

The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament Gospels

Nicholas J. Frederick

Nicholas J. Frederick is an assistant professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University.

The study of the relationship between different texts is commonly referred to as *intertextuality*. The concept behind intertextuality is that texts can communicate meaning through the adoption and adaption by one text of words, images, and phrases that refer explicitly or implicitly to another text. Thus intertextuality can be viewed as “the literal presence (more or less literal, whether integral or not) of one text within another.”¹ French theorist Julia Kristeva famously stated that every text is a “mosaic of quotations,” whether that text is nonfiction, fantasy, or, in the case of the Bible, scripture.² Biblical scholar James A. Sanders, building on Kristeva’s ideas, provides a useful definition of intertextuality that has a more direct bearing on biblical studies. According to Sanders, intertextuality is the “recognition that all literature is made up of previous literature and reflects the earlier, through citation, allusion, use of phrases and paraphrases of older literature to

create newer references to earlier literary episodes, even echoes of earlier familiar literature in the construction of the later." Sanders adds that "recognition that the reader is also a text and that reading is in essence an encounter between texts. The reader is a bundle of hermeneutics, as it were, engaging a text that is itself a bundle of hermeneutics."³

Biblical scholars have long been aware of the textual connections between the Old and the New Testament.⁴ Early Christian writers living during the first century AD relied upon the language and stories of the Old Testament as they began to conceptualize the radical changes made to their religious conceptions by Jesus, in particular, the paradoxical nature of Jesus's death.⁵ Could true salvation, they asked, really spring from the crucifixion?⁶ Sorting through this question and others like it forced writers like Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John to search Israel's textual history and traditions for answers. As one scholar has written, "Christian faith has its beginnings in an experience of profound contradictoriness, an experience which so questioned the religious categories of its time that the resulting reorganization of religious language was a centuries-long task."⁷ The result of this "reorganization of religious language" was a tendency toward what Richard B. Hays has termed "retrospective reinterpretation," meaning that the Gospel writers essentially began to read their scripture "backwards" through the lens of "new revelatory events."⁸ The writings produced were more than just history; they represented God's close interaction with and the inspiration he delivered to his covenant people. The authors of Christian texts saw themselves as part of God's ongoing interaction with humanity, and thus found contemporary application in the archaic works of the Hebrew prophets and scribes. As a result of this, as New Testament writers composed their texts, they often integrated quotations and allusions to the Old Testament throughout their own writings, linking God's

work in the present with his work in the past. The recent decades have seen a burgeoning of attention paid to exploring these intertextual links more closely, due primarily to the work of Hays and Gregory K. Beale, among others.⁹

The purpose of this chapter is to provide for Latter-day Saints a brief examination of some of the ways that the New Testament, specifically the four Gospels, appropriated the language of the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰ This paper will proceed as follows. Each of the four Gospels will be examined individually, first looking briefly at how each evangelist generally integrates the Old Testament into his own text, followed by a closer examination of three specific passages. A summary statement of what can be said about each Gospel writer's approach to the Old Testament based upon those three readings will then follow. The paper will then conclude with a few general observations. It is hoped that by the end of the paper the reader will have a basic understanding of how each Gospel writer has adopted and adapted the text of the Old Testament into the New Testament.¹¹

Matthew

Of all the Gospel writers, Matthew's use of the Hebrew Bible is the most extensive. His Gospel contains approximately 124 quotations and allusions, the highest total among the Evangelists.¹² This heavy reliance upon Old Testament language informs readers that one of Matthew's primary interests is "the kingdom as the fulfillment of the OT (Old Testament) expectation."¹³ This "OT expectation" can be seen quite early on in the Gospel. In his first two chapters, Matthew includes a series of vignettes describing the birth and early years of Jesus's mortal life, centered upon five quotations from the Old Testament that Matthew feels are explicitly fulfilled in the birth of the Messiah, even if the original authors

had different ideas.¹⁴ Matthew continues to return to this theme of prophetic fulfillment throughout Jesus's ministry.¹⁵ This section will briefly examine three of Matthew's fulfillment prophecies, and then conclude with a short discussion of how readers might make sense of Matthew's interpretative moves.

Isaiah 7:14–16/Matthew 1:22–23

When Gabriel appears to Joseph, he tells Joseph that he is to name his son Jesus, “for he shall save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). Matthew then tells his readers that this was done so that

It might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (Matthew 1:22–23)

Gabriel is here quoting from Isaiah 7:14:

Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, And shall call his name Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

The contemporary context of Isaiah's prophecy was the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, and the Syro-Ephraimite war (734 BC). Two enemy kings in particular, Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, troubled the kingdom of Judah. Both kings wanted Ahaz to join their coalition against Assyria. Isaiah had approached Ahaz, king of Judah, and asked him to ask the Lord for a sign affirming that Jehovah will destroy the enemies of Ahaz, thus confirming the instruction not to join their coalition. Ahaz declined to ask for a sign, but Isaiah gives him one anyway:

Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. For

before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings. (Isaiah 7:14–16)

Based upon the events of the next chapter (Isaiah 8), the “son” Isaiah is referring to is perhaps his own son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, and Isaiah’s wife, the “prophetess,” is the “virgin.” On the other hand, perhaps the birth of Hezekiah fulfilled this prophecy.¹⁶ The immediate fulfillment of this prophecy remains a riddle. The primary purpose of the prophecy, however, was to inform Ahaz that by the time this “son” has learned to choose between good and evil, both Rezin and Pekah will be dead and the present crisis no longer relevant.¹⁷

Hosea 11:1/Matthew 2:15

A second, similar “prophecy” involves the flight of Joseph, Mary, and the young Jesus to Egypt in order to escape Herod’s sword. When Joseph and Mary eventually return from Egypt with Jesus, Matthew interprets this return as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy:

And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son. (Matthew 2:15)

The prophecy in question is Hosea 11:1:

When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt. (Hosea 11:1)

The immediate context of Hosea 11:1 is the relationship between Jehovah and Israel.

Jehovah, as Father, is reminding Israel, his “Son,” that he has always loved them, and proof of this love can be found in the origins of Israel, the divine exodus of Israel from Egypt.¹⁸ Unfortunately, as the next verse indicates, Israel rebelled and abandoned Jehovah in favor of idols. However, the important difference between this

passage and the Isaiah passage discussed above is that where Isaiah was delivering a prophecy about the *future*, Hosea was referring to an event in Israel's distant *past*.¹⁹ Hosea's explicit connections with Israel's past, however, does not preclude him from speaking prophetically and implicitly foreshadowing the future flight of Jesus to Egypt.²⁰ Nor does it preclude Matthew from using Hosea's words to speak about Jesus.

