

THE USE OF ZECHARIAH 11:12-13 IN
MATTHEW 27:9-10: A STUDY IN
BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS

by
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In the general field of the NT's use of the OT the manner in which Matthew 27:9-10 uses Zechariah 11:12-13 stands out as being not only particularly interesting but quite challenging. Two problems confront the biblical scholar with regard to this use of the OT in the NT in particular. First, Matthew ascribes the quote to Jeremiah in his introductory formula. Second, a comparison of the texts (MT, LXX, NT) reveals a rather free quotation of Zechariah in Matthew. Scholars have approached these problems differently. The conclusions of this paper are offered as a viable solution to both of them.

The quotation in Matthew 27:9-10 belongs to a group of eleven quotations known as the formula quotations. The common denominator between these is not the text form itself but the introductory formula containing πληρόω. The hypothesis that the first Gospel emanates from 'a school' which practiced a pesher type exegesis employed at Qumran is highly questionable. Pesher exegesis, characteristic of the Qumran community as revealed in 1QpHab, which does share with Matthew an eschatological outlook in its use of the OT, has some striking differences as well. Agreeably, the Gospel of Matthew cannot be divorced from its cultural setting. However, neither should Matthew be labeled as a sect of Qumran practicing a pesher type of exegesis. It is best to account for the mixed text form of Matthew's citation by postulating that Matthew was his own targumist and drew on his knowledge of Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek textual traditions of the OT as well as employing Jesus' own use of the OT as his source and model.

The ascription of this quotation to Jeremiah is not a 'mistake' on Matthew's part. It is his clear intent. Matthew has combined two OT passages from Zechariah and Jeremiah. Conflate or composite citations do play an important role in the NT. Some very significant parallels between Matthew 27:3-10 and Jeremiah 19:1-13 suggest that Jeremiah 19 played an important part in Matthew's thinking. The ascription is to Jeremiah because of the manifestness of the quotation as coming from Zechariah and the lack of verbal resemblance to Jeremiah would have caused the Jeremiah side to be lost.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS i

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
II. OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT . .	5
Textual Variants in New Testament Quotations. . .	5
Quotations From Memory	7
Various Textual Traditions	8
Interpretations of the New Testament Writers .	11
Qumran Peshet	12
Charismatic Exegesis	15
Eschatological Exegesis.	18
Atomizing Exegesis	19
Exegetical Presuppositions of New Testament Writers	22
Historical Correspondence.	23
Christological Interpretation.	26
III. MATTHEW'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.	28
The Phenomena of the Quotations in Matthew. . . .	28
The Text Form of Matthew's Formula Quotations . .	29
School of Matthew Hypothesis	30
Testimonia Hypothesis.	32
Matthew the Targumist.	34
πληρόω in the Formula Quotations.	34
An Evaluation of Matthew's Hermeneutics	36
IV. MATTHEW'S USE OF ZECHARIAH 11:12-13	40
The Context of Pertinent Passages	40
Zechariah 11:4-17.	41
Jeremiah 19:1-13	43
Matthew 27:3-10.	45

	ii
Comparison of Texts.	48
Matthew's Use of Zechariah 11:12, 13	51
The Name Jeremiah in the Fulfillment Formula of Matthew 27:9-10	52
Matthew's Use of the Old Testament Passages . . .	55
V. QUMRAN PESHER AND MATTHEW'S USE OF THE OLD TESTA- MENT.	58
CONCLUSION	64
BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SOURCES CONSULTED.	66

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The problem of the use of the OT in the NT is a complicated one for OT and NT scholar alike. The subject has received no little attention down through the history of the christian church. Volumes have been written by the greatest minds the church has produced. In spite of all the advances that have been made the knowledge and understanding we possess is still in need of refinement through further research.

