

Introduction: The Study of the Use of the Old Testament in the New

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Abstract

The study of the use of the Old Testament in the New (OT/NT) is a developing sub-discipline within the realm of biblical studies. This article seeks to offer an introduction to some of the recent developments within OT/NT scholarship and to consider some of the presenting issues and questions that have arisen lately within the sub-discipline. In particular, it draws attention to four key areas: the context(s) of the citation, interpretative and exegetical techniques, citational text form, intertextuality.

KeywordsOld Testament in the New Testament, *Vorlage*, intertextuality

The notion that Jesus Christ died and was raised according to the scriptures (1 Cor. 15.3–4) is hardly a new phenomenon to students of early Christian origins, whether to those of the patristic period, to the Reformers, or even to modern day interpreters. Indeed, one might surmise that ascribing scriptural connotation to the passion is very much a given within NT scholarship (if any such thing exists!), and the catechetical or formulaic aspect of 1 Cor. 15.3–8 suggests that it had become an established datum at a very early stage within Christological formulation.¹ Yet one might still want to add two important caveats to such a

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1. Lindars (1976: 59) terms 1 Cor. 15.3–4 ‘the clearest possible case in the New Testament of appeal to the Scriptures in order to provide the basis of a theological interpretation of the Christ-event’.
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conception. First, had Paul either specified the particular texts he had in mind, or indicated, rather, that he was alluding to a wider scriptural perspective, developments in the biblical studies arena might have looked somewhat different, and certain PhD theses and monographs would perhaps not have emerged along the way.² Paul's silence on such matters has enabled the space for such exploration, and also for consideration of the different ways in which the passion may have been understood in scriptural terms. Second, the discourse that has become known as 'OT/NT' has only come to the fore in recent years, or at least has only become viewed as a *specialism* – akin to, say, Jesus studies or Pauline theology – in relatively recent times. The precise origins of the discourse area are hard to name, and rather depend on how one conceives of the nature of the sub-discipline, and where its scope/specialism begins and ends. However, one would want to mention in dispatches the significant works of C.H. Dodd on, among other aspects, the consideration of the wider context of an OT quotation (1952), or Barnabas Lindars's discussion of the apologetic dimension to the use of the OT in the formulation of the NT kerygma (1961), or Donald Juel's work on messianic or christological exegesis (1988), or Richard Longenecker's significant work on apostolic exegetical method (1975).

Wherever one dates its conception or origins, one might nonetheless say, though, that the scholarly sub-discipline has now 'come of age'. The scope of publication in OT/NT-related matters has grown extensively in recent years, and scholarship has witnessed a veritable expansion in monographs, articles and studies, all seeking to offer a focused analysis of various OT/NT matters – be that the use of, say, new exodus imagery in a NT account,³ be that the *Vorlage* of cited OT material,⁴ or be that the exegetical techniques manifested by a particular NT writer. An exhaustive list would require a bibliographical volume in and of itself, but one might highlight some particular examples as representative of the way in which the sub-discipline now stands on its proverbial feet. One thinks of the series of volumes edited by Maarten Menken and Steve Moyise, which has given a focused view of the use of particular OT books within the NT, and thus offer a window onto such matters.⁵ These volumes yield insight into a plethora of issues raised within the sub-discipline – the comparative use of a particular text across the NT compositions, the diversity of exegetical methodologies thus utilized, or the way in which the particular contours of an OT text are variously perceived. To what extent, for example, did the NT writers conceive of the Minor Prophets as one scroll/corpus, rather than twelve constituent texts (Menken and Moyise

2. For a recent analysis of the scriptural background to understanding the passion, see Novakovic 2012.

3. For example, Watts 1997; Pao 2000.

4. For example, Menken 2004; Steyn 2011.

5. Menken and Moyise 2004, 2005, 2007, 2009, 2012.

2009: 4-5)? Or with what form of ‘Genesis’ narratives were different NT writers working – that of the canonical form, or that found within pseudepigraphical writing (Menken and Moyise 2012: 1-6)? From a different constituency has emerged a magisterial commentary volume dedicated to the use of the Old Testament in the New (Beale and Carson 2007), with constituent chapters on each NT text, further suggestive that the sub-discipline may now be considered as a scholarly area in its own right, with its own methodological approaches and interests.⁶ Likewise, focused seminar groups, colloquia and conferences given over specifically to OT/NT matters have also generated their own published material. One thinks of the SBL seminar on Pauline scriptural interpretation, generating two edited volumes on that topic;⁷ likewise, the annual British OT/NT seminar has been a significant voice in such matters in producing both the figures and many publications that have come to be influential in the discipline.⁸ One might surmise that the next stage, perhaps, is a journal series given over to OT/NT, akin to that generated within other sub-disciplinary discourses.⁹