Zechariah 9:9/Matthew 21:5

Matthew 21:5 presents readers with one of Matthew's more enigmatic Old Testament quotations. Here Jesus, in preparation for the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, instructs his disciples to "go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me" (Matthew 21:2).²¹ Matthew writes that the acquisition of the animals fulfills the prophecy given by Zechariah: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9:9). The original context of the Zechariah passage is the eschatological arrival of a triumphant king, one who finds favor with Jehovah and one whose humility is underscored by the mode of his arrival. A triumphant king may be expected to arrive on the back of a stallion, but this one arrives riding upon a donkey. What is noteworthy here is that Jesus is the one who initiates the fulfillment of the prophecy. He is the one who requests that the animals be brought, and he is the one who willingly rides into Jerusalem in a deliberate manner.²² To those awaiting his arrival, the implications of Jesus's provocative actions were clear: their King, the triumphant Son of David, has arrived, but in a fashion that would give pause to those viewing his entry into Jerusalem as the first movement toward an insurrection.²³

For modern readers, it can be difficult to understand how to interpret Matthew's use of Old Testament prophecy.²⁴ The prophecy from Zechariah 9:9 is perhaps the easiest to unfold, as it appears to serve partially as *predictive* prophecy, a mode of prophecy that anticipates an event occurring in the future, in this case Jesus's arrival in Jerusalem, without a fulfillment contemporary to the actual pronouncement. But what of Isaiah 7:14, which explicitly refers to events in the life of Isaiah, or Hosea 11:1, which speaks of a past event rather than a future one? How can Jesus be the "fulfillment" of these passages? In the Isaiah passage, readers could interpret Matthew's interpretive move as an example of *multiple fulfillment* prophecy, meaning that one prophecy can have a partial fulfillment in the time in which it is given, and a further fulfillment at a later time. The future fulfillment, however, should not be taken as more "correct" or important than the original. As for the Hosea passage, Matthew's interpretation can be seen as an example of *typological* prophecy, meaning that Matthew sees in the life of Jesus "the fullest expression of a significant pattern of events" that occur and reoccur throughout the biblical narrative.²⁵ Understood typologically, Matthew understands Jesus retracing "in his own life the foundational experience of Israel in being called by God out of Egypt."²⁶ The presence of fulfillment prophecies in Matthew's Gospel reveal an author who is a careful reader of Israel's scripture and one who sees Jesus's life and ministry as a, if not *the*, crucial focal point of Old Testament prophecy and the culmination of Israel's history.

Mark

The use of the Old Testament in Mark's Gospel differs from Matthew in two significant ways. First, Mark contains only approximately seventy quotations and allusions, as opposed to Matthew's 124 (although Mark's Gospel is admittedly shorter).²⁷ Second, as discussed above,

Matthew used the Old Testament to frame his message that Jesus's ministry represented the fulfillment of prophecy—Jesus's life, ministry, and death represented the culmination of Israel's history. Mark, however, does not use Old Testament quotations to further his narrative. With the exception of one quotation that we will examine below (Mark 1:2–3), every Old Testament quotation in Mark's gospel comes from words spoken by Jesus. Mark seems much less interested in interpreting Jesus's ministry in light of scripture or prophetic fulfillment. Rather, one of his primary concerns is to employ Old Testament scripture in a way that demonstrates clearly that Jesus is the divine son of God.²⁸

Mark 1:2–3/Isaiah 40:3; Malachi 3:1; Exodus 23:20

Mark 1:2–3 is notable for two important reasons. First, as mentioned above, Mark 1:2–3 represents the only place in Mark's Gospel where Mark quotes from the Old Testament in a narrative fashion rather than having the quotation spoken by Jesus. Second, although Mark claims that he is quoting from Isaiah, Mark 1:2–3 is actually a composite quotation drawn from three separate texts.²⁹

Here is Mark's quotation:

As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. (Mark 1:2–3)

Now compare Mark's words to these verses:³⁰

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. (Exodus 23:20)

Behold, I will send my messenger, and he *shall prepare the way before me*: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant,

whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:1)

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. (Isaiah 40:3)

In the Old Testament, each of these three passages had significant meanings. Exodus 23:20 re-enforces for Israel that they are the people of Jehovah, who has sent his “messenger” to lead them. As long as Israel hearkens to this “messenger,” they will be safe. Malachi 3:1 is likely a paraphrase of Exodus 23:20 but situated within a new context. Now Malachi speaks of Israel’s disobedience as a reason for Jehovah’s absence; Jehovah will be sending Elijah to turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, lest he “smite the earth with a curse” (Malachi 4:6). Isaiah 40:3 announces to Israel that Jehovah’s triumphant return is imminent and that the “glory of the Lord” is to be shortly revealed (Isaiah 40:5).

Mark cites these three Old Testament passages and makes two crucial interpretive moves. First, he casts John the Baptist into the role of the “messenger,” who delivers the message of Jehovah to the people. John’s mission is that of the eschatological Elijah, and to reject his words is to invite the wrath of Jehovah. Second, he casts Jesus in the role of Jehovah; it is Jesus’s way and Jesus’s path that needs to be prepared and made straight by the Jews. He is the Lord whose arrival is imminent. Israelite prophets such as Isaiah had centuries earlier predicted the salvation of the house of Israel, and in the combination of these three passages Mark “sees in the coming of John and Jesus to the wilderness the fulfilment of the promised salvation of which the prophet Isaiah had spoken.”³¹

Psalms 110:1/Mark 12:36

Mark’s Gospel, more than any of the other three, makes an effort to conceal Jesus’s divine identity from the public. As his ministry

progresses, some of his followers (and even, on one occasion, an unclean spirit; see Mark 5:1–20) begin recognize that Jesus is more than human, but Jesus consistently advises them to withhold that knowledge from the public, a trait of the Gospel of Mark that scholars have labeled the “Messianic Secret.”³² Whereas in Mark 1:2–3, Mark himself used Old Testament language to argue for Jesus’s divine sonship; later in his gospel, Mark will present Jesus as doing something similar, namely using Old Testament quotations to support his claims to deity. This paper will now explore two of those passages.

The first comes in Mark 12. Here Jesus, less than a week before his death, is approached at the Temple by a scribe, who poses the question, “Which commandment is first of all?” (Mark 12:28). Jesus answers, and then poses a question of His own to the crowd:

How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David?

For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, **The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool.**

David therefore himself calleth him Lord; and whence is he then his son? (Mark 12:35–37)³³

Jesus here quotes from Psalm 110:1:

The LORD says to my lord, “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool. (Psalm 110:1)³⁴

The idea that the Messiah would be from the lineage of David was well attested in the Old Testament.³⁵ However, Psalm 110 introduces a possible contradictory: How can the Messiah, if he is David’s son, as the scriptures teach, also then be David’s Lord? Jesus is pushing the conventional boundaries of the understanding of the Messiah and his mission by asking his audience to reconcile two seemingly incompatible ideas. Is it enough to call the Messiah “Son of David?”