Until recent years, research on the subject of the use of the OT in the NT has been somewhat limited. The Jewish roots of the OT have always made it a priori likely that the NT's use of the OT would resemble that of contemporary Judaism to some extent.¹ As G. Vermes affirms,

In inter-testamental Judaism there existed a fundamental unity of exegetical tradition. This tradition, the basis of religious faith and life, was adopted and modified by its constituent groups, the Pharisees, the Qumran sectaries and the Judeo-Christians. We have, as a result, three cognate schools of exegesis of the one message recorded in the Bible, and it is the duty of the historian to emphasize that none of them can properly be understood independently of the others.²

¹Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and the New Testament," NTS 7 (1961):297.

²G. Vermes, "The Qumran Interpretation of Scripture in its Historical Setting," ALUOS 6 (1966-68):95.

Similarities with rabbinic Judaism have long been established. There are, however, several objections to taking the rabbinics of the Talmud and Midrash as representative of first century Judaism. First, the literature is late and includes basically only the views of the pharisaic element of Judaism which became dominant after A.D. 70. Second, the destruction of Jerusalem and the subsequent dispersion, as well as the rise of christianity, doubtless affected the literature considerably.¹

In comparatively recent years the discovery of the Qumran Scrolls has given fresh impetus and new insights into the NT's use of the OT. This is due to the fact that in contrast to the Talmudic literature the writings of the Qumran Scrolls antedate for the most part the composition of the NT books, or are in part at the latest contemporary with them.² In many of these scrolls the OT is used in a manner similar to the way it is used in the NT.

It is at this point that the writer would like to issue a word of caution with regard to this subject in general and this paper in particular. Two extremes need to be avoided with regard to discovering parallels between the exegesis of the NT and that of Qumran. The first extreme finds the NT writers to be just another division of the Qumran

¹Earle E. Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1957), p. 42.

²Fitzmyer, "Explicit Old Testament Quotations," p. 297.

community and finds minute parallels everywhere between the exegetical practices of the two groups. The second approach sees no parallels at all saying the NT writers were totally divorced from their cultural background. The writer feels a middle road comes closer to the truth. There are parallels as well as differences between Qumran and the NT. The writer approached this paper with three presuppositions concerning the exegetical procedures of the NT writers and particularly Matthew. First, that the earliest christians employed many of the exegetical presuppositions and practices that were common within various branches of Judaism in their day and they did so quite unconsciously. Second, they looked to Jesus' own use of the OT as the source and model for their own employment of the Scripture. Third, they believed they were guided by the exalted Christ, through the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit in their continued understanding and application of the OT.¹

This paper is arranged into four chapters not including the Introduction and Conclusion. Chapter two will have as its purpose to introduce the reader to the subject of the use of the OT in the NT in general. Textual variations in NT quotations, an introduction to the nature of pesher exegesis characteristic of the Qumran Scrolls and a brief survey of some of the presuppositions that may have guided the

¹Richard Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), p. 207.

NT writers in their use of the OT will be discussed. Chapter three will look at the use of the OT in Matthew in particular as a basis for the use of Zechariah 11:12-13 in Matthew 27:9-10 which follows in chapter four. After a brief look at the phenomena of the quotations the meaning and significance of πληρῶν will be discussed. A consideration of how Matthew uses the OT and whether he violates the OT contexts of the passages he cites will close the chapter. Chapter four will consist of an examination of how Matthew uses Zechariah 11:12-13 in Matthew 27:9-10. Contexts of relevant passages will be considered, texts compared and reasonable solutions will be proposed to the problems this particular use of the OT creates. Chapter five will attempt to demonstrate the similarities and differences between Qumran exegesis and Matthew's use of the OT.

The writer is not so naive to suppose that this paper is the final word on the subject. An attempt has been made to understand the issues involved in the field of the use of the OT in the NT and hopefully present some valuable suggestions. The writer hopes that both he and the reader will keep the following warning in mind when dealing with this important subject.

The historical study of biblical exegesis, both Jewish and Christian, is a field in which generalization is perilous, and any patterns that the investigator may discern he will, if he is wise, postulate but tentatively.¹

¹R. Loewe, "The 'Plain' Meaning of Scripture in Early Jewish Exegesis," PIJSL 1 (1964):140.

