CHAPTER XII

HOW THE NEW TESTAMENT USES THE OLD

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I. The Character of New Testament Usage

1. GENERAL

Old Testament phraseology in the New Testament occurs occasionally as the idiom of a writer whose own patterns of expression have been influenced by the Scriptures (1 Thess. 2:4; 4:5). Most often, however, it appears in the form of citations or intentional allusions or reminiscences. Dr. Hartman suggests three reasons for an author's citation of another: to obtain the support of an authority (Mt. 4:14), to call forth a cluster of associations (Mk. 12:1f.), and to achieve a literary or stylistic effect (Tit. 1:12). He rightly observes that an allusion sometimes can be discerned only after the total context of a passage has been taken into account.

As might be expected in Greek writings, citations from the Old Testament are frequently in agreement with the LXX, the Greek version commonly used in the first century. But they are not uniformly so, and at times they reflect other Greek versions, Aramaic targums, or independent translations of the Hebrew text. Apart from the use of a different text-form, a citation may diverge from the LXX because of a lapse of memory. However, this explanation is often less probable than has been supposed in the past. More frequently, as will be detailed below, citations diverge from the LXX because of deliberate alteration, i.e. by ad hoc translation and elaboration or by the use of a variant textual tradition, to serve the purpose of the New Testament writer. The variations, then, become an important clue to discover not only the writer's interpretation of the individual Old Testament passage but also his perspective on the Old Testament as a whole.

2. INTRODUCTORY FORMULAS

Formulas of quotation, which generally employ verbs of “saying” or “writing,” correspond to those found in other Jewish writings, e.g. the Old Testament, the Qumran scrolls, Philo and the rabbis. They locate the citation with reference to the book or writer or, less frequently, the story (“in Elijah,” Rom. 11:2; “at the bush,” Mk. 12:26). At times they specify a par-
ticular prophet (Acts 28:25), a specification that on occasion may be impor-
tant for the New Testament teaching. When one book is named and
another cited, the formula may represent an incidental error or, more likely,
the cited text may be an interpretation (Mt. 27:9) or elaboration (Mk. 1:2)
of a passage in the book named.

Introductory formulas often underscore the divine authority of the Old
Testament, not in the abstract but within the proper interpretation and
application of its teaching. Thus, the formula “Scripture (γραφή) says” can
introduce an eschatological, i.e. “Christianized” summation or elaboration
of the Old Testament (Jn. 7:38; Gal. 4:30), and γραφή can be contrasted to
traditional interpretations (Mt. 22:29). That is, it implies that the
revelational, “Word of God” character of Scripture is present within the
current interpretation. In the words of Renée Bloch, Scripture “always con-
cerns a living word addressed personally to the people of God and to each of
its members. . . .” The formula “it is written” can also have the intended
connotation of a specific and right interpretation of Scripture (Rom. 9:33;
11:26) even though the connotation may not always be true (Mt. 4:6).

Sometimes an explicit distinction between reading Scripture and knowing
or hearing Scripture may be drawn. It is present in the story of the Ethiopian
eunuch (Acts 8:30) and, implicitly, in Jesus’ synagogue exposition at
Nazareth (Lk. 4:16f., 21). It may be presupposed, as it is in rabbinical
writings, in the formula “have you not (ἐδώκα) read?” That is, “you have
read but have not understood.” This formula is found in the New Testament
only on the lips of Jesus and usually within a Scriptural debate or
exposition.

A few formulas are associated with specific circles within the Christian
community. The nine λέγει κύριος (‘says the Lord’) quotations probably
reflect the activity of Christian prophets. The ἵνα πληρωθῇ (‘that it might
be fulfilled’) quotations, found especially in the Gospels of Matthew and
John, may have a similar origin. Both kinds of quotations contain
creatively altered text-forms that facilitate an eschatological re-application
of the Old Testament passages, similar to that found in the Qumran
scrolls, to the experiences and understanding of the early church. This is a
kind of activity recognized in first century Judaism to be appropriate to
prophets as well as to teachers.

Somewhat similar are the πιστοὶ δὲ λόγος (‘faithful is the word’) passages
in the Pastoral letters. They appear to be instructions of Christian
prophets (cf. 1 Tim. 4:1, 6, τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως) and/or inspired teachers,
used by Paul in the composition of the letters. Although they do not contain
Old Testament quotations, some of these “faithful sayings” may refer to the
exposition of the Old Testament. They appear to arise out of a prophetic
circle engaged in a ministry of teaching.

3. FORMS AND TECHNIQUES IN QUOTATION

(a) Combined quotations of two or more texts appear frequently in a
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variety of forms: a chain of passages (Rom. 15:9-12), a commentary pattern (Jn. 12:38-40; Rom. 9-11) and composite or merged citations (Rom. 3:10-18; 2 Cor. 6:16-18). With the exception of the last type these patterns were commonly employed in Judaism. 18 They serve to develop a theme and perhaps exemplify the principle in Dt. 19:15 that two witnesses establish a matter. Sometimes (Rom. 10:18-21), in the fashion of the rabbis, they bring together citations from the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. Such combinations usually were formed in conjunction with catchwords important for the theme (e.g. “stone,” “chosen” in 1 Pet. 2:6-9).

(b) Testimonia. Citations “testifying” to the messiahship of Jesus were of special interest to the early church. Sometimes they appear as combined quotations (Heb. 1), combinations that possibly lie behind other New Testament citations. 19 Such “testimonies” were primarily thematic combinations for instructional and apologetic purposes and, as the testimonia at Qumran indicate (4Qtest), some may have circulated in written form during the apostolic period. However, the hypothesis that they were collected in a pre-canonical “testimony book,” used by the Church in anti-Jewish apologetic, 20 is less likely.

The “testimonies” apparently presuppose a worked-out christological understanding of the particular passages and are not simply proof texts randomly selected. The earliest Christians, like twentieth century Jews, could not, as we do, simply infer from traditional usage the “Christian” interpretation of a biblical word or passage. Proof texts standing alone, therefore, would have appeared to them quite arbitrary if not meaningless.

