

## INAUGURAL LECTURES

### THE COGNITIVE PERIPHERAL VISION OF BIBLICAL AUTHORS

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#### *I. Introduction*

The problem that this article attempts to address concerns those NT uses of the OT that appear on the surface to have a very different meaning that is not consistent with the original meaning of the OT passage being referred to. One of the examples addressed below is John 19:36, which says that not breaking Jesus' bones at the crucifixion was a fulfillment of Exod 12:46, which commands Israelites "not to break any bone of" the Passover lamb. The problem is that this is a historical description of a command to Israelites, not a prophecy about the Messiah. Another example is Matthew's quotation of Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15. The Hosea passage says, "Out of Egypt I have called My son," and Matthew quotes it and sees it fulfilled in Jesus. The problem with this is that Hosea's wording is not a prophecy to be fulfilled but merely a historical reflection on Israel's past exodus out of Egypt. Furthermore, Hosea's wording refers to Israel as a nation and not to an individual Messiah, as Matthew takes it. Many would say that Matthew has twisted the original meaning of Hosea's words. Many examples could be added to these, but these will suffice for now.

How do we deal with such problematic texts? There are a variety of responses to these thorny passages. Some say that the NT writers were wrong. Others say that their interpretive approach was wrong, but what they wrote was nevertheless inspired. Still others contend that they were strange exegetes who cannot be judged by modern-day standards. And others affirm that their exegesis is legitimate, but their approach is so unique that we dare not try to copy their method. And then there are those who argue that with caution we can try to imitate their method.

In this article I will argue that OT writers knew more about the topic of their speech act than only the explicit meaning they expressed about that topic. If

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so, there was an explicit intention and an implicit wider understanding related to that intention.<sup>1</sup> It is sometimes this implicit wider intention that NT writers develop instead of the OT author's explicit or direct meaning. These NT interpretations may seem strange at a first reading but when the OT and NT writers' wider understanding is explored, the interpretations become more understandable. One clarification: this article looks primarily at what the human biblical author understood, though realizing that the human authors were aware that they were writing under divine inspiration and that God would certainly have a more exhaustive understanding of their intention.

## II. *Modern-Day Examples of Explicit and Implicit Meaning*

When a husband says he loves his wife, this can be unpacked in the following principal ways: I am unconditionally committed to you/I think of you before myself/I think of you as more important than myself/I love [care for] you as I love [care for] myself /I want to sacrifice myself for you/I want to sacrifice myself for you in the same manner as Christ sacrificed himself for the church. Then there could be many applications of these general principal statements, such as, "I will do house chores so that the full load of housework will not fall upon you" or "I will cook dinner for you tonight." The point is that any one of the above statements can be unpacked further with added meaning but meaning that is truly part of the meaning of the one original statement.

Or, imagine students asking a teacher to clarify the teacher's initial interpretation of a biblical passage. There could be several more sentences of interpretation that expand on the original interpretation but were not stated explicitly with the original. Or, what does a teacher (or Paul) mean when the teacher says all believers are "in Christ." This phrase is used throughout Paul, and he focuses on different aspects of "union with Christ" in different contexts: justification/sanctification/regeneration/adopted sonship/new creation/reconciliation/image of God, and so forth. When Paul focuses, for example, on adopted sonship, does that mean he does not have in mind sanctification secondarily, if you asked him?

The original statements in the above illustrations are what some scholars call "thick descriptive" statements, which can be unpacked layer by layer.<sup>2</sup> This

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<sup>1</sup> Some scholars, such as those who espouse a hermeneutical view known as "relevance theory," refer to this as "explicitures" and "implicatures" (e.g., see Gene L. Green, "Relevance Theory and Biblical Interpretation," in *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament* [ed. Stanley E. Porter and Matthew B. O'Donnell; New Testament Monographs 11; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009], 234). Scholars can also refer to such speech acts as "linguistically underdetermined."

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., Kevin Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text? The Bible, the Reader, and the Morality of Literary Knowledge* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 264-65, 284-85, 313-14. See also John Frame, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (Phillipsburg, N.J.: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1987), 215-41, for his notion of the "vagueness" of language, which overlaps with Vanhoozer's idea of "thick description."

concept of “thick description” goes a long way toward explaining some of the problematic uses of the OT in the NT. But more must be said to “unpack” this notion of “thick description.”

### III. *The Concept of Cognitive Peripheral Vision*

The notion of cognitive peripheral knowledge further explains the reality that human assertions have both explicit and implicit meaning. All humans have eyesight that includes direct vision and peripheral vision. Peripheral vision is typically defined as the ability to see objects and movement outside of the direct line of vision. A typical description of peripheral vision is the following:

Peripheral vision is a part of vision that occurs outside the very center of gaze. There is a broad set of non-central points in the field of view that is included in the notion of peripheral vision. “Far peripheral” vision exists at the edges of the field of view, “mid-peripheral” vision exists in the middle of the field of view, and “near-peripheral,” sometimes referred to as “para-central” vision, exists adjacent to the center of gaze. For example, peripheral vision is practiced by jugglers. Jugglers do not directly follow the paths of individual objects with their eyes; instead they focus on a defined point in mid-air, so almost all of the information necessary for successful catches is perceived in the near-peripheral region.<sup>3</sup>

All people see and are aware of more than what their eyes are directly focused upon, and this awareness is an ongoing biological default setting. Likewise, there is a similar phenomenon with our mind’s eye. When we make statements about anything, we are focused on our direct meaning, yet that meaning is robust and can be expanded. The expansion is not uncontrolled. In the direct vision of our physical eyes are objects related to objects in our peripheral vision in that they are all part of one whole vision range. So likewise are things that are part of our direct focus of meaning related to things in our wider field of peripheral cognitive vision, since they are all part of one whole cognitive vision range (some scholars refer to this as the “cognitive environment”). It is thus natural to elaborate one’s direct meaning by its wider range of meaning, since they are part of one unified range of meaning. Such a wider range of related meaning is a default setting for our knowledge.

I believe that something like this is going on with OT and NT authors when they make direct statements with an explicit meaning. There is always a related range of meaning that appropriately is an expansion of the explicit meaning. All speakers and writers, including ancient writers, are aware of more than what they are directly saying in their speech act. Thus, cognitive peripheral vision is a theory of knowledge in itself, of which the peripheral vision that we have with our eyes is an illustration. We will delay giving biblical examples of this concept

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<sup>3</sup> “Peripheral vision,” Wikipedia, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peripheral\\_vision](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peripheral_vision) (accessed August 2013).

until we discuss some similar theories of human knowledge, which give a more philosophical grounding to my proposal of cognitive peripheral vision.

But at this point, I want to make a basic comparison between our physical peripheral vision and the cognitive peripheral vision of a NT writer. Have you had the experience of driving and your direct focus is on the road ahead, yet you are aware to some degree of objects in your peripheral vision? All of a sudden, you notice a car in your peripheral vision that is out of place and appears about to hit the right side of your car. You respond and immediately jerk your car to the left. Your direct focus and direction of your car have immediately changed, and you veer temporarily out of your lane. However, someone in the passenger seat who did not see what you saw (like my wife) thinks you are doing something radically wrong and cries out, "What are you doing?" Once they learn what you saw in your peripheral vision, they can understand why you jerked the car to the left instead of going straight. Likewise, a NT author may quote an OT passage that seems obviously to have one meaning, but he gives it a meaning that appears not to be found in that passage. What has happened is that in the author's cognitive peripheral vision, he has seen a passage three or four chapters later that is related to the meaning of the passage that he quotes, and he brings in the meaning from that later passage. In keeping with our car metaphor, the biblical author quotes an OT text but he steers away from its obvious meaning and goes in a different interpretive direction because of the later passage in his peripheral cognitive vision. To a later reader sitting in the interpretive passenger seat, it appears that the NT author has gone in the wrong interpretive direction and given a wrong meaning to the passage he cites. However, once the interpretive passenger understands that the author saw the verse four chapters later out of his cognitive peripheral vision and brought that meaning in, then the passenger understands why the author went in another interpretive direction. This does not distort the meaning of the focus passage but it does, at first, seem to be different.

#### IV. E. D. Hirsch's Concept of a "Willed Type"

In this regard, Hirsch's notion of a "willed type" as a further explanation of intentional, verbal meaning may be helpful. For Hirsch, a willed type has two characteristics: (1) a cognitive entity with a boundary in which some things belong within the boundary and others are excluded, and it can be represented by only a single instance among the other things which belong within the legitimate boundary; (2) the type as a cognitive entity can be represented by more than a single instance, as long as the other representing instances fall within the boundary.<sup>4</sup> That is an abstract explanation. Let me illustrate and try to make this more concrete.

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<sup>4</sup> E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Validity in Interpretation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 49-50.

Let us say that one of my students visits me for a lemonade on my back porch during the summer. While the student is visiting me, I say to him, "There is nothing I like more on a summer day than sipping lemonade and listening to Bach's Brandenburg concertos." A few days later, my student (student # 1) is visiting with another student (student # 2), and says, "I was over at Greg Beale's house on Tuesday, and we sat out on his back porch, while Bach was playing in the background. Beale said, 'There is nothing I like more on a summer day than sipping lemonade and listening to Bach's Brandenburg concertos.'" And let us say that student # 2 asks, "Does Greg Beale like sipping lemonade and listening to Bach more than taking a walk on a warm summer day?" Student # 2 has misunderstood and taken my words too literally. My intention was to refer only to the fact that no *work of musical art* pleased me so much as Bach's Brandenburg concertos. I was not speaking of all other possible things that I could enjoy on a summer day. But suppose that student # 2 asks, "Does Greg Beale also like to listen to other compositions by Bach, as well as by Handel, Albinoni, Pachelbel, and Vivaldi?" The answer to the student's question would be "yes." In fact, other Baroque composers could be included and even some classical musicians like Beethoven. Thus, my statement about enjoying Bach's Brandenburg concertos actually included not only all of Bach's works but also all Baroque music. If I had been asked by student # 1 at the time that I made the statement, "In saying that you enjoy Bach's Brandenburg concertos, do you mean to say that you also enjoy all of Bach's works and the general genre of Baroque music?," my answer would have been "yes." If student # 2 asked if my statement about Bach included hard rock music, rap music, or even soft rock, like Elvis Presley's "You Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog," the answer would be "no." Some overriding principle in my original meaning about Bach's Brandenburg concertos must have determined that Elvis Presley's "You Ain't Nothin' But a Hound Dog" was not included in my meaning, along with a number of other non-Baroque music compositions. This is the case because my peripheral or tacit vision included a particular type of thing that I enjoy and excluded other possible musical art pieces not belonging within the boundary of the Baroque type. Certainly, my narrowly focused direct or explicit intention did not include all the kinds of musical works that please me, but only Bach's Brandenburg concertos. There was before my mind's eye only this particular work by Bach, but if the student proposed more within the Baroque genre, I would agree that it was within my implicit or peripheral cognitive vision and should be secondarily included in my original meaning. Another way to say this is that the broader musical context gathered from my listening experience must ultimately be taken into consideration in interpreting my single statement about Bach's one musical composition.<sup>5</sup> Such implicit meanings within my "willed type" can be called interpretive "implications" of the explicit verbal meaning.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> This illustration about music has been adapted, with a few changes, from *ibid.*, 48-49.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 61-67.