Work within the sub-discipline has, of course, been informed, enabled and encouraged by scholarly effort within other areas of biblical studies. As such, OT/NT, in ‘coming of age’, does not stand or exist in isolation – indeed, quite the reverse; perhaps more than any other sub-discipline, it stands inextricably interconnected to other sub-disciplines, and benefits from developments within them. Indeed, it cannot exist or function in detached fashion, but rather draws on (in mutually informing fashion) other areas within the realm of biblical studies, such that a veritable matrix of connections emerges. OT/NT scholars must therefore engage with standard NT presenting questions – for example, is it Paul or Deutero-Paul? Did the same ‘Paul’ pen both 1 Cor. 9.9 and 1 Tim. 5.18, both citing Deut. 25.4 but in different textual form? Is it synoptic influence, or is there another plausible explanation for a particular text form and argument when Matthew’s and Mark’s scriptural usage is compared? To what extent is the use of the OT in Revelation dictated by the apocalyptic genre conventions, rather than by ‘deliberate’ use of the OT material? And how does OT/NT research impact on other NT topoi – such as Historical Jesus questions, or the existence (or otherwise) of the Johannine Community? One thinks, for example, of Guy Waters’ work – ostensibly a study of Paul’s use of the closing chapters of Deuteronomy, but effectively critical of certain tenets of the New Perspective on Paul, albeit through OT/NT lenses (Waters 2006). OT/NT

6. The Beale-Carson volume gives six features against which to assess each OT citation: NT context, OT context, contemporary usage, text matters, how the NT author uses it, and theological usage.

7. Porter and Stanley 2008; Stanley 2012.

8. For a history of the Seminar’s contribution to OT/NT discourse, see North 2000: 278-81.

9. One thinks, for example, of the *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus*.

discourse also impacts significantly on the question of the ‘Jewishness’ of the early Christian movement, whether such ‘Jewishness’ is manifest in the choice of *Vorlage*, whether in the exegetical techniques deployed, or whether in the comparison with other Second Temple practice and self-understanding. One might suggest that recent work in the so-called ‘parting(s) of the ways’ between Judaism and Christianity has also been mutually informing to, and of, OT/NT discourse.

Conversely perhaps – and at the risk of stating the obvious – the relationship with Hebrew Bible scholarship remains less well developed by comparison. Whilst the dialogue with Qumran material and/or work on the LXX textual tradition has significantly informed conversations, we have seen less of an interest in Hebrew Bible scholarship *mutually* informing OT/NT discourse. Whilst, of course, OT/NT draws heavily on Hebrew Bible scholarship, one senses that the direction of travel has tended to be only one-way: i.e., Hebrew Bible scholars have generally been less interested in the findings of OT/NT scholarship such that it informs or contributes to their scholarly output. To put it another way, OT/NT discourse still remains fundamentally embedded within the purview of NT scholarship, with its practitioners generally self-identifying as NT scholars rather than OT/Hebrew Bible ones. It is thus appropriate, one suggests, that this issue is produced within the *JSNT* periodical, rather than in a wider biblical studies series. This is not, of course, to ignore the significant work done in matters of inner biblical exegesis, or the work of those engaged in the so-called Rewritten Bible discourse; it is more to the effect that Hebrew Bible scholars tend to preserve their sub-disciplinary borders in such matters.