CHAPTER II

OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

The purpose of this chapter is to furnish the reader with a general understanding of how the NT uses the OT in order to lay a foundation for what is to follow in chapters three and four. Before one can look at the particular use of an OT passage in the NT an understanding of the broader picture is indispensable.

To this end three areas will be considered: 1) Textual variants in NT citations; 2) The nature of pesher exegesis; 3) An investigation into some of the possible presuppositions the NT writers may have had as they wrote their books. This chapter is not intended to be an exhaustive discussion of these points just outlined. My purpose is to set the stage for the reader in light of later discussions.

Textual Variants in New Testament Quotations

To even the casual reader of the NT it quickly becomes apparent that the NT is dependent upon the OT. The NT contains over sixteen hundred citations of the OT and many more allusions to it. Among the direct citations two hundred and thirty nine are introduced by formulas whose

purpose is to underline the authority of the NT authors.¹

Beyond the direct citations there is a great amount of allusive material. Some of these allusions are deliberate and some are unconscious though nonetheless real. This is due to the fact that the NT writers were immersed totally in the OT Scriptures. They lived and breathed the context of these writings. Particularly sacred was the recital of God's saving activity in behalf of Israel and the covenant promises concerning the future of God's people. When they were confronted with the ministry of Jesus they were programmed to understand it as the consummation of God's saving activity and the fulfillment of God's covenant promises.²

As Earle Ellis says, "The Old Testament phraseology of the New Testament occurs occasionally as the idiom of a writer whose own patterns of expression have been influenced by the Scriptures."³ At times an allusion can be discerned only after the total context of a passage has been taken into account.⁴

¹Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, s.v. "Interpretation, History of," by D. Hay, supplementary volume:443. For a rather complete list of the OT quotations cited directly in the NT see Kurt Aland et al., eds., The Greek New Testament, 3rd ed. (New York: American Bible Society, 1975), pp. 897-918.

²Samuel Schultz and Morris Inch, Interpreting the Word of God (Chicago: Moody Press, 1976), p. 78.

³Earle E. Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutics in Early Christianity (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), p. 147.

⁴Ibid.

This abundance of OT material in the NT poses a problem. Every biblical student has looked up quotations in the Bible and found to his surprise that the text of the quotation in the NT differs considerably from the OT source, or the NT quotation, the way its used, seemed to violate the historical, grammatical context of the OT, or which in some way or another seemed arbitrary or unjustified.¹ What explanation is to be given for these differences?

Quotations From Memory

Historically, the facile solution which was often employed to explain the discrepancies between the quotations and the known Greek or Hebrew texts of the OT is that they are quotations from memory.² Though in light of modern research this solution may have been somewhat overworked, there is valid basis for it. Exact verbatim quotation was generally foreign to the spirit of the Graeco-Roman world of the first century A.D. What was regarded as important was not the precise wording of a passage but rather the sense of a passage which the writer desired to communicate. T. W. Manson affirms,

We are too long accustomed to distinguish carefully between the text, which--in more senses than one--is sacred, and the commentary upon it or the exposition of it. We tend to think of the text as objective fact and the interpretation as subjective opinion. It may be doubted whether early Jewish Christian translators and

¹Schultz and Inch, Interpreting the Word of God, p. 79.

²Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "'4Q Testimonia' and the New Testament," TS 18 (1957):514.

expositors of Scripture made such a sharp distinction. For them the meaning of the text was of primary importance . . . and accurate reproduction of the traditional wording of the divine oracles took second place to publication of what was held to be their essential meaning and immediate application.¹

Having said this, there is the possibility that some might question the doctrine of inspiration. After all, if the exact words of the quotation are not used then inspiration is suspect. Technically speaking, however, inspiration applies to the autographs of both the OT and the NT in which the quotations are found. Denying the doctrine of inspiration assumes the authors of the NT were haphazard and capricious. To the contrary, they were guided by the Holy Spirit as well as the church's understanding of the events and significance of the events as a fulfillment of the OT promises.² To the extent that they were led by the Holy Spirit and accurately represented the thought of the OT Scriptures, to that extent their quotations are inspired. The NT writers did not hesitate to quote freely from the OT Scriptures.

