Prolegomena

**Creeds and Reformed confessions**

1) Ecumenical creeds
   a) Apostles’ creed - www.cprf.co.uk/languages/apostles_japanese.htm#.W7a6UhMzZT
   b) Nicene creed - www.cprf.co.uk/languages/nicene_japanese.html#.W7a6pRMzZTY
   c) Athanasian creed - www.cprf.co.uk/languages/athanasian_japanese.html#.W7a7DxMzZTY

2) Westminster Standards
   a) cms.chorokyokai.jp/index.php/archives/text_a_top/1/
   b) English - www.pcaac.org/resources/wcf/

3) Three Forms of Unity
   a) Belgic Confession (English) - www.urnea.org/1651/file_retrieve/23907
   b) Canons of Dort - archive.org/details/westminsterassem00west_0/page/n0
   c) Heidelberg Catechism - www.jesus-web.org/heidelberg/index.htm

**Doctrine of Scripture**

Scripture (original autographs) describes itself as God's words given through inspired writers. Though they are written by humans, they are God's very words. They are not merely humanity's testimonies or merely contain God's revelation, but are in every word, God's word.

Scripture itself also describes the manner in which the Scriptures were recognized to be God's words. Each book was given by a prophet or apostle (Heb 1:1-2; Eph 2:20). Therefore, the authority of the Scriptures upon our lives is largely rooted in the authority that the office of the prophets and apostles, from which the Scriptures historically originated, also possessed (Belgic 3). Though some of the authors remain unknown to us, Scripture assures us, that a recognized prophet or apostle is the one who has provided the book (Bavinck, Reformed Dogmatics 1:378; Young, "Infallible Word" 68-70, Yeo 246). Others besides a prophet and apostle may have contributed to a book, but it was the prophet or apostle who was responsible for and approved the final product. In other words, the prophet or apostle provided the book. Partly based on the authority of the prophetic or apostolic office (also conformity with previous revelation, fulfilled prophecy, et al.), the book was recognized as God’s word. Thus, the covenant community recognizes the biblical book as authoritative. Broadly speaking, the Scriptures were compiled and recognized in this historical and objective manner.

Liberals and some evangelical Christians hold to a single book of the bible growing over time. Perhaps a prophet or apostle wrote the initial core of the book, but over time, other "inspired" authors or editors added to and changed this initial core (ABD 482ff). Evangelical Christians who hold to this view appeal to providential divine sovereignty as directing this manner of Scripture's compilation. However, in this manner of compilation, the church becomes the de facto authority of the authenticity of Scripture as God's words. Otherwise, why accept the later edition as authoritative but not the earlier (Bavinck,
Reformed Dogmatics 1:424-9)? The covenant community would not have recognized a book as divinely inspired unless it had been already affiliated with the authoritative prophetic or apostolic office (Deut 18:15ff; cf. Exod 4:16; 7:1f.; Yeo 277-8; Kline Structure 58). This places the authority of Scripture on the objective and infallible ground of God’s word rather than on the ground of the judgment of a subjective and fallible covenant community.

Exceptional cases of modifications and additions to the text do exist. These are of minor significance and numerically minimal (i.e. modernization of language, updating of name and places, glosses, additional information). Also, these exceptions may be text-critical issues and so may not have been in the original autographs. If they do exist in the original autographs, they should not then be made the rule of our doctrine of Scripture. It could then be understood that a prophet or apostle authorized the inspired changes.

Christianity is a historical religion. It is not just doctrine that matters; it is not just a philosophy. The idea cannot be dissociated from history. One of the authoritative grounds for the Scriptures is that these events happened in time and space. So Christianity is dependent on historical events and facts. Without history, Christianity is useless, false, and worthless (1 Cor 15:12-19).
OT Text Criticism

(Brotzman 29)
ca. 1400-400 BCE. OT written from time of Moses to Malachi.
Selected Textual Evidence

Prior to 300 BCE: No textual evidence.
300 BCE – 135 CE: Judean desert scrolls which includes the Qumran scrolls (www.deadseascrolls.org). Contains MT, SP, LXX evidence.
300 – 400: Codex B (Vaticanus) is best complete LXX manuscript.
350: Codex S (Sinaiticus) oldest combined LXX and NT (www.codexsinaiticus.org/en/).
1000 – 1450: Leningrad Codex dated 1009. Corrected to a Ben Asher manuscript. Very close to Aleppo Codex (Tov 45). Base text for BHS/BHQ. Oldest full manuscript.
(Brotzman 22)

Exegesis

Exegesis = Analysis of the text’s grammatical relations, historical context, literary form, and canonical context to ascertain the text’s meaning for the original audience and for today (i.e. grammatical-historical, literary, redemptive-historical, covenantal, Christocentric, apostolic exegesis). Most of exegesis is intuitive.