As such, this creates debates as to where/when the boundaries of OT/NT discourse begin and end. Is work, say, on the motif of the Law in Hebrews an exercise in OT/NT scholarship? And similarly, what of the use of the OT in non-canonical material such as the epistle of *Barnabas* – does this exist within the sub-disciplinary domain? And likewise the use of interpretative techniques in the texts of the Rewritten Bible; as comparative work on scriptural interpretation, one would surmise that these are both in the discourse’s purview, even if there is technically little or no NT ‘reference’ whatsoever, but it is not self-evidently so. Thus sub-disciplinary boundaries are often tested or have become fluid – early Christian texts (not NT ones) such as *Barnabas* have indeed become key places of inquiry within the sub-discipline (and not merely places of comparison or contrast), and pseudepigraphical texts such as *Jubilees* or Pseudo-Philo have become even more familiar conversation partners for NT scholars. This raises the further, related question of the extent of the canon – both the lack of closure and the extent of it (i.e. dual canons),¹⁰ and the associated impact of fluidity

10. See the recent contribution of Lim 2013.

within the OT textual tradition;¹¹ again, such issues continue to be significant concerns and/or of interest for OT/NT scholars.

Hence one of the hallmarks of OT/NT discourse remains the inherent diversity or breadth of its scope. This is true not just of its interrelatedness with other sub-disciplines, but also of the sub-discipline itself; one easily identifies different interests emerging within it, and one remarks on the sheer diversity of approaches manifest within the NT choir – Matthaean fulfilment or Revelation's avoidance of formal quotation; Hebrews' desire for verbal delivery as opposed to the more textual, citational mode of Paul. One suggests, therefore, that the very attraction of this investigation is its 'broad and multi-faceted aspect' (Stamps 2006: 9), coupled with the wide sphere of engagement that OT/NT interaction demands.

The focus of this issue of *JSNT*, then, is to demonstrate something of this diversity and, in some fashion, to manifest some presenting areas of research, interest and inquiry within the OT/NT landscape.¹² Any such discussion must be necessarily selective, but I would suggest that several core ideas or themes emerge. They are all interconnected, but for heuristic purposes, we will treat them as four distinct subject areas, namely: Context, Interpretative Technique, Textual Form and Macro versus Micro.

Context

Since at least the work of C.H. Dodd, one of the presenting questions within OT discourse has been the extent to which a NT text will preserve, pick up or allude to the (prior) OT contextual understanding. Rather than quotations being isolated lemmata or proof texts, Dodd opined that they functioned 'as pointers to the whole context' of the wider OT source, and, as such, brought that wider narrative to the fore (1952: 126). As an aside, Dodd's work on such contextual matters also revisited the existence and use of *testimonia* collections; he averred that such collections existed, but that they served to evoke the wider OT passage rather than the specified text alone.¹³

Broadly speaking, some OT/NT scholars have surmised that the context is preserved when placed within its new (NT) milieu; others have seen the OT lemma change, at times somewhat dramatically, or given a very different sense or

11. Cf. McLay 2006: 58: 'The corollary to the fact that there was no canon of scripture for the NT writers was that there was no biblical text either ... [W]e might say that the organic way in which the scriptures were written, translated, reinterpreted and copied within Judaism and its major centers meant that the texts of the scriptures for the writers of the NT were characterized by pluriformity.'

12. One might note the similar reviews of OT/NT matters, including, among others: Docherty 2015; Porter 1997; Moyise 2001; Stamps 2006: 1-37.

13. Dodd 1952: 28-60. On the use of *testimonia*, see also Albl 1999.

function when cited in the NT context.¹⁴ Perhaps one of the most prominent fora for such debates has been the use of OT imagery within the book of Revelation, with Greg Beale and Steve Moyise taking very contrasting positions on such usage; their robust articulations of their respective positions have formed a prominent feature of the OT/NT scholarly landscape. Beale advocates a number of ways in which OT material might function in the NT (re-)location (he lists 12 in his recent handbook on the matter; 2012: 55-93), but the consistent theme (aside from his 'assimilated use' category) is that the context is broadly preserved; following Hirsch, he distinguishes between the concept of the 'word' and that of its 'significance'. The latter may change, he suggests, but the former remains consistent. In his given example, an apple remains an apple even when it is picked and placed in a fruit bowl. The new setting/context must be a variable for understanding the nature of the apple (for eating or for decoration, one surmises), but the essence of the apple *as apple* remains consistent (Beale 1998: 51-52). By contrast, Moyise argues for an evolution, or development, of the meaning, but on the basis of the reader generating such meaning. That is, when placed in its NT context, the (NT) reader can conceivably generate a fresh reading or meaning of the given lemma; that is, the 'meaning' of an apple may change when it is cut up and ready to eat. As such, Moyise argues for a more dialogical approach both to contextual matters and to the relationship between OT and NT occurrences. The relocation of an OT text to a NT context impacts on its meaning in the OT location, not just in the NT; the interchange is legitimately two-way.¹⁵