According to a thesis of C. H. Dodd 21 the “testimony” quotations were selected from and served as pointers to larger Old Testament contexts that previously and as a whole had been christologically interpreted. For example, Mt. 1:23 in citing Is. 7:14 probably has in view the total section, Is. 6:1-9:7, as the additional phrase “God with us” (Is. 8:8, 10 LXX) and the frequent use of Is. 6-9 elsewhere in the New Testament indicate. Dodd correctly perceived that the testimonia were the result of “a certain method of biblical study” (p. 126). But what precisely was that method? It may well have included, as Dodd thought, a systematic christological analysis of certain sections of the Old Testament. Beyond this, however, the method probably corresponded to a form and method of scriptural exposition used in contemporary Judaism and known to us as midrash.

4. QUOTATION AND MIDRASH

(a) The Hebrew term “midrash” has the meaning “commentary” (cf. 2 Ch. 13:22; 24:27), and in the past it has usually been associated with certain rabbinic commentaries on the Old Testament. Recently it has been used more broadly to designate an activity as well as a literary genre, a way of expounding Scripture as well as the resulting exposition. 22 Thus, “the house of midrash” (Sirach 51:23) was a place where such exposition was carried on (and not a library of commentaries). According to Miss Bloch (op. cit.,
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note 9) the essence of the midrashic procedure was a contemporization of Scripture in order to apply it to or make it meaningful for the current situation. It can be seen, then, in interpretive renderings of the Hebrew text (= implicit midrash), e.g. the Greek LXX\(^\text{23}\) and the Aramaic targums, as well as in more formal "text + exposition" pattern (= explicit midrash), e.g. the rabbinic commentaries.\(^\text{24}\) Both kinds of midrash appear in first-century Judaism in the literature of the Qumran community.

(b) In the use of the Old Testament by the New, implicit midrash appears in double entendre, in interpretive alterations of Old Testament citations and in more elaborate forms. The first type involves a play on words. Thus, Mt. 2:23 cites Jesus’ residence in Nazareth as a “fulfilment” of prophecies identifying the Messiah as a \(\text{Na}_\zeta\omega\rho\alpha\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\) (= ?Nazirite, Jud. 13:5, 7 LXX) or a \text{neter} (= branch, Is. 11:1; cf. 49:6; 60:21).\(^\text{25}\) Possibly the double meaning of “lift up” in Jn. 3:14; 12:32ff., i.e. hang and exalt, alludes to an Aramaic rendering (\(z^\prime kaph\)) of Is. 52:13, which carries both meanings; the terminology is clarified in the Synoptic Gospels where Jesus prophesies that he is to “be killed and rise” (Mk. 8:31; cf. Lk. 18:31).\(^\text{26}\) A similar double entendre may be present in Acts 3:22–26 where “raise up” apparently is used both of Messiah’s pre-resurrection ministry and of his resurrection.

The second type can be seen in Rom. 10:11:

> For the Scripture says, “Everyone (\(\pi\alpha\zeta\)) who believes on him shall not be put to shame.”

The word “everyone” is not in the Old Testament text; it is Paul’s interpretation woven into the citation and fitting it better to his argument (10:12f.). Similarly, in the citation of Gen. 21:10 at Gal. 4:30 the phrase “son of the free woman” is substituted for “my son Isaac” in order to adapt the citation to Paul’s application. More elaborate uses of the same principle will be discussed below.

More complex forms of implicit midrash occur (1) in making a merged or composite quotation from various Old Testament texts, altered so as to apply them to the current situation, and (2) in the description of a current event in biblical phraseology in order to connect the event with the Old Testament passages. Contemporized composite quotations appear, for example, in 1 Cor. 2:9; 2 Cor. 6:16–18. The use of Scriptural phraseology to describe and thus to explain the meaning of current and future events is more subtle and reflects a different focus: the event appears to be of primary interest and the Old Testament allusions are introduced to illumine or explain it. This kind of midrash occurs, for example, in the Lucan infancy narratives, in Jesus’ apocalyptic discourse and his response at his trial and in the Revelation of St. John.\(^\text{27}\)

In the infancy narratives the Annunciation (Lk. 1:26–38) alludes to Is. 6:1–9:7 – e.g. 7:13f. (27, \(\pi\alpha\theta\delta\epsilon\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\), \(\epsilon\xi\ \omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\ \Delta\omicron\iota\omicron\omicron\omicron\)) ; 7:14 (31); 9:6f. (32, 35) – a section that C. H. Dodd has shown to be a primary source for early Christian exegesis.\(^\text{28}\) It probably also alludes to Gen. 16:11 (31); 2 Sam. 7:12–16 (32, ?35, \(\nu\omicron\omicron\ Θεον\)); Dan. 7:14 (33b); and Is. 4:3; 62:12 (35, \(\acute{\alpha}m\nu\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\omicron\)}
The Magnificat (1:46–55) and the Benedictus (1:68–79) appear to be formed along the same lines. It is probable that family traditions about the events surrounding Jesus’ birth were given this literary formulation by prophets of the primitive Jerusalem church.29

The response of our Lord at his trial (Mk. 14:62 par) is given by the Gospels in the words of Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13. It probably represents a summary of Jesus’ known response, a summary in biblical words whose “messianic” exegesis either had been worked out in the Christian community or, more likely, had been taught to the disciples by Jesus. That Jesus made use of both Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13 in his preresurrection teaching is highly probable.30

The apocalyptic discourse (Mk. 13 par), which also includes the use of Dan. 7:13, apparently consists of a midrash of Jesus on certain passages in Daniel, a midrash that has been supplemented by other sayings of the Lord and reshaped by the Evangelists and their predecessors “into something of a prophetic tract” linked to the Church’s experiences. In the course of transmission the midrash “lost many of its once probably explicit associations with the OT text”.31 If this reconstruction is correct, it shows not only how teachings of Jesus were contemporized in a manner similar to the midrashic handling of Old Testament texts but also how our Lord’s explicit midrash was modified so that the Old Testament references, although not lost, were largely assimilated to the current application. The process is much more thoroughgoing than is the case in the composite quotations cited above.

These examples suggest that implicit midrash sometimes presupposes and develops out of direct commentary on the Old Testament, i.e. explicit midrash. We may now turn to that form of the early Christian usage.

