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ARTICLE

What Theological Commitments Structure Loving Attention to Moses's Law?

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Abstract

Augustine and Aquinas assume that Moses's law figures Christ. In this piece, I show how their complementary accounts of the old law rest upon other doctrinal emphases, namely providence, God the Father, and created things as participations in divine goodness. By drawing out these themes, I advance reflection on the worth of Moses's law, unfolding how other doctrines structure loving attention to the law as indicative of Christ.

Keywords: Aquinas; Augustine; God; law; Moses; providence

Augustine and Aquinas agree that the Old Testament more broadly and Moses's law more specifically matter deeply for Christian faith and life. The old law, as found in Exodus 20-Leviticus 26:46, is vitally important because of the one that it prefigures, Jesus Christ. This is a relatively straightforward observation. Less well observed are the grounds for positively valuing Moses's law along such lines. In this piece, I draw out the importance of some neighbouring doctrines for heightening loving attention to Christ's presence in the old law, thereby contributing to a constructive view of the role of the law in Christian theology.[1]

It is important to define clearly the parameters. In this piece, I engage in a dogmatic investigation into Augustine's and Thomas's respective accounts of the old law. In each case, the old law's figurative character bears the stamp of other doctrines. My reading of them is, of course, selective. Accordingly, I do not intend to contribute to the historical task of interpreting either one. There are excellent studies that describe the basic moves each makes in their respective accounts. Accordingly, my goal is not archaeological but rather a matter of constructive metaphysical inquiry. I show that the figurative richness of Moses's law requires other doctrines to do serious supportive work.

[1]The language of the new not only fulfilling but *surpassing* the old comes from Frances M. Young. See *Scripture in Doctrinal Dispute* (vol. 2 of *Doctrine and Scripture in Early Christianity*; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2024), p. 141. She makes this comment whilst discussing Cyril of Alexandria's discourses on John's gospel.

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Just so, I turn first to Augustine's *Answer to Faustus*.[2] Therein, Augustine explains why Christians should accept and cherish the Old Testament, the law, and the prophets, over and against Faustus's 'total rejection of Jewish Scriptures'.[3] Augustine values Moses because of Christ, whom Moses foretells, commends, and prefigures. Augustine also points to Christ as the agent of the law's figuring of himself. In *Answer to Faustus*, 'Augustine develops a profound Christian interpretation of the Old Testament, one that particularly illumined the prophetic role of the Jewish people'.[4] Second, I look to Thomas. Thomas values the old law for the friendship that it occasions with God. Thomas ties the goodness of the law to the goodness of its giver, God the Father, and is sensitive to how God moves the old law towards its elevation and perfection in Christ.[5] In the third part, I draw the various strands together, showing how Christological prefiguration requires a strong sense of providence understood in Christocentric and theocentric terms as well as the fundamental goodness of the Law at the level of being.

Commenting on the words of Genesis in *Confessions*, Augustine observes that 'in Bible study all of us are trying to find and grasp the meaning of the author we are reading, and when we believe him to be revealing truth, we do not dare to think he said anything which we either know or think to be incorrect'.[6] There is much to note here. Consider, first, the word 'meaning'. Augustine's task as an interpreter of Scripture is to discern 'the meaning of the author'. Meaning or intention – what we

[2]As Matthew Levering notes in his helpful essay, there is a 'lack of secondary literature' on *Answer to Faustus*. See 'Scriptural and Sacramental Signs', *Letter and Spirit* 7 (2011), p. 92, n. 8. Furthermore, as Michael Cameron notes, 'the common assumption [is] that Augustine's views on Scripture are all found in the *De Doctrina Christiana*'. See '*Enarrationes in Psalmos*', in Allan D. Fitzgerald, OSA, ed., *Augustine through the* Ages (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), p. 283, cited in Young, *Scripture in Doctrinal Dispute*, p. 283. Thankfully, Cameron himself has worked hard to overturn that perception. See his excellent chapter 'The Old Testament as the First Book of the New: Augustine Figures it Out Against Faustus the Manichee' in *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 251–82. Readers may also want to consult Michael S. Hahn's mammoth dissertation 'in the absence of scholarship that deals with the *Contra Faustum* as an integral whole'. 'Augustine in the Teaching of Thomas: Aquinas's Reception and Use of *Contra Faustus Manichaeum*' (PhD dissertation, University of Notre Dame, 2018), p. 25. Hahn's dissertation sheds light on *Answer to Faustus* by unfolding how Thomas 'exhibits a nearly unparalled appreciation of what is most unique and distinctly valuable about the work, judiciously adopting Augustine's most salient signature emphases on his own', p. 7. Cuhttps://curate.nd.edu/articles/thesis/Augustine_in_the_Teaching_of_Thomas_Aquinas_s_Reception_and_Use_of_em_Contra_Faustum_Manichaeum_em_/24822093?file=43661562

[3]Isabelle Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture against the Manichaeans after 400 CE', in *The Bible in Christian North Africa*, vol. 2, Part II, *Consolidation of the Canon to the Arab Conquest: (Ca. 393 to 650 CE)*, ed. Jonathan P. Yates and Anthony Dupont (Berlin: De Gruyter Brill, 2023), p. 189.

[4]Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *Bible in North Africa*, p. 168.

[5]In this piece, I do not engage the discussion about the utility of dividing the Mosaic law into moral, civil (or judicial), and ceremonial (or cultic) law. My view is that such a division is profitable even if 'the New Testament cites and applies specific laws and principles from all three categories to the life of the church and the believer'. See Richard E. Averbeck, *The Old Testament Law for the Life of the Church: Reading the Torah in the Light of Christ* (IVP Academic, 2022), p. 15. *Contra* Averbeck, however, I do *not* think the tripartite division is 'unnecessary, misguided, and misleading in interpreting Old Testament law'. See *Old Testament Law*, p. 313. Rather, the tripartite division reflects Paul's sense in Romans 7:12 that 'the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good'. The holy may be seen to pertain to the ceremonial, the just to the civil, and the good to the moral.

[6]Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), XII.xviii, p. 259. 'XII' denotes the book, 'xviii' the paragraph, and '259' the page number.

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might call the plain sense – is the interpretive priority. The interpreter may, however, assign a meaning to the text that its 'author whom he is reading did not have and though he had grasped a truth, had not discerned that seen by the interpreter'.[7] The author's meaning may transcend, for Augustine, the occasion of his writing. When this insight is extrapolated with respect to the relation of the Testaments one to another, New Testament writings may interpret Old Testament writings in a way that the Old Testament writers themselves could not foresee. This is not a problem, given 'the congruence with the New but also its [the old's] secret participation in it'.[8] In *On Christian Teaching*, Augustine avers, 'Could God have built into the divine eloquence a more generous or bountiful gift than the possibility of understanding the same words in several ways'.[9] Meaning is not necessarily singular, then, owing to 'the divine eloquence'. Thus, when Christians read the Old Law, they are reading words that may very well contain multiple meanings that anticipate and describe Christ.

