

UNIT 7: INTRODUCTION

Aim: The aim of this unit is to examine what is traditionally described as the 'use' of Scripture (i.e. the Hebrew Bible or the Old Testament) in ancient Judaism and first-century Christianity.

Ancient Judaism

The term 'ancient Judaism' is used to denote the kind of Judaism that finds particular expression in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Apocrypha, the Pseudepigrapha, and in the writings of Philo and Josephus. For a general overview of these Jewish writings and of the historical circumstances in which they were written, you can consult some of the articles listed below (Evans, Longenecker, Salvesen).

Overview: You are strongly advised to start work on this unit by reading the essays or articles listed below under 'Essential Reading'; this will help you to familiarise yourself with key issues relating to methodology and to the different modes of scriptural reference in ancient Jewish literature and in the New Testament writings. The publications listed under 'Recommended Reading' focus on particular aspects of the topic for this unit, especially the methods of biblical interpretation that are applied in the Dead Sea Scrolls (also known as the Qumran writings).

Full bibliographical details of all the listed essays and articles can be found at the end of the next two sections. If you require further guidance about the selected reading material, or if you are interested in consulting additional items on this particular topic, please contact me via the Discussion Forum.

Essential Reading: You are advised to begin this unit by reading A.T. Hanson's short article entitled 'Quotations of OT in NT', which you will find under 'Q' in the e-book version of *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*; Hanson's article maps out central issues in the study of the reception of Scripture in the New Testament, and it also provides highlighted links to other relevant articles in the *Companion* (including those on Jewish biblical exegesis). A more recent, and particularly useful, attempt at mapping out the main contours of this subject area can be found in a recent issue of the *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* (JSNT), and you are strongly encouraged to read the introductory and concluding articles by David Allen and Susan Docherty respectively.

Finally, you are advised to read a brief, but very insightful, article by Margaret Daly-Denton ('Going Beyond the Genially Open Cf'), in which she examines the impact of the literary theory of intertextuality on biblical studies. Daly-Denton focuses on three 'modes of intertextual reference' (quotations, allusions, echoes), citing examples in each case that are drawn from the Gospel of John. You will find it useful, particularly when you work on Assignment 4 for this module, to compare and contrast the criteria used by Daly-Denton, on the one hand, and Hays/Green, on the other, for identifying various ways of appropriating scriptural references in New Testament texts.

Allen, David M., 'Introduction: The Study of the Use of the Old Testament in the New', *JSNT* 38 (2015), 3-16.

Daly-Denton, M., 'Going Beyond the Genially Open "Cf": Intertextual Reference to the Old Testament in the New', *Milltown Studies* 44 (1991), 48-60.

Docherty, Susan E., "'Do You Understand What you are Reading?' (Acts 8:30): Current Trends and Future Perspectives in the Study of the Use of the Old Testament in the New', *JSNT* 38 (2015), 112-25.

Hanson, A.T., 'Quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament', in B.M. Metzger & M.D. Coogan (eds), *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

Recommended Reading: Several studies have been published in recent years that examine the reception of individual biblical books in the New Testament writings. One such example that you may wish to consult is the essay by Ross Wager on 'The Prophets in the New Testament', published in *The Oxford Handbook to the Prophets* (ed. Carolyn Sharp).

If you would like to examine the ways in which recent scholars have approached the question of 'the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament' with reference to ancient Jewish techniques and modes of scriptural interpretation, I would encourage you to read the article by Susan Docherty entitled 'New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in its Early Jewish Context: Reflections on the *Status Quaestionis* and Future Directions'. An older, but still illuminating, examination of the reception/use of Scripture in ancient Judaism is Richard Longenecker's chapter entitled 'Jewish Hermeneutics in the First Century'.

Docherty, Susan E., 'New Testament Scriptural Interpretation in its Early Jewish Context: Reflections on the *Status Quaestionis* and Future Directions', *Novum Testamentum* 57 (2015), 1-19.

Longenecker, R.N., *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999), 6-35.

Wagner, J. Ross, 'The Prophets in the New Testament', in Carolyn J. Sharp (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook to the Prophets* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

Much work has been done in recent scholarship on the various ways in which members of the Qumran sect (whose discovered library is known as the Dead Sea Scrolls) engage with the Jewish Scriptures, particularly as it seeks to define itself as a group within Judaism. There is a wealth of pertinent material on this subject to be found in *The Oxford Handbook of the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Chapters 12, 13, 14, 22, 24) and also in *The Oxford Handbook of Biblical Studies* (Chapter 6).