Terminology here is key. “Christ” is the English rendering of the Hebrew/Aramaic title “Messiah,” or “anointed one,” a title that generally referred to prophets, priests, and kings but by the time of Jesus had become associated by some Jews with a national liberator.³⁶ The first “LORD” is the Hebrew title Jehovah (Yahweh), and the second “Lord” is the Hebrew term *Adonai*. Both are rendered in the Greek of Psalm 110:1 and Mark’s Gospel as *Kyrios*. In the original context of Psalm 110, the setting was likely a coronation, where the “LORD” (God) inducts the “Lord” (King) as his co-ruler and invites him to sit as his right hand.³⁷ By the time of Jesus, however, the Psalm appears to have taken on a different meaning, where “LORD” still refers to Jehovah but “Lord” now refers to the Messiah. Jesus’s question thus goes something like this: “David said that Jehovah (the LORD) spoke to the Messiah (my Lord) and said ‘Sit at my right hand.’ How can the Messiah then be both David’s Lord (as Psalm 110:1 claims) and also David’s son (as his audience has come to believe)?” Because it would be silly to refer to a son as a Lord, the answer is simple: He cannot be both. While not rejecting the David lineage of the Messiah, Jesus appears to be suggesting that a re-evaluation of the connections between David and the Messiah is needed, and that the Messiah is better understood not as “Son of David” but as “Son of God.”

Daniel 7:13–14/Mark 13:26

This re-evaluation of Jesus’s divine identity reaches a further stage of development in Mark 13, the scene of Jesus’s climactic eschatological discourse about the Temple. Midway through the discourse, Jesus describes a future time when “the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light.” Jesus relays that those alive during this time will

see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. And then shall he send his angels, and shall gather

together his elect from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven. (Mark 13:26–27)

Jesus's words are an allusion to Daniel 7:13:

I saw in the night visions, and, behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed. (Daniel 7:13–14)

What is notable here is the title “Son of Man,” which Jesus has applied to himself through the Gospel of Mark and has become his “distinctive self-designation.”³⁸ Overall, the title Son of Man appears fourteen times in the Gospel of Mark.³⁹ Earlier in Mark, Jesus stated that the Son of Man “must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again” (Mark 8:31). Now, in Mark 13, this same “Son of Man” figure comes “with great power and glory.”

The title “Son of Man” itself appears several times in the Old Testament, where it seems to be a literal translation of the Aramaic phrase *bar nasha*.⁷ In Ezekiel, where it appears ninety-three times, the title seems to simply be another way of saying that someone is a “human being.” Additionally, “Son of Man” may even have functioned as a circumlocution for “I.”⁴⁰ Daniel’s use of the title seems to refer possibly to a divine being who will arrive on Earth at a future point and establish an everlasting kingdom, or possibly to a ceremony where Jehovah, surrounded by his angels, enthrones the Son of Man as ruler over the Earth. The exact nature of Daniel’s use of the title remains unclear to biblical scholars,⁴¹ but it is likely that

Jesus adopted it for a specific reason and with a specific meaning in mind. Jesus's use, especially in Mark 13, leaves "no doubt that in his interpretation of Daniel's vision it is he himself who is to receive that ultimate authority."⁴² The title Son of Man then becomes the perfect designation for one who is both conquered (put to death) and conqueror (overcame death).⁴³

As we saw above, an important element of Matthew's use of Old Testament scripture, particularly writings from the prophets, was directed toward demonstrating Jesus's life and ministry as the fulfillment of prophecy. The scriptures and the events they described found a realization, if not *the* realization, in Jesus. An important element of Mark's use of the Old Testament is to demonstrate that Jesus Christ is more than a human prophet. Jesus is the representative of Jehovah, whose path must be prepared. He is more than the Son of David, a nationalistic figure who will lead to political liberation. He is the divine Son of Man whose majestic arrival will signal a new age in Israel's history. He is ultimately the Son of God.

Luke

Luke stands second to Matthew among the Gospel writers in his use of Old Testament quotations and allusions (109 vs. 124).⁴⁴ In contrast to Matthew, who saw Jesus and his ministry as the *culmination* or *climax* of the Old Testament period, Luke sees Jesus and his ministry as the *continuation* of the Old Testament period. In other words, Luke does not see the life and ministry of Jesus Christ strictly as the fulfillment of prophecy or as a new, separate age, but as the continuation of a story that has been unfolding since the creation and has as its central motif the ability and power of God to *save*. As one scholar writes, "Luke sees the Scripture fulfilled . . . in terms of the reintroduction and fulfillment of OT (Old Testament)

patterns that point to the presence of God's saving work."⁴⁵ Not surprisingly, one of the major points of emphasis, in particular toward the beginning of Luke's Gospel, is God's extension of salvation to Israel through the Abrahamic covenant. While Luke explicitly mentions Abraham in Luke 1:55 and 73,⁴⁶ Lucan scholar Joel B. Green has noted that the infancy stories of Mary, Elisabeth, and Zacharias in Luke 1–2 contain about twenty-five allusions to the story of Abraham and Sarah in Genesis 11–21, including the barrenness of a woman (Genesis 11:30/Luke 1:7), a miraculous conception (Genesis 21:2/Luke 1:24), and God's favor being with the child (Genesis 21:20/Luke 2:40).⁴⁷ These allusions indicate that Luke "regards his opening chapters as though they were the continuation of the story rooted in the Abrahamic covenant," a theme that will continue throughout the Gospel.⁴⁸ This extension of a means of salvation beyond Judaism would have particularly resonated with Luke's (presumably) Gentile audience, who realize that the New Israel will include both Jews and Gentiles, the primary conditions for membership being faith in Jesus Christ and repentance for sins. With this in mind, this section will look at three Old Testament usages by Luke that bring the Abrahamic covenant and the continuation of Israel's story into focus.

Malachi 4:5–6/Luke 1:17

Luke 1:16–17 represents Gabriel's words to Zacharias while the latter was ministering in the Temple. Gabriel informs Zacharias that the mission of his son will involve the redemption of God's people:

And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. (Luke 1:16–17)

This statement is an allusion to Malachi:

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:

And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. (Malachi 4:5–6)

The context of Malachi 4:5–6 is an eventual eschatological reconciliation between God and his people, with Elijah, who performed a similar unification during the time of Ahab and Jezebel, leading the way. Malachi's prophecy ends ominously, with a warning predicting "the annihilation of the land of Judah with its people. . . unless the Lord sends his messenger to change the hearts of his people."⁴⁹

Gabriel's allusion to the Malachi prophecy contains a few noteworthy shifts. Many, but not all, of Israel will respond to Elijah's eschatological call. Gabriel also omits the phrase "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children," from Malachi, but that may have simply been a way to accommodate the inclusion of the second phrase, "and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just."⁵⁰ Finally, Gabriel's declaration ends on a much happier note: the purpose of this eschatological call is to ready the righteous for God's imminent kingdom. Gabriel's point is that Zacharias's son, John the Baptist, will play the role of Elijah in preparing Israel for the new age.⁵¹

The key phrase here is one that is well known to Latter-day Saints, "And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children." Jesus quoted this verse when he visits the Nephites (3 Nephi 25), and Moroni quoted it (with a few changes) to Joseph Smith in 1823 (cf. D&C 2). Malachi's language hints specifically to the reconciliation and restoration of family relationships: "fathers and sons are reconciled to one another and neighbours to one another, and so together they seek God."⁵² The ultimate expression of this "reconciliation"

may be that of God the Father to his wayward children. Green argues: “God himself is presented as the Father who cares for his children and acts redemptively on their behalf, and human fathers can be characterized along similar lines.”⁵³ What John the Baptist introduces, then, is a “renewal of family harmony,” a reconciliation that may extend to all God’s children, not only the Jews.⁵⁴ Based upon the abundance of Abrahamic material in the opening chapters of Luke (even Zacharias’s subsequent response to Gabriel in the next verse echoes that of Abraham), Luke appears to have viewed the Christian era not as a “new” period of time but as the “next” period of time, one where the Gentiles receive their invitation into God’s covenant, joining with those Jews who also respond to him to form his people “Israel.”