It could be asked, how would Beale's students be able to figure out the *implicit* representative meaning of the explicit reference to Bach's Brandenburg concertos? The answer is that the students need to have some knowledge of Beale's life. If students came to Beale's house, they would without too much effort find CD's of many kinds of Baroque music. They might well find such music playing in Beale's house. They might notice books about Baroque music on the coffee table in the living room. In various conversations with Beale, they would likely hear him express his enjoyment of such music. Such comments might be used as illustrations in class lectures. In other words, some research into the context of Beale's life would help the students toward appreciating his implicit meaning in his explicit mention of the Brandenburg concertos. So, discovering such implicit meanings is not a shot in the dark. Likewise, research of biblical authors' lives, their historical contexts, and the full context of their writings should help interpreters toward a better grasp of their implicit meanings.

In this respect, such implicit or subsidiary meanings are like icebergs: the greater part may be under the water; but that which is under the water must be organically connected to the part above the surface. The metaphor conveys the notion that the implicit or submerged authorial meaning must be organically connected to the explicit meaning. Even though the explicit visible tip of the iceberg (explicit meaning) is the smaller part of the larger submerged iceberg (implicit meaning), it determines what is a part of the whole and what is not part of the whole (other separately floating ice, debris, or sea life). "Any part of the whole that is not continuous with the mass above the surface cannot be part of the iceberg."<sup>7</sup> While such physical metaphors are sometimes misleading, this one seems relevant, since the identity of a verbal meaning is dependent on coherence that is somewhat comparable to physical connectedness. If there are features in a text that point to implicit meanings, they are a part of the verbal meaning of the text "only if they are coherent with a consciously willed type which defines the meaning as a whole."<sup>8</sup> Other proposed meanings that are incoherent are then not a part of the willed verbal meaning. Therefore, in the words of Hirsch, "it is possible to will an et cetera without in the least being aware of all the individual members that belong to it. The acceptability of any given candidate applying for membership in the et cetera depends entirely on the type of whole meaning I willed."<sup>9</sup>

Such subconscious "implications" of explicit meaning fall within the overall pattern of what the author willed.<sup>10</sup> An author's mental acts are not accessible in the way that his willed type of subsidiary sub-meanings are. Jeannine Brown nicely summarizes Hirsch at this point:

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 49

<sup>10</sup> See Jeannine K. Brown, *Scripture as Communication: Introducing Biblical Hermeneutics* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 39, and her summary of Hirsch.

Mental acts, in contrast, are authorial motives that are precisely not included in meaning. Mental acts are the inaccessible experiences of the author when writing the text (e.g., an author's hidden feelings and thoughts). Hirsch's distinction between meaning and mental acts provides a way for interpretation to avoid seeking the author's mental state, while still being able to hold to the notion of authorial intention [on both an explicit and implicit level]. . . . As N. T. Wright has so vividly put it: ". . . criticism . . . should [not] attempt to work out, by reading between the lines of a poem, what the author had for breakfast that morning, or whether he had just fallen in love with the housemaid." . . . The goal of interpretation then will be to ascertain the author's communicative intention [explicit and implicit] rather than his or her motives.<sup>11</sup>

Therefore, the fact that verbal meaning has some boundary to be communicable does not rule out subconscious meaning. What is necessary is that a subsidiary meaning should lie within a boundary that determines the explicit verbal meaning under consideration.<sup>12</sup> This means that the principle for accepting or rejecting implicit meanings is the same as that for explicitly conscious meanings.<sup>13</sup> Many of these subconscious meanings lie at the "edges" of the boundary of meaning or the author's awareness or what we have called the widest part of cognitive peripheral vision. There is a blurring at these edges.<sup>14</sup> Because of this blurring, one can, therefore, only viably propose that an implicit meaning is in mind to one degree or another.<sup>15</sup> Such proposals are based on evidence that points to varying degrees of possibility or probability that the subsidiary meaning is really in mind. Nevertheless, Hirsch concludes later in his book, "To say that verbal meaning is determinate is not to exclude complexities of meaning [implicit sub-meanings] but only to insist that a text's meaning is what it is and not a hundred other things."<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40, brackets inserted. See likewise John Barton, *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 168, on the legitimate distinction between an author's *intended meaning* and the psychological state of mind that prevailed at the time of writing.

<sup>12</sup> See Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 99-100, where Hirsch says that the purpose of an utterance is what determines how much emphasis an unconscious implication may have: was the utterance intended as part of a prayer, command, praise, academic essay, warning, etc.?

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>14</sup> Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 101, 103, 105, 108, 111, 113.

<sup>15</sup> There is a similar phenomenon in art, where an artist will intentionally blur figures in the background of a painting that are a continuation of clear figures in the foreground (e.g., groups of trees, humans, angels), so that the observer assumes that the blurred material represents a continuation of the same kind of images that are clear. See, e.g., Gombrich who refers to this blurring technique, especially illustrated by impressionist artists, as the "etc. principle," which is "the assumption we tend to make that to see a few members of a series is to see them all"; the artist relies on the human "faculty to project and to supplement what he has left indistinct" (Ernst H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* [2d ed.; Bollingen 35; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1961], 217, 220; see 216-32 for a broader discussion).

<sup>16</sup> Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 230, brackets inserted. Hirsch's view of a determinant meaning is based on Husserl's epistemological presupposition that the mind can perceive an idea of something experienced and that it can "demarkate" that mental act so that it remains the same idea over a period of time (E. D. Hirsch, Jr., *Aims of Interpretation* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press,



One negative trait of all implicit meanings is that they are meanings on which the author was not immediately focused. Such a feature is not reassuring, since there are no limits for what a particular author may not have been aware of. Hirsch's notion of willed type is an approach that offers some guidelines, albeit still broad and not formulaic, for determining such implicit meanings that may be included in an author's full verbal meaning.<sup>17</sup>

In this light, a NT writer may quote an OT passage but give it a meaning that is not found explicitly in that passage but a meaning that comes from the wider context of another chapter in the OT book, which has some kind of conceptual connection—it is of the same “type” of idea—to the passage being quoted. In other words, a NT writer may cite an OT passage but interpret it from the peripheral view of later chapters in the OT book, where the cited passage is developed. We will wait before looking at some examples in order to address the epistemology of Michael Polanyi.

#### V. Michael Polanyi's Notion of Tacit or Subsidiary Knowledge

Hirsch's view of a “willed type” and our concept of cognitive peripheral vision can be supplemented by Michael Polanyi's similar philosophical view, which, though not identical, significantly overlaps with these two above perspectives.<sup>18</sup>

Some scholars understand that NT writers are respecting OT contexts from which they quote only when they quote the passage in a strictly straightforward and verbally literal way and, above all, use such texts in harmony with their immediately surrounding context and in their explicit historical sense.<sup>19</sup> Otherwise, they are not respecting the context.

I believe that the concepts already introduced on peripheral cognitive vision and Hirsch's “willed type” show this criterion of respecting context to be too

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1978], 4-5). An explicitly theistic hermeneutical perspective would add to this the presupposition that the omniscient God's immutable, sovereign transcendence is the enduring foundation for “an absolute transcendent determinant meaning to all texts” (Dan McCartney and Charles Clayton, *Let the Reader Understand* [Wheaton: Victor, 1994], 284); the determinant meaning of all texts is known completely by the all-knowing God who is “not mutable or time bound, and so the meaning which He understands of a text is unchanging” (ibid.).

<sup>17</sup> Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 51-52.

<sup>18</sup> My former doctoral student and research assistant Mitchell Kim has alerted me to the significance of Polanyi with respect to my own developing approach, and, in addition to consulting Polanyi for myself, this section on Polanyi is indebted to a significant degree to Kim's article on this topic, “Respect for Context and Authorial Intention: Setting the Epistemological Bar,” in *Paul and Scripture* (SBL Early Christianity and Its Literature 9; ed. Christopher D. Stanley; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 115-29. I have tried to flesh out Polanyi's view a bit more, especially with the help of Esther L. Meek, *Longing to Know* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), and her *Loving to Know* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011), in which she develops Polanyi's epistemological approach. Furthermore, I attempt in the conclusion of this article to respond to Steve Moyise's objection to Kim's article in his application of Polanyi to the use of the OT in the NT (see Moyise, “Latency and Respect for Context: A Response to Mitchell Kim,” in *Paul and Scripture*, 131-39).

<sup>19</sup> See, e.g., Steve Moyise, “Does Paul Respect the Context of His Quotations?,” in *Paul and Scripture*, 97-99, 112.



narrow. Before we further evaluate this overly restricted view of some scholars, it will be helpful also to reflect on the insights of Michael Polanyi. Polanyi has given some perspectives to help further define authorial intention. He says that subsidiary or tacit knowledge entails that “we know more than we can tell.”<sup>20</sup> Polanyi applies this to all realms of human knowledge. Before we apply his insights to authorial intention and meaning, Polanyi’s view needs brief explanation and illustration.

