TO THE GLORY OF GOD
EVALUATING ORIGEN'S EXPOSITION OF THE SCRIPTURE IN HIS LEVITICUS
HOMILIES

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A Dissertation
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I have always found the dedication of things to be fascinating. The poignant words of an author offering us a chance to stop and smell the roses of his or her life before we engage their weightier arguments.

I dedicate this work to my beloved, Emily. I began this work with you and one small infant. At its completion, our family has expanded to four children and a dog. This project would never have been possible if not for your constant care, your support, and encouragement. Also to my children: Noah, Gideon, Chloe, and Esther. Your kindness and soft-spoken support, hugs, and kisses have given me tremendous joy as I have prepared this work for the benefit of the Church. Truly the Lord does all things well for children are a gift from God.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACCS   Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture

ACT   Ancient Christian Texts

ACW   Ancient Christian Writers

ANF   *Ante–Nicene Fathers*

ConC   Concordia Commentary

EAC   *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity.* 3 vols., edited by Angelo DiBerardino, Thomas Oden, and Joel Elowsky. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2014

ESV   English Standard Bible

FC   Fathers of the Church

GCS   Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten [drei] Jahrhunderte

LCL   Loeb Classical Library

LLT   *Library of Latin Texts*

LW   *Luther's Works, American Edition*. Vols. 1–30, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan. St. Louis: Concordia, 1955–1976. Vols. 31–55, edited by Helmut Lehmann, Philadelphia/Minneapolis: Fortress, 1957–1986. Vols. 56–82, edited by Christopher B. Brown. St. Louis: Concordia, 2009–

LXX   Septuagint

NPNF[2]   *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church*, Series 2

PG   Patrologia Graeca [= Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca]. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 162 vols. Paris, 1857–1886

PL   Patrologia Latina [= Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina]. Edited by Jacques-Paul Migne. 217 vols. Paris, 1844–1864

TLG   *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae: Canon of Greek Authors and Works*. Edited by Luci Berkowitz and Karl A. Squitier. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1990

WA   Martin Luther, *D. Martin Luthers Werke: Kritische Gesammtausgabe* (*Weimarer Ausgabe*) Weimar, Germany: Hermann Böhlau/H. Böhlaus Nachfolger, 2009.

ABSTRACT

Johnson, Andrew M. "To the Glory of God: Evaluating Origen's Exposition of the Scripture in His Leviticus Homilies". Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2022. 237 pp.

Origen has been called "Adamantine," an impossibly hard metal. Many have found his work to be strong and powerful and equal in its density. Origen's preaching is almost impenetrable to the Evangelical preacher. This dissertation seeks to offer an entry for modern evangelical preachers to engage with the historic practice of figural exposition in Origen's Leviticus homilies. The dissertation investigates the interpretative, homiletical and rhetorical histories which intersect in Origen's homilies. It unpacks Origen's use of the rhetorical figures of *anthypophora* and expansion-by-division (*distributio*) exposition in his homilies on Leviticus in order to offer the evangelical preacher a guide for understanding how Origen's homilies function and, in turn, how they can assist their own preaching. This dissertation engages Origen's work through a close reading of Origen's Leviticus homilies, evaluating and categorizing Origen's homiletical use of figural exposition into three key themes: revelation of Christ, unity between Christ and the Christian, and edification through understanding.

CHAPTER ONE

THESIS AND METHODOLGY

The task of preaching may be compared to a tree. It has deep, near permanent, foundations which are rooted in the Scriptures and the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ. Trees are not known, generally, for their root systems but for their foliage. Each passing year, new leaves and growth give witness to the ongoing life of the tree. In this metaphor, those leaves take on the characterization of the contemporary act of preaching. Each leaf is an instantiation of the past, its lessons, failures, and experiences manifesting a new homiletic expression. As diverse as the field of homiletics has become, it can be difficult to see the tree through the leaves. This dissertation investigates the historic branch of Origen's figural exposition within his Levitical homilies, in order to articulate how that history might manifest itself in new leaves. The goal of this investigation is to assist contemporary preachers, specifically Evangelical Preachers, in understanding how the distinct material of Origen's figural exposition might manifest in contemporary preaching's producing new and beautiful leaves.

Introduction of Thesis

Origen's status in the Church has shifted substantially in modern Church history. Beginning with Henri De Lubac (1896–1991) and the Ressourcement movement of the mid-twentieth century, Origenian studies have grown in popularity and frequency.[1] A substantial field of discussion and analysis has grown up about Origen's theology and hermeneutical principles. Peter Martens' 2012 work, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life*, remarks "given the vastness of the scholarship on Origen's biblical exegesis and hermeneutics, it is

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[1] Jürgen Mettepenningen, *Nouvelle Théologie—New Theology: Inheritor of Modernism, Precursor of Vatican II* (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 10.

neither feasible nor advisable to aim for a comprehensive survey [of the literature]."[2] Instead, Martens presents a taxonomy of categories of Origenian study.[3] He describes these as families of study, labeling them "procedural movement" focusing upon literary analysis and Greco–Roman philology, "doctrine of Scripture" focusing upon the multiple senses of Scripture, "topical understanding" focusing upon a particular theological doctrine, and "instrumental character of interpretation" often focusing upon particular concerns and agendas of the researchers.[4] All four families approach Origen's work in an effort to articulate its historical representation. Missing from this taxonomy, and from the literature in general, is the study of Origen for the development of contemporary theology.

Whereas much has been written regarding Origen's theology and its historic representation, relatively little literature addresses how Origen might impact the practice of contemporary theology. Our study seeks to demarcate its analysis from the purely historic representation of Origen's homiletic project by attending to Wendy Mayer's observation of a scholastic divide between the historic evaluation of the historic artifacts of the Early Church (e.g., homilies) and the benefit derived from an engagement for the sake of contemporary practice.[5] The results of our analysis of Origen's figural exposition are presented in relation to contemporary approaches to Evangelical preaching.

Thesis

Origen's figural exposition arises from Origen's unveiling of a spiritual sense of the text

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[2] Peter Martens, *Origen and Scripture: The Contours of the Exegetical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 6.

[3] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 3–4.

[4] Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 3–4.

[5] Wendy Mayer, "Homiletics," in The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies, edited by Susan Ashbrook Harvey and David G. Hunter, 555–83. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.)

through his utilization of a patristic theory of meaning that understands meaning as self-contained within the Scripture on account of its nature as divine revelation. This figural exposition utilizes a variety of rhetorical figures to establish three theological themes in his homilies: revelation of Christ, unity of Christ with the Christian, and edification of the hearer through the creation of "understanding." A close reading of the use of the rhetorical figures in Origen's *Leviticus Homilies*, attending to of the figures of *anthypophora* (asking a question and providing an answer) and the technique of expansion by *distributio (*expansion by division of substance, components, or attributes), reveals Origen's nuancing of the function of each figure to unveil the spiritual sense of the text and develop the overarching theological themes of his homilies.

This perspective of Origen's use of figural exposition, with specific attention to the figures of *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio*, offers opportunities for the use of similar figural exposition to explore and support the fundamental concepts presented by several modern approaches to Evangelical homiletics.

Introduction of Methodology

This section offers a theoretical outline of the methodology and a brief description of its form. The methodology will be described first in theoretical form, and then in relation to the thesis and the chapters of this dissertation.

This dissertation follows a form of "dialectical synthesis," exemplified by the present observer's synthesis of the conversational construction of meaning that occurs when viewing one historic object (depiction) through the description of that object (orientation). This method is derived from the "theological history of practice" outlined by Ted Smith in his essays "History, Practice, and Theological Education" and "Theological History, Practical Reason, and the

Demands of Preaching Today", as well as his book *The New Measures: A Theological History of Democratic Practice.*"[6] Smith's "theological history of practice" attends to the theological reasons why a practice "emerged and the social forces with which that practice was allied."[7] The consideration of both theological and socio-cultural forces create a "thick" description of the setting of a historic practice.[8] This double description of history allows an observer to engage in a critical conversation regarding the "thick" description of that practice and an evaluation of the actual practice itself. Reflecting Gadamer's fusion of horizons, both the historic description and the evaluation of the practice fuse into a new perspective. In turn, this fusion continues as the present observer is brought into an additional conversation regarding the modern relationship that observer may have to the newly fused perspective concerning the specific practice. The term "practice" follows Smith's utilization of the term as "socially patterned combinations of actions and dispositions, something like what Pierre Bourdieu called the *habitus.*"[9] Smith approaches "practice" from the perspective that every practice contains its own history and its own socio-cultural patterning. Smith resists Alasdair MacIntyre's "complex form" of practice, in an effort

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[6] Ted Smith, "Theological History, Practical Reason, and the Demands of Preaching Today," *Homiletic* 37, no. 2 (23 December 2012): 15–26; Ted Smith, *The New Measures: A Theological History of Democratic Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); David Daniels III and Ted Smith, "History, Practice, and Theological Education," in *For Life Abundant: Practical Theology, Theological Education, and Christian Ministry*, ed. Dorothy C. Bass and Craig Dykstra, 214–40 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008). Ted Smith's theological history is based upon the premise that practical theology has a unique ability to arrive at meaning. This theological history views historical reality through the lens of God's continued activity. History is not a stationary dot upon a line, but a vector or mathematical movement in a certain direction. This does not mean that any practice is correct based upon the fact of its existence in time. "To say that God moves in history is not to say that whatever is, is right. And to attempt to tell theological histories of church practices is not to say that those practices have become simply and perfectly identical to the word of God in the world." (Ted Smith "History, Practice, and Theological Education," 220.)

[7] Smith, "Theological History," 18.

[8] Smith, "History, Practice, and Theological Education," 218–19. The term "thick" is taken from the work of Clifford Geertz. Geertz argued that a "thick" description of culture is the analysis and interpretation of the significance that humanity invests in its own understandings, values, and activities in search of meaning." (Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* [New York: Basic Books, 1973], 5)

[9] Smith, "Theological History," 19.

to attend to more specific histories, e.g., Origen's use of figural exposition, and their relation to modern practitioners.

Figure 1: Dialectical Synthesis

	Depiction: Line 1, represented in red, illustrates the conversation that exists between the present observer and the historical object.
	Orientation: Line 2, represented in blue, illustrates the conversation that exists between the historical object and its description in another historical moment.
	Synthesis: Line 3, represented in purple, illustrates the present observer's synthesis of the depiction and orientation of a historic object in order to create meaning for themselves in regard to the historic object.

Before continuing our discussion concerning our methodology in relation to Origen's figural exposition, we present a more concrete example of our theoretical method using the metaphor of glasses. A pair of glasses is composed of two lenses, which synthesize a shared image in the back of the irises of the person wearing the glasses. Each lens is unique in the perspective it offers of the original object. In our methodology, one lens is a semantic definition of patristic interpretation, using the concept of "figural." The other is the discussion of the historic developments in rhetoric and homiletics that influence Origen's homilies. Together, the images these lenses produce are brought into conversation with each other (at the back of the

iris) and synthesize a new perspective within the mind of the observer, that is the reader of this dissertation.

The dialectical synthesis method of this dissertation navigates the tension between the questions of how the practice of Origen's figural exposition arose and how the reader understands the historic practice in an effort to better establish the contemporary observer's own relationship with the historic practice of "figural exposition." The thesis focuses upon Origen's figural exposition in his Leviticus homilies as the "practice" under consideration and attends to both theological and rhetorical aspects of this practice.

Outline

Chapter Two

Chapter two introduces patristic interpretation and our usage of the term "figural exposition." The chapter proceeds in two stages: First, it seeks to define the term "figural" for future use in the dissertation by presenting John O'Keefe and R.R. Reno's theory of the "mechanics" of patristic interpretation.[10] This theory differentiates the theories of meaning utilized by modern and patristic interpreters. David Dawson's subsequent work with figuration and history nuanced O'Keefe and Reno's distinction between "typology" and "allegory."[11] The first stage concludes with a workable definition of "figural" that attends to the typology/allegory distinction in view of O'Keefe and Reno's patristic theory of meaning. The second stage of the chapter analyzes Origen's homilies to support the claim that Origen utilized a "figural exposition" in his homilies. The foundational nature of this "figural exposition" will be shown

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[10] John O'Keefe and R.R. Reno, *Sanctified Vision: An Introduction to Early Christian Interpretation of the Bible* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

[11] David Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Identity* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2002).

through an examination of genres of Scripture and their corresponding homilies.

Chapter Three

Chapter three discusses the historical and theological conditions that produced Origen's figural exposition. Origen's figural exposition is the result of two historical narratives (See Diagram 1.1, Orientation). The first narrative follows the homiletic development of the Early Church in relation to its authoritative proclamation and defense of the Scripture. This section will follow O.C. Edward's description of Origen as a homiletical pioneer, and then follow the arguments of Alistair Sykes-Stewart and Ronald Heine, who understand Origen's figural exposition as an apologetic defense of Scripture.

The second thread appreciates Origen as a practitioner of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition. The socio-cultural situation will be discussed in relation to the work of Cicero and Quintilian in the form of their rhetorical handbooks, *Rhetorica ad Herennium* and *Institutio Oratoria*, which provide descriptions of figures of thought and speech found throughout Origen's Leviticus homilies. Specific attention will be paid to *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio*. These figures will be illustrated through a close reading of Origen's figural exposition in his Leviticus homilies.

The theological and historic orientation will be supported and sharpened through a brief review of the major work of Henri De Lubac, Peter Martens, Samuel Hong and Kyeil Kwak, each of whom has specifically dealt with the relation of Origen's theological understanding and his rhetorical work.

Chapter Four

Chapter four proceeds from observation of the historical setting that gave rise to the practice of Origen's figural exposition to a direct evaluation of Origen's figural exposition within

his Leviticus homilies (See Diagram 1.1, Depiction). The dissertation follows Heine's English translations of Origen closely and engages the Latin translation of the Leviticus homilies in cases that warrant more careful investigation, particularly in regard to the figures of *anthypophora*, expansion by *distributio*, and instances of repetition of words and phrases.[12] This close reading and analysis follows a style similar to Karen Torjesen's and Samuel Hong's evaluations of Origen's homilies, moving between citation of Origen and explanation of his figural exposition. The analysis of Origen's figural exposition attends to his use of *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio,* as well as the theological themes Origen developed through figural exposition. Observing Origen's use of both the figure of *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio* provides a nuanced understanding of Origen's figural exposition to draw out the implications of a spiritual sense of the Scripture. This close reading offers a depiction of the practice of figural exposition that can be evaluated separately from its historical situation within Origen's Leviticus Homilies.

Chapter Five

Chapter five asks, in light of Origen's figural exposition, "what can we learn from homiletical traditions outside our own?" This chapter utilizes Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim's *Homiletics and Hermeneutics*,[13] a collection of essays which presents four major approaches to evangelical preaching. Each approach is similar but holds distinct values and concerns as central to the approach. Origen's figural exposition is drawn into a conversation with each approach's central concerns through Origen's theological themes and usage of *anthypophora* and *distributio*.

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[12] Rufinius's Latin translation of Origen's Leviticus homilies was accessed via *LLT*.

[13] Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim ed., *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018).

These conversations gesture toward the synthesis of a new conversation concerning the viability of figural exposition within each approach. (See Diagram 1.1, Synthesis)

Issues of Controversy in Origenian Scholarship

The nature of this dissertation requires several additional introductory comments to assist the reader in navigating the growing scope of Origenian scholarship and the argument of the dissertation. These comments are meant to acknowledge the controversy that continues to surround Origen's work and to set aside various topics which otherwise might adversely impact the nature of this study. This is a homiletical study that focuses on Origen's use of rhetorical *figura*. As this study addresses Origen's use of rhetoric, it does not enter into many of the hermeneutical debates which otherwise might surround the discussion. However, even though our focus remains on the homiletical artifact, two topics must be discussed, lest they unduly influence one's reading of Origen. The two topics which fall into this category are Origen's cosmology and the use of Rufinus' translation of Origen's Leviticus homilies.

Platonism and Its Corresponding Cosmology

There is no question that Origen utilized the terms of Platonism.[14] Origen's cosmology has been a point of issue in the history of Origen scholarship since Origen wrote *Peri Archon* or *On First Principles*. Later Church councils struggled with this aspect of his more speculative

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[14] The often-applied criticism is that Origen is a Platonist. This position has been challenged in recent scholarship. Peter Martens, in his article "Origen Against History: Reconsidering the Critique of Allegory." expresses the status of current scholarship well. "Yet whatever we want to say about [Origen's] relationship to Plato and the Platonic traditions of his day, Origen did not advocate a world of eternal, immaterial, and changeless forms that transcended this world of change and becoming. The <u>most</u> one could say is that many of his allegorical references were generic. Origen often saw in scriptural narratives the theme of the soul's ascent to God (and not some specific person's ascent to God), or a virtue or vice (and not some particular person's virtue or vice.) (Peter Martens, "Origen Against History: Reconsidering the Critique of Allegory," *Modern Theology* 28, no. 4 [October 2012]: 635–56. 645.) See also Walther Völker, *Das Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes; eine Untersuchung zur Geschichte der Frömmigkeit und zu den Anfängen christlicher Mystik* (Tübingen: Mohr Kraus Reprint, 1966); and Mark Edwards, *Origen Against Plato* (Burlington, UK: Ashgate, 2002).

theology—a term he himself used in describing his ruminations about some of the foundational principles of the philosophical religious thought of his day. The fifth ecumenical council anathematized Origen's cosmological teaching including the pre-existence of souls and the *apokatastasis,* a teaching that states a type of universalism, which scholars such as David Bentley Hart have recently picked up.[15] These more speculative aspects of Origen's teaching were not central to his interpretation of Scripture or his theological enterprise in general. The *Ressourcement* movement within the larger church, which began with scholars such as Henri De Lubac and Bertrand De Margerie, has recognized that the very tradition that had rejected Origen's teachings was overwhelmingly influenced by his exegesis of Scripture, which formed the dominant narrative of the ancient church, normed by the *regula fidei*.[16] Early Church scholarship has recognized that Christians of the first millennium utilized platonic categories to express Christian truth, utilizing the *regula fidei* and Scripture to curb problematic and erroneous interpretation.[17] Setting aside the terminology of Origen's cosmology, his use of figuration and its role in his homiletical development privileges the use of rhetoric to drive the homily forward. One example of the use of rhetoric is highlighted in the dissertation of Samuel Hong, who argues that Origen utilized the rhetorical *stasis* of *constitutio legitima*, specifically the subtype, *scriptum et sententiam*, which focuses upon resolving ambiguity between the letter of the Law and its intention, to support his expounding upon the Scriptural text where the letter of the text seems to

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[15] See David Bentley Hart, *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, and Universal Salvation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019).

[16] See Henri De Lubac, "The Case against Origen" in *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture According to Origen*, trans. Anna Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 15–50.

[17] See Andrew Louth, *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Also, Craig A. Carter, *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition: Recovering the Genius of Premodern Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018), 66.

stray from the intention of its author.[18] While Origen's homilies may utilize terminology

linguistically connected to Platonic cosmology, I submit that cosmology is not driving the

homiletical development, but the elements of rhetoric in relation to the Biblical text being

expounded.

Craig Carter's *Interpreting Scripture with the Great Tradition* identifies the above

cosmological tension well:

> The theological metaphysics of the Great Tradition can be described as Christian
> Platonism. Andrew Louth quotes Endre von Ivanka: "The phenomenon which
> characterizes the whole of the first millennium of Christian theological thought … is
> the use of Platonism as the form for [its] philosophical expressions and the
> framework of the world-picture in terms of which the proclamation of revealed truths
> was made - in other words, Christian Platonism." As Louth goes on to explain, both
> Platonism and Christianity teach that we have a spiritual nature that can participate in
> the "realm of eternal truth, the realm of the divine." But whereas Platonism sees
> human nature as continuous with divine being and as capable of ascending to the
> realm of the divine, Christianity views man as a creature created out of nothing.
> Therefore, in Christianity, there exists an ontological gulf that can be overcome only
> by God descending in Christ to save us. Yet, as Louth points out, we have been made
> in God's image and have the possibility of communion with God, even though this
> possibility is realized only in Jesus Christ. What is open to us in Platonism by nature
> is only open to us in Christianity by Grace.[19]

Carter's "Christian Platonism" illustrates the *crux Origenis*. There is no dispute that Origen

utilized a platonic frame to express Christian truth.[20] The dispute is whether such a frame can

adequately express Christian truth. According to some scholars, this frame dominates Origen's

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[18] See Samuel Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric as a Means to the Formation of the Christian Self" (Ph.D. diss., Claremont Graduate University, 2004). See also, Cicero, *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, trans. Harry Caplan. Loeb Classical Library 403 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954), 35–43 [1.11.19–13.23].

[19] Carter, *Interpreting Scripture*, 66.

[20] See Lloyd P. Gerson, *From Plato to Platonism* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013), 11–13. Gerson argues for a general set of beliefs which gave form to "Platonism" and from which more specific aspects arose, such as Neo-Platonism. For a summary of Gerson's 5 points of "Ur-Platonism" see Carter, *Interpreting Scripture*, 79–83. Origen argues against Celsum's critique that his Christian beliefs are expressible within such a philosophical framework. Ὅρα δὲ εἰ μὴ τὰ τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν ταῖς κοιναῖς ἐννοίαις ἀρχῆθεν συναγορεύοντα [But, look if the things of our faith are not spoken together with common considerations] (PG 11:972)

expression of Christian truth, at best diluting the truth and at worst outright contradicting it.[21]

Other scholars have argued that in Origen's work the Christian truth dominates the platonic

frame.[22] Therefore, the argument proceeds that Origen presented a Christian, though perhaps less

than ideal, articulation of Christian truth. This dissertation acknowledges the ongoing nature of

this debate and attempts to allow the homilies to defend themselves. The methodology

introduced above has been chosen to isolate the homiletic implications of Origen's rhetoric,

whilst setting aside judgment of the work on ontological grounds.

The dissertation attends to Origen's homilies according to their self-report to be Christian.[23]

As such, it assumes that because of his ontology, Origen interprets the Scripture as the inspired

written Word of God. While this self-reporting is a debated premise among scholars, it does limit

the projection of extra-historical judgments upon Origen's homilies. Conclusions concerning the

ontology of Origen will be reserved for the work of other scholars.

The Translation of Rufinus

The corpus of Origen is divided between Greek copies of Origen's work and Latin

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[21] See C.H. Dodd, *Parables of the Kingdom*, rev. ed. (New York: Scribner, 1961); Douglas Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia: On the Significance of the Doctrine of the Ascension for Ecclesiology and Christian Cosmology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); R P.C. Hanson, *Allegory and Event: A Study of the Sources and Significance of Origen's Interpretation of Scripture* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002); Robert Plummer, "Contra Origen: Martin Luther Allegorizing the Biblical Text," pages 14–30 in *Always Reforming: Reflections on Martin Luther and Biblical Studies*, ed. Channing Crisler and Robert Plummer (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2021); Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text: Interpreting and Preaching Biblical Literature* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988); and Hughes Oliphant Old, *The Biblical Period,* The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Christian Church 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[22] See Martens, "Origen Against History," 635–56; Völker, *Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*; Edwards, *Origen Against Plato*; De Lubac, *History and Spirit*; Karen Jo Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure and Theological Method in Origen's Exegesis* (New York: De Gruyter, 1985); Ronald Heine, *Origen: An Introduction to His Life and Thought* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2019); Mitchell Chase, *40 Questions About Typology and Allegory* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Academic, 2020).

[23] Origen explicitly calls himself "A man of the Church" (*ego* e*cclesiasticus*) in Origen, *Homilies on Leviticus 1–16*, trans. Gary Wayne Barkley, Fathers of the Church 83 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1990), 29–30 [1.1.2]. This title is utilized in opposition to those who have labeled him as utilizing the "clouds of allegory" to his own ends.

translations. The Latin translations were produced by Rufinus (345–411) and Jerome (347–420).[24] Relatively few homilies have been retained in their Greek form.[25] Origen's Leviticus homilies have no Greek exemplars and appear only in Latin translation. Due to Rufinus' self-described "improvement" of Origen's words, some have raised concern over using Rufinus' translation. Rufinus stated in his "Peroration of Rufinus Appended to His Translation of Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans,"

> I made it my object to supplement what Origen spoke *ex tempore* in the lecture room of the church for his aim there was the application of the subject for edification rather than the exposition of the text. This I have done in the case of the homilies and short lectures on Genesis and Exodus, and especially in those on the book of Leviticus, where he has spoken in a hortatory manner, whereas my translation takes the form of an exposition. This duty of supplying what was wanted I took up because I thought that the practice of agitating questions and then leaving them unsolved, which he frequently adopts in his homiletic mode of speaking, might prove distasteful to the Latin reader.[26]

Rufinus' admission presents a challenge when trying to determine his changes between the "original" and copy. This dissertation follows the example of Ronald Heine and Annie Jaubert, who after a thoughtful analysis of the possible meanings and scope of Rufinus' comments, argue that Rufinus is a trustworthy translator. Heine and Jaubert arrive at this conclusion after an analysis of Rufinus' Latin translation against extant Greek copies of Origen's work.

Heine and Jaubert acknowledge that such translation may not be exact in terminology, but

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[24] Tyrannius Rufinus of Aquileia is the primary translator of Origen's work from Greek into Latin. From Rufinus' prefaces to his translations, one is able to see that these translations were intended "to be useful to 4th-c. readers." (Jean Gribomont, "Rufinus of Aquileia" in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* 3, ed. Thomas Oden and Joel Elowsky (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 434.

[25] Some of Origen's homilies on the Psalms were rediscovered in 2012 at the Bavarian State Library in Munich. These have been published in the Fathers of the Church series as volume 141. See Origen, *Homilies on the Psalms: Codex Monacensis Graecus 314,* trans. Joseph Trigg, Fathers of the Church 141 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2020).

[26] Rufinus, "The Peroration of Rufinus Appended to His Translation of Origen's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans," vol. 3, trans. W.H. Fremantle, in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church,* Series 2, 567.

the resulting work is consistent with Origen in style and content as is evidenced by numerous

scholars who cite Latin and Greek homilies of Origen interchangeably

Additionally, the Greek text of Origen's Leviticus homilies has not survived and Rufinus'

Latin translation remains the only attestation of this work of Origen. Mayer recognizes that

extant artifacts have significance in themselves, as they have been retained throughout history.

The Leviticus homilies exhibit an example of the substance of Origen's homiletical project,

which can be further supported through analysis of Origen's other works. Henri de Lubac's

critique that "[Rejecting Origen's Latin corpus is] too much an invitation to laziness and simple

lack of inquiry"[27] must be heeded.

In sum, Rufinus' translation of Origen's Leviticus homilies stands as a Latin representation

of Origen's homiletic practice. There is little scholarly debate that the Leviticus homilies are not

thoroughly Origenian or represent a non-Origenian substance. Their study offers insight into

Origen's homiletical understanding and invites further engagement with Origen's other homiletic

material.

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[27] FC 83:23.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATING ORIGEN'S FIGURAL EXPOSITION

Introduction

This chapter accomplishes two things. First, it encapsulates the contemporary scholarship regarding the practice of ancient interpretation by addressing the "figural" family of terms, including allegory, typology, and figuration. The thesis posited by John O'Keefe and R.R. Reno in *Sanctified Vision* will be challenged, and its conclusion nuanced through the structure of "figuration" developed by David Dawson's *Christian Figural Reading and the Fashioning of Christian Identity* and Don Collett's *Figural Reading and the Old Testament*. This section concludes with a clear and concise description of the term "figural" in a homiletical setting. Second, this chapter investigates Origen's homiletical material in light of the "figural" definition. This section briefly addresses Origen's two major hermeneutical works, *Peri Archon* and *Contra Celsum*, to highlight Origen's practice in light of his theory. This section concludes with a discussion of the presence of figural exposition as an over-arching aspect of Origen's homiletical practice.

Addressing the Concept of Figural

In order to address the practice of "figural exposition," we must define the term. Scholars discuss different "schools" of the Church.[1] The landmark essay by David Steinmetz, "The

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[1] These schools are typically labeled geographically, Alexandrian and Antiochian. Scholarship is divided on the scope of difference between the schools. Contemporary scholarship has trended toward articulating the difference as one of scope and intention, rather than hermeneutic or interpretative difference. See Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 182–85. Young explicitly argues that the difference between these schools lies in their limitation or expansion of the *skopos,* or aim, of Scripture. According to Young, Alexandria utilized a *skopos* that included the whole Scripture in relation to any singular passage. In contrast, the Antiochene school choose to limit their engagement to the aim of the immediate context of the passage, book, or genre. In the article, "The Fourth Century Reaction against Allegory," Young

Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis" concludes its brief discussion of the medieval theory of levels of meaning (i.e. literal and Spiritual) concluding "with all its undoubted defects, [the medieval method] flourished because it is true."[2] The boldness of this claim has resulted in an outpouring of material concerning the Early Church and Medieval Church's approach to reading and interpreting Scripture. The literature concerning this topic is too vast to discuss in full. The discussion may be specifically aided by utilizing the Pauline description of "letter and spirit" and attending to vocabulary that expresses the semantic domain of non-literal description. In modern discussions, this semantic domain is typically expressed as typology and allegory (αλλεγορια). Additional terms, such as figural, figuration, θεορια, ιστορια also find a place in this discussion.[3] In this section, we lay out our understanding of "figural" by presenting a clear discussion of typology and allegory and nuancing that discussion with the historical framework that arises from the figuration/figural debate.

Laying Out a *Sanctified Vision*

O'Keefe and Reno's *Sanctified Vision* begins with an articulation of the difference in theories of meaning that are present within the Church. O'Keefe and Reno highlight the post-modern "referential theory of meaning" as the dominant theory by which modern readers and

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concludes that the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools "shared the same methodology . . . but came to different conclusions [regarding the interpretation of Scriptural passages]." (Frances Young, The Fourth Century Reaction against Allegory," in *Studia Patristica* 30, ed. Elizabeth Livingstone, 120–25 [Leuven: Peeters, 1997], 124.) See also Matthew Pereira, "From the Spoils of Egypt: An Analysis of Origen's Letter to Gregory," in *Origeniana Decima: Origen as Writer. Papers of the 10th International Origen Congress Krakow, 3 August-4 September 2009* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2011), 224–25; Darren Slade, "Patristic Exegesis: The Myth of the Alexandrian-Antiochene Schools of Interpretation," *Socio-Historical Examination of Religion and Ministry* 1, no. 2 (Fall 2019): 155–76.

[2] David Steinmetz, "The Superiority of Pre-Critical Exegesis," *Theology Today* 37 (1980): 38.

[3] For a discussion of the philological aspect of text critical, literary, and allegorical terms, see Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 41–68; B. Neuschäfer, *Origenes als Philologe* (Basel: Friedrich Reinhard, 1987), 140–55.

interpreters make sense of the Scripture.[4] Generally speaking, the referential theory of meaning

presumes that words have meaning insofar as they related to themselves within the work and/or

point toward something, that is they are symbolic.[5] O'Keefe and Reno suggest that this view

stands in contrast with that of the Early Church, which held a priori that the meaning of scripture

is in the words and not behind them.[6] Two helpful terms are "acquiring" and "conferring." In

referential theory, words acquire meaning through their connections to themselves and to what

they point toward. In Patristic theory, the words themselves confer meaning because "it *is* divine

revelation. Scripture is ordained by God to edify, and that power of edification is intrinsic to

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[4] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 9–10.

[5] Frances Young has offered some discussion on nuancing the term "symbolic," including a discussion of "symbolic" language within the framework of Early Church exegesis. See Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 210–11. Young argues that the Alexandrian and Antiochian schools can be discussed in light of the distinction that can be drawn between ikonic and symbolic allegory. This difference is predicated upon referential theory as meaning is created through relationships, either obvious or contrived. Young borrows the terms, "ikonic" and "symbolic" from the field of linguistic semiotics and its analysis of metaphor. A semiotic articulation of the difference is whether the source domain remains in view through a resemblance of the original metaphor (ikonic) or is overwritten by the target domain in what is an arbitrary relationship (symbolic). Ikonic allegory has a linguistic anchor that remains in the source text, whereas symbolic allegory anchors itself to the target domain.

To clarify Young's terminology in practice, we present two examples from the preaching of the Church. The first is an example of an "ikonic" allegory from John Chrysostom. Chrysostom utilizes the image or ikon of Christ sleeping in the bottom of the boat to signify for his hearers' freedom from pride and to encourage confidence and assurance in the coming trials. (Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 211.) Of particular note is Chrysostom's usage of the allegory to deepen the text does not remove the literal meaning of Jesus sleeping.

An example of "symbolic" allegory is presented from Origen's fifth homily on Leviticus in which the three means of preparation of the sacrifice, "in an oven, on a gridiron, in a frying pan," are taken as a unit for discussing the nature of the Scriptures in reference to a threefold level of meaning in the Scripture, as well as individually in terms of the spectrum of hidden and revealed teachings of Scripture. (FC 83:100 [5.5.3]) Here the "arbitrary" nature of the connection is revealed in that the source image (cooking implements) is not related to the target (the understanding of the Scripture). The hearer is to draw the conclusion of the importance of the nature of the Scripture, over the importance of the literal three cooking methods.

This dissertation appreciates the linguistic analysis and distinction that Young offers in her analysis. This analysis is helpful in broadening one's reading of "symbolic." While helpful in categorization, this dissertation ultimately resists Young's distinction as foreign to the Early Church's conceptualization and utilization of allegory. While this distinction may be helpful in categorizing allegorical passages, it does not explain the homiletical function of allegory, nor does it address how Patristic preaching attempted to engage with the conference of meaning that occurs between the Spirit and the hearer.

[6] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 11.

Scripture."[7] O'Keefe and Reno do not make enough of the significance of their supposition. Meaning exists as an extension of the divine properties of the text. In a similar recognition, De Lubac remarked "For Origen, the Scripture is the Word of God *hic et nunc*."[8] This recognition of divine self-contained meaning is what allows, in O'Keefe and Reno's argument, the Early Fathers to find *theoria*, the spiritual sense of the Scripture. *Theoria* is arrived at by contemplation of the *historia*, the "rhetorically motivated reconstruction of the Scriptural narrative."[9] Since the words of Scripture are divine revelation, they are more than history, conferring a spiritual meaning.[10]

We return to the second half of O'Keefe and Reno's statement. "Scripture is ordained by God to edify, and that power of edification is intrinsic to Scripture."[11] This statement presents a different model for understanding the homiletic work of the Early Fathers than the referential mode of meaning utilized in post-modern theories of meaning. This dissertation reads the Early Fathers in concert with O'Keefe and Reno's description of an "intrinsic" power of edification within the Scripture as divine revelation. Therefore, O'Keefe and Reno's use of typology and $\alpha\lambda\lambda\varepsilon\gamma o\rho\iota\alpha$ provide a beneficial guide to discuss the differing ways the spiritual sense of Scripture edifies its hearers.

Typology

O'Keefe and Reno designate typology as "a ubiquitous patristic interpretive practice that

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[7] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 10.

[8] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 431. De Lubac's comment is reflective of the general understanding of the Early Church.

[9] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 15.

[10] Modern evangelical homiletics has embraced this concept apart from its historical instantiation, under the technique "Christiconic Preaching."

[11] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 10.

discerns patterns within and between discrete events depicted within Scripture."[12] Typology is

typically associated with the events, places, and people of the Old Testament in relationship to

the New Testament.[13] O'Keefe and Reno use this term to describe the Early Church's

interpretative practice that "moved beyond analysis of particular words and images toward the

larger, unified patterns of the Bible."[14] The purpose of this movement beyond the letter was

intended to allow "the reader to enter into the experience of the type directly and without the

mediation of extended interpretive experience." This understanding of typology turns upon

Irenaeus' emphasis of the divine economy of God which is centered in the work and revelation

of Jesus Christ.[15] Typology, understood through the divine economy, has two parts. The first

focuses upon determining Christ's relationship to the objects and events of the Old Testament.

This establishes the type for the hearer. The second part is an entrance into the type through the

hearer's experience of the type through their own relation to Christ. O'Keefe and Reno highlight

the patristic example of Exodus and baptism. It is important to note the Patristic refusal to make

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[12] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 20.

[13] Mitchell Chase expands the above definition for typology. "A biblical type is a person, office, place, institution, event, or thing in salvation history that anticipates, shares correspondences with, escalates toward, and resolves in its antitype." (Chase, *40 Questions*, 38.) Versions of this definition can be seen abounding in much of the literature of Biblical interpretation and homiletics. Unresolved in both Chase's definition and that of the *Sanctified Vision* is the issue of limitation. Chase's definition does not define any limitation upon who may limit the typological assertion. James Hamilton Jr. argues that this limitation is the intention of the human authors within Scriptural history. (James Hamilton Jr., *Typology: Understanding the Bible's Promise-Shaped Patterns: How Old Testament Expectations are Fulfilled in Christ* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2022], 26.) Hamilton limits typology to the work of the Biblical authors alone. According to Hamilton, typology does not exist outside of Scriptures. The Early Church held the opposite view prioritizing authorship of the Spirit who continues to work through the act of interpretation, drawing clear inferences between the Scriptural narrative and the narrative of their own experience.

[14] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 70.

[15] The concept of "economy" (οικονομια) indicates good order and arrangement of affairs. This is similar to a plot of story or an outline for a dissertation. For Irenaeus, the correct interpretation of Scripture must articulate its economy or good order. Irenaeus sees Christ as the decisive event that resolves the question of the proper "economy" of the Scripture. The coming of Christ properly arraigned the "economy" of the Old and New Testament so that the proper sequence is followed and the correct purpose is revealed.

a theological abstraction as the type, e.g., Exodus and the New Life.[16] The patristic use of

typology focuses upon personal theological application, e.g., baptism.[17] The interpretive use of

typology moves the hearers into the narrative of the Scripture through their own experience of

the *τυπος*.

An example of this typology can be found in Origen's HLev 5.3. "What is the 'sacrifice'

which is offered 'for sin' and is 'very holy' except 'the only begotten Son of God,' Jesus Christ

my Lord? He alone is the 'sacrifice for sins' and he is 'a very holy offering.'"[18] Origen's brief

comment offers a one-to-one correspondence between the "sacrifice offered for sin" in Leviticus

and Christ's death in the New Testament, where Christ is presented as the singular sacrifice

through which forgiveness is rendered. The hearer is invited to participate in this type as the

priest forgives their sins in imitation of the Old Testament type and its connection to the divine

economy of Christ's redemption.

O'Keefe and Reno present the mechanics of Patristic typology as two parts: first, the

identification of a connection between a person, event, or place with the divine economy which

is centered in the revelation of Jesus; second, an invitation for the hearers to enter into this

connection through their own typological experience.

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[16] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 79. "The fathers focused the typological reading on developing a link, not between Exodus (discrete sequence) and New Life (theological abstraction), but between the Exodus narrative and the practice of baptism . . . the power of the interpretation stems from the immediacy of the link. The sequence of events in Egypt is connected to the sequence of events that occur when a person is baptized, without the interposition of theological abstractions or generalizations." The utilization of immediacy strengthens the father's ability to draw together narratives through common experience of the hearer.

[17] According to the terminology of Hans Frei, the Father's use of typological immediacy and a shared experience of narrative creates a "direction of fit" that envelopes the hearer into the narrative of the Scripture. (Hans W. Frei, *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics* [New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1974]). See, also, Marcin Wysocki, "Hope Found, Hope Lost—Eschatological Aspects in the Interpretations of Israelites' Wilderness Wanderings. Two Sides of One Story: Origen's 27. Homily on the Book of Numbers and Jerome's Letter 78," *Vox Patrum* 37 (2017): 727–42.

[18] FC 83:94 [5.3.2].

Αλλεγορια

O'Keefe and Reno distinguish between typology and Αλλεγορια on the grounds of its ambition. This distinction is based upon extent of interplay between the Scripture and the life of the hearer. Αλλεγορια, or allegory, "seeks patterns and establishes diverse links between Scripture and a range of intellectual, spiritual, and moral concerns."[19] Allegory is broader than typology but not fundamentally different. Typology works as a one-to-one correspondence that can be judged by its perceived fit. A common patristic example is Moses as a type of Christ because of the similarities that exist between the persons, events, and details of their stories. According to O'Keefe and Reno, "Allegories require significantly more interpretive investment capital. The reader must outline the reality for which the text is a map, explaining the coding system of the text so that the message can be read."[20] O'Keefe and Reno point to Gal. 4:21–26 as evidence of Paul's usage of this interpretive technique.

Origen utilized allegory throughout his Leviticus homilies. In HLev 2.4 (4–6) Origen discussed the multitude of types of offerings for pardon. In his discussion, Origen highlighted the divergence between the Levitical experience and that of his hearers.

> But perhaps the hearers of the Church may say, generally it was better with the ancients than with us, when pardon for sinners was obtained by offering sacrifices in a diverse ritual. Among us, there is only one pardon of sins, which is given in the beginning through the grace of baptism. After this, no mercy nor any indulgence is granted to the sinner. Certainly, it is fitting that the Christian, "for whom Christ died," have a more difficult discipline. For the ancients, sheep, he-goats, cattle, and birds were killed and fine wheat flour was moistened. For you, the Son of God was killed.[21]

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[19] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 72.

[20] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision,* 90.

[21] FC 83:46–47. In this quotation of Origen's homily, and in the homiletical quotations of Origen that follow, the use of additional double quotation marks within the larger quotation have been inserted by the various English translators in an effort to more clearly indicate Origen's use of passages of Scripture within his homily. Some translators have utilized italics to indicate the same. For the sake of clarity, the italics used in the source material has been reproduced as double quotation marks.

Origen generalized his discussion of the text as he included a fuller list of types of Old

Testament offerings than were present in his immediate reading. Origen continued to "explain

the coding system" by enumerating the various ways in which "remission of sins" could be

found for his hearers. Origen completed the allegorical "remapping" by establishing for his

hearers a concrete connection between their experience of "the remission of sins" and the variety

of Levitical offerings.

> And you, therefore, when you come to the grace of baptism, you offer "a calf," for "you are baptized into Christ's death." But when you are led to martyrdom, you offer "a he-goat," because you kill the devil, the originator of sins. When you give alms and bestow the love of mercy moved by pity toward those in need, you load the sacred altar with fat goats. For "if you should forgive your brother's sin from your heart" and, having laid aside the tumor of your rage, gather within you a mild and simple spirit, be assured, you have killed your ram or offered your sheep in a sacrifice.[22]

Origen thus established a pattern of the "remission of sins" offered in a variety of forms. This

pattern attended to the spiritual concerns of his hearers. Furthermore, Origen intended to edify

his hearers as he offered them multiple concrete examples that could be emulated.

The example of HLev 2.4 is fairly clear cut for the modern reader. However, most of

Origen's interpretations are more convoluted for the modern reader to understand. Such an

example appears in HLev 1.2 (7–8).

> Moreover, see if this "calf without blemish" is not that "fatted calf" which the father, who had lost his son who "had squandered all his substance," killed for that one who had returned and was restored to him; and he made a great feast and had great joy, so that also, "the angels in heaven rejoice over one sinner who repents." This person who "had been lost and was found" since he had nothing of his own substance that he could offer—for "he had squandered all things living luxuriously"—found this calf which was indeed sent from heaven, but coming from the order of the patriarchs and following from the succeeding generations of Abraham . . . Moreover, it is "a male without blemish." It is truly "a male" which does not know the sin which is of female fragility. Therefore, only that "male," only he is "without blemish," who "did not sin and guile was not found in his mouth" and who "acceptable before the Lord," is

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[22] FC 83:48.

offered "at the door of the tabernacle." "At the door of the tabernacle" is not inside the door but outside the door. For Jesus was outside the door, "for he came to his own and his own did not receive him." Therefore, he did not enter into that tabernacle to which he had come but "at the door of it" he was offered for a whole burnt offering, since he suffered "outside the camp." For also those evil "husbandmen cast out the son from the father's vineyard and killed him when he came." This, therefore, is what is offered "at the door of the tabernacle, acceptable before the Lord." And what is as "acceptable" as the sacrifice of Christ "who offered himself to God"?[23]

Origen does not produce a one-to-one correspondence as he did in the example from HLev 2.4. Instead, Origen expounded allegorically and mapped the Levitical calf on to the narrative of redemption and Christ's rejection and death at the hands of the "husbandmen" in Matt. 21. In presenting the Leviticus text through this coding system, Origen intended for his hearers to experience their own repentance and restoration by Christ as analogous to the Levitical sacrifice. As O'Keefe and Reno state, this takes considerably more "interpretive capital" for Origen's hearers to have understood this interpretation in full. There are examples of Origen's attendance to those who have rejected his interpretation.[24] O'Keefe and Reno argue that Origen, and other Early Church Fathers, utilized this technique "to attach what he thinks to be important to what he knows to be sacred."[25] Therefore the more important consideration is not whether his hearers believed Origen, but whether Origen's exposition was within the bounds of the Church's teaching.

One of the more common critiques of allegory is its seemingly "imaginative" basis. The "logic" that governed the Early Church Fathers' use of allegory was the rule of faith, or *regula*

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[23] FC 83:32.

[24] Origen typically attends to this type of hearer through the use of *anthypophora* and its rhetorical answer. See HLev 16 (FC 83:264 [16.2.3]). "Are these my words? Do we pervert violently the meaning of divine law by arguments of rhetoric? Is it not Moses who says?" Other times Origen utilizes a more direct statement. See HLev 7 (FC 83:144 [7.5.1]). "Since indeed the Law also designates some from these to be clean and others unclean, I ask no one to believe my words about this unless I produce sufficient witnesses. I will offer to you our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ as a witness and creator of these." In both examples, Origen supports his interpretation by directing those who may disagree to the literal text of Scripture.

[25] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 22.

fidei.[26] This rule, first discussed by Tertullian and Irenaeus, arises out of the recognition that

Scripture can be interpreted in a variety of ways.[27] Only those which agree with the rule of faith,

however, can be considered correct. Some, including myself, summarize the *regula fidei* as the

faithful teaching of God and his work, which has been handed down from Christ to his apostles

and to the Church. Its shorthand form is encapsulated in the Apostles' Creed. Origen presents an

understanding of the *regula fidei* that largely follows this summary "which differs in no way

from the ecclesiastical and apostolic tradition."[28]

> The particular points, which are clearly handed down by the preaching of the apostles are as follows: First that 'there is one God, who created and arranged all things,' and who when nothing existed, made all things; he is God from the first creation and foundation of the world, the God of all the just, of Adam, Abel, Seth, Enosh, Enoch, Noah, Sem Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, and the prophets; and that this God in the last days, as he had announced beforehand by his prophets, sent our Lord Jesus Christ to call first Israel to himself and second the Gentiles, after the unfaithfulness of the people of Israel. This just and good God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, himself gave the law and the prophets and the Gospels, who is also the God of the apostles and of the Old and New Testaments.

> Then, again, that Jesus Christ himself, who came, was born of the Father before all creatures. After ministering to the Father in the foundation of all things, for "by him were all things made," in the last times, emptying himself he became human and was incarnate; being God when made human he remained what he was, God. He assumed a body like to our own, differing in this respect only, that it was born of a virgin and of the Holy Spirit. And that this Jesus Christ was born and did suffer in truth, and not

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[26] According to Vittorino Grossi, the *regula Fidei* was introduced by Tertullian and Irenaeus of Lyons. Tertullian enumerates 14 articles of faith in *De praescriptione*. Irenaeus discusses the *regula fidei* in both his *Adv. Haer*. (I, 1,20*) and Demonstra. Apost.* (ch. 3*)*. Grossi comments further "the *regula* fidei . . . performed the function of a regulating norm of faith in the dialectic of orthodoxy-heresy that sharpened with every contact of Christian acculturation." (Vittorino Grossi, "Regula Fidei" in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* 3, ed. Thomas Oden and Joel Elowsky (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 387).

[27] The metaphor of Irenaeus' mosaic example is often misunderstood. The reason for the mosaic to be disregarded when arranged as a fox is because of the *a priori* knowledge that it is supposed to be a king. One's interpretation of Scripture may be "correct" but if it is inconsistent with the entirety of scriptural revelation, then it is incorrect.

[28] Origen, *On First Principles,* trans. John Behr (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 6 (cited as *On First Principles*-Behr). In addition to this citation, Origen attends to this concept repeatedly throughout his corpus. Origen utilizes several phrases to indicate this concept in his work, "rule of faith," "rule of truth," and "rule of piety." (Albert Outler, "Origen and the Regulae Fidei," *Church History* 8, no. 3 [Sept. 1939]: 214.) However, the clearest and most thorough articulation is found in the above quotation from Origen's *De Prinicipliis,* Preface 4.

in appearance, and truly died our common death, and did truly rise from the dead, and after the resurrection, having sojourned a while with his disciples, was taken up.

