

B. NT use of the OT

According to Roger Nicole (in Hermeneutics [Baker, 1967], p. 43), "roughly one-tenth of the New Testament is really Old Testament material." "A conservative count discloses some 295 separate explicit references to the Old Testament. These occupy some 352 verses of the New Testament."

For those who hold to the inspiration of the Bible, it is particularly important to consider the NT approach to the OT. Yet, the whole study is complicated. There are those like Walter Kaiser who would argue that we can and should follow the exegetical methodology of the NT. For Kaiser this is a literal-syntactical method. He has written widely on particular "problem texts" in the NT in order to substantiate his thesis. Other scholars (like Richard Longenecker) argue that we cannot duplicate the methods of the NT writers.

Our procedure here will be to identify several presuppositions of the NT use of the OT which are significant for understanding how the NT writers went about their work. I will also note some of the continuing problems of scholarly debate in this field.

1. Presuppositions (These are the presuppositions that the N.T. writers worked with)

a. Salvation as history

"Jesus and his disciples conceive of history within the framework of two ages, this age and the age to come. This perspective appears to have its background in the Old Testament prophets, who prophesied of 'last days' and 'the Day of the Lord' as the time of an ultimate redemption of God's people and the destruction of their enemies." (E. E. Ellis, "How the New Testament Uses the Old," in I. H. Marshall, ed., New Testament Interpretation [Eerdmans, 1977], p. 209).

The NT writers, therefore, differ significantly from the Greek or Gnostic views of history, and, although they are closer to a the Jewish outlook, there are also differences from groups like the Qumran covenanters. The following charts may be helpful.

PLATONIC (or Gnostic):

ETERNITY



TIME

salvation is a-historical

JUDAISM