(c) Explicit midrash in the New Testament has affinities both with the pesher midrash at Qumran and with certain kinds of midrash found in rabbinic expositions. The ancient expositions of the rabbis are preserved in sources that date from several centuries after the New Testament writings.32 However, in their general structure they provide significant parallels for early Christian practice since (1) it is unlikely that the rabbis borrowed their methods of exposition from the Christians and (2) similar patterns may be observed in the first-century Jewish writer, Philo.33 They probably originated not only as “sermon” or “homily” but also as “commentary,” that is, not only as the complement of the synagogue worship but also as the product of the synagogue school.34 The type of discourse that finds most affinity with New Testament expositions is the “proem” midrash.35 As used in the synagogue, it ordinarily had the following form:

The (Pentateuchal) text for the day.
A second text, the proem or “opening” for the discourse.
Exposition containing additional Old Testament citations, parables or other commentary and linked to the initial texts by catch-words.
A final text, usually repeating or alluding to the text for the day.
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The general outline of this pattern, with some variation, occurs rather frequently in the New Testament. Without the text for the day, it appears in Heb. 10:5–39:

5–7
- Initial text: Ps. 40:7–9.

8–36
- Exposition containing additional citations (16f., 30) and linked to the initial text by catchwords: θναία (8, 26), προσαφέων (8, 10, 14, 18), περί ἀμαρτίας (8, 18, 26), ἀμαρτία (17).

37–39
- Final text and application alluding to the initial text with the verbs ἐκεῖν and εὐδοκεῖν: Is. 26:20; Hab. 2:3f.

The pattern is expressed more specifically in Rom. 9:6–29:

6f.
- Theme and initial text: Gen. 21:12.

9
- A second, supplemental text: Gen. 18:10.

10–28
- Exposition containing additional citations (13, 15, 17, 25–28) and linked to the initial texts by the catch-words καλεῖν and νείς (12, 24f., 27).

29
- A final text alluding to the initial text with the catchword σπέρμα.

A less complex form occurs in 1 Cor. 1:18–31. Here the second, supplemental text has been merged with the initial text; and the final text, the only subsequent citation, does not allude to the opening text:

18–20

20–30
- Exposition linked to the initial and final texts by the catchwords σοφός (26f.), σοφία (21f., 30), μωρός (25, 27), μωρία (21, 23), καυχάσθαι (29).

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In 1 Cor. 2:6–16 the initial texts are a composite and highly interpreted quotation:

6–9
- Theme and initial texts. Cf. Is. 64:4; 65:16, LXX.

10–15
- Exposition linked to the initial and final texts by the catchwords ἄνθρωπος (11, 14; cf. 13), ἰδεῖν (11f.), γνώσοκεῖν (11, 14).

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Instead of a composite quotation the initial text of the commentary at Gal. 4:21–5:1 is itself a summary of a Genesis passage, an implicit midrash introducing the key word ἑλευθέρα. It is probably Paul's summation, but it might have been drawn from a Genesis midrash similar to Jubilees or to the Qumran Genesis Apocryphon.56

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23–29 - Exposition with an additional citation, linked to the initial and final texts by the catchwords ἐλενθέθα (22, 23, 26, 30), παιδισε (22, 23, 30, 31) and ben/νίας = τέκνον (22, 25, 27, 28, 30, 31).

30ff. - Final text and application, referring to the initial text:

The pattern in 2 Pet. 3:5–13 is similar, although less clear. As in Gal. 4, the initial “text” is a selective summary of a section of Scripture:


7–12 - Exposition (with an additional citation: 8) linked to the initial and final texts by the catchwords σφανός (5, 7, 10, 12), γη (5, 7, 10), ἀπόλλημι (6, 9, cf. 7). Cf. ἡμέρα (7, 8, 10, 12).


The above examples show how a composite, interpreted citation and an interpretive summary of a larger section of Scripture may serve as the “text” in a midrash. The use of short, explicit midrashim as “texts” in a more elaborate commentary-pattern is only an extension of the same practice. One instance of this appears in 1 Cor. 1:18–3:20, which is composed of the following sections, all linked by catchwords, e.g. σφία, μοσία:

1:18–31 - Initial “text.”
2:1–5 - Exposition/Application.
2:6–16 - Additional “text.”
3:1–17 - Exposition/Application.
3:18–20 - Concluding texts: Job 5:13; Ps. 94:11.

The synoptic Gospels also display exegetical patterns similar to those in the rabbis. Mt. 21:33–44 corresponds to an ancient form of a synagogue address:

33 - Initial text: Is. 5:1f.
34–41 - Exposition by means of a parable, linked to the initial and final texts by a catchword λίθος (42, 44, cf. 35; Is. 5:2, saqal); cf. οὐκοδομεῖν (33, 42).

In Lk. 10:25–37 appears a somewhat different pattern, called in the rabbinic writings the yełamedenu rabbenu ("let our master teach us"), in which a question or problem is posed and then answered. Apart from the interrogative opening it follows in general the structure of the proem midrash (see above, p. 203):

25–27 - Dialogue including a question and initial texts: Dt. 6:5; Lev. 19:18.
28 - A second text: Lev. 18:5.

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29–36
- Exposition (by means of a parable) linked to the initial texts by the catchwords πλησίον (27, 29, 36) and ποιεῖν (28, 37a, 37b).

37
- Concluding allusion to the second text (ποιεῖν).

Mt. 15:1–9 is similar:43

1–4
- Dialogue including a question and initial texts: Ex. 20:12; 21:17.

5–6
- Exposition/application linked to the text and/or the dialogue by the catchwords τμεῖν (4, 6, 8), παράδοσις (3, 6), cf. ἐντολή/ἐνταλμα (3, 9).

7–9
- Concluding text: Is. 29:13.

Compare also Mt. 19:3–8:44

3–5
- Question, answered by the initial texts: Gen. 1:27; 2:24.

6
- Exposition linked to the initial text by the catchwords δύο, σάξι μία.

7–8a
- Additional citation (Dt. 24:1), posing a problem, with exposition.

8b
- Concluding allusion to the (interpolated!) initial text (ἀν’ ἀκριβῶς).

