

THE USE OF HOSEA 11:1 IN MATTHEW 2:15

by Andy Woods

INTRODUCTION

A straightforward reading of Hosea 11:1 yields merely a historical statement regarding Israel's Exodus experience. Verse 2 corroborates this understanding by highlighting the events of the nation following the Exodus experience. Thus, these verses are merely focusing on the history of the nation rather than the coming messiah. Therefore, at first glance, this passage is not in need of receiving any future fulfilling. However, what makes the passage problematic is that Matthew 2:15 indicates that Hosea 11:1 was fulfilled (ἵνα πληρωθῆ) by events that transpired in the early life of Jesus. In other words, Christ's departure into Egypt to escape the slaughter of the infants by Herod somehow fulfilled the words of Hosea 11:1. What in the context of Hosea 11:1 needed fulfilling when the verse merely looked backward to Israel's historical experiences rather than forward to the coming messiah?

This question has plagued numerous interpreters. For example, Ellis asks, "To many Christian readers, to say nothing of Jewish readers, New Testament interpretation of the Old appears to be exceedingly arbitrary. For example, Hosea 11:1 ('Out of Egypt I have called my son') refers to Israel's experience of the Exodus; how can Mt. 2:15 apply it to Jesus sojourn in Egypt?"¹ Similarly, Silva observes, "'Out of Egypt I have called my son' (Hosea 11:1) is applied in Matthew 2:14-15 to what appears to be a different and unrelated event."²

The subject of the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15 is an important one for several reasons. For example, if Matthew in quoting Hosea 11:1 disrespected its contextual integrity, then questions begin

¹ E. Earl Ellis, "How the New Testament Uses the Old," in *New Testament Interpretation*, ed. I. Howard Marshall (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 209.

² Moises Silva, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *Scripture and Truth*, ed. D. A. Carson and John D. Woodbridge (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983), 156.

to surface regarding the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture. Furthermore, if Mathew engaged in arbitrary exegesis in quoting Hosea 11:1, then perhaps New Testament writers cannot serve as a guide for contemporary exegesis. It is for reasons such as these that a careful examination of the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15 is warranted.

This paper will attempt to survey this subject in the following manner. First, a historical analysis and brief overview of the pertinent passages will be provided. Second, several inadequate solutions that evangelicals have offered in an attempt to explain the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15 will be highlighted. Third, the view that I believe best handles the problem will be presented.

BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF THE PERTINENT PASSAGES

Hosea 11:1

Historical Background of Hosea 11

Hosea was a prophet to the Northern kingdom of Israel who prophesied during its final years. The time frame of Hosea's ministry is indicated through his mention of the various kings under whom he prophesied. According to Hosea 1:1, the southern kings included Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah and the northern king was Jeroboam II. Thus, it is safe to say that Hosea prophesied nearly 40 years from 760 to 722 B.C. Hosea probably began his ministry during the later part of the reign of Jeroboam II and continued until Israel fell to the Assyrians in 722 B.C.³ When Hosea prophesied, the ten northern kings experienced military prominence and economic prosperity under Jeroboam II.⁴ Unfortunately, experiencing such prosperity was not conducive to the spiritual welfare of the people as they began to attribute their prosperity to Baal instead of Yahweh.⁵ Consequently, syncretism and Baal

³ Charles Dyer and Gene Merrill, *Old Testament Explorer*, Swindoll Leadership Library, ed. Charles R. Swindoll and Roy B. Zuck (Nashville: Word Publishing, 2001), 722.

⁴ Robert B. Chisholm, "Hosea," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck. 2 vols. (Colorado Springs: Chariot Victor Publishing, 1985), 1377.

⁵ Dietrich Ritschl, "God's Conversion," *Interpretation* 15 (1961): 288.

worship proliferated within Israel. Thus, throughout the book, Hosea denounces Baalism and warns of the covenant curses that are destined to come upon the nation because of its violation of the terms of the Mosaic Covenant (Deut 28:15-68).

The Book of Hosea consists of several cycles (Hos 1:1-2:1; 2:2-23; 3; 4-14) with each cycle enumerating the sins of the nation, the impending judgment that resulting from the nation's sins, and the ultimate restoration awaiting the nation upon her return to the terms of the Mosaic Covenant.⁶ Hosea 11:1 is found in the final cycle, which consists of a covenant lawsuit against Israel. In this final cycle, God takes the nation to court for violating the terms of its covenant.⁷ The chapters that immediately precede chapter 11 (chapters 9-10) detail the sins and wickedness of the nation. Chapter 11 continues these same themes but by way of contrast. In addition to sin and judgment, chapter eleven also focuses upon God's love and ultimate plan to restore the nation. Most commentaries divide Chapter 11 into three sections. Verses 1-4 describe God's love for the nation in spite of her sin. Verses 5-7 describe the imminent judgment that is soon to come upon the nation as a result of her sin. Verses 8-11 depict the temporal nature of such judgment and how God will ultimately restore the nation.

Overview of Hosea 11

In verses 1-4, God's love for the nation is depicted in terms of a tender love that a father has for his son. Such love was expressed as God called (or summoned) His son Israel out of Egyptian bondage (vs. 1). Unfortunately, such fatherly love was not reciprocated by the nation (vs. 2). The more the prophets called to the wayward nation, the more the Israelites moved away from the prophetic message into sin.⁸ The nation sacrificed to Baals and burned incense to carved images. In employing the Hebrew verbs "sacrificed" and "burned incense," Hosea shifts away from the perfect tense and instead makes

⁶ Dyer and Merrill, *Old Testament Explorer*, 723.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 729.

⁸ Chisholm, "Hosea," 1402.

use of two piel customary imperfections, which denote repeated action in past time. The idea is that the nation kept sacrificing to Baals and burning incense. The use of such a tense depicts the nation's continued willful disobedience against the backdrop of Yahweh's ever-present fatherly love.⁹

Verses 3-4 continue the theme of Yahweh's love for Israel. Yahweh's establishment of Israel after the Exodus is analogized to a parent training a child to walk and a master removing or repositioning an animal's yoke so that it might eat more easily. Yet despite Yahweh's care, the nation refused to acknowledge His acts of healing on their behalf.¹⁰ In sum, despite Yahweh's love and expression of that love through His deliverance of His people from Egyptian bondage, the nation ignored the prophets and habitually worshipped another god. In so doing, the nation committed idolatry and thus violated the basic tenet of the Mosaic Covenant (Exod 20:3, 23; 22:20; 34:17).

The consequence of Israel's sin is given in verses 5-7. Deuteronomy 28:49 predicted that God would use a foreign power to discipline His people if they persisted in sin. In verse 5, Hosea builds upon this theme by explaining that God would use the Assyrian empire as his disciplining instrument. Although God once brought Israel out of Egypt as evidence of his love for His chosen people, he would now use Assyria as an instrument of His judgment. Verse 6 vividly depicts the imminent Assyrian invasion. The repetition of the Hebrew verb "eats" or "devours" in verses 4 and 6 emphasizes the contrast between the Lord's past blessings and future judgment. In the past God had given Israel food to eat. Now He was about to send Assyrian swords to eat or devour His nation.¹¹ Verse 7 pinpoints Israel's refusal to repent as the culprit of this coming judgment.

