The Old Testament Used By New Testament Writers

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Before any thought has been given to the origin of the Bible, a child reared in a Christian home learns that the Bible has two parts which are equally revered as sacred and inspired. He with many others would regard this two-part Book as one of the established facts of life, much like the law of gravity. However, as he through experience and education reaches into the world about him, he learns that the Bible is not like a law of nature or a date in history. He learns further that those who honor the Bible esteem it with various degrees of appreciation. And when he encounters Jews he may be surprised to observe that their Bible has only the first part, the Old Testament. If not by meeting Jews or by seeing their Bible, every Christian will soon or late note that the two divisions of the Bible are not the author's device for arrangement of material, but that each part is the basis for a distinct separate faith. If then the Old Testament is the basis for the Jewish faith, the question is not far distant why it should be a part of the Christian Scriptures. In some manner as here described the problem arises concerning the relationship of the Old Testament to the Christian faith.

Perhaps we should rephrase the problem to inquire what the relationship is between the Old Testament and the New Testament. This has indeed been the problem which has engaged the minds of biblical scholars especially during the past three decades. One may say that this problem is one of the foremost if not the foremost in biblical research today. In classrooms, at meetings of biblical societies and in learned journals the relationship of the two Testaments is critically examined. Solutions for the problem, if any are reached, carry certain qualifications and reservations to indicate the well-nigh impossibility of finding a solution for the complex problem.

Since both Testaments comprise the Bible we accept as the basis for our faith, no difficulty should dissuade us from attempting a discussion for an understanding and clarification of the problem. Surely in view of what we now know about the problem, we should not hope to arrive at a solution fully satisfying to all. However, a discussion carefully undertaken may disclose insights and interpretations of the Bible that shall far outweigh a solution fully or partially achieved.

2
The Background of the New Testament

The New Testament in every book and often on every page acknowledges the Old Testament as the authoritative Word of God. We can readily observe this in the life and teaching of Jesus. When he was assailed by the tempter he quoted the Old Testament as authority for rejecting the temptation (Matt. 4:4-10). Both Jesus and his opponents, whether the devil or the Jews, accepted the Old Testament as the authority to which appeals could be made. In his debate with the Pharisees about the sabbath, Jesus uses the Old Testament to refute his opponents (Matt. 12:1-8). To the perplexed disciples on the way to Emmaus Jesus interpreted his mission by interpreting to them the law of Moses, the prophets and the psalms (Luke 24:44). His ministry found its purpose and goal in the fulfillment of the law and the prophets (Matt. 5:17).

The attack Jesus made on the interpreters of the Old Testament must in no instance be regarded as an attack on the Old Testament itself. The intent of Jesus was to liberate the Old Testament from the bondage of legalism which prevailed in Judaism. He appealed to the spirit of the Law rather than to the letter, for the spirit of the Old Testament was the living authority of the Book. The conflict between Jesus and his opponents brought out a profound respect and understanding of the Old Testament that produced an attitude of mind in the disciples which would on the one hand accept the ancient Scriptures as authoritative and on the other hand interpret them according to the spirit and not according to the letter. In the school of Jesus the disciples learned freedom with reverence: freedom from any form of legalism and reverence for the living Word of God. We are not far afield to assert that Jesus of Nazareth set the standard for the proper appeal to and the use of the Old Testament.

The comment of the people that Jesus taught with authority and not as the scribes (Matt. 7:28f.) indicates that Jesus' method of teaching and interpretation was being contrasted with methods well known to the people. And indeed methods and types of interpretations were current among the Jews, and without doubt these were known to Jesus and the writers of the New Testament. For convenience we may list them as the rabbinic method, the allegorical method of Philo, and the pesher method used at Qumran.

