

A True and Greater Boaz: Typology and Jesus in the Book of Ruth

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INTRODUCTION

The Book of Ruth is not the only Old Testament (OT) book with a genealogy, but it is the only one with a genealogy in its closing verses.¹ In fact, the content of the genealogy may be the whole reason the Book of Ruth was written.² The last word of the final verse is “David” (Ruth 4:22). Since the story in the Book of Ruth took place during the pre-Davidic period of the judges when there was no king in Israel (1:1), the appearance of David’s name at the very end is noteworthy.³ This four-chapter drama leans forward. The events therein were not reported for their own sake by a narrator who was impartial to grander purposes.

The Book of Ruth tells a story that resolves in chapter four yet is still heading somewhere. It narrates how a Moabite named Ruth met an Israelite named Boaz and how their marriage ensured the continuation of her mother-in-law Naomi’s family line and inheritance (4:3-5, 9-10, 14-15).

But the book is about more than immediate relief for the main family. The coming together of Boaz and Ruth is a result of God's providence, and God's providence plays the long game. From their line will come David and, in the fullness of time, David's greater Son.

While the genealogy at the end of Ruth 4 looks beyond the days of Boaz and Ruth, and while Boaz is an ancestor not only of David but also of Jesus, this article will contend that the relationship between Boaz and Jesus is typological. Put simply, Boaz is a type of Christ, and Jesus is a true and greater Boaz. To defend this claim, we will first define a Christological type. Second, we will address whether Christological types can be identified in the OT even if the New Testament (NT) authors did not identify them. Third, we will note the correspondences and escalation between Boaz and Jesus. Fourth, we will draw conclusions from our observations.

DEFINING A CHRISTOLOGICAL TYPE

Studies on typology are fruitful and multiplying. Repeatedly the literature consistently calls for the presence of historical correspondences and escalation between the type and antitype.⁴ Both elements are vital. In Jim Hamilton's words:

The historical correspondence has to do with the way that real people, events, or institutions match each other ... The escalation has to do with the way that as we move from the initial instance, which we might call the archetype, through the installments in the pattern that reinforce the significance of the archetype, we gather steam in the uphill climb until the type finds fulfillment in its ultimate expression.⁵

The road between archetype and antitype passes through ectypes along the way.⁶ The type-antitype relationships like those between Adam and Christ, Moses and Christ, David and Christ, and Solomon and Christ are difficult to challenge given the preponderance of biblical evidence to substantiate them. More controversial is the insistence that the Adam mold is so strong in the OT that subsequent characters—like Noah or Abraham or David—have Adamic features evident in their story or stories. Taking cues from the biblical texts themselves, readers of Scripture might refer, for instance, to Noah as a

“new Adam.”⁷⁷ These observations show that typology was occurring within the OT itself long before the NT era dawned. In this way of thinking, there is a first Adam (who came from the ground), a last Adam (who came from heaven), and other Adams between them.

An OT archetype may find partial fulfillment in an ectype (or several) as it awaits its future culmination and resolution in the antitype. Across the pages of God’s progressive and canonical revelation, a type is most meaningful when it is understood from a Christological viewpoint. For example, the connections between Adam and David are significant but not as significant as the connections between Adam and Jesus or David and Jesus. A biblical type, then, should be considered christotelic. The divine author has designed a type to function in a forward-pointing, christotelic way. David Schrock explains, “Due to the progressive nature of biblical revelation and the fact that behind the individual human authors stand a single divine Author, it is appropriate to speak of typology in terms of Christotelic trajectories that would have exceeded the expectations of the original author and audience ... Israel’s persons, events, and institutions are divinely designed types of Christ.”⁷⁸

A Christological type is an OT person, place, or institution with historical correspondences to and escalation toward the Lord Jesus Christ. For the purposes of this article, we will consider the category of typological persons.

IDENTIFYING UNIDENTIFIED TYPES

Interpreters readily acknowledge that the NT authors identify Christological types such as Adam or David or Solomon or Jonah. But what about unidentified types? Does the interpreter, though uninspired and fallible, have hermeneutical warrant to discern unidentified Christological types in the Old Testament?