In *Answer to Faustus*, Augustine reflects on this dynamic at length in ways subtle and profound in order to bolster commitment to the Old Testament's authority for Christian faith and life. As Wilhelm Geerlings observes, 'What is written in the Scriptures – with this he [Augustine] reproaches the Manichean Faustus – is valid for all time, and so, as such, was written for us'.[10] Similarly, Isabelle Bochet notes, 'Against Faustus, Augustine unceasingly invoked the prophetic value of the Old Testament'.[11] To begin, then, Augustine explains why Christians accept the Old Testament's witness.[12] Augustine writes to Faustus 'that the Old Testament contains promises of temporal realities and is called the Old Testament for that reason'.[13] Promise is a keyword, grounding Christian acceptance of the old. 'Temporal realities' in the Old Testament are thus transparent to something greater: they are indeed 'symbols of things to

[7] *Confessions*, XII.xviii, p. 260.

[8] Cameron, 'First Book of the New', p. 257.

[9] Augustine, *On Christian Teaching*, trans. R.P.H. Green (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 3(85), p. 87. '3' denotes the book, '85' the paragraph number, '87' the page number.

[10] Wilhelm Geerlings, 'The Decalogue in Augustine's Theology', in *The Decalogue in Jewish and Christian Tradition,* eds. Henning Graf Reventlow and Yair Hoffman (New York: T&T Clark, 2011), p. 112. For a treatment of the Decalogue in the Fathers, see Martine Dulaey, 'Le decalogue, les tables de la Loi et la catechese', in *Le Décalogue au miroir des Pères*, ed. Rémi Gounelle and Jean-Marc Prieur (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), pp. 49–63.

[11] Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 181.

[12] This is not an easy thing to do, given that, as Paul Fredriksen notes, 'much of his [Fautus's] critique of Jews and Judaism simply echoed what generations of more orthodox North Africans had already heard in their own churches'. Indeed, Fredriksen describes the extent to which Tertullian stands at 'the headwaters' of 'orthodox … anti-Jewish invective', with Marcion standing at the headwaters of the 'heterodox' variant of the same. See *Augustine and the Jews: A Christian Defense of Jews and Judaism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 223–232.

[13] Augustine, *Answer to Faustus, a Manichean*, trans. Roland Teske, S.J. (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2007), 4, 2, p. 82. '4' refers to the book, '2' the chapter, and '82' the page number. Fredriksen notes that 'what made Faustus so dangerous – dangerous enough to call forth the massive counterattack that Augustine mounted – was not his re-using the centuries-old criticisms of earlier Christian heretics or his deploying the derogations of their common culture's rhetorical arsenal. What made Faustus so dangerous was the way that he built his case by appealing to so many of the anti-Jewish attitudes and traditions of interpretation that the Manichees held in common with Augustine's own church'. *Augustine and the Jews*, p. 223.

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come'.[14] In Matthew Levering's words, 'Augustine answers Faustus by conceding that the laws and promises of the Old Testament refer literally to the people of Israel alone, but he [Augustine] argues that these laws and promises prefigure something greater'.[15] Description of the Old Testament's promissory character includes recognition of ongoing relevance, given the realities it prefigures. Augustine adjudges, 'We therefore accept the Old Testament not in order to attain those promises but in order to understand in them the promises of the New Testament'.[16] The Old Testament is not self-enclosed but raises hearts and minds to the realities prefigured. In other words, the Old Testament's promises are the means by which we inhabit the New Testament's blessings. The New Testament is thus intelligible in relation to the Old Testament, the Old Testament's promises being the structuring principle for something greater, that is, New Testament promises, namely, 'the promise of eternal life and the kingdom of heaven'.[17] For Augustine, Christians accept the Old because of the understanding it grants in relation to 'the promises of the New Testament'.[18] The Old Testament displays the truth; its promises are conduits of grace and truth. Hence, the symbols of the old are 'symbols for us, and all such [Mosaic] sacrifices signified in many different ways the one sacrifice'.[19] Their value is not so much regulative as figurative, confirming, as it were, the blessing of salvation in Christ.

In addition, beyond structuring and foretelling the new, the old demands that we receive it 'in a spiritual manner'.[20] Understanding and practice are, interestingly, juxtaposed with observances. Believers, Augustine argues, are not 'to observe in a bodily manner the things that were written there, but to understand and practice them in a spiritual manner'.[21] The new, then, changes the character of the old from 'commandment' to 'testimony'. Christians receive the testimony of the old by practising it. This is fascinating, I think, as it reveals something of Augustine's intention as shown in *On Christian Teaching* of 'the possibility of understanding the same words in several ways'.[22] Because of 'the divine eloquence', something that was once 'a commandment … is now a testimony', or, 'a witness to the realities that were symbolized'.[23] And these realities, in turn, are to be practised. In Christopher R. Seitz's words, 'It is not content alone which the commandments convey, but a living relationship'.[24]

Augustine adjudges that the forward thrust of the old is not entirely uniform, for 'the commandments' of the old law continue to 'regulate life'.[25] It is safe to say that

[14]*Faustus*, 4, 2, p. 82.
[15]Levering, 'Signs', p. 92.
[16]*Faustus*, 4, 2, p. 82.
[17]*Faustus*, 4, 2, p. 82.
[18]*Faustus*, 4, 2, p. 82.
[19]*Faustus*, 6, 5, p. 97. Though Augustine does not say so explicitly, it is clear that he is thinking of the cultic dimensions of the law, that is, those aspects pertaining to Levitical sacrifice and priesthood.
[20]*Faustus*, 6, 9, p. 103.
[21]*Faustus*, 6, 9, p. 103.
[22]Augustine, *Christian Teaching*, 3(85), p. 87.
[23]Augustine, *Christian Teaching*, 3(85), p. 87; *Faustus*, 6, 9, p. 103, p. 104.
[24]'The Ten Commandments: Positive and Natural Law and the Covenants Old and New – Christian Use of the Decalogue and Moral Law', in *I Am the Lord Your God: Christian Reflections on The Ten Commandments*, ed. Carl E. Braaten and Christopher R. Seitz (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), p. 38.
[25]*Faustus*,10, 2, p. 112.

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the commandments Augustine has in mind are the Ten Commandments.[26] Indeed, Christians fulfil the Decalogue by loving God and neighbour.[27] The Decalogue remains authoritative, a site of Christian obedience. On the flip side, the laws that 'symbolize life … have now been revealed'.[28] Augustine has in mind laws symbolising Israel's relationship to God, for example, the law of circumcision. Christians obey the regulative commandments (the Ten Commandments) and, at the same time, observe symbolic commandments by embracing their testimony to Christ and his church.