The rabbinic method is well described by the seven rules of Hillel, a renowned rabbi of the first century, which included principles of analogy, of generalization and of context, and may be recognized as common sense principles for understanding any kind of literature. In the application of these rules, however, we observe that rabbinic exegesis did not restrict itself to rules but indulged in much freedom and in fantasy. Clever and pious combinations of texts produced some interesting results. An example of this is about the rock which Moses struck with his staff to produce water in the wilderness. The first mention of the rock is in Exodus 17;

and since the rock also appears in Numbers 20, the conclusion is drawn that the rock journeyed with Israel to serve as a fountain of water which is also mentioned in Numbers 21:16-18. The rabbis therefore spoke of a movable fountain the size of a beehive which was created on the sixth day to be used for Israel's wilderness wanderings. Paul no doubt alluded to this rabbinic teaching in I Corinthians 10 when he identifies this rock with Christ.

Philo of Alexandria, a Jew of the dispersion not under the control of rabbinic tradition, interpreted the Old Testament through Platonic concepts of Greek philosophy. The world of things and of history is but the shadow or form of the world of ideas. The so-called material things of the Old Testament, such as people, places and events, were interpreted through use of the allegory to mean something that belonged to the world of ideas. With this method Philo could change the content of the Old Testament law and history into the ideas of the spirit world. Something akin to Philo's allegory is found in Paul's use of the law of the threshing ox (I Cor. 9:9f.), from which Paul derives the principle that the workman is entitled to his hire. Allegory and typology will be discussed later and therefore it is not necessary here to examine the contrast and similarities between the New Testament method and the allegorical method.

The Qumran pesher has become well known in biblical studies especially because of the Habakkuk scroll found with other Dead Sea scrolls. The author presents a commentary on short portions of Habakkuk often with the introductory formula, pesher ad, "its pesher, interpretation, concerns." He intends to show that the words of the Old Testament prophet were then in process of fulfillment. In fact the prophet spoke in a mystery beyond his own understanding, but God was revealing that mystery to the teacher of righteousness who communicates the full interpretation of the prophet to the Qumran community. At first glance it seems that liberties are taken with the Old Testament text, but on closer examination these so-called liberties fall within a framework of exegetical rules which makes use of changes of letters, text variations and synonyms. The main purpose of the author is to demonstrate that the words of the prophet have their meaning in the experience of the Qumran sect. The fulfillment of Habakkuk is seen in the coming of the Romans, the wickedness of the priest and the appearing of the Teacher of Righteousness. The comment on Hab. 2:4, "The righteous shall live by his faith," points out that the doers of the law escape judgment because of their toil and their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness. The Qumran pesher therefore is much like the method of New Testament writers in that both of them find the Old Testament reaching fulfillment, the one in the Teacher of Righteousness and the Qumran community and the other in Jesus of Nazareth and the church.

From the above survey of three types of interpretation current at the time the

New Testament was written, we can easily surmise that the writers of gospels and epistles were conversant with some or all methods then in vogue. They therefore would use whatever method would best serve their purpose. Furthermore, since the readers were for the most part Jews, either those within Hebrew culture or those in the Gentile world, the authors of the New Testament would use language and thought forms, as well as methods of exegesis, which readily communicated the significance of Jesus Christ and the Christian Church.

Our discussion to this point reveals that in their attitude toward the Old Testament the writers of the New Testament followed the example of Jesus is not being subject to any school of the scribes and yet being free to use methods, thought forms and language of these schools. Here we may observe that these writers combine freedom and bondage: freedom from established methods of interpretation and their established results and yet bondage to the use of the thought forms of their times; freedom for searching the Old Testament to discover the dynamic meaning of the Word of God and yet bondage in the use of means for communicating the Old Testament as it was being fulfilled.

In the many references to the Old Testament we observe that no one Old Testament text was cited. Quotations were primarily taken from the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek Old Testament in common use by the Christians. In many instances the LXX and the Hebrew texts agree so that in those cases a preference for one or the other cannot be determined. However, several examples show a preference for the LXX against the Hebrew text. Much less frequently is the opposite true in which the Hebrew is chosen instead of the LXX reading.