Some Say Yes, Some Say No

Some scholars say that interpreters should not imitate the apostles’ typological reading of the OT. Such imitation would wreak havoc upon the OT canon, finding Christ in all the wrong places and presuming to act with the authority of Christ-commissioned apostles. Richard Longenecker represents this viewpoint well:

Christians today are committed to the apostolic faith and doctrine of the New Testament, but not necessarily to the apostolic exegetical practices as detailed for us in the New Testament ... [Our responsibility] is to reproduce the faith and doctrine of the New Testament in ways appropriate to the apprehension of people today, not to attempt to reproduce—or to feel guilty about not being able to reproduce—the specific exegetical procedures contained therein.⁹

Other scholars say that interpreters should adopt the apostolic methods of reading the OT.¹⁰ The NT authors never claimed to exhaust all that one can see of Christ in the OT, nor did they forbid their readers from imitating their hermeneutics. During his post-resurrection conversations with his disciples, Jesus taught how the Law, Prophets, and Writings pointed to himself (see Luke 24:44-45; Acts 1:3). In the speeches of Acts and in the twenty-one NT letters, interpreters can see the hermeneutical moves of the biblical authors. By reflecting on and discerning these moves, interpreters will be more equipped to read the OT from the perspective of those authors. The words of Georges Barrois should sober the interpreter: “The neglect or rejection of the typological approach results unavoidably in spiritual impoverishment, and it constitutes a serious fault of method.”¹¹

The imitation of the apostles’ hermeneutics must be done with care and caution, to be sure, but we need not adopt a minimalist view of typological interpretation due to fears of unrestrained and endless imaginative conclusions. Thoughtful criteria are necessary. The careful interpreter is not infallible, but all interpretations exist on a spectrum of certainty anyway. Still, “the fact that the Spirit is not ensuring the inerrancy of our conclusions does not mean we should adopt an *un-* or *a-*biblical perspective when reading the Bible.”¹² While readers can be certain about Christological types which the NT authors have identified, interpreters can also make a cumulative case suggesting a type, which is unidentified by NT authors, with different degrees of probability or certainty.¹³

Criteria for a Valid Type

G. K. Beale notes five essential characteristics of a type: (1) analogical correspondence, (2) historicity, (3) a pointing-forwardness, (4) escalation, and (5) retrospection.¹⁴ While these features are helpful, Hamilton shows that the probability of a type increases when interpreters notice linguistic

correspondences, sequential event correspondences, and redemptive historical import.¹⁵

Schrock contributes to the discussion of valid types by emphasizing the progression of biblical covenants. Basically, “a valid Christological type must be *textual* in its origin, *covenantal* as to its theological import, and *Christotelic* in its teleological fulfillment.”¹⁶ Regarding covenantal import, he says, “the interpreter must show from the text how the type corresponds to its covenantal context ... In this way, the Bible’s typological and covenantal structures are interdependent. Together, they prepare the way for a superlative mediator of the new covenant, Jesus Christ.”¹⁷ Schrock rightly warns that, “Problems occur when interpreters move directly from type to Christ, without travelling along the path of covenantal progress. Such a hasty method, usually based on outward similarities or bare predictions, opens the door to allegory and unwarranted spiritualizing.”¹⁸

Earle Ellis is right: “NT typology does not, therefore, merely involve striking resemblances or analogies but points to a correspondence which inheres in the Divine economy of redemption.”¹⁹ In order to demonstrate that Boaz is a type of Christ, there needs to be not only historical correspondences and clear escalation between them but also an immersion in the covenantal stream of Scripture.²⁰

CORRESPONDENCE AND ESCALATION BETWEEN BOAZ AND JESUS

There are at least seven connections between Boaz and Jesus. While no specific number is required to discern a valid type, the probability of such recognition increases as a cumulative case forms.

The Tribe of Judah

When readers first meet Boaz, the narrator says he is “a worthy man of the clan of Elimelech” (Ruth 2:1). From 1:1-2 we learn that Elimelech’s clan was in the tribal area of Judah. Before it was a reference to an allotment in the promised land, the name “Judah” was Jacob’s son who received his father’s blessing near the end of Genesis. Jacob’s words included regal imagery: “The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until tribute comes to him; and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples” (Gen 49:10).

The tribe of Judah would one day be associated with royalty. In the generations after Boaz, King David was from the tribe of Judah (1 Sam 17:12) and, a thousand years after David, so was King Jesus (Matt 1:2-3, 16; Heb 7:14). Boaz belonged to the tribe of the Messiah. Though Boaz was a great man, the greatest man from Judah was still to come.