Augustine's Manichean critics seem to be incapable of acknowledging the nuances that Augustine is proposing. Indeed, as Bochet notes, 'Faustus's entire biblical hermeneutic is his visceral rejection of Judaism. Properly speaking, Faustus does not interpret the Old Testament so much as he repudiates it entirely'.[29] The Manichees would certainly view Augustine as guilty of Judaizing. For Augustine, laws symbolising life – think again of laws relating to Israel's cultic life – 'were suited to being observed then at that time and to being understood now at this time'.[30] All of Moses must be honoured, sometimes along regulative lines and at other times along testimonial lines. The point is significant because it relates to why and how Christians 'uphold the authority of the Old Testament'.[31] All of Moses's law must be observed, Augustine avers, but not all of it is observed in the same way. A basic distinction exists between the regulative and the symbolic. This distinction, however, does not detract from the Old Testament's authority as 'part of the canon of the Church' because both the regulative and symbolic dimensions of the law are authored by God with a view to Christ.[32] Therein lies a criticism of the Manicheans that is significant. They do not, Augustine argues, appreciate how 'the legislation that was given to the Israelites' has a crucial 'role in God's providence. For God does not want us to be under the law any longer, but under grace'.[33] Not surprisingly, there is much to comment on here. The reason why Augustine posits a basic distinction between 'Jewish servitude' and 'Christian freedom', law and grace, is because of God's providence.[34] So Bochet: 'Christ, insisted Augustine, fulfilled the Law and the Prophets: Christ indeed represents the nodal point where all the powerfully prophetic vectors of the Old Testament converge'.[35] The regulative and symbolic dimensions of the old law make sense, for Augustine, in relation to a basic theological conviction, namely 'God's providence'. The old law's authority for Christians is intelligible in relation to God's providence, providence that moves Moses's

[26]I am not going to get into a discussion of natural law. The Decalogue, for Augustine, is something given, a positive reality. Of course, all of Moses's laws are given, but not all are binding in Christ. Similarly, to conflate the Decalogue with the natural law is a move foreign to Augustine, as Augustine does not discuss the Ten Commandments in terms of natural law. So Geerlings: 'it is to be mentioned that the idea that the Decalogue contains the natural laws, the *lex naturalis*, is only mentioned in passing in Augustine's work, if at all, and then only in the sense that humankind has been carrying a moral consciousness, one that corresponds with the "Golden Rule", in themselves since Adam'. Geerlings, 'Decalogue', p. 113.

[27]See Matt 22:34–40.

[28]*Faustus*,10, 2, p. 112.

[29]Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 171.

[30]*Faustus*,10, 3, p. 113.

[31]*Faustus*, 8, 2, p. 108.

[32]*Faustus*, 11, 8, p. 124.

[33]*Faustus*, 12, 3, p. 127.

[34]*Faustus*, 8, 2, p. 108.

[35]Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 180.

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law to its own surpassing in the new covenant. That, I think, is a salutary instinct. The joy and duty of the church is to cling to the Old Testament in a non-fleshly manner, that is, in light of Christ. Accordingly, 'Augustine's biblical hermeneutic, in brief, is fundamentally Christocentric'.[36] What does this mean? The Jews, for Augustine, make the basic mistake of divorcing the gift – Moses's law – from the giver – God. While I would resist Augustine's rather simplistic identification of the Jews with earthly servitude to the flesh, I do embrace, wholeheartedly, Augustine's sense that God moves the old not to irrelevance but to perfection, fulfilling 'the law by making it grace and truth'.[37] Providence informs how we think about the similarity within dissimilarity of the covenants; furthermore, how we think about the interior relationship of the old law to the new. Providence exercises a vital role in determining how we approach Moses's law.

For Augustine, God moves the old law towards 'Christ's mission of fulfillment'.[38] Christ reveals 'the mysteries of the Old sacraments to those believers who cross over to Christ by their confession of faith and with their mouth open to drink his blood'.[39] To understand God's providence, then, is to attend to its Christological shape and focus. Accordingly, when Augustine reads Moses, he avers that 'Christ meets and refreshes me everywhere in those books, everywhere in those scriptures, whether openly or in a hidden manner'.[40] The issue is not where Christ meets him but rather whether that encounter is hidden or unveiled. Interestingly, in terms of the latter, Augustine refers to Joseph: 'He [Christ] is made known to me in Joseph, who after his trials is honored in Egypt by his brothers who persecuted and sold him'.[41] It is Christological revelation in a figure such as Joseph that gives the old its authority and vitality. Christ is present in grace and truth in the old economy. Such revelation, however, assumes providence, God's governance of everything in Christ. After all, it is 'originally the one nation of the Hebrews that holds hidden in its holy people the mystery of God, which is Christ, the mystery that the whole world lacks'.[42] Israel's special dignity lies in its holding of this mystery, but Israel's dignity also requires that it refer every aspect of its national life back to God, something it does not often do. Israel's function, in light of God's providence, is to 'foretell Christ', to refer its life to him who is hidden therein 'in figures'.[43]

God arranges the forward direction of the old, and, remarkably, does not thereby dispense with and abolish the old, for to dispense with the old is to dispense with the new, 'since the Old Testament undergoes a conversion and exaltation in the New

[36]Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 180.

[37]Cameron, 'First Book of the New', p. 262. Such a simplistic identification is seen to be what it is when adjudged by Jon D. Levenson's work. The notion of Judaism as being bound up with servitude to the flesh as opposed to gratitude anchored in the biblical covenant – 'the foundational moment of divine love and gift-giving … that discloses the true nature of the God-Israel relationship' – is spurious. See *The Love of God: Divine Gift, Human Gratitude, and Mutual Faithfulness in Judaism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), xv.

[38]Levering, 'Signs', p. 103.

[39]*Faustus*, 12, 11, p. 132.

[40]*Faustus*, 12, 27, p. 143.

[41]*Faustus*, 12, 28, p. 143.

[42]*Faustus*, 12, 32, p. 146.

[43]*Faustus*, 12, 44, p. 155; 12, 37, p. 149. Cf. 1 Cor 1:11: 'These things happened to them to serve as an example, and they were written down to instruct us, on whom the ends of the ages have come'. (NRSV) .

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Testament'.[44] In an arresting statement, Augustine writes that 'the two Testaments … cry out to each other like the Seraphim, *Holy, holy*'.[45] Accordingly, the form of Christian belief in Christ is 'through Hebrew prophecy'.[46] The law (and prophets) foretell Christ, and we embrace Christ in and through them as he fulfils the law. Old and new neither contradict nor compete with one another, even as they differ from one another, and the arrival of what is figured (Christ) does not mean that we no longer need the instruction offered by the symbols that prefigure. In Frances M. Young's words, 'fulfillment did not necessarily mean annulment'.[47] Divine providence intends that the law in its promissory as well as regulative dimensions structure Christian faith, hope, and love – 'these books [prophets and apostles] sing in harmony with each other in alternating voices'.[48] Providence generates canonical harmony and unity along christological lines.