Very frequently the quotations diverge from the LXX and the Hebrew texts in which cases they may be taken from the Aramaic Targum, which was a free, commentary-type translation coming into use because of the inability of Aramaic speaking Jews to understand Hebrew. Or citations may have been derived from a collection of Testimonia, now recognized as a compilation of Old Testament texts in use among Christians. Or possibly a quotation was a free rendition of one or more passages which in effect retained the sense if not their literal exactness. The variety of sources for quotations should in no wise detract from the impression that the New Testament writers regarded the Old Testament of paramount importance for the understanding of the coming of Christ and the establishing of the church.

The many Old Testament quotations and references we encounter in the New Testament were designed to achieve one goal: fulfillment. The Greek verb, ple·roun, to fulfill, because of its frequent occurrence in the Gospels and the Acts becomes our keyword for the unlocking of the significance of events attending the birth and ministry of Jesus. Fulfillment was taking place. The Old Testament word from God had been spoken; it had not yet become an event in history. The

transformation of the spoken Word into the observable Event was being realized; Word was being fulfilled in Event.

We do well, in this setting, to observe that the Hebrew noun *dabar*, commonly translated "word," embodies a two-fold sense: word and event. The first meaning is much like our understanding of word, a vehicle of communication as in the prologue to the decalogue, "God spoke all these words saying," or like the "words of the wisemen" (Eccles. 12:11). The second meaning may be seen in the Hebrew title for Chronicles, *debarè hayyamin*, "The events of the days." *Dabar* is on the one hand the message which God places in the prophets mouth (Jer. 1:9), and on the other hand the inspiring event from God which happens to the prophet (Jer. 1:4, 11, 13).

The sequence of spoken word and realized event quite naturally involves fulfillment. The spoken word often took on the sense of promise which awaited the actualization of the word. The word spoken to Abraham that his seed should inherit the land became a realized event under Joshua (cf. Ps. 105:8, 42). The word of God spoken by Joshua against Jericho also reached fulfillment (Josh. 6:26; I Kings 16:34). The word of promise or of doom looked forward to realization. The blessing and the curse are more than outbursts of temperamental moods for the words thus spoken must finally reach fulfillment. Word, therefore, when its Old Testament significance is fully comprehended, embodies expectancy, actualization, and fulfillment.

This brief digression on *dabar* intends to set the background of "to fulfill" in clear perspective. It shows first of all that in the Old Testament God has proclaimed his word to his people. This living word reached into the experience of his people Israel who were delivered from the bondage of Egypt and made the people of God under Moses. They were the ones through whom the word addressed to the patriarchs reached fulfillment especially during the reigns of David and Solomon. However, the tragic humiliation of being a subject people during the exile converted the past glory of Israel into a mocking dream. Yet in that state of humiliation prophets arose to proclaim God's word anew. God had not abandoned his people, for another fulfillment of his word was to take place in the restoration of the exiles to their homeland. God's word would not return to him empty, but it would accomplish the divine purpose of changing Israel's captivity into the freedom of living in the blessed land promised to the fathers. However, as the generations passed, this freedom was only partially realized since first the Greeks and later the Romans made Palestine a vassal state. The Old Testament comes to a close looking and hoping for the time when God would again act and when the promised word of God would become event.

As the evangelists took up their pens to elaborate on the theme "fulfillment," they stood, we should clearly remember, some years after Pentecost. No doubt, they were among the early disciples who frequently assembled to rehearse the words and deeds of Jesus. The death and resurrection of their Lord had indeed given new
dimension to their understanding of what Jesus had come to fulfill. The first preaching of the disciples as recorded in The Acts was to make clear to the Jews that the Old Testament had been fulfilled in the resurrection of Christ. Moreover, the outpouring of the Spirit at Pentecost was an additional fulfillment of the prophets. Within the fellowship of the early church that diligently pondered the Old Testament the evangelists developed the theme of fulfillment, a subject of primary interest to all Jews of that time.

Fulfillment in Matthew, Chapters 1-2

Let us select the Gospel of Matthew to observe how the author uses the Old Testament references. In the birth stories of Jesus we are given five instances in which the prophets were being fulfilled. Four are cited with the expression that all this was done that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet; one has as it was written by the prophet (2:5).