There are two aspects of knowing for Polanyi: tacit (subsidiary) and explicit or focal (Polanyi refers to these as proximal and distal<sup>21</sup>). In any action or act of knowing one is tacitly aware of one thing that is necessary for the carrying out of another thing, which is the focus of our awareness. Polanyi primarily explains his theory of these two types of knowledge by adducing a number of illustrations. For example, in the doing of any physical skill, one is aware of the various muscular moves that are necessary in carrying out the skill to which explicit attention is directed.<sup>22</sup> A blind man finds his way by tapping with a stick. He feels the impact on his palm and fingers. His awareness of the impact on the hand “is transformed into a sense of its point touching the objects” he is exploring, so that the immediate feeling on the hand becomes a secondary focus.<sup>23</sup>

This is how an interpretive effort transposes meaningless feelings into meaningful ones, and places these at some distance from the original feeling. We become aware of the feelings in our hand in terms of their meaning located at the tip of the probe or stick to which we are attending. This is so also when we use a tool. We are attending to the meaning of its impact on our hands in terms of its effect on the things to which we are applying it. We may call this the *semantic* aspect of tacit knowing.<sup>24</sup>

When playing a musical piece, an expert pianist does not focus on the elementary foundations for playing the piano nor does she focus on her hand movements when playing, otherwise she would be paralyzed and could not play the piece. Rather, the foundations of piano playing and her hand movements become secondary in her awareness (tacit or subsidiary knowledge) and her explicit attention is directed toward playing a comprehensible piece of music. When speaking to someone, we do not focus on the motion of our lips and tongue and to the particular sound being made, otherwise our speech would become halted and ultimately gibberish. Rather, we focus on the effect of communicating,<sup>25</sup> and the meaning of the vocabulary and English syntax

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<sup>20</sup> Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City: Doubleday, 1966), 10. Along the same lines, see his other two works, where he selectively discusses the same notion: Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958); and Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch, *Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975).

<sup>21</sup> Polanyi, *Tacit Dimension*, 10.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 12-13.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 18-19.

is subsidiary awareness. Thus, Polanyi also makes a distinction between focal awareness (= explicit/distal awareness) and subsidiary awareness (= tacit or proximate awareness).<sup>26</sup> The tacit is that which is unspoken or not explicitly expressed but is implied or inferred (cf. *Oxford English Dictionary* [*OED*]). Or, similarly, the subsidiary supplements in a secondary or subordinate manner (cf. *OED*).<sup>27</sup>

This last illustration on speaking is well-illustrated through the experience of one of my former doctoral students, Mitchell Kim. When Mitch first moved to Japan from America in the fourth grade, he was overwhelmed at the squiggles on the signs and the inarticulate garble of syllables in the marketplace. His mother took him to a private tutor to learn Japanese, and the grammar and basic vocabulary of Japanese became the object of his focal attention. After some time, he began to venture out into his neighborhood to play with other, Japanese children. At first his attention was focused on recalling the proper words for ball, game, run, and play and on forming coherent sentences in order to communicate. As the words and grammatical structures were internalized and became tacit, the words began to connect more naturally, and he could communicate with fluency and ease. The knowledge of the vocabulary and grammar of the Japanese language had moved to the place of secondary, tacit, or subsidiary knowledge, where they were no longer the focus of his attention but were assumed, as his childhood attention was focused on playing and joking with his new friends.<sup>28</sup>

It is important to note that Polanyi does not view tacit awareness as “unconscious” awareness in contrast to the explicitly conscious focal awareness. While, of course, focal awareness is always explicitly conscious, subsidiary or tacit awareness “may vary over all degrees of consciousness”<sup>29</sup> and “can exist at any level of consciousness, ranging from the subliminal to the fully conscious.”<sup>30</sup>

This insight about subsidiary or tacit knowledge from Polanyi is similar to our view of “cognitive peripheral vision” and Hirsch’s “willed type,” and is applicable to the debated issue of authorial intention in biblical studies. Jeannine Brown asserts that NT writers “echo or evoke an Old Testament text or idea without being fully aware that they have done so.”<sup>31</sup> Consequently, Brown contends that authorial intention should be more broadly understood to include “those sub-meanings that an author may not be attending to or fully aware of as he or she writes, yet that fit the overall pattern of meaning the author willed to

<sup>26</sup> Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 55-59, 61-62, 92-93.

<sup>27</sup> A synonym of “subsidiary” or “tacit” knowledge used more rarely by Polanyi is “latent” knowledge (e.g., *Personal Knowledge*, 103, 317), i.e., that which is “hidden, concealed,” or “present or existing, but not manifest, exhibited or developed” (*OED*).

<sup>28</sup> Kim, “Respect for Context and Authorial Intention,” 120.

<sup>29</sup> Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 92-93.

<sup>30</sup> Polanyi and Prosch, *Meaning*, 39.

<sup>31</sup> Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 108; see also 109-10.

communicate and shared in the text.”<sup>32</sup> Brown asserts that authors mean “more than they are fully [directly] attending to.”<sup>33</sup> This is very similar to my view of cognitive peripheral vision, to Hirsch’s “willed type,” and to Polanyi’s view of tacit knowledge: “we can know more than we can tell.”<sup>34</sup>

In connection to this line of thought, Kim concludes that subsidiary or tacit knowledge

helps us to see that inattentive intentionality should not be regarded as some inferior mode of reference; indeed, it is part and parcel of all communicative intentions. We always intend more than what we are fully attending to. In writing these words, I am not fully attending to the grammatical structures of the English language or the acceptable canons of academic discourse or the tapping of my fingers upon the keyboard; my attention is focused on the articulation of a fuller account of authorial intention. Yet it is my latent knowledge of grammar, academic discourse, and typing that make this communication possible. To reduce authorial intention to conscious authorial attention is unnecessarily reductionistic. We always intend more than the focus of our attention.

In a similar manner, biblical authors possess a latent knowledge of Scriptural texts even when their attention is focused elsewhere. The fact that they are not consciously attending to these texts does not make them irrelevant to the interpretation of their writings. Rarely do we focus upon the frameworks by which we make sense of the world, yet they operate just the same. The reader need not share the entirety of the author’s latent knowledge for the author to achieve his or her communicative intent, but such knowledge would obviously add further resonances and nuances that could aid interpretation. An elucidation of this latent knowledge brings about a richer and deeper understanding of the meaning and significance of biblical references.<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, when a NT writer refers to an OT passage, both the explicit and subsidiary understanding of the OT author’s meaning compose what we would call the NT writer’s respect for the OT contextual meaning. In addition to the explicit meaning from the specific text quoted and explicitly attended to by the NT author, this contextual meaning may include ideas from the immediate or nearby OT context that are in mind, as well as ideas from other OT books that are related to the meaning of the focus text.

Another aspect of subsidiary or latent knowledge for Polanyi, only implied in our earlier discussion, involves how discovery is made in any humanistic or scientific enterprise. A person is faced with the particular phenomena of the world that at first appear unconnected. A person puts these particulars together into a meaningful pattern in order to understand the world better (when this

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 108; see also 109-10.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 108, brackets inserted. The distinction between an author’s intention and attention is drawn from Vanhoozer, who contends that meaning should not be restricted to “the author’s focal awareness” but can also include things of which “the author was only tacitly aware (or unaware) too”; see further Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, 259.

<sup>34</sup> Polanyi, *Tacit Dimension*, 4-10.

<sup>35</sup> Kim, “Respect for Context and Authorial Intention,” 121-22.

happens for the first time in human history, it is called a “discovery”). Imagine a person who wants to learn the auto mechanics of a race car engine, but knows nothing about it. He looks at a motor removed from a car and separated into all its smallest parts. The novice sees the parts but does not know how they fit together or how they work in harmony. Over time, after reading about motors and learning as an apprentice with hands-on work, the connectedness of the parts and their harmonious operation become apparent. The novice learns from a race car mechanic who is also a skilled race car driver, and the novice also watches his teacher race his car in various races. As this learner becomes skilled at understanding the engine of a race car, the overall pattern of the motor is revealed, and the learner even makes more sense of each particular part. The unconnected parts are what Polanyi calls *tacit* or *subsidiary awareness* and the overall pattern of how the motor fits together is the *focus*, since that is the goal of what the mechanic is trying to achieve. The former has merged with the latter but is not the main focus. Polanyian followers refer to the subsidiary focus as being “like our peripheral vision,” since “by definition you can’t focus on your peripheral vision! But you rely on it all the time.”<sup>36</sup>

Then our mechanic decides he wants to be a race car driver like his auto mechanic teacher whom he has been watching in races. The mechanic has to learn a new skill set in order to handle a race car. The skill of a race driver cannot be expressed by a mere knowledge of the mechanics of the car motor and its other workings, but by paying direct attention to the various aspects of driving the car: attending to the gear shift, curves of the roadway, speed, brakes, length of the race, and relationship of the other cars in the race. The knowledge of the way the parts of the motor are connected and work together now becomes tacit or subsidiary awareness, and the direct concentration on how all the facets of race car driving fit together into a successful race is the explicit focus. The former has merged with the latter but is not the main focus. Again this subsidiary focus is like our peripheral vision.

Likewise we believe that NT writers looked at an OT book and observed the particulars of the verses (subsidiaries) that compose that book. They then discerned through their skilled reading certain patterns that a group of those verses formed (e.g., a pattern based on and organized by a common theme, which is the explicit focus). They then might cite only one of those verses as their explicit focus in their argument in the NT context and interpret the verse in the light of the whole observed pattern (which itself has now become subsidiary knowledge). If modern readers are without knowledge of the entire pattern, the NT writer’s interpretation or use of the single verse of explicit focus may seem wrong and not connected to the idea of the immediate literary context. But when the broad pattern within which the single verse has been quoted is understood by modern interpreters, then the quoted verse falls into place and makes sense. The challenge is for the contemporary commentator

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<sup>36</sup> Meek, *Longing to Know*, 84.

rightly (!) to discern the pattern first recognized by the biblical writer (the subsidiary awareness) in order to understand the goal (the explicit focus) of quoting the single verse.