Then, again, they handed down that the Holy Spirit is associated in honor and dignity with the Father and the Son. But in this case, it is not yet clearly discerned whether he is born or not-born, or whether he is to be considered as himself Son of God or not: but these points which are yet to be inquired into, to the best of our ability, from holy Scripture, and investigated with the requisite wisdom. That this Holy Spirit inspired each one of the saints, both the prophets and the apostles, and that there was not one Spirit in those of old but another in those who were inspired at the coming of Christ, is indeed most clearly taught throughout the churches.[29]

The use of this rule allows for a range of interpretation for a particular passage but prevents interpretation that would run contrary to the known teaching of the Holy Spirit as revealed in Scripture. The limitations of the *regula fidei* require spiritual maturity on the part of the interpreter as Origen notes in his commentary on the Song of Songs.[30] Through the maturity granted by the Holy Spirit, the exposition will exceed the limitations of the interpreter's faith.[31] In the example of HLev 1.2, "the calf without blemish," the decision must be made regarding its

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[29] Origen, *On First Principles*-Behr, 6–7. Italics are original to the source and indicate an explicit Biblical citation.

[30] Origen, *The Song of Songs: Commentary and Homilies*, trans. R.P Lawson, Ancient Christian Writers 26 (New York: Paulist Press, 1957), 44–45. After an extended discussion of the ordering and importance of the three books of Solomon, Origen summarizes his argument of spiritual maturity. "If, then, a man has completed his course in the first subject, as taught in Proverbs, by amending his behaviour and keeping the commandments, and thereafter, having seen how empty is the world and realized the brittleness of transitory things, has come to renounce the world and all that is therein, he will follow on from that point to contemplate and to desire the things that are not seen, and that are eternal. To attain to these, however, we need God's mercy; so that, having beheld the beauty of the Word of God, we may be kindled with a saving love for Him, and He Himself may deign to love the soul, whose longing for Himself He has perceived." Not all scholars view Origen as representing such maturity. Walther Völker cautions that faithfulness to the general limitation of the *regula fidei* does not preclude one from adding opinion to exegesis. "Origen never intentionally violates or infringes on the rule of faith but feels justified to read his own convictions into the language of the text." (Völker, *Vollkommenheitsideal des Origenes*, 148.)

[31] Christopher Halls affirms the closeness of individual character (i.e., one's faith) and the exegesis which the Spirit enables. "For the fathers, the Scripture was to be studied, pondered and exegeted within the context of worship, reverence and holiness. The fathers considered the Bible a holy book that opened itself to those who themselves where progression in holiness through the grace and power of the Spirit. The character of the exegete would determine in many ways what was seen or heard in the text itself. Character and exegesis were intimately related." He proceeds to cite Athanasius in *On the Incarnation,* "the searching and right understanding of Scriptures [demands] a good life and a pure soul…One cannot possibly understand the teaching of the saints unless one has a pure mind and is trying to imitate their life." (Christopher Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998], 41)

status according to the *regula fidei*. Origen's exposition hangs on the necessity of Christ's sacrifice for the redemption of sinners in Old and New Testaments. The centrality of Christ fits the *Heilsgeschichte*, which understands Christ as the true sacrifice for sin. It follows, then, that while the allegorical exposition of Origen may require more "interpretive capital" than modern readers are accustomed to spending, Origen's exposition lies within the *regula fidei* and within the generally accepted boundaries of the faith of the Church.

O'Keefe and Reno present allegory as an interpretive technique in the Early Fathers that uses the literal text as a metaphorical map, which is then decoded so that the message can be read and the hearers formed accordingly. Origen provides many examples of this metaphor mapping and coding for his hearers to establish a link between the Scriptural text and the hearer's experience of that text. Both Origen, and the Fathers more generally, exhibit a strict adherence to the *regula fidei* in their teaching to establish the faithfulness of their exposition of the Scripture.

Challenging and Nuancing *Sanctified Vision*

The distinction of typology and allegory found in *Sanctified Vision* reflects the authors' intention to describe the logic of this "spiritual discipline." O'Keefe and Reno divide the discipline for the sake of their reader, privileging the categories of modern scholarship above the Early Church's holistic approach to interpretation. This dissertation does not seek to answer the typology versus allegory debate, since Origen utilized typology and allegory without distinguishing between them. Therefore, the dissertation understands and evaluates the occasions of Origen's exposition that move beyond the literal sense as a spiritual interpretation that reveals a connection between Christ and the literal text under consideration and/or unveils a connection

between the Scripture and "a range intellectual, spiritual, and moral concerns."[32]

The dissertation's use of the term "figural" follows David Dawson's definition and differentiation between "figural" and "figuration." Dawson begins his differentiation by attending to Quintilian's discussion of "tropes" and "figures." Quintilian divides these categories according to their retention or replacement of literal meanings. Dawson concludes, "Tropes *replace* literal meaning with nonliteral meaning, while figures *preserve* literal meaning in their generation of figurativeness. . . . Figurative interpretation is based on a conception of language as a series of tropes in which nonliteral meanings replace literal meaning; in contrast, figural reading generates a figurativeness that is not nonliteral."[33] Figural Christian interpretation sees the figurative character of Scripture as an extension, not a destruction, of the literal sense of the text.

Our description of Origen's exposition as figural interpretation requires further nuancing, specifically concerning the role of history. It is also vital to ascertain whether or not our assessment of Origen is verified in his actual practice. Many scholars have evaluated Origen's use of history in his interpretation and exposition. Much of the discussion has centered upon Origen's own comments in *Peri Archon* 4.3 where he wrote, "for our contention with regard to the whole of divine Scripture is, that it all has a spiritual meaning, but not all a bodily meaning for the bodily meaning is often proved to be an impossibility."[34] This passage is typically turned

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[32] O'Keefe and Reno, *Sanctified Vision*, 72.

[33] Dawson, *Christian Figural Reading*, 14–15. This dissertation's choice of "figural" is also influenced by Eric Auerbauch's use of *figura* in reference to metaphoric expressions which deepen language through its ability to express multivalent meanings. (Erich Auerbach, "Figura", *Scenes from the Drama of European Literature,* [Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1957], 45–46)

[34] Origen, *On First Principles*, trans. G.W. Butterworth (Gloucester, UK: Peter Smith, 1973), 295. (cited as *On First Principles*-Butterworth) Περὶ Ἀρχῶν 4.3.5. διακείμεθα γὰρ ἡμεῖς περὶ πάσης τῆς θείας γραφῆς, ὅτι πᾶσα μὲν ἔχει τὸ πνευματικόν, οὐ πᾶσα δὲ τὸ σωματικόν· πολλαχοῦ γὰρ ἐλέγχεται ἀδύνατον ὂν τὸ σωματικόν. Διόπερ πολλὴν προσοχὴν συνεισακτέον τῷ εὐλαβῶς ἐντυγχάνοντι ὡς θείοις γράμμασι ταῖς θείαις βίβλοις, ὧν ὁ χαρακτὴρ τῆς νοήσεως τοιοῦτος ἡμῖν φαίνεται·

into generalization which concludes Origen was a denier of historicity and its importance. Peter Martens offers a thorough discussion of this problem in his article "Origen Against History: Reconsidering the Critique of Allegory" where he argues that there are occasions when Origen understood biblical narrative to be non-literal and to require an allegorical interpretation to draw out their use. Martens concludes, "a careful reading of book four of *On First Principles* or of his wider exegetical corpus would have quickly confirmed that allegorizing did not go hand-in-hand with a denial of history."[35] It follows from Martens's argument that Origen did not use a "tropec" view of language whereby meaning is replaced. Rather, Origen saw his figural exposition as an extension of the literal sense, particularly in cases where the literal sense was impossible.

Two examples from Origen's corpus confirm this statement. First is an example from his homiletical practice, which Martens references under his "wider exegetical corpus." Origen states in HGen 2.1,

> As we begin to speak about the ark which was constructed by Noah at God's command, let us see first of all what is related about it literally . . . When we have laid foundations of this kind, we can ascend from the historical account to the mystical and allegorical understanding of the spiritual meaning.[36]

This statement illustrates the necessity that Origen placed upon the historical account of the Scripture. Without the historical account, there is nothing from which meaning can be extended. This would not be the case if Origen had viewed "figural exposition" as utilizing tropes that could replace history. If that were the case, there would be no need any discussion of the literal as it holds no actual meaning due to its meaning being replaced by "tropec" interpretation.

The second example from *On First Principles*, where, shortly after discussing the

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[35] Martens, "Origen Against History," 641.

[36] Origen, *Homilies on Genesis and Exodus*, trans. Ronald Heine, Fathers of the Church 71 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1982), 72 [2.1].

"impossibility" of bodily meaning, Origen made clear his understanding of "impossibility."

Citing the examples of God "walking in the cool of the day" in Gen. 3:8 and the high mountain

from which Satan "showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory" in Matt. 4:8,

Origen argued, "I do not think anyone will doubt that these are figurative expressions which

indicate certain mysteries through an apparent and not actual historical record [διὰ δοκούσης

ἱστοπίας καὶ οὐ σωματικῶς γεγενημένης]."[37] Origen viewed both the physical locomotion of the

Divine and the presence of such a physical mountain as literal impossibilities. Such

impossibilities do not destroy the text but force the interpreter into a non-literal interpretation. It

is only in the cases where a historical reality is impossible that Origen denies a "bodily

meaning." This fits within the argument for Origen's awareness of a "figural" nature to his

exposition. Origen utilizes the bodily sense as the foundational sense of Scripture from which

arises additional understandings. It is only when the foundational sense is, itself, non-sensical

that Origen is forced to abandon the preservation of the literal sense.

Origen did not deny a historicity to the Scriptures *in toto*. Origen only disregarded the

literal text when he deemed its impossibility was undeniable.[38] More importantly, he

acknowledged the literal sense of the Scriptures as the foundation from which any interpretation

arises, even in the case of "impossibility." While this answer will not satisfy all readers and may

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[37] Origen, *On First Principles*-Butterworth, 423.

[38] Martens highlights two main sections where Origen understands that Scriptural episodes "while narrated as actual historical events, simply could not have occurred." (Martens, "Origen Against History," 639.) These are the narrative of Gen. 1–3 and the temptation of Jesus in Matt. 4:8. It must be further noted that Origen is not denying the Scriptural truth of these passages, nor that they did not occur, rather that the text cannot be understood literally. i.e., Unlike our digital society, Origen understands that the sun is needed to indicate the arrival of morning. Similarly, Jesus' travel to a mountain that allowed him sight of all the kingdoms of the world is a literal impossibility as such a mountain does not physically exist. One example that further supports our claim that Origen is not dismissive of the historical sense of Scripture is Origen's adherence to the literal meaning of 1 Sam. 28:3–25 (especially v. 11), the account of Saul and the witch at Endor. Here, Origen holds to the literal meaning over and against the critique of other interpreters who argue that this is not meant to be read literally.

in fact dissuade some, this dissertation asserts that Origen's Levitical homilies offer no examples of a denial of history. They are, on the other hand, full of literal texts and historic accounts that give rise to Origen's figural exposition.

<p style="text-align:center">A Figural Vision</p>

This dissertation understands the scholarly differentiation of typology and allegory present within much of contemporary scholarship. This differentiation is external, however, to the Patristic Father's own description. Origen made no such distinction in approach or terminology. The term "figural exposition" is employed to describe Origen's practice of figuration. This figural exposition is understood to be the practice by which Origen retained the literal meaning of Scripture, grounded in history as far as possible, and expanded upon it through a Spiritual extension of meaning that sought to unveil the presence and connection of Christ to his hearers while he attended to spiritual and moral concerns raised by the text. [39]

Figural Exposition in Origen's Homilies

This second section addresses the definition of "figural exposition" within Origen's homilies. His homilies on three genres of Scripture, Pentateuchal, prophetic, and gospel texts,

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[39] Origen utilizes the concepts of edification and senses of Scripture, but he does not define them explicitly in his work on Leviticus. For a brief discussion of the term "edification" see Chapter Two, "A Lutheran Vision of Origen." The concept of "senses of Scripture" is utilized throughout his homilies but is explicitly connected to the edification and the anthropology of his hearers in Homily Five. Discussing the three modes of priestly cooking from Lev. 7:9, "*in clibano, in sartagine, in craticular*" ("in an oven, on a gridiron, in a frying pan") Origen interprets the three modes figurally concluding, "*Triplicem namque in scripturis divinis intelligentiae inveniri saepe diximus modum: **historicum, moralem, mysticum**; unde et corpus inesse ei et animam ac spiritum intelleximus. Cuius intelligentiae triplicem formam sacrificiorum triplex hic apparatus ostendit*." (Emphasis mine) For often a triple mode of understanding we have found in the divine Scriptures: the historical, the moral, the mystical. From this we understood the body, the soul, and the spirit. This threefold manner of preparation of the sacrifices shows the threefold form of understanding." (FC 83:100 [5.5.3]). It is important to note that while Origen does encourage the developmental progression of his hearers and privileges his consideration of the moral and spiritual senses in his homilies, he does not deny the importance of any of these modes of understanding, nor does he privilege the spiritual sense to the degree that it is understood as removed from the body and life of the hearer. The Spiritual sense, here discussed as both moralem and mysticum is a product of Origen a priori presumption of the Scripture which he laid out in HLev. 1.1.

will be evaluated to discover examples of "figural exposition." Absent from our evaluation are several of Origen's homiletical series, such as his Psalm homilies and those on the Song of Songs. These were set aside for the sake of clarifying Origen's position on history in relation to his figural exposition. Specifically, of main concern is Origen's retention of historical meaning and the expansion of that meaning through a connection to Christ and/or spiritual concerns.

Figural Exposition in Origen's Pentateuchal Homilies

Origen preached upon all five Pentateuchal books: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy within a three-year span at some point between AD 238–244.[40] Of these, homilies on Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers have survived. We will investigate three of these, Genesis, Exodus, and Leviticus in turn, looking for the presence of our articulation of figural exposition.[41]

Origen's second homily on Genesis focuses upon Noah's building of the ark. In an extended quotation below, I offer an example of Origen's figural exposition. First, Origen discussed the historicity of the event. He proceeded in defense of the Scripture's literalness against "Apelles, who was a disciple indeed of Marcion [*sic*]" and who held that "the story is invented; but if it is, it is evident that this scripture is not from God."[42] After establishing the literal foundation of the text, Origen expanded the meaning of the text as he turned to its spiritual

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[40] These dates are arrived at by Pierre Nautin in *Origene* (Paris: Beauchesne, 1977), 404. Nautin favors an early date over a later one. Our analysis of Origen's homilies remains unchanged by the selection of other early or later date due to a general lack of information concerning situations, pressures, or other extenuating circumstances that would impact Origen's homiletical expression.

[41] Homilies on Genesis and Exodus were chosen due to the importance of historicity in their modern interpretation and to illustrate a difference in Origen's presentation of acceptance of that history. Leviticus was selected as it is the subject of this dissertation. Numbers was excluded for sake of brevity, as this section can easily run longer than its usefulness. A similar decision was made concerning the exclusion of Isaiah from discussion under the prophetic genre.

[42] FC 71:75 [2.2].

edification through a connection of Christ as "our Noah" who builds himself an ark to save creation.

> In the first place, therefore, we ask what sort of appearance and form we should understand of the ark. I think, to the extent that it is manifest from these things which are described, rising with four angles from the bottom, and the same having been drawn together gradually all the way to the top, it has been brought together into the space of one cubit. For thus it is related that at its bases three hundred cubits are laid down in length, fifty in breadth, and thirty are raised in height, but they are brought together to a narrow peak so that its breadth and length are a cubit . . . With this intention [Apelles] exaggerates sayings of this kind, and says that in no way was it possible to receive, in so brief a space, so many kinds of animals and their foods, which would be sufficient for a whole year . . . .But against these words we bring to the knowledge of our audience things which we learned from men who were skilled and versed in the traditions of the Hebrews and from our old teachers. The forefathers used to say, therefore, that Moses who, as Scripture testifies about him, was "instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians," . . . Let these things be said, as much as pertains to the historical account, against those who endeavor to impugn the Scriptures of the Old Testament as containing certain things which are impossible and irrational.… But now, since we have already previously prayed to him who alone can remove the veil from the reading of the Old Testament, let us attempt to inquire what spiritual edification also this magnificent construction of the ark contains. . . . Therefore, just as it is said at that time to that Noah that he make an ark and bring into it along with himself not only his sons and neighbors, but also diverse kinds of animals, so also it is said by the Father in the consummation of the ages to our Noah, who alone is truly just and perfect, that he make himself an ark of squared planks and give it dimensions filled with heavenly mysteries. For this is described in the Psalm where it says: "Ask of me and I will give you the Gentiles for your inheritance and the ends of the earth for your possession."[43]

This long example gives a clear indication of the presence of figural exposition. First, Origen made a historical statement and grounded foundational meaning upon that history. Secondly Origen expanded that meaning, using a typological connection between Christ and Noah, which Origen developed further throughout the homily. As one reads through the homily, Origen continues to draw upon the relationship between Noah and Christ in order to discuss the connections of the text in its spiritual sense and in its moral sense.[44] Origen's figural exposition,

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[43] FC 71:72–73, 76–78. [2.1–3].

[44] FC 71:85–88. [2.6].

found in this example, occurs as a homiletical structure more than an interpretative technique and provides a framework for reading the homily.

Another example of Origen figural exposition is found in his third Exodus homily. We present a longer example from the homily with commentary.

> Do you wish to see, however, that this is what the Holy Spirit indicates in the Scriptures? When this Pharaoh, who is the prince of Egypt, sees that he is strongly pressed to send the people of God out, he wishes to effect by this inferior place that "they not go farther away," that they not travel the full three days. He says, "Go not far away." He does not wish the people of God to be far from himself. He wishes them to sin, if not in deed, certainly in word: to fail, if not in word, certainly in thought. He does not want them to travel a full three days from himself. He wishes to have one day at least in us as his own. In some he has two days, in others he possesses the full three days. But blessed are those who withdraw a whole three days from him and he possesses no day in them as his own.
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> Do not suppose, therefore, that Moses led the people out of Egypt only at that time. Even now Moses, whom we have with us—"for we have Moses and the prophets"—that is, the Law of God, wishes to lead you out of Egypt. If you would hear it, it wishes to make you "far" from Pharaoh. If only you would hear the Law of God and understand it spiritually, it desires to deliver you from the work of mud and chaff. It does not wish you to remain in the activities of the flesh and darkness, but to go out to the wilderness, to come to the place free from the confusions and disturbances of the world, to come to the rest of silence. For "words of wisdom are learned in silence and rest." When you come to this place of rest, therefore, you will be able "to sacrifice to the Lord" there. You will be able to know the Law of God and the virtue of the divine voice there. For that reason, therefore, Moses desires to bring you out of the midst of vacillating daily business and from the midst of noisy people. For that reason he desires you to depart from Egypt, that is from the darkness of ignorance that you might hear the Law of God and receive the light of knowledge.[45]

This example of figural exposition requires a more careful reading than the previous example. Origen began with a question, *anthypophora,* which we will discuss in greater length in subsequent chapters. This question intimated that there is a spiritual meaning in addition to the literal sense. The initial statement of the second paragraph affirms our first requirement of figural exposition, a historic foundation. "Only at that time" implies an acceptance of a historical reality,

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[45] FC 71:254–55. [3.3].

even as it also invites the hearer to view this event as occurring at other times as well. The second requirement, a connection to Christ and/or spiritual concerns, is presented by Origen with the concrete attention to God's bringing "you out of the midst of vacillating daily business and the midst of noisy people" through the words of wisdom and divine voice found in the Law.

A third example is from the subject of our study, Origen's fourteenth Leviticus homily. Origen's text is Lev. 24:10–14. This example will be offered in two parts according to the criteria for figural exposition. The first part attends to the historical foundation of the text.

> The history was read to us which, although the narrative appears clear, nevertheless unless we follow very carefully its contents which is according to the letter, its interior sense will with difficulty be opened to us . . . Let us see first, therefore, what is the literal meaning of what we have proposed, and, although it appears clear, we shall still attempt to place it more clearly before your eyes. Therefore, let us take one who rejoices in the nobility of an Israelite name from his father and mother, and another from his mother alone and not also from his father and, as it were, noble in part and in part not from his father, which certainly appears better, but from his mother's part which is inferior . . . In this quarrel the one who appears born of an Egyptian father and only an Israelite mother, "naming the name, cursed"; and because of this the one who cursed was led to Moses. But Moses, daring neither to absolve nor to condemn him without God, "handed him to the guard until he should receive a response from God about what he wanted done to him." This is the content of the historical meaning; now let us see what spiritual interpretation may be in it which ought to edify the Church.[46]

Origen's approach to history is not one of negation, but acceptance. Origen affirmed the historical account, taking time to assist his hearers in navigating the complexity of the text's description of the lineage of the two quarrelers. Only after the conclusion of this verification of its historical meaning did Origen signal his intention to expand this meaning of the text by a figural exposition of the text that will edify the Church.

The second aspect of figural exposition is the connection to Christ and/or spiritual concerns of the text. Our argument concerning Origen's use of figural exposition is proved a few lines

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[46] FC 83:245–46 [14.1.1–2].

later in HLev 14, where Origen used the historical frame of the two parties quarrelling to discuss the debate occurring in the Church, concerning the proper use of literal and spiritual meaning.

> Therefore, today also if I defend the truth, if I fight for the faith of the Church against him who, to be sure, partly believes in Christ and receives the Scriptures, but does not faithfully or completely receive their sound meaning, I struggle against him who from his mother is certainly an Israelite but from his father an Egyptian. If, therefore, anyone by acceptance of the faith and profession of the name is a Christian and a Catholic, this one is an Israelite from both parts. But he who by profession is indeed a Christian but by the understanding of the faith is a heretic and a pervert, this one indeed has an Israelite mother but an Egyptian father. How therefore does this happen? When someone reads the Scriptures and indeed follows the literal sense but denies the spiritual understanding, this one indeed has an Israelite mother, that is the literal sense. But because he does not follow the spiritual sense but the literal, his is an Egyptian father.[47]

Origen begins with the literal sense that establishes the Hebrew mother as a historical figure. Origen cannot deny the historicity of the text without destroying his own standing as a part of the Church. Without the Israelite mother (in this example), there is no connection to the Church. Clearly, Origen affirmed the literal sense, and made an equally clear mandate for the use of a spiritual sense as the Israelite, or orthodox, father. This example from Origen's Pentateuchal homilies pushes the argument further than previous examples. It definitively supports the presence of figural exposition in Origen's homilies, while demanding that this figural exposition be understood as the normative, or intended, understanding of the Scriptures.

I have highlighted, through these examples, the presence of our understanding of figural exposition across Origen's homiletic series on books of the Pentateuch. This exposition can be both obvious and compose the structure of the homily, or more discreet requiring a more careful reading. In all cases, Origen affirmed the historical reality of the text and offered an extended Spiritual meaning intended to edify his hearers. Our final example, from Leviticus, situates

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[47] FC 83:247 [14.2.3].

figural exposition as more than merely a feature present in Origen's homilies to a necessary aspect of his understanding of the scripture.

<div align="center">Figural Exposition in Origen's Prophetic Homilies</div>

Having shown that Origen utilizes a figural exposition across his Pentateuchal homilies, we proceed to prophetic texts. Origen's homilies on Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel have been preserved. We will evaluate two of these, Ezekiel and Jeremiah. As was the case for the Pentateuchal material, all of Origen's homilies on the prophets appear to have been offered over the same three-year period.[48]

Origen began his homiletic series concerning Ezekiel by discussing the reasons why one might endure captivity. After a lengthy discussion of various factors, Origen returned to the importance of the history of the text.

> Therefore, when you hear about the captivity of the people, to be sure you should believe that the captivity really happened in accordance with the reliable testimony of history. Yet it came first as a sign of something else, and it pointed to a subsequent mystery. For even you who are called faithful sojourn in Jerusalem, you who see peace—for Christ is our peace [cf. Eph 2:14]. But if you sin, God's visitation will abandon you, and you will be handed over as a captive to Nebuchadnezzar, and having been handed over, you will be led to Babylon. For since your soul has been thrown into confusion by vice and disturbances, you will be led off into Babylon. For Babylon means "confusion."[21] But if you again do penance and procure mercy from God through the conversion of a true heart, an Ezra is sent to you, who leads you

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[48] Ronald Heine cites Pierre Nautin's efforts to establish the lectionary used by the Caesarean Church as the reason for this three-year limitation. "Drawing on bits of information in Pamphilus' *Apology*, Socrates' *Church History*, the *Didache*, the *Apostolic Tradition*, Tertullian's works, and Origen's homilies, Nautin reconstructs the weekly services of the Church at Caesarea in the first half of the third century. There were two types of services, a eucharistic and a noneucharistic. The noneucharistic assembly met every morning except Sunday for the reading of a lengthy passage from the Old Testament and a homily on the passage read . . . The Gospels were not read in these assemblies because, in those days, catechumens were not admitted to the reading of the Gospel until the last weeks preceding their baptism. These readings and homilies proceeded systematically through the Old Testament. Based on the average number of verses covered in Origen's homilies on the Old Testament, Nautin concludes that the entire Old Testament would have been covered in approximately three years, which, according to the *Apostolic Tradition* 17, corresponds to the length of the catechetical instruction." (FC 71:19)

back and makes you build Jerusalem [cf. Ezra 7:1–10]. For Ezra means "helper." And he is sent to you as a helping word, that you may return to your homeland.[49]

Origen briefly affirmed the history of the text before expounding upon its spiritual sense, moving immediately to the text's relation to Christ. This relation comes in the experience of peace. Thus, it appears that figural exposition is present in Origen's homilies on Ezekiel. One additional observation will prove beneficial. This example highlights a common quality of Origen's figural exposition, the utilization of the historical sense as a typological experience for the Christian hearer whereby Christ and Christian are united. This observation conforms to O'Keefe and Reno's observation in *Sanctified Vision* that one aspect of typology is the entrance of the hearer into a connection between the text and the divine economy, centered in Christ, by means of their own typological experience. Origen utilizes this typological construction repeatedly in his Leviticus homilies, by first affirming the historical reality of a text and then utilizing that historical sense as a typological experience to illustrate and strengthen the connection between Christ and the Christian.

The second example comes from Origen's nineteenth homily on Jeremiah on Jer. 20:1–7. Our quotation begins with Origen's first comments concerning verse 4.

> "And they will fall by the sword of their enemies." They who are assigned for giving punishments are those who have swords and who make them to fall. Concerning which the Word prophesied and said, "And your eyes will see." "Your eyes," he said, "will see" these things which are prophesied. "And I will deliver both you and all of Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon." If he has gone to live in Judah as a sinner in this way he is worthy to be possessed by the king of Babylon, the Confusion. He will be delivered to him, and the king of Babylon will accept the sinners. And the king of Babylon is Nebuccadnezzar [*sic*] according to history, but the Evil One according to the spiritual sense. And the sinner is handed over to this person, since he is alternatively, both the "enemy" and "avenger." But because the sinner is delivered to him, let Paul teach you, where he speaks about Phygelus and Hermogenes "whom I have delivered to Satan in order that they may learn not to

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[49] Origen, *Homilies 1–14 on Ezekiel*, trans. Thomas Scheck, Ancient Christian Writers 62 (Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 2010), 31.

blaspheme," and where he speaks about the one who has prostituted: "When you and my spirit are together with the power of the Lord Jesus, I have judged to deliver such a man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that the spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus Christ."[50]

This example illustrates some of the difficulty of establishing a figural exposition within prophetic portions of Scripture. Jeremiah's literal text reaches into the future. Origen attends to this by acknowledging the prophetic act. Origen inverts our characteristics of figural exposition by first establishing a connection between the spiritual sense and the hearer. Origen utilized a repetition of "your eyes" to indicate that this is indicative of the hearer's relationship to the incarnate Word. After inviting his hearers to view this Scripture as directed to form them, Origen proceeded to the historical aspect of the text, "And I will deliver both you and all of Judah into the hands of the king of Babylon." On this point, Origen is explicit, "And the king of Babylon is Nebuccadnezzar [*sic*] according to history." Origen does not proceed into the spiritual sense without first establishing the historical foundation. Origen does not spend much time on the establishment of the historical truth of the text,[51] a fact which some have viewed as an indication of a lack of importance. However, Origen's homiletical process utilizes a figural exposition built upon the historical reality of the text.

These examples provide evidence of the presence of figural exposition in Origen's prophetic homilies. Origen affirmed the historical reality of persons and acts specifically and the historical narrative of the Scripture more generally. Whether before or after the establishment of the historical reality, these homilies show that Origen connected the text to Christ and relation of

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[50] Origen, *Homilies on Jeremiah; Homily on 1 Kings 28*, trans. John Clark Smith. Fathers of the Church 97 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1998), 213–14 [19.14.3].

[51] Peter Martens has pointed out that this perceived lack of attention to the history of the Scriptures is the basis for R.P.C. Hanson's argument that Origen has no respect for the historicity of the Scriptures in his allegorical interpretation of them. Martens deflects this claim in a manner similar to our own, and further indicates that Origen perceives historicity as a "wider" concept than simply the historical event of God's self-disclosure. See Martens, "Origen against History," 646–50.

the Christian to the Scripture and Christ.

Figural Exposition in Origen's Gospel Homilies

The third genre of Origen's homilies to be considered is "gospel," the story of the life of Jesus as contained in the accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Origen wrote commentaries on Matthew, Luke, and John. Of these, Origen preached a series on Luke. As was the case for both the Pentateuchal and prophetic texts, these homilies were offered in the course of the same three-year period.[52] This genre is, perhaps, the most important of our investigation due to the centrality of Christ and the necessity of his historical activity to the Christian faith.

Origen's twelfth homily on Luke is much shorter than his homilies on the Old Testament. This shorter format lends itself to our investigation, since the brevity does not allow Origen to become convoluted or to use examples as drawn out as in other genres. This example moves quickly and, somewhat opaquely, through the historic nature of this passage toward a spiritual understanding.

> My Lord Jesus has been born, and an angel has come down from heaven to announce his birth. Let us see whom the angel sought out to announce his coming. He did not go to Jerusalem. He did not seek out Scribes and Pharisees. He did not enter a synagogue of the Jews. Instead, he found "shepherds in the fields keeping watch over their flock" and said to them, "Today a Savior is born for you, who is Christ the Lord." Do you think that the words of the Scriptures signify nothing else, nothing more divine, but only say this, that an angel came to shepherds and spoke to them? Listen, shepherds of the churches! Listen, God's shepherds! His angel always comes down from heaven and proclaims to you, "Today a Savior is born for you, who is Christ the Lord." . . . For, "God established in his Church apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers. He established everything for the perfection of the saints." Let this suffice for a simpler explanation.[53]

This example establishes the text and its situation. Origen utilizes a *distributio*, a rhetorical figure

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[52] See n.48.

[53] Origen, *Homilies on Luke, Fragments on Luke*, trans. Joseph Lienhard, Fathers of the Church 94 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1996), 48–49 [12.1.1–2].

that will be discussed later in detail, to expand upon the "audience" of the angelic visitation. Origen affirms the historicity of this event, by the phrase "Do you think that the words of the Scriptures signify nothing else, nothing more divine, but only say this, that an angel came to shepherds and spoke to them?"[54] Implicit to this statement is the understanding that these words attest to the historical occurrence of these events. This is consistent with Origen's general logic that from the historical situation arises the spiritual meaning of the text through the hearer's typological experience. Origen draws out this typological relationship as he addressed the utilization of the term "shepherd" within Paul's listing of roles in Eph. 4:11. Origen's exposition draws upon the relationship of the hearer to Christ through his establishment of the connection between the hearer's identity as shepherds and the angelic visitation to "shepherds." The twofold criteria for figural exposition, as posited above, is present within Origen's Gospel homilies.

Conclusion of the Presence of "Figural Exposition" in Origen's Homilies

The understanding of figural exposition as an extension of the literal sense that is built upon a historical foundation is commonplace throughout Origen's homiletical project. In every genre investigated and in every homiletical series presented, Origen utilizes a form of figural exposition. In each case cited, he affirmed the historical reality of the text and proceeded from that affirmation to expand his exposition into a spiritual sense. Thus, Origen utilized a figural exposition of a kind that conforms closely, if not exactly, to the definition we have offered. This figural exposition is understood to be the practice by which Origen retained the literal meaning of Scripture, grounded in history as far as possible, and expanded upon it through a Spiritual extension of meaning that sought to unveil the presence and connection of Christ to his hearers

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[54] FC 94:49 [12.1.2]. *Putas ne nihil aliud divinius scripturarum sermo significat, sed tantum hoc dicit, quod ad pastores venerit angelus et eis locutus sit?*

while he attended to spiritual and moral concerns raised by the text. This definition will guide

our project as the first of our methodologic "lenses" as we position Origen within the history of

the Church and Greco-Roman rhetoric. It will also serve as the underlying understanding of

Origen's exposition in our close-reading and evaluation of Origen's Leviticus homilies.

Digression: A Lutheran View of Origenian Figuration

This portion of the dissertation is presented in relation to the author's theological tradition,

Lutheranism, particularly in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Several shifts

have taken place within historical Lutheranism concerning the understanding of figuration as

either figure or trope. Martin Luther's writings include many examples of figural exposition and,

even, complete allegory.[55] However, Luther is more known for his later theological development

where he laments the expositions of Augustine and Origen as examples of non-historical

allegory.[56] After Luther's death, the rise of Lutheran scholasticism, typified by Johann Gerhard,

returned to the acceptance and utilization of a figural exposition that viewed figuration as figure,

not trope. Following the Enlightenment, the scales shifted again away from figuration *in toto*

toward an overt literalism. C.F.W. Walther is often cited for his position on this matter, though a

careful investigation of his citations reveals his reliance and acceptance of Gerhard's position.

Many contemporary LCMS scholars have taken a hard line against Origen, reading his figural

exposition through the rhetorical lens of trope. This section will briefly react to these shifts and

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[55] See Martin Luther, "The Deuteronomy of Moses with Notes," in *Lectures on Deuteronomy*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 9, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960), 7. See also, Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis, Chapter 28," in *Lectures on Genesis*: *Chapters 26–30*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 5, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1968), 215; Martin Luther, "Lectures on Genesis, Chapter 3," in *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 1–5*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 1, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), 234.

[56] See Martin Luther, "Concerning Allegories," in *Lectures on Genesis: Chapters 6–14*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 2, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960), 151; Martin Luther, "Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans 1546 (1522)," in *Word and Sacrament I*, ed. Helmut Lehmann, vol. 35, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960), 371.

present its argument concerning the use of figural exposition, understood from the position of figure, that Origen's homiletical figural exposition can be understood and employed in a manner consistent with the doctrine of the LCMS.

The figure of Martin Luther looms over the status of Origen in the LCMS. At several points Luther directly condemns the allegory of Origen.[57] An example of this is found in his Genesis commentary, where, true to his bombastic form, Luther attacks. "Because [Eden being a small portion of the earth] opposes reason and experience, it has been a very abundant source of offense, giving Origen and others an opportunity for amazing twaddle."[58] No direct citation of this comment by Origen can be found to support these claims. However, in his HGen 1.17, Origen does progress from a historical acceptance of Genesis. "The historical meaning, at least, of this sentence indicates clearly that originally God permitted the use of foods from vegetation, that is, vegetables and the fruits of trees,"[59] to an allegorization of "bodily affections" from which Origen directs his hearers toward a recognition of a *distributio*, or division, between the affections of the body that feed the soul or damage it. This example, if not read in its context or with an awareness of Origen's homiletic goals, appears to be "twaddle."

However, Luther's position on allegory is more fluid than such a censure may imply. Luther is well known for his allegorical interpretation of the Psalms in his first psalm lectures, *Dictata Super Psalterium* (1513–1515), as well as his homily on John 2 concerning the wedding

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[57] Such language is found throughout Luther's works, of note are Luther's commentaries on the Pentateuchal books of Scripture (See Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, American Edition*. Vols. 1–9, edited by Jaroslav Pelikan. St. Louis: Concordia, 1955–1976.) and his response to Erasmus, in Martin Luther, "The Bondage of the Will," in *Career of the Reformer III*, ed. Helmut Lehmann, vol. 33, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960).

[58] *LW* 1:97.

[59] FC 71:69. *Historia quidem huius sententiae manifeste indicate usum ciborum primitus a Deo ex herbis, id est oleribus et arbourm fructibus, esse permissum.*

at Cana.[60] Both condemnation of and support for allegory may be found across many of Luther's

writings, depending on the time and situation in which he wrote. More helpful to our discussion

is Luther's own treatment concerning the interpretation of Scripture, specifically Luther's

utilization of what scholarship has noted as a "double-literal sense" or a "fat" literal sense."[61] In

How Christians Should Regard Moses, Luther wrote that

> I find something in Moses that I do not have from nature: the promises and pledges of
> God about Christ. This is the best thing. It is something that is not written naturally
> into the heart, but comes from heaven . . . I read Moses because such excellent and
> comforting promises are there recorded, by which I can find strength for my weak
> faith. For things take place in the kingdom of Christ just as I read in Moses that they
> will; therein I find also my sure foundation.[62]

Luther, in this passage, focuses upon the revelation of Christ and his promises as the primary

reason for reading the books of Moses. Similar to O'Keefe and Reno's discussion of figuration,

the centrality of Christ occupies the foundational consideration of reading the Old Testament.

Luther continued later, "In the third place we read Moses for the beautiful examples of faith, of

love, and of the cross…. Examples like these are necessary. For although I am not Cain, yet if I

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[60] See Martin Luther, "Preface of Jesus Christ, Son of God and our Lord, To the Psalter of David," in *First Lectures on the Psalms I: Psalms 1–75*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, vol. 10, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1974), 5–7; Martin Luther, *Sermons of Martin Luther*, vol.1–2, ed. and trans. John Lenker (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 54–69.

[61] This sense is derived from the writings of Nicholas Lyra, "*duplex sensus literalis*." See Erik Herrmann, "Luther's Absorption of Medieval Biblical Interpretation," in *The Oxford Handbook of Martin Luther's Theology*. Herrmann's analysis makes clear that the historical-literal sense of Scripture can be "fattened" by the inclusion of Christ as the aim or substance of the Scripture. The "fat" literal sense is, therefore, a Christological sense which understood as the primary sense of the Scripture, even as it may not correspond to the historical-literal sense of the text. Scholarship on the topic of "senses" of the Scripture has exploded in recent years. Three major texts, Craig Carter, *Interpreting Scripture*; Don Collett, *Figural Reading and the Old Testament: Theology and Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020); and Keith Stanglin, *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation: From the Early Church to Modern Practice* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), argued for a greater inclusion of a Spiritual sense of the text. A general agreement is found in these texts which focuses upon the idea that the meaning that is conveyed is more fundamental to the discussion of understanding the Scripture than the method by which that meaning is conveyed. It is important to note that all three of these texts follow our process of arguing for a limitation on figural or allegorical interpretation be means of the *regula fidei*.

[62] Martin Luther, "How Christians Should Regard Moses" in *Word and Sacrament I*, ed. Helmut Lehman, vol. 35, *Luther's Works* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1960), 161–74.

should act like Cain, I will receive the same punishment of Cain."[63] Here, Luther evoked the

same typological experience of the text that O'Keefe and Reno highlight as a necessary aspect of

typology and which Origen utilizes in his figural exposition. While Luther did not utilize the

terminology of figuration, the concept of figural exposition was clearly in Luther's view as

Luther concluded the document, "Origen, Jerome, and others like them, have not shown clearly

how far Moses can really serve us."[64] Luther's attempt to discredit these fathers falls short based

upon our discussion above.[65] Luther himself values the Old Testament, in contrast to adherence

to its literal sense, for the same reasons as the Church Fathers that O'Keefe and Reno highlight,

namely its Christological revelation and its ability to edify the Christian.

Luther, again, shows his understanding of Origen's figural exposition in *On the Bondage of

the Will*. "Look what happened to that master of tropes, [*tropum*] Origen, in his exposition of the

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[63] *LW* 35:173.

[64] *LW* 35:174

[65] A digression is offered here as an explanation of Luther's sole focus on the term "trope." The Renaissance brought with it the emphasis on the return to the sources for study and understanding. One of the most influential rhetoricians of this era was Peter Ramus (1515–1572). During his time at the University of Paris, Ramus separated speech into logic and rhetoric, striking at Aristotle's categories by marking the latter category a decorative addition of speech. Ramus's division distanced the rhetorical enterprise from its beginnings as a call to persuade as seen in Isocates' *Antidosis*, where he argues that "the art of discourse" is built upon the innate power of persuasion (ἐγγενομένου δ' ἡμιν τοῦ ρείθειν ἀλληλλάγημεν). (Isocrates, *Antidosis,* trans. George Norlin, [New York: Putnam and Sons, 1929], https://ryanfb.github.io/loebolus-data/L229.pdf)

Peter Mack argues that Philip Melanchthon follows in this vein, defining rhetoric as "the technique of discussing any general issue in a relevant and suitable way." (Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380–1620*, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011], 109) The rhetorical model put forward by Luther's friend, Philip Melanchthon, divided rhetoric into dialectic and eloquence. The former is built upon the logical proof and defense model with claims and warrants. The later family focused upon learning by imitation. There is little doubt that Melanchthon's influence is felt in Luther's rhetorical understanding. Luther's utilization of the term "trope" mirrors the prominence of this term in Ramus's, Agricola's, and Melanchthon's rhetorical texts to discuss the larger field of metaphor. Following Peter Ramus's (and Melanchthon's) limitation of the number of literal tropes to four is a clear indication that, while metaphor was retained, its nature was understood within a distinctly different logical frame than the αλλεγορια of the Early Church. The Early Church understood and utilized metaphor, according to its form and its content, as an expression of meaning. The form (metaphor) was an equal part of meaning, not an accident to meaning. Because tropes and metaphorical language were limited by Ramus to the concept of eloquence, the meaning of a passage could no longer be informed or extended by metaphor. Logic established the meaning and metaphor was viewed as an expression of what the logic had already produced. Therefore, the use of metaphorical language to do more than illustrate an argument was excluded *a priori* by Luther.

Scripture! . . . even Jerome thinks that the defenders of Origen have an impossible task."[66] This

denunciation of Origen comes in Luther's attack on Erasmus' view of interpretation. In the

example below, we see the key interpretative issue concerns which type of rhetorical figure is

utilized by Erasmus and Origen.

> You see, therefore, that the controversy here is not about the text itself, nor is it any
> longer about inferences and similes, but about tropes [*tropis*] and interpretations . . .
> Let us rather take the view that neither an inference nor a trope is admissible in any
> passage of Scripture, unless it is forced on us by the evident nature of the context and
> the absurdity of the literal sense as conflicting with one or another of the articles of
> faith. Instead, we must everywhere stick to the simple, pure, and natural sense of the
> words that accords with the rules of grammar and the normal use of language as God
> has created it in man. For if everybody is allowed to discover inferences and tropes in
> the Scriptures just as he pleases, what will Scripture as a whole be but a reed shaken
> by the wind or a sort of Vertumnus? Then indeed there will be nothing certain either
> asserted or proved in connection with any article of faith which you will not be able
> to quibble away with some trope or other. We ought rather to shun as the deadliest
> poison every trope that Scripture itself does not force upon us.[67]

Key to this discussion is Luther's use of the term *tropus*. Dawson's reminder of Quintilian's

distinction between *tropes* and *figures* illustrates the issue. A *trope* replaces meaning, while a

figure retains meaning. As argued above, Origen does not utilize a tropec reading and exposition

of the Scripture. Rather, he embraces a figural exposition, which retains the literal sense of the

text while expanding upon its spiritual sense for the edification of his hearers. Luther,

intentionally or otherwise, approached Origen from a rhetorical perspective different from the

one which we have put forward. This different interpretative assumption of the use of tropes

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[66] *LW* 33:162–63; *WA* 18:703.

[67] *LW* 33:162–63; *WA* 18:700–701. "*Vides itaque hic, non de textu ipso, nec iam de sequelis et similitudinibus, sed de tropis et interpretationibus pugnari .. . . .Sic potius sentiamus, neque sequelam neque tropum in ullo loco scripturae esse admittendum, nisi id cogat circumstantia verborum evidens et absurditas rei manifestae in aliquem fidei articulum peccans; sed ubique inhaerendum est simplici puraeque et naturali significationi verborum, quam grammatica et usus loquendi habet, quem Deus creavit in hominibus. Quod si cuivis liceat, pro sua libidine sequelas et tropos in scripturis fingere, quid erit scriptura tota nisi arundo ventis agitata aut vertumnus aliquis? Tum vere nihil certi neque statuetur neque probabitur in ullo articulo fidei, quod non queas aliquo tropo cavillari. Vitari potius sicut praesentissimum venenum debet omnis tropus, quem non cogit ipsamet scriptura.*"

resulted in Luther's dismissal of Origen's exposition. [68]

This different understanding of Origen's use of figurative speech (as trope, not figure) offers an insight to the shift that occurred in the rise of Lutheran Scholasticism, as typified by Johann Gerhard (1582–1637). Gerhard's *Loci Theologica* is a comprehensive set of theological treatments on the Christian faith from a Lutheran perspective. Under the topic "On Interpretating Scripture," Gerhard attends to the use of rhetorical figuration. In the subsection, "On Allegory," Gerhard distinguishes between "type" and "allegory."

> A type is when something in the OT foreshadows or represents something that has been or will be accomplished in the New Testament. An allegory is when something in the Old or New Testament is expounded with new meaning (*sensu novo*) and is applied to spiritual doctrine or instruction [for living]. A type consists in the comparing of facts. Allegory is not so much concerned with facts as it is with sermons that draw forth useful and deep-lying doctrine."[69]

Gerhard's use of "allegory" differs from Luther's *tropum*. Gerhard utilizes a conceptualization of homiletic application to distinguish between the senses of the Scripture. Gerhard's comment that allegory "draws forth" (*depromit*) shows that he understands allegory as a legitimate aspect of homiletical expression. This *sensus novus* rests upon a historical foundation of both testaments that figural language expounds upon with "new meaning" and applies that meaning to the life of

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[68] While it does not fit into our discussion at present, there is little evidence to support Luther having a robust interaction with Origen's work beyond quotations from the *glossa Ordinaria* and Lombard's *Sentences*. Erasmus's *Prefaces to Origen's Writings* is published in 1536, two months after Erasmus's death. Furthermore, Luther himself invites this critique in his hyperbolic table talk. "In all of Origen there is not one word about Christ." (Martin Luther, "Table Talk Recorded by Veit Dietrich, 1531–1533," in *Table Talk*, ed. Helmut Lehmann, vol. 54, *Luther's Works* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1960), 47) Such a statement does not stand on its own merits in view of Origen's exposition.

[69] Johann Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture and Method of Theological Study,* trans. Joshua Hayes, Theological Commonplaces (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 96. "*Typus est, sum factum aliquod veteris testamentiostenditur, praesignisicasse seu adumbrasse aliquid gestum vel gerendum in Nov. Testamen. Exponitur sensu novo, atque accommodator ad spiritualem doctrinam seu vitae institutionem. Typus consistit in factorum collatione, Allgoria occupatur non tam in factis quam in ipsis concionibus [gatherings], e quibus doctrinam utilem et reconditam depromit.*" (Johann Gerhard, *Locorum Theologicorum*, vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Sumptibus Zachariae Hertelii, bibliopolae Hamburgensis, 1657, 37) As a note, the editor of this volume leaves untranslated the word *vitae* from *vitae institutionem*. I have amended the translation with brackets so that it appears more consistent with Gerhard's own terminology which understands the sermon as the place of allegory which is oriented toward edification.

the hearer. Thus, Gerhard understood allegory as analogous to the contemporary homiletical act of application. This is a fundamental shift away from the way Luther approached figurative language. Luther's concern was not with the spiritual instruction that occurs with the homiletical frame, but the invention of doctrines that have no Scriptural foundation. Contrary to Luther's caution against tropec replacement of meaning to create new doctrines of the faith, Gerhard saw allegory (within the homiletical sphere) as figural, retaining and expanding the meaning of the Scripture for the instruction of the hearers.

Attending to the utilization of the Scripture in the act of homiletic application, Gerhard wrote.