The Town of Bethlehem

Not only the tribe but the *town* of Boaz connects us to Jesus. Being of the clan of Elimelech, Boaz was from Bethlehem (Ruth 1:1-2; 2:1, 4). The opening chapter also said Elimelech's family "were Ephrathites," which is associated with Bethlehem in earlier and later Scripture. Genesis 35:19 reported that Rachel was buried "on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem)." The prophet Micah prophesied, "But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from old, from ancient days" (Mic 5:2). Judah would be the tribe of the future king, and Bethlehem would be his town.

Generations after Boaz and Ruth, David was also from Bethlehem in Judah (1 Sam 16:1; 17:12). Later out of Bethlehem came Jesus, in fulfillment of the Micah 5:2 prophecy and in keeping with the town of Boaz and David (Matt 2:1-6; Luke 2:4-7). Jesus grew up in Nazareth of Galilee (Matt 2:22-23), but the Gospels of Matthew and Luke deliberately showcased his birthplace.

The Role of Redeemer

The significance of Boaz is greater than his town and tribe. The role he plays in the story is a kinsman-redeemer (*gō'ēl*). Boaz is a relative of Naomi's deceased husband (Ruth 2:1), and Naomi calls Boaz "one of our redeemers" (2:20). This role stems from Leviticus 25 where a relative can redeem property and even slaves by bearing the cost himself (25:25-30, 47-55).²¹ This redemption would bring restoration to destitution. The redeemer helped the helpless.

Prior to Leviticus 25, the work of a *gō'ēl* is only associated with God. Jacob spoke of being "redeemed" from evil (Gen 48:16), God promised to "redeem" his people Israel from bondage in Egypt (Exod 6:6), and Moses sang of when God loved the people whom he "redeemed" (Exod 15:13). According to later authors, like David and other psalmists, God is a *gō'ēl* (Pss 19:15; 69:19; 74:2; 107:2). His past acts of redemption, particularly the

exodus from Egypt, established precedent that he would act as a redeemer in the future. In the Book of Isaiah, the term is used only of Yahweh.

When people acted as kinsman-redeemers for their family, they were imaging the work of Yahweh to the destitute and helpless.²² They were vessels in the greater Redeemer's hands. The redemption by Boaz was a picture of what God had done and would do for Israel. In the fullness of God's plan, redemption at the exodus foreshadowed redemption at the cross of Jesus. By acting as a redeemer for the family of Elimelech, Boaz is a type of Christ. In fact, as important a role as a kinsman-redeemer is in Leviticus 25, Boaz is the only human kinsman-redeemer featured in the whole Old Testament. It cannot be coincidental that *gō'ēl* appears twenty-two times in the Book of Ruth, the precise number that the word appears in Leviticus.²³ Boaz is the ideal kinsman-redeemer described in Leviticus, and he foreshadows the Redeemer who will embody that role in a surpassing way. Jesus came to the spiritually destitute, those enslaved to sin and in helpless estate. Then, at incredible cost to himself, Jesus redeemed sinners (Rom 3:24; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:7; Col 1:14). He came to set the captive free and proclaim the year of Jubilee (Luke 4:18-19). Jesus was not the *first* redeemer from Bethlehem and Judah, but he was the *greatest*.

A Bride from the Nations

In the opening lines of the Book of Ruth, the family of Elimelech leaves the promised land for the country of Moab (Ruth 1:1-2). As years pass, the family patriarch dies and his sons marry Moabite wives (1:3-4). After Ruth's husband dies, she journeys to Bethlehem with her mother-in-law Naomi (1:5, 16-17, 19, 20). People in Bethlehem know that Ruth is not from Israel (2:6, 11), and the narrator refers to her as a Moabite in almost every chapter (1:22; 2:2, 6; 4:5, 10). The reader is aware, then, that when Boaz marries Ruth in 4:13, he is marrying a Gentile. The narrator explains, though, that this covenant benefits Israel too. By the time of the marriage, Boaz had already redeemed the land of Naomi's family (4:3-4, 7-9), and his future child with Ruth was called a "redeemer" and "a restorer of life" for Naomi (4:14-15). The redemption by Boaz, as well as the covenant he entered, resulted in Israelite/Gentile blessing.²⁴

The entrance of Ruth into the promised land and her worship of Yahweh (Ruth 1:16-22) reminds readers that God promised blessing through

Abraham to all families of the earth (Gen 12:2-3). The heirs of God's promises would not be exclusively ethnic Israelites. Before there ever was an Israel, God had made promises to Abraham with global implications. By faith in Christ, Gentiles are the offspring of Abraham and thus heirs of the promises (Gal 3:29-4:7). Just as the Book of Ruth is a story of redemption and marriage, so is the gospel. The New Covenant unites a multiethnic wife to Jesus, a bride from the nations. The blood of Christ has taken those far off and brought them near to God (Eph 2:13-16). But this Gentile inclusion does not replace Israel. Rather, just as Boaz's actions toward Ruth meant blessing for Naomi, the inclusion of the Gentiles ensures that all Israel will be saved (Rom 11:11-32).²⁵