Augustine assigns to the whole Old Testament the character of 'prophecy' – 'the Old Testament is a prophecy of the New Testament'.[49] In de Lubac's words, 'the New Testament is the fruit of a supernatural tree whose roots and trunk and leaves were the Old Testament'.[50] This would seem to be a fairly straightforward observation, but not quite. 'The holy patriarchs and prophets in that first people' had hope of better things, 'of eternal salvation in the New Testament'.[51] God was doing something through them, and they understood that something well. Just so, God did not grant them a sketchy sense of their hope. Rather, more than glimpsing their hope, they apprehended something of it. 'For they belong to that Testament, which they understood and loved'.[52] It is the inclusion of 'and loved' that is surprising. The patriarchs and prophets knew that they belonged to the new, and as a result, were to love the One to whom they belonged through the new. Thus, for Augustine, law and prophecies are not thin gruel. 'Against Faustus', Bochet avers, 'Augustine unceasingly invoked the prophetic value of the Old Testament'.[53] Even though the patriarchs and prophets prefigure, such prefiguring is neither cheap nor haphazard. When understood, the law and prophets yield great hope, 'the hope of eternal salvation', just so, loving union with God.[54]

That said, Augustine does not discount the old symbol's inability to confer grace or effect loving intimacy with God. The moral precepts (the Ten Commandments) are fulfilled by grace. The symbolic (sacramental) promises are akin to the finger of John the Baptist pointing to Christ – 'we must seek and understand something else in them [the old symbols]'.[55] To understand them truly is to sense where they fit in God's economy, and God's economy is, for Augustine, fundamentally about Christ. It is Christ who

[44]Henri de Lubac SJ, *Medieval Exegesis*, trans. Mark Sebanc, vol. 1, *The Four Senses of the Scriptures* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 252.
[45]*Faustus*, 12, 48, p. 157.
[46]*Faustus*,13, 2, p. 159.
[47]Frances M. Young, *Scripture, the Genesis of Doctrine* (vol. 1 of *Doctrine and Scripture in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2023), p. 48.
[48]*Faustus*, 13, 18, p. 173.
[49]*Faustus*, 15, 2, p. 185.
[50]de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, vol. 1, p. 235.
[51]*Faustus*, 15, 2, p. 185.
[52]*Faustus*, 15, 2, p. 185.
[53]Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 181.
[54]*Faustus*, 15, 2, p. 185.
[55]*Faustus*, 15, 6, p. 190.

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causes Augustine to esteem the symbols as he does, presumably because they bespeak their own fulfilment in him. Not some of Moses's symbolic laws but all of Moses's law pertains 'completely to Christ'.[56] Providence orchestrates Christologically. Moses not only 'foretells him' in the symbols and promises but also 'commends his grace and glory'.[57] This too is important to note. Prefiguring involves not only foretelling but commending. Augustine's language is remarkably insistent that everything of Moses 'is about Christ'.[58] While there is no equivalence between Moses's prophecy and the gospel of Christ, there is 'harmony'.[59] In Seitz's words, 'Law is gift here, born out of God's saving and identifying purpose'.[60]

The old law functions as 'signs' that are 'to be interpreted in a figurative sense'.[61] Whether we are referring to the symbolic or regulative dimensions, each law not only indicates Christ but also shapes Christian existence and the life of the church – 'whether in actions or in the celebration of the sacraments or in ways of speaking'.[62] Even as the law (and the prophets) foretell and signify Christ and the church, their fulfilment in him (in terms of both the commandments and the symbolic promises) does not connote irrelevance. The symbols of the law remain a sign, even as 'the meats of animals' are removed as a means of relating to God.[63] The symbols remain transparent to God's grace and truth in Christ.

The law's fulfilment involves removal or contrast on the one hand and ongoing relevance and indeed intensification on the other. The law's commandments, Augustine argues, remain commandments for Christians, commandments that the Lord 'helps us to carry out … by his grace'.[64] Graceless fulfilling of the commandments is removed in the new covenant, for him to whom they turn our eyes has graciously come, blessing us with the Holy Spirit. Christians thus observe the commandments – again, the Decalogue – no longer as commandments that promise Christ but rather as 'a law in Christ'.[65] The law is transformed in him through the Spirit in such a way that Moses's law becomes the law of Christ.[66] The law promises and commands, and so Christians fulfil the commandments of the law by grace insofar as they love God and neighbour, and fulfil the promises by receiving them in faith. Christians embrace the promise of the law by seeing 'circumcision and … other sacraments of that time' as transparent to Christ.[67]

The basic distinction present in Moses's law between commandments and promises is fecund. Fulfilment of the law's commandments involves their ongoing salience by grace in the form of the double commandment; fulfilment of the law's promises

[56]*Faustus*, 16, 9, p. 203.
[57]*Faustus*, 16, 9, p. 203.
[58]*Faustus*, 16, 9, p. 203.
[59]*Faustus*, 16, 27, p. 220.
[60]Seitz, 'Ten Commandments', p. 29.
[61]*Faustus*, 17, 4, p. 233; Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 185.
[62]*Faustus*, 18, 7, p. 236.
[63]*Faustus*, 16, 30, p. 223.
[64]*Faustus*, 19, 31, p. 261.
[65]Seitz, 'Commandments', p. 34.
[66]In this regard, Averbeck writes, 'The law and the Spirit go together. One cannot have the Spirit without the Spirit bringing God's revealed law to bear on one's life'. See *Old Testament Law*, p. 75.
[67]*Faustus*, 22, 6, p. 301.

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involves cessation of its sacraments, filled as they 'are filled with promises'.[68] When we receive the symbols and what they promise in faith – that is, receive their 'mystical meaning' – they cease their regulative function, even as they maintain their instructive purchase.[69] Augustine's profoundly high view of the old law thus discourages Christians from finding fault with it. Israel 'remains "a prophetic nation" for the duration of its history'.[70] Even its most obscure dimensions reveal – to the discerning, anyhow – Christ along the lines of commandments instructive of conduct and promises symbolic of his death and our participation in the same. Accordingly, the relationship between the old law and the new covenant is not developmental. The former is not obsolete, whilst the latter functions as a serious upgrade.[71] Thankfully not! Augustine does not 'reduce God's laws given to old Israel to a former day and to regard them now as outmoded and replaced by a law of love'.[72]

Let us end this section by considering briefly an old sacrament, namely circumcision. The new covenant does not command circumcision but instead forbids (Gentile) observance of circumcision. Augustine would have us ask of it (and indeed of anything in Moses's law that the New Testament forbids) 'what it signifies'.[73] Circumcision signifies Christ and initiation into the life of his people, to be sure, and so the Christian community observes circumcision in Christ, which is to say that the sacrament of baptism replaces circumcision. Christians thus observe an ancient sacrament – circumcision – not as 'not condemned but fulfilled'.[74] And for Augustine, the rationale for its fulfilment in Christ is due to God's moving of things towards Christ, the eschatological heir of all.[75] Augustine's thoughts about circumcision enable us to see the extent to which figurative fulfilment in Christ assumes a Christ-centred vision of providence. Augustine's vision of providence is contained in Christology. Augustine writes, 'the Word of God, the power and wisdom of God, while remaining in himself and with the Father and while ruling the created universe, reaches from end to end with power and arranges all things with gentleness. With the amazing and ineffable ease with which he arranges all things'.[76] For Augustine, a christologically concentrated vision of providence is responsible for how Christians relate within the context of the church to Moses's law. Moses's law is subject to Jesus' arrangement, and Jesus ultimately arranges it so as to communicate himself by uniting it to himself, mediating Moses to disciples through himself. Why do we have the old law and the new covenant? Ultimately, the old law as mediated and fulfilled is a fruit of the Word's arrangement of 'all things

[68] *Faustus*, 22, 7, p. 301. As Bochet elaborates, 'the Law is fulfilled differently in these two sets of teachings. The moral precepts (such as the Ten Commandments) were fulfilled by the gift of grace since the Holy Spirit made one capable of observing these by the gift of love (*caritas*). The ritual precepts were fulfilled once truth unveiled what these rules actually prophesied'. Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 184.