> There is only one proper and legitimate sense to each Scripture passage, a sense intended by the Holy Spirit and derived from the natural meaning of the words, and only from this one literal sense can any valid argumentation be brought forth. Allegorical, tropological, and anagogical interpretations are not different meanings, but different inferences drawn from the one meaning or different adaptations to the one meaning and sense that the writings express."[70]

This clarification is helpful in evaluating Origen's own figural exposition in view of Lutheran theology. Gerhard does not limit the literal sense of the Scripture to the historical event of the passage, but to the Spirit's intention for the use of the passage. Gerhard's reliance upon the Spirit's intention is the lynchpin of his argument. Gerhard clarifies his position by setting Christ as the "aim of all Scripture."[71] Thus, the revelation of Christ serves as the fundamental intention

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[70] Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture,* 94. "*Unus est cujusque loci proprius & genuinus sense, quem intendit Spiritus sanctus, & qui exipsa genuina verborum significatione colligitur, & ex hoc literali sensus solo essicacia argumenta depromuntur. Allegoria, tropologia, anagogia nonsunt variisensus, sed variex uno isto sensu collectiones, vel variae ni istius sensus & rei, quam exprimit litera, accomodationes.*" (Gerhard, *Locorum Theologicorum* , 36) Robert Preus makes the same recognition in *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism,* vol.1 (St. Louis: Concordia: 1970), 326. Preus offers further support to our position in his reproduction of a long quotation from Salomo Glassius (*Philologia Sacra*, [Leipzig, 1705]) which highlights the figural nature of the literal sense. (Preus, *Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:322, 1:370–71) For a more complete treatment of Gerhard's theology of interpretation, see Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture*, 93–100.

[71] Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture,* 97.

of the Spirit. The outer limit of the Spirit's intention is governed by the analogy of faith or *regula fidei.* The space that exists between the center and edge of the Spirit's intention is filled with Gerhard's "different inferences" for the sake of "giving sermons to the people."[72] Origen's HLev 1 presents a similar understanding of the central revelation of Christ, the role of the Spirit, and the function of the homily.

> As "in the Last Days," the Word of God, which was clothed with the flesh of Mary, proceeded into this world . . . So also when the Word of God was brought to humans through the Prophets and the Lawgiver, it was not brought without proper clothing. For just as there it was covered with the veil of flesh, so here with the veil of the letter . . . the Holy Spirit himself must be entreated by us to remove every cloud and all darkness which obscures the vision of our hearts hardened with the stains of sins in order that we may be able to behold the spiritual and wonderful knowledge of his Law, according to him who said, "Take the veil from my eyes and I shall observe the wonders of your Law." Therefore, as best we are able, let us briefly narrate a few things from many, not studying so much the interpretation of single words, for this is done by one who writes at leisure. But we will bring forth the things which pertain to the edification of the Church in order that we might provide opportunities of understanding for our hearers.[73]

Origen situates the whole of the written Word of God as Christ and revealing Christ, the same as Gerhard asserts by his statement "Christ is the aim of the Scripture." Furthermore, Origen presents the Holy Spirit as the actor who gives understanding as to the "knowledge of his Law." In similar fashion to Gerhard's "intention of the Spirit," Origen held that the Spirit is the only one who is able to give proper understanding and insight into the Scripture. Finally, Origen positions the function of his homily (the edification of the Church) in the same vein as Gerhard discusses the use of allegory "expounded with new meaning (*sensu novo*) and is applied to spiritual doctrine or instruction [for living]."[74]

Gerhard presents and supports an understanding of figuration that divides its homiletical

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[72] Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture*, 97.

[73] FC 83:29–31.

[74] Gerhard, *On Interpreting Sacred Scripture*, 96.

usage from its ability to establish doctrine. Gerhard understands figuration in homiletics in a manner consistent with Origen's usage of figural exposition, rejecting Luther's focus upon trope. This use of figural exposition aims at the revelation of Christ and the instruction of the hearers, without destroying the historical sense of the text.

Although Gerhard aids in understanding how figural exposition may be expressed within Lutheran dogmatics, his "one proper and legitimate sense" has resulted in a misunderstanding of the accepted exegetical position of the LCMS. This misunderstanding recognizes only the historical-literal sense as the "true" meaning. This position is often based upon the discussion by C.F.W. Walther in Thesis 16C and 16D of *The True Visible Church of God upon Earth*.[75] There Walther writes, "The Evangelical Lutheran Church recognizes only the literal sense as the true meaning," and "The Evangelical Lutheran Church maintains that there is but one literal sense."[76] A careful consideration of Walther's statement and the authorities he utilizes reveals that Walther is not supporting a purely historical-literal sense. Among those whom Walther references for support are August Pfeiffer (1748–1817) and Johann Gerhard, who stand out for their definition of the "literal sense." Walther quotes Gerhard's "one proper and legitimate sense," which we have already discussed. The quotation from Pfeiffer offers a thorough treatment of the function of the "literal sense."

> The literal sense is that which the words have in their proper and original meaning, although this at times does not express what the speaker has in mind. Thus the statement: 'Herod is a fox' means in its literal sense: 'Herod, the tetrarch of Galilee, is a howling four-footed beast.' But the proper so-called literal sense is that which by the inspired words the Holy Spirit really means to convey . . . Hence the literal sense is not always and everywhere the original meaning of the words, that is the sense which the words have in their proper meaning. The original meaning of the words is not always that intended by the Holy Spirit, which commonly we call the literal sense

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[75] C.F.W. Walther, *The True Visible Church and the Form of a Christian Congregation*, trans. John Theodore Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia, 2006), 72–79.

[76] Walther, *True Visible Church*, 72;74.

. . . Every passage of Holy Scripture has a literal sense; that is every one has a definite meaning, which the Holy Spirit really intended and which is the literal sense no matter whether the words are to be taken properly or figuratively . . . The mystic or spiritual meaning of Holy Scripture is, to speak accurately, either the literal sense or it is no sense at all; that is, it is either so constituted that it coincides with the literal sense, namely, wherever the suggested spiritual mystery is expressed by the words, or it cannot at all be called the meaning of Holy Scripture, as for example, were it is not expressed. . . .Thus the passage: 'Though shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn' (Deut. 25:4) is applied by Paul figuratively in 1 Cor. 9:9 to the teachers of the church, whose support must not be denied them. This application of Paul in the latter passage is the literal sense of the Holy Scripture itself. But in the passage used by Moses this figurative meaning is not the literal sense, but an application of a commandment which is revealed not here, but elsewhere by the Holy Spirit.[77]

Pfeiffer sets forward the literal sense as the meaning that "the Holy Spirit really means to convey." This statement allows for the use of figurative language in establishing meaning, invalidating a literalism that does not recognize figuration in language. Pfeiffer's description of the literal sense fits Gerhard's understanding that the application of Scripture allows for "different inferences" to be drawn from passages of Scripture when they are applied to contemporary hearer. This is expressed in Pfeiffer's explanation of Paul's figural exposition of 1 Cor. 9:9. The distinction between the meaning of 1 Cor. 9:9 and Deut. 25:4 lies in the historical intent of the text. Paul used the figural application of Deut. 25:4 to support teachers of the Church. The historic intent, and therefore the literal sense of Deut. 25:4 is the care of animals. As Pfeifer concludes, "in the passage used by Moses this figurative meaning [of 1 Cor. 9:9], is not the literal sense, but an application of a commandment which is revealed not here, but elsewhere by the Holy Spirit." Pfeiffer makes the case that the literal sense is the historical intent of the passage, but that this literal sense can be applied non-historically through figural meaning, as long as it is in accordance with the teachings of the Holy Spirit elsewhere in Scripture.

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[77] Walther, *True Visible Church*, 73–74. Quoting from August Pfeiffer, *Thesaur. Herm.,* chapt. III pars 3,4, can. 1, 6,8, 10, pp.112 ff.

Walther, in utilizing Gerhard and Pfeiffer as authorities for the definition of his use of "literal sense," presents an understanding of the literal sense built upon the historical reality of the text. This "literal sense" is not the limitation of homiletics, but the establishment of doctrine. Walther's literal sense invites a homiletic approach that utilizes the figurative application of the text in order to edify and teach those who hear as they are drawn to the "aim of all Scripture," Christ.

This understanding and use of the historical-literal sense is closely related to a more referential theory of meaning. Returning to the beginning discussion of this chapter, O'Keefe and Reno highlight the different theories of language which are utilized by the Early Church and more modern readers. Modern readers view language as acquiring meaning through reference. Implicit in Walther's statements and his authorities is a move away from the theory of meaning that was utilized in the Early Church that saw meaning delivered directly through the text without reliance upon its historical antecedents. For Walther and those in his line, the meaning of Scripture is found in its historical-literal sense. Any additional application of Scripture is a derivative of the literal meaning that gains meaning only in reference to the original historical-literal sense. These Lutheran authorities have not embraced or understood the conferring nature of meaning utilized by the Early Fathers, which saw meaning delivered directly through the text without reliance upon its historical antecedents. Instead, they have imposed their own theory of meaning upon their reading of the work of the Early Church. The imparting of a referential theory of language upon the work and teaching of the Early Church is the repeated theme from Luther to Walther and into modern Lutheranism. Judging Origen through lens and views that were not his own nor available to his position in history does not offer a true picture of his work, but a caricature.

As we have seen from the examples of Luther, Gerhard, Walther and his authorities,

Lutheran dogmatics has strongly cautioned against the removal of historical meaning from a

passage. It has, however, allowed for and promoted additional meaning to be found in a passage

beyond its historical-literal sense.[78] In his discussion of Jacob's ladder in his Genesis

commentary, Luther identifies the ladder as a "picture or an image, as it were, that has to have a

meaning."[79] Luther ultimately argues that the ladder "signifies Christ."[80] Luther's interpretation

adds a layer of sense to the text, while retaining the original historical sense. This example of

Luther's "pictorial" language is connected to the Lutheran dogmatician, Francis Pieper (1852–

1931). Pieper's *Christian Dogmatics* does not formally discuss the senses of the Scriptural text.

Nevertheless, the concept can be inferred through Pieper's insistence upon the literal sense. The

prime example is Pieper's discussion of the language of the Lord's Supper. Pieper warns against

the use of tropes as substitutes for the proper or intended meaning of a passage. "[W]hen we are

dealing with pictures 'is' remains is … Moreover, all Scripture passages which bring parables or

allegories belong to the category of pictures."[81] In the same section, Pieper writes,

> [O]ur Lutheran teachers call to mind the following hermeneutical rule, a reminder
> which some call tiresome, but which is nevertheless very necessary: Every word must
> be taken in its first, that is, its proper meaning until circumstances contained in the
> context or an express declaration of the writer compel one to substitute the figurative
> or symbolic meaning for the natural.[82]

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[78] This additional meaning is typically discussed in Lutheran dogmatics under the concepts of *sensus plenor* and *sensus literalis unus est*. See Preus, *Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:315–35; Samuel H. Nafzger et al., ed., *Confessing the Gospel: A Lutheran Approach to Systematic Theology*, vol 2 (St. Louis: Concordia, 2017), 689–93.

[79] *LW* 5:217.

[80] *LW* 5:218.

[81] Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, vol. 3, trans. T. Englender, J.T. Mueller, and W.W.F. Albrecht (St. Louis: Concordia, 1950), 306. Pieper utilizes *tropus* through his discussion on language concerning the Lord's Supper as his technical definition of figurative meaning. (Francis Pieper, *Christliche Dogmatik*, vol. 3 [St. Louis: Concordia: 1920], 359.)

[82] Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, 3:317.

Pieper argues that Scripture is not to be understood differently than its proper meaning and, even in situations of pictural language, meaning is not substituted. If one joins Pieper's comments concerning "pictures" to the concept of figural interpretation, the vision of a ladder in Genesis could legitimately give rise to an additional meaning of a vision of Christ. The substitution of meaning is not a destruction of the literal sense, "Jacob saw a ladder," but expansion, "Jacob saw Christ as the ladder." This illustrates the retention of meaning that occurs with "figures" in contrast to the removal of meaning that occurs with tropes. Likewise, Origen's homily on Lev. 4 affirms the historic situation and meaning of ritual sacrifices, while at the same time viewing these sacrifices as *figura* which expand upon this historical meaning into a Christological sense.[83]

Little investigation of figural exposition has occurred in contemporary Lutheran circles. Most interaction with figuration and senses of Scripture is found in the form of a rehashing of Luther's tropec assumptions against Origen.[84] An exception to this trend is found in the Concordia Commentary series, specifically John Kleinig's volume on Leviticus.[85] In both Origen and Kleinig, the historical sense of the text is affirmed and expanded in order to form the hearer/reader through the revelation of Christ. The method used by Kleinig to expound and comment upon Leviticus appears similar to Origen's stated approach in HLev 1.

> Nevertheless, both Christ and his apostles show that the ritual legislation in Leviticus
> is relevant for us. While the law of Moses does not prescribe what we do in the
> Divine Service, it helps us to understand how God interacts with us in Christ and in

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[83] FC 83:39–51.

[84] One modern example of this position on Origen in Lutheran literature is seen in Robert Plummer's "Contra Origen." "There can be little doubt as to what Luther thought of the allegory of Origen, Jerome, and many other church fathers. He repeatedly blasts their allegorical exegesis as unfaithful twisting of Scripture." (Plummer, "Contra Origen," 20.) The question of the correctness of Luther's critique is left unaddressed and simply assumed to be correct. As we have attempted to show in our analysis, Luther has a fundamentally different understanding of Origen's figural exposition. Plummer and other Lutheran scholars have not engaged the legitimacy of Luther's critique. They have perpetuated an incorrect, or at least incomplete, understanding of Origen that has drastically shifted the Church's intentional and thoughtful engagement away from the Early Church generally and Origen, more specifically.

[85] John W. Kleinig, *Leviticus*, ConcC (St. Louis: Concordia, 2003), 24–30.

the Divine Service. So each section in this commentary ends with a discussion of the fulfillment of each piece of ritual legislation by Christ. In each case, we will examine the function and significance of the divine service, for what God intended to achieve ritually through his law in Leviticus is accomplished fully by Christ and conveyed to the Church in the Divine Service.[86]

Kleinig's comments illustrate a close connection to Origen's bringing "forth the things which pertain to the edification of the Church in order that we might provide opportunities of understanding for our hearers."[87] As Origen sought to create understanding of the divine nature of the written Word that reveals Christ to the hearer in the homily, Kleinig attempts to draw out a similar understanding in the context of the Divine Service.

Lutheran teachers before Kleinig have spoken similarly about the figural sense of the Scripture and its relation to the literal text. Robert Preus recognizes this in *The Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheran*.[88]

> The sense of Scripture is the meaning that the Spirit of God intends to be known and understood by those who read it. But often the Spirit intends a higher (*sublimius*) meaning to be understood from the persons or events depicted in a text (*per rem ipsis verbis significatam*) than the reading of the text as a mere history immediately conveys. Thus, not only the history is the sense of the text, but through the history a certain mystery is introduced as the sense of the text.[89]

Furthermore, Preus affirms the viability of the homiletical use of figural exposition for the sake of edification.

> Allegory gives a new meaning to something in the Old or New Testament for the sake of application only. For instance, we might say that David's victory over Goliath signifies the victory of our spirit over the flesh. This would be said to illustrate a point, not to prove it, and there is nothing in the story of David and Goliath that suggests the victory of our Spirit over our flesh. The allegory is used merely for illustrative purposes.[90]

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[86] Kleinig, *Leviticus*, 25.

[87] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[88] Preus, *Theology of Post-Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:321–29.

[89] Preus, *Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:327.

[90] Preus, *Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:328.

Preus' observations mirror our own.

Even as Origen was the target of some of the theological corrections and clarifications embraced by the Lutheran Church, in actuality, Origen's figural exposition largely conforms to Lutheran standards.[91] Moreover, Origen's figural exposition presents a homiletical model that can be utilized in a manner completely consistent with the doctrinal expressions of the LCMS.

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[91] Preus, *Theology of Post Reformation Lutheranism*, 1:324. "The Lutheran insistence on determining the *sensus literalis* of Scripture is clearly opposed to the theory of Origen, which filtered down to the schoolmen, that every Scripture passage admitted of a *multiplex intelligentia* and a fourfold sense must be sought."

CHAPTER THREE

SITUATING ORIGEN'S FIGURAL EXPOSITION IN ECCLESIASTICAL AND RHETORICAL TRADITIONS

Introduction

This chapter situates Origen's homilies within both the historic development of the Church's homiletic tradition and Greco-Roman rhetoric. As historical artifacts, Origen's homilies offer a perspective on the historical era of their production. Though modern homiletical categories cannot adequately evaluate ancient homilies, Origen's homilies can benefit the modern preacher.

This chapter consists of three parts. The first two seek to establish a "thick" description of Origen's homilies within the Church's tradition of preaching and the societal tradition of rhetoric. The present discussion will articulate the function of Origen's figural exposition, and thereby address the problems that occur when ancient homilies are read as modern sermons. Reading Origen within the Church's history highlights Origen's place as both a technical pioneer and an apologetic defender of the Scriptures. The second part of the chapter will examine Origen's use of the rhetorical tradition that arose from Aristotle and was more fully expressed in the works of Cicero and Quintilian.[1] Specifically, their discussion and definition of a variety of *figura* situate Origen's homilies within their rhetorical tradition.[2] Two specific figures, *anthypophora* and expansion by division (*distributio*), will aid to illustrate a holistic description of the structure and intention behind Origen's figural exposition. The third part of this chapter offers introduction to several key scholars whose work intersects with our own. These scholars

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[1] See Aristotle, *Rhetoric for Alexander,* trans. Robert Mayhew and David Mirhady, Loeb Classical Library 317 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011); Cicero, *Rhet. Ad Herr.*; Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, vol. 1–5, trans. Donald A. Russell, Loeb Classical Loeb 124– 29 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[2] LCL 403:274–309; LCL 127:10–163.

share some agreement in their examination of rhetorical aspects in Origen but diverge in their evaluation of the implications of Origen's rhetoric. These scholars will also facilitate a new awareness of Origen's use of figures as a means to accomplish his goal of "understanding" in his hearers.

Defining Origen's Homiletical "Understanding"

Origen preached to "provide opportunities for understanding."[3] Origen used the term "understanding" (*intellegentia*) to refer to the process that begins with a knowledge of the literal sense of Scripture and then moves through a spiritual interpretation to the resultant formative activity of the body and soul. This definition of "understanding" enables us to distinguish between Origen's purpose and a misunderstanding common to Origenian scholarship. Within the literature, the act of preaching has been segregated from the act of interpretation. Scholarship has addressed "Origen's interpretation of Scripture" or "Origen's understanding of the Scripture" or some similar terms.[4] Scholars have, then, devised an interpretive schema from Origen's *Peri Archon* and then "proved" this schema from various homiletical examples and commentary references.[5] Origenian scholarship has largely followed the modern treatment of homiletics in

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[3] FC 83:31 [1.1.5]. "*occasiones potius intelligentiae*"

[4] See Heine, *Origen: An Introduction*, 57–80; Martens, *Origen and Scripture*, 1–5.

[5] A prime example of this is the work of Kyeil Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage: Envisioning Scriptural Interpretation as a Symbolic Act in Origen's Hermeneutics," PhD. diss, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, 2017. This trend has seen some differentiation recently with the John Solheid's suggestion that the Scripture is "a contemplative medium" which Origen encountered God through prayer. Solheid argues that the reading and the interpretation of Scripture are best understood as primarily embodied acts of prayer by which God imparts understanding. ("The Grammar of Prayer According to Origen: On Prayer as Technê Askêtikê," in *Spiritus*: *A Journal of Christian Spirituality* 19, no. 2 [Fall 2019]: 283–303.) Solheid's argument is not far from Augustine's own comments concerning prayer as a vehicle of Spiritual reminding. Augustine sets prayer as primarily a spiritual interaction with God. "We must seek and pray to God in the innermost court of the rational soul which is called the 'interior man,' for it is here that He has wished to make His temple." (Augustine, "The Teacher," in *Earlier Writings,* trans. J.H.S. Burleigh, 64–101 [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006], 9.) Augustine, returns to prayer later in his argument, nuancing this spiritual act by reinforcing its inability to effect God and its ability for God to use it to effect and remind us of certain truths. "In praying to God, who cannot conceivably be taught or reminded of anything, our words serve either to remind ourselves or to enable us to remind and teach others." (Augustine, "The

their division of the act of exegesis (synonymous in function with hermeneutics) and the act of application or preaching act.

This modern division between exegesis and application is too firmly applied to Origen's homilies. Origen's preaching is best discussed as an extemporaneous endeavor in which the interpretation is blended into the act of preaching. While Origen regularly displays underlying principles of interpretation in his homilies, our evaluation in this dissertation is not hermeneutical. I wish to draw attention to the result of the homiletical act, insofar as possible distinguishing the homiletical act from the underlying hermeneutical process. The event of preaching should be distinguished from the hermeneutical process that produces it. There exists a recognizable difference between the result of the preaching act and the result of an act of interpretation, the latter being located in an apologetic work or commentary. Origen presents this difference in light of one's temporal setting, dividing homily from commentary through the temporal limitations of both events. The interpretive act in a commentary is expansive, addressing "single words" (*singulorum verborum*) in "wide-ranging expositions" (*expositionum latitudinem*).[6] The homiletical act is a focused endeavor in which Origen attempts "to narrate a few things from many … in order that we might provide opportunities of understanding for our hearers."[7] The homily, as a limited action, has the narrow aim of formation.

The Early Church does not typically distinguish between interpretation in a hypothetical position or interpretation within a homiletical setting.[8] Nevertheless, it is possible to articulate a

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Teacher," 30)*.* In this way, Augustine and Solheid, work to establish a theory of interpretation that informs any interpretation of Scripture with the *a priori* activity of the Spirit that occurs through prayer.

[6] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[7] FC 83:31 [1.1.5]. "*Igitur quam possumus breviter pauca perstringamus ex multis … ut occasiones potius intelligentiae auditoribus demus*".

8 FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

difference and evaluate Origen's homilies from the perspective of the preaching act by attending

to its structure and intention for formation. Modern speech-act theory, particularly as advocated

by J.L. Austin,[9] offers several terms that can help identify the difference between interpretation

within a commentary and within a homily. Austin's theory focuses on both the intention or use

of language to achieve an outcome and the effect of that language upon the hearer. The intent is

described as "illocutionary force" and the result of the act upon the hearer, "perlocutionary

force."[10] Though these terms are anachronistic for analyzing Origen, they can help in the analysis

of his homilies.

In HJer 8 Origen equates the illocutionary force of "understanding" to the knowledge that

forms the experience of the hearer in a particular way. Origen highlights the effect that the

different names for Christ have on the hearer.

> But though there is one substance, the differences in the aspects of the names are
> many. You do not understand the same thing about Christ when you understand him
> as "wisdom" and when you understand him as "righteousness." For when he is
> "wisdom," you mean the knowledge of things divine and human, but when he is
> "righteousness," he is that power which allots to every person according to worth.[11]

Origen's observations can be read as a commentary upon both the illocutionary force and its

intended perlocutionary force. Origen employs the term "understanding" to describe the force of

the text to form the hearer to act in specific ways based on their knowledge of the meaning of the

words used.

Origen assumes that his homiletical speech act will have an impact upon the hearer. In HEx

12, Origen attends to the perlocutionary force of "understanding" by dividing those who "turn to

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[9] J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1962).

[10] Austin, *How to Do Things,* 94–99; 101–103.

[11] FC 97:76–77 [8.2.1].

the Lord" from those who "turn away from the Lord."[12] Origen begins the section with an

enthymeme[13] that equates a lack of understanding with those who "have not yet turned to the

Lord." After discussing what "turning to the Lord" is not, Origen offers a positive example. "We

devote ourselves to God if we are exercised in his testimonies, this is to turn to the Lord."[14]

Origen expands the concept of understanding by tying together the concepts of faith, knowledge,

and action under the phrase "turning to the Lord." For Origen, this denotes an active devotion to

God on the part of the hearer. This example shows that Origen's use of figural exposition has an

intended effect upon the hearer and the result of that effect is seen in the activity of the Christian.

The activity of the hearer as a result of "understanding" can again be seen in an example from

HLev 6.

> But if we understood well what the ornament of the priest is or, above all, the honor
> of his head, we would desire not only to know and to hear the depths of the divine
> mysteries but both to fulfill and to do them because "the hearers of the Law will not
> be justified before God, but the doers." As we have already said often, you too can
> function as a high priest before God within the temple of your spirit if you would
> prepare your garments with zeal and vigilance; if the word of the Law has washed
> you and made you clean, and the anointing and grace of your baptism remained
> uncontaminated; if you were to be clothed with two garments, of the letter and of the
> spirit; if you were also girded twice so that you may be pure in flesh and spirit; if you
> would adorn yourselves "with a cape" of works and "a breastplate" of wisdom; if also
> he would crown your head "with a turban" and "a golden plate," the fullness of the
> knowledge of God; although, I would have you know, you may be hidden and
> unknown before men. "For you are the temple of the living God" if "the Spirit of God
> lives in you."[15]

Throughout his homiletical corpus Origen uses the term "understanding" to describe the

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[12] FC 71:367–69 [1.1–2].

[13] Quintilian addresses enthymeme as a subset of syllogism. Syllogism "always has a completed argument and a major premise and proves its proposition by means of all its parts, while and enthymeme is content simply to be understood." (LCL 125:512–13) In actual practice, enthymeme is used as a contracted syllogism that assumes a portion of the syllogism's argument.

[14] FC 71:369. [12.2]. "*Deo vacemus, exerceamur in testimoniis eius, hoc est conversum esse ad Dominum.*"

[15] FC 83:125 [6.5.2].

status of the hearer whereby the hearer joins with the speaker in accepting the spiritual

interpretation of the text and internalizing its application as an act of formation. Several

examples are provided here. First, in HEz 3 (2.1).

> Here, too, if we are to understand the present Scripture and the sense in which it is
> said to the prophet: "Set your face on the daughters of your people," so that he sees
> the things he is about to speak, we need to set our understanding and hold a full
> investigation into the intention of our heart [in order to determine] what it is that is
> signified.… Necessity is imposed upon us by the Scripture itself, though we are
> unwilling, to draw back from shapes of the letters and to ask that his word, wisdom,
> and intention disclose what is closed off and illuminate what is obscure. Thus, we
> may be able to become free from this curse, while we learn what it means for the one
> against whom the curse is pronounced.[16]

Understanding is knowledge tempered with action. Origen pairs knowledge with wisdom

intentionally using the illocutionary force of the passage to lead the hearer toward a spiritual

interpretation so that the hearer "may be able to become free." This spiritual sense of the

Scripture is the lynchpin of Origen's use of "understanding." To "understand" is more than

knowledge, it is action. Specifically, it is a spiritual activity that is bound up in Origen's

soteriology.

A second example of "understanding" as the expression of interpretation and application is

presented in HJud. 8. Here, Origen divides the term by highlighting the difference in outcome

between the "understanding" of Jews, or literalistic reading of the Scripture, and a spiritual

understanding of the text.

> See what he himself [Jesus] says, interpreting in the following verses: "But they who
> were sown along the path, they are those who hear the word of God and receive it
> with joy, but the Devil comes and takes away from their heart that which has been
> sown." So, therefore, even those now come to the seed of God and wish to "take" it
> "away from the heart" of those in whom it was sown, because they find them settled
> in the valleys, already pursuing each one of the lowest places. For from these places
> come those who, basely and unworthily, as so I might say, receive the word of God
> with a Jewish understanding, and, for that reason, the demons can "tear" it "out of

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[16] ACW 62:55–56 [3.2.1].

their heart." But he who ascends from the lowness of the letter to the heights of the spirit, and, shrinking back from the fleshly meaning, pursues into the higher places "those [gifts] which are of the Spirit of God," from him neither the Midianites nor the Amalekites can tear away anything, but indeed neither will "the people of the East" themselves be able to plunder the one who is established at the highest summit of spiritual understanding.[17]

Origen presents two outcomes based on the knowledge and action of the hearer: (1) Those who engage in more "Jewish" or literalistic readings will lose the joy of the written Word of God. (2) No one, however, will be able to steal the joy and "gifts which are of the Spirit of God" from the one who ascends to the Spiritual sense of the text.

In emphasizing the spiritual sense of the text, Origen is careful to highlight the distinction between his interpretation of the Scripture and that of the heretics. One example is found in HEx 2, where Origen focuses upon the interplay between exegesis and application. In this example he blends the activities into one event through his appeal for "diligent attention" and the work of the Holy Spirit. Origen presents the case that a proper exegesis in the homiletical setting is an application by which the hearers are enabled to act.

> But if someone, when reading the Gospel, applies his own meaning to the Gospel and fails to understand it in the way in which the Lord spoke it, he is a false prophet.… Now when he [Christ] comes upon me, I, who am spoken of as a man of the church, I who receive the Holy Book and who depend on him for the interpretation, to determine what should be understood about the heretics, I request that the hearers pay diligent attention and receive the grace of the Spirit according to what has been spoken: "The discernment of spirits."[18]

Origen models this in himself, the interpretation of the Scripture results in an application of judgment upon other teachings. It is not a separate activity but an assumed outcome of the process.

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[17] Origen, *Homilies on Judges*, trans. Elizabeth Dively Lauro, Fathers of the Church 119 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2010) 102–103 [8.2].

[18] ACW 62:47–48 [2.2.3].

In his commentary on the Gospel of John, Book VI, Origen positions application as a natural outcome of a correct exegesis. Discussing the phrase "Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17), Origen seeks to comfort his hearers by alleviating any fear of a contradiction between this scripture and Jesus' statement "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (John 14:6). Origen assumes that through proper exegesis the application of the teaching is accomplished.[19]

In sum, Origen uses the term "understanding" as the result of the homiletical act. Origen does not perceive any division between the comprehension of the teaching of Scripture and its integration into one's life. To understand is to enact. Origen's homilies do not dwell upon the concept of resistance to the Gospel by the hearers. Origen believed that a proper understanding will be used by the Holy Spirit to develop the hearer's character and deepen the union between the Christian and Christ. Origen illustrates this belief by his usage of Prov. 9:9 in HLev 1.1. "Give understanding to the wise and he will be wiser still."[20]

Homiletical Development of the Early Church

Proper positioning of Origen's homilies in the history of the Church includes appreciation of his concept of "understanding" based on the texts of Scripture. Contrary to the popular assertion that Origen's homilies reflect a platonic worldview, Origen's homilies pioneered a new rhetorical form of "homily"[21] aimed to defend the validity of the Christian Scriptures and to change the life of his hearers.

Scholars have often portrayed Origen as the head of the Alexandrian tradition of allegorical

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[19] Origen, *Origen: Commentary on the Gospel According to John, Books 1–10*, trans. Ronald E. Heine, Fathers of the Church 80 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 1989), 178 [6.37].

[20] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[21] O. C. Edwards Jr., *A History of Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004). Old, *Biblical Period*, 1:31.

interpretation. The Alexandrian tradition is best viewed in relation to its counterpart, the

Antiochian tradition. The Antiochian tradition emphasized the literal sense of the Scripture,

whereas the Alexandrian tradition embraced the spiritual sense.[22] This type of scholarly

description reflects an attempt to describe the historical moment of Origen through his

hermeneutic practice. Attempts to use his hermeneutic to describe the Church's development

have typically failed to appreciate Origen's reason for his hermeneutic system as fundamental to

understanding his historic milieu. Therefore, most scholars have pivoted around a central concept

of "Platonism" as either defining or defying Origen's work.[23] Viewed in this way, Origen's

homilies are evaluated through a narrative that works out of these "Platonist" tendencies in one

way or another. Thus, these scholars describe the church's homiletic as a growing out of

'platonic' thought into something more "biblical."[24]

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[22] The example of Theodore of Mopseustia, part of the Antiochene school, serves to illustrate this division. In his commentary on Psalm 22, Theodore argues that there is no way for it to refer to Christ because it is not literally referenced by the New Testament in relation to Christ. Christ's use of portions of it during his crucifixion notwithstanding. (Theodore of Mopseustia, *Commentary on Psalms 1–81*, trans. Robert Hill [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006], 242–43.) Other members of the Antiochian school are less extreme but still cautious of non-literal readings.

[23] Douglas Farrow's *Ascension and Ecclesia* is a good example of understanding Origen as a Platonist in clerical robes. "[Origen] borrowed his building blocks from a variety of sources (Christian, Platonist, Stoic, Basilidean, etc.) and dressed them to his own requirements . . . *de Principiis* - which Jerome referred to as his 'poisoned dish' – begins with the 'plain' doctrines taught by the apostles and confessed by all at their baptism. But here follows immediately the first of a series of concessions to Greek cosmology and knowing." Farrow's point is clear. "Origen's God-talk is more Philonic than Christian and more triadic than trinitarian." (Farrow, *Ascension and Ecclesia*, 90–91;92) De Lubac has anticipated this critique in *History and Spirit*, "Calling [Origen's position] Platonic is to use overly general or imprecise language . . . Besides, Platonic or not, if it is philosophical our first trichotomy is Biblical as well, and not only Pauline. According to the psalms, for example, "a living man is composed of three elements: flesh, soul, and breath." (De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 177.) See also Edwards, *Origen against Plato*; Dermot Moran, "Origen and Eriugena: Aspects of Christian Gnosis." In *The Relationship between Neoplatonism and* Christianity, ed. Thomas Finan and Vincent Twomey (Dublin: Four Courts, 1992), 44.

[24] This dissertation seeks to avoid the idea of "repristinating" attending to the awareness of what John Webster calls "the temptation of religion." "A further temptation for theologians of retrieval is to subscribe to a myth of the fall of theology from Christian genuineness at some point in its past (fourteenth-century nominalism, the sixteenth-century Reformation, seventeenth-century Cartesianism, or whatever "modernity" is considered to have first presented itself) . . . Such a stance can indicate the same illusion of superiority as that sometimes claimed by critical reason. Moreover, it can fail to grasp that the problem is not *modern* theology, but simply *theology.* Modern constraints bring particular challenges which can be partially defeated by attending to a broader and wiser history, but there is no pure Christian past whose retrieval can ensure theological fidelity." (John Webster, "Theologies of

Origen's homilies offer an informative and important portrait of one of the most influential Fathers of the Early Church. Origen's homilies reflect a period of Church history characterized by both numerical growth and homiletic development focused upon the Biblical text. A close reading of Origen's homilies does not support the centrality of "Platonism." Origen's approach understood that the historic text was a revelation of Christ, the incarnate Word of God, and was given to edify its hearers.[25] This sense was more central to the purpose of the Scripture in Origen's homilies than the historical sense or "platonic" categories. Origen was a pioneer of the style and function of the homily, using a familiar form of rhetorical speech to establish a valid form of preaching for those inside and outside the Church. This validity, by the nature of truth and the commitment of an individual to their perception of truth, leads to the development of the hearer. Origen's homilies exhibit a didactic and exhortative tone, by which Origen attempted to form his hearers according to the Biblical pattern of unity with Christ, which he finds throughout the Scriptures. Origen's figural exposition was not without its opponents, including some within Origen's congregation, as is evidenced from Origen's various self-referential comments.[26] This opposition did not arise from concerns of "platonic" corruption of the faith, but from an overly literal reading of the Scripture.

Origen as a Pioneer

Origen's figural exposition offered a repeatable homiletical form to the Church that was distinct from other contemporary Greco-Roman forms of speech. Origen's practice of addressing

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Retrieval" in *Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. Kathryn Tanner, John Webster, and Iain Torrance, 583–99, [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009] 596–97.)

[25] FC 83:30–31 [1.1.1–5].

[26] See FC 83:166 [8.9.2] Marcian and Valentinus are specifically commented upon in HLev 8. In this reference, Origen discusses both Marcian and Valentinus as a stand-ins for general set of heretical beliefs with the main focus of the passage upon Epicurus and his focus on "pleasure as the highest good."

a Scriptural passage, figurally expounding upon said passage, and progressing to the next passage became the building block of the Church's homiletic. This repeatable style was joined to the Church's worship as it focused upon the spiritual formation of the congregation through the exposition upon a text of Scripture. While these facts are not debated, Origen scholarship has put forward two competing narratives describing Origen's homiletical pioneering, portraying Origen as either a generally orthodox churchman or as corrupted by platonic influence. These narratives will be presented through the work of O.C. Edwards and H.O. Old.

The works of O.C. Edwards and H.O. Old serve both as longitudinal compendiums of preaching and as examples of the two narratives of the rising homiletical tradition of Origen in the Early Church. Edwards prioritizes one of the competing narratives by his attention to Origen's purpose, while Old focuses upon his understanding of Origen's hermeneutic. In his history of the preaching of the Church, Edwards presents Origen as a pioneer of the homiletical form. "Credit for creating the classical form of the homily has to go to the one who is also known as 'the first Christian systematic theologian,' Origen."[27] Edwards continues, following the work of Pierre Nautin,[28] discussing Origen as a "grammarian" and argues that his homilies did not follow rhetorical structures as "none of the *genera dicendi* of classical rhetoric provided for the explication of a text. Origen's training as a grammarian provided him with precisely the genre of speech in the Greco-Roman world that was adaptable to preaching from the Bible."[29] Edwards is careful to present Origen's allegorical interpretation in view of its aim, which Edwards describes as "the spiritual formation of the congregation."[30] Edwards privileges the aim of Origen's

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[27] Edwards, *History of Preaching,* 31.

[28] See Nautin, *Origene.*

[29] Edwards, *History of Preaching*, 40.

[30] Edwards, *History of Preaching*, 46.

homiletics over his specific hermeneutical practice. Origen is ultimately viewed by Edwards as the formulaic model of the Church's homiletic until at least the Middle Ages.[31]

H.O. Old offers an alternative narrative of Origen in the homiletical tradition of the Church. Old's first volume in his series *The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures in the Worship of the Church* addresses "The Biblical Period."[32] Old begins this volume with the Old Testament Law and prophets and progresses toward the third century. Old discusses Justin Martyr, Tertullian, and Hippolytus under the title of "the historical documents."[33] Old concludes his first volume with a study of Origen, presenting him as a culmination of a pattern begun in a sermon from the Church of Corinth and passing through Melito of Sardis and Clement of Alexandria.[34] In discussing Melito's homily, Old describes his figuration as "typology."[35] Moreover, his discussion of Melito privileges this typology as an aspect of Melito's recitation of the salvation narrative. This pairing of figuration and *Heilsgeschichte* is not recognized as a pattern in Old's analysis but is commonly seen hand-in-hand in the early homiletical tradition of the Church.

Old does not place Origen at the beginning of a tradition as Edwards does, but as the

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[31] Edwards, *History of Preaching*, 42. We note that by form, Edwards is referring to the expository form of the homily, not allegorical hermeneutic, thought there is a relation and general continuation of the practice of Origen in the development of the *Quadriga*, or fourfold interpretation of the Middle Ages.

[32] This volume begins with the worship traditions of the Old and New Testaments. It continues into the first two centuries of the Early Church and concludes with a consideration of Origen.

[33] Old, *Biblical Period*, 255–77. Old differentiates the work of these authors from early preaching by the presence of descriptions of the Christian worship service. According to Old, these works offer a framework for understanding the worship service whereas early preaching is understood as an artifact of the worship services.

[34] Old, *Biblical Period*, 278–352. Old identifies the "sermon from the Church of Corinth" with the *Second Epistle of Clement*. Old defends this identification, arguing "It is generally agreed that [the epistle] is neither a work of Clement of Rome nor a letter. It is rather a sermon; in fact it is frequently claimed as the first Christian sermon to have come down to us." (Old, *The Biblical Period*, 278.)

[35] Old, *Biblical Period*, 285–88. Old neglects to offer a strict definition for his use of typology. His usage of the term generally follows the outline of an Old Testament person, place, or idea that is identified by the New Testament authors with a greater meaning. Old prefigures the argument against Origen in his argument that Melito's understanding of typologies is "strongly influenced by the popular Platonism of his day." (286)

beginning of the end of the Platonic influence upon the Church.[36] Viewing Origen as an allegorist, Old argues that Origen is the apex of the more figurative tradition of Greco-Roman philosophy that had gained a foothold in the early Church. According to Old, Origen is this culminating representative due to the presence of his homilies and the general lack of homilies from other contemporaries.[37] Old segregates Origen's approach to the interpretation of Scripture from the other preachers he mentions in the chapter. Therefore, Old divides Origen from the historical development of the Church, setting him as an outlier, or misguided pioneer, from the preachers who had gone before.

With two competing narratives present in scholarship, the question must be asked, which narrative best fits the situation which gave rise to Origen's homilies. To answer this question, we turn, as best we can discern, to the typical setting for Origen's preaching. Origen preached to a congregation in Caesarea. Origen did not begin his life in the church as a priest, but as a catechist and therefore did not preach in his home, Alexandria. Origen may have been invited to teach in Rome for a brief time,[38] and may have been exposed to the preaching of Hippolytus and was invited to preach himself.[39] Origen was also invited to preach in the neighboring see of Jerusalem and Caesarea. According to Eusebius, Origen's own actions resulted in his expulsion from Alexandria by the bishop Demetrius and his reception and ordination in the city of Caesarea.[40]

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[36] Old, *The Biblical Period*, 337.

[37] Old, *The Biblical Period*, 313. In his evaluation of Origen, Old does not consider the question of why Origen's homilies have survived while others have not, if they are defective, in the vein that Old considers. Instead, Old casts a wide net over the whole period stating, "He [Origen] was not the greatest preacher of the second and third centuries because he was so unusual but because he was so representative."

[38] For a thorough presentation of Origen's early life, see Eusebius, *The Ecclesiastical History,* trans. Kirsopp Lake, 2 vols. Loeb Classical Library 153 and 265 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959).

[39] Hippolytus (170–235 AD) is the author of the *Refutation of all Heresies* (*Philosophumena*) and his work elaborates upon the variety of opponents of Christian orthodoxy. The invitation to preach illustrates the regard in which Origen was held by some in ecclesial authority.

[40] LCL 265:28–31.

If one accepts the analysis of Pierre Nautin, Origen preached all his homilies within a three-year period in his mid-fifties.[41] Unlike other homileticians, such as Augustine who preached for decades, Origen's material does not shift in its historical context nor its location. This locates the homiletical focus of Origen in obvious and recurrent themes. Nautin's research bears out a Caesarean church that celebrated the Eucharist every Sunday and Friday. Daily services were held, which included a sermon but no sacrament. This may explain the general lack of sacramental imagery and discussion in the Levitical Homilies. The Eucharistic services often included homilies for Old and New Testament readings, while the daily services often focused upon the reading and preaching of the Old Testament.[42]

Although Origen does not elaborate upon the various liturgical activities of the Church, as Ambrose or Augustine do, Origen describes his homily as following a public reading of a passage of Leviticus. We conclude that Origen's Levitical homilies are best understood as a focal point of the daily worship of the Church in Caesarea. Furthermore, the Leviticus homilies fit the narrative of Edwards, with their attention to the spiritual formation of the congregation. The homilies resist Old's definition of typology and his separation of Origen from others, such as Melito, by means of this definition and use of figuration.

In summation, Origen's homilies present a daily spiritual formation, which pioneered a general pattern for the Church's preaching on the Scripture. This pattern was not a misuse of typology, as Old claims,[43] but a continuation of the formulaic model of the Church's "spiritual formation of the congregation" that largely continued into the Middle Ages.

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[41] Nautin, *Origene*, 404.

[42] FC 119:22.

[43] Old, *Biblical Period,* 339.

Origen as a Defender of Validity of Scripture

Alistair Stewart-Sykes' *From Prophecy to Preaching* traces the roots of pre-Origen preaching, specifically focusing on the Church's transition from "prophetic instruction" to preaching.[44] Stewart-Sykes bridges the gap between the public preaching of the apostles and the more fully developed preaching of the Church in the third century offering context to the development of the homiletical situation of the Early Church.[45] Stewart-Sykes presents several factors that influence and direct the preaching of the early Church, painting an image of the Church that rises out of the New Testament as focused on prophetic, spirit-lead preaching as typified by Peter, Paul, and the apostolic tradition. As the Church grappled with the cessation of new revelation and its continued proclamation of Jesus, the heresy of Montanism developed and became the key turning point for the Church. Montanism, as defined by Stewart-Sykes, was a mischaracterization or malfunction of the Church's prophetic tradition, with new prophets authoring material that often contradicted the Scripture.[46] Montanism's insistence on new revelation pushed the Church into a position that intentionally reinforced the authority of the Scriptural record, utilizing figural interpretation of the Old Testament as an apologetic tool against those who would reject it and claim the work of the Spirit to author new teachings. [47] As

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[44] Alistair Stewart-Sykes, *From Prophecy to Preaching: A Search for the Origins of the Christian Homily* (Boston*:* Brill, 2001).

[45] F. Fatti ("Preaching," in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* 3, ed. Thomas Oden and Joel Elowsky (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 276) comments upon primacy of exegetical homilies in this period arguing that they reflect the original meaning of preaching "in light of the fact that the efforts of the church of the first three centuries were directed precisely toward reaching a satisfactory formulation of the message which it considered itself the guardian, esp. in the face of the objections by Jews and pagans, and in an atmosphere of strong competition *ad intra* for the primacy of this formulation."

[46] Stewart-Sykes, *From Prophecy to Preaching*, 238.

[47] Stewart-Sykes, *From Prophecy to Preaching*, 74. This sentiment is echoed by Lewis Ayres. (Lewis Ayres, "'There's Fire in That Rain': On Reading the Letter and Reading Allegorically," *Modern Theology* 28, no. 4 (October 2012): 616–34.) Ayres advances the concept of the Early Church's focus on figuration was an act of faithfulness to the intention of the text. Ayres's argument rests upon the conceptualization that figuration is an attempt to navigate the unified whole of the Scriptural text. (Ayres, "There's Fire in That Rain," 621–24.)

such, the church transitioned from prophetic preaching typified by such phrases as "Thus sayeth the Lord" to more interpretative preaching focused upon the proclamation of the kerygma of Christ as savior. This preaching also emphasized the edification of the hearer through their understanding and integration of this kerygma into their lives. Stewart-Sykes concludes that by the age of Origen, preaching no longer added to Scripture as a manifest revelation of the Spirit, but rose out of Scripture as a manifest revelation of the Spirit.[48] Origen's figural exposition takes on a level of assumed appropriateness when viewed as a defensive rhetoric against heresies that would destroy the Scripture, and the faith of the hearers, through an overly literal reading or an invention of foreign teachings.

Stewart-Sykes observes that the Church was fighting a two-fronted war. Beyond Montanism, Marcionism cast a long shadow upon the Church's preaching of the third century.[49] One front, *Montanism*, stood against those who are adding to the Scripture and the other, *Marcionism*, against those who reject portions of the Scripture. Origen's preaching reflects the Church's attempt to counterbalance these two sides. Origen's figural exposition attempts to use the homily to offer stability to the Church's use of the Scripture by means of his retention of the Old Testament as Christian Scripture.

Ronald Heine has helpfully discussed the apologetic nature of Origen's preaching.[50] Heine

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[48] Stewart-Sykes, *From Prophecy to Preaching*, 269.

[49] Angelo Di Berardino, "Marcion — Marcionism" in *Encyclopedia of Ancient Christianity* 2, ed. Thomas Oden and Joel Elowsky (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 676–78. Marcionism is described by two fundamental doctrines "(1) the benign God, Father of Jesus Christ, becomes distinct from the God of the OT, creator and lord of this world, and (2) the OT is to be rejected as the foundation of Christian faith." (677) Di Berardino, also, comments on Marcion's relation to Gnosticism. "The predominant opinion seems to be that [Marcion] knew gnostic Christians and that he was influenced by them, but not to the degree that one can group him with the Gnostics." Taken together, the picture of Marcionism is a near-opposite of Origen's homiletic emphasis upon the Old Testament revelation of Christ and his emphasis upon the Spirit for understanding.

[50] Ronald Heine, *Origen: Scholarship in the Service of the Church. Christian Theology in Context* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 172–79. Other scholars have echoed Heine's awareness of this apologetic nature. See Guy Stroumsa, "Clement, Origen, and Jewish Esoteric Traditions," in O*rigeniana Sexta: Origen and the Bible.*

rightly prefers the argument that the apologetic nature of figurative exposition is the key tool that led to the demise of many early heresies. Heine presents this anti-Maricon position as one which permeates the entirety of Origen's corpus, not just his commentary or homiletical material.[51] The apologetic use of figurative exposition adds an air of viability to figuration within preaching through its defense of the whole Scripture as the written Word of God.