Constant Acts of Kindness

If faith without works is dead, then the faith of Boaz was alive and well. The narrator told us he was "a worthy man," which, in this context, asserted his honorable reputation.²⁶ He spoke to his reapers from a posture of blessing, and they responded in kind (Ruth 2:4). During the period of time when Boaz did not realize Ruth's relationship to Naomi but knew only that she was a foreigner, he spoke to her in warm and merciful ways (2:8-9). He even took measures to protect her (2:9, 15). Ruth herself is taken aback at what she calls "favor in your eyes" (2:10, 13). When Naomi tells Ruth, "May he be blessed by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead" (2:20), the antecedent of "whose" may be referring to Boaz or Yahweh.²⁷ Boaz's kindness is implied in the second option, though, since Yahweh's kindness would still be expressed through the kinsman-redeemer. Ruth was poor, a widow, and a foreigner, so she represented the kind of person who was destitute, dependent, and easily overlooked. Yet Boaz performed deed after deed of kindness toward her.

Among the various virtues of Jesus evident in the Four Gospels, his kindness was consistently clear. Jesus moved toward the despised and reached out to the untouchables. Be it a leper, demoniac, tax collector, Samaritan woman, or beggar, they were deliberate targets of Christ's kindness. The understood social boundaries were being redrawn by the steps he took. Like Boaz, Jesus was not hesitant to extend kindness toward a Gentile (Matt 8:5-13; 15:21-28).

A Keeper of the Law and Then Some

In the Book of Ruth, Boaz not only kept the Law of Moses, he exceeded it. The Lord provided for sojourners, the poor, and widows to glean from the leftovers of a field during harvest time (Lev 23:22; Deut 24:17-22). But Boaz permitted Ruth to glean in ways that were not required by the law.²⁸ He told her to keep close to his reapers (Ruth 2:8), instructed his young men not to touch or rebuke her (2:9, 15), offered her their vessels of water to drink (2:9), invited her to eat with his reapers like she was part of his household (2:11), and he gave her access to the sheaves and bundles that the men and women of the field were already gathering together. The Law of Moses did not require Boaz to do any of these things. Knowing the law, Boaz went beyond the law.²⁹ He was just but also merciful. In the story he embodied the spirit of the law.

No one, however, had a heart with God's law upon it like Jesus did. The words of the psalmist, "Lead me in the path of your commandments, for I delight in it" (Ps 119:35), would be truer from the mouth of Jesus than from the original speaker. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matt 5:17). And as the Sermon unfolds, it is clear that the law is kept not by mere outward obedience but from the heart (e.g., 5:22, 28; 6:3, 6, 18, 21). Jesus not only fulfilled the Law of Moses, he spoke with divine authority about it, prefacing his teaching with phrases like "You have heard that it was said ... But I say to you" (5:28). Throughout his kingdom ministry, Jesus practiced what he preached, poignantly illustrated at the cross when he prayed for his enemies and asked the Father to forgive them (5:38-48; Luke 23:34).

An Abundant Provider

One of the motifs in the Book of Ruth is the journey from emptiness to fulfillment. In Ruth 1, the promised land has a famine (1:1) but eventually is filled with food again (1:6). Naomi returns to Bethlehem empty of a husband and sons (1:21), but the narrative emphasizes that Ruth's marriage to Boaz will "perpetuate the name of the dead in his inheritance" (4:10), and their child will be to Naomi "a restorer of life and a nourisher" in old age (4:15). Boaz is an instrument of the Lord's filling up what was empty. Each time the narrator reports Ruth returning home to Naomi, she has arms

full of grain (2:17-18; 3:15-17). She shared in his bread and wine, ate until she was satisfied, and went home with leftovers (2:14, 18). According to 2:23, “she kept close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests,” so it is probable that her work in the field was broken up by more lunches of bread, wine, and leftovers. Boaz was an abundant provider. His actions in the story filled her arms and stomach, and later her womb and future.