[69] *Faustus*, 22, 96, p. 370.

[70] Bochet, 'Augustine's Use of Scripture', in *The Bible in North Africa*, p. 189.

[71] In this regard, compare de Lubac's statement that 'Scripture may also be thought of as that great eagle which figures in one of the visions of the Book of Revelation. The two unfolded wings of this eagle are the two Testaments'. de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, vol. 1, p. 26.

[72] Seitz, 'Ten Commandments', p. 23.

[73] *Faustus*, 32, 9, p. 413.

[74] *Faustus*, 32, 9, p. 413.

[75] See Heb 1:2.

[76] *Faustus*, 23, 10, p. 380.

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with gentleness'.[77] Put differently and in summary, Christ, for us, is both the subject of the law and active agent in terms of its ongoing moral validity, applicability in displaying himself, and ultimate fulfilment in himself. Augustine's rich figurative vision assumes a thick doctrine of providence understood along Christocentric lines. It is this assumption that I have brought to the fore in this section. In the next section, I show how Thomas's vision of perfection and fulfilment prioritises the Father and emphasises the law as a participation in divine goodness. These two commitments are pivotal for structuring loving attention to Moses's law.

Our next challenge is to map Thomas's vision of the value of Moses's law, and how the old may be said to be fulfilled 'not revoked' in the new covenant.[78] Does Thomas more or less say the same things as Augustine, or does he say something different and, if so, why? Thomas's treatment of the old law in qq. 98–105 of the *Prima Secundae* of the *Summa theologiae* offers a subtle account of Moses's law (the old law), why it matters, its divisions, as well as its relation to Christ.[79] As Franklin Harkins observes, 'the treatise on the Old Law (STh I-II, qq. 98–105) provides a particularly apt canvas on which Thomas paints Moses as a lawgiver who variously teaches Christ by way of prefiguration'.[80] The task in this section is not to provide an exhaustive engagement but rather to give an accurate impression – a big picture view in the service of biblically oriented systematic reflection – of the old's value, and the doctrines undergirding that value. As we shall see, the new heightens attention to the old law even as the new covenant perfects and surpasses it, blessing us with the grace of the Spirit in Christ, the very perfection and fulfilment of Moses's law.

Thomas begins by indicating the rationale for divine law.[81] Of God's law, he writes: 'Divine Wisdom, as moving all things to their due end, bears the character of Law'.[82] For Thomas, law reflects and manifests its source – God – and directs us towards an end, which is, ultimately, God. So Thomas: 'The Father is Lord inasmuch as all things

[77]*Faustus*, 23, 10, p. 380.

[78]Matthew Levering, *Christ's Fulfillment of Torah and Temple* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), p. 30. Readers should note the burgeoning scholarly interest in Thomas's scriptural exegesis. Led by theologians such as Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen, 'the goal of Biblical Thomism is to encourage contemplation of the truth attested in the biblical text and to draw attention to the purpose for which the Bible was written in the first place'. See Piotr Roszak, 'Text, Method, or Goal? On What Really Matters in Biblical Thomism', *Religions,* 14 3 (2022), 7.

[79]As Richard Schenk OP observes, Thomas also discusses the older rites 'in the relevant pages of the *tertia pars* of the *Summa theologiae*'. Schenk notes that Thomas changes his mind during his final tenure at Naples, stressing 'the pre-figurative dimensions of the older rites with an exclusivity new to his thought… . Thomas started to define its [the cult of the older covenant] meaning ever more exclusively in terms of the younger one'. See 'Views of the Two Covenants in Medieval Theology', *Nova et Vetera* 4, no. 4 (2006): p. 912. Cf. also *ST* III, q. 70, a. 4, wherein Thomas discusses circumcision.

[80]Franklin T. Harkins, '*Primus Doctor Iudaeorum*: Moses as Theological Master in the *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas Aquinas', *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review,* 75 1 (2011), 82.

[81]Thomas would not be pleased with William S. Morrow's judgment that 'biblical law [reflects] efforts at self-definition'. This is not to deny the 'community making dynamics' present in Moses's law but it is to say that the intelligibility of Moses's law rests upon God, specifically the goodness of God the Creator. See *Introduction to Biblical Law* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017), pp. 6–12.

[82]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 1, corpus. Note that I am using the translation supplied by the Fathers of the English Dominican Province, hereafter *ST*.

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are ordained to him as to the first principle and end of all things'.[83] Law's directive and ordering function derives from God the Father: 'eternal law is the type of Divine providence'.[84] As with Augustine, the doctrine of providence plays a crucial role in Thomas's thinking about law, although the emphasis in Thomas is more theocentric than christocentric. For Thomas, rational creatures naturally incline towards the eternal Law despite the ravages of sin, and the natural law attests and participates in the eternal Law by establishing principles of human action that preserve us in accordance with our end, namely, God the Father.

Thomas calls the old law 'the Divine Law'.[85] But what about Moses's law is divine? The old law is unequivocally good, coming as it does from God and directing us towards our end, which is God. The doctrine of creation understood in participatory terms makes its presence felt here. This is not to say that the old law is perfect, but it is to say that its permanent goodness, for Thomas, reflects its source – a good God – and purpose, that is, to point us to God, our supernatural end. In a programmatic statement, Thomas writes, the 'end of the Divine Law is to bring man to the end which is everlasting happiness'.[86] Having established the old Law's goodness and purpose, Thomas reminds his readers that it is an 'imperfect [good], according to Hebrews 7:19'.[87] Its imperfection involves an inability to confer grace. This inability, however, does not obviate the old law's goodness. Given that goodness has varying degrees, the old Law remains an imperfect good, preparing Israel to receive the greatest good in the person and mission of its messiah and saviour.

What, then, is the old law's relationship to Christ? The old law ordains Christ and participates in the new law.[88] The old law bears 'witness to Christ', and second, the old law withdraws 'men from idolatrous worship', enclosing 'them in worship of the one true God'.[89] The old law remains an abiding good, then, because it promotes right worship and prefigures Christ. Despite accomplishing these salutary things, the old law is not 'perfect simply'.[90] Rather, the old law is 'perfect in respect of time'.[91] Something better is indeed coming, what Thomas calls 'the perfect law of the New Testament … given by the incarnate God immediately'.[92] 'The perfect law of the New Testament'

[83]Saint Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on the Letter of Saint Paul to the Hebrews*, trans. Fabian Richard Larcher OP (Green Bay, WI: Aquinas Institute, 2012), 1:1, 21, p. 12. The first '1' denotes Hebrews ch. 1; the second '1' denotes the lecture number, '21' the paragraph number, and '12' the page number. T. Adam Van Wart discusses, with respect to Job, how 'the providential ordering of events in Job is, for Thomas, quite clearly paradigmatic for God's teleological governing of the world more broadly'. Whether we are reflecting on events in Job, the character of the law, or God's governance of the world, providence plays a determinative theological function. See 'Aquinas's Eschatological Historiography: Job, Providence, and the Multiple Senses of the Historical Event', *Pro Ecclesia* 30 1 (2021), 44.

[84]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 5, ad 2.

[85]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 1, corpus.

[86]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 98, ad 1.

[87]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 1, corpus.

