian Theology*, trans. A. V. Littledale (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1960).

³ Irenaeus, “Against Heresies,” Book IV, chapter 26, in *The Apostolic Fathers, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, vol. 1 of Ante-Nicene Fathers Series (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), 315–567, at 496.

⁴ Matthew W. Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation: The Center of Paul’s Method of Scriptural Interpretation* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2012), 121.

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so also Jesus is the eschatological fulfillment of these central Old Testament figures without negating their own distinctive narrative histories and identities.⁵ Thus the New Testament’s “figural Christology” requires what Richard Hays terms “reading backwards.”⁶

Indebted to the Church Fathers, Aquinas gave explicit attention in his writings to Jesus as the New Adam, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, and David according to the New Testament’s literal sense. Yet, contemporary Thomistic Christology has paid relatively little attention to Jesus’ eschatological fulfillment of these types. Given that “the ‘reign of God’ is the clear and unmistakable central theme of Jesus’ work,”⁷ the question is how to ensure that the reign of God is also a central theme of Thomistic Christology. The theme is by no means absent from Aquinas’s Christology. The *tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae* lacks a distinct *quaestio* on Jesus as King or on the inauguration of the kingdom of God. But the theme of the reign of God, and the ontological reality expressed by that phrase, appears frequently within Aquinas’s Christological reflections, especially in his discussions of Jesus as the eschatological Moses, Joshua, and David.

My argument is that by incorporating and expanding upon Aquinas’s reflections on the Christological typologies, contemporary Thomistic Christology can meet the challenge identified by White and laid down by the biblical scholar John Meier in the first volume of his *A Marginal Jew*: “[F]aith in Christ today must be able to reflect on itself systematically in a way that will allow an appropriation of

⁵ The New Testament does not name Jesus as the “New Adam” – Paul employs “last Adam” or “second” Adam in 1 Corinthians 15. Nor does the New Testament speak of the “New” Isaac, Moses, Joshua, or David. In this book, however, I will employ these phrases in order to signify the eschatological recapitulation of these figures by Jesus. On the Christian meaning of “Old” and “New” when applied to the two Testaments, see R. W. L. Moberly, *The Old Testament of the Old Testament: Patriarchal Narratives and Mosaic Yahwism* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1992), 158–59.

⁶ See Richard B. Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014).

⁷ Gerhard Lohfink, *The Forty Parables of Jesus*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press Academic, 2021), 223.

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the quest for the historical Jesus into theology. The historical Jesus, while not the object or essence of *faith*, must be an integral part of modern *theology*.⁸ The “historical Jesus” portrayed by Meier and others is an eschatological prophet who understood himself to be inaugurating the kingdom of God. It is this eschatological Jesus that the New Testament’s (and the Church Fathers’ and Aquinas’s) typological Christology depicts in richly nuanced ways. It does so from within a providentially unified understanding of history that does not subscribe to the limits imposed by modern historiography. This providential understanding of history resonates with contemporary Thomistic Christology, which shares Paul’s view that “nothing – that is to say, no human, no spiritual power, no geographical space, no era of time, and not even death – ultimately stands outside the reach of God’s sovereign control.”⁹

After an introductory chapter that appreciatively sketches the contemporary ecumenical resurgence of Thomistic Christology, each of the five main chapters takes up one typological motif (the eschatological New Adam, New Isaac, New Moses, New Joshua, and New David), exploring its role in the New Testament and in the Church Fathers and addressing how Aquinas employs it. Each chapter also identifies places in the *tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae* where further integration of the typological motif might strengthen contemporary Thomistic Christology. Each chapter has a concluding section titled “An Ontological Note,” in which I supplement the chapters’ typological–eschatological emphasis by briefly examining Aquinas’s insights into the ontological realities expressed respectively by the phrases “New Adam” (Christ’s human perfection under grace), “New Isaac” (atonement), “New Moses” (law and grace), “New Joshua” (the state of glory), and “New David” (the mystical body and Christ’s Headship of grace).¹⁰

⁸ John P. Meier, *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*, vol. 1, *The Roots of the Problem and the Person* (New York: Doubleday, 1991), 198–99.