Verses 8-11 pertain to Israel's restoration. Verses 8-9 introduce the idea of divine restraint. Although God will discipline Israel, He will not permanently destroy her. Verses 10-11 depict Israel's future obedience and return to land from global dispersion. Two similes ("as a bird" and "as a dove")

⁹ Tracy L. Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15" (Th.M. Thesis, Dallas Theological Seminary, 1984), 11.

¹⁰ Chisholm, "Hosea," 1402.

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Ibid.

are used to depict the speed by which this future return will occur.¹² Verse 11 indicates that the return will be from their former place of exile, Egypt, as well as their future place of exile, Assyria. Here Hosea is most probably using Egypt and Assyria figuratively to portray a “New Exodus.” Unlike the former Exodus, which resulted in past national disobedience (Hos 11:1-4), the new Exodus will result in future national obedience (Hos 8-11).¹³

Understanding the overall context of Hosea 11 is important for two reasons. First, it helps place Hosea 11:1 in its proper context. An understanding of this over all context is important because, for reasons that will be explained later, Matthew is probably drawing from the over all context of chapter eleven when he cites Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15. Second, a contextual and exegetical reading of Hosea 11 shows that the chapter concerns the history and future of Israel rather than the coming messiah. The individual Jewish messiah is not found in either in verse 1 or throughout the entirety of chapter 11.

Matthew 2:15

Historical Background of Matthew 2:15

Unlike John who expressly reveals the purpose of his gospel (John 20:31), Matthew’s gospel furnishes no similar purpose statement. However, most would agree that Matthew selected, recorded, and arranged events from the life and ministry of Christ in order to demonstrate to His Jewish audience that Christ truly was the long awaited Davidic messiah spoken of in the Old Testament.¹⁴ Toussaint best summarizes the twofold purpose of Matthew, which he sees as not only demonstrating to the Jews

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William Rainey Harper, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Amos and Hosea*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), 372.

¹³ Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15,” 16-17.

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David Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, New Century Bible Commentary, ed. Ronald E. Clements (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 43.

that Christ is the Davidic king but also offering them an explanation as to why the kingdom did not materialize the way they expected if Christ truly was the Davidic king.¹⁵

Matthew 2:15 is found in the early part of the book, which focuses on the infancy narratives as well as Christ's early life and ministry. As we approach this section of the book, we see Matthew selecting and organizing his material so as to accomplish his first purpose of identifying Christ as the long awaited Davidic messiah. For example, Matthew assigns Christ a title linking Him to the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants (1:1). Matthew's presentation of Christ's genealogy also links Christ to these covenants (1:2-17). Matthew also uniquely identifies Christ by describing His miraculous birth (1:18-25), baptism (3:1-17), and endurance under temptation (4:1-11).

Overview of Matthew 2

Chapter 2 is included within the context of these early chapters. Chapter 2 describes both a positive and a negative reaction to Christ's messianic identity. The positive reaction involves the visitation of the Magi for the purpose of worshipping the newborn king (2:1-12). The negative reaction involves King Herod's desire to kill the Christ child in order to preserve His own throne (2:13-23). Matthew probably includes these polarized reactions in order to foreshadow both the increasing Jewish rejection and gentile acceptance of the messiah that will be featured throughout his gospel.

After God warned the Magi in a dream not to return to Herod, God issued a similar warning to Joseph. He was instructed to take his family and depart for Egypt. Perhaps this particular geographic refuge was selected because Egypt was relatively near and there were Jews already living in that region (Jer 43:7; 44:1; Acts 2:10; 6:9; 18:24). Thus, there were friends available in Egypt upon whom the royal family could call for help.¹⁶ In the Old Testament, Egypt typically provided a refuge for the Jews

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Stanley D. Toussaint, *Behold the King* (Portland: Multnomah Press, 1980), 18.

¹⁶ William Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1973), 177.

(Gen 42-50; 1 Kgs 11:40; Jer 26:21-23; 43:7). Egypt also provided asylum for the Jews during the Maccabean struggle.¹⁷

Matthew is clear that Christ's departure into Egypt fulfilled prophecy. Matthew's use of ἵνα πληρωθῆ while citing Hosea 11:1 indicates that Christ's departure into Egypt was in some sense the fulfillment of Hosea 11:1. It is also worth noting that Matthew's citation of Hosea 11:1 comes from the MT rather than the LXX. For reasons that will be explained later, Matthew probably quoted the MT because its wording better accommodated Matthew's theological purpose than the LXX.¹⁸ While living in Egypt, the refugees received word that Herod had died and therefore Joseph moved his family up from Egypt to Nazareth (Matt 2:19-26).

In sum, although a plain reading of Hosea 11:1 indicates that the verse does not need fulfilling and is not even discussing the coming messiah, Matthew's use of this citation indicates that Christ's flight into Egypt fulfilled Hosea 11:1. In other words, although Matthew's use of the fulfillment formula was not an exegetical result of Hosea 11:1, it did connect Christ's flight into Egypt to Israel's Exodus experience. How and on what basis did Matthew expect to see the historical events surrounding the Exodus fulfilled in the infant life of Christ? Attempting to answer to this question will now be taken up in the subsequent sections of this paper.

INADEQUATE SOLUTIONS

Evangelicals have proposed various solutions for explaining the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15.¹⁹ While many of these options initially appear attractive, their flaws upon closer inspection

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Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 84; See also Josephus, *Ant* 12.9.7.

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Ibid., 85.

¹⁹ This list was originally compiled by Tracy L. Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 316 (October-December 1986): 316-20.

ultimately outweigh their attractiveness. The options include predictive prophecy, *sensus plenior*, exposition in Judaism, and prefiguration typology.

Predictive Prophecy

The predictive prophecy view maintains that Hosea 11:1 is actually predicting Christ's descent and return to Egypt in Matthew 2. Thus, Christ's sojourn into Egypt was a direct fulfillment of what the Lord had spoken through the prophet Hosea. In other words, a one to one correspondence exists in between Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15. Therefore, Hosea 11:1 is solely a reference to Jesus and not a reference to Israel at all. Lenski²⁰ and Payne²¹ are advocates of this position.

This view understands Matthew's fulfillment formula *ἵνα πληρωθῆ* as indicating a direct fulfillment of prophecy. This interpretation at first glance seems reasonable upon reading the initial sections of Matthew's Gospel. Prior to Matthew 2:15, Matthew uses this exact same fulfillment formula to show two direct fulfillments of Old Testament prophecy. The prediction of Isaiah 7:14 finds its direct fulfillment in the virgin birth of Christ according to Matthew 1:23.²² The prediction regarding the birthplace of the messiah in Micah 5:2 finds its direct fulfillment in Matthew 2:5-6. Based upon the pattern of these prior precedents, it would seem that the use of the identical fulfillment formula in Matthew 2:15 would also suggest that Hosea 11:1 finds a direct fulfillment. Proponents of this position couple this interpretation of Matthew's fulfillment formula with the translation "I called" in Hosea 11:1 as "I will have called."²³ In other words, they take this verb as a future perfect.

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R. C. H. Lenski, *An Interpretation of St. Matthew's gospel* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1964), 77-79.

²¹ J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1962), 269-70.