A Polanyian uses an illustration that is apt for what we have just discussed:

We look at a silver moon and surmise that we're seeing part of an orb, not all of a crescent. . . . The crucial difference is that we see the empty space as something hidden. . . . In the case of the moon, we trace an outline, and at the point of the gap in the outline, we say the pattern is there, but hidden.<sup>37</sup>

Similarly, the NT writer's use of the particular OT verse appears not to make sense in its context—there is a gap in understanding—until the overall pattern throughout the OT book is discerned and the single OT verse takes its place in that pattern and completes it. Therefore, when a NT writer refers to an OT passage, both the explicit and subsidiary understanding of the OT author's meaning compose what we would call the NT writer's respect for the OT contextual meaning. In addition to the explicit meaning from the specific text quoted, the wider contextual meaning may include ideas from the immediate or nearby OT context that is in mind, as well as ideas from other chapters of the book or even from other OT books, which are related to the meaning of the focus text.

#### VI. *Some Old Testament in the New Testament Examples of Subsidiary (Tacit) Knowledge, Willed Type, or Cognitive Peripheral Vision*

So far we have looked at my own view of “cognitive peripheral vision,” the theory of Hirsch's “willed type,” and Polanyi's “tacit knowledge,” and we have seen illustrations of them. I believe that these three perspectives are significantly overlapping. That is, they all have in common the notion that we know more than we intend to tell. Now I want to apply these concepts to some actual uses of the OT in the NT.

##### 1. *The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15*

Matthew 2:15 says, “Out of Egypt I have called my son.” How can Matthew say that a historical statement by Hosea about Israel's exodus could be a prophecy fulfilled in Jesus entering and returning from Egypt? On the surface, this seems like wrongly reading a prophecy into a text that is only historical. A fuller study reveals that Hosea himself in ch. 11 and elsewhere in the book already had a view of Israel's first exodus as a typological foreshadowing of an end-time exodus, with the Messiah leading it.

In this respect, mention of a first exodus from Egypt outside of 11:1 occurs elsewhere in Hosea, and a future return from Egypt would appear to be implied

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 121.

by repeated prophecies of Israel returning to Egypt in the future, though Hos 1:10-11 (on which see below) and 11:11 are the only texts explicitly affirming a future return from Egypt (though there are several texts in Isaiah that are also explicit about this):

First Exodus out of Egypt	Future Return to Egypt (Implying a Future Return from Egypt)
<p><b>Hos 2:15b</b> And she will sing there as in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt [though this passage also compares the first exodus with a future exodus].</p> <p><b>Hos 12:13</b> But by a prophet the Lord brought Israel from Egypt, And by a prophet he was kept.</p> <p><b>Cf. Hos 12:9</b> But I have been the Lord your God since the land of Egypt.</p> <p><b>Cf. Hos 13:4</b> Yet I have been the Lord your God since the land of Egypt, and you were not to know any god except me, for there is no savior besides me.</p>	<p><b>Hos 7:11</b> So Ephraim has become like a silly dove, without sense; They call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.</p> <p><b>Hos 7:16b</b> Their princes will fall by the sword Because of the insolence of their tongue. This <i>will be</i> their derision in the land of Egypt.</p> <p><b>Hos 8:13b</b> Now he will remember their iniquity, And punish <i>them</i> for their sins; They will return to Egypt.</p> <p><b>Hos 9:3</b> They will not remain in the Lord's land, But Ephraim will return to Egypt, And in Assyria they will eat unclean <i>food</i>.</p> <p><b>Hos 9:6</b> For behold, they will go because of destruction; Egypt will gather them up, Memphis will bury them. Weeds will take over their treasures of silver; Thorns <i>will be</i> in their tents.</p> <p><b>See also Hos 1:11</b> And they [Israel] will go up from the land [of Egypt].</p> <p><b>Hos 11:5</b> He [Israel] assuredly will return to the land of Egypt.</p> <p>[Note the implication of a future exodus from Egypt in <b>Hos 2:15</b> above.]</p>

Thus, by extending Hosea's peripheral vision to the end of the chapter and to other parts of the book, we can see that he understood that the first exodus was a pattern foreshadowing a second, end-time exodus. So Matthew is just following Hosea's own wider, peripheral, typological hermeneutic, which he sees beginning to be fulfilled in Jesus.

But how can Matthew say that Jesus fulfills Hos 11:1, when it is about the corporate nation Israel and not about an individual? Note that Hos 1:11 sees that the Messiah will lead this future exodus. That Jesus, the individual, can be corporately identified with the “many” of Israel in Hos 11:1 shows that Matthew was assuming a presupposition of corporate solidarity between Christ and Israel: Christ sums up true Israel in himself. Kings represented Israel in the OT, so that what could be said about the king was true of the nation, and vice-versa. Hosea 1:11 shows that Israel’s end-time king will lead them out of Egypt again. Matthew sees Jesus as that king, so the king can appropriately be said to be Israel. This corporate identification is further apparent from Matthew’s later recording of Jesus’ name as “Son of the living God” (Matt 16:16), which itself is an allusion to Hos 1:9, where the nation Israel is called “sons of the living God.” By extending Matthew’s peripheral vision from Hos 11 back to Hos 1:9-10 and to ch. 16 of his own book, we see justification for his understanding that Jesus was Israel. We shall see further later why Matthew can use this corporate hermeneutic.<sup>38</sup>

## 2. *The Use of Hosea 1:19 and 2:23 in Romans 9:25-26*

The comparison of the texts is as follows:

<p>Hos 2:23 and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy. And I will say to <u>Not My People</u>, “You are my people”; and he shall say, “You are my God.”</p> <p>Hos 1:10 <u>And in the place where it is said to them, “You are not My people,” It will be said to them, “You are the sons of the living God.”</u></p>	<p>Rom 9:25 As indeed he says in Hosea, “Those who were <u>not my people</u>, I will call <u>my people</u>, and her who was not beloved, I will call ‘beloved.’”</p> <p>Rom 9:26 <u>“AND IT SHALL BE THAT IN THE PLACE WHERE IT WAS SAID TO THEM, ‘YOU ARE NOT MY PEOPLE,’ THERE THEY SHALL BE CALLED SONS OF THE LIVING GOD.”</u></p>
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As with the previous example of Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15, my purpose here is not to cite scholars on various aspects of the issues and debate,<sup>39</sup> but merely to try to point out another example of a “willed type” or “tacit understanding,” which helps us understand better the way NT writers use the OT. Some scholars would say that Paul is merely using the Hosea texts as illustrations of salvation,

<sup>38</sup> For a fuller analysis of Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15 that supports the preceding study, see G. K. Beale, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: One More Time,” *JETS* 55 (2012): 697-715.

<sup>39</sup> See Kim’s brief sketch, “Respect for Context and Authorial Intention,” 122-25, as well as Moyise, “Latency and Respect for Context,” 132-34, 137-38.



which would pose no interpretive problem: Israel's prophesied salvation is now taken as an illustration of Gentile salvation. However, the majority of scholars more correctly understand that Paul is indicating the beginning fulfillment of the Hosea prophecies.<sup>40</sup> This would mean that what was prophesied for Israel's salvation is fulfilled not only among a remnant of Jews but also among Gentiles. This is why some scholars contend that Paul has not respected the original meaning and context of Hosea.

However, some have pointed out that the position of Israel as "not my people" before they become "my people" is really a Gentile position. Unbelieving Gentiles are also "not my people." Seen in this way, Hosea is prophesying that Israel would be in an unbelieving Gentile status before they would come to faith. Thus, it is a natural extension to see that the prophecy would be applied to ethnic Gentiles who were in the same position as unbelieving Jews.<sup>41</sup>

This identification of unbelieving Israel with unbelieving Gentiles is strikingly underscored in Hos 11:8-9:

8 How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboim? My heart is turned over within Me, all My compassions are kindled.

9 I will not execute My fierce anger; I will not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath.

In v. 8 God asks the question of how he could judge Israel "like" Admah and Zeboim. Verse 9 then says that he will not judge them that way. But why? Part of the explanation is that he "will not destroy Ephraim again." Apparently, Ephraim, which had not formerly been destroyed as a tribe, in some way was corporately identified with Admah and Zeboim, which were cities destroyed along with Sodom and Gomorrah. In some, indeed mysterious way, Ephraim, therefore, was considered to have been destroyed already with these other Gentile cities. So God says in v. 9 that he "will not destroy Ephraim again." This is more than an analogical comparison of the destruction of these Gentile cities with that of Ephraim.<sup>42</sup> Rather, this is an actual corporate identification of these Gentile cities with Ephraim,<sup>43</sup> much like the preceding kingdoms of Babylon,

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<sup>40</sup> This is in line with the connection of Rom 9:24-26 with the immediately following OT prophecies cited in Rom 9:27-29, which are clearly viewed as inaugurated prophetic fulfillments among a remnant of Israelites.

<sup>41</sup> E.g., see Mark Seifrid, "Romans," in *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (ed. G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 648.

<sup>42</sup> Note that often the prophets compare the sin of Israel to the sin or destruction of Sodom (Isa 1:9-10; 3:9; Jer 23:14; Lam 4:6; Ezek 16:46, 48, 55-56; Amos 4:11). However, these appear to be mere comparisons, not any kind of corporate identification.

<sup>43</sup> On the corporate identification of Ephraim with these cities associated with Sodom, see Derek Drummond Bass, "Hosea's Use of Scripture: An Analysis of His Hermeneutics" (Ph.D. diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2008), 222-26.

Medo-Persia, and Greece were corporately identified with the fourth and last world kingdom's destruction in Dan 2:31-45 (as also suggested by Dan 7:1-12).<sup>44</sup>

One of the implications of Hos 11:8-9 is that Ephraim was not merely like these Gentile cities but was actually in some way a corporate part of them! Perhaps Hos 7:8 alludes to the same thing: "Ephraim mixes himself with the nations." This enhances much more the notion that when Israel was said to be "not my people," they really were, in fact, in the position of unbelieving Gentiles and not merely "like" the Gentiles.

