

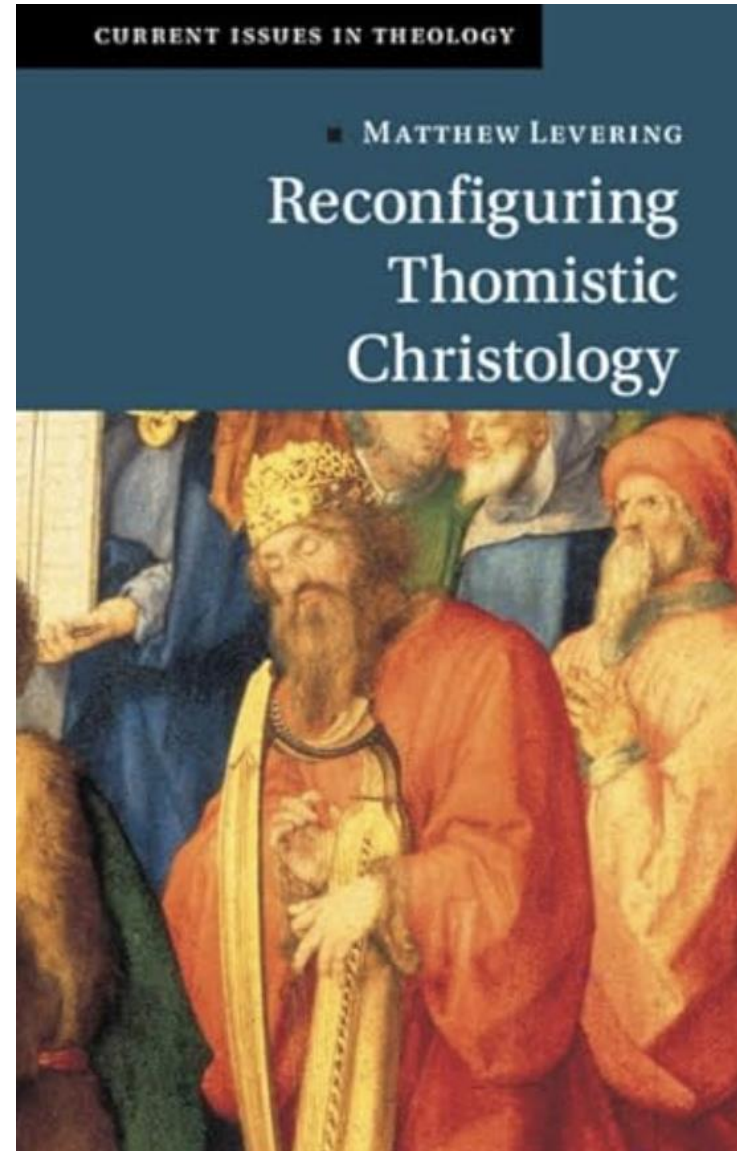
CHRIST THE NEW DAVID

Christology in St. Thomas Aquinas

Mysteria Lucis, January 2025



Key Source:
Levering, Matthew.
*Reconfiguring
Thomistic
Christology*. *Current
Issues In Theology*.
New York:
Cambridge
University Press,
2022.



KEY QUESTION

- What is the relationship between our study of St. Thomas' scholastic theology and our understanding of contemporary biblical scholarship?

INTRODUCTION

- Source text for this presentation:
Matthew Levering, *Contemporary Thomistic Christology*
 - Discusses the revival in Thomistic Christology since the 1990s
 - Interweaves Thomistic Christology with contemporary New Testament scholarship
 - Proposes directions for ongoing study in the Thomistic tradition

BACKGROUND

- 20th century criticisms of Thomistic Christology – rejection of its Aristotelean/metaphysical components
- Recovery of Thomistic Christology as a necessary component in understanding the incarnation and Lordship of Christ
- Movement towards a study that integrates scholastic Christology with contemporary biblical scholarship

...In the present book I place emphasis on “in and through such [historical] considerations.” It seems to me that a new scholastic Christology will need to be sure to avoid mere prooftexting of scriptural and other sources; it will need to be sure to give ample room to the voice and narratives of Scripture and to the arguments (rather than simply the conclusions) of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church (Levering, 2023, 53)

TYOLOGY IN
CONTEMPORARY
BIBLICAL
STUDIES

- Study of narrative and verbal parallels between the Old Testament type (partial fulfillment of truth) and New Testament antitype (full fulfillment)

LEVERING'S APPROACH

- Integration of Thomistic Christologies with typological Christologies:

Exploring in more detail the various Thomistic Christological emphases would also strengthen my case that the typological Christologies truly refer to the ontological reality of Christ and his saving work, rather than being mere metaphors or implausible stories. In addition, expanding the above discussion of contemporary Thomistic Christology could assist in demonstrating how the New Testament typologies themselves enrich our understanding of Christ and salvation (Levering, 2023, 59)

- We will focus today on Christ the New David



NEW DAVID CHRISTOLOGY IN LUKE

Nature of the Davidic Monarchy:

- 1) the Davidic monarchy was founded upon a divine covenant;
- (2) was the Son of God;
- (3) the Christ;
- (4) was linked to Jerusalem, particularly Mount Zion;
- (5) was bound to the temple;
- (6) ruled over the twelve tribes;
- (7) ruled over an international empire; and
- (8) was everlasting.