²² Although most non evangelical interpreters believe that this prophecy was fulfilled in Isaiah's day and many evangelical commentators believe that the prophecy finds a dual fulfillment in Isaiah's day and in the virgin birth of Christ, I believe the weight of the evidence demonstrates that the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 finds a singular, direct fulfillment in the virgin birth of Christ. See Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Messianic Christology* (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1998), 32-37; Edward E. Hindson, *Isaiah's Immanuel: A Sign of His times or the Sign of the Ages?*, International Library Series, ed. Robert L. Reymond (Philipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979).

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Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament*, 269.

Of all the options, however, this view is probably the most difficult to maintain. Its first problem revolves around the fact that it is built upon too narrow a definition of *ἵνα πληρωθῆ*. A broader definition of this phrase is evident from Matthew's other uses of it. The use of this phrase in the form of a fulfillment formula is used five times in Matthew's infancy narratives (Matt 1:22; 2:5, 15, 18, 23). As discussed above, a direct fulfillment of prophecy is in referred to in 1:22 and 2:15. However, in 2:17-18, which quotes Jeremiah 31:15, a direct fulfillment of prophecy is not alluded to. Dyer observes, "Is Jeremiah 31:15 even a remote prediction of death of babies in Jerusalem? If so, it's a prophecy that names the wrong city (Ramah versus Bethlehem), the wrong action (captivity versus death), and the wrong outcome (return from captivity versus no return from death)."²⁴

Similarly, a direct fulfillment of prophecy is not alluded to in 2:23 which contains a quotation found nowhere in the Old Testament. This verse is simply summing up what the prophets said rather than directly quoting them. In this case, the prophets said, "that he should be called a Nazarene." In the first century, Nazarenes were despised people (John 1:45-46). Thus, Matthew is saying that the prophets predicted that the messiah would be a despised and rejected individual.²⁵ The fulfillment formula is also used an additional seven times throughout the rest of Matthew's gospel (Matt 4:14; 8:17; 12:17; 13:35; 21:4; 26:56; 27:9). Although it is true that *ἵνα πληρωθῆ* is used various times to refer to Old Testament citations directly fulfilled in the life of Christ (Matt 21:4), in other instances the Old Testament quotation is not a forward looking utterance but rather a reflection upon a fact of history (Matt 27:9).

In sum, it is impossible to argue that Matthew's use of the fulfillment formula always refers to the direct fulfillment of prophecy. Although the use of the formula demonstrates a direct fulfillment of prophecy in some contexts, a broader understanding of the formula is evident from Matthew's other uses of it. Thus, the mere existence of the fulfillment formula is insufficient to cause the interpreter to

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Charles Dyer, "Biblical Meaning of 'Fulfillment'," in *Issues in Dispensationalism*, ed. Wesley R. Willis (Chicago: Moody, 1994), 57.

²⁵ Fruchtenbaum, *Messianic Christology*, 151-52.

automatically conclude a direct fulfillment of prophecy is at stake. Each use of the fulfillment formula in connection with an Old Testament citation must be examined on a case-by-case basis to properly determine meaning.

In addition, the Gospel of Matthew contains two instances where the verb πληροω is used to indicate something other than a direct fulfillment of prophecy. In 3:15, Jesus says that He fulfilled all righteousness at His baptism. This hardly meets the definition of a prediction. In 5:17, Jesus says that he came to fulfill the law and the prophets rather than abolish them. This passage is not saying that the law and the prophets are predictions of future events. Rather, it is saying that Jesus is the true purpose and goal of the Old Testament.²⁶ Πληροω is probably being used in a similar way in Matthew 2:15.²⁷

Moreover, most of the attempts to define πληροω demonstrate a level of meaning that includes and yet goes beyond the mere fulfillment of direct prophecy. For example, TDNT yields five definitions. These include the following: to fill something with content, to fulfill a demand or a claim, to fill up completely a specific measure, to complete, and to fulfill prophetic sayings.²⁸ Interestingly, Dyer observes that less than one third of the occurrences of in the New Testament fit the last category.²⁹ BDAG also yields several semantic domains for πληροω. These include the following: to fill, completion of a time period, finishing something, to complete a number, and fulfillment of a prophetic utterance.³⁰ Cremer notes that πληροω can convey the nuance “to complete” or “to establish” without

²⁶ Dan McCartney and Peter Enns, “Matthew and Hosea: A Response to John Sailhammer,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 63 (2001): 103-104.

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Interestingly, regarding the use of the word πληροω in Matthew 2:15, Toussaint points out that Matthew emphasized that the word spoken through the prophets *might* be fulfilled. See Stanley D. Toussaint, “The Argument of Matthew” (Ph.D. diss., Dallas Theological Seminary, 1957), 60.

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²⁹ *TDNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968), 6:290-98.

³⁰ Dyer, “Biblical Meaning of 'Fulfillment',” 53.

BDAG, s.v. “πληροω,” 827-29.

any reference to predictive fulfillment.³¹ This broad range of meanings for πληρωω prevents the interpreter from automatically concluding that a direct fulfillment of prophecy is at stake when the verb is used.

In addition to a reliance on an overly rigid definition of the phrase ινα πληρωθη, the prediction view also suffers because to take the verb “I called” in Hosea 11:1 as a future perfect is tenuous contextually. On the one hand, the previous verb “I loved” is a definite past preterite that looks back to Israel’s Exodus experience. On the other hand, verse 2 is also a past reference because it deals with the nation’s rejection of the Yahweh in order to follow Baal.³² Because the context looks backward it is inappropriate to categorize the verb “I called” as a future perfect. In sum, to treat Hosea 11:1 as a futuristic prediction of the coming messiah is to wrench from the verse what is not there. Hosea 11:1 merely has in view Israel’s historical Exodus under Moses.

Sensus Plenior

Interestingly, the concept of *sensus plenior* originated from the pens of Roman Catholic theologians.³³ However, evangelicals began studying and incorporating the concept when wrestling with how the New Testament uses the Old.³⁴ *Sensus plenior* relies heavily upon the concept of dual authorship. Roman Catholic scholar Raymond Brown defines *sensus plenior* as follows: “The *sensus plenior* is that additional, deeper meaning intended by God but not clearly intended by the human author, which is seen to exist in the words of a biblical text (or group of texts, or even a whole book)

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Herman Cremer, *Biblico-Theologico Lexicon of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895), s. v. "πληρωω," 500.

³² Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution,” 316.

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Robert L. Thomas, *Evangelical Hermeneutics: The New Versus the Old* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2002), 361; Bernard Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1970), 40-42.