Similarly, David Dunn-Wilson places Origen and his preaching under the category of "apologist."[52] Dunn-Wilson places Origen side by side with Clement and Tertullian as those who "confronted *pagan* intellectuals."[53] In this manner, Origen's figural exposition, which Dunn-Wilson describes as "a theological-practical exposition of a definite text,"[54] functions to create an "understanding" in his hearers that defends them against foreign interpretation. According to Dunn-Wilson, Origen was a guardian of the Old Testament, as he held to the belief that the Old Testament was given initially "foretelling the revelation in Christ" and as now belonging to the Church "to whom the truth [of types and symbols] has been revealed."[55] This protection was not found in the overly literal sense of the Scripture, but in the spiritual sense of the Scripture, in the use of figures, symbols, and types to reveal Christ through both Testaments.

Origen's apologetic technique of relying on the spiritual sense of the Scripture to reveal

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Actes du Colloquium Origenianum Sextum. Chantilly, 30 aout-3 Septembre 1993, 53–70 (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1995).

[51] Heine, *Origen: Scholarship*, 227.

[52] David Dunn-Wilson, *A Mirror for the Church: Preaching in the First Five Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 37.

[53] Dunn-Wilson, *Mirror for the Church*, 37. Dunn-Wilson's emphasis of this point is not reflected as strongly in Origen's homiletical corpus. Origen's *Contra Celsum* is arguably the most important apologetic work of the Early Church. However, Origen's homilies do not follow a pattern of such prolonged engagement of opposition. Instead, one sees brief repetitions of condemnation of Origen's opponents with limited or no direct engagement of their argument.

[54] Dunn-Wilson, *Mirror for the Church*, 37. Dunn-Wilson's assessment of Origen's homilies largely follows our own, viewing them as a practical application and defense of the faith.

[55] Dunn-Wilson, *Mirror for the Church*, 39.

Christ from the Old Testament may appear obtuse to modern readers of the Scriptures. However, David Steinmetz's essay "Uncovering a Second Narrative" offers a helpful illustration of the connection between the figural exposition that is found in the understanding of Scripture present in the New Testament and the Early Fathers. [56] Steinmetz presents the Early Church as reading a second narrative beyond the historical narrative and description of the text.[57] It is this so-called "second narrative" that defends the validity of the Scripture through its unity of content. Scholars have discussed the unifying aspect of this content as *Heilsgeschichte*, *kerygma*, or *skopos*. Steinmetz privileges the *kerygma*, or teaching of Christ, as he argues that "the second narrative of the early Christian church was based primarily on later events—that is to say, on what early Christians thought had happened in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.… [O]nce the second narrative is in place, it is impossible to understand earlier events apart from it."[58] It follows from Steinmetz's comments that one can see the development of the centrality of Christ as an apologetic consideration as well as a doctrinal position. The centrality of Christ serves as

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[56] David Steinmetz, "Uncovering a Second Narrative: Detective Fiction and the Construction of Historical Method" in *The Art of Reading Scripture*, ed. Ellen David and Richard Hays (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 54–65.

[57] Steinmetz, "Uncovering a Second Narrative," 56–58. This "second narrative" is akin to the "spiritual sense" utilized by Origen. Steinmetz presents this second narrative as a result of the work of Christ full revealing what the initial narrative was describing. Steinmetz focuses upon the pragmatic idea that a second narrative adds significance to the initial narrative. Steinmetz does not focus upon the authorship of the Holy Spirit as a justification for this position, something that is predominate throughout Origen, and the Early Church more generally. Significance alone is not a sufficient argument to expand the meaning of Scripture. The Early Church goes further than Steinmetz, arguing for a new significance to the Old Testament in view of the Holy Spirit's authority to impart such significance and not on their own authority.

[58] Steinmetz, "Uncovering a Second Narrative," 64. It should be noted that Steinmetz comments largely mirror Melito of Sardis's comments in *On Pascha*. Melito describes the creation of this "new narrative." "When you construct the model you require it, because in it you can see the image of what is to be. You prepare the material before the model, you require it because of what will come about from it. You complete the work, and that alone you require, that alone you desire, because only there can you see the type, and the material, and the reality . . . So the type was valuable in advance of the reality, and the illustration was wonderful before its elucidation . . . But when the church arose and the Gospel came to be, the type, depleted, gave up meaning to the truth: and the law, fulfilled, gave up meaning to the Gospel." (Melito, *On Pascha: With Fragments of Melito and Other Material Related to the Quartodecimans,* trans. Alistair Stewart-Sykes (Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 2001), 47. Specifically paragraphs 38 and 41–42.)

an organizing principle for the structure of Origen's homilies as well as the goal of much of his use of figures of thought and speech.[59]

One can and should read the Origenian homilies through a lens of apologetic fidelity to the Scripture. Henri De Lubac (1896–1991) observed, "Origen is rarely read, except by fragments and without making an effort to understand him."[60] A holistic reading of Origen grants understanding to his autobiographical statement of being "a man of the church."[61] Origen repeatedly uses this phrase as a defense against those who disagree with his figural exposition. De Lubac's *History and Spirit* agrees with the assessment of Origen as a "defender of the Scriptures and as a faithful, if eccentric, member of the Church's teaching ministerium."[62] De Lubac presents Origen's figuration as an internalization of history, which is manifested as a personal application of God's work for sinners.[63] For Origen, the Scripture is always *hic et nunc* the incarnate Word of God, and the Christian mystery of faith must be internalized and lived.[64] Origen shows evidence of this understanding of Scripture and provides for his hearers' internalization in his homilies through his use of rhetorical figures of thought and speech. These figures form the foundation of chapter 4 and our analysis of Origen's homiletical practice in his Leviticus homilies.

In a separate major work on Medieval interpretation, De Lubac approaches Origen's

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[59] See Chapter 4 for more information.

[60] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 38.

[61] FC 83:20 [1.1.2]. "*ego ecclesiasticus sub fide Christi vivens et in medio ecclesiae positus*."

[62] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 52. De Lubac presents Origen as an apologist against "the pagan and learned world."

[63] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 22. De Lubac further shows that this internalization of history is not unique. to Origen but is a common understanding of the Scripture adopted by the Church post-Origen. Quoting Gregory the Great, "*Res gesta, aliquid in sancta Ecclesia signat genendum*. The historical deed signifies something to be accomplished in the holy church." (178)

[64] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 446.

figuration from the perspective of the historical development of the reading and study of

Scripture present in the Medieval period, seeking to explain how the Medieval system developed

from Origen's practice.[65] De Lubac argues that Origen's figuration, and the system that develops

out of it, is an expression of Origen's understanding of the work of the Spirit, which unifies the

whole Scripture through the revelation of Christ. This work of the Spirit to reveal Christ is best

understood as a general "spiritual" sense of the Scripture.[66] The other medieval senses,

anagogical and tropological, are subdivisions of the spiritual sense. For Origen, this spiritual

sense is foremost a concern for the revealing of Christ in the whole Scripture. De Lubac observes

that Origen believed that the hearer is formed in morality and activity according to Christ.[67] From

this, one can argue that Origen's exposition of a spiritual sense of the Scripture is a development

of the Church's homiletic to centralize the teaching of Christ against heretical forces.

Origen's homilies have a distinct place within the historical development of the preaching

of the Church. In light of the pressures placed on the nascent Christian Church by the early

heresies of Montanism and Marcionism, Origen's figural exposition served as an apologetic tool

to defend the validity of Scripture and support the proclamation of Christ. This use of figuration

draws into focus a second layer of meaning in the text of Scripture which is seen only through

the lens of the revelation of Christ. Furthermore, when viewed in this way, the Scriptures are

recognized as valid for the formation of the contemporary hearer and ancient listener alike,

achieving its purpose by employing an "understanding" which internalizes the activity of God

and produces a response that arises from the unity of Christ and Christian.

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[65] De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*, trans. Mark Sebanc (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

[66] See Solheid, "Grammar of Prayer According to Origen," 2019. Solheid's essay defends the simple observation that the assumption of a spiritual author for a text implies a spiritual meaning for that text.

[67] De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis,* 146.

Origen's Place in the Greco-Roman Rhetorical Tradition

Origen's place in the homiletical history of the Church is best understood as a pioneer in a changing and volatile situation. The rhetorical tradition of the Greco-Roman society in which Origen operated was more stable than the Church's homiletical development. Origen's place within the rhetorical tradition is mainly as a practitioner. The development of the Greco-Roman rhetoric outside the Church was embraced and utilized by early homileticians. Augustine (AD 354–430) provides a clear example of this, as testified to in his autobiographical *Confessions*.[68] The rhetorical training of John Chrysostom (AD 347–407) under Libanius has been the focus of many studies.[69] Gregory of Nyssa (AD 335–395) also exemplifies the rhetorical development of the Church, with his *Life of Moses* and his general use of "Greek" forms of public speech in monographs and homilies.[70] The paucity of examples from the preaching of those who preceded these Church Fathers causes scholars to extrapolate estimations of technique based upon singular sermons, *The Pascha,* or letters such as those by Justin Martyr and the Shepherd of Hermes.[71] As the Church developed its public presentation of the central *kerygma* of the Gospel, the body of interpretation grew to include commentary upon the Scriptures and dogmatic treatises. This larger body of interpretative tradition helps establish a more thorough understanding of the

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[68] Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

[69] Wendy Mayer, *The Homilies of St John Chrysostom: Provenance, Reshaping the Foundations* (Rome: Pontificio institutio orientale, 2005); Gerald Bray, *Preaching the Word with John Chrysostom* (Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2020); David Rylaarsdam, *John Chrysostom on Divine Pedagogy: The Coherence of His Theology and Preaching* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

[70] Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*, trans. Abraham Malherb and Everett Ferguson, Classics of Western Spirituality (Mahweh, NJ: Paulist Press, 1978); Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer; The Beatitudes*, trans. Hilda Graef, Ancient Christian Writers 18 (New York: Newman, 1954).

[71] See Justin Martyr, *The First Apology; The Second Apology; Dialogue with Trypho; Exhortation to the Greeks; Discourse to the Greeks; The Monarchy or The Rule of God,* trans. Thomas Falls, Fathers of the Church 6 (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1965); Glimm, Frances, Joseph Marique, and Gerald Walsh trans., *The Apostolic Fathers*, Fathers of the Church 1 (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1947).

Church's reading of Scripture and, to a point, its public preaching. Together, these homilies and other interpretive works of the Church offer a broad sense that the presence and embrace of rhetoric figures and structure in the Church's homiletic tradition grew closer to rhetorical forms of Greco-Roman rhetoric as the Church aged.

Origen is recognized for his expertise as a *grammaticus*, a teacher of basic rhetorical exercises.[72] George Kennedy, who saw the Christian homily as a new development of rhetoric, observed that Origen's homilies do not exhibit a strong shift away from the techniques and styles of speech seen in the work of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian.[73] Aristotle's rhetorical trinity of content (*logos*), personal presentation (*ethos*), and engagement of the audience (*pathos*) largely set that stage for the developments of rhetoric until the time of Origen.

The two most influential figures in the rhetorical development following Aristotle are Cicero and Quintilian. The rhetorical work of Cicero and Quintilian form the basis for the figural analysis presented in the next chapter. Cicero's *Rhetorica ad Herennium* presents and discusses a general theory of oratory including the five canons of rhetoric, the three kinds of *stasis*, and a discussion of various rhetorical figures. In Book IV, Cicero laid out his levels of style with the corresponding discussion of its qualities.[74] As the conclusion to his discussion of rhetorical style, Cicero presented a large number of figures, arraigned in categories of speech and thought.[75] Two of these figures, *anthypophora* and *distributio*, will be discussed in greater detail below.

Similarly, Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* presents a pedagogically oriented treatment of

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[72] Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 81, and LCL 124:60–158.

[73] George Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 156–57. Kennedy observes that in Origen, there is a homiletic advancement toward a more thoughtful and rhetorically structured sermon. Kennedy stresses that this homiletical advance occurs within the confines of the existent rhetorical system.

[74] LCL 403:252–69.

[75] LCL 403:275–309.

rhetorical theory. *Instituito Oratoria* is a twelve-book compendium, beginning in Book One with a discussion of elementary education and moving forward to the culmination in Book Twelve with the character and responsibilities of an orator. Origen's rhetorical style appears closer to this style than the verbose and grand style frequently cited from Cicero. Robert Smith's research points toward this development as he argues that Alexandrian preachers utilized a philosophical type of rhetoric over the more colorful epideictic genre of ceremonial speech.[76] Especially pertinent to this discussion is *Institutio Oratoria*'s Book Nine, which focuses upon figures of thought and speech and their functions. Quintilian followed Cicero in discussing style and then elaborating upon figures of thought and speech.[77] Quintilian explored many of these figures in detail, which offers insight into their usage and reveals variability within the development of the rhetorical tradition between Cicero and Quintilian. Origen's use of figures reflects many of the general patterns of the figures recorded by Cicero and Quintilian.

Specification and Definition of Figures for Evaluation in Origen

Origen utilizes a broad array of rhetorical figures to construct his homilies: *Enthymeme*, *ratiocinatio*, *anthypophora*, metaphor, analogy, numerology, repetition of words, phrases, and sounds. Several rhetorical structures, including *chreia* or elaboration, thesis, and expansion by division (*distributio)*, can all be found within Origen's Leviticus homilies. Cicero and Quintilian provide the background for understanding the technical aspects of these rhetorical figures.

The figures *anthypophora* and *distributio* are both prominent in Origen's Leviticus homilies, and support the general themes of Origen's preaching, such as its Christo-revelatory

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[76] Robert W. Smith, *The Art of Rhetoric in Alexandria: Its Theory and Practice in the Ancient World* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974, 37–40.

[77] LCL 127:18–29.

approach and its attention to the unity of Christ and the hearer. The following discussion does

not intend to provide strict definitions, but general categorizations of these figures.

Anthypophora

Origen's homilies contain many figures of thought and speech, any number of which might

be analyzed closely. *Anthypophora* deserves special attention due its wide use in Origen's

homilies, Greco-Roman rhetoric, and Scripture. *Anthypophora* can be understood broadly as the

posing of a question and the giving of an answer. Quintilian discusses *anthypophora* briefly in

Book 9 as a rhetorical device used to "verify the truth of something" even as it seems

impossible.[78] This use of a question to make space for an answer is a common rhetorical device

found across advertising, politics, and, as we will demonstrate, homilies.[79] The term

anthypophora has developed through much of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition, seemingly

beginning with Gorgias[80] and addressed by both Quintilian and Cicero.[81] The use of

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[78] LCL 127:152–53 "*incredibile est quod dico sed verum.*"

[79] Examples of the question-answer rhetorical pattern are common to modern advertising. One of the more unsettling, by rhetorically aware, 2022 Superbowl commercials is built around various celebrities answering the question, "If it was delivered by Uber Eats does that mean I can eats [*sic*] it?" by attempting to eat Uber Eats non-edible deliveries.

Politics continues to utilize this form in political speeches. The use of the rhetorical question is found more than five times in President Joseph Biden's 2022 State of the Union address. Two examples will suffice our point. The first appears after Biden has offered a proposal on taxes, "So what are we waiting for? Let's get this done And while you're at it confirm my nominees to the Federal Reserve, which plays a critical role in fighting inflation." In this instance Biden uses his question to create rhetorical space for specific action to be taken among law makers. In the second occasion Biden does not elaborate upon the answer but allows its implied answer to support the preceding argument. "And I ask Congress to pass proven measures to reduce gun violence. Pass universal background checks. Why should anyone on a terrorist list be able to purchase a weapon?" (Joseph Biden. "2022 State of the Union Address," *The White House*, The United States Government, March 3, 2022, https://www.whitehouse.gov/state-of-the-union-2022/.

[80] Gorgias is known for being one of the earliest Greek rhetoricians. He arrived in Athens in 427 BC. His initial task was to request military assistance for Leontini against Syracuse. Gorgias' use of rhetoric emphasizes persuasion. He became known as a teacher of rhetoric and advertised himself as able to speak on any topic. *Anthypophora* would have been a practical, and probably essential, technique to fulfill his claim. (Scott Porter Consigny, *Gorgias, Sophist and Artist* [Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 2001]. 7)

[81] LCL 127:92–95.

anthypophora in both cultural and theological works allows for the investigation of this figure across hermeneutical boundaries, including preachers of different historical eras. Luke records Jesus' use of *anthypophora* to support his claim concerning John the Baptizer:

> What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who are dressed in splendid clothing and live in luxury are in kings' courts. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is he of whom it is written, "Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you." I tell you, among those born of women none is greater than John. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he (Luke 7:24–28).

The second reason for selecting this figure is that it is easily recognizable, which allows us to establish its presence in a homily and identify its function even in extreme examples. Cicero's *Fourteen Orations Against Marcus Antonius* provides such a case:

> To what destiny of mine, O conscript fathers, shall I say that it is owing, that none for the last twenty years has been an enemy to the republic without at the same time declaring war against me? Nor is there any necessity for naming any particular person; you yourselves recollect instances in proof of my statement. They have all hitherto suffered severer punishments than I could have wished for them; but I marvel that you, O Antonius, do not fear the end of these men whose conduct you are imitating. And in others I was less surprised at this. None of those men of former times was a voluntary enemy to me; all of them were attacked by me for the sake of the republic. But you, who have never been injured by me, not even by a word, in order to appear more audacious than Catiline, more frantic than Clodius, have of your own accord attacked me with abuse, and have considered that your alienation from me would be a recommendation of you to impious citizens.[82]

With this initial question and immediate answer, Cicero opens his *Fourteen Orations against Marcus Antonius* to the senate of Rome.

Origen's sixteenth homily on Leviticus provides an example from his preaching. Origen interprets the passage "I shall give you rain in its time" according to its spiritual sense, arguing that such rain is the spoken Word of God. An appreciation of Origen's use of *anthypophora*

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[82] Cicero, *The Orations of Marcus Tullius Cicero*, trans. C. D. Yonge (Medford, MA: George Bell & Sons, 1903) 19–20.

shows the rhetorical proof of his argument.

> Therefore, let us seek in the Scriptures what is "the rain" which is given only to the saints and concerning which "it is commanded to the clouds that they do not pour their rain" upon the unjust. Therefore, Moses and the Lawgiver himself teaches us what this rain is. For he himself says in Deuteronomy, "Consider, O heaven, and I will speak and let the earth hear the words from my mouth; let my speech be awaited like rain." Are these my words? Do we pervert violently the meaning of divine law by arguments of rhetoric? Is it not Moses who says that it is "rain" of which he speaks? He says, "Let my speech be awaited like rain and my words descend as dew, as a storm upon the grass and as snow upon the hay." Listen diligently, hearer, lest you think we do violence to the divine Scripture when, teaching the Church, we say that either water or rainstorms or other things which seem to be said physically are to be understood spiritually.[83]

This example shows Origen's use of *anthypophora*, as he asked a question and provided its immediate answer to silence critics and establish the truth of his argument through appeal to the authority of Moses' own description.

In his *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero labels this rhetorical question and answer as *Hypophora*. Cicero's definition focuses upon the judicial nature of this figure.

> When we inquire of our adversaries (*cum interrogamus adversarios*), or ask ourselves, what the adversaries can say in their favour, or what can be said against us; then we subjoin what ought or ought not to be said—that which will be favorable to us or by the same token, be prejudicial to the opposition."[84]

Cicero further explores its favorable usage: "The result of an accumulation of this kind of *hypophora* is to make it seem obvious that of all the possibilities nothing preferable to the thing done could have been done."[85]

Returning to the above example from Origen, one can see that Origen uses the device in a way similar to Cicero. Origen directly questions those who would speak against his

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[83] FC 83:264. [16.2.3].

[84] LCL 403:310–15 [4.23.33–34].

[85] LCL 403:315 [4.23.34]. "*Eiusmodi consequuntur indentidem subiectiones ut ex omnibus ostendit videatur nihil potius quam quod factum sit faciendum fuisse*".

interpretation. In a small flourish of irony, Origen uses this rhetorical figure to defend himself against the accusation that his interpretation is a perversion of theology by rhetoric. Origen concludes this brief section with a conclusion that again follows Cicero's influence. Origen teaches that the spiritual reading of "rain" is preferable to a literal reading of "rain" if one is to be faithful to the divine Scripture.[86]

As we have seen from Origen's example, this question-and-answer pattern reflects a judicial-styled speech whereby one presents his case over and against a perceived opponent. This nature of *anthypophora* is further confirmed by the rhetorical teachers of the Reformation and later, as a more general "rhetorical question" by which one may ask and answer any question as a means of generally pushing forward the argument of the speech.[87] Although these examples show succinct answer to the question, the *anthypophora* is not limited to a singular sentence but can be addressed in combination with other rhetorical techniques forming the logical basis of paragraphs and, at times, entire sections of speeches or homilies.

> Do you want me to show you from what treasures these riches come? Hear the Apostle Paul speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." And also, in the Gospels, the Lord says, "The scribe brings new and old riches from his treasures." Concerning these, the Apostle Paul also says, "In every way, you are made rich in him, in every word and in all knowledge." Therefore, out of this wealth, which is brought from "the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," this "ram" must be bought by us, which ought to be offered for sins, those, of course, which were committed against holy things, and which must be bought with the amount "of a sacred shekel." Now we have said above that each offering is a type and figure of Christ, but much more rather the ram which, once substituted for Isaac by God, had to be sacrificed. Therefore, Christ who cancels payment on our sins is to be compared by us with "the sacred shekel." "The sacred

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[86] FC 83:264. [16.2.3].

[87] Philip Melanchthon, *Rhetorik*, trans. Joachim Knape (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1993). The development of this term in Philip Melanchthon's rhetoric is used in order to introduce a new topic or perspective. This could be seen as a development of the generalness of the term outside of its immediate judicial setting or it can be seen as a description of the term's history of actual usage in rhetoric.

shekel" holds the form of our faith. For if you offer faith as the price, you will receive the remission of sins from Christ as from the unstained ram given in sacrifice.[88]

Origen utilized this style of public question and answer because it fit closely his a priori accommodations to the nature of Scripture, i.e., the revelation of Christ by the Spirit through the unveiling of the spiritual sense from the literal sense of the Scripture. Origen perceived this division of senses and his figural exposition to be in constant competition with the stated or perceived literalistic interpretation, which was manifest in both rabbinic interpretations and heretical teachings. This rhetorical feature is found in the work of Melito's *On Pascha*, as well as other works of the day.[89]

This question and answer serve as an easy and rhetorically active technique for the introduction of figural exposition and for its acceptance by the hearers, even in its more extreme examples. Origen's use of questions to create an alternative and favorable position in the mind of the hearer presents an interesting opportunity for the modern practice of homiletics.

Expansion by Division (*Distributio*)

> But also he knows how to show what the principles of the Law were, what progress was added in the Prophets but what completion is found in the fullness of the Gospels; or who can teach with what "milk" of the word "the little children in Christ are to be fed," and with what food those "who are weakened in the faith" must be restored, and even what is the "solid and strong food" with which the athletes of Christ must be "made fat"; he who knows how to separate such diverse things with spiritual reason, such a teacher can be seen as the priest who "places the whole burnt offering that was divided limb by limb upon the altar." Whence also, they were said to be "filled with new wine"; "baked with fire," for tongues of fire settled on each one; "broken in the middle," for they were broken in the middle when the letter was

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[88] FC 83:66–67. [3.8.2].

[89] Melito, *On Pascha*, 58, 74. "O Israel, what have you done? Is it not written for you: 'You shall not spill innocent blood' so that you might not die the death of the wicked? 'I' said Israel. 'I killed the Lord.' Why? 'Because he had to die.' You have erred, O Israel, to reason so about the slaughter of the Lord." This example shows anthypophora is present in Melito's homily. However, Origen's use of juxtaposition with anthypophora is not. The lack of juxtaposition is best understood as representative of the homiletical development discussed in the sections above.

divided from the spirit; and "well cleansed," for the presence of the Holy Spirit cleanses all filthiness by delivering remission of sins. [90]

Homiletic students are confronted with the question of how to divide the content of a biblical text in order to organize the preacher's thoughts in an efficient and effective manner. Modern homileticians label such forms as Law-Gospel, Redemptive-Historical, amidst others.[91] Origen, in the above example, divides his sermon in progressive principles, moving from the food for infants to the spiritual food necessary for athletic performance. This division of teaching is itself an example of the second rhetorical figure considered in this dissertation, *distributio*. *Distributio* is another recognizable, widely known, and utilized figure, which Origen uses regularly in his homilies. Specifically, as we will show in chapter 4, Origen uses this figure to unveil the spiritual sense of the Scripture for his hearers.

The figure *distributio* is a fluid term that has a general meaning in the discussion of how one may divide an argument. This division can be specified as a division according to its parts (*merismus*), its species (*diaeresis)*, its effects or antecedents (*enumeratio)*, its components or attributes (*taxis*), the duties of individuals in a list of people (*distributio),* or possibilities (*expeditio*). From this one may gain the impression that this is simply a figure of arrangement. As we will show below, this figure inhabits two places within the canons of rhetoric, invention and arrangement. Origen does not typically specify why he is creating a division, therefore this analysis will focus on Origen's use of division to advance his argument.

Whereas *anthypophora* provides Origen an opportunity to create a rhetorical space to introduce a topic or idea into the discussion of the text, *distributio* creates a similar space but one

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[90] FC 83:35–36. [1.4.4].

[91] See Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim, "Introduction," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today,* ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), xii.

that arises from the text as an alternative concept or additional consideration. *Anthypophora* introduces questions that lead Origen's interpretation toward specific goals. The function of the question creates a rhetorical opportunity for Origen to introduce his figural exposition. Origen's use of *distributio* is similar to *anthypophora* in its attention to the spiritual sense of the Scripture. The two figures differ in that *anthypophora* must first pose a question in order to create the rhetorical space needed to proceed to a figural exposition whereas the use of *distributio* allows Origen a direct path to discuss the additional sense of the text.

As with *anthypophora*, both Cicero and Quintilian discuss *distributio* as a rhetorical technique. Cicero lists the term under the canon of "arrangement" arguing for its definition in *Rhet. Ad Herr.* "Distribution occurs when certain specified roles are assigned among several things or persons."[92] Quintilian, in his brief listing of the term, places it within the confines of other figures of thought as an act of invention.[93] The difference can be articulated as one of emphasis. Cicero taught how one uses division to create the structure of the argument. Quintilian discussed how division can create the substance of an argument. Within his Leviticus homilies, Origen does not say whether he is using *distributio* for invention or arrangement, but a close reading of the homilies more supports Quintilian's usage.

> But let us see how these "twelve loaves" are placed "in two places, six loaves in each place." Do you think this division is meaningless? Why is it that the number twelve is again divided into six? For the number six has a certain relationship with this world; for in six days this visible world was made. Therefore, there are two orders in this world, that is, two people, who preserve faith in the Father and the Son in one Church as on "one pure table."[94]

In this example, Origen uses *distributio* to create the substance of the argument. The twelve

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[92] LCL 403:346–47. "*Distributio est cum in plures res aut personas negotia quaedam certa dispertiuntur*."

[93] LCL 127:24–25.

[94] FC 83:241–42 [13.5.1].

loaves represent the total creation, composed of both literal and spiritual senses, as taught by the Church. This whole teaching preserves faith in the Father and the Son. (*qui fidem patris ac filii in una ecclesia tamquam in 'una mensa munda' custodiunt.*) This division of the text creates the substance of the argument, that each set of these loaves is necessary to preserving faith. While not the easiest argument to follow theologically, it does illustrate Origen's use of *distributio* as the creating of the substance of an argument.

Rufinus's comments concerning the Leviticus homilies and his editorial activities, as Origen's Latin translator, shed light on Origen's use of *distributio*. Rufinus generally cleaned up the rhetorical structures of Origen, eliminating unanswered questions and other rhetorical imperfections.[95] This speaks to the general assumption that Origen utilized this figure of *distributio* in producing homilies according to the creation of substance, not according to the creation of style or set structures. Moving from passage to point and then onward to the next scriptural passage, Origen's rhetorical structure rarely shows evidence of a thought-out and organized arrangement. Rather, scholarship has largely acknowledged that Origen's homilies proceed from a more inventive attempt to create opportunities for understanding in his hearers. To this end, Origen uses *distributio* to acknowledge where division occurs in the Scriptural text. Origen then used this figure to create a division to further his argument for the sake of the hearers.

Origen's utilization of *distributio* serves a similar function as *anthypophora*, the rhetorical question. Both figures provide a rhetorical opportunity to move the argument of the homily toward a greater specificity of a term or concept which in turn is used to introduce Origen's understanding of the spiritual sense of the text and its connection to Christ and the hearer. Other

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[95] *NPNF*[2] 3.567.

rhetoric figures are present within the homilies of the Early Church and specifically within Origen's Leviticus homilies. Our work on the figures of *anthypophora* and *distributio* serves as an introduction to how one may evaluate these homilies from the specific perspective of its use of rhetorical figures.

Contemporary Scholarship's Treatment of Origen's Rhetoric

The scholarship concerning Origen's use of rhetoric in his homilies has shifted substantially in the last 75 years. His work was previously considered "simple" according to the schema provided by Cicero in *Rhet. Ad Herr.*[96] Several Origenian scholars have challenged the evaluation of Origen's homilies as non-rhetorical, attending to and emphasizing various components of rhetoric in Origen's homilies, commentaries, and apologetic work.[97] The scholars who seek rhetorical technique in Origen's homilies show not only his rhetorical skill, but also his utilization of rhetoric to achieve the "understanding" and resulting Christian formation that Origen intends in his homilies.

Henri De Lubac

Henri De Lubac, introduced briefly above,[98] sought to return to the writings of the Early Church as a way to restore unity in the Church's understanding of the Scripture as a "mystery" which had become "an object of censure and disgrace" following the rise of Catholic scholasticism.[99] His work was restorative to Origenian scholarship in much the same way that the

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[96] LCL 403:260–63.

[97] See Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric"; Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*.

[98] See Chapter One, "Introduction of Thesis".

[99] De Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, xv–xvi.

New Homiletic challenged existing expectations and produced a vast new growth of study.[100] De Lubac defended Origen against his detractors by highlighting Origen's figural exposition as a rhetorical device, similar in form to the allegorical method of the Greco-Roman philosophers, that remains faithful to the Church's *kerygma* and offers legitimacy for his interpretations outside of the Church.[101]

De Lubac points to this similarity of form as an accommodation of the Greco-Roman allegorical technique to the purposes of the Christian homiletic.[102] As an accommodation of rhetorical style, Origen's exposition would hold some legitimacy to those outside the Church, as well as to those inside the Church who were familiar with this technique. De Lubac's analysis confirms Origen's knowledge of rhetoric from his instruction as a *grammaticus.*[103] De Lubac cautions that knowledge of rhetoric is not equal to rhetoric driving Origen's interpretation. Origen's homiletical exposition utilizes rhetoric, specifically this accommodation of Greco-

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[100] See Fred Craddock, *As One Without Authority* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1979); David Buttrick, *Homiletic: Moves and Structures* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987); Eugene Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form* (Atlanta: Westminster John Knox, 1980); Richard Jensen, *Thinking in Story: Preaching in a Post-literate Age* (Lima, OH: C.S.S., 1995); Thomas Troeger, *Imagining a Sermon* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990).

[101] De Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 176–77. See also Ronald Heine, "Reading the Bible with Origen," in *The Bible in Greek Christian Antiquity*, ed. Paul Blowers (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1997), 135–36. Heine, a later commentator and scholar of Origen, offers a simple description of the rhetorical connection between Origen and the interpretive technique of "philosophers" and other Greco-Roman rhetors. "To discover this spiritual meaning in the Biblical texts, Origen applied the allegorical method long used by philosophers to find symbolic meaning in the texts of Homer and the other poets…The practice of comparing texts within the corpus of an author's own works to determine what was meant in a particular text was a common procedure among exegetes of all types in the ancient world."

See also Pierre Sellew, "Áchilles or Christ? Porphyry and Didymus in Debate over Allegorical Interpretation," *Harvard Theological Review* 82 (1989): 79–100. Sellew argues that "Didymus employs the principle of interpreting one passage in Scripture from another—a device well known from the practice of solving Homeric problems. In his citation, he presents the opening of Porphyry's Homeric Questions in Codex V: "ὡς αυτ αὐτὸς μὲς ἑαυτὸν τὰ πολλὰ Ὅμηρος ἐξηγεῖται. (ed. Sodano, 1. 12–24) 83n11. Robert Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian: Neoplatonist Allegorical Reading and the Growth of the Epic Tradition* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1986), 109. Also see Heraclitus, *Homeric Problems*, trans. Donald Russel and David Konstan (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2005).

[102] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 176–78.

[103] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 89–92.

Roman form, as a logical means to address his deeply held belief of the Spirit's working through the Scripture to reveal Christ and through this revelation to form a unity between Christ and the hearer or reader.

Origen's HLev 5 exemplifies his use of the Greco-Roman form to create "an opportunity for understanding" as well as to establish that this meaning remained with the *regula fidei* of the Church.

> But where shall I find an approach to the divine Scripture that teaches me what "an oven" is? I must call upon Jesus my Lord that he may make me as the seeker find and may open to the one knocking, that I may find in Scriptures "the oven" where I can bake my sacrifice that God may accept it. Indeed, I think I have found it in Hosea the prophet where he says, "All adulterers are as an oven ignited for burning." And again, he says, "Their hearts glowed as an oven." The human heart, therefore, is "an oven."[104]

Origen sought an additional meaning behind the word "oven" to assist his hearer's Christian understanding. The Church does not offer Levitical sacrifices according to the letter, so Origen intends for his hearers to understand that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in accordance with what Paul writes in Rom. 12:1, "present your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God which is your spiritual worship." Origen moves from a literal reading of "oven" to a spiritual understanding. He follows the typical Homeric comparison of passages by the same author to clarify a semantic domain for the term.[105]

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[104] . FC 83:99 [5.5.2].

[105] One of two fully extant works that exhibit this "Homeric comparison" is Porphyry's *Homeric Questions on the Iliad.* In this work, Porphyry addresses various passages of the Iliad, drawing upon other passages from Homer that clarify the meaning of particular words. One example of this intra-authorial comparison occurs at N443.1 in Porphyry, *Homeric Questions on the Iliad,* trans. John MacPhail (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 206–207. In this example, Porphyry articulates a philological difference between two words and their corresponding difference in usage and meaning. "[1] Some confuse 'to skip' (*skairein*) and 'to gasp' (*spairein*), believing that they mean the same thing, though Homer distinguishes between them. [2] For he says 'to gasp' with an *ā* according to Attic practice, [i.e.] *aspairein*: 'and thereupon gasping (*Od.* 12.254), and 'having taking it gasping' [*sic*] (*Od.* 19.229), and "which gasping even made the bottom of the spear quiver' (*Il.* 13.443), and 'he gasped as when an ax' (*Il.* 13.571), but 'to gasp' not with an *ā*: 'with dancing and shouts of joy they followed gasping on their feet' (*Il.* 18.572). [3] So the difference is that *spairein* and *aspairein* mean some inelegant motion which appears in fish (*Od.* 12.254) and the

Origen viewed the primary authorship of the Scripture as Divine,[106] and thus utilized the whole Scripture as the work of one author when juxtaposing passages. In this example, passages from Leviticus and Hosea are compared in order to discuss the term "oven" and to establish its spiritual sense in this homily as "the human heart." This example highlights De Lubac's insistence that while Origen utilized a common and well-known rhetorical technique, this technique did not produce teachings outside the bounds of the Church. Instead, this technique allowed Origen to create an opportunity for understanding that this oven which prepares the sacrifice is the hearers own heart. This exposition, while distinct from the literal sense, is nevertheless the same work of the Spirit, consistent with the *regula fidei*.

De Lubac's work is an invitation to the Church to restore a unity in their understanding of Scripture by returning to ancient practices of interpretation. Origen's preaching highlights how such a practice operates through figural exposition and exemplifies the relationship between this exposition and the teaching of the Church, uniting them together through the continued work of the Spirit in Christian formation.

Peter Martens

As stated in the introduction to the dissertation, Peter Martens' *Origen and Scripture* offers an articulation of four families of Origenian scholarship. He describes these families as

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ox according to the poet has been bound (*Il*. 13.571-72) but 'to skip' [means] elegant motion, dance-like and rhythmical." Porphyry follows this pattern of definition and articulation throughout his discussion of Homer. Woven into this commentary are nuances of meaning covering a diverse set of topics including mathematics, culture, ethics, and theology.

[106] Modern exegetical studies seek to understand the historical situation of the human authors of Scripture in order to understand the Scripture in its historical context. While helpful, the result can diminish an understanding of the unity of Scripture. Origen's figurative interpretation resists the critique of an atomization of meaning because of Origen's understanding of the interconnectedness of the Scripture and his ability to connect passages together. (De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 346.)

"procedural movement" focusing upon literary analysis and Greco–Roman philology, "doctrine of Scripture" focusing upon the multiple senses of Scripture, "topical understanding" focusing upon a particular theological doctrine, and "instrumental character of interpretation" often focusing upon particular concerns and agendas.[107] Our analysis of Origen's homilies spans both Martens' "procedural movement" and "doctrine of Scripture" categories. Martens is a key voice supporting our placement of Origen in both rhetorical and theological histories.

Martens focuses the initial thrust of his analysis upon Greco–Roman philology to establish Origen as a *grammaticus* [108] according to Quintilian's handbook. Those educated in this manner would have a mastery of the *progymnasmata*, a collection of rhetorical and compositional tasks ranging from the creation of short fables (*mythos*) to full arguments utilizing a thesis. After establishing Origen's rhetorical education, Martens cautions that attending only to the rhetorical without contextualization to the Christian faith of Origen offers a "monochromatic" and "incomplete" profile of Origen.[109] Origen himself speaks about his technique and those who oppose his interpretations in HLev 1.

> For if I also should follow the simple understanding, as certain ones among us do, without using in their terms of ridicule the stratagems of language or the cloud of allegory, I would draw out the voice of the Lawgiver. I, myself a man of the Church, living under the faith of Christ and placed in the midst of the Church, am compelled by the authority of the divine precept to sacrifice calves and lambs and to offer fine wheat flour with incense and oil.[110]

Origen holds his status as "a man of the Church" (*ecclesiastius*) in direct support of his

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[107] Martens, *Origen and Scripture,* 3–5.

[108] See Martens, Specialization: The Elements of Philology" in *Origen and Scripture*, 41–66.

[109] Martens, *Origen and Scripture,* 69. Martens's caution seeks to prevent the overemphasis of either Origen's Christian faith or his rhetorical training at the expense of the other when assessing Origen's homiletical project.

[110] FC 83:29–30 [1.1.2] "*Si enim secundum quosdam etiam nostrorum intellectum simplicem sequar et absque ulla - ut ipsi ridere nos solent - stropha verbi et allegoriae nubilo vocem legislatoris excipiam, ego ecclesiasticus sub fide Christi vivens et in medio ecclesiae positus ad sacrificandum vitulos et agnos et ad offerendam similam cum ture et oleo divini praecepti auctoritate compellor.*"

utilization of "stratagems of language." (*stropha verba*) If one removes the rhetorical, then one is left with a literal reading alone, which Origin highlights through the example of divine precepts of sacrifice. Contrary to this "simple understanding," Origen seeks a spiritual understanding for his hearers which encourages them to place themselves under Christ, not the letter of the Law.[111] This example highlights the duality of Origen's figural exposition, part rhetorical and part theological. It also shows Origen's awareness of some who rejected his figural exposition. This adversarial position gives further credence to our consideration of Origen's homilies being borne out of the judicial form of Greco-Roman rhetoric. Martens' attendance to the judicial rhetorical frame helps to illuminate the apologetic aspect of Origen's homilies. Martens cites Origen's Book Five of his *Commentary on John.*

> But even now the heterodox [τῶν ἑτεροδόξων], with a pretense of knowledge, are rising up against the holy Church of Christ and are bringing compositions in many books, announcing an interpretation of the texts both of the Gospels and of the apostles. If we are silent and do not set the true and sound teachings down in opposition to them, they will prevail over inquisitive souls which, in the lack of saving nourishment, hasten to foods that are forbidden, and are truly unclean and abominable. For this reason, it seems necessary to me that one who is able intercede in a genuine manner on behalf of the teaching of the church and reprove those who pursue the knowledge falsely so-called. He must take a stand against the heretical fabrications by adducing in opposition the sublimity of the gospel message, which has been fulfilled in the agreements of the common doctrines in what is called the Old Testament with that which is named the New.[112]

Origen saw himself as one who could and needed to stand as a "man of the Church" in opposition to false teaching and interpretation. Origen's homilies do not always cite or speak to the oppositional parties directly. However, they are best understood within a framework of apologetics, as discussed above in the section "Origen as a Defender of Validity of Scripture." This apologetic draws out a spiritual sense of the Scriptures, affirming the continuity of the work

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[111] FC 83:29–30 [1.1.2].

[112] FC 80:166 [5.8]; GCS 4, 105.4–16.

of the Spirit across Testaments.

In sum, Martens presents a rhetorical view of Origen which is typical of the *grammaticus* and Greco-Roman philology.[113] This rhetorical understanding is not isolated from the Christian faith, nor is it presented as overbearing or influencing the doctrines of Origen. Origen holds the Christian faith against heterodoxy by explaining and defending the unity of the Scripture through the unveiling of Christ for the edification of his hearers. Martens does not discuss the role of isolated rhetorical figures, but opens the door for further investigation of how such rhetorical figures produce the interaction of rhetoric and theology that he envisions within Origen's interpretation of the Scripture.

Samuel Hong

Samuel Hong further highlighted the rhetorical structuring of Origen's homilies through his investigation of the role of rhetoric upon Origen's homiletical endeavor. Hong introduces us to the term *stasis*. A *stasis* is a way to categorize the types of inquiries one might make in a rhetorical argument or judicial case. A fuller discussion of *stases* is helpful to illustrate the rhetorical function of Origen's figural exposition, particularly in relation to *anthypophora*'s use of juxtaposition. *Stases* govern the broad scope of approaches one may take when authoring an argument. Aristotle offers the antecedents for the development of these *stases* in his *Rhetoric,* which were subsequently elaborated upon by Cicero and Quintilian.[114] Quintilian offers his

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[113] Martens, *Origen and Scripture,* 33–40.

[114] LCL 193:288–89. [2.22.4–5]; LCL 403:29–32. "First of all then, it must be understood that in regard to the subject of our speech or reasoning, whether it be political or any other kind, it is necessary to be also acquainted with the elements of the question, either entirely or in part; for if you know none of these things, you will have nothing from which to draw a conclusion. I should like to know, for instance, how we are to give advice to the Athenians about making war or not, if we do not know in what their strength consists, whether it is naval, military, or both, how great it is, their sources of revenue, their friends and enemies, and further, what wars they have already waged, with what success, and all similar knowledge?"

thoughts on the matter under the term *status*. "The *status* is not the first conflict—'You did it,' 'I didn't'—but what arises out of the first conflict, in other words, the type of Question (*genus quaestionis*)."[115] Quintilian, after summarizing the historical development of these types of questions, arrives at a fourfold division, "three logical *status*—conjuncture, quality, and definition—and one legal issue."[116] Each s*tasis* is presented as an avenue or theme for inquiry that governs a degree of the invention which occurs within the production of an argument.

Hong's study argues for a renewed consideration of the rhetorical nature of Origen's homilies using rhetorical *stases.* Hong lays out an understanding of the rhetorical system which Origen utilizes, following an insight of George Kennedy. "Origen's emphasis on seeking God's intent in a text rather than in the literal meaning can be compared to that part of stasis theory in rhetoric that explored the issue of the intent versus the letter of a law."[117] By placing the intention of a text at the forefront of the discussion, Kennedy and Hong arrive at the critical question of why Origen preached in this manner. Hong's work answers by drawing a line from the rhetoric of Aristotle, Cicero, and Quintilian to the homiletical works of Origen. This line of influence informs a close reading of Origen's homilies and supports our investigation of the figures utilized by Origen. The result of this reading is a clearer understanding of how Origen utilized this rhetorical tradition to achieve his theological intention in preaching, namely the creation of

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[115] LCL 127:48–51.

[116] LCL 125:82–83. "*tris rationales status, coniecturam qualitatem finitionem, unum legalem.*"

[117] Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric,* 158. Kennedy's quotation is more substantive than Hong presents. "Origen's three levels of interpretation [literal, moral, spiritual], might be renamed the logical, the ethical, and the emotional. In that case, they can be thought of as hermeneutic counterparts of Aristotle's logos, ethos, and pathos, the modes of rhetorical persuasion. Origen's emphasis on seeking God's intent in a text rather than in the literal meaning can be compared to that part of stasis theory in rhetoric that explored the issue of the intent versus the letter of a law." Kennedy's comparison to both Aristotle and to *stasis* theory offers a clearer view to the *raison d'être* that explains Origen's insistence on the use of figural exposition. In focusing upon the spiritual intention of a text, Origen observes the purpose of Scripture as the revelation of the Christ (*Logos*) which, when properly understood, is used by the Spirit for the formation of the hearer.

understanding that the Spirit uses to produce spiritual formation of his hearers.

Different *stases* are prioritized for different types of speech. Both Kennedy and Hong emphasize a connection between Origen and the *stases* associated with judicial speech.[118] Hong gives great weight to the legal stasis of *scriptum et sententiam* as the logical and linguistically connected rhetorical question by which Origen speaks against the letter in favor of the Spirit. *Scriptum et sententiam* is a technique that contrasts the actual words of a text with the intention of its author. Cicero articulates his description of this *stasis* through the example of a boat lost at sea.[119] All the crew abandon ship and only a deathly sick man is left behind. By a miracle, the man recovers, and the boat comes to shore. The letter of the law argued that the last remaining person would become the new owner of the ship and its cargo. Cicero argues that ownership by the recovered man is contrary to the intention of the law. By extension, one can understand this *stasis* as relevant when an event highlights the divergent nature of an outcome of the letter of the law when viewed through its original intention. An example from Origen's HLev 5 highlights the division of letter and spirit.

> And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to Aaron and his sons saying, 'This is the law [of sacrifice] for sin. In the place where the whole burnt offerings are killed, they will kill it because it is [a sacrifice] for sin before the Lord; these are very holy things . . . Unless we take all these words in a sense other than the literal text shows, as we already said often, when they are read in the Church, they will present more an obstacle and ruin of the Christian religion than an exhortation and edification. But if it is discussed and found in what sense these things were said, and if they are turned worthily to God who is said to write these things, indeed he who hears these things will become a Jew, but not one "who is one in appearance" but "who in secret is a Jew," according to that distinction of a Jew which the Apostle makes, saying, "For not he who is a Jew in appearance, nor one in whom circumcision is manifest in the flesh, but he who is in secret a Jew by the circumcision of the heart, who is one by the spirit, not by the letter; whose praise is not from men but from God."[120]

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[118] Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric," 250. Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric,* 159

[119] LCL 403:34–37.

[120] FC 83:88–89 [5.1.1–2].

Origen understands a difference between the letter of the Law and its intention. Origen's use of *scriptum et sententiam* is not destructive to the text but seeks to clarify its intention for the contemporary reader. Origen argued that this law's intention is shown to be an inward "exhortation and edification" through the "circumcision of the heart," not an outward activity of animal sacrifice. This example underscores the relationship between Origen's homiletical edification and his view of Scriptural intention.

Hong's analysis is closely associated with our work on Origen's use of figures. Hong provides a surface-level interaction with Origen's rhetorical use through his documentation of the presence of *scriptum et sententiam*, which he labels as "paraphrase and proof" in his analysis. While such analysis provides some insight into the intention of Origen, it is an over-simplification of this *stasis* to apply it to the whole of Origen's use of juxtaposition. Absent from Hong's analysis is an appreciation of the underlying presumption of Origen that the literal sense is a legitimate sense of the text. Hong overemphasizes the *stasis* of *scriptum et sententum*. In this way, Hong's presentation of Origen's is similar to that of R.P.C. Hanson. Hanson criticized Origen's approach to history, arguing that Origen's figural exposition was an actualizing of the text for his hearers, which destroyed the historical reality of the text. Origen, however, did not discard history, but read the Old Testament from a new position, that is from the position of a Christian reader.[121] Origen understood that the Old Testament holds a deeper intention for its hearers that could not be fully known until the coming of Christ. The spiritual agency of the written Word, regardless of time or Testament, has a transformative effect upon the hearer. This agency does not destroy the history of the text but defends the validity of the Old Testament message and teaching by uniting it to the central kerygma of Christ and his *Heilsgeschichte*.

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[121] Martens, "Origen Against History," 649–50.