Hahn, "Kingdom and Church in Luke-Acts: From Davidic Christology to Kingdom Ecclesiology."

TRIAD DISCUSSION

- Review the *Jesus as the Shepherd-King in Luke* chart (handout pp. 1-2)
- In what way is Luke presenting Jesus as the Shepherd-King?
 - What links stand out as significant?
 - Are there any parallels you would add?

NEW DAVID
CHRISTOLOGY
IN JOHN

- David is mentioned only once directly in St. John's gospel; however, other Davidic references/echoes are present

NEW DAVID CHRISTOLOGY IN JOHN

Old Testament (1 & 2 Samuel; Narratives of the Davidic Kingdom; Prophetic Texts)

2 Samuel 15-18 – David’s betrayal by his son Absalom (betrayal by a close confidant, Ahithophel advises seizing David by night so that followers will flee, David ascends with his followers to the Mount of Olives).

Ahithophel counsels those who follow Absalom to “seek the life of only one man [David], and all the people will be at peace” (2 Sam 17:3).

God’s covenant with Solomon as the Davidic Son- “I will be his father, and he shall be my son; I will not take my merciful love from him.” (1 Chronicles 17:13)

Gospel of St. John

Contains intertextual references to 2 Samuel 15-18 (Jesus is betrayed by a close confidant, he is seized at night, his followers flee, Jesus is at the Mount of Olives on the night of his arrest)

Caiaphas advises that ““it is expedient for you that one man should die for the people” so that “the whole nation should not perish” (Jn 11:50).

Jesus is the true Davidic Son; emphasized in the Farewell Discourse – e.g., “I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father” (Jn 14:31).

NEW DAVID CHRISTOLOGY IN ST. JOHN

- St. John's passion narrative repeatedly emphasizes that Jesus is king- "the King of the Jews" (Jn 18:39); "Hail, King of the Jews!" (Jn 19:3); "Here is your King! ... Shall I crucify your King?" (Jn 19:14-15); "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews" (Jn 19:19); "This man said, 'I am King of the Jews'" (Jn 19:21)
- Jesus' burial is presented as a royal burial - "Nicodemus ... came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds' weight" (Jn 19:39)

EXAMPLES OF NEW DAVID
CHRISTOLOGY IN ST. THOMAS
AQUINAS (1):

OSANNA FILIO DAVID

EXAMPLES OF NEW DAVID
CHRISTOLOGY IN ST.
THOMAS AQUINAS (2):

Commentary on St. John

FURTHER INTEGRATION OF NEW DAVID CHRISTOLOGY INTO THE SUMMA (TERTIA PARS)

- Levering notes that New David Christology appears infrequently in the *Summa theologiae*.
 - e.g., in the *secunda pars*, 1 Samuel appears 26 times; Psalms appears 319 times
 - 2 Samuel 7 and 1 Chronicles 17 (which describe the Davidic Covenant) are not used in the *secunda pars* or *tertia pars*; Aquinas does not cite such Davidic texts when exploring Christ's Kingship
 - In total, 1-2 Samuel appear 8 times in the *tertia pars*
- This provides space for deeper integration of the New David into the Christology outlined by Aquinas in the *Summa theologiae*

INTEGRATION OF NEW DAVID CHRISTOLGOY INTO THE SUMMA (TERTIA PARS)

Question	Topic	New David Christology
7	Christ's grace and virtue	Righteousness and piety of David
7	Christ's headship	Expansion of references to David to connect more strongly to Christ's Davidic Kingship
46-59	Cross, Resurrection, and Ascension, as well as to his sitting at the right hand of the Father and judiciary power	Deeper integration of Christ reigning and judging as the New David
47, article 2	Suffering and obedience of Christ	David's suffering and obedience in I Samuel, I Chronicles, and the Psalms

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

- Levering proposes a synthesis between Thomistic Christology and contemporary biblical scholarship
- We need not view these as in conflict with one another, but rather acknowledge how contemporary biblical studies, such as the typology of Christ the New David, can further expand our understanding