What impact does all this have on Paul affirming that not only Jews but Gentiles could fulfill the Hosea prophecy? It shows that the prophecy really was about people being saved out from an unbelieving Gentile location. Hosea had direct focus on Israel coming out from that position, but, from what we have said above, it is viable that Hosea himself would have "tacitly understood" (in light of, e.g., Hos 11:8-9) that his prophecy could just as well apply to Gentiles, who would also be saved out of an unbelieving Gentile position. Paul would be developing both Hosea's direct meaning and his "tacit meaning" or "willed type" or what was in Hosea's broader cognitive peripheral vision.

Part of Paul's rationale may well also have been his latent understanding that Christ was true Israel, and that anyone, whether Jew or Greek, who identified with Christ was corporately understood to be also true Israel. This rationale would have made it relatively easy for Paul to see Gentiles also fulfilling the Hosea prophecy about Israel's salvation.<sup>45</sup>

### 3. *The Use of Exodus 12:46 in John 19:36*

This passage is perhaps the most difficult so far, since the historical narrative about the exodus Passover lamb is taken by John and seen to be a prophecy of Jesus' death. After narrating that the Roman soldiers did not break Jesus' bones at the crucifixion, John 19:36 says, "For these things came to pass that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'not a bone of him shall be broken.'"

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<sup>44</sup> Likewise, another example of Israel not merely being like the Gentiles but actually corporately identified with Gentiles is Matt 21:43-45, where v. 44b is an allusion to Dan 2:34-35: "And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust." This is startling since the statue that is broken in Dan 2 represents the evil Gentile kingdoms, but now Jesus applies the Daniel passage to the Jews, and they realized it ("they understood that he was speaking about them"). Thus, in this passage Jesus sees the Jewish leaders as corporately identified with the Gentiles.

<sup>45</sup> That this latent idea may be in mind is pointed to by the phrase "sons of the living God" in Rom 9:26 (quoting from Hos 1:10) and the statement that Christ was "the Son of God" (Rom 1:4) and the repeated abbreviated references to him as God's "Son" (Rom 1:3, 9; 8:3, 29, 32). The three references to "Son" in Rom 8 are not far from the context of Rom 9:25-26. The corporate identification with Jesus as God's son is also enhanced by the mention of "adoption as sons," referring both to believing Jews and Gentiles in Rom 8:15, 23, and the reference to Israelites in the older epoch, "to whom belongs the adoption as sons" (Rom 9:4).

To be specific, this use would be prophetic in the sense that Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15 was prophetic. It would be an event that pointed forward implicitly to what John is narrating about Jesus' death. The statement "not a bone of him shall be broken" comes most likely from Exod 12:46 (or Num 12:9, which repeats the Exodus statement).<sup>46</sup> Certainly, Moses' statements in the Exodus and Numbers texts refer to the historical event of the Passover lamb's slaying and the requirements about how it was to be slain, which following generations of Israelites were to obey. These statements in Exodus and Numbers are mere historical descriptions and not prophecies. But how can John 19:36 say that not breaking Jesus' bones at the crucifixion was a fulfillment of prophecy from these Exodus and Numbers texts? Many if not most scholars would say that Moses had no prophetic intent in these texts. As a result, some would merely say that John misinterpreted these OT texts or read completely new ideas into the texts.<sup>47</sup> Still others would contend that John was given this insight retrospectively, after the ascension and bestowal of the Spirit. Accordingly, the prophetic sense was not in Moses' mind but in God's wider intention, which was then revealed later to John.

How can the notion of cognitive peripheral vision, together with Hirsch's and Polanyi's ideas, help in this case? These overlapping notions may well illuminate why John sees a mere historically narrated event as pointing forward. It is true that Moses was focused on making a historical description about the Passover lamb, which was to be prescriptive for all succeeding generations of Israelites. This was the direct focus of meaning in his mind's eye. However, can we not legitimately ask the question of how Moses would have related his statement in Exod 12:46 to other parts of his own writings in the Pentateuch? Some would say that to ask such a question could lead only to pure speculation. But what we are really asking is whether or not the rest of his writings that are related significantly to the exodus event were in his cognitive peripheral vision or in his subsidiary understanding when he wrote about the Passover lamb. We cannot ask uncontrolled questions about what would have been in his wider understanding (e.g., about what he had for breakfast or did he have a family quarrel), but can ask only those questions that are related to and prompted by his direct focus concerning the Passover lamb and its relation to the exodus event. We have only what he has written in Exod 12 and elsewhere in the Pentateuch. Thus, we are not trying to enter into the mind of the author to discover all of his encyclopedic knowledge about redemptive history, which has not been written down elsewhere in his writings.

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<sup>46</sup> It is possible that Ps 34:20 could be included, which applies the Exodus/Numbers statement to God's protection of the righteous; see G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012), 59-60.

<sup>47</sup> In this respect, some would flatly say that John was wrong, while others would say that his flawed exegetical method should not be followed, but what he wrote was nevertheless inspired. Others would say that John's exegetical approach could be construed as wrong, but that on the other hand modern scholars should be cautious in judging ancient writers by modern exegetical standards.

For example, we could ask if Moses would have related this event to other similar redemptive-historical events that he narrated in his own writings. While the exodus event was the greatest event in the history of God's people up until that time, Moses had earlier written about an even greater redemptive-historical event in Gen 3:15 in which the seed of the woman was to deal a fatal blow to the satanic serpent.<sup>48</sup> Yet Gen 3:15 says that the seed of the woman will be "bruised" by the serpent. So there is the idea of this end-time conqueror winning a battle over an eschatological adversary yet suffering in the midst of that battle.<sup>49</sup> If we asked Moses, "Moses, is the slain Passover lamb (which leads to Israel's victory over Egypt and their deliverance) related to the even greater historical deliverance of a conqueror who will suffer yet still win a decisive victory over Satan (Gen 3:15)?" I think Moses' most likely answer would be that there was an analogical relation between the exodus event and Gen 3:15, and that this was a divinely intended analogy.

Thus, I am saying that the similar but greater event of Gen 3:15 was in Moses' subsidiary understanding or within his "willed type," or what I have called his cognitive peripheral vision. If so, John may have understood the same thing, and this may be the reason that John sees the slain lamb of the exodus as an analogical pointer to the slain lamb at the cross, which was a greater redemptive-historical event than the exodus. Thus, the messianic lamb could be understood as "fulfilling" what was implicitly related to the exodus lamb.

But that is not all. Moses writes in Gen 49:1, 9-12 that in "the latter days" Judah would rule over all Israel and all the "peoples," as well as win a decisive battle. Similarly, Num 24:14-19 says "in the latter days" a leader from Jacob would defeat nations that are likely representative of Gentile enemies in general. Part of the description is that this leader will "crush through the forehead of Moab" (24:17), which is likely a reflection back to the "bruising of the head" of the serpent.<sup>50</sup>

These latter two texts plausibly develop Gen 3:15 in a conceptual way, and the latter may even be an inner biblical exegesis of that text.<sup>51</sup> These passages, since they are related developments to Gen 3:15, are also good candidates for passages that would have been in Moses' latent understanding when he wrote about the Passover lamb. The eschatological nature of Gen 49 and Num 24

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<sup>48</sup> I take this in the traditional sense that it refers to the Messiah who will decisively defeat the devil. I do not think this is limited to humans judging serpents by stepping on them, as some scholars think, which is a very thin and unlikely description of the Gen 3 narrative (see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011], 29-58).

<sup>49</sup> For the idea that Gen 1-3 contains eschatological implications, see *ibid.*, 29-63.

<sup>50</sup> See Jim Hamilton, "The Skull Crushing Seed of the Woman: Inner-Biblical Interpretation of Genesis 3:15," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 10 (2006): 34, 49-50, who makes this connection and also traces other later inner-biblical OT allusions (and allusions by Judaism) to Gen 3:15 and understands many of them to be related to the coming Messiah's defeat of evil (see *ibid.*, 30-54), though readers might question some of his allusive connections.

<sup>51</sup> On these Genesis and Numbers texts and their eschatological and messianic development of Gen 1-3, see Beale, *New Testament Biblical Theology*, 92-101.

would have facilitated all the more John's prophetic understanding of the exodus Passover lamb, if he had some insight into Moses' subsidiary knowledge.

Hebrews 11:25-26 may be but the "tip of the iceberg" in revealing that, indeed, Moses did have such a tacit knowledge or cognitive peripheral vision, which we have just explained. Moses chose

25 rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, 26 considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he was looking to the reward.

And then on the heels of this statement, only two verses later there is reference to Moses who "kept the Passover and the sprinkling of blood, so that he who destroyed the firstborn might not touch them. By faith they passed through the Red Sea" (Heb 11:28-29). This is striking, since the reference to Moses considering the suffering of the "Christ," which is related to Moses receiving an eschatological "reward" (Heb 11:26), is closely tied to the Passover lamb's slaying and the exodus deliverance from Egypt (Heb 11:28-29), the very connection we were earlier suggesting may have been latent in Moses' and John's mind. Some would say that Heb 11:26 is a good example of illegitimately reading Christ into the OT. On the other hand, in the light of what we have said so far about the possibilities of Moses' subsidiary knowledge, the Hebrews text may just as plausibly be an example that our analysis is on the right track.

Up until now we have not tried to appeal to God's understanding which was wider than that of the human prophet, though this is applicable. I certainly do not want to affirm that we are only concerned with purely human intentions in the Bible, since biblical writers wrote under the inspiration of God and were probably conscious of writing under such inspiration. When there is a divine understanding that transcends the conscious intention of the human author, the divine understanding is still organically related to the human author's understanding or "willed type." What God more fully knew than the prophet consciously knew would be an interpretive implication that would fit within the human author's "willed type," and, if asked later, the prophet would say, "Yes, I see how that is the wider, thicker meaning of what I intended originally to say." We must say that in every case God had a more exhaustive understanding than biblical authors had of what they wrote.