⁹ Bates, *The Hermeneutics of the Apostolic Proclamation*, 122.

¹⁰ Here may be the place to recall the medieval practice of exegeting Scripture according to the four causes, so as to penetrate to the ontological realities under discussion

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In proposing to “reconfigure” Thomistic Christology by integrating these typologies more fully, I am concurring with the judgment of Romanus Cessario and Cajetan Cuddy that Thomistic theologians should “receive the essential philosophical and theological principles from the Angelic Doctor and then apply these sound principles to the unique questions, challenges, and requirements that their own period raises.”¹¹ As noted, I am responding especially to modern New Testament scholars’ questions, challenges, and insights about Jesus’ eschatological understanding of his identity and mission. For contemporary New Testament scholars, one of the clearest elements of the New Testament is “that Jesus was remembered as preaching about the kingdom of God and that this was central to his message and mission.”¹² Biblical scholars also affirm that “Jesus’ talk of the kingdom was blended with the much older imagery of inheriting the land of promise,” that is, imagery related to the exodus.¹³ Jesus’ eschatological renewal of the Temple and the end of the exile are other frequent themes.¹⁴

in scriptural texts. For background, focusing on the relation of divine and human authorship, see Timothy Bellamah, O.P., “*Tunc scimus cum causas cognoscimus*: Some Medieval Endeavors to Know Scripture in Its Causes,” in *Theology Needs Philosophy: Acting against Reason Is Contrary to Human Nature*, ed. Matthew L. Lamb (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 154–72.

¹¹ Romanus Cessario, O.P., and Cajetan Cuddy, O.P., *Thomas and the Thomists: The Achievement of Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2017), xii, xvii.

¹² James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 387.

¹³ Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, 386. For the influence of the exodus upon New Testament writings and thought-patterns (as distinct from claims about the historical Jesus’ own worldview), see for example Teresa Morgan, *Roman Faith and Christian Faith: Pistis and Fides in the Early Roman Empire and Early Churches* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 504–05.

¹⁴ For background to the theme of the eschatological end of exile, see Judith H. Newman, *Before the Bible: The Liturgical Body and the Formation of Scriptures in Early Judaism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 95. This theme has been a central element in N. T. Wright’s work, as spelled out especially in Wright’s

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For the purpose of developing these eschatological dimensions of Jesus' identity and mission from within Thomistic Christology, I argue that the above-named five biblical typologies, well known to Aquinas, can serve as a bridge for joining Aquinas's Christology to modern biblical scholarship's emphasis on Jesus as the eschatological Davidic king who restores his people, renews the Temple, and leads the new exodus. Contemporary Thomists have perceived how profoundly Aquinas integrates Scripture and the Church Fathers into his theology, but Thomistic Christology still needs to assimilate more explicitly the eschatological aspects that shape the New Testament's portraits of Jesus.¹⁵ Therefore, my chapters propose enrichments to Thomistic Christology flowing from explicit attention to the typologies, and I show how such enrichments can be set forth in relation to the *tertia pars*.

programmatic *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1992). For further discussion, see Brant Pitre, "Excursus: N. T. Wright and 'the End of the Exile,'" in *Jesus, the Tribulation, and the End of the Exile: Restoration Eschatology and the Origin of the Atonement* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 31–40, where Pitre argues that "while Wright is absolutely right about the importance of the 'exile,' he is fundamentally wrong in his understanding of it" – since Second Temple Jews living in the land do not appear to have considered themselves to be in "exile," but instead they focused on the fact that the Assyrian exile of the northern ten tribes had never been resolved and they awaited "the restoration of all twelve tribes of Israel in a final Return from Exile, under the headship of a messianic king" (32, 38).