In summary, Origen's figural exposition seeks to "edify" his Christian hearers through the development of a spiritual "understanding." Hong presents the rhetorical method of this "edification" as based in the *stasis scriptum et sententiam*. Using the division of letter and intention/Spirit, Hong presents a reading of Origen's homilies that attends to Origen's use of a spiritual sense of the text as the fundamental aspect of the formation of his hearers. Hong views Origen's preaching as using this rhetorical division to progress the homily from the letter of the text to the formation of hearers.

Kyeil Kwak

> Thus therefore, to those converted from sin, purification is indeed given through all this which we said above, but the gift of the grace of the Spirit is designated through the image of "oil" that this one who is converted from sin, not only can attain cleansing but also be filled with the Holy Spirit by whom he can receive the best "robe and ring" and, having been reconciled with the Father, can be restored to the place of a son, through our Lord Jesus Christ himself, "to whom is glory and power forever and ever. Amen."[122]

This example from Origen's HLev 8 introduces the work of Kyeil Kwak.[123] On several occasions, Origen uses the conclusion of his homily to review the material he has previously covered. Origen often frames this review within the structure of salvific narrative. In this case, the hearer is moved from conversion from sin to purification by the "grace of the Spirit." This purification is manifested as a being "filled with the Holy Spirit" and culminates in the reconciliation with the Father, manifested as restoration "to the place of a son, through our Lord Jesus Christ." This narrative illustrates the central conclusion of Kwak's dissertation and takes a step toward an understanding of Origen's figural exposition as a confessional activity that bears

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[122] FC 83:175 [8.11.15].

[123] Kyeil Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage: Envisioning Scriptural Interpretation as a Symbolic Act in Origen's Hermeneutics," PhD. diss, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia, 2017.

witness to a complex articulation of ecclesiastical understandings and salvific narratives.

Kyeil Kwak observed that Origen used the juxtaposition of two or more texts of Scripture to offer a new metaphysical understanding of the original passage. This new understanding of the original passage was then placed within a teleological drama revolving around the salvific work of Christ. In effect, Kwak recast Origen's figural exposition in light of its systematic aim, arguing that his use of figures, particularly *symbolon*, reflects an attempt to draw together Christ and Christian in the ongoing drama of salvation. Kwak states:

> Therefore, in Origen's hermeneutics, scriptural interpretation is a symbolic drama through which Scriptures comes [*sic*] to be reunited with the Logos in a synecdoche mode as "the flesh" (PP 26.5–10) or "the one complete body" (HJer 39) of the Logos. By connecting the Old and the New Testament as a connected whole, Origen narrates another symbolic drama of reuniting what is originally one in their mutual coming to each other: the ecclesiastical body and Christ, her head. In this teleological drama, Origen understands Christian life as a life–long ritual of returning to the union with Christ. Accordingly, Origen remarks in his commentary on Matthew: God unites [Christ and his body], not like two beings that remain independent, but in one single flesh… Christ clings to his spouse fallen [from heaven] to this [earth], and there the two have become one.[124]

Kwak is correct that "scriptural interpretation is, for Origen, [a becoming] by which Christian ontological union with Christ is facilitated and narrated."[125] There is a necessarily participatory nature of the "letter" which holds actual truth, or divinity, as Origen argues in HLev 1. "As the Word was "covered with a veil of flesh [in the incarnate Christ], so here with the veil of the letter, so that indeed the letter is seen as flesh but the spiritual sense hiding within is perceived as divinity."[126] In the same way, this truth is expressed to the contemporary hearer spiritually, that is by the work of the Spirit.

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[124] Kyeil Kwak, "Understanding Scripture Interpretation as a Symbolic drama in Origen's Hermeneutics," *Korean Journal of Christian Studies* 101 (July, 2016): 105–106.

[125] Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage," 106.

[126] FC 83:29 [1.1.1].

Hans Boersma articulates the argument succinctly. "It is possible to move from the letter to the spirit in biblical interpretation precisely because (1) there is a letter from which to ascend, and (2) the letter contains patterns of the Spirit, which we can find only by paying careful attention to the letter."[127] Origen clarifies this in answering the question of Celsus, "How do we think we know God?"[128] God's enfleshment, the incarnation, by which letter is united with Spirit, as humanity is united to divinity through divine transformation, then "perfection."[129] God is made known through the physicality of Christ. *Mutatis mutandis*, Christ is made known through the letter of the Scripture, in both Old and New Testaments by the Spirit. As the Christian engages the letter of Scripture, the Spirit leads them through the spiritual sense to a greater unity that is formed between Christ (as Logos and content of the Scripture) and the Christian. Turning to the homiletical act, Kwak's theory of symbolic unification emphasizes that the result of the revelation of the Christ-Logos is a unification between Christ and Christian.

Origen's Leviticus homilies show a general consistency with Kwak's hypothesis, utilizing the juxtaposition that many scholars have identified. Several of Origen's homilies exhibit an explicit structural progression from the presentation of Christ, to the unity of Christ and hearer, and lastly to ethical teaching or exhortation. Kwak's hypothesis seeks to present a unity between Origen and the modern Church's description of the work of Christ through the written Word. Caution is needed, however, as Kwak's discussion of *symbolon* impresses upon the reader a narrow understanding of the term and its usage by Origen. As the work of Martens highlights,

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[127] Hans Boersma, *Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 10.

[128] PG 11:1401–402. "διόρεπ ἐὰν ἔρηται ἡμᾶς κέλσος, πῶς οἰδμεθα γνωριζειν τὸν θεὸν; *Quapropter si Celsus a nobis quasietit, quimodo Deum cognoscete putamus*"

[129] PG 11:1623–24. "ἡμεῖς δὲ τῆς λοικῆς φύσεώς φαμεν ὅλης κρατῆσαί ποτε τὸν Λόγον, καί μεταποιῆσαι πᾶσαν ψυχὴν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ τελειστητα; *At nos asserimus Verbum sibi naturas omnes ratione praeditas esse subacturum, et in suam ipsius perfectionem mutaturum.*"

Origen's vocabulary was diverse and he utilized a variety of terms (type, *symbolon*, example, etc.) to describe the figures and rhetorical techniques which he drew upon in homilies and commentary work.[130] For example, Origen's homiletical legacy does not utilize *symbolon* to a large degree. It appears only once in HLev 10 and that in parallel to type and form (*et figuris ac formis allegoricis*).[131] Kwak, however, discussed neither type nor form. Kwak's work highlights a culminating principle which, while present in Origen's homilies, appears in a more philosophical pattern and force in the more philosophic *Contra Celsum*.

The language of Origen, homiletically, is not one of reuniting, but of growth, emphasizing the deepening of an already existent relationship between Christian and Christ. Without discounting the deep analysis of *symbolon* produced by Kwak, one should recognize that if the definition of *symbolon* is pushed too far, he falls into the same error as Jean Danielou, namely the imposition of a post-Origenian conceptualization of Christianity upon Origen's work.[132]

The argument concerning the semantic domain of *symbolon* helps set Origen's homiletical work in phase with his philosophical work. *Symbolon,* according to Kwak's definition, narrates the unity that exists between the two. From this position, an application to modern homiletics becomes clearer. Origen's figural exposition narrates a unity of Christ and Christian, encouraging and exhorting the hearer toward consistency in action and understanding with that narrative. This unity arises from the revelation of Christ within the Scriptures and the work of his

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[130] Peter Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16 (2008): 300–306.

[131] FC 83:202 [10.1.1].

[132] Martens cites De Lubac's claim against his student Danielou. "[Daniélou's distinction between typology and allegory] has, nevertheless, the disadvantage, we think, of being formulated with a terminology that is neither scriptural nor truly traditional. Thus it risks, perhaps, muddling up in certain minds, rather than clarifying as it proposes to do, the historical problem relating to this [spiritual] exegesis." (Martens, "Revisiting the Allegory/Typology Distinction," 287 n.12)

Spirit in the hearer. Action follows revelation. While not a new maxim to homiletics, this interpretation should not be overlooked, particularly in the case of figural exposition: The revelation of Christ is the central and foundational proposition of the homiletical act.

Conclusion

Origen's homilies are the product of two historical developments. These two developments offer a second lens to view Origen's practice of figural exposition. The first development is the maturation of the Church's homiletic activity. Origen pioneered the homiletical form of preaching that elaborates upon a spiritual sense text of Scripture through its connection to Christ. Origen also defended the Scripture's authority over and against detractors and heretics through his figural exposition, its emphasis on unveiling Christ's presence in the Scripture, and the Spirit's formation of the hearer through their understanding.

Origen was not a pioneer of rhetoric, but a practitioner. He utilized common figures of thought present within the Greco-Roman handbooks of rhetoric. Through his use of these familiar figures, Origen crafted his homily to attend to his hearers and lead them toward opportunities for understanding that offer a spiritual formation through union with Christ. Specifically, the evaluation of the figures *anthypophora* and *distributio* proved helpful due to their frequency, the ability to recognize their occurrence, and their ability to create opportunities for Origen's figural exposition to illustrate the spiritual sense of the text. The next chapter will provide a series of examples and close readings of each of these figures within their homiletical contexts in order to analyze their function within Origen's homilies.

The final section of this chapter reviewed several key scholars who have worked with Origen and rhetoric. The work of these authors shares a central theme of rhetoric but draw the implications of Origen's rhetoric in many directions. Our discussion of these scholars used

Origen's Leviticus homilies as examples highlighting several different and important rhetorical aspects of these homilies. Each scholar offers a perspective that assists our understanding of Origen's use of figures and their relation to his goal of creating "understanding" in his hearers. De Lubac presents Origen's accommodation of Homeric literary comparison to the preaching task as an attempt to create an "opportunity for understanding" in his hearers that was faithful to the teachings of the Church. Martens reminds readers of Origen that one must hold together both the rhetorical *grammaticus* and the theological "man of the Church" aspects of Origen, if one is to discuss his homilies and their intention for Christian formation. Hong develops Origen's strong ties to the *stasis scriptum et sententiam* as a vehicle to move from letter of the Scripture to spiritual formation of one's hearers. Kwak emphasizes the relationship that Origen's figural exposition holds with theological narratives which guide Origen's homiletical project.

Together these sections highlighted Origen's received rhetorical and homiletical traditions, presented two distinct figures for analysis and evaluation in Origen's Leviticus homilies, and highlighted the congeniality between this dissertation and work of other scholars.

CHAPTER FOUR

ORIGEN'S USE OF *ANTHYPOPHORA* AND *EXPANSION BY DIVISION* IN HIS FIGURAL EXPOSITION

Introduction

This chapter will introduce several examples from Origen's Levitical sermons that illustrate the typical and specific nature of Origen's usage of *anthypophora* and expansion by division (*distributio*). *Anthypophora* is the utilization of a question and its answer to drive forward an argument. Expansion by division describes the rhetorical division of material in order to expand the scope of the argument. Origen used these two figures to establish a Christorevelatory exposition (typically discussed as a Christocentric exposition), as an expression of unity between Christ and the Christian, and/or the edifying progression of the Christian toward a greater understanding of the divine.[1] These figures and their analysis highlight several commonplaces (*loci*) where the homiletical material tends to coalesce. Further chapters will suggest how such figural loci could influence contemporary homiletics. Appendix One offers an evaluation of a non-partitioned homily to illustrate how these figures and *loci* occur.

Samuel Hong, one of the scholars discussed in the previous chapter, focuses on a median-level analysis utilizing a rhetorical *stasis*, or approach to an argument, of *scriptum et sententiam.* Hong introduces the general figure of *enthymeme* as a feature of Origen's homilies, commenting on Aristotle's observation that the truncated syllogism is the basis of most rhetorical speeches.[2] Instead of following the functionality of *enthymeme*, Hong focuses on the rough pattern of "paraphrase and proof," which he derives from the dynamic of the division between letter and

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[1] As stated above, Origen employs the term "understanding" to describe the force of the text to form the hearer to act in specific ways based on their knowledge of the meaning of the words used and their revelation of Christ.

[2] Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric," 23.

Spirit.

Origen's figural exposition occurs across a variety of rhetorical structures and techniques. By evaluating the specific figures by which Origen accomplishes his hermeneutic, one is better able to evaluate the benefit for contemporary preachers to imitate Origen's underlying hermeneutic or the overlaying figures.

Origen's uses of *Anthypophora* in his Leviticus Homilies

Origen utilized *anthypophora* within his homilies to create a rhetorical space in which he could lead and assist his hearers to understand the spiritual sense of the text. Origen's use of *anthypophora* generally fits within two theological categories, exegetical and dogmatic.

The Exegetical Use of *Anthypophora* in Origen's Leviticus Homilies

The exegetical use of *anthypophora* is best understood as a direct comparison of two or more passages, which in turn either produce or form part of an *enthymeme* — a truncated syllogism. Scholars often label this use as juxtaposition, the comparing of passages, which typically occurs by means of a common word, phrase, or idea in all passages.[3] This process aims to clarify the initial passage by investigating other meanings of the text beyond a literal sense. Ronald Heine discusses this as a generic practice of establishing meaning by utilizing an author's greater corpus when there is doubt or disagreement about a specific passage.[4]

The figure of *anthypophora* features prominently in this pattern because of its ability to

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[3] Thomas Scheck offers some guidance to readers on how to understand how Origen structures authority in his interpretation. (Origen, *Homilies on Numbers*, trans. Thomas Scheck, Ancient Christian Texts, [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009].) In what some might call a daisy-chain, Origen takes one passage and connects it to another and to another after that in order to produce a meaning for the original text dependent upon the whole of the Scriptures. This technique is often cited as Origen's greatest homiletical strength. This knitting together serves as an inductive exercise for the hearers as they are taken along through various webs of interpretation, to an end goal of understanding that is informed by the whole of the Scriptures and its author, the Spirit.

[4] Heine, "Reading the Bible with Origen," 135–36.

focus the hearer and argument upon a specific word or phrase. Torjesen and Hong attend to this linguistic focus in complementary ways. Hong views this focus rhetorically and labels this pattern of comparison of passages as "narration-proof."[5] Torjesen focuses on the theological connection of the texts, arguing for a Christocentric understanding of both the content and composition of the Scriptures.[6] Utilizing the phrase Christ-Logos, Torjesen views the paraphrasing of Scripture and its proof by juxtaposition as a theological act that expresses the unity of the Scriptures through the presence of the Logos as manifested in the person of Christ.[7] Origenian scholarship has recognized this pattern, generally, within Origen's homilies. Our reading of Origen confirms this recognition, adding that several different rhetorical figures are utilized by Origen to introduce the practice of juxtaposition.[8] The presence of several distinct figures does not translate into distinct usages of juxtaposition, but highlights the centrality of the revelation of Christ to Origen's homiletic project. Several examples of *anthypophora* in Origen's Levitical homilies will now be presented to further define and discuss its exegetical category.

The first instance of Origen's use of *anthypophora* occurs nearly halfway through his first homily as Origen considers Lev. 1:4–5, Origen asks, "However, do you want to know how there was a double sacrifice in him [Jesus], suitable for those on earth and appropriate for those in

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[5] Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric," 203.

[6] Torjesen's work is best set out according to a four-step method she derived from Origen's preaching. Step 1) Origen establishes the grammatical sense of the passage under consideration. He does so by repeating or reframing the text under consideration. Step 2) He affirms the concrete, and often historical, reality of the grammatical sense. Step 3) Origen investigates what the Logos is teaching in this concrete reality in relation to the grammatical sense. Step 4) Origen seeks to answer the question of how this teaching from step 3 can be applied to the hearer today. (Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure,* 4.)

[7] Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure,* 129.

[8] Hong has offered *enthymeme* as one rhetorical figure that introduces juxtaposition. My work focuses upon *anthypophora* and expansion by division. In addition, one can find juxtaposition introduced generally through the progynmastic use of *chreia,* which is the use of an anecdotal saying of someone well known to appeal to authority. (FC 83:171 [8.11.4].) Origen also utilizes *exergasia*, that is the return to former subjects, to draw together passages as he develops his homiletical argument. (FC 83:92 [5.2.3].)

heaven?"[9] This is not a question about substance but of technique. Earlier in this homily, Origen offered the conclusion that there is a double sacrifice in Christ. Origen's question privileges an answer that highlights the spiritual sense of the text. Origen uses the question to create an opportunity to privilege his figural exposition as the proper means, by way of a logically answered question, to attend to the meaning of Scripture.

In this *anthypophora*, Origen proceeds from the question and its answer to juxtaposition, and lastly into a description of how the stated question is indeed the truth. Origen juxtaposes Lev. 1:4–5, "And he will lay his hand upon the head of the offering and will kill the calf before the Lord, and the sons of Aaron the priest will offer the blood and pour it out while going around the altar which is at the door of the Tent of Meeting," with Heb. 10:20, "through the veil, that is, his flesh" whereby Christ, understood as High Priest, passes through two veils, one of flesh and one of heaven. By juxtaposing these passages, Origen forms an analogy between them, arguing that Jesus' sacrifice "saved both those on earth and those in heaven."[10] The rhetorical nature of *anthypophora* opens an experience of the text to the hearer that envisions the sacrifice through Christ by expanding the understanding of the text through its exegetical relationship with other passages of Scripture.

This exegetical usage of *anthypophora* is directed toward the revelation of Christ as the content of the Scripture. As the central content of the Scripture, the revelation of Christ serves as an organizing principle of the homily. Similar to Torjesen and Hong's "paraphrase and proof," Origen uses the revelation of Christ through this exegetical comparison as a central aspect of his homiletical system. Both Torjesen and Hong see the juxtaposition as a means to an end of

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[9] FC 83:34 [1.3.3].

[10] FC 83:34 [1.3.3].

spiritual formation.[11] Origen's homilies attend to formation as the result of understanding the spiritual revelation, or unveiling, of Christ within the Scriptures. Origen's stated homiletical goal is to "bring forth the things which pertain to the edification of the Church [namely the revelation of Christ in the Scripture] in order that we might provide opportunities for understanding for our hearers."[12] "Understanding" of this revelation results in both the spiritual formation of the hearers as well as their formation in thought and action.[13] This transformation, as Origen understands it, is the work of the Spirit.

A second example of this exegetical category is found at the end of Origen's Levitical homilies, where Origen's uses of *anthypophora* highlight the judicial foundation of the rhetorical question, whereby, even if an opponent is not present, the question assumes the logical position of presenting an adversarial argument. Origen takes up Lev. 26:4, "I shall give you rain in its time." He proceeds quickly to introduce an *anthypophora*. "Therefore, let us seek in the Scriptures what is 'the rain' which is given only to the saints and concerning which 'it is commanded to the clouds that they do not pour their rain' upon the unjust."[14] Identifying "rain" for further exposition, Origen cites Moses from Deut. 32:1–2, "Consider, O heaven, and I will speak and let the earth hear the words from my mouth; let my speech be awaited like rain." The repetition of the term "rain" juxtaposes Leviticus with Deuteronomy. Origen's comparison of the passages expounds upon the definition of "rain" by equating the usage of the term in both passages, thereby defining it as consisting of spiritual speech in the Church. A modern linguist

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[11] Hong, "Origen's Rhetoric," 198; Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 275.

[12] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[13] Origen casts his description of edification's results widely. "to be pure in body, upright in mind, pure in heart, reformed in habits. We should strive to make progress in deeds, be vigilant in knowledge, faith, and actions, and be perfect in deeds and understanding in order that we may be worthy to be conformed to the likeness of Christ's offering." (FC 83:38 [1.5.3].)

[14] FC 83:264 [16.2.3].

may have reservations regarding the legitimacy of so linking words within Scripture. However, as has been discussed previously, this technique of figural exposition, which juxtaposes terms from a singular author as a technique of clarifying the meaning of a term, is a received and accepted grammatical strategy. Origen acknowledged that his figural exposition is a direct contrast to the literalistic understanding of rain, occurring as water that falls from the heavens. "Are these my words? Do we pervert violently the meaning of divine law by arguments of rhetoric? Is it not Moses who says that it is 'rain' of which he speaks?"[15]

Origen identifies the nature of his figural exposition as one of constant opposition to the exclusionary literalistic reading of the Scripture. In contrast to his opponents, Origen seeks to broaden the term according to Moses' example of rain being speech and seeking to include Isaiah's metaphor of the spoken Word of God being like "rain and snow."[16] This act of figuration orients the passage under consideration toward Christ's metaphor of the Gospel as a seed. This refocuses the objective of the passage from teaching the literal sense of the text to the attending to the spirit and the needs of the soul. Origen confirms our suggestion: "Listen diligently, hearer, lest you think we do violence to the divine Scripture when, teaching the Church, we say that either water or rainstorms or other things which seem to be said physically are to be understood spiritually."[17]

Origen's exegetical use of this *anthypophora* provided an apt tool by which Origen answered the criticisms that plagued his homiletical and interpretive technique. In this case, Origen draws on a biblical motif that equates the concepts of men and earth to unveil the

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[15] FC 83:264 [16.2.3].

[16] FC 83:264 [16.2.3].

[17] FC 83:264 [16.2.3]. "*Intende diligenter, auditor, ne putes nos vim facere Scripturae divinae, cum docentes ecclesiam dicimus vel aquas vel imbres vel alia, quae corporaliter dici videntur, spiritaliter sentienda.*".

spiritual sense of the text. Origen brings together the "earth" as "our hearts" drawing together the

hearer into the metaphorical narrative of rain and growth. This rain of God's Word produces the

fruit of the Spirit and the growth of Christian understanding. This *anthypophora* created an

opportunity for the hearer to grow in understanding through this spiritual understanding and

application of the word, "rain."

The exegetical use of *anthypophora* explains what many scholars have observed in

Origen's interpretative technique. Scholars have widely understood the use of juxtaposition as

the means by which Origen illustrates an additional sense of the literal text through its

comparison of terms across multiple passages. Origen utilized exegetical *anthypophora* to

privilege what he understood as the spiritual sense of the text. Origen's central concern of

revealing Christ through the Scripture results in opportunities for the Spirit to work upon

Christian formation through the hearer's "understanding" of the text in this spiritual sense.

The Dogmatic Use of *Anthypophora* in Origen's Leviticus Homilies

The second category of *anthypophora* in Origen's figural exposition is dogmatic. When

Origen utilizes the figure for this purpose, he does not typically draw multiple passages together

in an *enthymeme* but uses a question to create an opportunity to present a distinct theological

teaching as an answer. This answer produces a favorable understanding of the speaker and their

interpretation.

Origen's theological teachings are not simply inventions of the mind, as some have written,

but based on his metaphysical understanding of the world. In HLev 5 Origen returns to this

understanding as a supporting structure to his exposition. Thus, appreciation of his metaphysical

view of the world aids in understanding his dogmatic use of *anthypophora*. Origen's

understanding of the created order as tri-partite, with the visible world offering a cohesive

perception of the invisible, is consistent through his homilies, commentaries, and other

apologetic works.

> For the visible holds the highest relationship with the invisible, as the Apostles says, "The invisible is perceived from the creation of the world through the things that were made." Therefore, just as "the visible and invisible," earth and heaven, soul and flesh, body and spirit have mutually this kinship and this world is a result of their union, so also we must believe that Holy Scripture results from the visible and the invisible just as from a body the letter which is certainly something seen, and the soul, the understanding of which is understood within, and of the Spirit, according to that which some also hold in "heaven" as the Apostle said, "They serve as models and shadows of the celestial things."[18]

Essentially, Origen understands creation to exist as a duality of the physical and the spiritual.

Origen's use of Heb. 8:5, "they serve as models and shadows of the celestial things,"

illustrates his use of the word-family of *τυπος* (as shown by Martens) to attend to his

understanding of reality.[19] Origen does not simply spiritualize the physical. He involves the

body, the soul, and the Spirit to understand the "models and shadows of the celestial things."[20]

This holistic structure frames the literal word (*signum*) in light of its spiritual correspondence.

Furthermore, particularly in the case of *anthypophora*, the use of this reasoning expresses the

union that exists between the literal and spiritual as expressed in Rom. 1:20, "the invisible is

perceived from the creation of the world through the things that were made," whereby the

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[18] FC 83:89 [5.1.3]. *Sicut ergo cognationem sui ad invicem gerunt 'visibilia et invisibilia', terra et coelum, anima et caro, corpus et spiritus, et ex horum coniunctionibus constat hic mundus, ita etiam sanctam scripturam credendum est ex visibilibus constare et invisibilibus, veluti ex corpore quodam, litterae scilicet, quae videtur, et anima sensus, qui intra ipsam deprehenditur, et spiritu secundum id, quod etiam quaedam in se 'coelestia' teneat, ut Apostolus dixit quia: "exemplari et umbrae deserviunt coelestium".*

[19] FC 83:89 [5.1.3]. "*exemplari et umbrae deserviunt coelestium.*" See also Martens, "Revisiting the Typology/Allegory Distinction," 304.

[20] Hans Boersma devotes a chapter toward Origen's understanding of history, "Incarnational Reading: Origen on the Historical Narrative of Joshua" in *Scripture as Real Presence: Sacramental Exegesis in the Early Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), 105–30. History for Origen is anchored within divine providence and serves a sacramental function in so far as it reveals the salvation of God. In this way, Origen both affirms the historical record and supports his use of figural exposition that sees the whole Scripture as serving to reveal Christ. Boersma further supports this argument by emphasizing Origen's theological reading of the Song of Songs whereby God's wisdom teaches us "from actual things and copies things unseen by means of those that are seen." (Boersma, *Scripture as Real Presence*, 4–5)

invisible attributes of God (τὰ ἀόρατα αὐτοῦ) are known through the things that are made.[21]

Following Paul's teaching that the divine can become known, to a limited degree, through

creation, Origen affirms the historical reality of the Scripture to unveil the union of the letter

with its spiritual sense. Origen makes clear throughout his corpus that the interpreter of the

Scripture must be filled with the Holy Spirit, since the Spirit gives wisdom and understanding.[22]

The dogmatic use of *anthypophora* presents theological observations and conclusions by

moving from the literal/historical sense to the spiritual sense. Whereas the exegetical use

juxtaposes passages of Scripture to clarify a term in both meaning and scope, the dogmatic use

presents its exposition of the text without direct quotation of other passages. This dogmatic use

of *anthypophora* allows Origen greater flexibility to highlight and elaborate on specific teachings

to achieve the aim of his argument.

Origen's fifth Leviticus homily presents an example of dogmatic *anthypophora*. Origen

prepared for this *anthypophora* by paraphrasing Deut. 7:28–34.

> The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak to the sons of Israel saying, 'Whoever offers
> a salutary sacrifice to his Lord will bring his offering to the Lord in his salutary
> sacrifice. His hands will bring to the Lord the offering, the fatty parts which are about
> the breast and the lobe of the liver. He will offer these so that they are placed as a gift
> before the Lord. And the priest will put the fatty parts, which are above the breast,
> upon the altar, and the breast will be for Aaron and his sons. And the right limb you
> will give to the priest, separate from your salutary sacrifices. Whoever from the sons

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[21] FC 83:89 [5.1.3].

[22] In the following examples, the role of the Spirit is clearly shown to be foundational to the acts of exegesis and homiletics, as well as initiating and permeating the expositional process. FC 83:34 [1.1.4] "Thus, the Lord himself, the Holy Spirit himself must be entreated by us to remove every cloud and all darkness which obscures the vision of our hearts hardened with the stains of sins in order that we may be able to behold the spiritual and wonderful knowledge of his Law, according to him who said, 'Take the veil from my eyes and I shall observe the wonders of your Law.'"; FC 83:99 [5.5.1] "let us see according to the spiritual sense, which the Spirit gives the Church;"; FC 83:128 [6.6.3] "But let him teach those things that he has learned from the Lord, not "from his own heart," or from human understanding, but what the Spirit teaches."; FC 83:244 [13.6.2] "Therefore, if we have understood first how God speaks to Moses and Moses to the sons of Israel, and second the reason for the "pure lampstand and the lamps" and their oil, third [if] we have also understood the shew bread, "each one made from two tenths" according to the will of the Spirit, let us pay heed to how we may not be shown unworthy of this so great and so sublime understanding but that our soul may first become "a holy place" and in "the holy place" we may receive the holy mysteries through the grace of the Holy Spirit by whom everything is sanctified that is holy."

of Aaron offers the blood of salvation and the fatty parts, the right limb will be for him as his part. For I took from the sons of Israel the breast that was presented and the limb that was separated from your salutary sacrifices, and I gave them to Aaron, the priest, and to his sons, eternally prescribed by the sons of Israel.[23]

Having set the text in the mind of the hearer, Origen began with a general rhetorical question, "Do we not think there is some reason that forms all the limbs of the animals that are killed in sacrifices, these limbs above all others were selected?"[24] This question introduces the narrative of the priest's activity. In this way, Origen's question tends toward the introduction of *hypotyposis* or vivid description. Quintilian remarks that this technique is not so much a description of facts but an experience of them, which allows the speaker to envelop the hearer into the story.[25] Origen did not answer his initial question immediately but focused the hearer on a distinct aspect of the text under consideration. "What, then, is the breast of the priest? What is its nature?" (*Quod ergo est . . . quale*?)[26] Origen used these questions to focus on the nature and quality of the breast, and thus move the hearer to envision and experience the breast as more than a physical item. The question of nature or quality can refer to either physical attributes or an internal, even spiritual essence. In this case, Origen uses the term to investigate spiritual things. Origen's answer is a transmutation of the literal breast to a description of the virtues that exist within an individual. "I think it to be such a kind (*tale)* as is full of wisdom, full of knowledge, full of all holy understanding." [27] Origen's redefinition of the term is not based upon a juxtaposition of a specific passage cited for the hearers but draws upon the theological

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[23] Deut. 7:28–34.

[24] FC 83:113 [5.12.5].

[25] See Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage," 19–20. Kwak's thesis centers upon Origen's use of figuration to "narrate the drama of salvation" for his hearers.

[26] FC 83:113 [5.12.5].

[27] FC 83:113 [5.12.5].

considerations of the anthropological statements of the whole Scripture (e.g., "I will set my Law upon the heart"), performing the act of exegetical juxtaposition internally. Origen presented his hearers with a dogmatic statement that has no immediate connection to the text but does have an internal coherence with the Greek concept of virtue resting within the heart or soul.[28] To support his claim, Origen asked, "What do I mean full of understanding? Assuredly that he is full of God."[29] This statement expands the description of the priest and his eating of the "breast" to include the hearer and the work of the Spirit upon them. Origen completes his use of this *anthypophora* by establishing that the "breast" and, by an equivocation, the "right limb" are manifestations of God's work upon the priest and instances of growth for the saints so that they may "see God."[30] Origen's homiletic conclusion makes his point clear "that we may learn why 'of the breast of presentation' and 'of the limb of separation' was written; and why an eternal portion was given to the priests in which he sees fit to make us worthy that we may, through a pure heart and good work, have a part in the divine sacrifice through the eternal high priest, our Lord, and Savior Jesus Christ."[31] Origen's dogmatic teaching on this point draws together the vivid description of the sacrifice and subtly applies it to the hearer through the "pure heart" they receive in their union with Christ as the high priest. This unification of hearer and Christ is an important aspect of Origen's use of *anthypophora* and will be discussed at greater length.

    HLev 2 provides a second example of Origen's dogmatic use of *anthypophora*. Origen

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[28] See Appendix Two.

[29] FC 83:113 [5.12.5]. "*Et quid dico plenum intelligentia? Immo quod plenum sit Deo.*" Origen makes clear that understanding (*intelligentia*) is not divestible from the divine. One cannot have understanding of the Scripture apart from the work of the Spirit upon the hearer.

[30] FC 83:114 [5.12.7]. "*In qua hostia pars efficitur sacerdotis 'pectusculum' et 'bracchium dextrum', ut sit indicium, quod pectus eius et cor, quod ante mala cogitabat, sacerdotis labore conversum recepit cogitationes bonas et ita mundatum est, ut etiam Deum possit videre.*"

[31] FC 83:115 [5.12.9].

addressed the offerings of Lev. 4 through a series of questions in a style similar to *ratiocinatio*,

asking two or more questions in immediate succession. Origen quotes Lev. 4:3, "If the high

priest who was anointed sins, so that he makes the people sin, he will himself offer to the Lord

for his sin a calf without blemish from the herd." Immediately afterward, Origen produces an

anthypophora. "So finally, is no one safe, not even the high priest? And who is this high

priest?"[32] Origen answered these questions dogmatically. First turning to the historical terms of

"anointed" and "kindles holy fires," Origen established that all human priests are contaminated

by sin.[33] Origen presented this universal contamination to establish equality between the sinful

priesthood with the sinful hearer. Origen thus draws the homily into a further contemporization,

arguing that since every priest is given "to imitate that one 'who did not sin,'"[34] the Christian is

to imitate Christ. This imitation is not mimicry but mimesis, becoming like another. Origen urges

admiration for this priest because the priest knows and understands his sin. Thus, the aware

priest may correct his behavior and have greater mercy on others. The allusion to he "who did

not sin" forms the central premise of the argument. The argument begins with a historical

example and ends with the revelation of Christ and his implied activity upon the hearer. The

benefit of such implied activity is a question for modern homiletics. While Origen alludes to

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[32] FC 83:44 [2.3.1]. This is one of several occasions where the oral quality of Origen's homilies becomes clear. Walter Ong reminds those of literary cultures that much of the power of orality comes in its performance. Furthermore, Ong offers a catalog of psychodynamic qualities of orality in *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (New York: Routledge, 2012), of which two will be helpful to discuss briefly. First, Ong argues that a primarily oral culture is "additive rather than subordinative." Instead of parsing the language of Scripture in dividing images, Origen draws them together layering them and his use of figuration deepens the meanings of Scripture for his hearers by adding to the picture in the mind of the hearer. (Ong, *Orality,* 37) The second quality is that oral culture tends to be "situational rather than abstract." Ong writes "Oral cultures tend to use concepts in situation, operational frames of reference that are minimally abstract in the sense that they remain close to the living human lifeworld." (Ong, *Orality,* 49) Origen's figural exposition fits this patterning through his focus upon a present edification that leads away from the distance of the past to the contemporary experiences and expectations of his hearers.

[33] FC 83:44 [2.3.1].

[34] FC 83:44 [2.3.1].

Christ and implies his work, this homily occurs within a series and Origen expects a connection between his homiletical expressions in all of his sermons. This tight connection between homiletical acts explains why Origen often alludes to a topic that he has previously addressed rather than fully expounding upon it a second or third time. In several sermons, Origen reminds his hearers of material that had been spoken of earlier in Leviticus and even other homiletical series such as Jeremiah.[35]

Another feature of Origen's figural exposition is seen in the example from HLev 2. The structure of Origen's exposition places the development of the hearer first. This highlights the activity which Origen hopes the hearer will imitate. This activity does not stand on its own but is supported by what comes next with a clear teaching of Christ as the sacrifice for sins. Without Christ as the lynchpin, Origen's exposition falls apart. But, as one is led into Christ, Origen edifies the hearer by expositing upon the moral sense of the high priest which leads to the correction of all virtues "through nothing other than by putting Christ to death."[36] Both Christian development and the foundational centrality of Christ will be discussed later in this chapter.

Additionally, the dogmatic category of *anthypophora* allows Origen's figural exposition to address theologically important topics not immediately available in the literal sense of the passage under consideration. As a third example of the dogmatic use of *anthypophora*, in HLev 13, Origen discusses the phrase "one loaf from two tenths."[37] Origen asks "How do 'two tenths' become one mass? Because I do not separate the Son from the Father nor the Father from the Son."[38] This passage highlights a dogmatic teaching of the unity of Father and Son, a doctrine

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[35] See FC 83:75 [4.3.2];41 [2.1.8];179 [9.2.5].

[36] FC 83:46 [2.4.1].

[37] FC 83:239–40 [13.4.1–2].

[38] FC 83:240 [13.4.3].

that came under greater scrutiny through various councils, heretical anathema, and dogmatic writings. The measurement of loaves, however, does not immediately lend itself to a Trinitarian discussion according to the literal sense. Dogmatic *anthypophora* does not regularly utilize exegetical juxtaposition but, on rare occasions, can utilize juxtaposition to create the necessary space to discuss a theological teaching. In this case, a connection is assumed between Levitical loaves and the concepts of Christ as the bread of life and the Father as the giver of bread as shown in Matthew's parables. Without addressing the connection he has drawn exegetically, Origen addresses the connection of Christ and Father as necessary to the homiletical endeavor. The separation of the Son from the Father is neither a correct interpretation of Scripture nor an appropriate homiletical act. While it is premature at this point to address the implications of Origen's figural exposition on modern homiletics, it bears noting that Origen's words bear a striking resemblance to the critique of Sydney Greidanus against so-called "Christomonistic" preaching.[39]

Origen utilized this same Father-Son focus in HLev 5, where he offers another dogmatic *anthypophora* by both implying and answering a question. Addressing the text of Lev. 6:25–26, "In the place where the whole burnt offerings are killed, there also the offerings for sin are offered . . . the priest who offers it will eat it." Origen first recognized the mercy of God that this offering brings about a unification between sinner and God. After this, he offers the *anthypophora*.

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[39] Greidanus includes a small section in *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* titled "The Danger of Christomonism." Greidanus critiques the trend in some preaching communities to twist the Christocentric emphasis of preaching out of proportion so that "the revelation and redemptive act of *God* in Christ, has been all but lost." (Sidney Greidanus, *Preaching Christ from the Old Testament: A Contemporary Hermeneutical Method* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999], 178.) Highlighting the work of Charles Spurgeon, Greidanus applies his critique. "Another shortcoming in some of Spurgeon's sermons is that his single-minded desire to preach Jesus Christ isolates the person and work of Christ from the person and work of God the Father. (Greidanus, *Preaching Christ*, 162).

The text wants you to make a more daring assertion if your hearing still would follow. What is the "sacrifice" which is offered "for sin" and is "very holy" except "the only begotten Son of God," Jesus Christ my Lord? He alone is the "sacrifice for sins" and he is "a very holy offering."[40]

Origen acknowledges that this seems hard to understand because the context of Lev. 6:26, "the priest who offers it will eat it," seems to imply that "what must be eaten seems to be referring to the sin."[41] Origen makes explicitly clear, particularly in HLev 3, that he understands the sacrifice of Christ as the fulfillment of the sacrificial type.[42] Drawing upon this material, Origen clarifies this difficult passage, of Christ "eating sin", by creating an *enthymeme* using "the priest who offers it will eat it" and juxtaposing this passage with Hosea 4:8, "they feed on the sin of my people; they are greedy for their iniquity." Origen justifies this juxtaposition through the repetition of the words "eat" and "sin" in "they will eat the sins of my people." Origen concludes that it is correct for the priest to eat the sins of the people and by extension, "Therefore my Lord and savior eats "the sins of the people."[43] However, this *enthymeme* is not an obvious answer to the initial inquiry of what is the sacrifice offered for sin.

Origen returns to the figure of *anthypophora* for clarification of his off-center *enthymeme*. Utilizing the *ratiocinatio* motif of rapid questioning, Origen introduces the metaphoric phrase of Deut. 4:24, "Our God is a consuming fire" *(Deus inquit noster ignis consumens est)*. He then asks what this fire consumes. Origen sets aside the literalistic objection that divine fire would consume wood or straw or hay and gives the answer of "human sins."[44] He supports this

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[40] FC 83:94 [5.3.2].

[41] FC 83:93 [5.3.2].

[42] FC 83:52 [3.1.1] ."But, if anyone should remember well these things which were said, he can tell us that we can hold as a figure *(figuram)* of Christ the sacrifice which we said the high priest offered 'for sin.' . . . the deed is done through a mystery *(per mysterium res)* and he himself is set up both as high priest and as the sacrifice."

[43] FC 83:94 [5.3.2].

[44] FC 83:94 [5.3.2].

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reasoning exegetically, juxtaposing Isa. 1:25 "I will purge you with fire for purity." Origen completes the answer to his *anthypophora* by concluding that Jesus took our sins and eats them and consumes them "as if a fire." (*tamquam ignis comedit*) This dual use of *anthypophora* illustrates the power of this rhetorical technique. It is able first to move the hearer toward a certain perspective, and then to offer further clarification of statements to draw the hearer into a conclusion that appears true even though it was not apparent in its initial presentation.

Origen's exegetical use of *anthypophora* has been discussed and evaluated by Torjesen, Hong, and Kwak. The use of a question to initiate this juxtaposition is a helpful rhetorical marker for the hearer in their processing of the *logos* of Origen's argument. By introducing juxtaposition, Origen assists his hearers in understanding the meaning which arises from the connection that he is creating between the passages. The dogmatic use, however, has not received the same scholarly reception and focus. It has often been the object of ridicule, or at the least presented as a less scholarly act of interpretation by Origen. As has been shown, however, Origen employed dogmatic *anthypophora* to address topics that are theologically important to his homiletical aims but not necessarily immediately available in the literal sense of the passage under consideration. In sum, both of the uses of *anthypophora* facilitate Origen's figural exposition through the clarification of words and the spiritual sense of their meanings and the creation of homiletical opportunities to address material that increases the spiritual "understanding" of his hearers.

Origen's uses of *Expansion by Division* in his Leviticus Homilies

Expansion by division (*distributio)* is a generic term under which many kinds of division

can be utilized.[45] Quintilian utilizes the term *distributio* in *The Orator's Education* where it is

referenced by the editor as equivalent to *diairesis*.[46] *Distributio* describes the division of a topic

or a subject into parts. The previous chapter laid out the general scope of this figure and noted

the various understandings of this figure's location in the canons of Rhetoric.[47] Our analysis of

Origen's homilies proceeds from placing this figure as an act of invention. Particularly

influential to this decision is the extemporary nature of the exposition which Origen offers. This

act arises from the moment and is distinct from the stylistic divisions that may be found within

Origen's commentaries. As an act of invention, Origen's division of material creates a new

perspective for the hearer to engage through the invention of a previously unspecified alternative.

Utilizing the term "unspecified" may create the impression that Origen's exposition is full of

"impious spiritualities" as some have suggested.[48] However, as one reviews the inventive act of

division present within Origen's homilies, there is a clear intentional engagement of the text,

which intends to deepen the hearer's interaction with the text by bringing into focus a spiritual

sense to the interpreted text. Origen's use of figural exposition utilizes the figure of expansion by

division to draw out such distinctions from the text. Thereby Origen unveiled the spiritual sense

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[45] Cicero *De Inventione,* trans. H. M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library 386 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1949), 64–65 [1.22.32]. Cicero discusses this a "statement of topics (*continent expositionem*)." These topics are divided by *genera* and *species*, which Cicero explains as "a *genus* is a class that embraces several *species*, as animal. A *species* is that which is a part of a *genus*, as horse." This division can be manifest outside of the zoological domain by means of topic and subtopic. By example, division of a topic may proceed by subparts (*merismus)*, alternatives (*dialysis*), or logical reasoning for a specific division (*prosapodosis*). Our analysis does not proceed to this level of *specie* but utilizes the *genus* of division in evaluating Origen's homilies.

[46] LCL 127:25 n.36.

[47] A somewhat contemporary example of expansion by division is found in the work of C.S. Lewis's *The Lion,* the Witch, and the Wardrobe. Susan, one of the protagonists, has just been introduced to the truth that Aslan, the King of Narnia*,* is a lion. Speaking to a Mr. Beaver, Susan's sister asks, "'Then he isn't safe?' 'Safe?' said Mr. Beaver; 'don't you hear what Mrs. Beaver tells you? Who said anything about safe? 'Course he isn't safe. But he's good. He's the King, I tell you." (C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* (New York: HarperTrophy, 1950), 86.) This example highlights a division by alternative concerning the idea that kings are safe and lions are not. Mr. Beaver proceeds to expand upon this division by introducing the concept of good into the discussion.

[48] De Lubac, *History and Spirit*, 19.

of the text to invoke a personal response to the text and defend his hearers against heretical or unchristian interpretations.

Spiritual Expansion

Many scholars have discussed Origen's use of expansion by division to establish the senses of Scripture, especially noting Origen's three levels of interpretation in his early work, *Peri Archon*.[49] The same attention has not been paid, however, to his use of this figure within his homiletical work. In HLev 5, Origen discussed this triple interpretation through a division of kind found in the text. Expounding upon Lev. 7:9, "and every sacrifice of the priest who offers it, that will be made in an oven, and all that is made in a small gridiron or in a frying pan, will be his," Origen discusses the threefold manner of Levitical food preparation: oven, gridiron, and frying pan.[50] Origen expanded on this threefold division as a threefold manner of understanding the written Word.

> And so, there are these three in which it says the sacrifice ought to be prepared, "in an oven, on a gridiron, in a frying pan." I think that "the oven", by reason of its form, signifies some things more profound which are unmentionable in divine Scriptures. "The gridiron" is those which, if they are frequently and often thought upon, can be understood and explained. But "the frying pan" is those which are well known and are understood without any covering. For often we have said that a triple mode of understanding is to be found in divine Scriptures: the historical, the moral, the mystical (*historicum*, *moralem*, *mysticum*). From this we understood the body, the soul, and the spirit (*corpus*, *animam*, *spiritum*). This threefold method of preparation of the sacrifices shows the threefold form of this understanding.[51]

This triple interpretation is an example of expansion by division to establish the literal and additional senses of the text of Scripture. In dividing the senses of Scripture, Origen attends to

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[49] PG 11:341. Origen utilizes an anthropological scheme of body, soul, and spirit to as an ascending hierarchy of interpretation.

[50] FC 83:98–99 [5.5.1].

[51] FC 83:100 [5.3.3].

the variable status of the hearers in terms of their ability to engage with the Scripture. This is one of the strengths of Origen's use of expansion by division, as it allows for the homiletical act to be understood across historical, moral, and mystical senses.

Another example of this spiritual expansion by division is found later in the same homily. Origen took up Lev. 7:10, "and every sacrifice made in oil or not made in oil will be for all the sons of Aaron, to each one equally." Beginning with a set of questions, Origen divided the sacrifices between those "made in oil" and those "not made 'in oil.'"[52] This difference, according to Origen, is whether the purpose of the sacrifice is "salutary" or for "sin." The use of a soteriological division in the oil invests the text with a spiritual sense. Origen expands upon the concept of the sacrifice of sin, interpreting it as one offered by those who do not repent. "Neither the oil of joy nor the incense of sweetness is placed on it."[53] Origen thus colors this sacrifice for sin so that it appears as the lesser of the two options. Origen directs his hearers toward one type of sacrifice, the salutary sacrifice, which is offered with joy. This passage illustrates a rhetorical aspect of Origen's use of expansion by division, namely, the spiritualization of the figural exposition, as Origen expanded upon the division of sacrifices by placing it within a soteriological framework. This division does not reflect a historical division, but a spiritual sense of the presence of repentance and joy in the hearer. This stands hand-in-hand with an implicit choice or personal agency in relation to the illocutionary force of Origen's soteriological division of the sacrifices.

Personal Choice

A second aspect of Origen's figural exposition with the figure of expansion by division is

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[52] FC 83:101 [5.6.1].

[53] FC 83:101 [5.6.1].

the presentation of choice. This choice is implicit to the rhetorical structure of the homily, whereby the hearer may choose to follow the example or reject it. Furthermore, the concept of choice is tied to the concept of virtue, particularly to the Early Church's view of the imparting of spiritual knowledge (*gnosis*) as foundational to the proper utilization of virtue by the Christian.[54]

Observations concerning Origen's use of "virtue" lead to understanding Origen's utilization of the concept of choice. Origen's use of division, from an inventive position, often contains an implicit choice for his hearers. One can visualize it as a question of whether the hearer will seek to follow the aims of the flesh or the Spirit. This implicit question invests the hearer with responsibility.

An example can be seen in Origen's HLev 4, as Origen expounds upon Lev.6:1–2, "If a soul sins, and neglects the precepts of the Lord, and lies to his neighbor over a deposit or a partnership or through robbery, or if he has oppressed his neighbor." In this section, Origen presents and expands upon a division between "evil robbers" and "good ones." "Certainly, these good [robbers] are those about whom the Savior says, 'they seize the kingdom of heaven.' But there are evil robbers about whom the prophet says, 'and the plunder of the poor is in your houses.'"[55] Origen clarifies his division, presenting an example of a man who is not "cleansed from vice, not yet separated from profane and sordid deeds."[56] This man listens to the mystical rites of the Church and "wrongly seizes the knowledge of the initiated and perfect." Origen's example helps provide clarity according to bodily action and virtue's operation. Origen concludes the section through *enthymeme* connecting the example of the man with the teaching of Christ that new wine cannot be put into an old wineskin without the skin bursting and the wine

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[54] See Appendix Two, "Origen's Body and Virtue."