In the Four Gospels, Jesus does not give the impression of being tightfisted with blessings. He is generous with provision to a scandalous degree. As Jesus ministered throughout Galilee, he proclaimed the gospel and healed “every disease and affliction among the people” (Matt 4:23). A paralytic once left Jesus not only walking home but forgiven of sin (9:1-8). When he fed a hungry crowd of ten thousand or more, they all left satisfied, and his disciples filled baskets with leftovers (14:19-21)—and later he performed the same astounding miracle again (15:35-38). At the Last Supper his disciples shared bread and wine with him, and he said the bread and cup foreshadowed the work of redemption he would soon accomplish (26:26-28). God’s people in the Old Testament had witnessed their share of divine provision, to be sure, but never had a man claimed, “I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever” (John 6:51). Jesus was an abundant provider. His grace was lavish, his mercy unmatched.

CONCLUSION

If someone invited you to listen to a story about a redeemer from Bethlehem in Judah who fulfilled and exceeded the law with his acts of mercy and abundant provision before entering into covenant with a bride from the nations, that story could be about Boaz or Jesus. Such is the beauty and brilliance of the Word of God. The correspondences and escalation between those characters can be appreciated more fully when we see the covenantal stream in which Boaz is immersed. He is like Adam who woke from sleep to see a woman who would be his wife and whose offspring would bring redemption.³⁰ He embodies the promises to Abraham, for he is inhabiting and increasing his territory in the promised land, and in a microcosmic way he brings blessing to the families of the earth. He keeps the Law of Moses in the way he permits the poor, widowed, and foreigners to glean from his

field, but he also goes beyond the minimum requirements of the law in the way he treats and eventually marries Ruth. And of course Boaz connects to David, for the book ends by filling up its last word with the name of that king of Israel.

While the New Testament authors did not identify Boaz as a Christological type, the preceding sections of argument build a cumulative case for identifying him as such. During the years when the judges ruled and when famine plagued the promised land, God had plans to fill the emptiness of Naomi, Ruth, and Israel. They needed a redeemer and a king. In Boaz they got the one and in David the other, but in Jesus they got both and then some. He was the last Adam, the seed of Abraham, the perfect law keeper, the redeemer of God's people, and the promised King from David's line. While the narrator ended the Book of Ruth with a genealogy, the Gospel of Matthew begins with one. There in Matthew 1:5, in the opening verses of the New Testament, is the name Boaz. But this time the genealogy does not end with David, though it includes him (1:6). It goes all the way down to Jesus (1:16), which is fitting, for that is where the story in the Book of Ruth was heading anyway.

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- ¹ The linear genealogy of Ruth 4:18-22 has ten names (see the ten-name genealogies in Gen 5:1-32 and 11:10-26).
 - ² See Arthur E. Cundall and Leon Morris, *Judges and Ruth* (TOTC; Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1968), 306. According to John Wilch, "the genealogy provides a fitting climax to the book as a whole and so is best regarded as an integral part of the author's original composition" (*Ruth*, [Concordia Commentary; St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006], 378).
 - ³ The beginning of the book is set "when the judges ruled" (Ruth 1:1), and the end of the book takes the reader generations later to David (4:22), forming an inclusio with these verses. The kingless situation at the start of the story is resolved in the final word.
 - ⁴ See, e.g., David L. Baker, "Typology and the Christian Use of the Old Testament," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed., G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994), 327; E. Earle Ellis, "Foreword" to Leonhard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the Old Testament in the New* (Donald H. Madvid, trans.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), x; G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament: Exegesis and Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012), 19-22; Daniel J. Treier, "Typology," in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible* (ed., Kevin J. Vanhoozer; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 823-27; Francis Foulkes, "The Acts of God: A Study of the Basis of Typology in the Old Testament," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed., G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994), 342-371.
 - ⁵ James M. Hamilton Jr., *What Is Biblical Theology? A Guide to the Bible's Story, Symbolism, and Patterns* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2014), 77.
 - ⁶ David Schrock defines "ectypes" as "intermediate types that stand between the original type and Christ" ("What Designates a Valid Type? A Christotelic, Covenantal Proposal," *Southeastern Theological Review* 5.1 [2014]: 23).