In the past, exegesis and hermeneutics were strictly distinguished. Hermeneutics is defined as the rules and procedures governing interpretation (i.e. application). In recent times, exegesis and hermeneutics have become somewhat blurred. Due to their natural overlapping, hermeneutics will inevitably arise from exegesis; the spiritual difficulties the original audience had also apply to today’s world.

Ultimately, it will always be the Holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit alone that will gift you with the true meaning of the text. But God works through means, and without understanding the above aspects of the text, the meaning you glean from the text will always be wanting. So always depend on the Holy Spirit and give God the glory for any fruit that comes from your exegetical labors.

Grammatical-historical exegesis

This method is based upon the presupposition that knowledge of the grammatical uses (vocabulary, grammar, etc.) and historical context of the text are necessities in rightly understanding the text’s meaning. The goal of this method is to understand the text’s meaning as the author intended to convey it to the original audience. This method, while always present, became more prominent during the Reformation. The Reformers were opposing the allegorical hermeneutic that was common in the church at the time. Allegory gives the interpreter almost free reign in their interpretation. The grammatical-historical method provided necessary controls to ascertain the meaning of the text as the author intended.

Literary exegesis

This method could also be understood as a logical outworking of the grammatical-historical method. However, it will be treated separately here for the sake of clarity.
Literary exegesis recognizes Scripture as literature and so analyzes native literary conventions to ascertain meaning from the text. Literary conventions include genre, prose (narrative prose = plot, characters, setting, point of view), poetry (terse, minimal conjunctions, parallelism, ellipsis, imagery, structure, chiasm, acrostics, etc.), etc. (Longman DOTTE 1:114-23).

Parallelism = generally speaking, “(t)he characteristic movement is one of heightening or intensification, …, of focusing, specification, concretization, even what may be called dramatization. …the general term occurs in the first verset and a more specific instance of the general category in the second verset (Alter Poetics 444).”

**Redemptive-historical/covenantal/Christocentric exegesis**

Redemptive history recognizes that God is working redemption for His people within and throughout history. This redemption is promised and administered in history through covenants. Recognizing the covenant era of which the text was under is of paramount importance in rightly understanding the meaning for its original audience, and also for rightly understanding its application for us today. This will be further explained below.

This method also recognizes that the person and work of Christ Jesus is the center and culmination of redemptive history and, therefore, Christ Jesus is the beginning, middle, and end, the Alpha and Omega of all Scripture (Luke 18:31-33; 22:37; 24:13-53; John 5:46-47; Eph 1:9-10; 1 Peter 1:10-11; etc.); “(c)entrally, the Old Testament is a book about Christ, and more specifically, about his sufferings and the glories that will follow—that is, it is a book about the promise of a coming Messiah through whose sufferings God will establish his glorious, eternal kingdom. (Duguid, “Seeing Christ” 17)” This means that when reading the OT rightly, without allegory or manipulation, each passage (but not necessarily every isolated verse) leads us to Christ (Duguid, Seeing Christ, 19).

There are proponents of a Christotelic view. They advocate two readings of the OT. The first reading is a grammatical-historical reading that requires a non-Christocentric reading, to do so would “impose” a reading upon the original human authors that they never intended. Only after such a first reading is a second, Christotelic reading made. This reading applies the passage to Christ. However, this is deeply flawed, the entire Scripture is and always was Christocentric. Although we can affirm that the human authors who wrote the OT may not have fully understood every aspect of their writing as Christocentric, we affirm that the ultimate, divine author did.¹ Yes, the OT is Christotelic, but only because it is Christocentric (Gaffin, Seeing Christ, 86).

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¹ “Even this commitment to original meaning cannot be made supreme in application to the Word of God. The prophetic richness of Old Testament Christology goes beyond any grounding in the address to Israel. There was much that even David the king did not understand in his own writings (Clowney, “Preaching Christ,” 624-626).”
**Apostolic exegesis**

Of course, the primary reason that a redemptive-historical/covenantal/Christocentric exegesis should be utilized is because it is demonstrated in the Scriptures. We can see this most clearly in the NT. So this section will briefly explain this methodology of the NT writers.

Five presuppositions of NT writers (Beale, Seeing Christ, 28-9; Beale Handbook, 53).
1. Assumed corporate solidarity or representation.
2. Christ represents the true Israel of the OT (Isa 49:3; etc.) and the church as the true Israel of the NT (Gal 3:16; etc.).
3. History is unified by a wise and sovereign plan so that the earlier events are designed to correspond and point to the latter events.
4. The age of eschatological fulfillment has come in Christ.
5. As a consequence of the preceding presupposition, the NT holds that the latter parts of biblical history function as the broader context in which to interpret earlier parts because the various authors all have one divine author inspiring them. So Christ is both the goal to which the Old Testament points and the end-time center of redemptive history, which is the key to interpreting the earlier portions of the Old Testament and its promises.