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Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution,” 316. In note 14, Howard cites numerous Catholic theologians who first embraced *sensus plenior*. In note 15, he cites numerous evangelicals who have incorporated various aspects of *sensus plenior*.

when they are studied in light of further revelation or development in the understanding of revelation.”³⁵ Bock communicates a similarly definition of *sensus plenior*: The “Human author did not always fully understand or comprehend the prophetic reference, while God intended the full reference.”³⁶ Payne captures the essence of the view when he notes, “Our primary task is to understand God’s intention, not fundamentally the human author’s.”³⁷

According to the *sensus plenior* view, God as the divine author behind Hosea’s message knew more than Hosea and intended more than what Hosea recorded. Consequently, although Hosea may not have known of a messianic fulfillment, God intended one. The evidence that the divine author intended a messianic component in Hosea 11:1 is found in the way Matthew 2:15 applies Hosea 11:1 to Christ. Thus, this view allows Hosea 11:1 to be messianic in nature without finding a messianic prediction in the verse via the literal, grammatical, historical hermeneutical method.³⁸

LaSor advocates *sensus plenior* as a solution for resolving the Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15 problem. He writes:

When he delivered the Israelites from Egypt, he was delivering all of his people from bondage—in a literal sense, for if Israel had not been delivered from Egypt, there would have been no Israel; and in a fuller sense, for if there had been no Israel, there would have been no Davidic king, no prophets, no Scriptures, no messiah, and no redemptive fulfillment. It was therefore true, in this fuller sense, that God did call his own out of Egypt.³⁹

Elsewhere LaSor writes, “He [Hosea] was inspired by God’s spirit...and the spirit led him to express his words in a form that was capable of a fuller meaning. The fullness of that prophetic word was seen by Matthew, and he found fulfillment in Christ.”⁴⁰ According to LaSor, although Hosea may

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Raymond E. Brown, *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore: St. Mary's University, 1955), 92.

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Darrell Bock, “Evangelicals and the Use of the Old in the New, part 1,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 142 (July-September 1985): 213.

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Philip B. Payne, “The Fallacy of Equating Meaning with the Human Author's Intention,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 20, no. 3 (September 1977): 252.

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William S. LaSor, “Prophecy, Inspiration, and *Sensus Plenior*,” *Tyndale Bulletin* 29, no. 49-60 (1978): 55.

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William S. LaSor, “The *Sensus Plenior* and Biblical Interpretation,” in *Scripture, Tradition, and Interpretation*, ed. W. Ward Gasque and William S. LaSor (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 275.

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not have known how God's plan would eventually work out, his words were capable of being fulfilled in Christ.⁴¹ LaSor also seems to advocate *sensus plenior* in the Matthean fulfillment texts because of the use of πληρωω.⁴²

However, understanding Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 on the basis of *sensus plenior* has been criticized on a number of grounds. First, if God is furnishing meanings unknown to the human author, how would an interpreter ever understand all of the divine implications given in a text other than the written expression? Thus, embracing *sensus plenior* moves the interpreter from the realm of objectivity into subjectivism.⁴³ Kaiser observes, "When extrinsic implications are read into the biblical text, with a note of divine authentication, then we have introduced an uncontrollable element of subjectivity if not indeed eisegesis."⁴⁴

Howard advances the following three-pronged approach in order to establish control and objectivity with a *sensus plenior* interpretation: the fuller sense must be given by further revelation, the human author must at least be vaguely aware of the fuller sense, and the fuller sense would have to be grounded in a literal, grammatical, historical reading of the Old Testament text. Howard goes on to observe that these criteria are not met regarding a *sensus plenior* interpretation of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15. The second and third criteria are not met because it is difficult to establish that Hosea included any messianic ideas in his discussion of Israel's historical Exodus.⁴⁵ Even LaSor seems to acknowledge that these latter criteria are not met regarding Isaiah 7:14 and Hosea 11:1 when he says, "In neither case is there any indication that the author had some distant future event in mind, hence it is

LaSor, "Prophecy, Inspiration, and *Sensus Plenior*," 58.

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Ibid.

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LaSor, "The *Sensus Plenior* and Biblical Interpretation," 271.

⁴³ Tracy L. Howard, "The Author's Intention as a Crucial Factor in Interpreting Scripture: An Introduction," *Baptist Reformation Review* 10 (1981): 22-27.

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Walter C. Kaiser, *A Response to 'Author's Intention' and Biblical Interpretation' by Elliot E. Johnson* (a paper presented at the International Council on Biblical Inerrancy, Chicago, November 1982, 1982), 1; quoted in Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 317.

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Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 317.

most difficult to conclude that the author's were speaking of Jesus Christ or even an unnamed messiah... Yet both of these passages are cited as fulfilled in Jesus Christ."⁴⁶

Second, the use of πληρωω in the Matthean fulfillment texts does not advocate a *sensus plenior* understanding. As already discussed under the prediction view, πληρωω does not have to mean the fulfillment of predictive prophecy or a fuller sense because of the broad semantic range of the word.⁴⁷

Third, some have criticized *sensus plenior* on the grounds that it misrepresents the process of inspiration. The principle of *sensus plenior* makes the human author a secondary element in the process as God supplies to the reader additional readings not intended in the original context. This suggests a process of inspiration closely resembling mechanical dictation.⁴⁸

Fourth, although a minority view, it is possible that the fuller sense revolves around the issue of timing rather than subject matter. Kaiser rejects interpreting the various texts, which are typically relied upon to prove dual authorship in Scripture, as teaching that the initial speaker or writer did not understand his utterance. After dealing with these passages in detail, he concludes that the only thing that the Old Testament writer did not understand was the time of the fulfillment of his prophecy.

Regarding Daniel 8:27, Kaiser says, "So clear was Daniel's understanding of the meaning of his prophecy and so dramatic was its effect on him that he 'was overcome and lay sick for some days.'"⁴⁹ When commenting upon Daniel 12:6-9, Kaiser says, "the fact that these words of the angel were to be 'closed up and sealed until the time of the end' was no more a sign that these events were to remain *unexplained* until the end time than was the equivalent expression used in Isaiah 8:16, 'Bind up the testimony, seal the law.'"⁵⁰ Finally, in interpreting 1 Peter 1:10-12, Kaiser notes that the Old Testament

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LaSor, "The *Sensus Plenior* and Biblical Interpretation," 271.

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Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 317.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 316.

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Walter C. Kaiser, "The Single Intent of Scripture," in *Evangelical Roots: A Tribute to Wilbur Smith*, ed. Kenneth S. Kantzer (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1978), 127.

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Ibid.

prophets understood the following five topics: the Messiah, His sufferings, His glory, the sequence of events (His suffering was followed by His glorification), and that the salvation announced in those pre-Christian days was not limited to the prophets audience, but it also included the readers of Peter's day. Thus, Kaiser concludes that the prophets' search was not for the meaning of what they wrote but rather simply the timing of the subject matter.⁵¹ Thus, a *sensus plenior* understanding of Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15 is weakened to the extent that Kaiser's understanding of dual authorship is correct.

Exposition in Judaism

Some attempt to explain Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 by arguing that Matthew used the same hermeneutical methodology employed in first century Judaism. One such methodology is known as Midrash. Longenecker offers the following definition:

Midrashic interpretation, in effect, ostensibly takes its point of departure from the biblical text itself (though psychologically it may be motivated by other factors) and seeks to explicate the hidden meanings contained therein by means of agreed upon hermeneutical rules in order to contemporize the revelation of God for the people of God. It may be briefly characterized by the maxim, "that has relevance to this"; i.e., what is written in Scripture has relevance to our present situation.⁵²

Bloch says Midrash "designates an edifying and explanatory genre closely tied to Scripture, in which the role of amplification is real but secondary and always remains subordinate to the primary religious end, which is to show the full import of the work of God, the Word of God."⁵³

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Ibid., 125-26. For a fair assessment of Kaiser's position regarding dual authorship see Elliott E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1990), 52, 184.

⁵² Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 37.