¹⁵ See, for example, Roger Nutt and Michael Dauphinais, eds., *Thomas Aquinas, Biblical Theologian* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2021); Piotr Roszak and Jürgen Vijgen, eds., *Reading the Church Fathers with St. Thomas Aquinas: Historical and Systematical Perspectives* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021); Michael Dauphinais, Andrew Hofer, O.P., and Roger W. Nutt, eds., *Thomas Aquinas and the Greek Fathers* (Ave Maria, FL: Sapientia Press, 2019); Leo J. Elders, S.V.D., *Thomas Aquinas and His Predecessors: The Philosophers and the Church Fathers in His Works* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2018); Michael Dauphinais, Barry David, and Matthew Levering, eds., *Aquinas the Augustinian* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2007); and Michael Dauphinais and Matthew Levering, eds., *Reading John with St. Thomas Aquinas: Theological Exegesis and Speculative Theology* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2004).

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Lest there be any misunderstanding, let me firmly reject the all-too-common idea that Thomistic Christology is overly philosophical. In fact, the metaphysical richness of Aquinas's Christology and of contemporary Thomistic Christology is greatly needed for any serious reflection on who Jesus is, what he accomplished, and what he continues to accomplish today. In Chapter 1, I survey a number of contemporary Catholic and Protestant thinkers who have reflected deeply upon Aquinas's Christology and who have retrieved its metaphysical and theological relevance. I single out recent books by Adonis Vidu and Thomas Joseph White, while describing the work of many other important contributors as well, such as Jean-Pierre Torrell and Dominic Legge. It is noteworthy that scholars with deep Eastern sympathies such as Rowan Williams, and Eastern Catholics such as Khaled Anatolios, have also recently drawn upon Aquinas's Christology in fruitful ways. My first chapter makes clear that the purpose of my book is not to undermine contemporary Thomistic Christology but to augment it. Recognition of Jesus' humanity, which Paul Gondreau and others have shown is so central to Aquinas's Christology,¹⁶ requires today a focused attention on the way his teaching comports with the eschatological dimensions of New Testament Christology.

I propose augmenting Thomistic Christology along *typological* lines because Aquinas himself employed these typologies and because they have a strikingly eschatological import. Of course, given the biblical and patristic testimony, all theologians – not only Thomists – should have a strong interest in exploring Jesus Christ as the eschatological New Adam, New Isaac, New Moses, New Joshua, and New David. As Joseph Ratzinger says of one of these types, along lines that can be extended to the other four:

¹⁶ See Paul Gondreau, "The Humanity of Christ, the Incarnate Word," in *The Theology of Thomas Aquinas*, ed. Rik Van Nieuwenhove and Joseph Wawrykow (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2005), 252–76.

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“[I]t is important to emphasize that Jesus adopts the tradition of Sinai and thus presents himself as the new Moses.”¹⁷

Biblical Scholarship and Typology

Before proceeding, let me offer some further background to my proposal. One of the most influential New Testament scholars of the past fifty years, E. P. Sanders, reconstructs Jesus’ self-understanding as follows: “Through him, Jesus held, God was acting directly and immediately, bypassing the agreed, biblically sanctioned ordinances, reaching out to the lost sheep of the house of Israel with no more mediation than the words and deeds of one man – himself.”¹⁸ For Sanders, Jesus understood himself to have “full authority to speak and act on behalf of God,” and Jesus experienced his relationship to God to be uniquely intimate.¹⁹

Sanders’s remarks are only partly correct, in my view. He is correct about Jesus’ authority and intimacy with the Father. But it is not the case (as Sanders elsewhere helps to show²⁰) that Jesus simply “bypassed” Torah and Temple or that Jesus reached out to his people in a way that bypassed the mediation of Israel’s Scriptures. On the contrary, Jesus fulfilled, rather than bypassed, Israel’s covenantal law and cult.²¹ Jesus’ words and deeds are unintelligible without the mediation of Israel’s Scriptures. This can be seen throughout

¹⁷ Ratzinger is here writing as Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: “The Catholic Priesthood,” in *From the Depths of Our Hearts: Priesthood, Celibacy, and the Crisis of the Catholic Church*, trans. Michael J. Miller, ed. Nicholas Diat (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2020), 23–60, at 32.