Appropos of contextual discussion, some scholars also have criticized the burden such debates can place upon the original context – i.e. for assuming that the original (OT) context is *necessarily* the important one.¹⁶ Some have averred that the context is effectively an irrelevancy, namely that the reader is invited to go elsewhere in their analysis. Others have observed that NT usage goes far beyond the OT text's original contextual meaning, and that this is entirely consistent with contemporary Jewish exegetical practice (Enns 2005). This is connected, one suggests, to theological, as much as textual, matters,¹⁷ and OT/NT discourse is not isolated from, or immune to, wider theological debates as to how one derives the 'meaning' of the OT text, especially if there appears to be any discontinuity between an OT lemma and its usage in a (new?) NT context. Such debates have featured commonly in intra-evangelical discussions relating to the nature of scripture, and participants do arrive at contrasting solutions, differing as to

14. See the discussion in Moyise 2008: 130-38. He differentiates between meaning being 'extended' and meaning 'changing'.

15. Moyise 2008: 125-41. See also Moyise 2012a: 97-114; 2012b: 131-39; Kim 2012.

16. See, for example, Menken 2013.

17. Stamps (2006: 9) notes how 'the study of this topic [i.e. OT/NT] spills over from biblical studies into hermeneutics and theology proper'.

whether ‘full intent’ of the OT text is apparent in its OT context, or whether the change of context (to the NT) and/or the particular NT exegetical methods open up a different, perhaps contrasting, sense to the OT lemma. The existence (or otherwise) of concepts such as *sensus plenior* or typology have also become key (contested) reference points for discussion and debate.¹⁸

Interpretative Technique

Allied to matters of context, perhaps, is the way in which the NT writers went about engaging with the Jewish scriptures, and particularly the techniques that they used in so doing. Such discussion within OT/NT scholarship becomes less about the ‘why’ and more about the ‘how’, and has involved wider comparative debates as to the way in which scripture is used, interpreted and applied. This has, of course, occasioned engagement with wider Second Temple interpretation from a variety of settings and contexts. Whether through consideration of pesherist practice at Qumran, or through comparison with exegetical technique in mid-rashic sources, or through contrasting with the Philonic application of any given OT text, the NT writers’ hermeneutical practice has been evaluated against the backdrop of other contemporary interpreters. In a recent review of how Second Temple scriptural interpretation might inform OT/NT discourse, Susan Docherty concludes that ‘[e]arly Christian use of the scriptures should ... be regarded as *genuine exegesis* and not simply as an exercise in christological reading’.¹⁹ Her own work on the Jewish exegetical methods exhibited within Hebrews, or David Lincicum’s similar consideration of Paul as a particular, Jewish interpreter of Deuteronomy, illustrates the way in which OT/NT scholars portray the NT writers as contemporary Jewish exegetes, shaped by contemporary Jewish practice.²⁰ This may be through the interest in the same passages (Hab. 2.4, for example) or it may be through the recognition that the OT texts generally favoured by the NT writers (Isaiah, Psalms, Deuteronomy) are likewise those generally favoured by other contemporary interpreters. It is unsurprising, then, that all of the articles in this issue of *JSNT* attend to matters of interpretative technique – it has become a focal element of the OT/NT sub-discipline.