[88]Levering unfolds the participatory dynamic so very well. He argues, following Thomas's lead, that the 'literal sense itself possesses the resources for bridging past and present, because of the literal sense's conjoined linear and participatory dimensions'. *Participatory Biblical Exegesis: A Theology of Biblical Interpretation* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008), p. 7.

[89]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 2, corpus.

[90]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 2, ad 1.

[91]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 2, corpus.

[92]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 2, corpus.

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includes the grace of the Spirit who interiorises the old law, sealing it upon our hearts by faith.

Even though the new law is perfect, we do not very often embrace its benefits, what Thomas calls 'the benefits of grace'.[93] This is due to sin. Importantly, sin does not erase 'the benefits of nature'.[94] Without getting into a detailed discussion of nature, I think that it is fair to say that nature does not shed its teleological orientation. Natural law is not obviated by the old law, but instead the old law adds to and exceeds natural law, natural law itself being (again) 'a participation of the eternal law'.[95] There is a clear trajectory, for Thomas, one of imperfection to perfection, of grace elevating nature. Natural law is good, albeit an imperfect good, for it does not contain 'the benefits of grace', and the old law is a more perfect good than natural law because the old law ordains explicitly to Christ, the greatest good. Furthermore, the old law is more perfectly related to its source and end than is natural law, as it prefigures Christ and discourages idolatry.[96]

As with Augustine, Thomas assumes a basic distinction in Moses's law between the ceremonial – or what Augustine sometimes calls 'the sacramental' – and the moral. The former pertains to 'Divine worship', the latter 'to virtue as dictated by natural law'.[97] The moral precepts involve promotion of holiness, the hindrance of sin, and punishment for violations of the law. And both dimensions (the ceremonial and moral as distinct albeit imperfect goods) dispose 'to the perfect'.[98] The precepts of the old law, whether ceremonial (pertaining to worship), judicial (pertaining to community life), or moral, aim 'at establishing friendship, either between man and man, or between man and God'.[99] The old law disposes to God, that is, it seeks to establish friendship between us and God, which includes the friendship of one person in relation to another. Just as the old law, through its moral and ceremonial precepts, refers us to God, the precepts require us to 'become good'.[100] So Thomas: 'there cannot possibly be any friendship of man to God, who is supremely good, unless man become good'.[101] The precepts of the old law commend friendship with God, participating as they do in God's goodness, and expect that we strive to live as those worthy of friendship with a God who is supremely good.

For Thomas, the moral precepts of the old law are encapsulated in the Decalogue, the most permanent part of the old law. The first table directs us Godward whilst the second table 'contains the order of justice to be observed among men'.[102] The old law, as the first primary instantiation of divine Law, has a referential and directive function in relation to God and with respect to our relations 'to a community under God'.[103] This is not to say that the moral dimension of the old law, disposing as it does towards God,

[93] *ST* I-II, q. 98, a. 4, ad 3.
[94] *ST* I-II, q. 98, a. 4, ad 3.
[95] *ST* I-II, q. 96, a. 2, ad 3.
[96] *ST* I-II, q. 98, a. 4, ad 3.
[97] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 2, ad 1.
[98] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 6, corpus.
[99] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 1, ad 2.
[100] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 1, ad 2.
[101] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 2, corpus.
[102] *ST* I-II, q. 100, a. 8, corpus.
[103] *ST* I-II, q. 100, a. 5, ad 2. Cf. Thomas's comments on Heb 1:2: 'the Father is Lord inasmuch as all things are ordained to him as to the first principle and end of all things'. *Hebrews*, 1 1 21, 12.

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causes people to become holy and just. 'To become just, the people needed the grace of God to heal them of sin; thus, they needed "infused" virtues, which they were able to receive through implicit faith in Christ'.[104]

In addition, Thomas makes an explicit connection between the decalogue and the ceremonial (as well as the judicial). He writes, the 'ceremonial and judicial precepts *are determinations of the precepts of the decalogue*'.[105] In this important statement, Thomas expresses the asymmetry of the moral and ceremonial. The ceremonial precepts are determinations of the moral and not the reverse. The rest of the law thus develops and expands the Ten Commandments. In this respect, the whole of Moses's law is pedagogy, ordering us towards God and the receiving of the Messiah. However, the moral law perdures in the new, whilst the ceremonial and judicial do not; the latter are, as we shall see, transformed in light of the fulfilment of the promises in Christ. The ceremonial is with the moral directed to God, but do so only on an external or outward level, whilst the new heals us on an interior level, blessing us with the Holy Spirit.

The worship prescribed by the ceremonial is figurative, indeed, 'needed to be figurative', which is not to dismiss its reality.[106] Of what is it figurative? The ceremonial figures 'future truth to be manifested'.[107] But why? Herein we get to the heart of the matter. The sublimity of truth – Jesus Christ – is so extraordinary that 'there is a need of signs by means of sensible figures'.[108] For Thomas, it is not the moral so much as the ceremonial that foreshadows via sensible figures the mystery of Christ. The ceremonial precepts are good, bringing 'many boons to the world' not only in terms of what they represent – Christ and the church – but by what they intend, namely, our internal subjugation to God.[109] Even so, the ceremonial, in its representative and subjugative functions, weakly represents and subjugates. Thus, it is appropriate to say that for Thomas, the ceremonial precepts do not contain Christ but figure him whilst discouraging evil amongst those prone to it and improving those inclined to good.[110]

The ceremonial precepts have, then, a very concrete function. They pertain to divine worship (at that time) and foreshadow Christ and the church, deriving their intelligibility 'from the true sacrifice of Christ'.[111] In Harkins' words, 'The ceremonial precepts, then, foreshadowed the advent and salvific work of Christ'.[112] Notice the order: Thomas moves from Christ to the old law. We understand the rationale for the old in light of Christ. God institutes sacrifices not only to prevent idolatry but

[104]Levering, 'Aristotle and Mosaic Law', p. 78.
[105]*ST* I-II, q. 100, a. 11, ad 2.
[106]*ST* I-II, q. 101, a. 2, corpus.
[107]*ST* I-II, q. 101, a. 2, corpus.
[108]*ST* I-II, q. 101, a. 2, ad 2.
[109]*ST* I-II, q. 101, a. 3, corpus.
[110]See further *ST* I, q. 101, a. 3.
[111]*ST* I-II, q. 102, a. 3, corpus.
[112]Harkins, 'Moses as Theological Master', p. 86. Jeremy Holmes expands this, arguing that 'to say that the persons and events of the Old Testament participate in the mystery of Christ is to say several things at once. It means that the OT has the same properties as does the NT, but in an imperfect way. It means that the OT in some way receives those properties from the mysteries enacted in the NT, i.e., in dependence upon the NT mysteries. Lastly, it means that the mysteries of the NT have those same properties in a complete and definitive way'. See 'Participation and the Meaning of Scripture', in *Reading Sacred Scripture with Thomas Aquinas: Hermeneutical Tools, Theological Questions and New Perspectives*, ed. Piotr Roszak and Jörgen Vijgen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), p. 94.