The first (1:22-23) is the well-known "virgin" passage in which Isaiah's message to King Ahaz is cited (Isa. 7:14). The king who greatly feared the nations of Israel and Syria was assured by a sign that the threat of these nations would vanish. The promised sign was that a young woman would bear a son and that before the lad had reached the age of knowing right and wrong Israel and Syria would have become weak and harmless. The son was to be given the name Immanuel, God with us, to indicate that God was with Judah to protect her against her foes. Two features in the Isaiah passage are used by Matthew: the birth of a son from a virgin and the name Immanuel. The LXX parthenos, virgin, instead of the Hebrew 'almah, young woman, offered a ready association with the Virgin Mary; and the name Immanuel, although never used for Jesus later, fittingly described the birth of Jesus as God coming into close fellowship with his people. We should note that the other elements in the Isaiah account such as the fear of Ahaz, the threat of hostile nations and their impending doom are not used; they had no bearing upon the virgin birth of Jesus.

The second citation (2:6), "And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel," is taken from Micah 5:2, 4 [1, 3]. This the chief priests and scribes adduced to show that the Christ was to be born in Bethlehem in answer to Herod's question. Here we have a sample of the method used by the scribes to determine the fulfillment of the Old Testament. The prophet saw Judah under the power of Assyria, but only for a time, for out of Bethlehem, a small place among the clans of Judah, a mighty ruler shall arise. He shall become the shepherd to care for Israel. And the scattered brethren shall again return to be with the people of Israel. Since the LXX compares Bethlehem's ruler with the rulers of Judah, instead of the clans of Judah, this passage served well to awaken hopes for the overthrow of the feared and hated rulers of Judah, such as King Herod. This citation omits the name Ephrathah and inserts the land of Judah to make the reference to Bethlehem clear. Other matters in Micah such as the rule
of the oppressive power, the antiquity of the expected ruler, and the return of the scattered brethren are not included apparently because they do not serve any use in answering Herod's question.

The third citation, "Out of Egypt have I called my son," (2:15) is taken from Hosea 11:1. The prophet in this context is looking back into Israel's history to observe that God loved Israel as a young nation as a father loves his son. God called his son out of Egypt to become his people. Even though Israel often turned away from God to worship other gods, yet God continued to love his son and taught him to walk as a nation. He healed the waywardness of his son and provided for him. Such was God's fatherly relationship to Israel. Matthew makes two contacts with this prophet: Egypt and son. Since in his infancy Jesus was in Egypt, it was easy to draw the parallel with Israel's sojourn in Egypt. And it is very obvious that Jesus was God's son in a unique sense (cf. 3:17). Again we may observe that details such as the waywardness of Israel and the instruction given Israel are not apropos here and therefore are not mentioned. The important point is the Father's loving care for his Son.

The fourth citation, "A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be consoled, because they were no more," (2:18) is taken from Jeremiah 31:15. The prophet describes the plight of captive Israel in terms of the weeping at Ramah. Rachel, the mother of the tribe of Benjamin, is in great sorrow because her children have been taken away into captivity. However, in the following context the prophet offers consolation in that Rachel's children shall again return to their country. The apparent connection between the weeping of the mothers in Bethlehem because of Herod's slaying the innocents and the weeping of Rachel for her descendants lost in exile can be noted readily. Since Rachel's tomb was believed to be near Bethlehem, as it is today, it was easy to relate Rachel's weeping with that of the Bethlehem mothers. Although the circumstances which brought on these tragedies were different, and although the subsequent word of the prophet's consolation is not used in this reference, yet the weeping of mothers for lost children is a most striking parallel.