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Renee Bloch, "Midrash," in *Approaches to Ancient Judaism*, ed. trans. Mary Howard Callaway (Missoula, MO: 1978), 29.

However, not all scholars are comfortable with the notion that Matthew is using Midrash. For example, there appear to be some differences between Matthean quotations and contemporary Midrash. Prabhu observes that Midrash is “literature about literature” which comments upon a biblical text.⁵⁴ France notes how this description of Midrash contrasts with the Gospels when he says: “Nowhere in the Gospels...do we find a sustained commentary on a given biblical passage.”⁵⁵ Furthermore, in Midrash, the words of the prophecy are primary and serve as the foundation on which the Midrash interpretation depends. It took as its basis texts that it wished to make more intelligible. However, in Matthew, the words of the prophecy seem to be secondary and only point to Matthew’s words. Matthew added citations to an already existing narrative. Thus, Matthew’s infancy narratives were not composed for the purpose of making Old Testament citations more intelligible but rather to make Jesus more intelligible.⁵⁶ Cunningham and Bock similarly observe that a composition can be labeled Midrash only when the new work exists for the sake of the older text and the reader’s attention is focused on the prior text.⁵⁷

Another hermeneutical methodology employed in first century Judaism is known as Peshet. This methodology attempts to explain texts by including a written running commentary in the document.⁵⁸ Peshet refers to exposition of texts that views them as eschatological fulfillments in the current era.⁵⁹ The Qumran community believed that it was living in the last days and thus interpreted Scripture in light of first century events. Some believe that Matthew also employed Peshet because he interpreted the Old Testament in light of first century events and continually made use of the

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George Soares-Prabhu, *The Formula Quotations in the Infancy Narrative of Matthew: An Inquiry into the Tradition History of Mt 1-2*, Analecta Biblica (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1976), 15.

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R. T. France, “The Formula Quotations of Matthew 2 and the Problem of Communication,” *New Testament Studies* 27 (January 1981): 235.

⁵⁶ Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1977), 560-61.

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Scott Cunningham and Darrell Bock, “Is Matthew Midrash?,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* (April-June 1987): 169.

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David Noel Freedman, ed., *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 6 vols. (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 5:244.

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Darrell Bock, “Use of the Old Testament in the New,” in *Foundations for Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1994), 101.

fulfillment formula. However, others are less comfortable with the notion that Matthew used Peshet because the formula of fulfillment found in the New Testament has no equivalent in the Qumran literature.⁶⁰ Also, Peshet interpretation has a tendency to disregard the context of the Old Testament citation.⁶¹

Stendahl combines these categories in arguing that Matthew employed a hermeneutical procedure known as Midrash-Peshet. Stendahl maintains that Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 resembles the Midrash-Peshet exegetical technique employed in the Qumran commentary on Habakkuk (1QpH5).⁶² Longenecker has also adopted Stendahl's Midrash-Peshet approach.⁶³ Midrash-Peshet has the two elements. First, each major section of the Dead Sea Scrolls Habakkuk commentary begins with a similar formal Hebrew introduction meaning "its prophetic interpretation" or "the interpretation of the prophetic word," which means οὗτος (ἐστιν) in Greek. Second, this formal feature is coupled with an eschatological perspective found in the Qumran community.⁶⁴ This eschatological perspective weaves together the following ideas: God revealed mysteries to the prophets particularly with regard to the time when the divine purposes would be fulfilled, these meanings could not be understood until its meaning was imparted to the Teacher of Righteousness, the mysteries hidden in the biblical books pertained to the history of their community, all the works of the prophets had reference to the end and the time of the end was at hand, the interpretation of these mysteries was revealed to the Teacher of Righteousness and the selected interpreters that followed him, the disciples of the Teacher of Righteousness were taught the principles of instruction which sometimes included the deliberate manipulation of the text to suit the new context better.⁶⁵

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Joseph Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament," *New Testament Studies* 7 (1961): 303, 331.

⁶¹

Ibid., 297-333.

⁶² Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* (Lund: G. W. K. Gleerup, 1954), 35.

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Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 144-45.

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Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15," 47-48.

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However, there seem to be some differences between the exegetical method practiced by Matthew and that of Midrash-Pesher. First, the formal features are dissimilar between the Qumran commentary on Habakkuk and Matthew. The formal quotations in Matthew follow the fulfillment formula *ἵνα πληρωθῆ*. Fitzmyer points out that this type of introductory formula is absent from the Qumran texts.⁶⁶ Fitzmyer observes, “The famous formulae of fulfillment or realization which are frequently found in the New Testament have practically speaking no equivalent in the Qumran literature.”⁶⁷

Second, because the Qumran community saw itself as being in the last days to which all prophecy pointed, the community had a tendency of disregarding the original context when exegeting prophetic passages.⁶⁸ Such strained exegesis can be observed in the community’s attempt to equate the Chaldeans in the Dead Sea Scrolls with Kittim or the Romans.⁶⁹ After researching 42 explicit quotations, Fitzmyer finds only seven quotations where the community considered the original context. The rest were modernized (11), accommodated (12), and applied in the new eschaton (10).⁷⁰

Third, there also seem to be a difference between Matthew’s method of recording a story about Jesus by using Old Testament citations to demonstrate its fulfillment and the Pesher technique, which is a line-by-line analysis of the Old Testament.⁷¹ Moreover, in Matthew, the Old Testament citation is subservient to the event. Matthew makes his point about Christ and then employs the Old Testament quotation to strengthen his case. Matthew’s methodology attempts to explain the life of Christ rather

F. F. Bruce, *Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), 9; Fitzmyer, “The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament,” 331.

⁶⁶ Fitzmyer, “The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament,” 303, 331.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 303.

⁶⁸ Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution,” 318-19.

⁶⁹ Horan, *Pesharim: Qumran Interpretation of Biblical Books*, 8, 26.

⁷⁰ Fitzmyer, “The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and in the New Testament,” 305-333.

⁷¹ Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 102, n. 13.

than the Scriptural citation. In Peshet, the scriptural text represents the ground around which the explanation was crafted.⁷²

Finally, there is an inadequate parallel between Christ and the Teacher of Righteousness. Establishing such a parallel is central toward Stendahl's thesis. He argues that just as Matthew's formula quotations are interpreted so as to be fulfilled in Christ, the Habakkuk commentary applies in a verse by verse manner the first two chapters of Habakkuk to the Teacher of Righteousness.⁷³ However, Gartner argues that the Teacher of Righteousness does not occupy the same central position as Christ does in Matthew's gospel. While Matthew concentrates upon Christ and seeks from Scripture to establish His identity, the Qumran community concentrated upon periods of time and the different events that left their mark upon the community.⁷⁴

Typological Prefiguration

The typological prefiguration option maintains that the events involving Israel's national life as recorded in Hosea 11:1-2 typified the life of messiah as recorded in Matthew 2:13-15. Fritsch defines typology as "an institution, historical event or person, ordained by God, which effectively prefigures some truth connected with Christianity."⁷⁵ Goppelt furnishes a similar definition.⁷⁶ Thus, many commentators maintain that the events described in Matthew 2:13-15 were prefigured in Hosea 11:1-2.⁷⁷ Hagner contends that although Matthew did not use Moses-Christ typology, he might have in

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W. D. Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount* (Cambridge: University Press, 1964), 208-209; Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 36.