As the Gospels uniformly attest, debates with scribes, i.e. theologians, about the meaning of Scripture constituted an important part of Jesus' public ministry. They were certainly more extensive than the Gospel accounts although they may have followed the same general pattern. In any case a ἀγλαμαδευνου pattern known and used by the rabbis is the literary form often employed by the Gospel traditioners.45 In the rabbinical writings the pattern is usually not a dialogue but the Scriptural discourse of one rabbi. In this respect the exegetical structure in Rom. 9–11 is closer to the rabbinic model than are the Gospel traditions.46

Certain differences between rabbinic and New Testament exegesis should also be noted. Unlike the usual rabbinic practice the New Testament midrashim (1) often do not have an initial text from the Pentateuch, i.e. do not employ the sabbath text of the synagogue lectionary cycle. (2) They often lack a second, proem text. (3) They often have a final text that does not correspond or allude to the initial text. (4) They have an eschatological orientation (see below, p. 209f.). Nevertheless, in their general structure they have an affinity with the rabbinic usage that is unmistakable and too close to be coincidental.

(d) A kind of exposition known as the pesher midrash appears in the Qumran writings, e.g. the commentary on Habakkuk. It receives its name from the Hebrew word used in the explanatory formula, "the interpretation (pesher) is." This formula and its apparent equivalent, "this is" (hū’h), sometimes introduce the Old Testament citation (CD 10:16) or, more
characteristically, the commentary following the citation. Both formulas oc­
cur in the Old Testament,\textsuperscript{47} the latter translated in the LXX by the phrase
\(\delta\nu\tau\sigma\varsigma\ (\epsilon\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)\).

Besides the formula, the Qumran \textit{pesher} has other characteristics com­
mon to midrashic procedure. Like the midrashim discussed above, it ap­
parently uses or creates variant Old Testament text-forms designed to adapt
the text to the interpretation in the commentary. It also links text and com­
mentary by catchwords. It is found, moreover, in various kinds of comment­
ary patterns: anthology (4Q\textit{flor}), single quotations (CD 4:14) and con­
secutive commentary on an Old Testament book (1QpHab).

More significantly for New Testament studies, the Qumran \textit{pesher}, unlike
rabbinic midrash but very much like early Christian practice, is both
charismatic and eschatological. As \textit{eschatological exegesis}, it views the Old
Testament as promises and prophecies that have their fulfilment within the
writer’s own time and community, a community that inaugurates the “new
covenant” of the “last (‘ah\textsuperscript{riti}i) days,”\textsuperscript{48} and constitutes the “last (‘ah\textsuperscript{r}n) genera­
tion” before the coming of Messiah and the inbreaking of the
kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{49}

This characteristic feature, the \textit{pesher} formula combined with an es­
chatological perspective, appears in a number of New Testament
quotations:

“In Isaac shall your seed be called” (Gen. 21:12). That is (\(\tau\omicron\nu \omicron\tau \epsilon\omicron\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) ... the
children of the promise are reckoned for the seed. For this is (\(\alpha\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\zeta\)) the word of
promise, “... for Sarah there shall be a son” (Gen. 18:10).

\textit{Rom. 9:7–9}

Do not say in your heart, “who shall ascend into heaven” (Dt. 30:12), that is
(\(\tau\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\epsilon\omicron\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) to bring Christ down...

\textit{Rom. 10:6–8}

“On account of this shall a man leave father and mother and be joined to his
wife, and the two shall be one flesh” (Gen. 2:24). This is (\(\tau\omicron\nu\tau\omicron \epsilon\omicrion\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) a great
mystery ... for Christ and the Church.

\textit{Eph. 5:31f.}

It is written, “Abraham had two sons...” (cf. Gen. 21). These are (\(\alpha\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\alpha\omicrion \epsilon\omicrion\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) two covenants...

\textit{Gal. 4:22–24}

All our fathers were under the cloud... But with many of them God was not
pleased, for they were destroyed in the desert (cf. Ex. 13f.; 16f.; Num. 20; 14).
These things (\(\tau\omicron\nu\tau\omicron\alpha\omicrion\)) happened as types for us...

\textit{1 Cor. 10:1–5, 6f.}

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues... This is (\(\tau\omicron\nu\tau\omicron \epsilon\omicrion\sigma\tau\iota\nu\)) what was spoken by the prophet Joel, “I will pour out my
spirit...” (Joel 2:28).

\textit{Acts 2:4, 16f.}
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Jesus Christ of Nazareth... This is (ὁ στῦλος ἐστιν) "the stone that was rejected by you builders, which has become the head of the corner" (Ps. 118:22).

Acts 4:10f.

The Qumran pesher is regarded by the community as charismatic exegesis, the work of inspired persons such as the Teacher of Righteousness and other wise teachers (maskilim). The Old Testament prophecies are understood, as they are in the book of Daniel (9:2, 22f.; cf. 2:19, 24), to be a “mystery” (raz) in need of interpretation (pesher), an interpretation that only the maskilim can give.50

(e) From midrash to testimonia: “Words lifted from their scriptural context can never be a testimonium to the Jewish mind. The word becomes a testimonium for something or other after one has brought out its meaning with the aid of other parts of Scripture.” 51 With this perceptive observation J. W. Doeve goes beyond the thesis of C. H. Dodd, mentioned above (p. 201), to contend that “testimony” citations in the New Testament are derived from midrashim, i.e. expositions of those particular Old Testament passages.

In support of Doeve are several examples of a “Christian” interpretation of a text that is established in an exposition and presupposed elsewhere in a “testimonia” citation of the same text.52 (1) The exposition in Acts 2:17–35 and that underlying Mk. 13 (see above, p. 203) apply Ps. 110:1 and Dan. 7:13, respectively, to Jesus. This interpretation is presupposed in the use of the verses at Mk. 14:62. (2) Heb. 2:6–9 establishes by midrashic procedures that Ps. 8 is fulfilled in Jesus; in 1 Cor. 15:27 and Eph. 1:20, 22 this understanding of Ps. 8 (and Ps. 110) is presupposed. (3) Acts 13:16–41 is probably a (reworked) midrash in which 2 Sam. 7:6–16 is shown to apply to Jesus.53 This interpretation of 2 Sam. 7 is presupposed in the testimonia in Heb. 1:5 and 2 Cor. 6:18.

The midrashic expositions in these examples are not, of course, the immediate antecedents of the cited testimonia texts. But they represent the kind of matrix from which the “testimony” usage appears to be derived. They show, furthermore, that the prophets and teachers in the early church were not content merely to cite proof texts but were concerned to establish by exegetical procedures the Christian understanding of the Old Testament.