Various Textual Traditions

An examination of the OT quotations in the NT has led to a consensus among biblical scholars that the majority of the quotations come directly from the LXX. This was the version commonly used in the first century among Christians as well as among Jews of the dispersion. Greek was the

¹T. W. Manson, "The Argument From Prophecy," JTS 46 (1945):135-36.

²Schultz and Inch, Interpreting the Word of God, p. 82.

lingua franca of the ancient world.¹ At other times the quotations are in harmony with the MT. When the quotations in the NT agree with both the MT and the LXX it may be assumed that the NT writer quotes directly from the LXX which in the particular instance under consideration agrees completely with the MT. There are other instances in the NT where the quotation will seem to agree with the MT over against that of the LXX. Here the NT writer depended on the equivalent of the MT directly.²

Not only was the OT available to the NT writers in three different languages but often in variant forms of each language. There were varied and complex textual traditions available to them that are not now extant.³ At times the textual variants may be attributed to other Greek versions. Of the anonymous versions little remains but Aquila, Theodotian, and Symmachus. In addition to these there may have been a host of others which are no longer extant. These may have served as the basis for some of the readings of OT quotations in the NT.⁴

¹Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutics, pp. 147-48; Fitzmyer, "'4Q Testimonia'," p. 514; Schultz and Inch, Interpreting the Word of God, p. 84; Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "peshet," by F. F. Bruce, 13:331-33. For a more detailed discussion of the use of the LXX in the NT see H. B. Swete, An Introduction to the Old Testament in Greek, rev. ed. (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1968), pp. 381-405.

²Schultz and Inch, Interpreting the Word of God, pp. 88-89.

³Swete, The Old Testament in Greek, pp. 29-58.

⁴Ibid., p. 30.

While variations of the OT quotations as they appear in the NT can be explained by postulating various versions of the Hebrew and Greek OT as the source, it must not be overlooked that the Targums could very well have been behind some of them.

When Hebrew was becoming less and less familiar to the ordinary people as a spoken language, it was necessary that they be provided with an interpretation of the text of Scripture in a language which they did know, if they were to understand what was read. The paraphrase itself was called a Targum. It was probably more than a strict translation, embodying a certain amount of interpretive comment.¹

Martin McNamara has written a book showing the relationships between the Targums and the NT. In it he says, "That Christ should have made use of the religious traditions of his people when addressing his message to them is altogether natural. . . . Since the Bible used regularly in the synagogues of Christ's time were the Targums it is not surprising that he would present the Gospel to them in a way which was already familiar to them."²

Numerous examples could be given to support this hypothesis that the NT did depend on the Targums in its use

¹F. F. Bruce, The Books and the Parchments, 3rd and rev. ed. (Westwood, N.J.: Flemming H. Revell Company, 1963), p. 133; Richard Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1975), pp. 21-22.

²Martin McNamara, Targum and Testament (Shannon, Ireland: Irish University Press, 1972), p. 167.

of the OT. Two such examples will be given. First, when the quotation from Isaiah 6:9-10 as quoted in Mark 4:12 is studied closely, it becomes evident that the closing words of the quotation "and it shall be forgiven them" appear neither in the MT or in the LXX. They are, however, the exact words used in the Targum of Jonathan. Second, in Ephesians 4:8 Paul quotes Psalm 68:18 with the words "He . . . gave gifts unto men." The MT and the LXX have "Thou has received gifts among men." The change from received to gave is significant. It is interesting in support of the present argument to find that the Targum on the Psalms gives the passage in a form like Paul's. It reads, "Thou hast ascended to the firmament [prophet Moses], thou has led captivity captive, [thou hast taught the words of the Law,] thou hast given gifts to men."¹

Interpretations of the New Testament Writers

In addition to free memory quotation and various textual traditions as an explanation for textual variations in the NT quotations, the NT writer's interpretation often had a bearing on the form of the quotation.