The final citation in the birth narrative of Matthew is, "And he went and dwelt in a city called Nazareth that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, 'He shall be called a Nazarene'," (2:23). One searches in vain for a reference in the Old Testament containing these words. We can only conjecture that Matthew is making allusions to words in the Old Testament whose root letters correspond with Nazareth so that a similarity in root or sound of the words suggests the idea of fulfillment in this instance. In Lev. 21:12 the anointed priest is called the nezer, one consecrated by the anointing oil to his God. Possibly the reference is to Isa. 11:1 where netzer is a branch from the root of Jesse, apparently an allusion to the coming Davidic ruler. Another possible reference is notzirê, "the preservers" of Israel, (Isa. 49:6), the ones who survived the exile in Babylon. Since we have no reference to a particular passage we cannot determine the historical setting
as in the other references. The assonance of Nazareth with a few Hebrew words may have been the means of finding a fulfillment for living in Nazareth.\(^5\)

To summarize the study of the birth-narrative citations, we observe that two were in the future tense, looking ahead for fulfillment, one described a past event, and another a present tragedy. All, whatever their distinctions in tenses, come under the common category of fulfillment. Further we note that parallelisms are drawn between the Old Testament and the New Testament event; details of the Old Testament not usable in the parallelism are bypassed. Also slight divergences in the words of the texts appear which may be due to the state of flux in which the Old Testament text was at that time. The intent in these citations is clearly to establish connections between events at the birth of Jesus and words and events of the Old Testament.

No one word can adequately define the method of the evangelist. The best that comes to mind is allusion. The word must be understood in its etymological structure as playing at something. Here play must not be understood in a sense of frivolity or irresponsibility, but rather in a sense of serious probing into a matter much like the probing of a scientist into elements before him. Allusion may be a kind of serious research conducted according to commonly accepted procedure. The early Christian scholars such as Matthew zealously worked and reworked Old Testament passages, much like their Jewish contemporaries, to draw out some finds that would have special meaning for the new age which Christ through his resurrection and by the sending of the Holy Spirit had introduced.

Other Fulfillment References

The citations in the birth narrative of Matthew may well serve as examples of methods used in the gospels and indeed in the entire New Testament. We observe some rather accurate quotations as far as text is concerned (Matt. 12:18-21) in which the ministry of Jesus finds its description in the ministry of the Servant (Isa. 42:1-4). Or we note that by the use of allusion, words, ideas, and events from more than one source are brought to bear on an event as in the case of the thirty pieces of silver in the betrayal narrative (Matt. 27:5-10). Words and phrases such as thirty pieces of silver, the price, the potter and the casting of the silver into the temple are found in Zechariah (11:12-14); and the potter, the place for burial and the buying of the field are taken from Jeremiah (Chap. 19, 32). The latter references account for the quotation's being ascribed to Jeremiah. These diverse elements found in these two prophets serve as fitting allusions for the betrayal and events associated with it.

\(^5\)Bertil Gartner makes a good case for the verbal root *natzar*, "keep, preserve," as the background for Nazarene. In Isa. 49:6 *netzarê*, "the preserved ones" (Qere reading) has the restored people of Israel in mind. In Isa. 42:6 and 49:8 where this verb appears the Lord has preserved the Servant to be a covenant to the people and a light to the nations. In the account of Jesus' being preserved from the wrath of Herod, Matthew may have seen in Nazareth a fitting allusion to the Hebrew root *natzar*. *Die vateshaften Termine Nazoraer und Iskariot* (Uppsala: Appelbergs Boktrykere A B, 1957).
The perplexing quotation in Matthew (2:23), noted above, suggests that some references are made to the Old Testament in a less obvious or a more subtle way than in the verbatim quotations. C. H. Dodd\(^6\) is of the opinion that the early Christians concentrated their studies especially on certain portions of the Old Testament, viz., the prophets and the psalms. And if one may judge from all references, direct and indirect, then within the prophets and the psalms certain portions become prominent: Isa. 6-11; 40-55, Pss. 22 and 69 in reference to the suffering of Christ, Joel 2-3, Zech. 9-14, Dan. 7 and 12. These so-called "favorite" sections became the fertile background to which the minds of the early church turned to find allusions and parallels to the coming of Christ and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the church.