We may proceed one step further. Rabbinic parables often are found in midrashim as commentary on the Old Testament texts. Christ’s parables also occur within an exegetical context, e.g. in Mt. 21:33–44 and Lk. 10:25–37 (see p. 205f.); and elsewhere, when they appear independently or in thematic clusters, they sometimes allude to Old Testament passages.54 Probably such independent and clustered parables originated within an expository context from which they were later detached. Their present context, then, represents a stage in the formation of the Gospel traditions secondary to their use within an explicit commentary format.
II. The Presuppositions of New Testament Interpretation

1. GENERAL

To many Christian readers, to say nothing of Jewish readers, the New Testament's interpretation of the Old appears to be exceedingly arbitrary. For example, Hos. 11:1 ("Out of Egypt I called my son") refers to Israel's experience of the Exodus; how can Mt. 2:15 apply it to Jesus' sojourn in Egypt? In Ps. 8:4ff. the "son of man" (ben-'adam) given "glory" and "dominion" alludes to Adam or to Israel's king; how can Heb. 2:8f. and 1 Cor. 15:27 apply the text to Jesus? If Gen. 15:6 and 2 Sam. 7 are predictions of Israel's future, how can New Testament writers refer them to Jesus and to his followers, who include Gentiles as well as Jews?

As has been shown above, the method used to justify such Christian interpretations of the Old Testament represents a serious and consistent effort to expound the texts. The method itself, of course, may be criticized. But then, our modern historical-critical method also is deficient: although it can show certain interpretations to be wrong, it can achieve an agreed interpretation for virtually no biblical passage. "Method" is inherently a limited instrumentality and, indeed, a secondary stage in the art of interpretation. More basic are the perspective and presuppositions with which the interpreter approaches the text.

The perspective from which the New Testament writers interpret the Old is sometimes stated explicitly, sometimes it can be inferred from their usage. It is derived in part from contemporary Jewish views and in part from the teaching of Jesus and the experience of the reality of his resurrection. Apart from its christological focus, it appears to be governed primarily by four factors: a particular understanding of history, of man, of Israel and of Scripture.

2. SALVATION AS HISTORY

Jesus and his disciples conceive of history within the framework of two ages, this age and the age to come. This perspective appears to have its background in the Old Testament prophets, who prophesied of "the last ('alt rit) days" and "the day of the Lord" as the time of an ultimate redemption of God's people and the destruction of their enemies. It becomes more specific in the apocalyptic writers, who underscored the cosmic dimension and (often) the imminence of the redemption and, with the doctrine of two ages, the radical difference between the present time and the time to come. This point of view is clearly present in the message of the Baptist that "the kingdom of God is at hand" and that the one coming after him, Jesus, would accomplish the final judgment and redemption of the nation (Mt. 3:2, 10ff.).

The two-fold consummation of judgment and deliverance that characterized the teaching of apocalyptic Judaism becomes, in the teaching
of Jesus and his disciples, a two-stage consummation. As "deliverance" the
kingdom of God that Judaism expected at the end of the age is regarded as
already present in the person and work of Jesus. As "judgment" (and final
deliverance) the kingdom awaits the second, glorious appearing of
Messiah. This perspective may be contrasted with that of Platonism and
of apocalyptic Judaism as follows:

Platonism
(and Gnosticism):

Eternity

\[ \uparrow \]

Time

This Age

Age to Come (Kingdom of God)

Judaism:

C \rightarrow P

New Testament:

C \rightarrow \text{+T-} \rightarrow P

Platonic and later Gnostic thought anticipate a redemption from matter,
an escape from time and history at death. The Jewish hope includes a
redemption of matter within time: The present age, from creation (C) to the
coming of Messiah (P), is to be succeeded by a future age of peace and
righteousness under the reign of God. The New Testament's modification of
Jewish apocalyptic rests upon the perception that in the mission, death and
resurrection of Jesus the Messiah the age to come, the kingdom of God, had
become present in hidden form in the midst of the present evil age, although
its public manifestation awaits the parousia (P) of Jesus. Thus, for Jesus
"the kingdom of God does not culminate a meaningless history, but a planned
divine process." Equally, for the New Testament writers faith in Jesus
means faith in the story of Jesus, the story of God's redemptive activity in
the history of Israel that finds its high-point and fulfilment in Jesus.

For this reason the mission and meaning of Jesus can be expressed in the
New Testament in terms of a salvation history "consisting of a sequence of
events especially chosen by God, taking place within an historical
framework." Although the concept \( \alpha i\kappa \alpha i\nu \mu \varepsilon \) as used in Eph. 1:10
represents this idea, that is, a divinely ordered plan, the term "salvation
history" does not itself occur in the New Testament. The concept is most
evident in the way in which the New Testament relates current and future
events to events, persons and institutions in the Old Testament. That
relationship is usually set forth as a typological correspondence.

3. TYPOLOGY

(a) Typological interpretation expresses most clearly "the basic attitude
of primitive Christianity toward the Old Testament." It is not so much a
system of interpretation as, in the phrase of Dr. Goppelt, a "spiritual
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perspective” from which the early Christian community viewed itself. As a hermeneutical method it must be distinguished from τύπος (“model,” “pattern”) as it is widely used in the Greek world.

Only occasionally using the term τύπος, typological interpretation appears, broadly speaking, as covenant typology and as creation typology. The latter may be observed in Rom. 5, where Christ is compared and contrasted with Adam, “a type (τύπος) of the one who was to come” (5:14). The former appears in 1 Cor. 10 where the Exodus events are said to be “types for us”, to have happened “by way of example” (τυπικώς) and to have been written down “for our admonition upon whom the end of the ages has come” (10:6, 11). Covenant typology accords with the Jewish conviction that all of God’s redemptive acts followed the pattern of the Exodus; it is, then, an appropriate way for Jesus and his community to explain the decisive messianic redemption. More generally, covenant typology approaches the whole of Old Testament as prophecy. Not only persons and events but also its institutions were “a shadow of the good things to come.”

New Testament typology is thoroughly christological in its focus. Jesus is the “prophet like Moses” (Acts 3:22f.) who in his passion brings the old covenant to its proper goal and end (Rom. 10:4; Heb. 10:9f.) and establishes a new covenant (Lk. 22:20, 29). As the messianic “son of David,” i.e. “son of God,” he is the recipient of the promises and ascriptions given to the Davidic kings.