Luke 20:17/Psalm 118:22

In Luke 20, Jesus delivers the “parable of the vineyard,” in which the servants, or husbandmen, hired by the owner of a vineyard, reject all the messengers sent by the owner to check on their progress, even rejecting the son of the owner himself, whom they cast out and kill. The result of these actions, Jesus explains, is that the owner of the vineyard “shall come and destroy these husbandmen, and shall give the vineyard to others” (Luke 20:16). His audience, likely reacting in horror to such a violent end, cry out “God forbid.” In order to help his audience understand the message behind the parable, Jesus makes the following statement:

And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? (Luke 20:17).

Jesus’s answer contains a quotation from Psalm 118:22:

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. (Psalm 118:22)

In context, Psalm 118 is a “thanksgiving liturgy related to entrance to the sanctuary,” one that commemorates Jehovah’s devotion and favor toward Israel.⁵⁵ The verse quoted by Jesus may have been a proverb expressing “transition from humiliation to honor, in which a generally discarded stone became the foundation stone stabilizing two adjacent walls.”⁵⁶ The “stone” mentioned in 118:22 could then refer to a king or to Israel herself—she has long been rejected by the other nations of the world, but when God’s plan of redemption is made apparent, the world will see that Israel plays a key role, the cornerstone of God’s kingdom.⁵⁷

Jesus takes this verse from Psalm 118 and its application to the parable of the vineyard and makes two key interpretive moves. First, He re-orientes the original meaning of the cornerstone so that it now refers to him (cf. Luke 20:19): *he* is the son of the vineyard owner who has been “refused” by the Jews, and actions of the husbandmen in the parable serve, then, to foreshadow Jesus’s own death at the hands of the Jews. However, in a remarkable reversal, this “discarded stone” will triumph and be vindicated, foreshadowing Jesus’s resurrection.⁵⁸ Second, when Mark and Matthew give their accounts of the “parable of the vineyard,” they include quotations from both Psalm 118:22 and 23:

The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. (Psalm 118:22–23)

Notably, Luke includes only 118:22 and avoids 118:23. The omission of “it is marvelous in our eyes,” a phrase that encapsulates the optimism of this thanksgiving psalm, allows Luke to maintain an emphasis upon the stone:

Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder. (Luke 20:18)

This statement, itself an allusion to Daniel 2:44–45 and Isaiah 8:14–15, serves to reinforce the great importance of the “stone.” For Luke, it is Jesus who will be overlooked by the nations of the world, yet it is Jesus who is the cornerstone of God’s new kingdom and his suffering and vindication of ultimate importance. Entrance into the new covenant must go through him—there is no other way. His words include a warning—those who wish to align themselves with God must distance themselves from the “tenants,” who will soon face their own destruction.

Luke 23:29–30/Hosea 10:8

This warning to those who would reject Jesus and his Kingdom implicit in Luke 20:18 becomes explicit in Luke 23:29–32, a final plea from the lips of Jesus to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. While walking toward Calvary to be crucified, Jesus encounters a group of women who “bewailed and lamented him” (Luke 23:27). Jesus turns to them and says:

Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children. For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry? (Luke 23:28–31)

Jesus’s statement contains an allusion to Hosea 10:8:

The high places also of Aven, the sin of Israel, shall be destroyed: the thorn and the thistle shall come up on their altars; and they shall say to the mountains, Cover us; and to the hills, Fall on us. (Hosea 10:8)

In the context of Hosea, these words “constitute an oracle of judgment sealing the fate of Jerusalem.”⁵⁹ Hosea prophesies about the fate of those who would substitute idolatrous practices for the worship of Jehovah: once Jehovah has exposed the idols as false, the guilt of Israel will be so great that they will lament for mountains to “cover us.”⁶⁰ By quoting this passage from Hosea, Jesus informs those witnessing his suffering that, if they do not take this one last opportunity to repent, then they will also stand guilty before God. The covenant and the Kingdom stand open, but only if those listening hear his words and seek repentance. Otherwise, just as the idol-worshippers wished for death, so would those who now stand and watch their Redeemer march to the cross mourn after his crucifixion.⁶¹ The result, Jesus declares, is that the state of affairs in Jerusalem will grow so catastrophic that it will be better for women to not give birth to children and bring them into such a desperate circumstance.⁶² In a bitter touch of irony, Jesus hints that the mourners are right in their act of mourning but wrong in their mourning for him—it is they and their children who should be mourned.

Luke’s story stresses that salvation, through a recapitulation of the story of Abraham, is available to all those who recognize that in Jesus lies a power to save that represents a continuation of the biblical narrative: “In Luke’s telling, God’s intent to reveal salvation to all flesh was part of Israel’s plotted role from the beginning.”⁶³ Luke’s allusion to Malachi 4 demonstrated that harmonious family relationships will provide a central facet of the New Israel. Jesus’s interpretation of Psalm 118 brought into sharp relief the necessity of faith in Jesus Christ and the intimation that the vanquished would quickly become the vanquisher. Finally, Jesus’s quotation of Hosea 10 provided a stern warning to those who would resist the charge to repent of their sins and align themselves with him. Through his use of the Old Testament, Luke provides a beacon

of light and hope to those who eagerly search for salvation, all the while reminding those who reject his covenant message in favor of another path that justice awaits.⁶⁴

John

John's Gospel is a very different text than the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, or Luke. John's Gospel contains no parables, no Sermon on the Mount, and no infancy stories. John even shifts the chronology of such key events as the cleansing of the temple and the day of the crucifixion.⁶⁵ It is noteworthy that, compared with Matthew (124), Mark (70), and Luke (109), John contains only twenty-seven quotations and allusions. John does use some of the same Old Testament passages that the synoptic authors used, such as Isaiah 40:3 (John 1:23) and Zechariah 9:9 (John 12:15). However, John also includes several passages from the Old Testament that are not found in the other three gospels. Of the fifteen probable direct quotations in John's gospel drawn from the Old Testament, eleven are unique to John.⁶⁶

One reason for John employing fewer quotations is that he "prefers to focus on the artistically selected instance that repays sustained meditation."⁶⁷ Like Matthew, John endeavors to portray Jesus's ministry as the fulfillment of prophecy, but John is not as interested in compiling quotations as evidence or proof. In addition to the few quotations he does include, John "relies upon evoking *images* and *figures* from Israel's Scripture."⁶⁸ In this way, he is able to portray Jesus as the premortal Son of God, the *logos* (word) who has existed from "the beginning" and through whom the Father speaks to his children.⁶⁹ John describes Jesus using images and symbols that are often drawn from the Old Testament—He is "In the Beginning" (John 1:1; cf. Genesis 1:1),⁷⁰ the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11; cf. Jeremiah 23:1–4; 2 Samuel 5:2), the "Living Water"

(John 4:10; cf. Zechariah 14:8), and the “Bread of Life” (John 6:35; cf. Exodus 16:4). In this section, this paper will look at three uses of the Old Testament in John’s Gospel: one that serves as an allusion to the Old Testament, and two quotations spoken by Jesus that highlight elements of his ministry.