These five presuppositions should always be in the background of your exegesis.²

**Typology**

An important aspect of the above presuppositions is typology. Typology = the analogical correspondences among persons, events, institutions, and other things to its antitype within the historical framework of God’s special revelation that, from a retrospective view, are of a prophetic nature (Beale, Handbook, 14).³

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² “Some hold that Jesus and the NT writers used noncontextual hermeneutical methods in interpreting the OT texts. So some say their conclusions were correct but their methodology was flawed and so should not be followed (Beale Handbook, 1-2).”

³ “A symbol is in its religious significance something that profoundly portrays a certain fact or principle or relationship of a spiritual nature in a visible form. The things it pictures are of present existence and present application. They are in force at the time in which the symbol operates.”

“A typical thing is prospective; it relates to what will become real or applicable in the future.”

“The things symbolized and things typified are not different sets of things. They are in reality the same things, only different in this respect that they come first on a lower stage of development in redemption, and then again, in a later period, on a higher stage. Thus what is symbolical with regard to the already existing edition of the fact or truth becomes typical, prophetic, of the later, final edition of that same fact or truth. From this it will be perceived that a type can never be a type independently of its being first a symbol. The gateway to the house of typology is at the farther end of the house of symbolization. This is the fundamental rule to be observed in ascertaining what elements in the Old Testament are typical, and wherein the things corresponding to them as antitypes consist. Only after having discovered what a thing symbolizes, can we legitimately proceed to put the question what it typifies, for the latter can never be aught else than the former lifted to a higher plane. The bond that holds type and antitype together must be a
A type has five characteristics:

1. Analogical correspondence to its antitype.
2. Historicity
3. A pointing-forwardness to its antitype (i.e. an aspect of foreshadowing or presignification).
4. Escalation to its antitype.
5. Retrospection from its antitype.

So not everything is a type. Also, a type cannot be a mere symbol representing a general truth or idea, it must look be forward-looking to a specific and greater fulfillment in its antitype.

*Clowney's Triangle*

The above Triangle is not an exact method but is helpful in giving a visual understanding of typology. For example, when considering the Garden of Eden, Tabernacle, and Temple, they each would be considered an OT concept (E). Each of these places, though distinct, have the same basic essence throughout Scripture, they all serve as God’s dwelling place. This OT truth ($T^1$) is distributed throughout the history of redemption. However, its antitype, that is, its fulfillment, is to be found in the New Heavens and New Earth ($T^n$). This $T^n$ is what the OT concepts have been foreshadowing. Though each concept in redemptive history$^4$ symbolized the New Heavens and New Earth, they do not merely symbolize them. In their respective space and time, each was also God’s dwelling place, though in a reduced form compared to the New Heavens and the New Earth.

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$^4$ The New Covenant church could also be included in this list.
Without typology, one of the errors that can easily arise is moralism. As seen in the triangle, moralism takes $E$, recognizes its truth ($T^1$), but then immediately applies it to today. For example, taking the Jerusalem Temple, a moralistic sermon may exhort Christians today to build a temple in Jerusalem. Some dispensational exegesis fall under this category.\(^6\)

Another possible error is allegory. Allegory takes $E$ and immediately assigns it a meaning to today without relating its meaning to its original readers or finding its typological fulfillment. For example, David’s five stones he picked up to battle Goliath are faith, obedience, service, prayer, and the Holy Spirit. Such a sermon would then exhort Christians today to use these “five stones” to battle our sin. Although this may be doctrinally orthodox, it is exegetically faulty.

\(^5\) “Only a moment’s reflection is necessary to prove that this is untenable, and that precisely from a broad historical standpoint Paul had far more accurately grasped the purport of the law than his opponents. The law was given after the redemption from Egypt had been accomplished, and the people had already centered upon the enjoyment of many of the blessings of the berith. Particularly their taking possession of the promised land could not have been made dependent on previous observance of the law, for during their journey in the wilderness many of its precepts could not be observed. It is plain, then, that law-keeping did not figure at that juncture as the meritorious ground of life-inheritance. The latter is based on grace alone, no less emphatically than Paul himself places salvation on that ground. But, while this is so, it might still be objected, that law-observance, if not the ground for receiving, is yet made the ground for retention of the privileges inherited. Here it can not, of course, be denied that a real connection exists. But the Judaizers went wrong in inferring that the connection must be meritorious, that, if Israel keeps the cherished gifts of Jehovah through observance of His law, this must be so, because in strict justice they had earned them. The connection is of a totally different kind. It belongs not to the legal sphere of merit, but to the symbolico-typical sphere of appropriateness of expression (Vos BT 127).”

\(^6\) Dispensationalism does not rightly appreciate the continuity of God’s redeeming work throughout redemptive-history (Clowney, “Preaching Christ,” 481-483).