(b) Because the new covenant consummated by Jesus’ death is the occasion of the new creation initiated by his resurrection, covenant typology and creation typology may be combined. As the “eschatological Adam” and the “Son of man,” i.e. “son of Adam,” Jesus stands at the head of a new order of creation that may be compared and contrasted with the present one. This combination in Paul and Hebrews finds its immediate background in the resurrection of Jesus. But it is already implicit in Jesus’ own teaching, e.g. his temple saying, his promise to the robber and his teaching on divorce. It is probably implicit also in his self-designation as the Son of man (Mk. 14:62), a designation that is derived from Ps. 8:4 and Dan. 7:13f., 27. The Son of man in Ps. 8 refers not only to Israel’s (messianic-ideal) king but also to Adam; likewise the Son of man in Dan. 7 is related not only to national restoration but also to a new creation. In apocalyptic Judaism also Israel was associated with Adam and the new covenant with a renewed creation. Jesus and his followers shared these convictions and explained them in terms of the mission and person of Jesus.

(c) The Old Testament type not only corresponds to the new-age reality but also stands in antithesis to it. Like Adam Jesus is the representative headman of the race; but unlike Adam, who brought death, Jesus brings forgiveness and life. Jesus is “the prophet like Moses” but, unlike Moses’ ministry of condemnation, that of Jesus gives righteousness. Similarly, the law “is holy, just and good” and its commandments are to be “fulfilled” by the believer; yet as a demand upon man it can only condemn him. One may speak, then, of “synthetic” and of “antithetic” typology to distinguish
the way in which a type, to one degree or another, either corresponds to or differs from the reality of the new age. 78

(d) Since the history of salvation is also the history of destruction, 79 it includes a judgment typology. The flood and Sodom, and perhaps the A.D. 70 destruction of Jerusalem, become types of God’s eschatological judgment; 80 the faithless Israelite a type of the faithless Christian; 81 the enemies of Israel a type of the (Jewish) enemies of the Church 82 and, perhaps, a type of Antichrist. 83

(e) In a brilliant and highly significant contribution to New Testament hermeneutics Leonard Goppelt has set forth the definitive marks of typological interpretation. 84 (1) Unlike allegory, typological exegesis regards the words of Scripture not as metaphors hiding a deeper meaning (ὑπόγεια) but as the record of historical events out of whose literal sense the meaning of the text arises (pp. 18f., 243ff.). (2) Unlike the “history of religions” exegesis, it seeks the meaning of current, New Testament situations from a particular history, the salvation-history of Israel. From past Old Testament events it interprets the meaning of the present time of salvation and, in turn, it sees in present events a typological prophecy of the future consummation (pp. 235–248). (3) Like rabbinic midrash, typological exegesis interprets the text in terms of contemporary situations, but it does so with historical distinctions that are lacking in rabbinic interpretation (pp. 31–34). (4) It identifies a typology in terms of two basic characteristics, historical correspondence and escalation, in which the divinely ordered prefiguration finds a complement in the subsequent and greater event (p. 244).

In a masterly essay 85 Rudolf Bultmann rejected Goppelt’s conclusion that salvation history was constitutive for typological exegesis and sought to show that the origin of typology lay rather in a cyclical-repetitive view of history (cf. Barnabas 6:13). Although Judaism had combined the two perspectives, the New Testament, e.g. in its Adam/Christ typology, represents a purely cyclical pattern, parallels between the primal time and the end time.

However, Professor Bultmann (pp. 369f.), in interpreting the New Testament hermeneutical usage within the context of the traditional Greek conception, 86 does not appear to recognize that the recapitulation element in New Testament typology is never mere repetition but is always combined with a change of key in which some aspects of the type are not carried over and some are intensified. Exegetically Goppelt made the better case and established an important framework for understanding how the New Testament uses the Old.

4. OTHER PRESUPPOSITIONS

(a) In agreement with the Old Testament conception, the New Testament views man as both individual and corporate existence. It presents the corporate dimension, the aspect most difficult for modern Western man to appreciate, primarily in terms of Jesus and his church. 87 For the New
(b) The early Christian prophets and teachers explain the Old Testament by what may be called charismatic exegesis or, in the words of L. Cerfiaux, "spiritual interpretation." Like the teachers of Qumran, they proceed from the conviction that the meaning of the Old Testament is a "mystery" whose "interpretation" can be given not by human reason but only by the Holy Spirit. On the basis of revelation from the Spirit they are confident of their ability to rightly interpret the Scriptures. Equally, they conclude that those who are not gifted cannot "know" the true meaning of the word of God.

This view of their task does not preclude the New Testament writers from using logic or hermeneutical rules and methods. However, it does disclose where the ultimate appeal and authority of their interpretation lie. Correspondingly, an acceptance of their interpretation of Scripture in preference to some other, ancient or modern, also will rest ultimately not on the proved superiority of their logical procedure or exegetical method but rather on the conviction of their prophetic character and role.

NOTES

4. E.g. 1 Ki. 2:27; 2 Ch. 35:12.
5. E.g. 1 QS 5:15; 8:14; cf. J. A. Fitzmyer in NTS 7 (1960-61), pp. 299-305.
12. Ellis, Paul's Use, pp. 107-112.
13. Stendahl, School, pp. 163, 200f.: "Matthew's formula quotations give evidence of features of text interpretation of an actualizing nature, often closely associated with the context in the gospel." "(They) seem to us ... to be a decisive indication that we must postulate a School of Matthew."
14. Cf. Ellis, Paul's Use, pp. 139-47. See notes 48, 49.
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17. Tit. 1:9, 14; 3:5f.; 8, 1 Tim. 2:13–15; 3:1a.


27. In Revelation no formal quotations occur, but almost 70% of the verses contain allusions to the Old Testament.

28. See note 21.

29. See E. E. Ellis, *The Gospel of Luke* (London 1974), pp. 27ff., 67ff. Lk. 1:5–2.40 is a literary unity and reflects a Hebraic source or sources that were composed in part, at least, from the perspective of a narrator in Jerusalem (e.g. 2:38). The New Testament evidence for the presence in the Jerusalem church of the Virgin Mary and of the brothers of Jesus (Gal. 1:19; Acts 1:14; 12:17; 15:13; 21:18) is not without significance for this matter, even if their presence in diaspora churches also is attested (1 Cor. 9:5; Epiph., *Panarion* 78, 11, 2).