John 1:51/Genesis 28:12

At the conclusion of the first chapter of John’s Gospel, Jesus encounters a man named Nathanael, whom Jesus identifies as “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile” (John 1:47). Nathanael, impressed at Jesus’s identification of someone he did not know, declares “Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel” (John 1:49). Jesus, in response, promises Nathanael if he follows Jesus he will see far more impressive events than this:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. (John 1:51)

The noteworthy phrase here is “the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man,” an allusion to Genesis 28:12:⁷¹

And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. (Genesis 28:12)

Jacob has this dream in the midst of traveling to Haran. The purpose of Jacob’s vision is largely to allow the Lord to reaffirm the covenant he had made with Abraham and Isaac (Genesis 28:13–15).⁷² Jacob appears to view this encounter as occurring upon sacred space. He declares, “this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven” (Genesis 28:17) and, fittingly, names the location of the dream “Beth-el” (House of God).⁷³

On one level, we can see Jesus's words in John's gospel having a similar intent as they did in Genesis. Jesus is reaffirming that the Abrahamic covenant is still in effect for Abraham's descendants. On another level, this allusion says something fundamental about the nature of Jesus Christ himself. Notice that in Jacob's dream, the angels "ascended and descended" upon the ladder. One way of understanding Jacob's ladder is to view it as representing a link between Heaven and Earth.⁷⁴ However, in John's account, the angels are "ascending and descending" upon *Jesus*. He has become the ladder, the link uniting heaven and earth.⁷⁵ If any desire to travel to heaven, they can only arrive through the assistance of Jesus. After all, as Jesus states later in John, "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). Jesus, then, becomes the new Beth-el, the true "gate of heaven."⁷⁶

John 10:34–35/Psalm 82:6

John's Gospel is notable for the many controversies that arise between Jesus and some members of his Jewish audience, often over his claims of divinity.⁷⁷ For example, one such encounter occurs when Jesus heals a lame man on the Sabbath, a miracle that almost becomes violent when the Jews "sought the more to kill him" (John 5:18). In John 10, Jesus again risks the wrath of the Jews when he makes the "blasphemous" claim that "I and *my* Father are one" (John 10:30). Once more, the Jews "took up stones again to stone him" (John 10:31). At this point, Jesus asks the Jews to explain for which of his "good works" they want to stone him. The Jews respond that it is not Jesus's good works, but his blasphemous statements that have led them to consider killing him, "because that thou, being a man, maketh thyself God" (John 10:33). In defense of his claims to divinity, Jesus asks:

Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken. (John 10:34–35)

The scripture quoted here by Jesus comes from Psalm 82:6:

I have said, Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the most High (Psalm 82:6).

In its original context, Psalm 82 is a likely a condemnation of those who rule unjustly in Israel.⁷⁸ The Psalm opens in the midst of a council or assembly convened by Jehovah and involving a group identified as “the gods.”⁷⁹ The purpose of the assembly appears to be Jehovah’s address of the unjust actions of those he had earlier appointed as judges. Because the power to rule is seen as belonging strictly to God, those to whom he grants power incur God’s wrath when they fail in their commission.⁸⁰ The verse in question, Psalm 82:6, appears to be a reference to the moment when Jehovah elevated the “gods” to their position as judges. The subsequent verse records their punishment and condemnation: “But ye shall die like men, And fall like one of the princes” (Psalm 82:7).⁸¹ These unjust rulers are thus not “Gods” in the sense that they are divine beings who are ontologically similar to Jehovah. Rather, they are “gods” in the sense that they are exercising authority granted unto them by God.⁸²

This context is important for understanding why Jesus chooses to quote Psalm 82:6 at this point. His logic seems to be this: if the scriptures “cannot be broken,” and if the scriptures contain references to beings other than Jehovah as “gods,” then how can the Jews condemn him for “making himself God” when their own scriptures apply the title of “god” to beings other than Jehovah? Even more so, Jesus argues that he is simply the “Son of God,” the implication being that if he could be justified in calling himself

“God,” he is even more justified in calling himself “Son of God.”⁸³ The irony, of course, lost on most of his audience is that Jesus actually is God made flesh, as John’s prologue so carefully establishes (cf. John 1:1-3).

John 13:18/Psalm 41:9

The washing of the Apostles’ feet provides the setting for the second quotation from the Gospel of John. Following the washing, Jesus encourages the Twelve to follow his example and seek humility. Then he makes the following statement:

I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. (John 13:18)⁸⁴

The quotation comes from Psalm 41:9:

Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me. (Psalm 41:9)

Psalm 41 is a thanksgiving psalm about seeking relief from serious illness. The speaker, presumed to be David, bemoans the betrayal of someone he considered close enough to share his dinner, the betrayal of this hospitality being a particular black mark against the offender.⁸⁵ In the rabbinic tradition, the events referred to in this Psalm were believed to be the rebellion of Ahithophel (David’s counselor and the grandfather of Bathsheba) and Absalom (David’s son) against David, as recounted in 2 Samuel 15.⁸⁶

The Gospel setting is filled with dramatic irony. The identity of the one who has “lifted up his heel against me” comes as no surprise to readers of the Gospel of John, as Judas’s betrayal had been foreshadowed earlier in the narrative (cf. John 12:4-8). However, Judas’s betrayal remains unknown at this point to the Apostles, who wonder aloud who this treacherous figure could be.

Even Jesus's handing the sop to Judas does not offer a full clarity of the situation to them. Additionally, the situation is clouded by the uncomfortable nature of what Jesus has asked them to do, namely sharing bread with him prior to "lifting up their heels," albeit to be washed by Jesus.⁸⁷ Not surprisingly, John's quotation presents readers with a difficult passage to unpack. However, Jesus's subsequent words in John 13:19–20 suggest that Jesus has a specific reason for making this quotation. Whereas in Matthew, where Old Testament quotations were largely employed to provide prophetic evidence of fulfillment to readers, Jesus's quotation of Psalm 41:9 in John appears to have been provided specifically for the benefit of the Apostles; that as they looked back after the events of the next few days, their confusion over Jesus's words and actions would crystalize into clarity and provide them with an additional witness of his divinity as they recognized the deeper meaning behind his words.

Conclusion

The Gospel writers present the life of Jesus as a tapestry. The framework is a singular view of time and history, while Israel's own text and traditions provide threads that are carefully woven together in a way that poignantly evokes the power of Jesus's life and death. The image that emerges over the course of the Gospels is the life and ministry of Jesus, one that is the fulfillment of prophecy (Matthew), the path of the Son of God (Mark), the continuation of Abraham's promises (Luke), and the re-creation of Israel's own story (John). Readers of the Gospels who do not fully recognize or grasp the intertextuality at work between the Old Testament and the New Testament can still be richly rewarded as they work their way through the different narratives of Jesus's ministry. But to truly understand the nuances, the ebbs and flows, and the shades and

degrees that each Evangelist carefully invests into his story, readers ought to seek out and commit to study the same texts that provided a context and a frame of reference for the Evangelists, namely the writings of the Old Testament.