Textual Form

A third feature characteristic of the OT/NT field has been its detailed attention to text-critical matters, and to the textual plurality found within the first-century context. This has involved fine textual work, either in creating

18. Cf. the variant perspectives on such matters in Berding and Lunde 2008.

19. Docherty 2015, emphasis added.

20. Docherty 2009; Lincicum 2010.

– however anachronistically! – the notion of ‘Matthew’s Bible’ (Menken 2004) or identifying the fluidity and plurality of textual form. Almost all OT/NT work has, in some fashion, to consider *Vorlage* questions, and discussions around the ‘source’ of the NT citation are pretty much ubiquitous within the landscape. The growing recognition of divergent text forms has moved such discussions beyond the traditional MT vs LXX dichotomy, and more nuanced approaches have come to the fore. Partly through Qumran finds, partly through LXX textual criticism, partly through consideration of other contemporary citation (for example, Philo or the Pseudepigrapha), partly through close attention to a particular NT writer’s own scriptural usage, a more nuanced view on such matters has emerged. Generally, whereas in previous generations, textual variance was often attributed to the creative instinct of the NT writers themselves, it is now more commonplace to note that the given text – however unknown to modern interpreters – was conceivably a legitimate text form for the author concerned.

Two further observations may be made. First, the very nature of *how* the link is being made continues to be a point of discussion. The traditional categories of quotation, allusion and echo remain part of the sub-disciplinary vocabulary, but work continues as to whether they are appropriate terms and how one best defines them.²¹ Are they the suitable terms for recognizing *when* NT writers are using scripture? Are they the only ones? To what extent are narrational or thematic connections also legitimate means of seeing the OT operative in the NT, whether through, say, exodus imagery, or through the appeal to key characters such as Moses or Abraham? Second, such debates are about more than just establishing the textual *Vorlage*, important though that concept may be. Text-form matters can also generate wider questions as to whether the choice of text (e.g. LXX or MT) generates a particular interpretative approach or inference, in that the utilized text form enables a particular conclusion. Both Radu Gheorgita, in his work on Hebrews’ use of the OT (2003), and Joel Lohr, in his commentary on the NT’s portrait of Cain and Abel (2009), pick up on the textual divergence between the LXX and MT, and propose that the NT usage of the OT material is shaped by a particularly Septuagintal perspective (i.e. one that is different from that offered by the MT tradition had that source been utilized instead). Questions as to the particular text form being used therefore still remain, and LXX textual criticism remains a welcome contributor to OT/NT studies.

Macro versus Micro

If attention to textual *Vorlage* has focused scholarly attention on seeking after the precise contours of textual matters, OT/NT has also exhibited an interest in wider

21. See Porter 1997; Stanley 1992.

discussions of what one might call ‘macro’ or ‘big picture’ readings of the given material. Such readings are attuned to a wider narrative – whether (new) exodus out of exile, whether entry into the land, or whether Jesus as new Moses/David – and thus are shaped by, and generative of, a wider, expansive reading of the scriptural material. ‘Micro’ readings are more concerned with fine textual detail and are cautious about more expanded interpretation; ‘macro’ ones are driven by them and utilize what may otherwise seem to be a fairly minor echo to generate a wider narrative or story.

One of the driving forces behind such interpretation has surely been the era-defining contribution of Richard Hays’s *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, and the multitude of volumes that have come forth as a result of his work are a testimony to the way in which Hays brought intertextuality and literary theory into OT/NT discourse.²² His conception of scripture as a cave of Pauline echoes has had significant influence, and the proverbial ‘Hays’s seven’ categories for identifying the existence of an echo, whilst challenged by a number of scholars, still remains one of the standard ‘tests’ for such matters. Hays has also participated in moving OT/NT debates away from ‘original context’ matters, averring that such matters are not the ‘primary hermeneutical concern’ (1989: 156). It is thus fair to say that part of the justification for the present *JSNT* collection of articles is to discern some of the ways in which OT/NT discourse has developed in the light of *Echoes*.²³

A core term in such conversations has been ‘intertextuality’, with some scholars enthusiastically embracing the term, and others finding it too slippery or unhelpful.²⁴ Debates have continued around the extent and/or development of the term, and more developed or methodologically complex proposals have emerged (as the issue’s article by Leroy Huizenga outlines).²⁵ And it remains the case that the criteria for identifying the resonances of echoes and/or allusions are somewhat contested, and it is unclear when/why a particular ‘macro’ take on Paul’s reading becomes persuasive. Thus, it is perhaps still an open question as to how far one limits the interpretative possibilities of the project, and Paul Foster’s article, a generally dissenting voice in the issue, sounds a number of notes of caution in this regard. Yet whatever the strengths or weaknesses of the term, ‘intertextuality’ has moved the OT/NT debate beyond historical-critical matters; and even if it is a potentially slippery phrase, one might suggest that its own ‘slipperiness’ offers a veritable lens onto the accompanying slipperiness

22. Hays 1989. His advocacy of a broader scriptural narrative against which Paul is reading and/or applying his texts has been followed by a number of other scholars; cf. Wagner 2002, 2006. See also Hays 2005.