¹⁸ E. P. Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (London: Penguin, 1993), 236–37.

¹⁹ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 238.

²⁰ See E. P. Sanders, *Jesus and Judaism* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1985).

²¹ For discussion of this point, addressing supersessionist and exegetical concerns, see the chapters on “Torah” and “Temple” in my *Engaging the Doctrine of Israel: A Christian Israelology in Dialogue with Ongoing Judaism* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2021).

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the New Testament, not least in Paul's devotion to Jesus. As Robin Scroggs remarks, "Paul believes that the eschatological age has been inaugurated by a man who embodies God's intent for all men – an intent thwarted by the first Adam, fulfilled by the Last."²² Scroggs calls this belief Paul's "Adamic Christology."

From the Church Fathers onward – most certainly including Aquinas – Christians have upheld this Adamic Christology. Moreover, Adam is not the only figure from Israel's Scriptures who helped Jesus and the apostles to illuminate the meaning of Jesus' words and deeds. King David has a central role as well, since Jesus is repeatedly described as the Messianic king in the line of David. So do Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Moses, Joshua, and Solomon.²³

But should these Old Testament figures matter to Christology today? In Sanders's view as a historian, they should not. No doubt Jesus thought of himself as uniquely God's "viceroys," helping to inaugurate the imminent kingdom of God,²⁴ but for Sanders there is no need to describe Jesus as a New David or New Adam. Sanders offers an illustration of what is wrong with such typological Christology. He states that according to the Bible, "God called Abraham in 1921 BC, Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt around 1500 BC, and David flourished about 1030 BC.... An approximate parallel today to the gospel's treatment of Jesus would be to describe Elizabeth II by saying that she is heir to the throne of William the Conqueror, that she fulfills the promise of King Arthur."²⁵ When the New Testament authors affirmed that Jesus fulfilled the work of Moses and David, they reflected a commonplace manner

²² Robin Scroggs, *The Last Adam: A Study in Pauline Anthropology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), ix.

²³ For the connection of Abraham and Jesus, see Mary Healy, *Hebrews* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 241.

²⁴ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 248.

²⁵ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 83.

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of thinking in Second Temple Judaism, but for Sanders this cannot be taken seriously today. In Matthew 16:14, for example, the people imagine that Jesus might be the return of Elijah or Jeremiah!

Sanders represents a standard historical viewpoint when he dismisses as mere invention Matthew's references to Jesus as the New Moses or Luke's references to Jesus as the New David. Yet, Sanders considers that a significant amount of truth about Jesus can still be discerned in the Gospels, notwithstanding all the typology. He states, "Echoes of Jewish scripture are everywhere in the gospels, but nevertheless no one would ever mistake the Jesus of the gospels for either Moses or David.... [T]he gospels *claim* a connection between Jesus and David, but they do not present Jesus as being in the least like David."²⁶ Surely Sanders is correct that Jesus did not do a lot of the things done by Moses and David, both of whom killed other people, for example. In fact, Sanders recognizes that the evangelists "thought that Jesus had gone beyond Moses and was a different sort of king from David. Thus we do not get a cardboard pop-up depiction of Jesus as a new Moses or David."²⁷ But Sanders still thinks that the historical Jesus must be separated from the typological overlay by which the evangelists sought "to convince readers that Jesus fulfilled God's promises to Israel" and that Jesus is the "universal saviour who fits into Jewish salvation history."²⁸ According to Sanders, the historian must do the "patient spadework to dig through the layers of Christian devotion and to recover the historical core."²⁹

However, Sanders's approach has an evident weak spot. Namely, assuming that God exists and is the provident Creator – assumptions that are quite reasonable³⁰ – why could not the incarnate Lord

²⁶ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 89.

²⁷ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 90.

²⁸ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 90.

²⁹ Sanders, *The Historical Figure of Jesus*, 280.

³⁰ Against the notion that these assumptions require revealed theology per se, see the arguments in my *Proofs of God: Classical Arguments from Tertullian to Barth* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016).