Testament faith in Jesus involves an incorporation into him: 88 It is to eat his flesh (Jn. 6:35, 54), to be his body (1 Cor. 12:27), to be baptized into him (Rom. 6:3), or into his name (1 Cor. 1:13; Acts 8:16), to be identified with him (Acts 9:4f.), to exist in the corporate Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) who is the “tent” (Heb. 9:11) or “house” (2 Cor. 5:1) in the heavens, God’s eschatological temple.

Corporate existence can also be expressed as baptism “into Moses” (1 Cor. 10:2), existence “in Abraham” (Heb. 7:9f.) or “in Adam” (1 Cor. 15:22) and, at its most elementary level, the unity of man and wife as “one flesh” (Mt. 19:5; Eph. 5:29ff.). It is not merely a metaphor, as we are tempted to interpret it, but an ontological statement about who and what man is. The realism of this conception is well expressed by the term “corporate personality.” 89

The corporate extension of the person of the leader to include individuals who belong to him illumines the use of a number of Old Testament passages. It explains how the promise given to Solomon (2 Sam. 7:12–16) can be regarded as fulfilled not only in the Messiah (Heb. 1:5) but also in his followers (2 Cor. 6:18) and, similarly, how the eschatological temple can be identified both with the individual (Mk. 14:58; Jn. 2:19ff.) and corporate (1 Cor. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:5) Christ. It very probably underlies the conviction of the early Christians that those who belong to Christ, Israel’s messianic king, constitute the true Israel. 90 Consequently, it explains the Christian application to unbelieving Jews of Scriptures originally directed to Gentiles 91 and, on the other hand, the application to the church of Scriptures originally directed to the Jewish nation. 92

Corporate personality also offers a rationale whereby individual, existential decision (Mk. 1:17; 2 Cor. 6:2) may be understood within the framework of a salvation history of the nation or the race. These two perspectives are considered by some scholars to be in tension 93 or to be mutually exclusive. 94 However, in the words of Oscar Cullmann, 95 the “now of decision” in the New Testament is not in conflict with the salvation-historical attitude but subordinate to it: “Paul’s faith in salvation history creates at every moment the existential decision.” For it is precisely within the context of the community that the individual’s decision is made: Universal history and individual history cannot be isolated from one another. 96

The history of salvation often appears in the New Testament as the history of individuals – Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Jesus; yet they are individuals who also have a corporate dimension embracing the nation or the race. The decision to which the New Testament calls men relates to them. It is never a decision between the isolated individual and God but is, rather, a decision to “put off the old man” and to “put on the new man,” to be delivered from the corporeity “in Moses” and “in Adam” and to be “immersed in” and to “put on” Christ, i.e. to be incorporated into the “prophet like Moses” and the eschatological Adam of the new creation in whom the history of salvation is to be consummated. 97
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32:6) + Exposition/Application, alluding to the preceding midrash and other texts (8–13). Such midrashic summaries also appear to form the “texts” on which the letter of Jude makes its commentary, e.g. Jude 5 (Nu. 14), 6 (Gn. 6), 7 (Gn. 19), 14f. (1 Enoch 1:9; cf. Gn. 5:22). This is, in effect, midrash on midrash. One can, thus, understand how Jude and others could use an interpretation of biblical material, e.g. 1 Enoch, as a “text” without necessarily regarding the book of Enoch eo ipso as Scripture. The targums provide an analogy in Jewish practice: they set forth an interpretation of Scripture for the synagogue hearers without themselves being given the status of Scripture.


38. See note 35 and, for the structure of 1 Cor. 1:18–31; 2:6–16, above p. 204.


43. D. Daube (The New Testament and Rabbinic Judaism (London 1956), p. 143) regards the passage, Mt. 15:1–20 as an original unity, “one whole from the outset,” with a close parallel in structure to Gn. Rabba 8:9 (on Gn. 1:26) and Nu Rabba 19:8 (on Nu. 19:2). Even so, Mt. 15:1–9 remains an original literary unity, relatively self-contained, and the midrash from which the rest of the passage proceeds.

44. A more complex stating of a problem is found in Mt. 22:23–33 = Mk. 12:18–27, the Sadducees’ question about the resurrection.

45. For the Gospels, as the above examples indicate, the forms in Matthew are at times clearer and closer to the Jewish, rabbinical patterns, i.e. presumably more primitive; those in Mark are at times broken and somewhat dissipated. This raises questions about the source criticism of the Gospels that cannot be discussed here.

46. Cf. the midrash in Rom. 9:13, 14–23 (Ellis, “Exegetical Patterns,” pp. 140f.).


49. CD 1:12; 1QpHab 2:7; 7:2; 4Qlsa 8; Mk. 13:30; cf. Mt. 4:14–17; Acts 2:17; I Cor. 10:11.

52. Cf. Ellis, "Midrash, Targum", pp. 65–69; "Exegetical Patterns", p. 137 (cf. 1 Cor. 1:31 with 2 Cor. 10:17); Michel, *Paulus*, p. 213. Somewhat different perhaps is Hab. 2:4; it appears with Gn. 15:6 = Rom. 4:3 as the initial text of a midrash, Rom. 1:17–4:25, and is apparently interpreted in terms of the exposition of the same text in Gal. 3:6–29.
53. See note 35.
54. E.g. Mk. 4:1–22 (on Je. 4:3); Lk. 15:3–6 (on Ezek. 34:11).
56. E.g. Mt. 12:32; Mk. 10:30; Lk. 20:34f.
61. Ibid., p. 25. Cf. F. F. Bruce, "Salvation History in the New Testament," *Man and his Salvation*, ed. E. J. Sharpe (Manchester 1973), pp. 75–90; W. G. Kümmel, *Promise and Fulfilment* (London 1957), p. 148: "... the New Testament message itself is abrogated if a timeless message concerning the present as a time of decision or concerning the spiritual nearness of God replaces the preaching of the eschatological future and the determination of the present by the future. For this would result in a complete degeneration of Jesus’ message that man . . . is placed in a definite situation in the history of salvation advancing toward the end, and the figure and activity of Jesus would lose their fundamental character as the historical activity of [God] . . ." 
68. Ps. 8:4, ben-'adam; 1 Cor. 15–27, 45; Eph. 1:21f.; Heb. 2:5–10; cf. Lk. 3:38; Acts 6:14; 7:44, 48.
70. Mk. 14:58 (δειμωσωσθενητος); 15:29; Lk. 23:42f. ("kingdom," "Paradise"); Mt. 19:4–9; cf. Lk. 16:16–18.
presented Israel's prehistory within a "Davidic" or "messianic" framework.