⁷³ Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament*, 183.

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Bertil Gartner, "The Habakkuk Commentary (DSH) and the Gospel of Matthew," *Studia Theologica* 8 (1954): 8.

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C. T. Fritsch, "Biblical Typology," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 104 (April June 1947): 214.

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Leonard Goppelt, *Typos: The Typological Interpretation of the New*, trans. Donald H. Madvig (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 17-18.

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A. B. Bruce, *Matthew*, *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, ed. W. Robertson Nicoll, 5 vols. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1900-1910; reprint, Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1979), 1:75; Hendriksen, *Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew*, 178-79; Alfred Plummer, *An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew* (London: Stock, 1909; reprint, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1953), 17.

mind Jesus' sojourn in Egypt in light of His people's sojourn in Egypt in Joseph's time.⁷⁸ Kent admits that even though it is difficult to find a messianic type from the historical account of the Exodus, Matthew probably had in mind a typological prefigurement based upon the phrase "Out of Egypt I have called my son."⁷⁹

However, the typological prefigurement is questionable for purposes of explaining Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1. First, the view presupposes a latent meaning in the text of which the human author was unaware. This presupposition is problematic because a straightforward reading of Hosea 11:1 fails to yield a latent messianic antitype anywhere in its context.⁸⁰ Carson attempts to counter this notion by contending that Hosea 11:1 is part of a messianic matrix that includes such descriptions as the seed of the woman, the elect son of Abraham, the prophet like Moses, the Davidic King, and the Messiah. Therefore, insofar as the matrix points to Christ the Messiah and insofar as Israel's history looks forward to the one who sums it up, the Hosea 11:1 looks forward to Christ.⁸¹ However, Carson's contentions is problematic because Hosea 11:1 is found in a context that is retrospective rather than forward looking as it historically depicts the beginning of Israel's history.⁸² Thus, Hosea's historical reference to the disobedient national son is incongruous with typologically prefiguring the obedient son.⁸³ Second, the concept of prefigurement typology is similar to the previously discussed *sensus plenior*. Brown admits the similarity when he recognizes that prefigurement typology and *sensus*

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Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, Word Biblical Commentary, ed. David A. Hubbard and Glenn W. Barker (Dallas: Word Books, 1993), 34.

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Homer A. Kent, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 121 (January 1964): 37-38.

⁸⁰ Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 320.

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D. A. Carson, "Matthew," in *Expositor's Bible Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 8:92.

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Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 326, n. 20.

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Ibid., 320.

plenior both contain meaning that exceeds human awareness.⁸⁴ Thus, typological prefiguration contains the same vulnerabilities as a *sensus plenior* approach that were discussed previously.⁸⁵

AN ADEQUATE SOLUTION: ANALOGICAL CORRESPONDANCE

A better understanding of typology reflects the concept of historical correspondence rather than prefiguration. Thus, Woolcombe proposes the following definition of typology:

Typology, considered as a method of exegesis, may be defined as the establishment of historical connexions between certain, events, persons, or things in the Old Testament and similar events, persons, or things in the New Testament. Considered as a method of writing, it may be defined as the description of an event, person or thing in the New Testament in terms borrowed from the description of its prototypal counterpart in the Old Testament.⁸⁶

Others have also sought to define typology in terms of analogies between the Old and New Testament.⁸⁷ Woolcombe's definition of typology reflects an understanding of historical correspondence rather than prefiguration. In other words, Hosea is not prospective but rather Matthew is retrospective. Thus, Matthew looked back and drew analogies or correspondences with events depicted in Hosea 11:1 rather than Hosea 11:1 looking forward to the events depicted in Matthew 2:13-15.⁸⁸ This understanding of typology in no way denies prefiguration typology in places where the Old Testament author understood some component of the latent antitype. However, in those instances such

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Brown, *The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture*, 118.

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Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 320.

⁸⁶ K. J. Woolcombe, "The Biblical Origins and Patristic Development of Typology," in *Essays on Typology*, vol. 22, *Studies in Biblical Theology*, ed. Geoffrey W. H. Lampe and Kenneth Woolcombe (Naperville, IL: A. R. Allenson, 1957), 39-40.

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Hans W. Wolff, "The Hermeneutics of the Old Testament," in *Essays on Old Testament Interpretation*, ed. Claus Westerman (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1963), 179-81; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker, 2 vols. (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 2:363.

⁸⁸

Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 320.

as Hosea 11:1, which fail to yield such an antitype, the category analogical correspondence rather than prefiguration typology seems preferable.⁸⁹

If Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 is explained in terms of the analogical correspondence model, then Matthew quotes Hosea 11:1 for purposes of reaching back into Israel's Exodus experience and drawing deliberate parallels between Israel and Christ. As will be explained below, Matthew's purpose in drawing such parallels is to show that Christ succeeded in every area where Israel failed thus becoming all that failing Israel was called to be. Such a line of argumentation would be consistent with Matthew's purpose of convincing his Jewish audience of Christ's unique identity as the Davidic messiah. What points of correspondence exist between Israel's Exodus experiences as portrayed in Hosea 11:1 and Christ's sojourn into Egypt as depicted in Matthew 2?

Commentators have pointed out at least eight parallels between Israel's Exodus experience and the early life of Christ.⁹⁰ First, both Israel and Christ are referred to as God's son. God calls Israel His son in Exodus 4:22-23 and Matthew routinely refers to Jesus as the Son of God not only in the infancy narratives (Matt 2:15; 3:17) but also throughout his book (Matt 4:3, 6; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16; 17:5; 26:63; 27:40, 43, 54). In fact, in Matthew 2:15, Matthew quotes the MT rather than the LXX in order to accomplish his theological purpose,⁹¹ which probably entails highlighting the fact that Christ is the Son of God. The LXX is rendered "his children" while the MT is rendered "my son." Second, both Israel and Christ experienced persecution. Israel experienced persecution under Pharaoh while the Christ child experienced persecution at the hands of Herod.

Third, both the persecution under Pharaoh and the persecution under Herod involved the death of infant males. Fourth, both Israel and Christ sojourned into Egypt for purposes of finding refuge during a time of distress. Jacob's sons sojourned to Egypt to find grain in the midst of famine and

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Ibid., 328, n. 38.

⁹⁰ Ibid.: 321-22; Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 34.

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Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 85.

Christ sojourned into Egypt to attain refuge in the midst of persecution. Fifth, when Jacob and his sons sojourned into Egypt, they fell under the protective influence of Joseph. Similarly, when Christ descended into Egypt, he was under the protective care of Joseph His father. Sixth, the matriarch Rachael figures prominently in the story of Jacob's sons. Similarly, Rachael is referred to in relation to Christ's sojourn into Egypt (Matt 2:17-18).⁹² Seventh, the return from Egypt was critical to the subsequent work of both Israel and Christ. The return from Egypt was central to the nation's establishment and development (Hosea 11:3-4). Similarly, Christ's return from Egypt was necessary in order for the inauguration of His ministry to eventually come to pass.⁹³

Eighth, Matthew also reaches back to Hosea 11:1 in order to draw an analogy between God's disobedient Son Israel and God's obedient Son Christ. In citing Hosea 11:1, Matthew adds another point of juxtaposition to a larger contrast between Christ and Israel developed throughout the early chapters of his gospel. Through this contrast, Matthew seeks to show that Christ succeeded in every area where Israel failed. In other words, Christ recapitulated in a positive sense the history of the

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McCartney and Enns, "Matthew and Hosea: A Response to John Sailhammer," 98-99, n.3.