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also to represent the mystery of Christ. In language redolent of Hebrews, the ceremonial precepts present 'a likeness to heavenly things'.[113] Therefore, as Levering notes, 'the ceremonial precepts are indeed to be observed forever, but only in their fulfilled reality'.[114]

Thomas explains the purpose of the temple and its inner sanctuary along these lines, namely, 'that God might be made known there by means of things done and said there'.[115] God is made known in sacrificial worship. The sacrifices – or sacraments, as Thomas sometimes calls them – prescribed in the old consecrate and depute the worship of God. The promotion of right worship is what God intends with the ceremonial law; that is, you might say, the literal meaning of it.[116] Further to this, the literal meaning or sense of the ceremonial is not parallel to the spiritual meaning or sense. The latter develops the former.[117] In shaping God's people for the worship of God, the ceremonial foreshadows Christ and something of the shape of the Christian life. This is its dual purpose, thereby evoking love of God and neighbour.

For Thomas, the ceremonies cleanse on an outward level; the flesh and not the soul is washed for the simple reason that 'they [the ceremonies] do not contain grace within themselves'.[118] When Christ comes, the ceremonial ceases regulating worship (as does the judicial common life). Even so, the ceremonial should continue to be received as that which figures Christ. Christ's fulfilment of the ceremonial as it relates to worship does not preclude the ceremonial's ongoing figuring of him. In other words, the ceremonial no longer structures worship, but that is not to obviate its uniqueness, figurative function, and abiding goodness. 'Through figurative instruction, in particular, Moses most appropriately foreshadowed the mysteries of Christ, which constitute the end of the Law'.[119] So Thomas: 'Although God speaks in the New and the Old Testaments, he speaks more perfectly in the New, because in the Old he speaks in the minds of men, but in the New through the Son's incarnation'.[120]

Consider for a moment Thomas's comment on the judicial, or what some would call, the civil precepts. They 'embrace all that concerns the ordering of human relations'.[121] In light of Christ, however, they 'are no longer binding'.[122] Put differently, the judicial precepts in their concern for regulating 'the relations between men' no longer are to be observed by the people of God.[123] Indeed, God instituted the judicial so as to order 'the state of that people, which was directed to Christ'.[124] Quite the opposite is true of the ceremonial: God instituted them 'in order to be figurative of something

[113]*ST* I-II, q. 102, a. 4, corpus.
[114]Levering, *Torah and Temple*, p. 29.
[115]*ST* I-II, q. 102, a. 4, corpus.
[116]As R. Jared Staudt notes, the ceremonial precepts 'grant specificity to the generic dictate to worship'. See *The Primacy of God: The Virtue of Religion in Catholic Theology* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Academic, 2022), p. 263.
[117]See further Roszak, 'Text, Method, or Goal?' p. 5.
[118]*ST* I-II, q. 103, a. 2, corpus.
[119]Harkins, 'Moses as Theological Master', p. 88.
[120]*Hebrews*, 1:1, 15, p. 8.
[121]*ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 1, ad 1.
[122]*ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 3, corpus.
[123]*ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 1, corpus.
[124]*ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 3, corpus.

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connected with the worship of God and the mystery of Christ'.[125] The ceremonial figurative function does not cease; it remains as relevant as ever due to God. In a statement that reveals the heart of the matter, Thomas writes that 'priesthood was transferred from Aaron to Christ. Therefore, the entire Law was also transferred; and so the judicial precepts are no longer binding'.[126] Let us think about this statement. 'The entire Law' is not abolished in Christ; instead, it is transferred by God to Christ and mediated to us in him. Thus, with Levering, we say that the Mosaic law '*is still observed by Christians*', indeed Moses's law abides as fulfilled in Christ.[127] In other words, some precepts – for example, the judicial – cease forming the life of God's people whilst others – namely the ceremonial in its figurative capacity as well as the moral – continue to bind believers in Christ. This is what it means to speak of God's transference of Moses's law to Christ. Transference is not obsolescence, for the whole law is now in Christ, and 'an Old Testament person or event might participate the mystery of Christ in several ways at once'.[128] In Averbeck's words, '"the law of Christ" is the way Jesus mediated Old Testament law to us for our lives as his followers'.[129] Transference grounds how we think about the relation of old to new. Some precepts (the ceremonial) figure, others order, and among those that order, some continue to bind (the moral) whilst others do not (the judicial).

What are we to take from this? For Thomas, Moses's law has a regulative and a revelatory function. All of the Law 'applies' to the Christian community, yet not all of it applies in the same way.[130] God the Father authors the law, and what is authored by God orders to God as expressive of the divine Wisdom and goodness, but the basic distinctions present in the law, as Thomas understands them, help us to see that each type of law orders uniquely as a distinct good sharing to varying degrees in the goodness of its Creator. To be sure, 'every law aims at establishing friendship, either between man and man, or between man and God', but it is the Decalogue (the moral) that has priority in relation to the ceremonial.[131] Accordingly, Thomas is not so much interested (as many moderns are) in the question of the extent of the old law's application. Instead, the various units of Torah – let us once again call them the moral, civil (judicial), and ceremonial – are instituted by God in order to direct us to the good that God is and direct our relations to one another with the ultimate horizon of such direction being Christ. Indeed, how we live in relation to God and to one another under God requires worship, encouragement of virtue, and foreshadowing of Christ. For Thomas, Moses's law in its entirety applies to the new covenant community, but application to that community is not uniform. The ceremonial (and judicial) cease regulating by virtue of their fulfilment in Christ, but they do not thereby cease sharing in God's goodness and figuring Christ. 'The law of God in the Mosaic covenant is anything but

[125] *ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 2, corpus.
[126] *ST* I-II, q. 104, a. 3, *sed contra.*
[127] Levering, *Torah and Temple*, p. 28. Or, as Levering observes elsewhere, 'The messiah has come, and as the high priest of all creation he reconfigures the law around himself'. See *Paul in the Summa Theologiae* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2014), p. 144.
[128] Holmes, 'Participation', in *Reading Sacred Scripture*, p. 100.
[129] Averbeck, *Old Testament Law*, p. 243.
[130] See further, Averbeck, *Old Testament Law*, p. 21.
[131] *ST* I-II, q. 99, a. 1, ad 2.

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left behind in the new covenant'.[132] Or, as Harkins notes of Thomas regarding Moses, 'Thomas understands Moses as a great theological master who, having been elevated to a supernatural knowledge of God, fittingly taught the ancient Israelites the doctrines of Trinity, creation, and Christ'.[133] It is the intention of God that the mystery of Christ and the riches of Christian doctrinal truth be perpetually figured by Moses, full stop. Moses's law details many truths, inspired by the Spirit in such a way that Moses 'would know the many true things that are contained virtually in his words'.[134]

So, for Thomas, the law, whilst prefiguring Christ, prefigures as it does because the whole law is subject to God the Father's providence and dynamic direction. 'God made the Old Testament realities to prefigure Christ similarly to the way an architect creates an "artist's rendering" of a house or town he plans to build'.[135] Thomas does not construe Moses's law in simply typological terms. Instead, by receiving Moses's law with Thomas, we see how Thomas's account trades upon generative convictions regarding God the Father and divine goodness. More so than Augustine, Thomas's treatment puts us in contact with God the Father and the law as a participation in goodness, evoking friendship. Thomas demonstrates something of the other doctrinal commitments that prefiguration assumes. As noted, nothing in Thomas's mind is static; teleology is intrinsic to temporal things. Moses's law, as with created things in general, has an appointed end, and that end is the One who gives it, God the Father himself. Moses's law is precious because of God who authors and communicates it in order to establish friendship with himself, then and now, in and through his Son. Friendship with God is not, of course, relegated to Christ, but Christ is the *telos* to whom God moves Moses's law in order that friendship be perfected.