74. 1 Cor. 15:22; Rom. 5:12, 15.


76. Gal. 5:14; Rom. 7:12; 13:8: "Love" (Lev. 19:18) is not a substitute for the commandments (Ex. 20) but a means and guide by which they are interpreted and fulfilled. Cf. Heb. 10:1.

77. 2 Cor. 3:6; cf. Gal. 3:10-13. The failure to distinguish, among other things, between the law as an expression of God's righteousness, which it ever continues to be, and the (works of) law as a means of man's salvation, which it is not and never was, leads G. Klein (*Rekonstruktion und Interpretation* (München 1969), p. 210 = *Evangelische Theologie* 24 [1964], 155) to the totally misguided conclusion that for Paul Moses, the giver of the law, is "the functionary of anti-godly powers ... [and] the historical realm based on him is not merely profaned but flatly demonized." Cf. C. E. B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," SJT 17 (1964), pp. 43-68; 'Notes on Rom. 9:30-33", in E. E. Ellis and E. Grässer (ed.), *Jesus und Paulus* (Göttingen 1975), pp. 35-43.

78. Luz, *Paulus*, pp. 59f. E.g. Abraham represents synthetic typology (i.e. his faith) but not antithetic (i.e. his circumcision, Gal. 3). Moses and the Exodus can represent both (Heb. 11:28f.; 1 Cor. 10:1-4, 6-10; 2 Cor. 3:9); so can Jerusalem (Gal. 4:25f.; Rev. 11:8; 21:2). The old covenant, i.e. the law, more often represents antithetic typology.


80. Lk. 17:26-30; 2 Pet. 2:6; Jude 7 (βῆθιμα); Mt. 24:3.

81. 1 Cor. 10:6-11; Heb. 4:5, 11.

82. Rev. 11:8; 17:5; cf. Rom. 2:24; Gal. 4:29.

83. 2 Th. 2:3f.; Rev. 13:1-10.

84. Goppelt, *Typos*. Cf. Cullmann, *Salvation*, pp. 127-135; J. C. K. von Hoffman, *Interpreting the Bible* (Minneapolis 1972 (1880)). Alternative approaches have been advocated by R. E. Brown (*The Sensus Plenior of Sacred Scripture* (Baltimore 1955)), by the existentialist theologians (e.g. M. Rese, *Alttestamentliche Motive in der Christologie des Lukas* (Gütersloh 1969), p. 209; A. Suhl, *Die Funktion der alttestamentliche Zitate ... im Markusevangelium* (Gütersloh 1965), pp. 162-186) and by A. T. Hanson (*Jesus Christ in the Old Testament* (London 1965), pp. 6f., 172-178), who believes that "the real presence of the pre-existent Jesus" best explains, for the most part, this area of New Testament exegesis. Cf. also his Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology (London 1974), pp. 149-158. Whether sensus plenior is only a kind of allegorical interpretation, as J. L. McKenzie thinks (JBL 77, 1958, pp. 202f.), will depend upon the criteria used; cf. R. E. Brown, CBQ 25 (1963), pp. 274ff. Hanson's view does not pose an absolute alternative to typological interpretation, as he admits (p. 177); it also does not appear to do justice to certain aspects of the two-age, apocalyptic framework of New Testament thought. The setting of existential decision in opposition to salvation history (Suhl) is, in my judgement, a false dichotomy. See below, pp. 213.


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Israel (London 1959 (1926), I–II, pp. 263–296, 474–479; III–IV, pp. 76–86; A. R. Johnson, The One and the Many in the Israelite Conception of God (Cardiff 1961), pp. 1–13. J. W. Rogerson (JTS 21, 1970, pp. 1–16) suspects that Robinson’s concept may have been derived from a current theory about primitive man’s thought. The theory may have stimulated Robinson’s work, just as current psychological theory may have stimulated a recognition of the psychosomatic unity of man in Scripture. But it is hardly responsible for the exegetical conclusion that has been established with considerable probability by Robinson, Pedersen, Johnson and others. To set that aside one needs a more persuasive explanation of the texts, a task that Rogerson does not attempt.


92. E.g. 2 Cor. 6:16ff.; Heb. 8:8–12; 1 Pet. 2:9f. The Qumran sect views itself similarly. In 1QM 1:2 the Jewish “offenders” are included among the pagan enemies. Cf. 1QpHab 2:1–4; 4Qtest 22, 29f.


94. Klein, Rekonstruktion, pp. 180–204.

95. Cullmann, Salvation, p. 248.

96. Luz, Paulus, p. 156.


99. 1 Cor. 2:6–16. See notes 15, 50.

100. Cf. Mt. 16:17; Mk. 4:11; Rom. 11:25f.; 12:6f.; 16:25f.; 1 Cor. 2:12f.; Eph. 3:3–6; 2 Pet. 3:15f.

101. Mt. 22:29; 2 Cor. 3:14ff.
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CHAPTER XI

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A. Suhl, *Die Funktion der alttestamentliche Zitate und Anspielungen im Markusevangelium* (Gütersloh: Mohn 1965).


CHAPTER XIII

APPROACHES TO NT EXEGESIS


Every apostle used the Old Testament to explain this great message about Jesus, and many of them wrote it down for us in the New Testament. Some authors were more explicit in their use of the Old Testament than others. And we can learn much from them about how to read the Old Testament ourselves. To that end, I’ve compiled a few lists to help launch you into the delightful world of intertestamental hermeneutics (a big phrase that simply means “how the New Testament authors understood the Old Testament”). These lists won’t give you a complete understanding of the Old Testament and how it speaks. This concise guide by a leading New Testament scholar helps readers understand how to better study the multitude of Old Testament references in the New Testament. G. K. Beale, coeditor of the bestselling Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament, focuses on the “how to” of interpreting the New Testament use of the Old Testament, providing students and pastors with many of the insights and categories necessary for them to do their own exegesis.