⁹³ Some may argue that the Scriptural citation in Matthew 2:15 can only be used to draw parallels with Israel's descent into Egypt rather than the nation's Exodus from Egypt because the citation occurs before Jesus actual departure from Egypt (Matt 2:21). However, it is reasonable to propose that Matthew had in view the entire event of departure into and out of Egypt and thus felt free to quote the passage as early as verse 15. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah*, 219-20. Others also challenge whether Matthew 2:15 can refer to Israel's and Christ's departure from Egypt. Gundry contends that the connection between Hosea 11:1 and Matthew 2:15 is not departure in and out of Egypt but rather preservation in Egypt. See Robert H. Gundry, *Matthew: A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 34. Morris follows a similar line of thinking in suggesting that Matthew is emphasizing Christ's entrance into Egypt. See Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 43. However, the emphasis of Gundry and Morris does not fit the context of Hosea 11:1-2, which depicts Israel's Exodus from Egypt and subsequent disobedience. See Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 325, n. 5.

nation.⁹⁴ Thus, Jesus through obedience became all that failing Israel was called to be.⁹⁵ Emphasizing this comparison would serve Matthew's purpose of bringing into focus the Davidic identity of Christ.

Here is how Matthew's Hosea citation fits into the larger contrast between Christ and Israel developed throughout the early chapters of his gospel.⁹⁶ Both Israel and Christ were called from Egypt as a child (Hos 11:1; Matt 2:15). Israel was disobedient as a child (Hos 11:2-5). Christ was not. Both Israel and Christ were baptized (Exod 14; 1 Cor 10:1-2). Israel disobeyed God within three days after the Red Sea baptism (Exod 15: 22-26). On the other hand, the Father said of Christ following His baptism "This is my Son whom I love; with Him I am well pleased" (Matt 3:17). Both Israel and Christ went into the wilderness to be tempted. Israel was tempted 40 years (Exod-Num) and Christ was tempted 40 days (Matt 4:1-11). Israel failed her temptations and Christ successfully endured His. Both Israel and Christ received God's Law. Israel went to Sinai to receive God's law (Exod 19) and Christ went to a mountainside and explained God's New Covenant Law (Matt 5-7). Israel broke the law before Moses could carry the tablets down from the mountain (Exod 32). On the other hand, Christ said, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law of the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them" (Matt 5:17). Both Israel (Exod 4:22-23) and Christ were called to worship God. Israel failed to worship Yahweh following her emancipation from Egypt instead opting to worship Baals (Hosea 11:1-5). On the other hand, Christ reserved worship only for God following His departure from Egypt (Matt 4:10).

In making this contrast between God's disobedient and obedient son, Matthew may be following a similar pattern already evident in Isaiah's servant songs (Isa 42; 49-57). In these passages,

⁹⁴ Hill, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 85; M. D. Goulder, *Midrash and Lection in Matthew* (London: S. P. C. K., 1974), 239.

⁹⁵ Ritschl, "God's Conversion," 297. The concept of an individual messiah recapitulating the history of an entire nation is consistent with the concept of "the one in the many" found throughout Scripture. According to this concept, a single member of the community represents the whole. Illustrations of this concept include Adam and Christ as representatives for all of humanity (Rom 5; 1 Cor 15:20-23, 45-49), the king or priest as a representative for the nation, and a sacrificed animal as a representative for the sin guilt of the nation. See Bock, "Use of the Old Testament in the New," 102, 112.

⁹⁶ Dyer, "Biblical Meaning of 'Fulfillment'," 55.

Israel's calling is portrayed as the true servant of God (Isa 42:1-7). Yet, these passages indicate that Israel failed in fulfilling this calling (Isa 42:18-22). Thus, God predicted that He would raise up a new servant to become all that Israel failed to be (Isa 49:1-7). The notion of a second servant that is distinct from Israel becomes apparent in Isaiah 49:5-6, which depicts the servant restoring Israel. This second servant is the suffering Messiah (Isa 52:13-53:12). The identity of the suffering servant is clarified through Matthew's application of some of the servant song passages to Christ (Matt 12:17-21). Thus, Christ became a new servant in succeeding in the very calling in which Israel had failed and consequently qualifying to be the one who would ultimately restore wayward Israel.⁹⁷ Matthew seems to be following the same pattern of the servant songs in developing a similar contrast between Israel and Christ in the early chapters of His Gospel.

Not only does Matthew reach back to Hosea 11 in order to build an analogy between Christ and Israel, but he may also be similarly reaching backward in order to build an analogy between Christ and Moses in order to further clarify Christ's identity. Many have observed the parallel between Christ's life as portrayed in the early chapters of Matthew and the life of Moses.⁹⁸ The infant lives of both Jesus and Moses were both miraculously spared from plots involving the annihilation of all the infant males within the vicinity. Just as Moses escaped from Egypt in the midst of persecution and later returned to Egypt, Jesus escaped to Egypt in the midst of persecution and later returned from Egypt.⁹⁹ Davies notes that Moses was the key figure in the Exodus from Egypt, the crossing of the Red Sea (which was a baptism according to 1 Corinthians 10:1-2), the journey through the wilderness, and the reception of the Law. Davies notes that in a similar fashion Matthew portrayed Jesus as the central figure following the same pattern. Jesus also left Egypt (Matt 2:15), was baptized in water (Matt 3), was tempted in the wilderness (Matt 4), and inaugurated the New Covenant Law (Matt 5-7).¹⁰⁰ Thus, the Hosea 11:1

⁹⁷ Dyer and Merrill, *Old Testament Explorer*, 565-66; McCartney and Enns, "Matthew and Hosea: A Response to John Sailhammer," 99.

⁹⁸ Hagner, *Matthew 1-13*, 34.

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H. Benedict Green, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, New Clarendon Bible, ed. H. F. D. Sparks (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), 59.

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citation in Matthew 2:15 regarding the Exodus from Egypt helps build the parallel between Jesus and Moses.

By quoting Hosea 11:1, Matthew may be seeking to establish yet another parallel between Jesus and Moses. His point may be that just as Moses led Israel in the original Exodus, Jesus will ultimately lead the nation through a New Exodus. As already discussed in the background section of this paper, Hosea 11 not only speaks of Israel's disobedience (1-4) and imminent judgment (5-7) but also God's divine restraint in the midst of judgment (8-9) and Israel's ultimate restoration (10-11). The final verses of the chapter contrast Israel's ultimate obedience with Israel's prior disobedience spoken of at the beginning of the chapter. Egypt is used to help build this contrast. Verses 1-4 discuss Israel's disobedience following her first Exodus from literal Egypt while verses 10-11 discuss Israel's obedience following her global re-gathering from figurative Assyria and Egypt. Because of the vividness of this contrast, some have referred to Hosea's depiction of Israel's future re-gathering as a "New Exodus."¹⁰¹ Referring to Israel's restoration as a "New Exodus" is not unique to Hosea. Bock sees similar "New Exodus" imagery in Isaiah 40.¹⁰² Dyer sees the final ten chapters of Ezekiel as a recapitulation of Israel's original Exodus experience.¹⁰³

It is possible that Matthew was referring to this New Exodus depicted in the later verses of Hosea 11 when he quoted Hosea 11:1. Some may argue against this notion on the grounds that it is illegitimate to assume that Matthew was referring to the entire chapter when he quoted just part of Hosea 11:1. However, Dodd argues that the early Christians normally quoted Old Testament passages as pointers to larger contexts rather than them being testimonies in and of themselves. He observes, "At the same time, detached sentences from other parts of the Old Testament could be adduced to illustrations or elucidate the meaning of the main section under consideration. But in the fundamental

Davies, *The Setting of the Sermon on the Mount*, 78; Howard, "The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15; An Alternative Solution," 328, n. 40.