23. See the article by Foster in this regard.

24. Beale 2012: 39–40. Cf. the discussion in Moyise 2000: 14–41.

25. See also Hays, Alkier and Huizenga 2009.

that accompanies OT/NT discourse. That is, the plurality of explanation celebrated by intertextual approaches parallels the very plurality of approaches to scriptural interpretation that OT/NT exhibits. For example, the findings of the SBL *Paul and Scripture* seminar manifest a variety of methodologies and conclusions; how close a reader of scripture is someone expected to be, and how far is the audience expected to know the resonance? What level of ‘biblical literacy’ is expected on the part of the audience? And which interpretative ‘Paul’ does one ultimately embrace? Francis Watson’s ‘Paul’, the close reader of the tensions found within the scriptural account (Watson 2004)? N.T. Wright’s ‘Paul’, the one who reads the scriptural testimony in narrational terms, particularly in relation to the closing chapters of Deuteronomy?²⁶ Or Christopher Stanley’s rhetorical Paul, the one who uses scripture to impress his audience?²⁷

This Issue

In sum, one might speak of two high-level perspectives or foci in OT/NT matters, namely the ‘sources’ and the ‘methods’ (or the ‘what’ and the ‘how’). These perspectives, of course, are somewhat interconnected, perhaps even two sides of the same coin. That is, the sources are *also* the methods; for example, the pesharim source texts manifest the very exegetical genre – or methodology – that interests the scholar, and one suggests that the two ‘poles’ of source and methodology are in some sense complementary, or interrelated. But for heuristic reasons, they can still offer a helpful shape to the issue such that key matters and ideas within the sub-discipline are suitably heard. Therefore, in two articles relating to matters methodological, Leroy Huizenga and Craig Evans focus on two presenting methodological questions. Huizenga offers a perspective, 25 years or so on from Hays’s *Echoes*, as to where intertextuality has – and might – take OT/NT discourse; it may, he suggests, bring more premodern – as much as postmodern – techniques to the exegetical table. Evans adopts a more text-based methodological approach, considering how Jesus himself uses the OT material; he avers that the NT writers’ practice of rooting their accounts in the Jewish scriptures was partially premised upon Jesus’ own prior habit of so doing.

Similarly, the issue has two articles on the way in which source questions have – and are – informing OT/NT discourse. In a consideration of the Minor Prophets quotations in Rom. 9–11, Gert Steyn examines how LXX studies might inform the understanding of the *Vorlage* of such quotations, particularly in relation to exegetical technique. Timothy Lim then offers a consideration of a number of ways by which Qumran scholarship is enriching OT/NT discourse, be that in terms of *Vorlage*, canon or interpretative practice. The other two

26. Cf. Wright 2013: 495–505.

27. Stanley 2004; see further Moyise 2010: 111–25.

commissioned pieces in the issue then offer contrasting views. First, Rikk Watts offers a 'sample' of OT/NT discourse, focused on Matthew's use of Isa. 53.4, as illustrative of the nitty-gritty application of the material. The final article, from Paul Foster, contributes a more sceptical, at times very critical, assessment of developments within OT/NT discourse, particularly around questions of methodology. As a conclusion to the issue, my co-editor Susan Docherty offers an evaluation of the articles included within it, in an attempt to identify any significant themes and issues emerging from them, which might impact upon future developments in the OT/NT realm.

As the writer to the Hebrews famously notes, time does not permit an exhaustive review of the *status quaestionis* of OT/NT discourse, but this introduction and the constituent articles within the issue are an attempt to show where some of the key points of the sub-disciplinary debate and discussion are to be found. The OT/NT world can claim to be both a road well travelled, but also one in which further developments are anticipated. It is hoped that the issue has something to offer on both counts.

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