This interpretive rendering of the Hebrew text was a practice not uncommon to various Jewish sects of the first century. That this process carried over into the early church to a certain degree quite easily is only natural. Among the NT authors, scholars have recognized that Matthew's

¹Bruce, Books and Parchments, p. 138.

formula quotations are particularly characteristic of this interpretive rendering of an OT passage.

The basis for this interpretive rendering of the OT was the coming of Christ. The thinking of the authors of the NT was dominated by the idea of fulfillment. This is not to say that NT authors saw deeper meanings in the OT than were there. They saw relationships of a generic or organic kind. There was one meaning to an OT passage in its historical context. But often a single prediction embraced a whole series of fulfillments and all those fulfillments shared something that was part and parcel of all of them.¹ The original meaning is not set aside but caught up in something far more comprehensive and far reaching than was foreseen before the OT author came. This eschatological attitude prevailed in the early church and became the most basic hermeneutical principle of the NT writers.²

Qumran Peshet

In comparatively recent years the Dead Sea Scroll discoveries have shed new light on the study of the NT's use of the OT. Among the hundreds of documents found in the caves of Qumran during the past thirty five years there is one distinctive group which comprises commentaries on a variety of biblical books.

¹Walter Kaiser, "The Promise of the Arrival of Elijah in Malachi and the Gospels," GTJ 3:2 (Fall 1982):232-33.

²Hay, "History of Interpretation," p. 443.

Among these, the biblical commentary which has been considered to be the most significant with regard to the study of the OT in the NT is the commentary on the prophet Habakkuk (1QpHab). This scroll was discovered in cave one in 1947 and published in 1950 by the American Schools of Oriental Research.¹ It contains the text of chapter's one and two of Habakkuk with interpretations interspersed throughout. These interpretations are important because they show how the sect handled the OT Scriptures.²

The characteristic feature of this commentary, as well as the other biblical commentaries at Qumran, is that the gloss after the biblical verse quoted is preceded by the phrase $\text{לְיַגְדֵּי הַפֶּשֶׁר}$ which means "its interpretation is." Because of this distinctive characteristic the commentaries themselves have come to be known as pescharim.³ Peshar, then, has reference to that form of exegesis which was characteristic of the Qumran sect.

The term itself comes from the Aramaic פֶּשֶׁר . In

¹J. G. Harris, "Early Trends in Biblical Commentaries as Reflected in Some Qumran Texts," EQ 36 (1964):101.

²William S. LaSor, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1972), p. 30. The Scroll was made of two strips of leather sewn end to end, probably about five feet long (some of the beginning is now missing) and seven and a half inches wide (from one to two inches irregularly is missing along the bottom edge), and is ruled both horizontally (lines) and vertically (columns). The writing is very neat and legible, and the divine name, YHWH ("Jehovah"), is always written in the ancient "Phoenician" script.

³TWOT, s.v. "פֶּשֶׁר," by Victor P. Hamilton, 2:744-45. See also Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis, p. 38; Richard

addition to the Qumran commentaries the word is used over thirty times in the Aramaic portion of Daniel. It also appears as an Aramaic loanword in Eccl 8:1 (פֶּשֶׁר). The Hebrew equivalent is the word פִּתְרָה which appears as a verb in Genesis 40-41 nine times and as a noun (פִּתְרוֹן) five times. The word means "interpretation" both in Daniel and Genesis.¹

The kind of interpretation that this word suggests can be discovered from its use in Ecclesiastes, Genesis and Daniel. Ecclesiastes 8:1 reads, "Who is like a wise man? Who knows the explanation of things?" The context implies that to know this kind of interpretation calls for wisdom.² This is amply confirmed when the thirty occurrences of the cognate פֶּשֶׁר in the Aramaic portion of Daniel and the fourteen occurrences of פִּתְרָה are taken into account. In both places it is an interpretation which surpasses the attainment of ordinary wisdom. The interpretation comes by divine illumination. Both Daniel and Joseph interpreted dreams but both emphasized that neither was able to solve the dream through his own wisdom. It was God who revealed the

Longnecker, "Can We Reproduce the Exegesis of the New Testament?" TB 21 (1970):8.