- 7 After the flood waters receded, Noah, like Adam, was the new head of the human race. Like Adam, Noah was to be fruitful and multiply (Gen 1:28; 9:1). Like Adam, Noah would have dominion over the animals (1:28; 2:19-20; 9:2). Like Adam, Noah dwelled on land that emerged from the waters by the hand of God (1:9-10, 26-28; 8:1-19). For an exploration of how Adam typology and historicity go together, see Joshua M. Philpot, "See the True and Better Adam: Typology and Human Origins," *Bulletin for Ecclesial Theology*, forthcoming in 2018.
- 8 Schrock, "What Designates a Valid Type?" 25.
- 9 Richard N. Longenecker, "'Who is the Prophet Talking About?' Some Reflections on the New Testament's Use of the Old," in *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New* (ed., G. K. Beale; Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1994), 385.
- 10 Hamilton argues, "The biblical authors model a perspective for interpreting the Bible, history, and current events. Should we adopt that perspective today? Absolutely. Why? I'm convinced that the biblical authors were inspired by the Holy Spirit, that God guided them to the truth by his Spirit, and that, therefore, they got it right" (*What Is Biblical Theology?* 21).
- 11 George A. Barrois, *The Face of Christ in the Old Testament* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1974), 44.
- 12 Hamilton, *What Is Biblical Theology?* 21. Elsewhere he writes, "The fact that we are not inspired, as the biblical authors were, simply means that we will lack the epistemological certainty enjoyed by the apostles" ("The Typology of David's Rise to Power: Messianic Patterns in the Book of Samuel," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 16.2 [2012], 9).
- 13 See, e.g., James M. Hamilton Jr., "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah? Tracing the Typological Identification between Joseph, David, and Jesus," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* 12.4 (2008): 52-77.
- 14 Beale, *Handbook on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 57.
- 15 Hamilton, "Was Joseph a Type of the Messiah?" 54.
- 16 Schrock, "What Designates a Valid Type?" 5, italics original.
- 17 *Ibid.*, 5-6.
- 18 *Ibid.*, 16.
- 19 E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock, 2003), 128.
- 20 Schrock, "What Designates a Valid Type?" 10.
- 21 Daniel I. Block, *Ruth* (ZECOT; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2015), 147. Block mentions other actions a kinsman-redeemer can take, which are found outside Leviticus: tracking down and executing murderers of near relatives (Num 35:12, 19-27; cf. Deut 19:6, 11-13), receiving restitution money on behalf of a deceased victim of a crime (Num 5:8), and ensuring that justice was served in a lawsuit involving a relative (Job 19:25; Ps 119:154; Jer 50:34).
- 22 The activity of a kinsman-redeemer "perpetuates the first redemption from Egyptian slavery and also, at the same time, provides a redemption from unending servitude to later pharaohs within Israel's own ranks. Thus the human *gō'ēl* carries out the redemption policy of the 'Great *Gō'ēl*,' Yahweh himself. The human *gō'ēl* personally represents Yahweh in such transactions" (K. Lawson Younger Jr., *Judges and Ruth* [NIV Application Commentary; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002], 401).
- 23 See Lev 25:25 [2x], 26, 30, 33, 48, 49 [3x], 54; 27:13 [2x], 15, 19 [2x], 20 [2x], 27, 28, 31 [2x], 33; Ruth 2:20; 3:9, 12 [2x], 13 [4x]; 4:1, 3, 4 [5x], 6 [5x], 8, 14.
- 24 Peter Leithart is insightful here: "all his kindness to Naomi is mediated through Ruth, Naomi's Moabite surrogate. ... Through his attentions to Ruth, he provides bread for Naomi. He agrees to spread the wing of his robe over Ruth, and so provides a son to Naomi ... He saves the Hebrew Naomi by redeeming the Gentile Ruth. The typological redemption of Ruth follows this pattern: Naomi, the Jewish widow, is bereft; the Gentile daughter Ruth joins her; Naomi gets a redeemer when Boaz attaches himself to Ruth" ("When Gentile Meets Jew: A Christian Reading of Ruth & the Hebrew Scriptures," *Touchstone* May 2009).
- 25 In Leithart's words, "the gospel of Ruth is summed up in this: 'All nations shall be blessed in you' and, 'So all Israel shall be saved'" (*ibid.*).
- 26 Wilch persuasively argues for the notion of "honor" here rather than the military/warrior nuances of the word found outside of the Book of Ruth (see his *Ruth*, 207-208).
- 27 See the discussion in Wilch, *Ruth*, 234-35, 240-41.
- 28 *Ibid.*, 218-19, 228.
- 29 Another example of this is his marriage to Ruth, which he was not required to do since he was not a brother-in-law. See the discussion in Tamara Cohn Eskenazi and Tikva Frymer-Kensky, *Ruth* (JPS Bible Commentary; Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2011), xxxv-xxxviii.
- 30 See Leithart, "When Gentile Meets Jew."