[55] FC 83:74 [4.4.4–5].

[56] FC 83:74 [4.4.5].

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is lost. Origen explicitly comments that those who are not "renewed, but continuing in the oldness of wickedness, ought not to be entrusted with the secrets of the new mysteries which the pure understand through Christ."[57] The choice is implied by Origen. If one wishes to be entrusted with secrets and mysteries, one must be renewed. This renewal is seen through action, that is through the virtuous soul's control of the passions.

Apologetic Interpretation

Origen uses expansion by division in a third way to evoke unity between the Testaments against those interpretations which are detrimental to Christians or patently heretical. As apologetic preacher, Origen used this figure of division to address what detractors could use to divide the Old and New Testaments. Origen addresses these "stumbling blocks" and expands upon the supposed division to create strength out of it.

In HLev 6, Origen notes that Leviticus allows a priest to have two tunics, referring to Lev. 8:7 "and [Moses] put on him a tunic, and he girded him with a belt and again he dressed him in a long tunic." This presents a problem to Origen as Christ allows only one tunic according to the command of Luke 9:3, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics." To Origen, this poses a problem as Christ seems to directly contradict the Old Testament. Origen's exposition uses expansion by division to discuss Christ's command for one tunic versus the Levitical provision of two tunics. Origen addresses a key text which draws unity between the testaments.

> The high priest, as I see it, is dressed by Moses with two tunics. But what do we do
> with the fact that Jesus prohibited his priests, our apostles, to use two tunics? We
> have said that Moses and Jesus, that is the Law and the Gospels, should agree with

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[57] FC 83:74 [4.4.5].

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one another. Perhaps someone could say that when Jesus commanded the two tunics not be used it is not contrary to the Law but is more perfect than the Law.[58]

Origen, in congruence with his tendency to use expansion by division to address the spiritual sense of the text, finds his answer in the division that exists between the literal and spiritual ministry of priests. Origen points out that the Old Testament priests have a ministry of both circumcision and faith, that is flesh and Spirit. In contrast, the Apostles, whom Origen has equated with New Testament priests, are no longer bound to the work of the flesh. They conduct a ministry of the Spirit alone.

> [The apostles] are prohibited from having two tunics so that they might inwardly repudiate completely observances of this kind according to the letter of the Law and not concern the disciples "with Jewish myths" and "place a yoke on them which neither they nor their fathers would have been able to bear." But one is sufficient for them, and this one "inward." For they do not want this tunic of the law that is external but that which comes from above. For Jesus permits them to have one and that one is "interior."[59]

Origen expands upon this division as he draws together the two Testaments through the centrality of Christ's ministry, which removed the necessity of the literal sense. The division of the texts by number is drawn together by analogy. Origen does not dismiss the Old Testament as being Spiritless. Instead, he affirms the Old Testament priesthood as clothed with the Spirit as the "interior" of the two tunics. Employing his figural exposition, Origen unveils a continuity between the Old and New Testament through the clothing of the Spirit, despite the seeming contradiction according to the letter.

Origen uses this figure as a more obvious apologetic tool at several other places in his Levitical homilies. In HLev 3, Origen highlights the "unsuitableness" of Jewish interpretation through a series of questions that address the division of touch that makes clean and touch that

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[58] FC 83:121 [6.3.3].

[59] FC 83:122 [6.3.5].

makes unclean.[60] Attending to Lev. 5:2–3, "Whatever soul touches anything unclean, or the

carcass of unclean beasts, and conceals it, and is defiled, or if he touches the uncleanness of man

or anything unclean by which he is defiled," Origen addresses the concept of touch over a

protracted discussion, spiritualizing touch as the result of spiritual contact with holy or unclean

things. Origen highlights this with the example of the woman of Luke 8 "who suffered from the

flow of blood." Origen observed that "she had touched sin and therefore had incurred the

'scourge' of the flesh. But afterward, with full faith, 'she touched the hem of Jesus . . . was made

pure.'"[61] Origen concludes his figural exposition on touch by returning to his apologetic against

overly literalistic interpretation. Religious Jews, according to Origen, will not touch a corpse to

stay ritually clean. Origen attacks this position. "But to refuse to touch men or dead bodies to

whom religious burial should rather be given, these are Jewish and useless fables, 'certainly

having the form of piety but denying its power.'"[62] Origen highlights the division between the

outward form of piety and the spiritual power of piety. "Jewish" interpretation limits activity but

does nothing to instruct or assist the faith of the hearer.[63] Origen's figural exposition intends to

unveil a spiritual sense to assist his hearers in addressing their contract with various spiritual

forces.

Origen is not limited to apologetics against Jewish interpretation. Origen uses expansion by

division to distinguish Christian teaching from heresy, as exemplified in HLev 8, where Origen

divides Christ from heretical teachers. Discussing Lev. 13:29–30, "the infection breaks out on

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[60] FC 83:55–56 [3.3.1–2].

[61] FC 83:56 [3.3.2].

[62] FC 83:58 [3.3.5].

[63] Nicholas De Lange nuances the condemnation of "Jewish" interpretation by Origen, noting that Origen's use of the term is not definitional but strongly polemical in nature. (Nicholas De Lange, "Origen and Jewish Bible Exegesis," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 22, no. 1–4 [1971]: 32.)

the head or in the beard of a man or a woman, so that the appearance of the leprosy itself may be under the skin of the body; and this is a leprosy of the head or of the beard," Origen expounds upon the division between a clean or polluted head. Christ is the clean and pure head. Those without Christ as their head, have a "leprosy of the head." Origen places this leprosy of the head as synonymous with "polluted and unclean" teachers, directly condemning "Maricon or Valentinus or someone who follows such as these."[64] These heretics correspond to two distinct apologetic concerns for Origen. Maricon sought exclusion of the Old Testament from the Church's canon. Valentinus, as reported by Hippolytus, constructed a heresy that was Christian only in name. It utilized the theories of Plato and Pythagoras to construct a Hellenistic heresy that was not connected to Christ in any real capacity.[65] Addressing both of these heresies together, Origen reveals an apologetic concern that attends to internal and external threats against the Church. The figure of headship, divided between pure and impure, serves as a strong rhetorical imagining of the situation of the hearer. Origen's use of a strict division by species (*diairesis)*, between Christ and heretic, assists in defending Christian interpretation from the influences of heresy.

In summary, Origen's exposition utilizes the general figure of expansion by division to "provide opportunities for understanding" and defend his hearers. Expansion by division is an important concept for figuration to draw attention to the unspoken division from the things that are by necessity excluded. The power of this figure is found in its ability to make clear what lies unspoken, beneath the surface of the text. Origen uses this figure to distinguish between words, senses, and teachings regarding the literal sense and spiritual sense of the text and thus to create

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[64] FC 83:166 [8.9.2].

[65] Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, trans. Francis Legge (New York: MacMillan, 1921).

opportunities for his hearers to make choices concerning their spiritual lives. Origen uses expansion by division to defend the Scripture and his hearers against false or useless interpretations and against those who would seek to destroy the unity of the Scriptures or the centrality of Christ.

Theological Commonplaces as Goals of *Anthypophora* and Expansion-by-Division in Origen's Figural Exposition

The two figures central to this study offer a view of Origen's homilies that provides a specific context and situation for Origen's figural exposition. This figural exposition, specifically seen in, but not limited to the figures evaluated, yields three major loci or common themes developed in Origen's use of figuration: Christorevelatory exposition, expression of unity between Christ and Christian, and/or the edifying progression of the Christian toward a greater understanding of the spiritual. These are not restrictive categories in Origen's homilies as he repeatedly draws them together for the sake of his homiletical aim. These categories are not unique to Origen's homiletics but speak to a larger consistency in his corpus and interpretation. This is expressed in *Ad Celsum*, as well as in HLev 1 where Origen utilizes the theme of veiled/unveiled to discuss the Christological substance of the written Word of God and the Christian's progression toward the divine.

Christorevelatory vs. Christocentric

The field of homiletics has utilized the term "Christocentric" to define the central kerygma of a homily.[66] In Origen's homilies the work of revealing, or unveiling Christ, is best discussed as a separate activity from the term Christocentric. Origen's view of Scripture holds a

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[66] This approach is relatively accepted in evangelical circles, although there are competing assertions and practices.

Christocentric understanding through the unity of the Logos with Jesus the Christ. As such,

Origen understands the whole of the Scripture to be the body of Christ which holds the divinity

of the Logos.

> As "in the Last Days," the Word of God, which was clothed with the flesh of Mary, proceeded into this world. What was seen in him was one thing; what was understood was something else. For the sight of his flesh was open for all to see, but the knowledge of his divinity was given to the few, even the elect. So also when the Word of God was brought to humans through the Prophets and the Lawgiver, it was not brought without proper clothing. For just as there it was covered with the veil of flesh, so here with the veil of the letter, so that indeed the letter is seen as flesh but the spiritual sense hiding within is perceived as divinity. Such, therefore, is what we now find as we go through the book of Leviticus, in which the sacrificial rites, the diversity of offerings, and even the ministries of the priests are described. But perchance the worthy and the unworthy see and hear these things according to the letter, which is, as it were, the flesh of the Word of God and the clothing of its divinity. [67]

One can understand Origen's interpretation as Christocentric because of the foundational nature

of the Logos-Christ to the interpretative enterprise. This is more of a systematic description of

Origen's doctrine than it is a homiletical description. This Christocentric approach does not,

however, fully explain Origen's figural exposition, which unveils the presence of Christ under

the various signs, symbols, and images of the Old Testament.

Origen's homilies are built upon the unveiling of Christ across both Old and New

Testaments, revealed by figuration.[68] The term "Christo-revelatory" describes an organizing

principle of Origen's homiletic, which is expressed through a distinct exposition of Christ

through the substance of the spiritual sense of the Scriptures. Origen's use of figuration unveils

the presence of Christ as the foundation of his homiletical kerygma and as a central activity of

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[67] FC 83:29 [1.1.1].

[68] FC 83:29–31 [1.1.1–5].

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the homily which unveils Christ in all aspects of the Scripture.[69] Reading Origen's Leviticus homilies from the perspective of its Christological revelation presents the reader a clearer view of the internalized structure of the homilies which are built upon the foundation of the revelation of Christ—in its various theological implications—and progress to the addressing of the unity of Christian and Christ and/or the Christian's edification.

Origen's Christo-revelatory exposition is evident in his usage of figuration. In his third homily on Leviticus, Origen uses rhetorical question (*anthypophora*) to develop a greater vision of the presence of Christ as revealed by the type and figure of the text (*typum … et imaginem*).[70] Origen explores the concept of the sacred shekel, a part of the treasury of the temple. In Leviticus, the shekel is the coin by which the offerings for sin are to be purchased. Understanding this historic occurrence but not having any such treasure in his contemporary congregation, Origen proceeds to a question.

> Do you want me to show you from what treasures these riches come? Hear the Apostle Paul speaking about the Lord Jesus Christ. He says, "In him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." And also, in the Gospels, the Lord says, "The scribe brings new and old riches from his treasures." Concerning these, the Apostle Paul also says, "In every way, you are made rich in him, in every word and in all knowledge." Therefore, out of this wealth, which is brought from "the treasures of wisdom and knowledge," this "ram" must be bought by us, which ought to be offered for sins, those, of course, which were committed against holy things, and which must be bought with the amount "of a sacred shekel." Now we have said above that each offering is a type and figure of Christ, but much more rather the ram which, once substituted for Isaac by God, had to be sacrificed. Therefore, Christ who cancels payment on our sins is to be compared by us with "the sacred shekel." "The sacred

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[69] Torjesen's analysis confirms our position. "The spiritual sense of the text to which Origen relates his hearers is simultaneously the teachings about the Logos and the Logos present, teaching . . . Origen means the Logos . . . not as an abstract principle, but as the personal Logos, as the Christ who was incarnate. Through the text, through the personal teachings of the Logos, the hearer encounters the living, personal Christ." (Torjesen, *Hermeneutical Procedure*, 135.

[70] FC 83:67 [3.8.2].

shekel" holds the form of our faith. For if you offer faith as the price, you will receive the remission of sins from Christ as from the unstained ram given in sacrifice.[71]

Following this exegetical use of *anthypophora*, Origen moves through a progression of passages by which he draws together the concept of the "sacred shekel" and Christ. In a final completed *enthymeme* Origen answers his rhetorical question: "Therefore, Christ who cancels payment on our sins is to be compared by us with the 'sacred shekel.'"[72] Even more than this, Origen presents Christ to the hearers as "the form of our faith." (*fidei nostrae formam tenet*) Christ is thus revealed to the hearer through figures. This revelation is twofold, both as the payment for their sin and as the *formam*, or mold, which gives form to the faith of the Christian. In this example, Origen proclaims Jesus to the hearer as both the object of faith, the figure of the sacred shekel, and the model of faith seen in the image of the use of the shekel for the purchase of an offering. This figural exposition, achieved through the use of a question and answer, reveals Christ to the hearers as Paul says in Rom. 1:17, "from faith for faith," making clear that the primary activity of his figural exposition is the revelation of Christ through the text being considered.

Origen employed more figures than just question/answer to draw out the spiritual sense of a text, and thus to reveal Christ. Origen also used the figure of division to point to Christ as revealed by the Scripture even in phrases as diverse as "at the door of the tabernacle."

> Therefore, only that "male," only he is "without blemish," who "did not sin and guile was not found in his mouth" and who "acceptable before the Lord," is offered "at the door of the tabernacle." "At the door of the tabernacle" is not inside the door but outside the door. For Jesus was outside the door, "for he came to his own and his own did not receive him." Therefore, he did not enter into that tabernacle to which he had come but "at the door of it" he was offered for a whole burnt offering, since he suffered "outside the camp." For also those evil "husbandmen cast out the son from

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[71] FC 83:66–67 [3.8.2].

[72] FC 83:67 [3.8.2]. "'*Siclo*' igitur '*sancto*' *comparandus est nobis Christus, qui peccata nostra dissolvat.* '*Siclus sanctus*' *fidei nostrae formam tenet.*"

the father's vineyard and killed him when he came." This, therefore, is what is offered "at the door of the tabernacle, acceptable before the Lord." And what is as "acceptable" as the sacrifice of Christ "who offered himself to God?"[73]

In this example, Origen divides by *taxis,* or attributes, dividing the sacrifice to include not only its ontological aspects of "male" and "without blemish" but also its localization. The concept of the location of the sacrifice does not immediately seem relevant to the revelation of Christ as Christ is not sacrificed outside a door but upon a cross.

Origen employed figures so that the hearer may see that all of the types, symbols, and figures reveal Christ. Origen sets the phrase "outside the door" as equally relevant to the description of the sacrifice of Christ. He draws this into further focus through the juxtaposition of the parable from Matt. 23 whereby the son is killed outside the vineyard with the concept of the sacrifice at the door of the tabernacle.[74] Origen further divides the sacrifice, adding "outside the camp" in the middle of this paragraph. "Outside the camp" carries an added weight as a theological call back to the scapegoat and the sins set upon it. By offering this term in combination with the previous passages, Origen has effectively both expanded the sacrificial attributes and altered the historical reference of the sacrifice. Origen's presentation blended multiple distinct historic sacrifices into a spiritual understanding revealed only in Christ. This is not out of character for Origen, nor outside the norm of the Scripture as Heb. 10 argues that Christ offered the once-for-all sacrifice in opposition to numerous sacrifices of the Old Testament.[75] This example highlights the foundational goal of Origen's homiletic, the revelation of Christ to his hearers. By expanding the sacrificial example through a division of its attributes, Origen makes clear that the spiritual sense of this sacrifice is only revealed in Christ and not in

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[73] FC 83:33 [1.2.8].

[74] Matt. 23:41–46.

[75] Heb. 10:12.

any historic or contemporary activity.

In sum, Origen's figural exposition is best understood as a Christo-revelatory act, which organizes the homily around the unveiling of Christ according to the spiritual sense of the Scripture. This Christo-revelatory act is understood as distinct from the term Christocentric, where Christo-revelation moves beyond the hermeneutical supposition of Christ as the content of the Scripture and seeks to use the unveiling of Christ through the spiritual sense of types, figures, and forms, as an organizing principle for the construction of the homily. This unveiling of the presence of Christ is the foundational act of the Origenian homiletical system. Only after establishing this foundation does Origen move forward in his homilies toward the creation of "opportunities of understanding,"[76] expressed in the unity of Christ with the hearer and hearer's edification.

Unity

The unveiling of Christ in the Scriptures presents an opportunity for Origen to explore and express the unity of Christ and the Christian. This unity is presented by Origen in several illustrations including head/body and husband/wife.[77] Kyeil Kwak has focused upon this, discussing the drama of salvation as a unifying activity between Christ and Christian.[78] In his

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[76] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[77] See FC 83:138 [7.2.10] "Because if the delight does not seem to be complete for you who are a member, if another member is missing, how much more does our Lord and Savior, who is 'the head' and the originator of the whole body, consider his delight to be incomplete as long as he sees one of the members to be missing from his body. And for this reason, perhaps, he poured out this prayer to the Father: 'Holy Father, glorify me with that glory that I had with you before the world was.' Thus, he does not want to receive his complete glory without us, that is, without his people who are his body and his members. For he himself wants to live in this body of his Church and in these members of his people as in their soul that he can have all impulses and all works according to his own will, so that that saying of the prophet may be truly fulfilled in us, 'I will live in them and walk [among them].'"; FC 83:219 [12.2.1] "He will not go out of the sanctuary and he will not contaminate the name which is sanctified over him of God because the holy oil of anointing of his God is on him; I am the Lord. This one will take a virgin from his race as a wife. But he will not take a widow, one cast out, one polluted, or a prostitute; but he will take a virgin from his race for a wife. He will not profane his seed in his people; I am the Lord who sanctifies him."

[78] Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage," 216.

work on symbol, Kwak argues that this unity is created through an experience of the text through which the hearer participates in the ongoing drama of salvation that is found in the revelation of Christ.[79] This participation is not an acknowledgment of the work of Christ, but a deep understanding in the individual that arises from the work of Christ upon the individual. At a basic level, this is manifested as an understanding of the believer's unity with Christ.

Origen discussed this type of spiritual unity in several places across his corpus. One example is presented in an *anthypophora* in HLev 13 concerning the location where the Levites will eat the showbread in Lev. 24:8–9, "This will be an eternal covenant for Aaron and his sons, and they will eat them in a holy place." Origen offers his interpretation as reasonable and a "better way" of understanding "holy place" than the physically bound meaning of the temple. "Is not 'the holy place' better understood in this way than if we imagine a structure of insensible stones to be called 'a holy place'?"[80] Origen builds upon this by analogy. "Whence in like manner this law is also set before you, that when you receive the mystical bread, you eat it in a clean place; that is, you do not receive the sacrament of the Lord's body with a soul contaminated and polluted by sins."[81] Origen's initial *anthypophora* allowed him to introduce the favorable understanding of "holy place" as the soul into a teaching about the proper reception of the Lord's Supper. Furthermore, Origen's figural usage allowed him to employ his hearer's engagement with the concept of the Levitical "holy place" as he equates the "holy place" with

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[79] Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage," 218–19. "[The Christian's] dramatic acts are mimetic representation of the Logos-Christ, who is the main actor in the Nicene σύμβολον as well as in all of Scripture, as most of this symbolic story . . . describes his actions out of his divinity. In this way, Christian enactment of the instituted symbols in any worship context can be understood as the dramatization (προσωποποιία) of Christ."

[80] FC 83:243 [13.5.5]

[81] FC 83:243 [13.5.5] The interior cleansing of the hearer brings about a real spiritual unity with Christ. Kevin Vanhoozer explains, "For those who by faith through the Spirit have been united to Christ, putting on Christ is not a fiction (what if) but a reality (what is) . . . Disciples do not act like Christ in order to approximate an exemplar outside them. Rather, disciples put on Christ from the inside out." (Kevin Vanhoozer, "Putting on Christ: Spiritual Formation and the Drama of Discipleship," *Journal for Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* 8, no. 2 [2015]: 161).

the soul unified with Christ. Origen's analogy motivated hearers toward repentance so that "you do not receive the sacrament of the Lord's body with a soul contaminated and polluted by sins." As Origen moves from physical to spiritual understanding of the text, his use of the question results in further exhortation of the hearers in their union with Christ.[82] Origen concludes this homily with a doxological exhortation.

> [L]et us pay heed to how we may not be shown unworthy of this so great and so sublime understanding but that our soul may first become "a holy place" and in "the holy place" we may receive the holy mysteries through the grace of the Holy Spirit by whom everything is sanctified that is holy. "To him be glory and power forever and ever. Amen!"[83]

This exhortation focuses upon the result of the unity of God with his hearers. Focusing on "understanding," Origen orders the work of the grace of the Holy Spirit before the hearers receive the mysteries of God. Origen directly connects the mysteries with the eating and drinking of the body of Christ. Such engagement of the mysteries, in Origen's mind, must follow the teaching of Paul and seek to be pure, lest the body of Christ is polluted through one's union with Christ. Kwak's work highlights this second narrative within the rhetoric of Origen's homilies, namely the reception for his hearers which, according to Kwak, is an enactment of the soteriological drama which brings unity to Christ and His Church.[84] As one receives the

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[82] It has not been noted in our analysis up to this point, nor has it been a focus of the wider scholarship of Origen's homilies, but the utilization of a *conclusio*, or summation, occurs in several of Origen's homilies. These summaries offer a clear indication of Origen's homiletical goal of providing understanding that leads to formation. Origen's HLev 1 concludes with "And therefore, we who read or hear these things should attend to both parts—to be pure in body, upright in mind, pure in heart, reformed in habits. We should strive to make progress in deeds, be vigilant in knowledge, faith, and actions, and be perfect in deeds and understanding in order that we may be worthy to be conformed to the likeness of Christ's offering, through our Lord Jesus Christ himself, through whom to God the Almighty Father with the Holy Spirit be "glory and power forever and ever. Amen." (FC 83:38 [1.5.3]) This *conclusio* leaves Origen's hearers with more direct enumeration of progression in edification according to both one's understanding and one's actions. Origen offers similar *conclusiones* in his HLev 6 (FC 83:128 [6.6.6]), HLev 10 (FC 83:207 [10.2.6]), HLev 12 (FC 83:229 [12.7.2]), and HLev 14 (FC 83:254 [14.4.6]).

[83] FC 83:244 [13.6.2].

[84] Kwak, "Symbolic Drama of Passage," 122.

mysteries, they are connected with the work of God and with Christ.[85] It is through the union of the hearer with Christ that the growth of the Christian takes place through greater opportunities for understanding.

In sum, the unity of Christ and his hearers in HLev 13, is presented through his hearers' participation in the holy mysteries. By eating the bread of Christ and being unified with him through the enacting of grace through the Holy Spirit, the Christian receives the mysteries of God. Origen's final exhortation expresses this succinctly for his hearers. Built on Christ and for his glory, the Holy Spirit makes souls holy that they may be further joined to Christ through the holy mysteries. This unity of Christ and hearer is built upon Origen's Christo-revelatory approach to the structure of his homilies. In turn, this unity with Christ forms the hearer through "opportunities for understanding."

A second, slightly ironic, example of Origen's unification of Christ with his hearers comes in HLev 7, where Origen explores the unity of Christ with his apostles and those who follow in the apostles' teaching by dividing them from those who "cannot eat 'the bread of separation.'" (Lev. 10:14–15)

> But since we applied the person of the high priest to Jesus my Lord and the holy apostles to his sons, let us see how this one and his sons eat "the breast of separation," but all the others cannot eat "the breast of separation." What is it,

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[85] Origen presents this union across several images. In HLev 12, Origen uses a generative image of conception and birth. "He will not go out of the sanctuary, and he will not contaminate the name which is sanctified over him of God because the holy oil of anointing of his God is on him; I am the Lord. This one will take a virgin from his race as a wife. But he will not take a widow, one cast out, one polluted, or a prostitute; but he will take a virgin from his race for a wife. He will not profane his seed in his people; I am the Lord who sanctifies him." (FC 83:230 [12.7.2].) In HLev 13, Origen utilizes the metaphor of the Levitical showbread. "But that one to whom was brought nothing of the mystery but the understanding of the present salvation and life, is described as having common loaves made from only "regular flour." And you, therefore, if you have knowledge of the secrets, if you can discuss wisely and carefully about faith in God, about the mystery of Christ, the unity of the Holy Spirit, you offer to the Lord loaves 'from fine wheat flour.'" (FC 83:238 [13.3.4]); Later in HLev 13, Origen describes this unity through the image of the "holy place" of the tabernacle. "Let us pay heed to how we may not be shown unworthy of this so great and so sublime understanding but that our soul may first become 'a holy place' and in 'the holy place' we may receive the holy mysteries through the grace of the Holy Spirit by whom everything is sanctified that is holy." (FC 83:244 [13.6.2].)

therefore, that is separated from all things and is not common with the rest, except the substance of the Trinity alone? If, therefore, I can understand the rationale for the world I cannot also understand about God, as is worthy, since if the knowledge of God has not been revealed to me, I can certainly eat a breast, but not "the breast of separation." Likewise, if I could say, "For he gave me true knowledge of all that is that I may know the reason of the world and the virtue of the elements; the beginning, the end, and the middle of time; the alternation of the solstices and the change of seasons; the cycles of the year and the positions of the stars;" knowledge of all this that is rational is the food of the breast but not "of the breast of separation." But if I could know from God the things that are great, that are holy, that are true and secret, then I will eat the breast of separation, since I would know that which stands out and is separated from all creatures. Therefore, first, my true high priest "eats" that "breast." How "does he eat" it? He says, "No one knows the Father except the Son." In the second place, "his sons also eat" it. He says, "For no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son wants to reveal him." But who are those to whom he reveals him except his apostles?[86]

Origen justifies this division of those who "cannot eat" according to their lack of spiritual knowledge, separating spiritual knowledge from literal or rational knowledge (*scientia quia rationabilis est*). They cannot eat because they do not know the "things that are holy, that are true, that are secret" (*sancta . . . et secreta*). Origen reminds his hearers that the basis of this division of understanding is, as John's Gospel describes, the work of the Son who reveals knowledge of the Father to those whom he chooses. This revelation is an aspect of a union between Christ and his followers that brings together these different persons into a collective knowledge of holy and secret things. This knowledge is not for its own sake. It is translated into activity, eating the breast of separation, congruent with this revelation. Origen discusses this unity of revelation by presenting the term "limb of separation" in reference to the activity of Christ.

And "the limb of separation" . . . are the deeds and works superior to the others which the Savior himself and my Lord completed first . . . In like manner, his apostles also

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[86] FC 83:140 [7.3.2–3].

"eat the limb of separation" or "removal" when they do the work of the Evangelist and become "workmen unashamed, rightly handling the word of Truth."[87]

Kwak discussed this "becoming" of the hearers as an example of symbols leading to a participatory union between Christ and Christian, whereby the Christian imitates the actions of Christ through their use of received knowledge. Origen presented a marked consistency in his homilies regarding the work of Christ through his Spirit. The one who "rightly handles the word of Truth" is the one in whom the Spirit has worked understanding. As was stated earlier, Origen views the work of 'interpretation" as a work of the Holy Spirit. Thus, the hearer is, through the Spirit-worked understanding of Christ's work, encouraged to imitate Christ's eating "the limb of separation" through the work of evangelism. The identity of the hearer is ascertained through its relationship to Christ, both from an internal or spiritual perspective and from an external viewing of activity.

In summary, the unity of Christ and the Christian hearer is a core aspect of Origen's figural exposition. Origen's homilies seek to draw out the union between Christ and Christian that occurs through the work of the Holy Spirit, which reveals Christ as the substance of the Scriptures. This work is paramount for Origen's homiletic exposition as it establishes the foundation of his exhortations. Christ and hearer become united through the agency of the Spirit as it grants understanding to the hearers. This understanding of Christ is not a literal knowledge of Christ, but a spiritual revelation. Through this, the hearer is ushered into a union with Christ beyond an epistemology, affecting the very ontological substance of the individual. This change in the individual is an expression of the drama of salvation and is expressed, in kind, by the actions of the individual. Just as a seed by nature grows and produces its crop so the unity of

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[87] FC 83:141 [7.3.4].

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Christ with a Christian will produce actions in accordance with the nature of Christ.

Edifying through Understanding

In a final exploration of the common focuses of Origen's homilies, we turn to the concept of edification. Origen addresses this goal of his Leviticus homilies in his first homily as providing "an opportunity for the wise to become wiser."[88] As iron sharpens iron, so Origen aimed at understanding, through which the hearer is formed according to the work of the Spirit concerning their intentions and actions. As stated above, Origen employs the term "understanding" to describe the force of the text to form the hearer to act in specific ways based on their knowledge of the meaning of the words used and their revelation of Christ. Contemporary homiletics tends to use "application" synonymously with the intended change in moral reasoning or activity,[89] but edification of this sort is not prominent in Origen's homilies. Instead, Origen often reveals Christ, in image or type or symbol, and then speaks to the unity of Christ and Christian. This discussion of unity can have a moralistic tone and implication and is found frequently in his homilies. However, deliberate moral exhortation of activities, such as "do not tell your neighbor a lie," is relatively rare. Typically, Origen presented these activities as the result of the Spirit's work upon the hearer through their understanding of the revelation of Christ and his growing unity with him.

HLev 5 provides an example of Origen's more deliberate edification. Focusing upon Lev.

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[88] FC 83:31 [1.1.5].

[89] This is not to say that contemporary homiletics does not view the change of the individual as the result of God's work upon the hearer. Rather, this observation draws attention to the greater prevalence in contemporary homiletics to place a greater emphasis on explicit descriptions or commendations of activity as the manifestation of the Christian's unity with God than an emphasis on the unity itself. Origen does not, generally, apply the preached Word so as to manifest a particular intention or action within the hearer. Rather, Origen applies the preached Word to the hearer in order to further illustrate and strengthen the hearer's union with Christ. It is this union, by the work of the Spirit, that will then manifest in more specific intentions and actions.

7:7, "It will belong to the priest who offers that, and he will make a propitiation for a transgression," Origen begins this section by encouraging his hearers to take on the role of the priest and to "learn that part was given to them with these for whom they should make propitiation for transgressions."[90] Origen continues with a dogmatic use of *anthypophora* concerning the function of "propitiation."[91] (*repropitio*) "But what is it 'to make propitiation for a transgression'?" (*Quid autem est 'repropitiare delictum'?*) In an answer to his question, Origen offers a proposed series of events that offer a general narrative of the Church's evangelistic efforts to "sinners."

> Admonishing, exhorting, teaching and instructing, lead him to repentance, turn him from his error, free him from vices and make him such that God becomes gracious to him converted, you will be said "to have made a propitiation for transgression. If you were such a priest, and your doctrine and word were such, part of those you reform is given to you with those you reform, so that their merit is your reward, and their salvation is your glory.[92]

Origen concludes slightly later in the same paragraph.

> Therefore, let the priests of the Lord understand when a share is given to them … let them know they are about to have a share in the presence of God in no other way than in that which they offer "for sins," that they should convert sinners from the path of sin."[93]

Origen's answer teaches that the Church's activity of conversion through teaching, rebuking, etc., is an enacting of Divine "propitiation." In keeping with the text of Lev. 7:5–9, Origen understands the work of propitiation as conducted through the work of the priest historically, and in his contemporary setting through the priesthood of all believers. Origen exhorts his hearers by

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[90] FC 83:98 [5.4.4].

[91] FC 83:98 [5.4.4].

[92] FC 83:98 [5.4.4].

[93] FC 83:98 [5.4.4]. *Intelligant igitur sacerdotes Domini, ubi est eis data portio … sed sciant se in nullo alio partem habituros apud Deum, nisi in eo quod offerunt 'pro peccatis', id est quod a via peccati converterint peccatores.*

encouraging them to know (*sciant)* that they have a share in God's propitiation through their evangelistic efforts. Origen's description sets down a list of activities for his hearers to follow and enact. These activities are the result of divinely given understanding. The formational activities that occur as a result are secondary in so far as they are specific representations of the holistic expression of the individual drawn together in "doctrine and word" to the work of reforming and converting sinners which is accomplished through the work of the Spirit drawing the hearer into a more realized union with the work of Christ.

A second aspect of this edification is present in Origen's insistence that the Church cooperates with the work of God. Origen's conclusion illustrates this connection, "Therefore, let the priest of the Lord understand (*intelligent)* . . . that they should convert sinners from the path of sin."[94] Origen does not devolve into the specific dogmatic nuances of this work of conversion, but presents the work to his hearer as an example for imitation. This imitation is built upon the hearer's unity with Christ as expressed by Origen's use of the title, "priest of the Lord." Origen understands that this relationship is not unilateral in its offering to God, highlighting the divine allocation of "reward" and "glory" given as a share of the sacrifice to the priests responsible for its offering. Just as the Levitical priest received a "share" or benefit for their conducting of sacrifice for transgressions, likewise the contemporary priesthood receives a "share" from those who are converted. Origen's spiritual interpretation of this "share" serves to encourage his hearers. Origen positions the reward received from evangelism as an essential outcome of the understanding he is seeking for his hearers. In conclusion to this example, Origen's edification of his hearers occurs through the presentation of distinct activities within a larger guiding example. This example provides a direction for the realization of the hearer's "understanding" and offers a

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[94] FC 83:98 [5.4.4].

rare encouragement of imitation by specific action.

In another example, Origen discusses several types of sacrifices in HLev 7 through expansion by division. As he expands upon the spiritual sense of each sacrifice, Origen comes to the division in the text between cattle and those that "do not chew the cud or part the hoof." Origen presents this difference of animals as analogous to various types of persons.

> For hearing what was written in the Law of God, [one who neither "chews the cud" nor "applies the cud"] does not meditate on it and apply it with a keen and spiritual understanding. But when he hears something, he immediately either disdains or despises it and does not look for what is valuable. Understanding is concealed in the more common words. And indeed, those die "who part the hoof" but "do not apply the cud." But you who want to be pure, hold your life in conformity and harmony with knowledge, and your deeds with understanding, that you may be pure in each, that "you apply the cud" and "divide the hoof" but also that "you may produce" or "you may cast away" the hoofs.[95]

The division presents both a model for the *via positiva* and *via negativa* of the Christian life, resultant from the individual's understanding. Origen holds up the "pure" as an ideal model. The hearer is offered several general statements to serve as guideposts for their behavior and as a measure for themselves and others. The "pure" progress by an understanding of the written Word of God that finds Christ "concealed in the more common words," in a similar manner to those who "disdain or despise" such revelation of the letter of the Law of God. Origen's division presents this as a clear delineation of positions. Either one understands and seeks, or one disdains and despises. Origen's edification is not a practice of working with grays but presents to the hearers models in a manner similar to Phil. 2:13, "for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure." These models offer both examples of positive behavior and prohibitions of negative behavior. The prohibitions may be presented as negative imperatives, "do not do" or as a negative example contrasted with a positive one.

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[95] FC 83:149 [7.6.5].

Addressing Lev. 14:10, "two lambs without blemish and one spotless yearling sheep and three tithes of fine wheat flour covered in oil and one ladle of oil," Origen's HLev 8 uses the two lambs to discuss Origen's understanding of the guidance of virtue upon activity as one which is first imparted to the individual by the Spirit.[96]

> Therefore, the first "lamb" which is "for transgression" appears to me to have the form of his virtue which he who was in sin received, through which he could cast away from himself his desire to sin and to make repentance for his old evils. But the second "lamb" [appears] to have the form of his recovered virtue through which, since he had rejected and chased away all his vices, he offered himself complete and completely to God and appeared worthy before the divine altars.[97]

Virtues are not only markers of a personal agency or choice of activity, but examples for imitation. This example highlights the first lamb as a moment of reception of Christian virtue, specifically an understanding of God and the work of Christ. The model progresses from the reception of divine virtue to the rejection of sin, vice, and evil. Following rejection, Origen presents a model of "recovered virtue," expressed as one who "had rejected and chased away all his vices" and "offered himself complete and completely to God." This three-stage example presents an exemplar who has received the restoration of virtue by the work of the Spirit. Origen offers this positive exemplar for imitation by those who also have been restored by the Spirit. Origen does not focus upon producing a negative example, but rather attends to the prohibition of various activities through a natural contrast that is developed within the positive description of

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[96] Hong offers a brief discussion of the role of virtue within Origen's homilies as an expansion of the Greek virtues. Hong's discussion utilizes "virtue" as analogous to societal "values." Hong's analysis of Origen's rhetoric, however, places an undue emphasis on the attempts of Origen to "Christianize pagan virtues" as an aspect of his homiletical program. As is discussed in appendix two, the edification of hearers according to newly Christianized virtues is the product of a Christorevelatory exposition of the Scripture and the establishment of a union between Christ and Christian. As Hong argues, these virtues are an aspect of Origen's formation of Christian identity. As we have presented above, virtues are best understood within the anthropological system of Platonism, whereby the soul uses virtues as a control for desire and passion.

[97] FC 83:173 [8.11.8]. "*Igitur primus 'agnus', qui 'pro delicto' est, videtur mihi virtutis ipsius formam tenere, quam assumpsit is, qui erat in peccatis, per quam potuit propellere a se affectum peccandi et malorum veterum poenitudinem gerere; secundus vero 'agnus' figuram tenere illius iam recuperatae virtutis, per quam abiectis et procul fugatis omnibus vitiis integrum se et ex integro obtulit Deo et dignus exstitit divinis altaribus.*"

the exemplar. The edification of the hearer follows as the hearer embraces a closer realization of their unity with God through the Spirit's work.

In this section, we have presented three loci, or themes, which Origen's figural exposition develops in his homilies in the continued effort to categorize Origen's use of figural exposition. The Christo-revelatory theme nuances the typical discussion of Origen's Christocentricity. The focus of Origen's homily is the revelation of Christ as the substance of the Scripture. This revelation expands upon a Christocentric understanding of the Scripture by focusing upon the homiletical act in which the unveiling, or revelation, of Christ forms both the primary theme of and primary rhetorical structure for the homily. The second theme, the unity of Christ and Christian, is built upon Origen's Christo-revelatory approach to the structure of his homilies. Christ and hearer become united through the agency of the Spirit as it grants understanding to the hearers, which ushers the hearer into a union with Christ that extends beyond an epistemological setting as it is an expression of the drama of salvation. The final theme is found in the edification of the hearer through "opportunities for understanding," which Origen present as exemplars for his hearers to imitate or avoid. Origen thus seeks to shape his hearers' soul and activities of the body according to Christ and the Christian's union with him.

Conclusion

Drawing upon the "lens" of the last two chapters, this chapter has evaluated Origen's actual homiletical practice of figural exposition. Origen's figural exposition works across numerous rhetorical figures to unveil Christ for his hearers. This unveiling of Christ is seen through the use of *anthypophora* and expansion by division, as well as in other figures, such as *enthymeme*. The homiletical work of Origen drives at the understanding of the hearer through both theological and rhetorical techniques. While the agreement with Origen's understanding of senses of the

Scripture has waxed and waned across the Church's history, it is a legitimate example of the rhetorical system and pattern of the Church in his age. As such, our analysis of Origen's homilies provides a window into the homiletical approach that formed the bulk of Christian homilies up to the end of the first millennium. The close reading of Origen's use of figures provides a clearer articulation of the function these figures play in the rhetorical organization of Origen's homilies as well as how they attend to the general themes of Origen's homilies.

Origen's use of *anthypophora* highlights two categories of use, exegetical and dogmatic. Origen utilizes the exegetical *anthypophora* as a rhetorical introduction for the juxtaposition of two or more passages together. This juxtaposition creates an understanding and nuancing of the spiritual meaning passage under consideration. Origen creates "opportunities for understanding" in his hearers through the use of dogmatic *anthypophora*, which allows Origen to address topics that are theologically important to his homiletical aims but not necessarily immediately available in the literal sense of the passage under consideration. Both of the uses of *anthypophora* facilitate Origen's figural exposition through the clarification of words and the spiritual sense of their meanings, as well as homiletical opportunities to address material that increases the spiritual "understanding" of his hearers.

Origen's exposition utilizes the general figure of expansion by division to form and defend his hearers from harmful interpretation. The strength of this figure is found in Origen's use to distinguish between words, senses, and teachings regarding the literal sense and spiritual sense of the text. Origen uses this figure to present opportunities for choice and acceptance of his interpretation in the spiritual lives of his hearers. Expansion by division is also used by Origen to defend the Scripture and his hearers against false or useless interpretations and against those who would seek to destroy the unity of the Scriptures or the centrality of Christ. Origen's use of

anthypophora and expansion by division also reveals three themes that are present throughout the work of Origen's homilies: Christo-revelation, unity of Christ and Christian, and edification. Origen's figural exposition draws these themes together into a general pattern of revelation, unification, and edification. These themes will be further explored in their relation to contemporary homiletics in the next chapter.

ORIGEN'S FIGURAL EXPOSITION AND EVANGELICAL PREACHING

This chapter turns our attention to the modern evangelical preacher. The preceding placement of Origen in the historical development of the Church's homily and rhetoric's usage prepared us for a close reading of Origen's Leviticus homilies at the level of rhetorical figure. Our analysis of Origen's use of *anthypophora* and *distributio* has shown a general pattern of Origen's figural exposition, revelation, unification, and edification. In addition to this pattern, each specific figure has revealed specific techniques Origen used to create "opportunities for understanding." This chapter relates these figures and this pattern to modern evangelical preaching as a dialogical synthesis of the preceding "lens" and "thick" descriptions.

The term "evangelical preaching" encompasses many perspectives and theological approaches. Our discussion will interact with four approaches to evangelical homiletics found in the essays contained in Scott Gibson's and Mathew Kim's *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*: redemptive-historic, Christiconic, theocentric, and law-gospel.[1] In concert with the thesis of this dissertation, these essays answer the central question, "what can we learn form a theological tradition not our own?" In the previous chapters, we have established the history surrounding Origen's figural exposition and we have evaluated his use of figures within that context. This analysis allows us to take the last step, the engagement of modern practice through our new understanding of its history. While the volume edited by Gibson and Kim deals primarily with contemporary traditions of evangelical preaching, the same question may be asked of Origen's historic tradition. To accomplish a thorough discussion, this chapter will begin by describing an evangelical approach to preaching. Next, Origen's general pattern of

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[1] Gibson and Kim, "Introduction," xii.

revelation, unification, and edification will be discussed in relation to the evangelical approach. This will be followed by suggestions of how Origen's use of *anthypophora* and *distributio* may be used within or offer a counterpoint to the specific evangelical approach. In this section, I have attempted to be faithful to the homiletical material presented under each approach, even as I may have theological issues with the way the material is presented.

Redemptive-Historic

Redemptive-Historic preaching is built upon the conviction that the "Scripture as a whole is God's revelation of his redeeming activity in Jesus Christ."[2] Practitioners point to the teaching of Jesus as the basis for this conviction as He identified "the redemptive focus of all Scripture when he walked with the two disciples on the road to Emmaus." This approach reads all Scripture related to Christ, that is "all passages in their context serve our understanding of his nature and or/necessity."[3] Bryan Chapell's chapter on the redemptive-historic approach focuses upon the redemptive nature of the Scripture. This nature draws together Old and New Testament into one *Heilsgeschichte*. Redemptive-historical preachers are tasked with assisting their hearers in understanding how a particular passage, for example Lev. 5:15 concerning "the sacred shekel" (בְּשֶׁקֶל־הַקֹּדֶשׁ), functions in relation to the redemption revealed in Christ. Chapell offers four "redemptive foci," which are not exhaustive but "provide dependable means of exploration and explanation."[4] The foci state that a text may be: predictive of the work of Christ, preparatory for the work of Christ, resultant from the work of Christ, and/or reflective of the work of Christ.

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[2] Bryan Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 12.

[3] Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," 8–9.

[4] Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," 12.

These categories are not mutually exclusive, since a passage can be developed in one or more than one of these categories.

Additionally, Chapell offers three forms of "disclosure" that allow Christ to be seen from a text: textual disclosure, that is a text "directly referring to Christ or his messianic work", typological disclosure, which refers to Christ by means of correspondence to other persons, events, and institutions; and contextual discourse, which describes passages that do not address Christ or his work directly or typologically, but reveal Jesus and his work in the greater context.[5]

The historic aspect of this method examines the historical setting of Scripture as well as its relation to the historical redemptive work of Jesus. The preacher views the Old and New Testaments as historically and theologically reliable texts from which the revelation of Christ arises. The historical moment of the homily, is viewed as "application." The homiletical goal of this method, as stated by Chapell, is "to show how each text manifests God's grace in order to prepare and enable his people to embrace the hope provided by Christ."[6] The redemptive-historic method is careful not to abandon the historic situation which gave rise to the text. Instead, by attending to t0his history, preachers are able to connect a passage to the redemptive work of Christ and in turn, to connect Christ's work viewed through this passage to the hearer.

Origen's Pattern of Figural Exposition in Relation to the Redemptive-Historic Approach

There is a great similarity between Origen's method and the principles and considerations of the Redemptive-Historic approach, as typified by Brian Chapell. This section will discuss each aspect of Origen's pattern in relation to the redemptive-historic approach, focusing upon Origen's use of figures in each segment.

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[5] Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," 10–11.

[6] Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," 7–8.

Revelation

Both the redemptive-historical approach and Origen's homiletics insist that the revelation of Jesus is the content of Scripture. Two examples highlight how Origen's focus upon the revelation of Christ through the Scripture can support the redemptive-historic approach.

The first example is from Origen's HLev 13, where Origen begins with a quotation from Lev. 24:11, "Concerning the son of an Israelite woman and an Egyptian father, 'who naming the name, cursed.'" Following the redemptive-historic approach, this passage does not directly refer to Christ, nor is it a recognized type of the New Testament, thus it is considered in the vein of a contextual disclosure of Christ. Origen first establishes the text's historical meaning and then moves to what happened to the one who cursed, namely they "departed." Origen uses this contextual image of departing to create a *distributio* to discuss sin's double consequence, departing from "the Law of God" and departing from "the assembly and congregation of the saints."[7] This figure facilitates Origen's move to the redemptive work of Christ as a response to those who have departed, both historically and in Origen's own congregation. His figural exposition translates the text's situation into a contemporary event whereby the redemptive work of Jesus is brought into focus through its application to the hearer's situation. In brief, Origen's emphasis on the revelation of Christ through a passage by means of its contextual relation to Christ's work supports the historic-redemptive approach's categorization of disclosure and avoids the "illogical leaps" of an unsupported allegory.

A second example is taken from HLev 9.8. "Therefore, now our true 'high priest,' Christ, also wants 'his hands' to be filled 'with finely composed incense.'"[8] On its face, this statement

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[7] FC 83:246, 251 [13.2.1, 13.3.5].

[8] FC 83:194 [9.8.5].

fits Chapell's concern of an "illogical leap" concerning the statement of Christ's hands being filled with incense. Detractors of Origen's figural exposition may argue that his statement appears to have been created from imaginary connections with no expository foundation. Origen's statement is an expansion of Lev. 16:12, "And he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from the altar before the LORD, and two handfuls of sweet incense beaten small, and he shall bring it inside the veil." Origen uses a Homeric comparison[9] between Lev. 16:22 and Psa. 140:2, "Let my prayer rise before you as incense," to expand the meaning of historical incense to include the spiritual sense of prayer. Origen's expansion of meaning is the product of the figure of *enthymeme*, or truncated syllogism. This figural exposition expands the meaning of the Scripture by utilizing a spiritual sense of the term "incense." Having established this spiritual meaning, Origen returns to the image of Christ as high priest, taken from Hebrews, where Christ is portrayed as intercessor of the saints. Origen views the historical activity of the priest as congruent with the redemptive activity of Christ as true high priest. Following this logic, Origen is able to present the image of the high priest's hands filled with incense as "reflective" of the work of Christ.

Unification

Origen's homilies generally move from the revelation of Christ to a discussion or unveiling of the Christian's unity with Christ. This movement finds purchase in the redemptive-historical approach's discussion of application under "A Love for God." Chapell approaches this from a perspective of relational cause-and-effect. The revelation of Christ and his work reveals God's love for the hearer. This love draws the hearer into God's love, which results in the development

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[9] The term "Homeric comparison" is used to describe the expansion or clarification of a term by means of its usage in other passages by the same author. See our previous discussion at Chapter 3, n.105.

of a reciprocal "love for God." This love for God is embodied in the hearer's desire to do God's will. Something similar is seen in Origen's concluding exposition of HLev1.