Moses's law is significant not because it reveals 'wise and enduring values and principles for contemporary Christians' but because of the Son who 'is Himself the eternal law by a kind of appropriation'.[136] Accordingly, for Thomas, Moses's law is pregnant with multiple meanings, being moved, elevated, and transformed by God into the law of Christ, containing as it does grace and thus its place 'within the heart of his theology of salvation'.[137] The words of Moses share in God's goodness and are subject to the One who gives them with a view to Christ. For Thomas, it is Christ's true sacrifice that establishes the rationale for all that figures him, permanently and non-permanently. Moses's law is an organ of Christ's law, reflecting how God leads in general from the sensible to the spiritual – 'so the New completes and perfects the Old'.[138] Both old law and new covenant were instituted by God, and they share in God's goodness in order that 'the soul might come to God'.[139] Each has a special dignity in light of God. God dispenses 'figurative things' in the old, but in the new 'Christ dispenses the spiritual

[132]Averbeck, *Old Testament Law*, p. 287.

[133]Harkins, 'Moses as Theological Master', p. 93.

[134]Mark F. Johnson, 'Another Look at the Plurality of the Literal Sense', *Medieval Philosophy and Theology*, 2 (1992), 130. I concur with Johnson that Thomas embraces the plurality of the literal sense.

[135]Holmes, 'Participation', in *Reading Sacred Scripture*, p. 100.

[136]Roy E. Gane, *Old Testament Law* for *Christians: Original Context and Enduring Application* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2017), xiv; *ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 4, ad 2.

[137]Levering, *Torah and Temple*, p. 18.

[138]*Hebrews* 8:2, 396, p. 173. For a discussion of how God uses sensible things to lead us 'to intelligible and spiritual things', see *Hebrews* 8 1, 389, 169.

[139]*Hebrews* 9:1, 414, pp. 181–82.

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things they prefigured', both, however, having 'the same author', namely, God the Father.[140]

How does Moses's law, as Augustine and Thomas receive it, inform thinking about prefiguration? First, we have noted, with Augustine, the centrality of Christ. A few keywords emerge in Augustine's treatment that impact, in my view, how Christology informs providence. Augustine reminds us that Jesus Christ 'arranges all things'. The law prefigures and regulates as it does because of Jesus' arrangement. This emphasis is distinct from Augustine. For Augustine, Jesus arranges the old law in relationship to the new in such a way that the former pertains completely to him as it is fulfilled in the latter through him. That is well and good, but Augustine's insight requires a Thomistic supplement. The authority of the old law resides not simply in him whom it gloriously prefigures but also in God's goodness. God is good, and the things God makes participate in his goodness.[141] Thus, we note the participatory structure of created things. The old law, for Thomas, as a created good, is indeed perfectly good 'in respect of time', witnessing as it does to Christ and discouraging idolatry.[142] The old law reflects and shares in the goodness of God the Father, a goodness common to the three persons. The doctrine of creation and the divine goodness are relevant here and make their presence felt. Augustine, of course, would not deny their relevance, but it is significant that Thomas reminds us of the divine goodness and created things as participations of that goodness as he unfolds the old law in relationship to its source and end, God the Father.

Moses's law, following Augustine, is subject to Christ's arrangement (as is the whole canon), and Christ arranges the law in such a way that its *telos* is reconfiguration through his own life, death, and resurrection 'by making it grace and truth'.[143] Even more, Thomas's treatment reminds us of the importance of God the Father in describing the Christological heart of providence.[144] Given that the law comes from God and aims at establishing friendship with God, the law shares in the goodness of God. The law is (again) good because God is good. Providence's principle and overarching horizon is God the Father almighty, and the law God speaks moves towards its own perfection in the New Testament in Christ, who is the centre of God's providence; but the fact that God moves things in this manner expresses the eternal procession of the persons. The Father's eternally begotten and beloved Son is he through whom the law comes. The Father arranges as he does in relation to the Son and in the Spirit, all to the glory of his holy name. Such an arrangement reveals the eternal order of the triune life. Not only is the substance-wise register relevant as we value positively Moses's law, but so

[140]*Hebrews* 9:3, 436, p. 193; 1:1, 19, p. 11.

[141]Holmes draws attention to a related area of theological concern, namely 'the participatory understanding of history at play' in Thomas's account. He notes, 'When we apply these distinctions to biblical studies, we find that the same Old Testament person or event may participate the mystery of Christ in more than one way at the same time'. See 'Participation', in *Reading Sacred Scripture*, p. 98.

[142]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 2, corpus.

[143]Cameron, 'First Book of the New', p. 262.

[144]Thomas would be uneasy with de Lubac's christocentric vision of the unity of Scripture, given that it affords little room for God the Father. For example, de Lubac writes, 'Jesus Christ brings about the unity of Scripture, because he is the endpoint and fullness of Scripture. Everything in it is related to him. In the end, he is its sole object. Consequently, he is, so to speak, its whole exegesis'. *Medieval Exegesis*, vol. 1, xii.

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too is the relationship-wise register.[145] The law is good and the law is a gift of the good God, reflecting the order of the divine life. Good gifts come from the Father through the Son.

When we join with Augustine and Thomas in learning to regard Moses well, we receive doctrinal illumination. I have argued in this piece that we see afresh the relevance of providence in relation to God the Father and Son, and the doctrine of creation articulated in a participatory way. The motifs adjudged important by Augustine and Thomas in treating the abiding authority of the old law – Christ's arrangement, the Father's providence, and divine goodness – accompany a robust doctrine of prefiguration, and demonstrate their ongoing relevance for valuing rightly the old law. Augustine's christological concentration is strengthened when supplemented by Thomas's sense that the old law, as derivative good, is such precisely because it shares in God's goodness as it directs to him. Law, indeed, is a 'type of Divine providence'.[146] The law is good because of God and because of Christ's arrangement and transference of it to himself, thus God's ordering of good things to their appropriate end. Augustine's and Thomas's accounts, taken together, nourish attention to the old law as bearing God's goodness and directional wisdom and as reflective of Christ's arrangement of all things in grace and truth.

[145]The idiom of substance-wise and relationship-wise is drawn from Augustine. See *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill OP (Brooklyn, NY: New City Press, 1991), V, 1, 6, p. 191. 'V' indicates the book, '1' the chapter, '6' the paragraph, and '191' the page number. The '-wise' language is the translator's creative accommodation of Augustine's Latin. The full sentence in Latin runs: '*Quamobrem quamvis diversum sit Patrem esse et Filium esse, non est tamen diversa substantia: quia hoc non secundum substantiam dicuntur, sed secundum relativum; quod tamen relativum non est accidens, quia non est mutabile*' *De Trinitate* (PL 42:5.6).

[146]*ST* I-II, q. 93, a. 5, ad 2.

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