There is not space here to discuss how this relates to so-called "new" meanings or "creative" meanings developed by NT writers, especially in those places where "mystery" is applied to NT understandings of OT texts. This will receive elaboration in a forthcoming work.<sup>52</sup> Suffice it to say, the upshot of this

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<sup>52</sup> G. K. Beale and Benjamin L. Gladd, *Hidden But Now Revealed: A Biblical Theology of Divine Mystery* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, forthcoming fall of 2014), which is consistent with and a further elaboration of D. A. Carson's outstanding essay "Mystery and Fulfillment: Toward a More Comprehensive Paradigm of Paul's Understanding of the Old and the New," in *Justification and Variegated Nomism* (2 vols.; ed. D. A. Carson, Peter T. O'Brien, and Mark A. Seifrid; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004), 2:393-436, which stresses both continuity and discontinuity between the

forthcoming work is that such meanings still fit within the OT human author's ultimate "willed type" or "latent knowledge," yet they are also a hidden mystery revealed. There is certainly a tension here, but perhaps Eph 3:4-5 is somewhat of a key to the other "mystery" texts in the NT: "the mystery of Christ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit." This text affirms that the mystery was known partially (note the "as" in Eph 3:5) but not fully. My contention is that the full development of such OT mysteries in the NT are not inconsistent with and ultimately fit into the human author's "willed type" or potential "tacit understanding." Would the OT author be surprised?—yes, but he would on further reflection see how it all ultimately fit as progressive revelation into his latent understanding. This is a tricky tension, which shall have to wait to be unpacked further in my forthcoming book.<sup>53</sup>

Coming back to the example of Exod 12 in John 19, one does not have to affirm that when the laws respecting the Passover lamb were written Moses (or his readers) explicitly understood that they were foreshadowing the messianic slain lamb. My explanation of Exod 12 in John 19 is what I would consider only a possible explanation, and will likely not be persuasive to some. Nevertheless, the examples of Hos 11:1 and Hos 1–2 in the NT, I believe, are more probable or persuasive case studies.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, this possible explanation of Exod 12 in John 19 should still be considered among the options for understanding this difficult OT in the NT passage. The upshot of these three examples is to suggest that, contrary to the consensus opinion both inside and outside of evangelical scholarship, OT authors may have had some inkling of how the meaning of their texts would be later interpreted in what would appear to us as surprising interpretations.

With reference to the Passover lamb and its relation to Christ, D. A. Carson says,

It would be fair to say that such notions were still hidden—hidden in plain view, so to speak, because genuinely there in the text (once one perceives the trajectory of the typology), but not yet revealed. And that perhaps is why a "mystery" must be revealed, but also why it may be revealed through the prophetic writings.<sup>55</sup>

The above analysis of Exod 12 in John 19 is an attempt to flesh out Carson's reference to the NT revelation about the messianic lamb being "hidden" yet at

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OT and the NT, while arguing that the revealed mystery in the NT had its roots in the OT, yet was a "new" revelation.

<sup>53</sup> I have also tried to elaborate on this tension throughout my *New Testament Biblical Theology*; e.g., see my discussion of the temple (ch. 19), the church as true end-time Israel (chs. 20 and 21), Israel's land promises (ch. 22), and the role of the Law in the OT and NT (ch. 26).

<sup>54</sup> Another probable case study that cannot be included here because of space constraints is the use of Isa 22:22 in Rev 3:7, which is another good illustration of cognitive peripheral vision on the part of John and Isaiah, as well as a good example of prophetic typology being recognized both by the OT and NT authors. See Beale, *Handbook*, 133-47.

<sup>55</sup> Carson, "Mystery and Fulfillment," 427.

the same time “in plain view . . . once one perceives the trajectory of the typology.” I have tried to unpack the idea that this trajectory of typology is not purely something revealed only in the NT but had its roots tacitly in the relation of the Passover lamb to other greater redemptive-historical events that had already been written about by Moses himself. Yet, when what was foreshadowed by the Passover lamb occurred in Christ there was a fuller revelation of the antecedent latent typology. For example, at the least, crucifixion by Romans in Jerusalem, which was instigated by Jews, would certainly not have been in Moses’ immediate subsidiary understanding, but it would still fit into the broad contours of his “willed type,” and would flesh out in detail how the fulfillment occurred.<sup>56</sup>

### VII. *The Subsidiary Presuppositional Perspectives of the New Testament Writers in Their Use of the Old Testament*

The argument throughout this article dovetails with Tom Wright’s discussion of authorial meaning. He contends that any theory of reading must

do justice . . . to the fact that the author intended certain things, *and* that the text may well contain in addition other things—echoes, evocations, structures, and the like—which were not [explicitly] present to the author’s mind, and of course may well not be present to the reader’s mind. . . . Similarly, we need a theory which will do justice . . . *both* to the fact that texts . . . do not normally represent the whole of the author’s mind, even that bit to which they come closest, *and* to the fact that they nevertheless do normally tell us, and in principle tell truly, quite a bit about him or her. Finally, we need to recognize . . . both that authors do not write without a point of view (they are humans, and look at things in particular ways and from particular angles) *and* that they really can speak and write about events and objects . . . which are not reducible to terms of their own state of mind.<sup>57</sup>

This last point about authors expressing a “point of view” when they write about events (or develop ideas) relates to one more dimension of subsidiary or peripheral knowledge not yet addressed in this article. Wright later elaborates

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<sup>56</sup> As Wright says, Paul “claims to offer a historical reading in which the ‘prefigurations’ are part of the story [of Israel] that has now come to its climax,” and I would add that this climax fleshes out in new ways the preceding prefigurations, though with coherence with those prefigurations (see N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992], 265; see also 264). Wright, however, seems to play down a bit too much the new progressive revelatory notion by saying that Paul “appeals” to arguments from these prefigurations “in the public domain and not by means of an esoteric secret which other contemporary Jews could not share” (*ibid.*, 265). While there is truth to this, since the prefigurations really are observable in the OT texts (!), it does not seem to leave enough room for Paul’s view of the revealed mystery, which he often speaks about (following the critique of Carson, “Mystery and Fulfillment,” 430-31). However, my suspicion is that Wright has somewhere in his voluminous writings qualified his statement appropriately (e.g., see the following statement by Wright cited directly below from his *New Testament and the People of God* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992], 62-63).

<sup>57</sup> Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 62-63, brackets inserted. Instead of “state of mind” at the end of the quotation, I would substitute “directly focused thought.”



on this comment by saying that “human writing is best conceived as the articulation of worldviews, or better still, *the telling of stories which bring worldviews into articulation.*”<sup>58</sup>

I hope that the gist of this article fleshes out a bit more thoroughly the kind of hermeneutical and epistemological theory that Wright wants to see developed in more detail than he had space to do. Indeed, this article is only a limited exploration of an approach that needs much more development and articulation. Though Wright has broader issues in mind in his last comment above about “worldviews” (e.g., the entire story of Israel in the OT and Judaism and its component parts), I believe that his statement would include the theological presuppositions of OT and NT writers that undergird their statements and interpretations. Thus, when a NT writer cites and interprets an OT text, he may not explicitly state the presupposition that underlies his interpretation, but it is nevertheless present in his subsidiary or tacit understanding and is, indeed, crucial for understanding how the author formulated his interpretation. In fact, without understanding the underlying presupposition, the interpretation may seem far-fetched and wrongheaded. For example, I have written elsewhere that the NT writers sometimes, perhaps often, interpret OT texts through presuppositional lenses, of which they may be explicitly conscious or such lenses may be tacit to the writers. These presuppositions are all rooted in the OT itself, so that they are part of what Wright would call the OT story of Israel. These presuppositions are the following:<sup>59</sup>

- (1) There is the assumption of *corporate solidarity* or *representation*.
- (2) Following from the first presupposition, Christ is viewed as representing the true Israel of the OT and *true Israel*, the church, in the NT.
- (3) *History is unified* by a wise and sovereign plan so that the earlier parts are designed to correspond with and point to the latter parts (cf. Matt 11:13-14).
- (4) The age of *eschatological fulfillment* has been launched in Christ.
- (5) As a consequence of the preceding presupposition, it follows that the latter parts of biblical history function as the broader context for interpreting earlier parts because they all have the same, ultimate divine author who inspires the various human authors. One deduction from this premise is that Christ, as the goal toward which the OT pointed and the end-time center of redemptive history, is the *key to interpreting the earlier portions of the OT and its promises*.

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>59</sup> Explanation of these presuppositions can be found in my “Did Jesus and His Followers Preach the Right Doctrine From the Wrong Texts? An Examination of the Presuppositions of the Apostles’ Exegetical Method,” *Them* 14 (1989): 89-96; and my *Handbook*, 52-53, 95-102. There is debate about some of these presuppositions, which we do not have space to elaborate on here. To the above presuppositions we could also add two others: (1) the OT is the inspired word of God; (2) the Holy Spirit must open a person’s eyes to understand the saving truth of the OT (see Beale, *Handbook*, 95-96).

These presuppositions help us understand why the NT interpretively applies OT texts to apparently different realities than what the OT had in mind. For example, presupposition # 3 above explains why OT historical events can be understood as typological prophetic pointers, as we attempted to show above with Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:15, and Exod 12:46 in John 19:36.

In addition, changed applications of the OT in general, whether or not typology is involved, do not necessitate the conclusion that these passages have been misinterpreted. For example, Matthew applies to Jesus what the OT intended for Israel (e.g., Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:14-15).<sup>60</sup> Or, prophecies about Jesus are applied to the church because the church is corporately identified with Jesus (e.g., Isa 49:6 in Acts 13:47), so that often what Jesus fulfills, the church is seen as taking part in. Or, as we discussed earlier, Paul applies to the predominately Gentile church what was intended for Israel (e.g., Rom 9: 24-26). What should be challenged in these kinds of apparently different applications is not the NT writers' interpretation of the OT but the validity of the above-mentioned framework through which they interpreted the OT: in the above cases not only the typological presupposition # 3 is in mind (i.e., in the Matt 2:15 and John 19:36 texts), but also presuppositions # 1 and # 2 (i.e., in the Matt 2:15 and Rom 9:24-26 texts), that Christ corporately represented true Israel and that all who identify with him by faith are considered part of true Israel. Furthermore, if Israel was corporately identified with unbelieving Gentiles (presupposition # 1) in Hosea, then it makes sense that Paul could legitimately see Gentiles themselves coming to faith, together with ethnic Jews, in fulfillment of the Hosea prophecies appealed to in Rom 9:24-26.