Notes

1. Gerard Genette, *The Architext: An Introduction*, trans. Jane E. Lewin (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 81–82.
2. “Word, Dialog and Novel,” ed. Toril Moi, *The Kristeva Reader* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), 37. It was in Julia Kristeva’s groundbreaking work *Semiotike: Recherchés pour une semanalyse* (Collections Tel Quel Paris: Le Seuil, 1969), that notions of “Intertextuality” began to develop. Kristeva argued that all texts share links between them that “intersect and neutralize one another.” *Desire in Language: A Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. Leon S. Roudiez (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980), 36.
3. James A. Sanders, “Intertextuality and Dialogue: New Approaches to the Scriptural Canon,” in *Canon vs. Culture: Reflections on the Current Debate*, ed. Jan Gorak (New York: Garland Publishing, 2001), 180.
4. Old Testament quotations present in the New Testament were first organized by J. Rendel Harris in his two volumes entitled *Testimonies* (Cambridge, 1916–20). For the work of later studies that built upon Harris’s work, see C. H. Dodd, *According to Scriptures: The Sub-Structure of New Testament Theology* (London: Nisbet, 1952); E. Earle Ellis, *St. Paul’s Use of the Old Testament* (London: Oliver and Body, 1957); Krister Stendahl, *The School of St. Matthew and its Use of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968); Barnabas Lindars, *New Testament Apologetic: The Doctrinal Significance of the Old Testament Quotations* (London: SCM Press LTD, 1961); and F. F. Bruce, *New Testament Development of Old Testament Themes* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968).

5. I recognize that titles like “Hebrew Bible,” “First Testament,” or “Sacred Jewish Writings” are perhaps more appropriate, but for the purpose of this paper I will use “Old Testament” as a way of referring to the thirty-nine canonized writings contained in the King James Bible.
6. For example, Luke 24:20–21.
7. Rowan Williams, *The Wound of Knowledge: A Theological History from the New Testament to Luther and St. John of the Cross* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1998), 1.
8. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 4–5. See also the discussion in Hays, *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014), 1–6.
9. See, for example, Richard B. Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel’s Scripture* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005); Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). One subsequent work on this topic acknowledged the debt to Hays, ironically enough, through allusion: Christopher A. Beetham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (BIS 96: Leiden: Brill, 2008). See also G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Books, 2007).
10. As noted above, the topic of intertextuality has become quite popular in the Academy, and there are a great deal of ongoing discussions and dialogues about topics such as the Evangelists’ use of the Old Testament. For the sake of audience, this paper will not be directly engaging those discussions beyond the introduction to the topic presented in this paper. Relevant secondary sources will be cited throughout for those wishing to engage the topic further.
11. A note on terminology: I will use the technical term “quotation” to refer to a passage in the New Testament that has been explicitly cited by the gospel author, meaning that the author specifically states that he is referring to an Old Testament passage. Usually this is done through a formula quotation, such as “As it is written” or “In order that the scripture be fulfilled.” I will

- use the term “allusion” to refer to a passage in the New Testament that has been implicitly cited by the Gospel author, meaning that the author is likely to have had the Old Testament passage in mind, even though he doesn’t explicitly state that he does.
12. I borrow this and subsequent totals of quotations and allusions from Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 284. It should be noted that numbers of quotations and allusions are continually debated. Depending upon the criteria one employs in evaluation, this number could increase substantially. For example, D. A. Hagner writes that Matthew contains “well over sixty explicit quotations from the OT (not counting a great number of allusions), more than twice as many as any other Gospel.” D. A. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13* (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), liv. However, R. T. France notes that the USB Greek New Testament lists fifty-four direct citations and over 250 allusions in Matthew’s Gospel, which he admits still may be a “conservative figure.” R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 10.
 13. Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, liv. France adds, “I have argued elsewhere that the central theme of Matthew’s gospel is ‘fulfillment.’” France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 10.
 14. Of this grouping of statements of prophetic fulfillment early in Matthew, Hays writes, “This clustering of fulfillment quotations near the beginning of the Gospel conditions readers to expect that nearly everything in the story of Jesus will turn out to be the fulfillment of something prescribed by the prophets.” Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 106.
 15. “Indeed, Matthew leaves nothing to chance: he repeatedly erects highway signs in large letters to direct his readers, making it unmistakably explicit that Jesus is the fulfillment of Israel’s Scripture.” Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 106.
 16. For a discussion of the identity of the “virgin” and “Immanuel,” see J. D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), 136–42.

17. For further discussion of this prophecy and its place in the New Testament, see Jason Combs, "From King Ahaz's Sign to Christ Jesus: The 'Fulfillment' of Isaiah 7:14" herein.
18. "Again, in retrospective language, God describes his people in terms of their origins" (Douglas Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah* [Dallas: Words Books, 1987], 177).
19. The Hebrew verb קָרָא is a qal perfect tense. In the LXX, Hosea 11:1 uses the Greek aorist tense $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\sigma\alpha$. In Matthew's quotation, he uses $\epsilon\kappa\acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\sigma\alpha$, also the aorist tense.
20. "A second special exodus from Egypt, that of the child Jesus after the death of Herod (Matt 2:15), comports precisely with the wording Hosea was inspired to use, and which therefore does double duty. It has its own meaning in Hosea 11:1, in a context which does not concern itself with the Messiah. It has as well a *sensus plenior*, deriving from the double potential of the specific wording chosen. Events in Jesus' life thus *fulfill* (i.e., complete the potential meanings of) the wording of v 1b, while not constituting its sole referent" (Stuart, *Hosea-Jonah*, 178). See also discussion in Raymond Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, rev. ed. ABRL (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 219–21.
21. The question of how many animals Jesus actually rode upon (one or two) has been the topic of much debate among scholars, some of who question whether or not Matthew misread the synonymous parallelism in Zechariah 9:9. Hays writes, "Matthew, on the other hand, is so eager to draw his readers' attention to the intertextual link that he quotes the Zechariah passage in full and explicitly points out that Jesus' action is the fulfillment of the prophecy. Furthermore, he reshapes the story to include *two* animals, a donkey and a colt, both mentioned in Zechariah 9:9, thereby underscoring the fulfilled prophecy but also creating for his readers the notoriously baffling image of Jesus somehow astride both creatures." Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 106. See also the discussion in Hagner, *Matthew*

- 1–13, 594–95, and David Instone-Brewer, “The Two Asses of Zechariah 9:9 in Matthew 21,” *TynBul* 54 (2003): 87–98.
22. “Jesus’s donkey ride was a matter of deliberate choice, and indeed probably of careful planning, rather than a matter of necessity.” France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 774.
 23. “But in deliberately presenting himself before Jerusalem as its messianic king, Jesus has chosen an OT model which subverts any popular militaristic idea of kingship. The meek, peaceful donkey-rider of Zech 9:9 is not a potential leader of an anti-Roman insurrection.” France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 775.
 24. For a useful discussion of Matthew’s different approaches to prophecy, including the three discussed in this section, see David L. Turner, *Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Books, 2008), 68–73. See also Jason Combs, “From King Ahaz’s Sign to Christ Jesus: The ‘Fulfillment’ of Isaiah 7:14” herein.
 25. James M. Hamilton Jr., “‘The Virgin Will Conceive’: Typological fulfillment in Matthew 1:18–23,” in *Built upon the Rock: Studies in the Gospel of Matthew*, ed. Daniel M. Gurtner and John Nolland (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 233.
 26. John Nolland, *The Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005), 123.
 27. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 284. See also Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New*, 6.
 28. In the OT, the title “Son of God” is applied to Israel as God’s people (Hos 11:1), the king at his coronation (Ps 2:7), the angels (Job 38:7), and the suffering righteous person (Wisdom 2:18). In Mark’s Gospel, “Son of God” is a very prominent title for Jesus. John R. Donahue and Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Mark* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 25. Robert A. Guelich adds, “Mark’s story relates Jesus’ mission as the divine Son who passes incognito through the realm of time and space.” Robert A. Guelich, *Mark* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1989), xxxix.