In addition to allusions as described above, we note that writers employ typology as another method of relating the New Testament to the Old. The apostle Paul made the events in the wilderness wandering serve as types for the instruction and warning of believers who were living in the final age (cf. I Cor. 10:11). Not often is the word "type" used (only twice by Paul) to point out some Old Testament event, yet the idea that the events of the past serve as types or prefigurations of New Testament events or persons is readily discernible. Thus it is that Adam, Moses, David, and the sacrifice of the paschal lamb are looked upon as types of Christ. Moreover, the exodus especially and the faith of Abraham are frequently referred to as models for the understanding of the Christian experience. Typology often appears without the formal "that it might be fulfilled" as in the case of allusions. Yet much like the allusions the person or event in the past is a type that finds significant fulfillment in either Christ or his church.

The Epistle to the Hebrews employs typology most frequently. Not only are Aaron, Moses, Joshua and Melchizedek types of Christ, but also the tabernacle in the wilderness and the ancient cult of Israel prefigure the sacrificial atonement of Christ. Moreover, the heroes of the faith (ch. 11) serve as typical and instructive examples for the encouragement of believers in their pilgrimage. One gathers the impression from reading the Epistle to the Hebrews that the Old Testament with its events, persons and institutions was God's prearranged plan for redemption that found complete realization in the priestly ministry of Christ and in his sacrifice.

Typology, as defined by Eichrodt,\(^7\) regards persons, events, and institutions as divinely established models of corresponding realities in the New Testament salvation events. The correspondence between the Testaments should in every case be restricted to such points which are designated by the author. For example, in the correspondence between Moses and Christ in II Cor. 3:7ff. Paul calls attention to two factors, the *diakonia* and the *doxa* (ministry and glory). Only according to these does Moses here serve as the type for Christ. In both the *diakonia* and the *doxa* Christ far excels Moses the type. In some cases the type illustrates a contrast

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such as between Adam and Christ in which Adam's sin brought on guilt and death and Christ's justification brought on righteousness and life (cf. Rom. 5:15ff.). In every case the type is but the preliminary stage of the plan for salvation; the realization of the plan is reached in Christ.

Since typology has points of similarity with allegory, a much used method in the history of interpretation, we should clarify the distinctions between the two. This is all the more necessary since Paul in Gal. 4:21-26 expressly states that the narrative of Abraham, his two sons, and his two wives is an allegory to represent two covenants, the one of Judaism which is slavery, and the other of the Church which is free. In what sense does Paul here use allegory? One might suppose that, since allegory at that time was used extensively by Philo in his interpretation of Scripture, Paul is referring to the allegory of Philo. This hardly seems possible since allegory as a technical term for Scripture interpretation was not known during the first century, but became the accepted method used especially by the church fathers of Alexandria. The allegorical interpretation as developed by Philo and later adopted by Christian scholars gave free rein to arbitrary exposition of Scripture so that the interpreter could extract from the Bible whatever he desired. The Scripture became a magician's hat out of which the interpreter could pull whatever he had placed in it.

Paul's allegory has more in common with the rabbinic midrashim which he surely knew as a student under Gamaliel. These interpretations of the Scripture in Jewish literature often employ the allegory as may be seen in the midrash on Gen. 40:9: The vine in Pharaoh's dream is Israel and the three branches are Moses, Aaron and Miriam. The Song of Solomon is a description of God and Israel. Much like the midrashim Paul uses allegory in Galatians. It is very similar to the allusions discussed previously. The significant and important factor to be noted here is that Paul takes hold of historical events which are paralleled with circumstances in the church.

To distinguish typology from allegory we may well quote a definition by Johann Gerhard,8 a Lutheran theologian of the 17th century: It is a type when any Old Testament fact is shown to have been done or yet to be done in the New Testament. It is an allegory when anything of the Old or New Testament is explained with a new sense and is accommodated to a spiritual doctrine or way of life. A type consists in the comparison of facts. An allegory is occupied not so much with facts as with their incidentals from which it draws out useful and hidden doctrines.

Allegory is very much attached to the text, and indeed to the very words and letters from which hidden meanings may be extracted; and it is further characterized by an unbridled freedom in matters of spiritual interpretation. In contrast, typology is remarkably free from attachment to the words or letters of the text,

but is bound by a great degree to the historical phenomena of the text. Typology searches for the events in history in which correspondence and similarity can be seen. Allegory, on the other hand, is little concerned with events for it looks for comparison of ideas and doctrines. It does not ask how an event took place, but what is the spiritual meaning. Typology insists that the events shall determine the meaning which is to be derived from them.