> And therefore, we who read or hear these things should attend to both parts—to be pure in body, upright in mind, pure in heart, reformed in habits. We should strive to make progress in deeds, be vigilant in knowledge, faith, and actions, and be perfect in deeds and understanding in order that we may be worthy to be conformed to the likeness of Christ's offering, through our Lord Jesus Christ himself, through whom to God the Almighty Father with the Holy Spirit be "glory and power forever and ever. Amen.[10]

The Christian seeks a conformity to God's love seen in the work of Christ with knowledge, faith, action, and understanding. Built upon the work of Christ, Origen draws his hearers to a holistic response of love for God.

Origen's figural exposition may assist this redemptive-historic approach of unification. In the following example, Origen presents an *anthypophora* which creates a rhetorical space to present and affirm the unity of believers with Christ through his work.

> But the Apostle also speaks to us about the fellowship "of the saints," and this is not surprising. For if our "fellowship" is said to be "with the Father and the Son," how is it not also with "the saints"? Not only with those who "are on earth," but also with those who are "in heaven"? For Christ, "through his blood has made peace with things on earth and things in heaven" so that the earthly might have fellowship with the heavenly. This he clearly indicates where he says there will be joy in heaven "over one sinner who repents" and, on the other hand, when he says, "those who rise from the dead will be as the angels of God in heaven," and when he promises firmly to men "the kingdom of heaven." Therefore, anyone breaks off and denies this "fellowship" who is separated from their union by their own evil deeds or evil thoughts.[11]

Origen's use of the rhetorical question gives allows him to affirm the believer's union with Father and Son and the unity with all believers. Such unity is not an assumption but a description of the work of Christ and his redemption. *Anthypophora*, as used by Origen, can assist the

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[10] FC 83:37 [1.5.1].

[11] FC 83:73 [4.4.3].

redemptive-historical approach, in a similar manner to the above example, providing a rhetorical

moment for the homiletic consideration of the unification between Christ and Christian that

results of God's redemptive work.

Edification

"Love for those loved by God" is the second formative goal of the redemptive-historic

approach according to Chapell. Chapell lays out a redemptive aspect of this exhortation which

calls hearers to reject sin and their love for it and to be transformed in their obedience to God,

expressed in care for others. This concept corresponds closely to Origen's moral exhortation of

Christians. Origen's Leviticus homilies do not take up the focus of care for others in a deliberate

sense.[12] Rather, Origen seeks to care for others through the purification and spiritual formation of

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[12] This is not to say that Origen is amoral. Origen's moral exhortation occurs often in the third person. Several examples may be cited. Origen cautions his hearers to attend to the fellowship between Christians and to act as "good" robbers in HLev 4. (FC 83:73–74 [4.4.3–4]) "'For Christ, 'through his blood has made peace with things on earth and things in heaven' so that the earthly might have fellowship with the heavenly. This he clearly indicates where he says there will be joy in heaven 'over one sinner who repents' and, on the other hand, when he says, 'those who rise from the dead will be as the angels of God in heaven,' and when he promises firmly to men 'the kingdom of heaven.' Therefore, anyone breaks off and denies this 'fellowship' who is separated from their union by their own evil deeds or evil thoughts. After these things, 'robbery' is spoken of. There are evil robbers and there are good ones. Certainly, these good ones are those about whom the Savior says, 'they seize the kingdom of heaven.' But there are evil robbers about whom the prophet says, 'And the plunder of the poor is in your houses.' However, the Apostle abruptly proclaims, saying, 'Make no mistake, neither adulterers, nor catamites, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor robbers will obtain the kingdom of God.'"

In HLev 5, Origen exhorts his hearers to stay avoid touching the impurity of others. (FC 83:109–10 [5.10.5]) "If anyone is joined to friendships and to a partnership with a man of malice, wrath, or adultery, now certainly he is not brought by his own deeds into this wickedness. Nevertheless, he sees and knows how that one hates his brother and is a murderer, or how he lies in wait for another's wife and is an adulterer, or how he is sacrilegious in other things. If when this is discovered he does not separate from his partner, he is one who 'touches uncleanness' an animal or a bird or 'a carcass' and is himself polluted by another's impurity. But we spoke earlier about the different kinds of impure things as it could happen. Is this not what the Apostle teaches about this same form when he says, 'But now I write you in a letter that you not be mixed up with anyone who is called a brother, if he is a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolator, or a drunk, or greedy. With this kind do not take bread.' In all these things, what else did he teach except that we not be polluted by another's sins and impurities?"

In HLev 7, Origen encourages his hearers to advance in their faith. (FC 83:151 [7.7.1]) "Therefore, each saint is like this one who, enclosed within 'the net' of faith, is called 'a good fish' by the Savior and is put 'into a vessel,' as having 'fins' and 'scales.' For unless he had had 'fins,' he could not have risen from the mire of incredulity nor come into 'the net' of faith. But why is it that he is also said to have 'scales' except that he is prepared to lay aside old garments? For these who do not have 'scales' are as if they are wholly of the flesh and totally carnal, who cannot

the church as individuals. A rare example, directed toward the Church as institution, is found in

HLev 2.4, where Origen considers the formation of Church's teachings and practices. If these are

corrupted, "all the people sin." If such corruption occurs, the only means of repair is to return to

the redemptive work of Christ.

> In the moral sense, this high priest can be seen as the understanding of piety and
> religion, which through the prayers and supplications which we pour out to God,
> performs in us, as it were, a kind of priesthood. If this one should transgress in
> something, immediately "he makes all the people sin" against the good acts which are
> within us. For we do not do any right deed when the understanding, the guide of good
> works, turns aside into wrong. For that reason, for correction of this, not just any kind
> of offering is required but the sacrifice "of the fatted calf" itself. In like manner, the
> guilt of the congregation; that is, the correction of all virtues which are within us, is
> repaired through nothing other than by putting Christ to death.[13]

Origen uses *enthymeme*, or a truncated syllogism, to form the hearer by creating a rhetorical

connection between the high priest's role in sacrifice and the Church's teaching of virtue. As the

chief priest must offer the sacrifice of the fatted calf for sin and must teach Israel to do good, so

the Church must address its hearers with the teaching and correcting of virtue. When such

teaching transgresses God's law, the repair is to return to Christ's death for forgiveness.

This example highlights Origen's use of the concept "virtue"[14] to discuss the formation of

the hearer's soul in relation to God, "we do not do any right deed when the understanding, the

guide of good works, turns aside into wrong." The moral activity of the hearer is predicated upon

the "correction of all virtues" that occurs through the hearer's connection to the redemptive work

of Christ. Moral action occurs when the soul's guide, understanding, is united with Christ. Thus,

the moral activity of the Christian is an expression of the hearer's union, or "understanding" of

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lay aside anything. Therefore, if someone has 'fins' with which he advances to the superior things, he is clean. But
he, who does not have 'fins' but remains in interior things and always is living in filth, is unclean."

[13] FC 83:45–46. [2.4.1].

[14] See Chapter 4, *Origen's Uses of Expansion by Division, "Personal Choice."*

the redemptive work of God. Origen's emphasis on the moral activity of the Christian as a reflection of their inner status of faith and understanding reflects the redemptive-historic approach's emphasis upon "love for those loved by God" through its emphasis on the relation of obedience as a direct result of transformative work of God's redemption.

Origen's Use of *Anthypophora* and *Distributio* in the Redemptive-Historic Approach

"In Christ-centered preaching, the rules do not change, but the reasons do."[15] This line is key in understanding how Origen's figural exposition might assist the redemptive-historic approach to evangelical preaching, since it reveals a second layer of meaning for the Scripture. As the *Heilsgeschichte* governs the reading of the Scripture from the Old Testament toward the coming of Christ, now one is able to read backwards as according to our *Heilsverständnis*, or salvation understanding, from the Christ toward the Old Testament. Laying under this statement is a broad understanding of the validity of the history of the Scripture as well as its continued role in Church to edify Christians. The redemptive-historic approach accepts the historical setting of the Scripture as inspired but understands that setting in view of Christ's appearance, which now forms Christians through Christ ("the reasons").

Origen's specific use of *anthypophora* and *distributio* supports or advances a redemptive-historic approach to evangelical preaching. Each figure will be introduced with an example that will provide the material for our discussion.

Anthypophora

> But also "he will not take a harlot." What soul is "a harlot"? That one which takes "lovers" to itself, about which the prophet says, "You were prostituted to your lovers." Who are these "lovers" that enter to the prostituted soul except the hostile powers and demons that are captivated by the desire of her beauty? For the soul was

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[15] Chapell, "Redemptive-Historic View," 23.

created by God beautiful and becoming enough. Hear how God himself speaks: "Let us make man in our image and likeness." See how becoming, how beautiful the soul is.[16]

Origen uses a dogmatic form of *anthypophora* to address the spiritual sense of the prohibition of the priest "taking a harlot." Origen's exploration of the "harlot" is built upon the premise that a lover is desirable and can exhibit some agency in who they love. In this way, Origen returns to some of the broader narratives of Scripture to inform his hearer's understanding of this particular passage and, in turn, form them against certain spiritual acts. Origen presents his case earlier in the homily that "the order of the whole exposition was applied to Christ, the true 'great priest.'"[17] Viewing Christ as the priest, Origen addressed the spiritual nature of these prohibitions upon "Christ's marriage." The historical prohibition against union with "a harlot" leads Origen to consider the spiritual unity of Christ with the soul of the hearer and the hearer's own unity with sinful spirits. Origen's answer turns this initial question into a warning against the embracing of the devil or his angels or the receiving of the spirits of "wrath or envy or pride or impurity."

This figure of *anthypophora* offers the redemptive-historic preacher an opportunity to explore nuances of its historic texts through a focus upon the theological teaching of a text that attends to the Christ-centeredness of the passage and the ways the text can form the contemporary hearer based upon reading the Scripture as *Heilsverständnis*.

Distributio

The fourth law was where it said, "if a fiery inflammation occurs on the skin" and then "when the inflammation has been cured, it becomes bright and white with red or at least whitish, and its appearance is below the remaining skin," it says this is "leprosy which flourishes in inflammation."

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[16] FC 83:229 [12.7.1].

[17] FC 83:226 [12.5.1].

(2) See, therefore, if the "inflammation" is not in every soul which receives "fiery darts of the evil one"; or everyone who burns with carnal love is not "ignited by the fire." Therefore, these inflammations are also ignitings "of fires." But this one also suffers "inflammation" who is set on fire with the desire of human glory or who is inflamed with the fervor of rage and fury. If perchance that soul is cured from these wounds through faith and after receiving his health while holding him in contempt who said, "Behold, you are now made clean, do not sin anymore lest something worse happen to you," then the fruit of the old vice begins to bring forth fruit from the closed up scar and the scar is not made even with the skin of the rest of the body but is "under" and still retains that color which it had at the time of the leprosy. His "leprosy breaks out again in an inflammation" and because of this the priest judges him "unclean."[18]

In this example of *distributio*, Origen follows the Levitical categorization of leprosy and expounds upon it according to its literal description. Origen introduces a spiritual sense for each category of leprosy. In this portion, Origen discusses "inflammation" in the soul as the result of the "darts of the evil one" as well as the soul's rejection of God's healing and command "do not sin anymore." The spiritual sense of this type of leprosy is an exhortation to continue to reject sin. Origen's figuration in this homily is built upon an expansion of several divisions of the text. Origen is able to address different spiritual issues for his hearers and, as the homily progresses, how one might mitigate and correct those issues.

Using each division of leprosy, Origen draws out the spiritual sense of the text. In turn, the spiritual sense opens a discussion of how each of these divisions provide opportunities to apply the text to the hearer through the redemptive-historic approach's division of application as "a love for God" or "a love for those loved by God." To return to our example, "inflammation" of the soul occurs when one is pierced by Satan and when the forgiven soul holds "him in contempt who said, 'Behold, you are now made clean, do not sin anymore.'" Origen's *distributio* focuses upon the "love for God" that is expressed through the individual's relationship with God,

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[18] FC 83:164–65 [8.8.1–2].

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specifically the lack of such love that results in their rejection of God's command and a return to sin.

Summary

The redemptive focus of all Scripture expressed through "redemptive foci" and forms of "disclosure" reflects Origen's figuration in its own foci and disclosures of Christ. Both Origen's *anthypophora* and *distributio* provide opportunities to introduce a spiritual sense to the text and to offer "opportunities for understanding" to hearers. Each of these figures can advance the redemptive-historic approach by reading the passage according to its *Heilsverständnis* and expanding upon its historic details in view of its connection to the narrative of Christ's redemption.

Christiconic

The Christiconic approach to evangelical preaching focuses on the hermeneutical problem of "traversal from the then of the text to the now of the audience."[19] This approach is presented by Abraham Kuruvilla as "Biblical readings for application." At the center of the Christiconic approach are two concepts, "the world in front of the text" and "pericopal theology."[20]

The "world in front of the text" is taken from Paul Ricoeur's linguistic-philosophical work.[21] From a pragmatic position, the text conveys information to the reader. In order to understand the text, the reader must ascertain what the author is trying to do with the text. This intention, along with its awareness of historical and linguistic limitations and subtleties, forms

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[19] Abraham Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 45.

[20] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 53–59.

[21] The work cited by Kuruvilla is Paul Ricoeur, "Naming God," *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 34 (1979): 21.

the "world in front of the text." This view of pragmatics privileges the "original" text and its human author, using pragmatics to envision the "ideal world" intended by the author.[22] By understanding each author and his historic position, the Christiconic approach views preaching as drawing out a complete image of God's teaching and revealing God's ideal world in Christ.

The idea of a complete image brings us to the topic of pericopal theology, which Kuruvilla presents as a homiletical arrangement of the teachings of Scripture. No homily stands on its own but draws upon its place in the Scripture to support the theological argument and teaching of its pericope. Each pericope is viewed as "God's gracious invitation to humankind to live in his ideal world, by abiding by the thrust of that pericope."[23] Each week's homily draws together more aspects or facets of God's ideal world and forms its hearers to live in this world accordingly. Additionally, each homily is viewed within a Trinitarian structure. Kuruvilla illustrates this as the inspiration of the Scripture by the Holy Spirit leads to the formation of the image of Christ in the hearer which in turn leads to the hearer living to glorify God in the Father's Kingdom.[24]

In this approach, Christ "alone has comprehensively abided by the theology of every pericope of Scripture."[25] Thus, the whole Scripture can be considered as a collection of pericopes which portrayed "what a perfect life looks like, exemplified by Jesus." In this way, the whole Scripture is Christological as "the written word of God depicts the incarnate Word of God" which gives rise to the moniker Christiconic, or depiction of Christ.[26]

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[22] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 55.

[23] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 56.

[24] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 63.

[25] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 59.

[26] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 59.

Origen's Pattern of Figural Exposition in Relation to the Christiconic Approach

Origen's figural exposition offers some support to the core principles of the Christiconic approach. It also presents a counterpoint to this approach's limitation of authorship in relation to the "world in front of the text." To illustrate this, the following unit will view Kuruvilla's examples from 1 Sam. 15 and Gen. 22 through Origen's expositional pattern of revelation, unification, and edification. Under each of these, we will discuss how Origen's figural exposition interacts with the Christiconic's "the world in front of the text" and concept of "pericopal theology."

Revelation

Instead of the typical typological interpretation of Gen. 22 that is present across Church history, Kuruvilla focuses upon an aspect of the "world in front of the text"—Abraham and Isaac never speak together again in the book of Genesis.[27] From this insight, Kuruvilla adapts John 3:16 to express the teaching of the text, "For Abraham so loved God, that he gave his only begotten son."[28] The application, according to Kuruvilla, being that one must see Abraham as an example to be followed in this pericope, being willing to give up everything for God.[29]

One of the strengths of Origen's figural exposition is the scriptural unity that Origen is able to draw upon. Kuruvilla's inversion of John 3:16 offers an opportunity to draw together more than the isolated Scriptural pericope to support a homiletic application. Using a *conduplicatio*, the repetition of a word in adjacent phrases, one might draw upon John 3:16 to create a *distributio* of contrast. "For Abraham so loved God" is compared to "For God so loved the

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[27] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 50.

[28] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 50.

[29] As stated in the introduction, there are theological differences between Kuruvilla's and the author's approaches. However, as we have with Origen, we have tried to allow this author to speak on his own terms.

world" revealing a broader understanding of the "world in front of the text." Abraham's obedience brings God glory. Just as Abraham loved God more than his child, God loves himself and brings himself glory through the death and resurrection of his Son. Origen's figural exposition looks for the revelation of Christ and offers a fuller understanding of the author's intention, by focusing upon the Spirit as the primary author and taking a more expansive look at the narrative of the Scripture to assess the "world in front of the text."

This Spiritual authorship is informative when considering the "world in front of the text." Origen viewed the Spirit as the primary author of Scripture. This shifts the "world in front of the text" by altering the pragmatics of the text through the expansion of the authorial context. If one is no longer limited to the Mosaic authorship of Genesis, the use of John 3:16 can be viewed as more than simply a rhetorical inversion. John 3:16, as the product of the same Spiritual author, can inform our understanding of Genesis. Using Origen's figural exposition, one could draw together a connection between these passages by means of their dissimilarity. Abraham and Isaac do not speak in the narrative after the sacrifice. Christ and the Father never stop speaking, even conversing at the moment of death. Jesus exemplifies the pericopal theology of love for God that continues to speak even in suffering.

Unification

The Christiconic approach lacks an explicit focus on establishing or exploring the union between Christ and the hearer. Rather, this approach seeks to "conform" its hearers to the image of Christ that is depicted in the passage being considered. In the example above, Kuruvilla sees the "image of Christ" manifested in Abraham's love of God. The purpose of this example is to "conform" hearers to express this same love for God. This example does not draw the hearer to the cross or the redemptive work of Christ, but to the "image of Christ" and Kuruvilla's self-

depiction of the lesson of Gen. 22.[30]

An example of Origen's figural exposition from his seventh homily on Genesis presents a different approach to Gen. 22. This example offers to the Christiconic approach an awareness of the greater interconnectedness of Scripture. This interconnectedness arises out of a more pronounced attention to the union of Christ and his hearers. This attention validates the pericopal teaching without overturning the pragmatics of the original text. Attending to the union of Christ and the Christian hearer supports the Christiconic approach's development of the image of Christ in its hearers.

> Do you wish to see that this is required of you? In the Gospel the Lord says: "If you were the children of Abraham, you would do the works surely of Abraham." Behold, this is a work of Abraham. Do the works which Abraham did, but not with sadness, "for God loves a cheerful giver." But also if you should be so inclined to God, it will be said also to you: "Ascend into the high land and into the mountain which I shall show you, and there offer your son to me." "Offer your son" not in the depths of the earth nor "in the vale of tears," but in the high and lofty mountains. Show that faith in God is stronger than the affections of the flesh. For Abraham loved Isaac his son, the text says, but he placed the love of God before love of the flesh and he is found not with the affection of the flesh, but "with the affection of Christ," that is with the affection of the Word of God and of the truth and wisdom.[31]

This example attends to the hearer's response, similar to Kuruvilla's example. Origen utilized an *anthypophora to* illustrate the connection between the hearer and Christ. Origen allowed the original text to present the pragmatics of the text by focusing his question upon the pericope teaching, asking what love allows people to give up everything as Abraham did. The answer, according to Origen, is love for God. This love is manifested as "the affection of Christ" through "the Word of God." The hearer is connected to Christ through their love for the incarnate Word of God given to them, over and against their love for things of the flesh. The Christiconic

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[30] This is another example where this evangelical approach differs from the author's Lutheran hermeneutics and homiletics.

[31] FC 71:142–43.

approach emphasizes that the "written word depicts the incarnate Word of God." As such, Origen's connection of the hearer to Christ through the written Word fits well into the Christiconic approach's concern not to overrun the text's pragmatics by an immediate move to the cross or redemptive-history. As the hearer attends to the written Word, they develop in connection to the image of God portrayed in this pericope.

Edification

Kuruvilla's example of 1 Sam 15 utilizes a figure of linguistic repetition to help identify the pragmatic teaching of the pericope. Attending to the utilization of קול, the Christiconic approach illustrates that Saul has listened to the "voice" of sheep and cattle over the voice of the Lord. Origen's figural exposition utilizes the same principle of linguistic repetition repeatedly in his homilies, as discussed above under the terms "Homeric comparison" and "juxtaposition."

Origen's juxtaposition differs from the Christiconic approach by means of scope, not by technique, since Origen's juxtaposition typically occurs beyond the immediate context of a passage. Therefore, Origen's figural exposition contrasts with the Christiconic approach by expanding the context and content from which the approach is able to evaluate for repetition and draw upon to edify one's hearers. Regarding 1 Sam. 15, Kuruvilla states that "the thrust of the text is clearly the issue of listening to and obeying the voice of God."[32] Origen offers an example of how the "voice of God" could be expounded upon through juxtaposition in his homilies on Exodus. Origen utilizes a thematic repetition to draw together Hos. 4:14 and Ezek. 16:42.[33]

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[32] Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 46.

[33] Origen's example is one of a juxtaposition by similar theme. Though one is not present, one could easily imagine a juxtaposition built upon the repetition of the term voice. In the case of "listening to God's voice," one might turn to Gen. 3:8 and the "voice" of the Lord walking in the garden, or Psa. 29 and the mighty voice of God, or even Acts 12:22 and Herod's ill-fated pride in his own voice. Such figural exposition expands the scope of the Christiconic approach's use of repetition of terms to draw out implications of a text by offering an expanded view of

Do you wish to hear, however, the terrible voice of God when he is displeased? Hear what he says through the prophet. When he had enumerated many abominable things which the people had committed, he adds these words also: "And for this reason I will not visit your daughters when they fornicate nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery." This is terrible! This is the end when we are no longer reproached for sins, when we offend and are no longer corrected. For then, when we have exceeded the measure of sinning "the jealous God" turns his jealousy away from us, as he said above, "For my jealousy will be removed from you and I will no longer be angry over you." I have said these things about the statement, "God is jealous."[34]

The use of *anthypophora* and its answer to draw together passages according to a common theme is one of Origen's more common rhetorical maneuvers. In this case, the theme of God's jealousy adds clarity to Kuruvilla's statement by focusing upon God's response to the sinful activity of the hearers. This clarification offers a concrete example and consequence for the sake of the hearer's edification.

To conclude, Origen's attention to the formation of his hearers through his figural exposition largely contrasts with the Christiconic approach. The use of repetition of terms, or concepts, could support the gathering of Biblical examples which support the internal pericopal intent and teaching. Origen's typical use of such repetition works against the internal consistency of the Christiconic approach. Therefore, one must be careful to establish the intent of the text before exploring the wider scope of the Scriptural usage of words and phrases.

Origen's Use of *Anthypophora* and *Distributio* in the Christiconic Approach

This section moves from Kuruvilla's examples and Origen's general homiletic pattern to an exploration of Origen's actual usage of *anthypophora* and *distributio.* Origen used these rhetorical techniques to create opportunities for the Holy Spirit to form hearers in understanding the spiritual sense of the Scripture. The following examples reveal several occasions where

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repetition of terms within all Scriptural examples of the importance of listening to the "voice of God."

[34] FC 71:328 [8.5].

Origen's figural exposition and its spiritual formation can engage with the principles of the

Christiconic approach.

Anthypophora

> But pay attention to the reason why I mentioned this Scripture. According to the Law, the adulterer or "the adulteress were put to death," nor could they say, "We seek repentance and we pray for mercy." There was not a place for tears and no opportunity was granted for any correction, but in every way it was necessary for those who had contravened the Law to be punished. But this was observed in certain individual offenses for which the death penalty was ascribed. But among Christians, if adultery has been committed, the precept is not that "the adulterer and adulteress" be punished by the destruction of the body; and power was not given to the bishop of the Church to sentence the adulterer to an immediate death as then happened according to the Law, by the elders of the people. What, therefore? Will we say that the Law of Moses which orders "the adulterer and adulteress" to be punished is unmerciful and the gospel of Christ through gentleness freed the hearers for the worse? It is not so. For this reason, we brought forth the word of Paul, saying above, "Of how many more punishments is he deserving who tramples on the Son of God," etc. Hear, therefore, how neither was the Law cruel then nor does the gospel now appear dissolute because of the abundance of mercy, but in both instances the benevolence of God is held in a different dispensation.[35]

Origen begins this brief section with an exhortation directed toward Ricoeur's "world in front of

the text."[36] In discussing the law concerning adulterers, Origen presents to his hearers the

pragmatic force of this passage that "in every way it was necessary for those who had

contravened the Law to be punished." In dealing with the issue of adultery, a wide reading of the

Scripture seems to present a disagreement between the literal expression of this passage with its

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[35] FC 83:213 [11.2.4].

[36] Paul Ricoeur's "world in front of the text" is not simply an author's projection as Kuruvilla states (Kuruvilla, "Christiconic View," 54). Ricoeur intends this idea to address the outcome of the reader's imagination, that the text gives life to a world in which we can inhabit. This habitation occurs by cycles through which the hearer is continually formed by the text's world and incrementally inhabits that world to a larger degree with each cycle. Lance Pape discusses this cycle and its relation to homiletics in *The Scandal of Having Something to Say: Ricoeur and the Possibility of Postliberal Preaching* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2013). In Origen's example, Origen's exhortation intends for the hearers to view the Levitical text through the lens of a present purpose, in effect calling upon the hearers to imagine a world wherein the Levitical text has a specific purpose that will alter the way they live.

death sentence and Christ's engagement of the issue in John 8:1–11. Origen has described these discrepancies as "stumbling blocks" (σκανδαλα) in *Peri Archon.*[37] Origen presents such "stumbling blocks" as opportunities for the Holy Spirit to form hearers in understanding the spiritual sense of the Scripture.[38] In this case, Origen uses *anthypophora* to call the question into direct focus. As there can be no disagreement in the Scripture due to the unity of Spirit's authorship, Origen asks, "Will we say that the Law of Moses which orders 'the adulterer and adulteress' to be punished is unmerciful and the gospel of Christ through gentleness freed the hearers for the worse?" Origen highlights the surface level discrepancy in order to unveil a deeper intention of the text, Christian formation in body and spirit. In both the Leviticus passage and in the Gospel, the pragmatic force of the passage attends to antinomianism in the mind of the hearers. Origen presents the Old Testament punishment as a bodily form of repentance "for they took their sin and the penalty for the crime was taken away."[39] Christ attends to the repentance of Christians as a spiritual matter expressed in their lives with the recognition and obedience to Christ's exhortation "go and sin no more." Origen's *anthypophora* thus transitions the concept of repentance from a bodily reality to a spiritual reality through its connection to Christ. For those who are now under Christ, "vengeance is reserved for us in the future" as our sin is against the "Son of God."[40] Origen's *anthypophora* and its answer attends to the pragmatic force of the text by drawing together the "stumbling blocks" of Scripture to unveil a deeper, spiritual intention of the text that attends to both bodily action and spiritual faithfulness.

This example of Origen's figural exposition highlights how the use of *anthypophora* can

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[37] PG 11:373–74.

[38] PG 11:376.

[39] FC 83:214 [11.2.5].

[40] FC 83:215 [11.2.6].

draw together the world in front of the text through the spiritual sense, especially in light of textual difficulties or Scriptural "stumbling blocks." Origen's figural exposition engages the Christiconic approach's emphasis upon authorial intent by drawing out an intention of the author that becomes clearer through its unity with the whole of the Spirit's revelation in Scripture.

Distributio

The following passage exemplifies how Origen's use of expansion by *distributio* enhances the Christiconic's concept of "pericopal theology."

> "And the soul which takes an oath, proclaiming it with his lips, to do evil or to do good in everything which he speaks to a person with an oath. . .." As best this passage can be understood, to do evil is to oppose someone and not to allow him to do what he wants. Therefore, when we come to God and dedicate ourselves to serve him in purity, "we proclaim with our lips" and "we take an oath to restrain our flesh" or to do evil to it "and even to bring it into slavery" that we may be able to save the spirit. For thus that one said that he had sworn who said, "I took an oath and determined to keep all your teachings." Therefore, the voice of the flesh is that which was doubtlessly cast down and constrained by the spirit and which says, "for I do not do what I wish, but I do that thing that I hate," "for it resists and fights against the spirit." And unless, perhaps, he does evil to it so that it be cast down and weakened, the spirit cannot say, "when I am weak then I am strong." Therefore, if anyone "should take an oath and proclaim to do evil" to this flesh which resists and fights against the spirit, and to cast it down and to torment it and he does not do it, he is guilty of sin in that he swore to crucify his flesh and to subject it to slavery and did not do it. By the same oath, however, he determined to do good to the spirit. For where he does evil to the flesh, he does good to the spirit. Therefore, if anyone should take an oath and does not do this, he is made guilty of sin. But do you want to know how one cannot do well to one of these without doing evil to the other? Hear even the Lord himself when he says, "I will kill and I will make alive." What does God kill? Certainly, the flesh. And what does he make to live? Without a doubt, the spirit. And again, in what follows he says, "I will strike and I will heal." What does he strike? The flesh. What does he heal? The spirit. For what purpose are these things accomplished? So that he may make you "dead to the flesh and alive in the spirit"; lest perchance you do not keep the Law of God with the mind but with "the flesh," that is, if it had not been killed, "the law of sin."[41]

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[41] FC 83:59–60 [3.4.1–3].

Focused upon the swearing of oaths and the "doing of evil to the flesh," Origen presents the central pericopal teaching as "to do evil is to oppose someone and not to allow him to do what he wants." Origen develops this division by expanding it to include the division of flesh and spirit. Origen utilized this spiritual expansion to further develop and clarify the pericopal teaching as to "where [the hearer] does evil to the flesh, he does good to the spirit."

Origen's figural exposition, in this example, could augment the Christiconic focus upon "pericopal theology" by expanding its understanding of the literal sense of the Scripture to address the spiritual sense and thereby offer a more holistic description of the effect of the pericopal teaching upon the hearer. Origen's *distributio* internalizes the teaching of the speaking of oaths, connecting the repetition of the word "oath" in Psa. 118:106 to the passage of Lev. 5:4–6. In the Psalm, the oath is taken in a spiritual sense to "keep all your teachings." By expanding the concept of "oath" to include both literal and spiritual senses in the Lev. text, Origen's exposition reveals a pericopal teaching that seeks to keep the law of God in mind and flesh. This expansion aligns with the warnings of Christ in Matt. 15:1–8, particularly the near-quotation of Isaiah, "This people honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." Origen's expansion articulates a "pericopal theology" that attends to both literal and spiritual senses of the text.

<div align="center">Summary</div>

Origen's use of *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio* can supplement the Christiconic approach by expanding its self-imposed limitations on the scope of a pericope and by redressing its over-concentration upon the human author at the expense of the authorship of the Spirit when seeking the "world in front of the text." Although the differences between the Christiconic approach and Origen's figural exposition can be detrimental to the Christiconic approach when it is applied without proper consideration, there are ways in which Origen's

figural exposition, especially *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio*, might assist aspects of the Christiconic approach to preaching.

Theocentric

The theocentric approach to evangelical preaching attends particularly to the exploration of the "whole will of God."[42] Kenneth Langley presents the theological rationale of this approach as, "God's purpose in everything he says and does, indeed 'the end for which God created the world,' is to magnify his own glory for the joy of his creatures. Everything else—election, judgment, redemption—is penultimate; the glory of God is ultimate."[43] The central premise of preaching in Theocentric preaching is to bring God glory. This goal is accomplished when "we faithfully explain, commend, and apply His words with respect for the form, content, purpose, and tone of the passage at hand."[44] In contrast to some of the more Christ-focused approaches of evangelical preaching, the theocentric approach seeks to de-centralize Christ and re-prioritize God as the subject of preaching.[45]

Langley expresses the concern that "a hermeneutical-homiletical theory that privileges redemption may miss creation and wisdom themes in Scripture."[46] The theocentric approach is acutely aware of the lens which one views the Scripture does color the Scripture and the teachings which one finds within it. Thus one can see the theocentric approach as an expansionary reaction to more limited thematic lenses, such as Law-Gospel, redemption, or

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[42] Kenneth Langley, "Theocentric View," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 92.

[43] Langley, "Theocentric View," 89.

[44] Langley, "Theocentric View," 96.

[45] Langley discusses this idea of God as the result that "texts [of Scripture] have other things to say than ideas that fit easily within Christology." (Langley, "Theocentric View," 91.)

[46] Langley, "Theocentric View," 90.

covenantal theology. The goal of this approach is to bring glory to God through the removal of thematic and theological limiters in order to proclaim the "whole will of God."

<div align="center">Origen's Pattern of Figural Exposition in Relation to the Theocentric Approach</div>

Origen's Leviticus homilies begin with the discussion of the Scripture as the clothing of Jesus. The ultimate purpose of his preaching is an unveiling of Christ for his hearers. This description of Origen's exposition could be understood as an example of the "Christocentric" preaching that the theocentric approach is reacting against. Even so, Origen's figural exposition may still offer some support to the central ideas of the theocentric approach to preaching. This unit will present several of Langley's "sermon summaries that suggest directions theocentric sermons application might take."[47] These summaries will be viewed through Origen's general process of revelation of Christ, unification of the hearer with Christ, and the edification of the hearer. Under each of these, we will discuss how figural exposition interacts with a theocentric view of Scripture and draws together the "whole will of God."

Revelation

"Come out of her, my people."[48] With these words, Langley's theocentric approach takes on an astounding text of judgment. The theocentric main idea of the sermon summary is "God calls his people to flee the materialistic sins of Babylon."[49] There is no mention of Christ and no clear place where Christ might be revealed and therefore, following the theocentric approach, Langley produces a sermon which glorifies God by correcting the sin of materialism. One question and its answer will offer an example as to how Origen's emphasis on the revelation of

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[47] Langley, "Theocentric View," 104.

[48] Rev. 18:4

[49] Langley, "Theocentric View," 106.

Christ in all the Scripture may serve to the theocentric approach as a corrective.

The main application of Langley's homily is "spiritual adultery, excessive luxury, and the hubris of Babylon are an affront to God."[50] Origen's figural exposition in HEz 1.5.2 offers a subtle corrective to the theocentric approach.

> For the river of this world is heavy, as is said elsewhere in a mystery (and for the simple and for those for whom it unfolds history; but for those who hear the Scriptures spiritually, it signifies the soul, which has fallen into the eddies of this life). "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. We hung our instruments on the willows in the midst of it. For there, those who had led us as captives asked us for the words of songs" [Ps 137:1–3]. These are the rivers of Babylon next to which they sit and reminisce for the heavenly fatherland. They mourn and weep when they hang their instruments on the willows, namely, on the willows of the law and of the mysteries of God.[51]

Origen's exposition centered upon the hearer's relation to the personal Word. Origen focuses upon the spiritual contemplation of the hearers which turns their souls to the mysteries of God revealed by the Spirit through the Scripture. While no homily from Origen exists on Revelation, one may follow his example by asking and answering the *anthypophora*, where are God's people going after they leave Babylon? Using Origen's technique of answering *anthypophora* with a collecting of passages that share a term (in this case Babylon), one draws upon the prophetic images of the prophets Zechariah and Isaiah sharing the term Babylon.[52] Zechariah 2:7 is

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[50] Langley, "Theocentric View," 106.

[51] ACW 62:35 [1.5.2].

[52] Zech. 2:7, "Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon."; Zech. 5:5–11, "Then the angel who talked with me came forward and said to me, 'Lift your eyes and see what this is that is going out.' And I said, 'What is it?' He said, 'This is the basket that is going out.' And he said, 'This is their iniquity in all the land.' And behold, the leaden cover was lifted, and there was a woman sitting in the basket! And he said, 'This is Wickedness.' And he thrust her back into the basket, and thrust down the leaden weight on its opening. Then I lifted my eyes and saw, and behold, two women coming forward! The wind was in their wings. They had wings like the wings of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between earth and heaven. Then I said to the angel who talked with me, 'Where are they taking the basket?' He said to me, 'To the land of Shinar, to build a house for it. And when this is prepared, they will set the basket down there on its base.'"; and Isa. 48:20, "Go out from Babylon, flee from Chaldea, declare this with a shout of joy, proclaim it, send it out to the end of the earth; say, 'The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob!'"

instructive as an answer, "Up! Escape to Zion, you who dwell with the daughter of Babylon." Zion is the destination of God's people. There is a large and rich tradition associating Zion and Jerusalem, in both its temporal and eternal referents. Thus far, we have not introduced the revelation of Christ into the preaching of the passage. Christ is introduced as we take up the pragmatic force of the passage when viewed through our *anthypophora*. A call to leave is also a call to go somewhere. God certainly speaks the words "come out" but the place God calls them to go is the heavenly city where Christ reigns as the lamb who was slain. The means of escape from Babylon begins with Langley's unshackling from the sins of "spiritual adultery, excessive luxury, and the hubris of Babylon," but it finds its fullness in the work of Christ who opened the kingdom of heaven to all who believe. As Christ is the incarnate Word of God, he is always revealed as present, even as one may seek a different emphasize of the homily.

Origen's figural exposition can assist our asking of questions of the text that do not seek to "consume" theology with Christology, but to draw together the whole will of God in a way that reveals the presence of Christ through the Scripture. Our example highlights how this question-and-answer technique might be paired with Origen's focus on the revelation of Christ to deepen the theocentric approach's main idea and application.

Unification

The theocentric approach is highly aware of homiletic tendencies in some approaches to shoehorn Jesus into every reading. In the example given for the sermon summary on 1 Sam. 17, Langley concludes "I disagree that 'it is impossible not to see Christ in this passage.'"[53] This phrase is highly instructive to understanding the theocentric approach. Langley sees the narrative

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[53] Langley, "Theocentric View," 105.

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of the text as essential and the Christological connections as non-essential. It is at this point in the logic of Langley's sermon summary that Origen's emphasis on the unity of Christ with the Christian contrasts with the theocentric approach.

Origen's emphasis on unity emphasizes the "thoroughness" of how the Spirit works through a text to form its hearers and readers. In this way, focusing upon the work of the Trinity, Origen's figural exposition draws out the whole council of God. The essential teaching of 1 Sam. 17, though not the literal teaching, sees God at work in this passage by "replacing faithless Saul with a man after his own heart who will show the watching world that there is a God in Israel."[54] As 1 Sam. 17:47 states, "the Lord saves, not with sword or spear." These words hold a clear *distributio* concerning the salvation of Israel by God. God's salvific activity in the battle against Goliath is manifested in the heart of his people, a manifestation especially seen in connection to the salvific work of Jesus. Origen's emphasis upon the union between Christ and Christian comes into focus as David's trust is presented as a typological experience for the hearers who experience the same trust in the salvation of God won in Christ.

Langley may hold a similar objection to this statement as "non-essential." Origen's figural exposition counters that the work of God is not divisible by historical era. The written Word continues to work by the Spirit in the present moment. This work reads the Scriptures according to *Heilsverständnis*, salvation-understanding, which reads the Scriptures in light of the work of Christ and not separate from the historical reality of Christ. In this way, Origen's exposition offers a counterpoint to the theocentric approach, attending to and illustrating the whole council of God as essential, even as it may not be explicitly referenced "in" a passage.

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[54] Langley, "Theocentric View," 104.

Edification

The theocentric approach fits nicely with Origen's emphasis on the edification of hearers. In his sermon summary for Psa. 72, Langley offers a main formative theme, "our longing for just, God-honoring government" which might be applied across numerous different aspects of civil and political life.[55] Langley, recognizing that Psa. 72 has a history of Christological connection and interpretation, offers the caution that a "link to Jesus" should never become the whole sermon. In this way, Langley's theocentric approach acknowledges the connection to Christ, while maintaining a focus on allowing the literal text to form its hearers.

The theocentric approach brings awareness to a variety of narrative streams of Scripture which bring glory to God. Origen's emphasis upon the edification of the hearers might further the theocentric approach's consideration of Scriptural narratives through his connection of edification with the larger narratives of Scripture. One of the hallmarks of Origen's figural exposition is his use of Homeric comparison to draw together passages that share common words or phrases to expand the teaching of a passage according to a spiritual sense. This spiritual expansion of a passage could be used by the theocentric approach to draw together more clearly particular narrative themes of Scripture, such as creation, wisdom of God, or redemption. To illustrate this, I will build upon Langley's homily on Psa. 72 which focuses upon justice.[56] The term "judge (יָדִין, κρινειν) in verse two of the Psalm could be expanded to address the narrative of longing for just-government, that Langely argues for in a temporal sense. Beyond the temporal

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[55] Langley, "Theocentric View," 105.

[56] Bryan Chapell, "Response to Abraham Kuruvilla," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018),71. Origen utilized both Greek and Hebrew in his study of the Scripture. He is perhaps best known for his *hexapla,* a textual-critical assembly of six different texts of the Old Testament. Origen has several homilies on the Psalms where he discusses terms in both Hebrew and Greek. See FC 141:204.

hope of a government that brings justice today is a spiritual hope in the eternal kingdom of God which culminates in the cry of the saints in Rev. 6:10 who cry out "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge (κρινεις) and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?" While this second passage is not connected by the theme of government, it is connected by the repetition of the term "judge." If one utilizes figural exposition, the temporal teaching can be connected to the lasting spiritual formation of the hearers who are formed according to the model of the saints of Revelation who look to God for justice. The theme of longing for justice, under Origen's figural exposition, adjusts the scope of the narrative to include the whole Scripture.

In sum, Origen's figural exposition can support the theocentric approach's emphasis on edification by expanding the spiritual sense of the text. This expansion enlarges the scope of the narrative addressed within a passage of scripture by connecting it to the over-arching spiritual expression of that narrative across the whole Scripture. Such expansion could be problematic to the theocentric approach insofar as the expansion does not anchor its homiletical presentation to the particular expression of a passage but allows "a link to Jesus" to become the whole sermon.

Origen's Use of *Anthypophora* and *Distributio* in the Theocentric Approach

Origen's threefold emphasis on the revelation of Christ, the unification of Christ and Christian, and the edification of the Christian contrasts the theocentric approach. This section offers figural examples from Origen's Leviticus homilies which lend themselves to the expression of the more distinctive aspects of the theocentric approach. These examples will illustrate how Origen's specific use of *anthypophora* and *distributio* challenges several tenets of the theocentric approach to evangelical preaching.

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Anthypophora

> However, we cannot specify or find the name or the definition of this measure, that is, of the substance; nevertheless, confessing the Father and Son, we make "one loaf from two tenths"; not that one loaf comes from one tenth and another from the other, that these "two tenths" are separated but that these "two tenths" are one mass and "one loaf." How do "two tenths" become one mass? Because I do not separate the Son from the Father nor the Father from the Son. He says, "For whoever sees me, sees the Father also."[57]

The theocentric approach is not anti-Christological in its reading of Scripture but seeks to honor the whole Trinity as may be appropriate in a text of Scripture. The above example from HLev 13 offers a clear view of Origen's own pre-Chalcedonian balancing of homiletic attention to Father and Son. Origen addresses the measurement of loaves as a metaphor for the creation of a homily. In a manner similar to the theocentric approach's concern that Christology does not overrun theology, Origen argued that a theology that embraces both Father and Son should be present in the homiletical exposition. Though Origen's approach and the theocentric approach function similarly, the impetus for the unity of Father and Son arises from different theological concerns. The theocentric approach seeks to embrace the equity between members of the Trinity for the sake of a proper "re-prioritization of God." Origen's theological concern, however, is salvific. Origen's unification of Father and Son is a reaction against heretical teachings that divided the Father from the Son.[58] Origen's *anthypophora* addresses the theological reality of the

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[57] FC 83:240 [13.4.3].

[58] Several heresies have done this historically. Marcionism because of its division of Old Testament God from New Testament Christ fits the Scriptural image which Origen is drawing upon in this case. Additionally, Origen reacts against Marcionism, and its offshoot Apellesism, at numerous points in his homiletical corpus both directly and by allusion. e.g., "But although all these things were composed with such great skill, some people present questions, and especially Apelles, who was a disciple indeed of Marcion, but was the inventor of another heresy greater than that one which he took up from his teacher. He, therefore, wishes to show that the writings of Moses contained nothing in themselves of the divine wisdom and nothing of the work of the Holy Spirit. With this intention he exaggerates sayings of this kind, and says that in no way was it possible to receive, in so brief a space, so many kinds of animals and their foods, which would be sufficient for a whole year." (FC 71:75 [2.2]); "We frequently hear vain words. What Marcion says is vain. What Valentinus says is vain. All who speak against the creator God speak vain words. Nevertheless, we frequently listen to those words so that we can respond to them lest they secretly

Trinity as the justification for his exposition. Placed into the theocentric approach, this awareness provides a backstop against an overcorrection which might otherwise ignore or look past Christological connections.[59]

Distributio

> The word of God which says, "Be holy as I, the Lord your God, am holy," was read just now in the hearing of the Church. What this term "holy" means or what it may signify in the divine Scriptures must be sought more carefully so that when we have learned the force of the word we also can complete its work. Therefore, let us draw together from the divine Scriptures instances in which we find "holy" used, and discover not only persons but also mute animals that are called "holy," and also find both "the vessels" of the ministry that are called "holy," and the garments which are said to be "holy," and even the places which were located in cities and suburbs and counted as priestly.[60]

Origen begins his eleventh homily on Leviticus with a *distributio.* Taking up the term "holy," Origen expands upon the concept in order that "when we have learned the force of the word we also can complete its work." Origen's use of this figure expands upon the singular usage of the term in Lev. 20:7 by seeking a more complete discussion of the term across its biblical usage. Following this division, Origen expands different aspects of the idea of holiness, particularly in the Christian life. Paul's utilization of the term in Acts 20:38 includes the teaching of "repentance toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." The modern usage of "whole will of God" is often used to embrace a preaching that addresses multiple facets of the Christian life which otherwise might find less priority in the pulpit. Origen's example offers distinct moments where the holiness of God may be divided and expanded upon in regard to persons, things,

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snatch away by their embellished speech some of the simple who are also our brothers." (FC 71:251 [3.2]); and "If one must distinguish the testaments and say that the gods of the two testaments are divided between themselves— even to suspect this is sacrilegious, but we are speaking 'improperly'—I shall speak really boldly and say that greater humanity by far is shown in the Old Testament than in the New." (ACW 62:38 [1.9.1].)

[59] We have already cited the egregious example of Theodore of Mopseustia. See chapter 3, n22.

[60] FC 83:208 [11.1.1–2].

clothing, and places. Origen's *distributio* can, therefore, enhance the theocentric emphasis on the "whole will of God" by creating opportunities to draw together "lesser" topics into larger themes of faith and Christian life.

Summary

Origen's figural exposition offers several opportunities to support the major emphases of "re-prioritization of God" and preaching upon the "whole will of God." When utilizing Origen's figural emphases of the revelation of Christ, the union of Christ and the Christian, and the edification of the hearer, the theocentric approach strengthens its engagement of the whole Scripture. This fuller engagement supports both major emphases of the theocentric approach.

Law-Gospel

The final approach to evangelical homiletics is the Law-Gospel approach. This approach utilizes a systematic duality of trouble and grace to categorize and utilize various texts of Scripture.[61] Paul Scott Wilson defines the purpose of the homily as "to proclaim the gospel, which I define as God's saving actions recorded anywhere in the Bible that have greatest clarity in Jesus Christ."[62] The law-gospel approach navigates the Scripture through the "dynamic relationship" and tension that exists between the "law" and "gospel." As Wilson highlights, these are not opposite, "binary terms," but are both necessary for a proper understanding and exposition of the Scripture. Wilson highlights the core "mathematics" of this approach with the equation: "gospel = trouble (law) + grace."[63] This equation is more than a simple description of

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[61] Paul Scott Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 117.

[62] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 117.

[63] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 122.

the "bifocal" nature of the written Word. It serves as the central principle for moving from historical discussion to homily. The law-gospel approach sees this as the "'grammar' of preaching, providing normative rules for clear expression."[64] Wilson, in particular, focuses upon the necessity of a homily to "focus on God" and not to "put the burden on humanity, as though Christ's life, death, and resurrection make no difference to the present day."[65] Wilson offers a "four-page" sermon form as a framework for building a homily according to this law-gospel dynamic.

Wilson acknowledges that "law" and "gospel" are loaded terms due to their long history of usage and denominational associations.[66] Origen is an example of Wilson's recognition, as he utilizes the terms "law" and "gospel" though not in the same sense as the law-gospel approach. Wilson views the unity of the homily as an expression of the law-gospel dynamic. The law-gospel approach, as typified by Wilson, is built upon an attempt to explain and explore the so-called "God sense" of a text according to the purpose of preaching stated above.[67]

Origen's Pattern of Figural Exposition in Relation to the Law-Gospel Approach

The law-gospel approach to evangelical preaching holds great similarity to aspects of Origen's figural exposition. Both focus upon the revelation of Christ and the centrality of his redemption. The following section offers examples where Origen's general process of revelation

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[64] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 125.