If the validity of these presuppositions be granted, then the viability of their interpretation of the OT in the above categories of usage must also be viewed as plausible. Therefore, changes of application need not mean a *disregard* for OT context, since this is not a logically necessary deduction. It seems likely that some confuse disregard for context with change of application. Assuming the viability of the presuppositions, although the new applications are technically different, they nevertheless stay within the conceptual bounds (the "willed type" or subsidiary meaning) of the OT contextual meaning, so that what results often is an extended reference to or application of a principle which is inherent to the OT text.

Some suspect that whenever there is a difficult OT in the NT use any new presupposition can be created by a willing exegete to solve the problem, so that such a position becomes unfalsifiable. However, these presuppositions were not created *ex nihilo* by the early Christian community, but are themselves rooted in

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<sup>60</sup> I.e., what is true of Israel positively is also true for the individual true Israel, Jesus, because of corporate identity. See R. T. France's good discussion of this context in "The Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication," *NTS* 27 (1981): 233-51, where he discusses the OT in Matt 2:4-22. On Hos 11:1 in Matt 2:14-15, see Beale, "Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15: One More Time," 708-10.

the OT and its telling of the redemptive-historical story of Israel.<sup>61</sup> We may say that these presuppositions were part of the subsidiary mindset or tacit default setting of the later OT prophets<sup>62</sup> and early Christians in interpreting the OT. These presuppositions were not chosen willy-nilly by the early church nor can modern interpreters create their own new presuppositions to explain OT uses in the NT. It is within the framework of these five presuppositions that the whole OT was perceived as pointing to the new covenant eschatological age, both via direct prophecy and the indirect prophetic adumbration of Israel's history. Accordingly, the broad redemptive-historical perspective of these assumptions was the dominant framework within which Jesus and his followers thought, serving as an ever-present heuristic guide to the OT. Therefore, the matrix of these five perspectives, especially the last four, is the direct or peripheral lenses through which the NT authors looked at (i.e., interpreted) OT passages.

In this respect, the NT writers (like the car mechanic) learned the “mechanics” of these presuppositions from Jesus (what they are, how they work, how they relate to one another, etc.). They strove to understand them during Jesus' earthly ministry, as they also watched Jesus run the race of that ministry. Then as they later “ran the race” of their ministries to various churches (like the mechanic turned into a race car driver), their explicit focus changed to pastoral concerns, and the mechanics of these presuppositions were still operative, but were not always front and center in their focus but often implicit and subsidiary.

### VIII. Conclusion

I have argued in this article that when OT or even NT authors make direct statements with an explicit meaning, there is always a related secondary range of meaning that appropriately is an expansion of the explicit meaning. All speakers and writers, including ancient writers, are aware of more than what they are directly saying in their speech act. New Testament authors may interpret OT speech acts not directly in line with their explicit meaning but may draw meaning from their cognitive peripheral vision. It may seem like speculation to try to formulate what that latent peripheral meaning was, but, at the least, we can try to show the viable possibility that there was a wider meaning and that the NT writer may have well been aware of that meaning in interpreting the OT passage. We have tried to show that searching for the peripheral sense is not a matter of pure speculation that is uncontrolled. There

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<sup>61</sup> On the OT roots of these presuppositions, see Beale, *Handbook*, 96-102. Consequently, this blunts the contention of some postmodern scholars who believe that the NT writers' presuppositions distorted their interpretation of the OT, since they see these presuppositions as newly created by the early Christian community in the light of the coming of Christ. Accordingly, such scholars believe that the NT was reading these foreign presuppositions into the OT, which skewed the original meaning of the OT.

<sup>62</sup> In the case of the later OT writers, the language of “Christ” in presuppositions # 2, # 4, and # 5 would be changed to “Messiah” or final eschatological king.

is what we may call an “organic” connection between the direct and the tacit meaning. Both Hirsch and Polanyi have sketched how these two dimensions of meaning are related and how, for example, the broader “willed type” of one statement and its meaning can be determined to some degree. The concept of cognitive peripheral vision expresses something very similar.

Probably the most viable objections to this view are twofold. First, it only explains how complicated interpretation is, and it explains the diversity of interpretations among commentators.<sup>63</sup> Second, and more significantly, it does not propose specific criteria for determining what is the content of the tacit meanings of OT authors and which tacit meanings a NT author might have picked up on, in addition to the explicit meaning when the latter is, in fact, referred to. In other words, the subsidiary theory approach is unable to offer guidelines for deciding which among all the diverse possibilities of subsidiary meanings might be in mind.<sup>64</sup> For example, Steve Moyise says with respect to the Hosea reference in Rom 9 example given above,

*if one could show that Rom 9:26 is drawing on a latent meaning of Hos 1:10 and 2:23 [about Jews being in the position of Gentiles, which extends the promise to Gentiles] and if one could produce an expert that could demonstrate that Rom 9:26 is the genuine fruit of Hos 1:10 and 2:23, then we could conclude that Paul respects the context of his quotations. The problem is that we cannot do either of these things.*<sup>65</sup>

Moyise concludes that if “respect for OT context” means accuracy of verbal quotation, awareness of the historical situation, and referring carefully to immediately surrounding verses of the OT quotation, then NT writers (e.g., Paul) do not always or, indeed, often respect the OT contexts of quotations. But he says if “respect for context” indicates recognizing the meaning of a quotation by relating it to a larger portion of the OT (as in my proposal about Exod 12 in John 19) or to even broader immediate contexts of OT books from which quotes are drawn (as my proposals for the OT in Rev 3:7 and Rom 9:25-26), the NT writers (e.g., Paul) sometimes or even often can be judged to respect the context of OT references.<sup>66</sup> But Moyise rejects this as the most unlikely option. If the criteria for contextual respect are drawn so broadly, way beyond the immediate context of the verse quoted, then it is hard to see how NT writers

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<sup>63</sup> So see, e.g., Moyise, “Latency and Respect for Context,” 136-38.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 137-38. This Moyise finds to be probably the most substantial objection to Kim’s article and approach, and thus to my own approach. The majority of the remainder of my present article is a response to Moyise’s objection, which apparently Kim did not have an opportunity to offer.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 137, brackets inserted.

<sup>66</sup> Moyise, “Does Paul Respect the Context of His Quotations?,” 112-13. He cites, among others, the broad contextual approaches of Hays and Watson; the former argues that the context of a whole OT book helps the reader to see how one quotation from that book renders it a contextual interpretation, while the latter extends contextual considerations to whole portions of the OT. Moyise proposes another criterion, which is essentially a reader-response criterion, that is not as relevant to evaluate here (see *ibid.*, 99-111).

“could ever cross it, so the assertion of ‘respect’ becomes meaningless” and unfalsifiable.<sup>67</sup> That is, if a NT writer seems to misunderstand a specific OT verse and even the immediate context of that verse, then one should keep expanding the context if necessary, even unto the scope of the whole OT canon, until the verse finally makes sense.<sup>68</sup> Moyise contends that this often involves elaborate and complicated inner-biblical exegesis, which likely would never have been followed by the readers.<sup>69</sup> Accordingly, this would tell us more about the imagination of these scholars than the biblical writers’ actual intentions.<sup>70</sup>

But is it correct to say that there are no criteria for determining what are the subsidiary meanings of OT authors and which subsidiary meanings a NT author might have been aware of? It is true that just as different people connect dots on a paper in different ways to form different shapes, likewise, interpreters connect different scriptural passages in different ways to formulate different interpretations, and they focus on different subsidiary meanings of a scriptural passage than other commentators focus on. But not all these interpretations are necessarily equally viable. There is an approach by which to validate which of the OT inner-texts or latent meanings should be focused on in the NT reference and which of a text’s (or texts’) interpretations was more probably in mind than the others. One would want to focus on all of the possible inner-texts or latent meanings related to the OT quotation, especially keeping in mind Hirsch’s concept of “willed type” in which subsequent “new interpretations” and applications of the meaning of a primary text can be seen as legitimately falling within the pattern of the “willed type” of the original meaning, and hence a legitimate extension of it. This could be referred to as “thick description,” which includes an account of an author’s threefold communicative act (involving locution, elocution, and perlocution).<sup>71</sup>

This practical literary approach then would be to study closely all the possible OT inner-texts related to the OT verse cited by the NT author,<sup>72</sup> as well as other possible subsidiary meanings that can be gleaned from the immediate and broad context of the quotation.<sup>73</sup> Perhaps many of these may be in the NT writer’s mind, so that he is developing the original meaning of the OT citation robustly. Alternatively, a NT writer may only have one or two inner-OT texts or subsidiary meanings in mind.

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>68</sup> E.g., Moyise says that “those who advocate ‘respect’ usually begin with the assumption that there must be an innerbiblical explanation and then go to great lengths to find one” (ibid., 101).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 103.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> See Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning in This Text?*, e.g., 282-85, 291-92, 331-32.

<sup>72</sup> E.g., in the case of Exod 12 in John 16, such inner-texts would have been, at least possibly, Gen 3:15, Gen 49:1, 8-12, and Num 24:14-19, which we proposed above.

<sup>73</sup> E.g., in the case of our above study of Hosea in Rom 9, we think of the latent meaning of what it means for Jews to be “not my people” like Gentiles, and the idea that Israel was corporately identified with Gentiles (Hos 11:8-9).