To the above uses of the Old Testament we should add that it was appealed to as authority for life. In refuting a tradition that nullified honor for parents Jesus cited the commandment, "Honor your father and your mother," and he enforced his argument by quoting further from the ancient law, "He who speaks evil of father or mother, let him surely die," (Matt. 15:4). Similarly in the discussion about divorce Jesus quoted a verse from the creation account in the second chapter of Genesis to establish the priority of the permanence of marriage over the permission for divorce, (19:3-8). When he was asked how to obtain eternal life, he answered, "if you would enter life, keep the commandments," (19:17). Paul also appeals to the Old Testament to establish his admonition to overcome evil with good by citing a passage from Proverbs, "If your enemy is hungry, feed him," (Rom. 12:20). It is needless to cite other examples to indicate how readily the Old Testament was used for instruction in holy living. "Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope" (Rom. 15:4).

Since citations and references are numerous—totals vary from 160 to 4150—one may expect to find variations in the methods and the purposes for citing the Old Testament. Our survey intended to stay within modest limits to make soundings which rather accurately reflect the wide area of Old Testament citations. Excellent handbooks on New Testament hermeneutics are at hand for further exploration of this interesting field.

**Summary**

A few summary statements are appropriate at this point.

1. The New Testament writers appeal to events in the history of Israel to find parallels to the events taking place in the new age which the coming of Christ introduced. These writers found the events of the exodus out of Egypt and of the restoration out of Babylonian exile particularly fitting. The former with its deliverance of Israel from bondage to become the people of God was used in several ways to represent the deliverance of the church from sin and death to become the people of God. The latter, especially since the prophet of the exile, (Isa. 40-55),

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described the role of the Servant of the LORD, became the pattern par excellence for the ministry and suffering of Christ and for the mission of the church.

2. The writers of the New Testament were selective in using not only certain events to the neglect of others but also the details of passages cited. Much like the parables of Jesus in which the main theme is not concerned with the details, so the writers used only those factors of the Old Testament story that established parallels in the New Testament narrative, such as the weeping of Rachel and of the mothers in Bethlehem. We ought not to conclude that only those events or texts that are cited are being fulfilled or have relevance for understanding the new age. Rather we should observe that the principle of selecting parts serves to include the whole, which is to say that the Old Testament as a whole, viewed as the established Word of God, was realizing its fulfillment. The cry of dereliction of Jesus from the cross, taken from Psalm 22, could not but make that psalm most beloved for fulfillment citations. Yet the cries of forsakenness in many non-cited psalms, in Job, or in Jeremiah are not thereby excluded from fulfillment. The part incorporates the whole so that we may assume that the entire Old Testament was caught up in the concept of fulfillment.

3. The methods of the various writers agree substantially with those in the rabbinic midrashim and with the pesher interpretations at Qumran. It would not display a Christian prejudice to observe that the New Testament writers are less given to vagaries and arbitrariness than their contemporaries. In our days we have been schooled to find the grammatical interpretation with its historical setting to learn the mind of the author as accurately as possible. Consequently, present day exegesis may not be too impressed with that of the New Testament. Nor need we be impressed for the writers did not intend to set up exegetical methods nor did they enjoin us to use their methods. They are asking us to note that they labored with the tools and materials of their time to show that the Old Testament was finding its consummation in the coming of Christ and his church. They were men of their age called to write for the readers of their age.

4. Finally, if we may think of the Old Testament as a tapestry with many loose ends, then the New Testament writers are weavers who select many of the threads to weave them into a newly begun tapestry in which the picture of Christ appears. The Old Testament strands give color, substance and background to enhance the beauty and the meaning of the Risen Lord. Further the strands are so thoroughly interwoven into the new fabric that the Old cannot be pulled out of the New. The two have become one flesh, to use another figure. What God has joined together, let not man put asunder.