[65] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 124.

[66] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 117–18.

[67] Wilson, "Law-Gospel View," 129. Wilson introduces "God Sense" in his book of the same title. Wilson offers "God sense" to "help preachers and students be more creative and faith-centered in reading the Bible for preaching. (Paul Scott Wilson, *God Sense: Reading the Bible for Preaching* [Nashville: Abingdon, 2001], 8) The crux of Wilson's argument advocates for a return to ancient practices which understood the presence of a spiritual or "God sense" in addition to the literal sense. (Wilson, *God Sense*, 85–90) In returning to a fuller understanding of the literal and spiritual senses of the text, Wilson finds the tools to proclaim the fullness of the law-gospel dynamic of the Scriptures.

of Christ, unification of the hearer with Christ, and the edification of the hearer support two central ideas of the law-gospel approach: the homiletical equation (Gospel= trouble (law) + grace) and the unity of homily as expressed in the "God sense" of a passage.

Revelation

Wilson's "God-sense" may best be understood as the literal-theological sense of the classic law-gospel approach found in Nicolas of Lyra as well as in Martin Luther and other reformers. The law-gospel approach adds a second sense to the historical-grammatical approach, namely, the literal-theological approach. The historical-grammatical sense recognizes the historical foundation of a text is established by its grammatical style. The literal-theological sense recognizes that the dynamic of law and gospel are at play within the totality of the Scriptures, even if they are not present in a specific account. This dynamic shapes the homily and its exposition to look beyond the historical sense of a text and view how the text talks about God. Origen's Leviticus homilies reveal several examples of a similar dynamic. An extended example is presented from HLev 3.5.

> But in order that we appear to touch briefly in passing on some, indeed almost every offering which is brought has something of the form and image of Christ. For indeed every sacrifice is recapitulated in him; inasmuch as all sacrifices which preceded him in type and "shadow" were given up after "he himself was sacrificed." Concerning these things, as best we were able, we showed in the preceding how the calf offered by the high priest either in the offering or "for sin" had his form. But "the fatty parts," which were offered in the offering and were "hidden inwardly" and held together with the kidneys, can be understood as that holy soul of him which indeed is "inward." That is, it was covering the secrets of his divinity. But he was held together "with the kidneys," that is, with bodily matter which he had assumed in purity from us. And he placed the nature of the flesh, intermediate between the flesh and God, to be sacrificed on the holy altars and to be illuminated by the divine flames and to be retained with himself in heaven.[68]

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[68] FC 83:62 [3.5.1].

Origen's figural exposition addresses the revelation of Christ in the Scripture by seeing Christ and the sacrificial system in a typological relationship. Origen uses a *syllogismus*, an image-based contracted syllogism, to focus on the "fatty parts" and "kidneys" to assist the hearer in understanding what the text is saying about God, particularly God in the person of Jesus. By attending to the details of the literal text, Origen's figural exposition moves to a literal-theological sense of the text by placing the literal details within the framework of the Scripture's discussion of God.

Origen's focus on the revelation of Christ supports the central idea of a "God-sense" of a passage through its process. Origen's homilies are not known for their "unity" of a single theme or teaching, but find their unity in terms of their process of unveiling Christ's presence in the Scripture under consideration. This constant seeking to unveil Christ runs parallel to the seeking of a "God sense" in the law-gospel approach to evangelical preaching.

Unification

Origen's figural exposition emphasizes the unification of Christ with the Christian. An example from HLev 6.2 shows the closeness of Origen's emphasis with the law-gospel approach's focus on the trouble-grace dynamic present in all Scripture.

> First he washes, then he clothes. For you cannot be clothed unless first you were washed. Therefore, "wash and become pure; take away your iniquities from your souls." For unless you were washed in this way, you cannot put on the Lord Jesus Christ, as the Apostle says, "Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and do not be concerned for the flesh in concupiscences." Let Moses wash you, therefore; let him wash you and let him clothe you. For we often have said that Moses in Holy Scripture stands for the Law, as it was said in the gospel, "They have Moses and the Prophets. Let them hear them." Therefore, it is the Law of God which washes you.[69]

Origen illustrates the unity of Christian with Christ by expanding upon the *distributio* of washing

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[69] FC 83:118 [6.2.3–4].

and clothing as one "puts on Christ." This unity with Christ is not the product of either "law" or "grace" individually. It is the gospel's work through the trouble-grace dynamic which unifies the Christian with the Christ. Being washed by the law and clothed with grace, the Christian puts on Christ. Origen's emphasis on this unification as an outcome of the work of law and gospel supports the law-gospel approach. Leviticus is, according to Origen's homily, part of the Law. Nevertheless, it is not only law but in a dynamic relationship with grace that results in the unification of Christ and Christian through the work of the gospel.

Edification

Origen's focus on edification, or opportunities for understanding, can assist the law-gospel approach's emphasis on the "God sense" of Scripture. Origen illustrates moral activity and exhortations to moral living at several points within his Leviticus homilies. These illustrations and exhortations do not stand on their own. Rather, they appear as linked to Origen's previous teaching concerning God. Moral activity, in Origen's homilies, is the product of God's activity upon the hearer. Specifically, Origen presents the moral sense of the Scripture as directly dependent upon understanding the theological sense.

In HLev 1, Origen presents Jesus as the spiritual sense of the sacrifice of the "calf of the whole burnt offering." This spiritual sense of the text is presented and expounded upon by Origen through a comparison to the judgment of Annas and Caiaphas of Jesus, whereby Jesus "placed the sins of the human race upon his own body, for he himself is the head of his body, the Church."[70] This theological foundation of the work of Christ is expounded upon at length by Origen. Afterward, Origen turns to the edification of his hearers utilizing the "moral sense."

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[70] FC 83:33 [1.3.1].

But if you wish to understand these things in the moral sense, then you have "a calf" which you ought to offer. The "calf" is your flesh and it is indeed exceedingly proud. If you wish to present it as an offering to the Lord, then you keep it spotless and pure, bring it "to the door of the Tent," that is, where it can hear the divine books . . . Therefore, the divine word desires that you offer your flesh to God in purity with reasonable understanding, as the Apostle says, "A living offering, holy, pleasing to God, your reasonable service." To offer blood on the altar through the priest or the sons of the priest is to be made pure both in body and spirit.[71]

Using the phrase "offer . . . in purity with reasonable understanding," Origen turned to the moral sense based upon the initial spiritual sense of the phrase. Activity is paired with an existent spiritual understanding. This example highlights an important principle of Origen's figural exposition, that hearers must understand spiritually before they are able to act morally. Origen's foundation is the spiritual sense of the text, or its "God sense." This type of emphasis, when reading the Scriptures, can support the law-gospel approach by prioritizing and centralizing the importance of the "God sense" of the Scripture.

Origen's Use of *Anthypophora* and *Distributio* in the Law-Gospel Approach

The following examples illustrate how Origen's use of *anthypophora* and *distributio* could function within the law-gospel approach.

Anthypophora

How, therefore, will it happen that through the flesh which Jesus received from us, having been made sin, "he makes the people sin"? Hear also concerning this, if perhaps we can respond with a certain logic. The passion of Christ, indeed, brings life to those who believe but death to those who do not believe. For although salvation and justification are for the Gentiles through his cross, to the Jews it is nonetheless destruction and condemnation. For so it is written in the Gospels, "behold, this one was born for the ruin and resurrection of many." And in this way, through his sin, that is through the flesh given on the cross, in which he received our sins, he certainly freed from sin those of us who believe. But he made "the people who do not believe" sin, for whom the impiety of sacrilege was added to the evil of disbelief. In this same way, this high priest through his own sin "made the people sin" when, placed in the

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[71] FC 83:37 [1.5.1].

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flesh, he was able both to be held and to be killed. Let us consider, for example, if "the Lord of majesty" had not come in the flesh, he would not have reproved the Jews. He also would not have been burdensome for them to see. And surely, he would not have been able to be held nor to be delivered to death. Without a doubt, "his blood" never would have come "upon them and their sons." But since he came in the flesh and was made "sin for us" and he was able to endure these things therefore, it is said, "he has made the people sin," who made him able to sin in himself.[72]

Origen allows the strangeness of the text of Lev. 4:3, "he made the people sin," in relation to Christ being viewed as high priest to set the *anthypophora*. How is it that Jesus "makes people sin?" Origen's answer illustrates the intertwined nature of the law-gospel dynamic. To those who believe, Christ brings life. To those who do not believe, Christ brings judgment. The same event, the "passion of Christ," can deliver law or gospel, depending upon the hearer's faith or unbelief. Origen, well-known for his consideration of the hearer's spiritual status,[73] preaches that the spiritual status of belief is the lynchpin of whether one receives the passion of Christ as law or gospel. This is a helpful nuance for the law-gospel approach. Whereas other approaches may have less debate concerning a pericopal teaching of a text or a redemptive connection of a text to the narrative of Scripture, the law-gospel approach relies on the essential role of hearer's faith to determine whether the text is heard as law or gospel. For those who believe, the death of Jesus is the good news of the freedom from sin. For those who do not believe, it is the "making of people sin" through "the evil of disbelief." Origen makes sense of the difficulty of the text by asking and answering through the lens of the law and gospel dynamic, including the awareness that the

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[72] FC 83:53 [3.1.2].

[73] Origen makes a three-stage distinction of hearers in his *Peri Archon* book three labeling them infants, those progressing, and the perfect. "*et revelata sint parvulis, his videlicet qui posteaquam infantes facti fuerint et parvuli, id est ad humilitatem se et simplicitatem revocacerint parvulorum, tunc proficient, et cum ad perfectionem venerint*." (PG 11:271–73) Origen returns to this threefold distinction in Book Four where he associates *simpliciores* with the bodily sense, the soulish sense with the one progressing; and the *perfecti* with the spiritual law. (PG 11:341) Elizabeth Dively-Lauro has also written extensively on the three-stage progression of the hearer and threefold nature of the Scripture in the work of Origen. Dively-Lauro's work with three levels of meaning and its correspondence within the hearer serves as an articulation of a practice which draws the hearers into the text to meet Christ and his teaching in the spiritual sense of the Scripture. See Elizabeth Dively-Lauro, *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture Within Origen's Exegesis* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

hearer's faith will determine how the spoken Word of God is received.

Origen's motivation is not strictly speaking law-gospel but, to relate the meaning of the passage through Christ. Origen's conclusion to this *anthypophora* makes clear that the historical reality of Christ and his work properly explains the meaning of this passage. "But since he came in the flesh and was made "sin for us" and he was able to endure these things therefore, it is said, "he has made the people sin," who made him able to sin in himself."[74] This conclusion draws upon the historical reality of Christ's work in order to understand the work foreshadowed in the Levitical instruction. In the law-gospel approach, the use of *anthypophora* offers a rhetorical figure that provides a clear opportunity to transition one's hearers from a grammatical-historical reading toward a "God sense" or spiritual sense of the text. To use Wilson's language, *anthypophora* can be used to introduce the transition between the trouble and grace of the text and trouble and grace in the lives of the hearers.

This example of *anthypophora* highlights the dynamic relationship between law and gospel in view of the hearer's faith. Origen utilizes this relationship to explore the difficult aspects of his text. The law-gospel approach could benefit from such use of *anthypophora* in attending to its division of law and gospel, particularly the awareness of the transitional power faith has in regard to shifting the manner in which a text is received.

Distributio

The following example of Origen's use of *distributio* illustrates an awareness of the necessity of both law and gospel within the life of the Christian and an aspect of recognition of the "God sense" of the passage.

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[74] FC 83:53 [3.1.2].

The course of this purification, that is, conversion from sin, is divided into three parts. First is the offering by which sins are absolved; second is that by which the soul is turned to God; the third is that of the fruitfulness and fruits which the one who is converted shows in works of piety. And because there are these three offerings, for that reason, it adds also that he must take "three tithe measures of fine wheat flour" that everywhere we may understand that purification cannot happen without the mystery of the Trinity.[75]

Origen's *distributio* places the law-gospel dynamic into a progressive narrative which culminates in the hearer's expression of the work of God through "works of piety." Origen's *distributio* assists the law-gospel approach through its division of the narrative of the Christian life into segments which can then be discussed and expanded upon through an emphasis on either "law" or "gospel."[76]

Origen's *distributio* expands upon the theological teaching, or "God sense" by means of numerology. Ancient interpreters, such as Origen, saw great importance in the numerals of Scripture.[77] This attention to such detail allows one to draw out additional aspects of the text that may serve the hearer in understanding what the text is saying about God. In this example, Origen focuses upon the repeated usage of three in the offerings and the "tithe measures" in order to highlight the spiritual connection to the Trinity. The importance and centrality of the Trinity to the worship of God's people becomes central under this example.

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[75] FC 83:173 [8.11.10].

[76] Origen used the *distributio* through an *enumeration* of the three aspects of "purification" or "conversion from sin." This threefold structure parallels Origen's general homiletical movement from the revelation and work of God to a unity of the soul with God, and lastly to the activity of the hearer. Origen's attention to the process of "conversion" as a threefold movement illustrates some of the difficulties that arise in the law-gospel approach. The individual aspects of "conversion from sin" could be categorized as either "law" or "gospel." However, one could argue that each aspect is itself a shorthand description of the expression of both "law" and "gospel" at each individual stage of "conversion."

[77] Examples of this are found across all of Origen's corpus. Origen's figural exposition assumes that all of the Scripture, including the numbers that are given hold a significance for the hearer as they are as equally inspired as the narrative or prophetic passages of Scripture. One example that typifies Origen's use of numerology is from HLev 13. Here Origen identifies a significance to the number ten (10) that extends beyond the literal sense. Using an *anthypophora*, "what is this thing whose measure and method could neither be specified nor named? Everywhere the number ten is found as perfect; for the reason and origin of every number rises from it. Therefore, suitably, the author and origin of all, God, appears to be shown under this number." (FC 83:238 [13.4.1].)

Origen is acutely aware of the Scripture's unity under the Spirit and sees that unity expressed in the deliberate use of terms to evoke an understanding that goes beyond the grammatical-historical sense. This awareness of the deliberate use of terms and their arrangement in Scripture approximates the law-gospel approach's attention to "God sense." Origen's expansion by *distributio* highlights the deliberateness of the literal text of Scripture in order to expand upon its ability to talk about God through specific terms. This attention to the literal detail of the text defends the law-gospel approach against one of its critiques, a lack of comprehension for what the author is doing.[78] In attending to what the text says about God through its specific divisions of language and figures, Origen and those who might utilize similar expansions by *distributio* are able to clearly illustrate what God (the primary author) is doing with a text.

Summary

Utilizing the work of Gibson et al. in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics* to guide our conversation, this chapter addressed each of the four distinct approaches of evangelical preaching in a dialog with the homiletic approach of Origen. Through each section of this chapter, I have examined one of the four contemporary approaches found in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics* according to the general pattern of Origen's figural exposition and his use of *anthypophora* and expansion by *distributio*. This examination of Origen's practice in light of contemporary approaches encouraged a new understanding of Origen's homiletic in view of its applicability to the modern act of evangelical preaching.

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[78] Abraham Kuruvilla, "Response to Paul Scott Wilson," in *Homiletics and Hermeneutics: Four Views on Preaching Today*, ed. Scott Gibson and Matthew Kim (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 150–53.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

This study began by proposing that Origen's homiletical figural exposition developed from a utilization of a spiritual sense of the Scripture that employed distinct rhetorical figures and structures to develop three main theological themes: revelation of Christ, unity of Christ with the Christian, and edification of the hearer. This final chapter will summarize the major aspects of the study which offer a suitable and sustainable answer in support of the thesis. A brief consideration of how contemporary evangelical preaching can learn from Origen's figural exposition will encourage the reader toward future conversations which in turn will create new practices or reinvigorate old ones. This chapter will end with some reflection upon the project.

Summary of Origen's Figural Exposition

The thesis of the study focuses upon answering two major questions: First, can Origen's figural exposition be examined as an actual homiletic artifact with specific purpose within the homilies of Origen? Second, assuming that our first question can be supported affirmatively, could Origen's homiletical approach inform or assist the practice of modern evangelical preaching? In order to answer our first question, chapter two focused on definitions to establish the first "lens" of our methodology. The work of O'Keefe and Reno provided an entrance into the landscape of patristic interpretation. Their work drew upon the categories of figuration, typology and allegory, to examine the interpretive decisions made by the Early Church. These interpretive decisions also exhibit a rhetorical quality. Using terms *figura* and *trope*, our study followed Quintilian's division of these rhetorical concepts based upon whether the outcome of their use resulted in a meaning that was rooted in the literal, or historical, meaning or replaced

the literal meaning of a text.[1] Our study rejected the utilization of the non-literal replacement of meaning that come with the utilization of *tropes*. The preferred term *figural* is understood as an act of interpretation which expands the literal meaning without destroying it. This understanding of Origen's exposition is not isolated to his Leviticus homilies but was shown to be a common feature of Origen's preaching. This study's acceptance of Origen's figural exposition was also examined within the specific context of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, based upon our understanding that Origen did not utilize *tropes* but a figural exposition in his homilies.

Chapter Three examined our second "lens," the ecclesiastical and rhetorical traditions that gave rise to Origen's figural exposition. Attending to our thesis' claim that Origen's figural exposition arises from Origen's unveiling of a spiritual sense of the text, and that this figural exposition utilized a variety of rhetorical figures to establish theological themes in his homilies, this chapter presented a "thick" description of Origen as both an ecclesial pioneer and a rhetorical practitioner. Origen responded to the historical rise of heresies and their attempt to offer new and different revelations with the creation of a homiletical style that was focused upon the existent Scripture. This style was the product of a Christ-centered reading of Scripture that sought to emphasize the edification of the hearers. This homiletic utilized known and familiar rhetorical figures and techniques, such as *anthypophora* and expansion-by-division (*distributio*). Origen employed these figures to unveil the spiritual sense of the text and develop the overarching theological themes of his homilies.

Chapter Four turned to a close reading of the sixteen sermons that constitute Origen's Leviticus homilies. This close reading offers two major insights. First, Origen nuanced his use of *anthypophora* and expansion by division to attend to the spiritual sense of the text. Origen

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[1] See chapter 2, Challenging and Nuancing Sanctified Vision

accomplished this with *anthypophora* by using questions to elicit answers that drew together the Scriptures—either by repetition of terms or by the commonplace of a theological teaching—and drew out a sense of the Scripture focused upon the revelation of Christ. Origen nuanced *distributio* (expansion by division of substance, components, or attributes) by using it to draw attention to unspoken divisions and to make clear what lay unspoken, beneath the surface of the text. Origen used this figure to distinguish between words, senses, and teachings to create opportunities for his hearers to make choices concerning their spiritual lives and to defend the Scripture and his hearers against false or useless interpretations. Second, this chapter examined the presence of a general pattern within Origen's homilies of revelation, unification, and edification. This pattern expressed the overarching themes of Origen's figural exposition, as the revelation of Christ, the unity of Christ and Christian, and the edification of the hearer.

The extent of Origen's figural exposition is expansive, being found throughout the whole of Origen's homiletic corpus. Furthermore, this figural exposition is best understood as the product of Origen's reception and utilization of his contemporary ecclesiastical and rhetorical traditions. Finally, there is a definite and intentional purpose to Origen's use of figural exposition. Specifically, Origen's figural exposition defends the Scriptures against false interpretations and edifies hearers in the development of their faith in Christ.

Summary of the Possible Uses of Figural Exposition within Evangelical Homiletics

The second major question, if Origen's homiletical approach could inform or assist the practice of modern evangelical preaching, was first addressed by means of a conversation between Origen and contemporary evangelical homiletics. Scott Gibson and Mathew Kim ask,

"what can we learn form a theological tradition not our own?"[2] Their book, *Hermeneutics and Homiletics*, begins this conversation among four perspectives on evangelical preaching. This thesis extends that conversation into a moment of dialogical synthesis by examining each perspective in light of Origen's figural exposition. Each perspective on contemporary preaching was addressed in terms of how Origen's three theological themes could assist or augment each. The conversation was continued through an investigation of Origen's use of *anthypophora* and expansion by division in reference to the presence of major themes and principles of each evangelical perspective.

Utilizing *Homiletics and Hermeneutics* to guide our conversation, the fifth chapter addressed each of the four distinct approaches of evangelical preaching in a dialog with the homiletical approach of Origen. This examination of Origen's practice in light of contemporary approaches encourages a new understanding of Origen's homiletic, that Origen's figural exposition is able to inform and even benefit the modern act of evangelical preaching.

Reflections Upon the Project

This dissertation has answered its two major questions, showing that Origen's figural exposition is an integral part of Origen's homiletical process, and that this figural exposition can, in fact, support contemporary evangelical preaching. Building on the work of Peter Martens, Henri De Lubac, and J. David Dawson, our project has challenged the disinterest of Origen's homilies by many Evangelical preachers. Through its analysis of Origen's actual homilies in light of various perspectives of evangelical homiletics, this dissertation has started the conversation. This hope of the dissertation is for more and deeper engagement of Origen's

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[2] Gibson and Kim, "Introduction," xiii.

homilies, as well as those of other Church Fathers, by modern evangelical preachers. In contrast to some of the more radical views of Origen's homilies, this project has shown that Origen's figural exposition is not the history-defacing, trope-based, platonic interpretation that is often portrayed. While Origen still has some interpretive problems and theological inaccuracies, our study has shown that a close reading of Origen reveals a homiletical expression centered upon Christ and seeking to form its hearers in faithfulness to Christ.

This project has produced a number of topics and ancillary questions that merit further consideration but lie outside of its scope. Two questions directly address what Brian Daley has called the "exegetical imagination,"[3] which will help to further clarify our understanding of Origen's homilies and their ability to inform and benefit evangelical preaching.

The first question concerns to what degree the philosophical change in our conceptualization of the human being has changed the way in which personal agency is engaged within the contemporary preaching task. Origen's homiletical corpus shows an awareness of a tripartite nature to human existence. In appendix two, we present the argument that the soul is viewed by Origen as a "middle ground" in which agency can be enacted as choice is made. Modern philosophical conceptions of human existence have not produced as clear a picture of the human existence as the platonic model Origen utilized.[4] Modern philosophy has, in many

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[3] "Early Christian Interpretation, grounded in its strong sense of God's long involvement with humanity, can offer us at least parallels and models for reviving our exegetical imagination … a greater familiarity with early Christian interpretation may lead modern Christian scholarly readers to reflect more radically on the hermeneutical conditions for reappropriating the Bible as the book of the Church and may thus stimulate them to develop new strategies of reading it in a Christian – and thus, in some sense, a figural – way, in a historically minded age." (Brian Daley, "Is Patristic Exegesis Still Usable? Some Reflections on Early Christian Interpretation of the Psalms," in *The Art of Reading Scripture* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003], 88.)

[4] Modern philosophical discussions approached the idea of the self, but from within a materialistic framework. Charles Taylor has discussed this as a "shifting of scaffolding," whereby the spiritual aspect of existence has been effectively eliminated from contemporary consideration. (Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007]) Even though there have been moments of reconsideration, such as social psychologist Jonathan Haidt's suggestion that "human beings evolved to be religious . . . There is a God-shaped hole

cases, moved away from discussion of the transcendent and has focused upon the imminent and its relation to the self. This drastic change has far-reaching implications upon evangelical preaching.

The second question concerns how the shift of philology in the 16th century altered the understanding of the written Word of God in the assessment of modern evangelical preachers. This second question is similar to the first, in that it seeks to investigate a historic shift. O'Keefe and Reno touch on this topic in *Sanctified Vision* when they argue that the hermeneutic of the Early Church used a different theory of meaning than the contemporary Church. O'Keefe and Reno do not explain when this divide originated, nor how expansive its effects may be. Walter Ong has suggested that this division is a shift of power away from divine sources to a power within language itself.[5] Such a shift, like the shift of anthropological understanding, has implications for preaching. A greater understanding of a pre-shift homiletic, such as Origen's figural exposition, may assist in understanding what has changed, and lend aid to assessing whether the change is beneficial or should be rejected.

We conclude our study by returning to our opening image of the tree. The tree of preaching has always had its foundations rooted in the Scriptures and the proclamation of the Gospel. Our study has shown Origen's branch not as withered and rotten as has been assumed by many. Through a close reading of his Levitical homilies, we have shown that the leaves of Origen's three theological themes of the revelation of Christ, the unity of Christ and the Christian, and the edification of the Christian continue to be found and to influence preaching across time, even

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in the heart of each man." (Quoted in Sarah Eekhoff Zylstra, "An Unlikely Ally': What a Secular Atheist Is Teaching Christian Leaders," *The Gospel Coalition*, February 28, 2019, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/what-a-secular-atheist-is-teaching-christian-leaders/.) there has been no significant cultural tradition toward the recovery of a material-spiritual framework of existence.

[5] Walter Ong, *Ramus, Method, and the Decay of Dialogue* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 65.

budding in contemporary evangelical sermons.

<div align="center">S.D.G.</div>

EVALUATION OF FUNCTION OF *ANTHYPOPHORA* AND EXPANSION BY DIVISION IN ORIGEN'S HLEV 15.

Appendix A offers an evaluation of Origen's fifteenth homily on Leviticus to present Origen's figural exposition and his theological *loci*.[1] This evaluation begins with a summary of homily. It continues with a rhetorical analysis that identifies and comments on various rhetorical *figura*. The analysis illustrates the foundational nature of Origen's theological concerns which drive his usage of rhetoric.

> HOMILY 15: *Concerning the selling and buying back of houses.*
>
> If a man sells a dwelling house in a walled city, he may redeem it within a year of its sale. For a full year he shall have the right of redemption. If it is not redeemed within a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong in perpetuity to the buyer, throughout his generations; it shall not be released in the jubilee. But the houses of the villages that have no wall around them shall be classified with the fields of the land. They may be redeemed, and they shall be released in the jubilee. As for the cities of the Levites, the Levites may redeem at any time the houses in the cities they possess. And if one of the Levites exercises his right of redemption, then the house that was sold in a city they possess shall be released in the jubilee. For the houses in the cities of the Levites are their possession among the people of Israel.

Homiletical Summary

This homily concerns Lev. 25:29–33. Origen progresses through the text by means of a division by taxis, that is a division by components. First, he offers a brief comment upon the historical sense of the text. Second, he focuses the majority of the homily upon the spiritual sense of the text. Origen expands the literal understanding of house, paraphrasing 2 Cor. 5:1, "We have an eternal house in heaven not made by hand." Origen further expands this heavenly (*coelestem*) house as one built by God and dwelt in by the "fear of God (*timeat Deum*)," "simplicity of mind

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[1] FC 83:256–60 [15.1.1–3.3].

and purity of heart (*simplicitate mentis et puritate cordis*)." Lastly, Origen shifts his focus away

from the construction and location of the house, to the buying back of a house. This final section

identifies the "mind consecrated to God" (*mens Deo consecrata*) with the priest and presents the

repentance of the hearer's sins and failings as the spiritual buying back of their "houses." This

final section concludes by attending to the foundation of Christ (*fundamentum Christi*) upon

which Origen builds his moral exhortation and spiritual edification.

Rhetorical Analysis

> (1.1) We see in Leviticus three different laws concerning the selling and buying back of houses given by Moses, whose content we will first examine according to the literal sense so that after that we can also ascend to the spiritual sense. Certain houses are "in walled cities;" certain ones are "in villages or fields not having walls." Therefore, it says that "if anyone should sell a house in a walled city, for a whole year he has the right to buy it back, but after a year no opportunity is given for it to be recovered. For the house will be a fixed possession of the buyer himself if within the year he who sold it could free it." (2) The second law is that "if a house, which was sold, were in a village which does not have walls but a field borders on this village, the seller is permitted, both after a year and at whatever time he could, to restore the price and to recover the house which he had sold."(3) The third law is that "if perchance it is the house of a Levite or a priest, wherever such a house was, either in a walled city or in a village which is not walled, it is permitted always and at any time that, at whatever time the Levite or priest would be able, he may buy back his house." And the divine laws do not permit at any time a priestly or levitical possession to be established for another who is not of his order.(4) These, therefore, are the laws, which that former people used and even according to that which is designated through the literal sense, which they consider religious and pious enough for the priestly or levitical orders.

In this first section, Origen comments upon the Leviticus housing law by *enumeratio*

division of a subject by its dependents. Each dependent law receives a brief comment with

Origen limiting his commentary to the literal sense of this section.

> 2. But let us refer more quickly to ourselves these by which the law of Christ, if we follow it, permits us neither to have possessions on earth nor houses in the cities. And why do I say houses? It allows us to own neither several tunics nor much money, for it says, "Having food and clothing, let us be content with these." Therefore, how will

we observe the laws which were given about houses whether located "within a walled city" or "in villages in which there are no walls"?

Origen begins with a hortatory exhortation which directs the hearer toward the application of this text to their own lives through "the law of Christ." This phrase introduces Origen's first theological locus of the homily, edification of the hearer. Origen completes the exhortation with an appeal to authority found in his paraphrase of the "law of Christ." Origen proceeds into an *anthypophora*. This *anthypophora* introduces a theme of judicial *stasis* which is confirmed in the second *anthypophora* at the end of the paragraph. These initial questions offer to establish the activity of the hearer in light of the seeming contradiction with the law of Christ that forbids possessions. Following Cicero's judicial progression in *De Inventione,* Origen establishes that a Christian can engage in the activity discussed.[2] Origen will return to this *figura* near the beginning of a paragraph several times in this homily. Each occurrence continues the judicial theme but attends to a different question, progressing from "who" to "what kind" to "what quality."

> (2) We find in other passages of Scripture that the divine word uses the word "house" in some greater and sacramental sense as when it speaks about Jacob and lays it down as if for his praise, "For Jacob was a simple man living in a house." And again I find written about the midwives of the Hebrews, "And because the midwives feared God, they made themselves houses." We see therefore that the fear of God was certainly the reason for the midwives to make houses, but for Jacob simplicity and innocence was the reason that "he dwelled in a house." Finally, it was not written about Esau, because he was evil, that he dwelled in a house, and it was not written about any other who did not have a fear of God that he built a house for himself.

This paragraph introduces an exegetical juxtaposition, which we have discussed more generally under "The Exegetical Use of *Anthypophora* in Origen's Leviticus Homilies." This exegetical use of *anthypophora* is best understood as a direct comparison of Gen. 25:7 and Exo.

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[2] LCL 386:20–38.

1:21 to produce an *enthymeme* — a truncated syllogism. This process aims to clarify the initial concept "house" (*domum*) by investigating a spiritual meaning of the text beyond a literal sense. In this case, the *enthymeme* can be presented as (A) The Scripture presents the living of a house an object of praise. (B) A house is made by the fear of God. (Conclusion) It is praised by Scripture that we should build a house by the fear of God. This conclusion conveys a spiritual sense to the idea of "house" through the idea that it is built through the fear of God.

Origen offers a brief expansion by division utilizing *prosapodosis,* the logical explanation of a specific division. In separating Esau from Jacob, Origen is able to introduce the concept of quality. The "logic" follows his *enthymeme*, the house is built by those who fear God. Jacob is "simple" and "innocent," (*simplicitas et innocentia*) both terms which conform to the fear of the Lord (*timorem Dei*). Esau is evil (*malus*). *Malus* and God-fearing are antithetical terms. This basic division serves as a mimetic summary when paired with Origen's final statement, "it was not written about any other who did not have a fear of God that he built a house for himself."

> (3) The Apostle Paul explains more clearly what this "house" is and what kind of building it is, when he says, "We have an eternal house in heaven not made by hand." This, therefore, is "the house" which no one can build unless he fears God. This is "the house" which no one can construct and live in except in simplicity of mind and purity of heart. But since it usually happens that even he who should build well and construct for himself a heavenly house by doing good and living well and believing rightly, incurs a debt of sin and is forced by a most cruel creditor to sell this and to transfer his labors to another, the piety and clemency of the Lawgiver replies that within a certain time it can be bought back.

Origen clarifies his *enthymeme* above with an appeal to authority. 2 Cor. 5:1 is used to support both his general claim of a spiritual sense to "house" as well as his conclusion that this 'house' is built by the fear of God. Origen proceeds to restate his position as *epitasis*, simple restatement, emphasizing a characteristic of both examples in the above paragraph. This restatement is an idealized example which connects to Origen's goal of edification.

Quintilian lists a *figura* of the invention of the "imaginary introduction of persons."[3] Origen adopts this *figura* in order to create a division to expand. This division follows the differentiation between the ideal example and the usual happenings whereby the hearer "incurs a debt of sin and is forced . . . to sell." (*incurrat alicuius peccati debitum et . . . foeneratore venumdare*) This division will serve as the basis for Origen to introduce, later in the homily, the theological locus of union of Christ and Christian.

> (4) It says, "However if your hand finds the price to restore it." What kind of "price"? Without a doubt, it is assembled with the tears of repentance and found with the hands, that is, by the labor of a good deed. Moreover, this "year" can be understood as the one which the Lord comes to call "the acceptable year," in which he releases the broken ones into forgiveness and grants salvation to those who confess their transgressions.

Origen begins with a paraphrase of the text now under consideration. Origen offers his second *anthypophora,* this time with an immediate and doctrinal response. This *anthypophora* attends to the concept of repentance as the price for restoration of the spiritual house. Origen then moves to the jubilee, which Origen designates a "year" (*annus*). Origen repeats the term *annum acceptum* as a *conduplicatio* using its general repetition to offer a more specific meaning to "year." Origen draws out this meaning in attending to the acts of God upon the penitent. Origen continues to build his general argument of edification, establishing the timeframe in which the redemption of a spiritual house can occur as synonymous with the time of the Lord's salvation. At this point, Origen has offered a spiritual interpretation that identifies the house of Leviticus with the spiritual house built by the fear of God. This house is lost or sold when sin occurs and is bought back by repentance during the period of God's forgiveness and salvation.

> (5) But in the statement "a house in a walled city," "the house" which is said to be "in heaven" is correctly understood, I think, to be "in a walled city." For the firmament itself of heaven is the wall for houses of this type. But those are few who can have

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[3] LCL 127:26–27.

such a house; they are those "who walking upon the earth have a conversation in heaven" about whom the Apostle says, "You are a building of God."

Origen continues his pattern of paraphrase and proof. Origen juxtaposes 2 Cor. 5:1 and the preceding theological argument with Phil. 3:19–20,[4] and 1 Cor. 3:9. The latter quotation fits nicely within Origen's theological presentation. The emphasis upon God's activity supports Origen's earlier claim that the "*domum*" is built by fear of God. There is a subtle strengthening of the awareness of God's activity upon the Christian, preceding or at least coordinating with their acts of piety. Origen's paraphrase of Phil. 3:19–20 is not an obvious selection. Origen amends Paul's *sapiunt* with walking (*ambulantes*). This paraphrase is complex as it draws upon Phil. 3:19–20 while also alluding to the apostles whose names are written on the foundations of the disciples who "walked" (*ambulantes*) with the Lord to Emmaus. As such, Origen returns to his penchant for exemplars which serve to guide the edification of his hearers. Taken together, this serves as a *syllogismus* leading the hearers toward the 'obvious' conclusion, that they may possess such a house, as they are a "building of God." (*Dei aedificatio estis.*)

> (6) But others have houses "in villages in which there is no wall," yet a fertile field is adjacent to them. Perhaps they are those who prepare for themselves a little dwelling "while living on earth," even on that earth which the Lord promises "to the meek," saying, "Blessed are the meek, for they will possess the earth as an inheritance." Therefore, there is "always" the possibility of recovering these houses if perhaps someone, as we said above, should fall into error because, for example, we say if some mortal fault finds us which does not consist in a mortal offense, not in blasphemy of the faith which is surrounded by a wall of ecclesiastical and apostolic doctrine but consists in a vice of words or habits; that is "to have sold the house" which is in a field or "in a village which is not walled." Therefore, this selling and this kind of fault can always be repaired, and it is never forbidden for you to do penance for offenses of this kind. For in more serious offenses, a place is given only once for penance; but these common ones which we frequently commit, always receive repentance and are bought back without interruption.

Origen completes this paragraph by addressing the division between a "walled house" and

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[4] This quotation follows the Vulgate, "*qui terrena sapiunt nostra autem conversatio in caelis est,*" more than it follows the Greek, "οἱ τὰ ἐπίγεια φρονοῦντες. ἡμῶν γὰρ τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς ὑπάρχει."

a house "in villages in which there is no law." Origen offers an exegetical pun by way of his comment "yet a fertile field is adjacent to them." Leviticus 25 literally places this phrase adjacent the houses "in villages in which there is no wall." Setting aside this humorous observation, Origen again introduces an imagined character whose person juxtaposes Psa. 27:13, "*in terra viventium*" with Matt. 5:5. This character serves to attend to the variety of spiritual maturity in Origen's audience. By Origen's own admission, few will understand themselves as so spiritual as to have a "house in a walled city." Without clear division, Origen summarizes his argument, "there is 'always' the possibility of recovering these houses if perhaps someone . . . should fall into error" and offers an example which draws together his entire argument thus far. This illustrates the hearer's edification within the frame of the metaphorical world which Origen has previously built. Origen completes the paragraph with a brief digression concerning "more serious offenses" that lie outside the ken of his exposition on this passage.

> 3. It says, "But if this house were either a priest's or a Levite's, wherever it is, whether in a city or in the country, it can always be bought back." In this passage I seek a priestly sense and a levitical understanding. For the hearer of these things ought not to be inferior, if possible, to that one who wrote and consecrated them. What is it, therefore, that the priest and Levite, "always" and wherever it is, "have the right to buy back" their house? According to a spiritual understanding, the priest is called the mind consecrated to God and the Levite is called that one who incessantly assists God and serves his will. Therefore, the priest and Levite must represent perfection in understanding and work, in faith and deeds. And so if it should sometimes happen to this perfect mind to sell and to give into another's hands "the eternal house which he has in heaven, not made by hand," just as it happened once to the great patriarch David when "from his roof he spied" the wife of Uriah the Hittite, immediately he buys it back, immediately he repairs it, for immediately he says, "I have sinned."

Origen begins this new section utilizing a repetition of a pair of *polypoptons*, repeating various forms of "priestly, *sacerdotalis*" and "Levite, *Leviticus*". Origen proceeds by an *aetiologia* which justifies his search for a "*sacerdotalem sensum*" in that the hearer "ought not to be inferior, if possible, to that one who wrote and consecrated [the Scriptures]." This statement

leans heavily upon Origen's theological locus of the unity between Christ and the Christian to

establish adequacy on the part of the hearer. This allusion to the unity of Christ and Christian, in

effect, begs the question. Origen proceeds immediately into his final *anthypophora* which attends

to the *stasis* of quality. Specifically, what quality do priests and Levites possess that they are able

to "always" by buy back their spiritual house no matter its location. Origen's "spiritual" answer

is difficult to follow. It appears that Origen utilizes the division of priest and Levite to offer a

distributio of roles. These roles are not found as persons but as aspects of the person. Origen sets

the priest as the "*mens Deo consecrata*." Origen established this possibility in Homily one,

paragraph five. Origen presents the mind as the priest "in you."[5] This follows Origen's

understanding of the soul as middle ground which can be purified by God so as to draw up the

body to do the will of God. Origen's Levite comments follow this exactly. Origen completes the

paragraph with an appeal to authority citing portions of the Bathsheba narrative (2 Sam. 11:2;

12:13) which in turn serves as efficacious example. This example uses a repetition of the core

metaphor "buying back" (*redimit*) as well as an additional comment on the "repair" (*reparat*) of

the house to connect the actions of the Davidic story with Origen's homiletical intention. It also

progresses via a threefold *epanalepsis*. Origen repeats "immediately" three times at the

beginning of successive clauses. "*statim eam redimit, statim reparat; statim enim dicit:*

'peccavi.'"

> (2) But on the contrary, we ought to consider something still more sublime in this
> sense: how the houses of the priests and Levites, that is, the transgressions of perfect
> minds, are always bought back and always cleansed. If when we read divine
> Scriptures and examine some transgressions of the holy fathers in these things, if
> according to the idea of the Apostle Paul we say, "All these happened to them in
> figures, but they were written for our admonition," in this way "their house is always
> bought back" because always for their faults, purification and satisfaction are brought
> by the teachers who show from the divine Scriptures these things to have been forms

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[5] FC 83:37 [1.5.1].

and images of future things, not that the transgressions of the saints may be denounced but that sinners and impious ones may be shown to be brought into the share and fellowship of the saints.

Origen offers a *correctio*[6] in an effort to nuance his previous statement regarding the spiritual sense whereby the hearer is called to spiritual and bodily "perfection in understanding and work, in faith and deeds" (*Perfectio . . . in intellectu et opere, in fide et actibus*). Origen turns to the examples of the "holy fathers" citing St. Paul's example of edification as a support for his own figural exposition. This "more sublime" thing (*sublimius*) is the ability of the Scripture to offers historical examples which inform and edify the saints. These examples are emphasized through repetition to show that the purification and satisfaction for sin are given for the purpose of present edification. Origen subtly ties these saintly examples back into the conversation of redemption as he identifies the purpose of their example as a model of God's redemption of sinners and not a moralistic condemnation.

> (3) Therefore, the priestly possession is never taken from the priest even if it should be removed for a time, even if it should be sold, "it is always bought back, always" restored, just as if it would say, "love," which is "perfect," "endures all things, hopes all things, bears all things, love never fails." Thus, therefore, the possession and house of the saints "never fails," never is taken away, never is separated from their right. For how can the house be taken from the priests, which was built "upon the foundation of the apostles and Prophets, in which Christ Jesus is himself the corner stone"? But that this house can sometimes be sold, that is, that this kind of building can fall into sin, hear what the Apostle Paul says about such: "As a wise architect, I laid down a foundation; another builds upon it, but let each one watch how he builds. For no other foundation can anyone lay down besides that which was laid down, who is Christ Jesus. But if anyone builds upon this foundation" [let him build] "gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw." Therefore, you see that "wood, hay, and straw," that is, works of sin can "be built upon the foundation of Christ." Whoever "builds" that without a doubt, "sells his house" to the worst buyer, the devil, from whom each one of the sinners obtains the price of sin, the satisfaction of his desires. If perhaps someone should commit what is not proper, let him quickly buy it back, let him quickly restore it while there is time for restoring, while there is a place of repentance, lest we be cheated out of the habitation of the eternal house, but let us be

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[6] LCL 403:318–21 [4.26.36].

worthy "to be received into the eternal tabernacle," through Christ our Lord "to whom is glory and power forever and ever. Amen!"

Origen begins his final paragraph with a *proecthesis* offering a justification for his conclusion. Origen understands the redemption of the saints in parallel to 1 Cor. 13:13 in that redemption, like love, remains. Origen emphasizes his conclusion using an *anaphora* repeating for emphasis "never" at the beginning of two successive clauses. Origen introduces his theological locus of a revelation of Christ only at the end of the homily, even as one may argue it governs the development of the whole. Christ is formally introduced via *anthypophora*. This rhetorical question, "For how can the house be taken from the priests?" focuses upon the term "taken" (*separari*). Here the narratival metaphor which Origen engages leads the translation toward "taken." However, "to separate from" attends better to the theological locus which Origen is addressing, the question of what can separate us from Christ. Origen confirms this in his rephrasing the question in his answer changing "taken" (*separari*) to "sold." (*distrahi*) To sell, as Origen has already established, is to sin. Origen elaborates upon the foundational nature of Christ's work appealing to the authority of 1 Cor. 3:12. Origen allows Paul to continue the argument dividing "wood, hay, and straw" from the precious and valuable resources. Using a repetition of "build" for emphasis, Origen does not advocate a perfection of life, but allows for sin to be built upon the "foundation of Christ." However, as Origen has previously laid out, such sin sells the house. Origen expands upon idea in the conclusion of his homily, playing out the metaphor, with the devil purchasing the house and the purchase price being the "satisfaction" of sinful desires. Origen concludes the homily with an exhortation of the general individual. This final exhortation provides both positive (let him buy buy) and negative (lest we be cheated out of the habitation) edification for his hearers. Origen finishes his homily with a doxology to Christ.

Conclusion

  Origen's fifteenth homily presents a clear indication of Origen's use of rhetorical *figura* to attend to his theological loci. Notable in this homily is the centrality of Origen's use of *anthypophora* to structure the progression of the homily. Origen's use of various forms of expansion by division provide opportunities for him to elaborate on the spiritual sense of the text and to exhort his hearers toward appropriate actions after the committing of sin.

APPENDIX TWO

The Soul in Origen's Homiletic Practice

Lorenzo Perrone maintains that even though one may analyze Origen's exegetical or rhetorical considerations, foremost in Origen's mind is "the dialogue of the soul with God."[1] This dialogue is manifested in the use of a tripartite anthropology as analogous to the Scripture's meaning and sense.[2] This interpretation follows the rhetorical understanding of the soul as a middle ground, able to anchor and pull the Spirit toward earthly, more base activities or to ascend into heavenly things, lifting body toward the things of the spirit as seen in the larger Greco-Roman world. Plato, in *Phaedrus*, offers a helpful illustration through the image of a charioteer who controls two horses, understood to be the passions of the soul divided between desires and more excitable or inflammatory movements of the soul.[3] The charioteer is the rational part of the soul that seeks to utilize both horses in drawing the soul toward higher things.

In HLev 2, Origen presents a similar image, where the "soul" is presented as the seat of choice, with "spirit" and "flesh" being drawn out as antagonistic outcomes. Origen writes,

> Rightly, it says 'a soul' when it ascribes sin, for it would not have called one about to sin a spirit about to sin. Nor would it have called this a person, in whom 'the image of God' could not subsist if sin intervened. Therefore, it is not the spirit that sins … it is established that it is the soul which either "sows in the flesh" or "in the spirit" and which can go to ruin in sin or be converted from sin. For the body is its result to whatever he chooses; and the spirit is its guide to excellence if he wishes to follow it.[4]

The concept of guidance for the soul is vital to understanding personal agency and its

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[1] Lorenzo Perrone, "Origen Reading the Psalms: The Challenge of a Christian Interpretation," paper presented at the conference: Upholding Scripture, Rejecting Scripture: Strategies of Religious Subversion, a Conference Celebrating the Work of Guy G. Stroumsa, Jerusalem, 4–5 January 2016, 23.

[2] Elizabeth Dively-Lauro's offers a thorough treatment of this in *The Soul and Spirit of Scripture within Origen's Exegesis* (Boston: Brill, 2005).

[3] Joel Elowsky, email to author, 9/24/2021.

[4] FC 83:43 [2.2.7].

relation to "virtue" in Origen's homilies. The Early Church viewed the concept of *passions* of the soul similarly. Plato and Aristotle understood passions as things that could be controlled through the operation of virtue, which comes from within oneself.[5] The virtue's goal to control the passions aims for the betterment of the person. The Church held largely negative views of the passions, but as Maximus the Confessor alludes to, where there is spiritual knowledge (*gnosis)* imparted by divine grace, the passions can be harnessed in a positive direction. This follows the same conceptualization of Greek virtue, with a key exception—this virtue is imputed. Origen utilizes the term virtue at several points in his homilies. Origen provides a key to understanding his usage in HLev 8.

> Therefore, the first "lamb" which is "for transgression" appears to me to have the form of his virtue which he who was in sin received, through which he could cast away from himself his desire to sin and to make repentance for his old evils. But the second "lamb" [appears] to have the form of his recovered virtue through which, since he had rejected and chased away all his vices, he offered himself complete and completely to God and appeared worthy before the divine altars.[6]

Two types of virtue are present in Origen's example. The first type is imparted and creates a response within the soul as it modulates and removes unhelpful passions. The second type appears to be akin to the internal virtue found in wider Platonism. Parallel to Maximus' description, Origen presents virtue, when expressed by the Christian, as the result of the preceding activity of the Divine upon the person.

In conclusion, virtue within Origen is best understood through the lens of Platonic aspects of the soul. This soul's aspects can be drawn toward either the heavenly or the earthy. Origen seeks to move the soul toward the divine.

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[5] Elowsky, email to author, 9/24/2021. Elowsky summarizes the discussion of passions that pervades Book 7 of Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library 73 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1926). "Desire, anger, fear, daring, envy, joy, friendliness, hatred, longing, jealousy, pity, and in general all conditions that are attended by pleasure or pain."

[6] FC 83:173 [8.11.8] .

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