¹Gerhard Lisowsky, Konkordanz zum Hebraischen Alten Testament (Stuttgart: Wurttembergische Bibelanstalt, 1958), p. 1199. For an extensive study of the meaning of peshar, including its Akkadian cognate, see Maurya P. Horgan, Pesharim: Qumran Interpretation of Biblical Books, The Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series, no. 8 (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic Association of America, 1979), pp. 230-37.

²Encyclopaedia Judaica, s.v. "Peshar," by F. F. Bruce, 13:331.

interpretation to them (Gen 40:8; Dan 2:7).¹

The nature of pesher in the Qumran Scrolls, though said to be unknown by some, is nevertheless understood fairly well by scholars who are familiar with the scrolls.² There are basically four distinctives which characterize the pesher exegesis of the Qumran community as reflected in their biblical commentaries.³

Charismatic Exegesis

By charismatic exegesis what is meant is that it is the work of inspired persons such as the teacher of righteousness and other wise teachers (Maskilim).⁴ This has already been touched on briefly above. Both Daniel and Joseph could only understand the dreams by God's enablement. Their wisdom and insight was not natural to themselves (Gen 40:8; Dan 2:7).

¹TWOT, s.v. " פֶּשֶׁר ," by Victor P. Hamilton, 2:744-45.

²George Brooke, "Qumran Pesher: Towards a Redefinition of a Genre," RevQ 40 (1981):483-504. Brooke's purpose is to attack the assumption that the meaning and method of pesher is understood and known. He warns that the term has become "the valueless chattel of the non-specialist" (p. 484). Brooke's, however, does admit to some understanding of pesher. He consents that there is general agreement that the pesharim stand in the tradition of dream interpretation variously represented in Daniel and Genesis.

³For a more detailed analysis of the exegetical procedures followed by the Qumran community see W. H. Brownlee, "Biblical Interpretation Among the Sectaries of the Dead Sea Scrolls," BA 14 (1951):60-62. He does a study of 1QpHab and observes thirteen exegetical principles which they used in interpreting the OT.

⁴Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutics, p. 160.

In the biblical commentary on Habakkuk from Qumran this very point is substantiated. In the comments which follow Habakkuk 2:1-2 the Qumranians write,

God told Habakkuk to write down the things that were to come upon the latter age, but he did not inform him when that moment would come to fulfillment. As to the phrase, that he who reads may run, the interpretation concerns the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets.¹

So then, it is God who enables the Teacher of Righteousness to understand the deeper implications of the words of the prophets.

It is necessary to note that the men of Qumran in their exegesis were not consciously following a rabbinic mode of exegesis as much as they were trying to repeat the pattern of interpretation so characteristic of the exilic and post-exilic periods. The pesharim grew out of the prophetic and the apocalyptic thought of the book of Daniel.²

In the book of Daniel there are a series of dreams followed by Daniel's interpretations. In that book the raz, the mystery, is divinely communicated to one party and the peshar, the interpretation, to another. Not until the mystery and interpretation are brought together can the divine

¹Theodore H. Gaster, The Dead Sea Scriptures, an English translation with introduction and notes, revised and enlarged edition (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1964), pp. 247-48.

²William H. Brownlee, "The Midrash Peshar of Habakkuk," SBLMS, no. 24 (Ann Arbor, MI: Edwards Brothers, 1979), pp. 28-29.

communication be understood.¹ In Daniel chapter two Nebuchadnezzar has a dream of a great image made of gold, silver and bronze. In Dan 2:30 Daniel says, "As for me, this mystery (מִסְתֵּר) has been revealed to me, not because I have greater wisdom than other living men, but so that you, O king, may know the interpretation (פִּשְׁרָא) and that you may understand what went through your mind" (see 4:9, 7:15-28).