¹⁰¹ Steven McKenzie, "Exodus Typology in Hosea," *Restoration Quarterly* 22 (1979): 107-108.

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Bock, "Use of the Old Testament in the New," 103.

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Dyer and Merrill, *Old Testament Explorer*, 691.

passages it is the total context that is in view, and is the basis of the argument.”¹⁰⁴ Albright and Mann similarly note, “ ‘Proof texts,’ with the ensuing barren controversies they have engendered down through the years, would consequently have puzzled any NT writer. Not only would the whole context of a cited passage have to be searched—if indeed a gospel author wished to discover what we call a ‘verse’—but the whole context would usually be known by heart.”¹⁰⁵ Similarly, Bock observes that one of the rules of Hillel, known as *Daber halamed me>inyano*, called for an explanation from the entire context. In other words, numerous NT texts reflect citations that deal not only with the verse cited, but summarize arguments in the larger context.¹⁰⁶

Thus, this background information demonstrates the probability that Matthew was referring to all of chapter eleven when he cited Hosea 11:1. If Matthew’s citation of Hosea 11:1 can be taken as encompassing the New Exodus depicted in the later verses of chapter eleven, then Matthew was drawing another important parallel between Christ and Moses. It is possible that Matthew is identifying Jesus as the one who would ultimately lead Israel in the New Exodus and thus inaugurate the age to come. This parallel would further build the connection between Jesus and Moses.¹⁰⁷ In sum, according to the analogical correspondence view, Matthew’s used Hosea 11:1 in order to reach backward for the purpose of drawing analogical points of correspondence between Christ and Israel and Christ and Moses. Matthew drew these analogies for the purpose of demonstrating Christ’s Davidic identity to his Jewish audience.

The analogical correspondence view is consistent with Matthew’s use of *ἵνα πληρωθῆ*. As already discussed under the weaknesses of the predictive prophecy view, *πληρωθῆ* has a semantic range

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C. H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures: The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952), 126.

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F. F. Albright and C. S. Mann, *Matthew*, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1971), lxii.

¹⁰⁶ Bock, “Use of the Old Testament in the New,” 101.

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Howard, “The Use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15,” 321-22. This parallel becomes even stronger if it is acknowledged that Matthew when quoting Hosea 11:1 was drawing from the context of the entire Book of Hosea rather than just the context of chapter eleven. New Exodus language is found throughout the entire Book of Hosea. See McKenzie, “Exodus Typology in Hosea,” 107-108.

that is broader than mere predictive prophecy. For example, Matthew 5:17 is not saying that the law and the prophets are predictions of future events. Rather, it is saying that Jesus is the true purpose and goal of the Old Testament.¹⁰⁸ Matthew is probably using πληρωθη in the same way in Matthew 2:15. His point in quoting Hosea 11:1 is that Christ completes the true purpose of both Moses and Israel. Moreover, most of the attempts to define πληρωω demonstrate a level of meaning that could encompass analogical correspondence. These definitions include the following: to fill something with content, to complete,¹⁰⁹ finishing something,¹¹⁰ to complete, and to establish.¹¹¹ These definitions of πληρωω fit well with the analogical correspondence view that sees Jesus as the completion of God's purposes for Israel and Moses.

Interestingly, some scholars employ the concept of analogical correspondence while using a different label when handling the use of Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15. For example, Fruchtenbaum labels his approach to Hosea 11:1 in Matthew 2:15 as "typology." Yet he is not using the term "typology" in the prefiguration sense of the word. This becomes clear when he states that Hosea 11:1 is not a prophecy but rather is speaking of a literal, historical event. Fruchtenbaum is careful to observe that the disobedient national son only becomes a type after the advent of the ideal individual son.¹¹² Fruchtenbaum's observation communicates the retrospective nature of Matthew 2:15 rather than the prospective nature of Hosea 11:1.

Similarly, Bock seems to use an analogical correspondence view when discussing Matthew's use of Hosea 11:1 although he labels his approach *TYPOLOGICAL-prophetic*. Yet Bock is not using

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McCartney and Enns, "Matthew and Hosea: A Response to John Sailhammer," 103-104.

¹⁰⁹ *TDNT*, 6:290-98.

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BDAG, s.v. "πληρωω," 827-29.

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Cremer, *Biblico-Theologico Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.v. "πληρωω," 500.

¹¹²

Fruchtenbaum, *Messianic Christology*, 148.

the term “typological” in the prefiguration sense. He notes that when Hosea 11:1 is read historically and exegetically it refers to Israel and everything about the passage looks to the past. Yet Bock observes that Matthew draws a typological connection between the Exodus events and Jesus who recapitulates in a positive sense the history of the nation. However Bock is careful to observe that the pattern is not seen in the Old Testament language but rather only becomes clear after the decisive pattern occurs. In other words, the connection between the disobedient, national Son of God and the individual, ideal Son of God only becomes visible after the ideal Son’s life falls into a specific pattern juxtaposing Him against the national son.¹¹³ If this pattern had been anticipated in the Old Testament language, then Bock probably would have labeled Matthew’s use of Hosea 11:1 as *typological-PROPHETIC* rather than *TYPOLÓGICAL-prophetic*.¹¹⁴ Bock’s reluctance to see Hosea 11:1 as messianic at an exegetical level is consistent with the retrospective nature of Matthew 2:15 rather than the prospective nature of Hosea 11:1.

CONCLUSION

Matthew’s use of Hosea 11:1 is problematic. Although Hosea 11:1 looks backward and does not appear to need fulfilling, Matthew 2:15 claims that Hosea 11:1 was fulfilled in the events surrounding the early life of Christ. This paper has sought to offer the analogical correspondence view as a solution to this dilemma. This view contends that Hosea 11:1 is not looking forward. Rather, Matthew is looking backward to Hosea 11:1 for the purpose of drawing analogies between Christ and Moses and Christ and Israel. This approach seems preferable in comparison to other solutions offered by evangelicals. It does the best job maintaining the integrity of Old Testament citation. Meanings unknown to the context of Hosea 11:1 are not extracted from the text and thus Hosea 11:1 is not forced to say something it was never meant to say. Moreover, the analogical correspondence view is

¹¹³ Bock, “Use of the Old Testament in the New,” 111-12.

¹¹⁴

Ibid., 110-11.

consistent with the phrase *ἵνα πληρωθῆ* found in Matthew 2:15. Finally, Matthew's desire to draw points of correspondence between the disobedient son and the ideal son satisfies his purpose of communicating Christ's Davidic identity to his Jewish audience.

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