29. "This usage and the texts cited show that Mark's audience is familiar with both the content and mode of citation of the OT. It also suggests a high level of literacy among first-century Jews and Jewish Christians." Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 60.
30. While in English represented above it may appear that Malachi 3:1 parallels Mark's words more closely, in the Greek text (LXX) Exodus 23:20 is clearly the source of the quotation, and the same is true for the quotation from Isaiah 40:3. The quotation from Malachi 3:1, however, corresponds more closely to the Hebrew text (MT).
31. William L. Lane, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1974), 47.
32. The classic study on the "Messianic Secret" is William Wrede's *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*, published in 1901. "Many scholars since Wrede have offered explanations of the significance of Mark's messianic secret. Nevertheless, no scholarly consensus has emerged on this issue. Part of the reason that no consensus has emerged is that scholars do not agree on exactly which passages constitute the messianic secret. The term functions essentially as a cipher: scholars have used it to refer to a wide variety of Marcan themes and passages. In general, some combination of the following sets of passages have been thought to constitute the messianic secret. Many scholars focus on only one or a few of these: 1:40–45, 5:21–24, 7:31–37, 8:22–26. . . . Together, these passages form a unified motif, a 'messianic secret,' in which Jesus' messianic identity and the necessity of his suffering, death and resurrection are kept hidden from all but a small group of his followers." David F. Watson, *Honor Among Christians: The Cultural Key to the Messianic Secret* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 2–4. See also the discussion in Donahue and Harrington, *Mark*, 27–29.
33. The occasion for this specific question could be the cry of the crowd as Jesus entered Jerusalem: "Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David" (Mark 11:10).

34. Psalm 110:1 is the most-quoted Old Testament text in the New Testament, appearing over thirty times. See discussion in D. M. Hay, *Glory at the Right Hand: Psalm 110 in Early Christianity* (Nashville/New York: Abingdon Press, 1973), 15, 45–47.
35. See, for example, Isaiah 9:2–7; 11:1–9; Jeremiah 23:5 f., 30:9, 33:15, 17, 22; Ezekiel 34:23 f., 37:24; Hosea 3:5; and Amos 9:11. See also the discussion in France, *Mark*, 435–36.
36. See, for example, *Psalms of Solomon*, 17:21. Cf. 2 Samuel 7:12–16.
37. See Konrad Schaefer, *Psalms* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2001), 272–75.
38. France, *Mark*, 127. France continues: “therefore the distinctive use of ‘the Son of Man’ by Jesus derives from his own choice of a term with clear messianic overtones but without a ready-made nationalistic content such as was carried by ‘Messiah’ or ‘Son of David.’”
39. 2:10, 28; 8:31, 38; 9:9, 12, 31; 10:33, 45; 13:26; 14:21, 41, 62.
40. See Geza Vermes, “The Use of *בן אדם* in Jewish Aramaic,” Appendix E in M. Black, *An Aramaic Approach to the Gospels and Acts* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967), 310–28; see also discussion in Lane, *Mark*, 296–303.
41. For a useful discussion, see Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). See also Kelli S. O’Brien, *The Use of Scripture in the Markan Passion Narrative* (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 172–189. For a general discussion of the title in the New Testament, see Larry W. Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 290–306. For a discussion of how the title is used specifically in Mark’s Gospel, see Adela Yarbro Collins and John J. Collins, *King and Messiah as Son of God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2008), 150–52.
42. R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2002), 534.
43. As Hays eloquently frames the riddle posed by the use of the “Son of Man” title, “The story moves on swiftly to Jesus’ condemnation and crucifixion, but the reader who understands the force of the Daniel citation is left with

a stunning revelation: this prisoner being led away to execution is the eschatological Son of Man who will be revealed in his full glory in due course—or, at least, the reader is forced to decide whether this is true. Is this Jesus, the Messiah of Israel, also a transhuman figure of greater glory and dignity than any merely human king? Will he receive an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away?” Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 61.

44. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 284. For a further breakdown of Luke’s usage of the Old Testament, see Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use*, 251–53. See also Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New*, 6.
45. Darrell L. Bock, *Proclamation from Prophecy and Pattern: Lucan Old Testament Christology* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1987), 274–77.
46. Cf. Acts 3:13 and 25, where Luke also writes in terms of the Abrahamic covenant.
47. For a full discussion, see Joel B. Green, *The Gospel of Luke* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 51–58.
48. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 57. Richard Hays adds, “The evocation of this easily recognizable scriptural pattern does alert the reader to expect connections between God’s gracious saving actions for Israel in the past and in the present: the same God who fulfilled his promise to Abraham is now at work again in the events of Luke’s story.” Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 198.
49. R. L. Smith, *Micah–Malachi* (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 342.
50. According to John Nolland, this omission “may be no more than accidental agreement in economizing so as to make room for an added generalizing statement.” John Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20* (Dallas: Word Books, 1989), 31.
51. There is some debate as to whether Gabriel (Luke) was claiming that John the Baptist was *the* fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy, or whether John the Baptist was *a* fulfillment of Malachi’s prophecy. Raymond Brown argues for the former (*The Birth of the Messiah*, 276–77), while I. Howard Marshall argues for the latter. *The Gospel of Luke* Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1978, 59.

52. Marshall, *The Gospel of Luke*, 60.
53. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 77.
54. Nolland, *Luke 1–9:20*, 31.
55. L. C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150 (Revised)* (Dallas: Word Books, 2002), 163.
56. Allen, *Psalms 101–150 (Revised)*, 167.
57. “Though deemed unimportant by imperial neighbors, Israel plays a distinguished role in the architecture of God’s reign. . . . With the dawn of redemption, all nations will realize that Israel is the “cornerstone” of world redemption.” Schaefer, *Psalms*, 291. See also the discussion in Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the Old Testament Use of the New Testament*, 337.
58. Cf. Acts 4:11 and 1 Peter 2:7.
59. Green, *The Gospel of Luke*, 817. Green adds, “Echoing Hosea, Jesus anticipates that those who have rejected God’s salvific purpose by rejecting Jesus and his divinely ordained mission will articulate a similar death wish” (816).
60. At this eschatological moment, “the terror of Yawheh, which they (the Israelities) treated with such disdain, overwhelms them inescapably.” Francis I. Anderson and David Noel Freedman, *Hosea* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1980), 559.
61. “Language from Hos 10:8 is called upon to evoke the full horror of that future. People will long for death as the only relief from the terrible suffering of that time.” John Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1993), 1139.
62. “In the midst of this coming calamity the natural values of the present will be reversed, and so, women who have been denied motherhood will consider themselves fortunate.” Nolland, *Luke 18:35–24:53*, 1139.
63. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 199.
64. In Luke’s writings, “The fate of individuals in this judgment hangs upon their response to the proclaimed word; those who reject it judge themselves ‘unworthy of eternal life.’” Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 219.