Is it mere subjective choice that guides readers to know which of the prior OT inner-texts or peripheral contextual meanings are in mind or uppermost in mind or whether all could be included? I do not think so. Those other inner-texts or contextually tacit ideas that have specific notions that correspond in some approximate way with the original meaning are live candidates, together with the original, for inner-texts or tacit ideas on which the NT author may have focused. The more “organic” or specifically related correspondences one can muster between the OT text, its contextual subsidiary ideas, its OT inner-texts, and its use in the NT will build up a “probability case” that one or more of these contexts is actually in mind in the text under consideration.<sup>74</sup> To put it another way, “the success of any interpretation depends on its explanatory power, on its ability to make more complex, coherent, and natural sense of textual data than other interpretations do.”<sup>75</sup> Accordingly, the interpretation or interpretive framework that has more explanatory power—that makes the most sense of the text’s details—than alternative interpretations is the more probable interpretation.<sup>76</sup> If one interpretive framework makes the particular traits of a passage more meaningfully functional than another interpretive framework, then the former interpretation is more probable than the latter, as difficult as it is sometimes to decide such things.<sup>77</sup> Hirsch has three chapters in his *Validity in Interpretation* (chs. 3–5) that discuss the criteria for how inductively to validate interpretations, not in a purely subjective manner nor solely objectively, but in a way that can be discussed or adjudicated in the public domain.<sup>78</sup> Competing interpretations have degrees of possibility and probability, depending on the number of fundamental correspondences that can be drawn between a NT’s interpretive use of the OT and its OT source text and its inner-texts and contextual subsidiary ideas.

Tom Wright gives a good example of the kind of probability judgments about competing interpretations that are involved in Hirsch’s approach. Wright adduces the example of a paleontologist who has the task of fitting a dinosaur skeleton together from some scattered bones.<sup>79</sup> If he creates a simple structure of a known dinosaur which still omits some significantly large bones that do not fit in, then others may accuse him of satisfying the criterion of “simplicity” at the expense of the “data.” The paleontologist responds by saying that the extra

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<sup>74</sup> For examples of my own attempted applications of Hirsch’s criteria for validation, see G. K. Beale, *The Use of Daniel in Jewish Apocalyptic Literature and in the Revelation of St. John* (Eugene, Ore.: Wipf & Stock, 2010); *The Book of Revelation* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); and *John’s Use of the Old Testament in Revelation* (JSNTSup 166; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999).

<sup>75</sup> Robert H. Gundry, *Mark* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 4.

<sup>76</sup> Remembering here the reality that even conservative and Reformed exegetes often offer alternate interpretations of the same passages.

<sup>77</sup> Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*, 190-96.

<sup>78</sup> Including the possibility of discussing presuppositions without adopting a neutral stance in the Reformed tradition of Abraham Kuyper, *Principles of Sacred Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954).

<sup>79</sup> Wright, *New Testament and the People of God*, 104-5.

bones belong to another animal who was eaten by or ate the one now being constructed. If a second paleontologist produces another skeleton from the same bones and is able to use all the bones, but there are seven toes on one foot and eighteen on the other, then the opposite problem is posed: “simplicity” has been abandoned for the sake of including all the “data,” and the first paleontologist will not be persuaded by an unconventional evolutionary explanation. Which of the competing theories will be accepted? The first is more plausible, since it is easier to think that some scattered bones from another animal intruded into the pile of the other than it is to believe that the strange mutated creature in the second scenario ever existed in some weird evolutionary form.

Alternative interpretive perspectives are comparable to the dinosaur hypotheses, which illustrate that usually no two hypotheses are without problems, but the one with the least problems is the more likely. Ultimately, in judging among competing interpretive perspectives, Wright is probably correct in placing more weight on the “simplicity of perspective” criterion than on the criterion of “inclusion of data.”<sup>80</sup> The same criteria applied by Wright to verifying alternative interpretive perspectives is very similar to the approach of Hirsch. Hirsch’s three chapters on criteria for discerning probable interpretations over possible interpretations is very important. I have tried to summarize the most salient parts of his argument, but limits of space prevent further elaboration. Nevertheless, readers should consult this very significant section of Hirsch for further explanation.

And we must always remember we are dealing not with scientific or mathematical formulas but with literary art, so that the personal experience and beliefs (which some might call “subjectivity”) of the interpreter are never erased. We are not dealing with a mechanistic, airtight method by which to come to complete objective certainty<sup>81</sup> or “perfect knowledge” about a proposed interpretation.<sup>82</sup> But this does not mean that we cannot reach probability judgments among alternatively proposed interpretations in a practical manner, which can be discussed in the public domain. This also does not mean that, though we favor one interpretive alternative over another, there are no viable objections to our preferred alternative or, indeed, that other interpretive alternatives do not have significant viability. In fact, at times we may barely favor our preference over other alternatives.<sup>83</sup>

Thus, I think it an overstatement to say that the approach of this article is unfalsifiable or unprovable one way or another. To think my argument is unfalsifiable is a radical reader-response view that is relativistic about truth or even probability statements and thus is overly pessimistic about an ability to

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 299-324.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 306.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 312.



discover that one interpretation is more probable than another.<sup>84</sup> In the real world, alternate interpretations of life situations involve degrees of probability and possibility, and people personally commit themselves to such interpretive frameworks with varying levels of tentativeness,<sup>85</sup> and it is the same with alternate interpretations of biblical passages. We must judge cautiously and carefully. Each difficult OT in the NT passage must be considered on a case by case basis, and some will be harder to determine with confidence than others. We have tried above to give three such case examples with varying degrees of confidence or “belief” about the results. Some interpretations may, indeed, be complex and hard for many readers to follow. Nevertheless, if it can be shown that such interpretations were likely in the mind of the author, then we must try to follow them, and realize that some among the first readers (e.g., Jewish Christians) would have been able to follow sufficiently many of these more complex interpretations (and others under discipleship would begin to learn them subsequently).<sup>86</sup> Nevertheless, such interpretive proposals remain “alleged facts,” still possessing a degree of tentativeness.<sup>87</sup>

Thus, Old and NT writers knew more than what they were explicitly intending to say (as Polanyi would put it). If so, there was an explicit intention and implicit wider understanding related to that intention. Though this approach does not offer a solution for all difficult uses of the OT in the NT, I believe that this notion can go some way to understanding better what some consider to be a number of “strange” uses of the OT by the NT.<sup>88</sup> And, in some cases, there may be no reasonable interpretive alternative for some of these thorny texts—we just have to leave it and trust God’s inerrant word. The thrust of this article is that the NT writers’ grasp of the OT writers’ peripheral vision is

<sup>84</sup> A view which my dialogue partner Moyise seems still to hold, though perhaps with some exceptions, after many years of interaction between us.

<sup>85</sup> Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 299-324.

<sup>86</sup> In response to Moyise (“The Old Testament in the New: A Reply to Greg Beale,” *IBS* 21 [1999]: 54-58), a number of years ago, I presented something similar to the above explanation of the practical process of validating a competing interpretation over another (G. K. Beale, “Questions of Authorial Intent, Epistemology, and Presuppositions and Their Bearing on the Study of the Old Testament in the New: A Rejoinder to Steve Moyise,” *IBS* 21 [1999]: 1-26), but, even though he made a rejoinder to some aspects of my response, he never responded to the criteria of validation that I offered (see in this respect, e.g., Moyise, “Seeing the Old Testament Through a Lens,” *IBS* 23 [2001]: 36-41; and “Does the Author of Revelation Misappropriate the Scriptures?,” *AUSS* 40 [2002]: 3-21). As far as I am aware, he has never specifically responded to this matter (the closest he comes to doing so is a brief concluding paragraph to his article “Authorial Intention and the Book of Revelation,” *AUSS* 39 [2001]: 35-40). Yet years later, in response to Mitch Kim’s view of the OT in the NT, Moyise continues to ask for criteria in deciding between alternative interpretations of the OT in the NT. So, I have felt compelled to offer again and expand on this criteria in response to Moyise’s response (“Latency and Respect for Context”) to Kim (“Respect for Context and Authorial Intention”), where Moyise asks for such criteria.

<sup>87</sup> Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, 303.

<sup>88</sup> In some ways the present article is a development of my earlier hermeneutical essay, “Questions of Authorial Intent.”

validated through observing their use of OT quotations and allusions. Some NT authors repeatedly refer to verses from throughout a large OT segment, which shows that they have an awareness of not just the single verses to which they refer but the wider contextual “vision” of the segment. C. H. Dodd has demonstrated this phenomenon with numerous NT examples.<sup>89</sup>

In this article I have attempted to expand upon what J. Gresham Machen said in 1936 concerning the NT writers’ use of the OT:

The writers of the Bible did know what they were doing when they wrote. I do not believe that they always knew all that they were doing. I believe that there are mysterious words of prophecy in the Prophets and the Psalms, for example, which had far richer and more glorious fulfillment than the inspired writers knew when they wrote. Yet even in the case of those mysterious words I do not think that the sacred writers were mere automata. They did not know the full meaning of what they wrote, but they did know part of the meaning, and the full meaning was in no contradiction with the partial meaning but was its glorious unfolding.<sup>90</sup>

Machen is referring to meanings of OT authors that lie at the “edges” of the widest part of their cognitive peripheral vision. There is a blurring at these edges,<sup>91</sup> just as there is with the peripheral vision of our literal eyes. Because of this blurring, one can say therefore that these authors may not have been much aware of these meanings, but God, who inspired them, was fully aware; and when this meaning becomes explicit in the NT, it is truly something that is organically “unfolded” from the OT author’s original meaning.

B. B. Warfield gives a most fitting illustration of what Machen is getting at:

The Old Testament may be likened to a chamber richly furnished but dimly lighted; the introduction of light brings into it nothing which was not in it before; but it brings out into clear view much of what is in it but was only dimly or even not at all perceived before. . . . Thus the Old Testament revelation of God is not corrected by the fuller revelation [of the NT] which follows it, but only perfected, extended and enlarged.

It is an old saying that what becomes patent in the New Testament was latent in the Old Testament. And it is important that the continuity of the revelation of God contained in the two Testaments should not be overlooked or obscured.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures* (London: Nisbet, 1952).

<sup>90</sup> J. Gresham Machen, *The Christian Faith in the Modern World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 55.

<sup>91</sup> Brown, *Scripture as Communication*, 101, 103, 105, 108, 111, 113.

<sup>92</sup> Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), 141-42.