65. See Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of John's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic Press, 2001).
66. These are John 2:17; 6:31; 6:45; 7:38; 10:34; 12:38; 13:18; 15:25; 19:24; 19:36; 19:37. See Moyise, *The Old Testament in the New*, 92–93.
67. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 284.
68. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Gospels*, 284.
69. “The first contribution of John’s Gospel to the theology of the New Testament takes us back to where we began. It is the notion of Jesus as God’s unique Envoy or messenger, simultaneously claiming for himself both Deity and obedient submission to Deity.” J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), 39.
70. “In any event, the words ‘In the beginning’ unmistakably echo Genesis 1:1, ‘In the beginning God made the heaven and the earth.’” Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 46.
71. “Our text (John 1:51) clearly alludes to Jacob’s vision, but it contains no explicit reference to Jacob himself. . . . Still, we are certainly not dealing here, any more than in similar allusions, with imagery arbitrarily borrowed from the Old Testament.” Herman Ridderbos, *The Gospel of John: A Theological Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 94. Also, “the Evangelist adds a saying addressed to all the disciples. Its imagery is complex; Jacob’s dream is clearly in the foreground, but there are reminiscences of the baptism of Jesus, possibly of his temptation, and of the eschatological and apocalyptic picture language used of the Son of Man, such as appears in the synoptic Gospels.” George R. Beasley-Murray, *John* (Dallas: Word Book, 1999), 28. However, compare Michaels, “The allusion in Jesus’ pronouncement to Jacob’s dream at Bethel (Gen 28:12) is neither as direct nor as unmistakable as is commonly assumed.” Michaels, *The Gospel of John*, 136.
72. “Through these remarks, the Lord reveals himself to be the very same God who spoke to Abraham, and what is more, confirms that Jacob is the chosen line, who will henceforth enjoy divine protection. And even more,

- though he is now fleeing Canaan, he will eventually return there. For what chiefly distinguishes this pronouncement of the promises from the earlier statements is their setting: the promises were first made to Abraham as he was settling in the land, but they are reaffirmed to Jacob as he is fleeing from it." Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 15–50* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1998), 223.
73. "Gate of heaven" occurs only here in the OT, but the idea that heaven, the divine abode, has one or more entrances is a familiar idea in ancient thought." Wenham, *Genesis*, 223.
74. "It is not clear whether the 'ladder' describes a ladder or 'a ramp or stairway,' or whether there is Egyptian or Babylonian influence on the imagery. What matters is that the 'ladder' links earth and heaven and has been placed on the earth presumably where Jacob is lying." Wenham, *Genesis*, 221–22.
75. "Thus, in short, Jesus is Jacob's ladder, the one who mediates between God in heaven and his servant Jacob on earth; thus the 'true Israelite' may receive the revelation of God as his ancestor did. As Jacob's ladder, he is also Bethel, God's house, an image that naturally connects with Jesus as the new temple." Craig S. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 489–90). See also Wayne Meeks, "The Man from Heaven in Johannine Sectarianism," *JBL* 91, no. 1 (March 1972): 44–72, esp. 51–52.
76. "What Jesus tells Nathanael, then, is that he himself will be the place of much greater divine revelation than that given at previous occasions. . . . Jesus is the 'new Bethel,' the place where God is revealed, where heaven and earth, God and humankind, meet." Andreas Kostenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Books, 2008), 86). See also D. A. Carson, "Jesus is the new Israel. Even the old Bethel, the old 'house of God,' has been superseded. It is no longer *there*, at Bethel, that God reveals himself, but in Jesus (*cf.* Davies, p. 298)—just as later on Jesus renders obsolete such holy places as the temple (2:19–22) and the sacred mountains of the

- Samaritans (4:20–24).” D.A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 164).
77. “From here on it is not so much a question of what Jesus will give as of who Jesus is, and that is where controversies in John’s Gospel most often begin.” Michaels, *John*, 373.
 78. While this interpretation is a strong possibility, other scholars see God’s condemnation aimed at angels who have abused their divine station or perhaps at Israel herself. See discussion in Kostenberger, *John*, 315.
 79. “The ‘divine council’ or ‘gods’ are judges or governors who share God’s responsibility to administer justice and protect the rights of the down-trodden and defenseless. . . . The drama is the opposition of good and evil. The repetition of ‘the wicked’ illustrates the dichotomy; the evil potentates are unfair in their dealings with the defenseless. The ‘gods’ support the oppressors instead.” Schaefer, *Psalms*, 202.
 80. “Yahweh expects judges and leaders to protect the marginalized people in society: the poor, the oppressed, and those without family support.” Marvin E. Tate, *Psalms 51–100* (Dallas: Word Books, 1998), 336.
 81. “The gods will become vulnerable to the destructive “falls” of tyrants, chieftains, princes, generals, and other kinds of leaders and officials. They are to be deposed from their divine prerogatives.” Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 338.
 82. “A very old stream of interpretation interprets the “gods” as human judges or officials. . . . Despite its exegetical weakness, however, the old tradition of relating Psalm 82 to human actions has a strong element of truth in it.” Tate, *Psalms 51–100*, 341. For a useful discussion of the various ways this passage has been understood, see Beasley-Murray, *John*, 176–77.
 83. “A single clear idea is in mind as Jesus cites this scripture: In the “Law” (i.e., the OT, of which the Law is the chief part; cf. 12:34; 15:25), the term “god” is applied to others than God himself; if those addressed by God in this passage can be called gods (and sons of God), how much more can he whom the Father consecrated and sent into the world be so termed?” Beasley-Murray, *John*, 175. D. A. Carson adds, “As Jesus uses the text, the

general line of his argument is clear. This Scripture proves that the word ‘god’ is legitimately used to refer to others than God himself.” Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, 397.

84. Notably, this is one of only two fulfillment quotations from the mouth of Jesus in the Gospel of John (the other being John 15:25).
85. “Even the good friend, the one with whom so many a pleasant meal had been passed, would “raise up his heel” against the sick person.” Peter C. Craigie, *Psalms 1–50*, 2nd ed. (Nashville: Nelson Reference & Electronic, 2004), 321.
86. See Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use*, 486.
87. “The quotation from Ps. 41:9—‘Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted, who ate of my bread, has lifted the heel against me’—refers to what is still an extremely rude gesture in many Mediterranean cultures. The disciples have reluctantly had to make this gesture as Jesus washed their feet. Whereas Jesus’s words to the disciples have nullified the offense, he does not grant the same pardon to Judas.” Jo-Anne Brant, *John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic Books, 2011), 203.