This principle, that the divine purpose cannot be properly understood until the peshar has been revealed as well as the raz underlies the biblical exegesis in Qumran commentaries also. The chosen interpreter of the divine mysteries was the Teacher of Righteousness, the founder of the community. To him the peshar was given.² The comments on Habakkuk 2:1-2 are again enlightening:

God told Habakkuk to write the things that were to come upon the last generation, but he did not inform him when that period would come to consummation. As for the phrase, that he who reads may run, the interpretation (peshar) concerns the Teacher of Righteousness to whom God made known all the mysteries (razim) of the words of his servants the prophets.³

The exegesis, then, of the Dead Sea community was charismatic exegesis: it was the work of inspired persons to whom God revealed the mysteries of his servants the prophets.

¹F. F. Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1959), p. 8.

²Ibid.

³Gaster, Dead Sea Scriptures, pp. 247-48.

Eschatological Exegesis

The second distinctive which is characteristic of the exegesis of the Qumran sect is that it is eschatological exegesis. The central feature here is the understanding of the inspired words of the past in the context of a present situation.¹ It is an inspired application of biblical prophecies to the circumstances of the end days.² As Richard Longnecker observes: "The Dead Sea sectarians considered themselves to be the divinely elected community of the final generation of the present age, living in the days of 'messianic travail' before the eschatological consummation. Theirs was the task of preparing for the coming of the Messianic Age or the Age to Come. To them applied certain prophecies in the OT which were considered to speak to their situation and circumstances."³

Though some seem to equate midrash with pesher and thereby call it midrash-pesher, it is this eschatological exegesis which distinguishes the two. Pesher does not attempt to elucidate the biblical text but to determine the application of these biblical prophecies in precise terms to contemporary events. Pesher is neither 'commentary' nor 'midrash' but the inspired application of the biblical

¹Asher Finkel, "The Pesher Dreams and Scripture," RevQ 4 (1963):370.

²Bruce, "Pesher," p. 331.

³Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis, p. 38.

⁴Cecil Roth, "The Subject Matter of Qumran Exegesis," VT 10 (1960):51-52.

prophecies to the end of days.¹

This second characteristic of pesher exegesis is one that is very closely paralleled in the NT. Matthew's formula quotations are in many respects quite similar, though Matthew does avoid the excesses which the Qumran sect did not seem to avoid.

Atomizing Exegesis

By atomizing¹ exegesis what is meant is that each phrase of the biblical text is made to fit a new historical situation regardless of its contextual meaning. In order to make the verse conform to the new historical situation it was often necessary for the interpreter to introduce some rather interesting textual variants.² The writer at times may have had differing textual traditions in which one reading would suit his purpose better than another. In this case it was a matter of merely selecting the reading which would best convey his message. Scholars suspect, however, although it's hard to prove, that deliberate altering of the text was also a factor in Qumran exegesis.³ Matthew Black sums up fairly well the exegesis apparent in the Dead

¹According to Webster's Third Unabridged New International Dictionary atomize means "to reduce to minute particles, to view or treat as made up of discrete or atomistic units rather than as an organismic whole, to individualize or cause to lose social cohesion." It is therefore exegesis which disregards historical context.

²Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, pp. 11-12.

³Ibid., p. 12.

Sea Scrolls.

Pesher, however, seems to have come to stay, to describe the free, creative, imaginative, and at times bold, even audacious, exegesis of the Qumran writings, to a very large extent inspired by their apocalyptic character. Its chief characteristics are its assumptions: a) that Scripture has a veiled, eschatological meaning; b) that this cryptic meaning may be ascertained, if necessary, by a forced and even abnormal construction of the Biblical text, e.g. by combining texts, by interpreting textual variants, even by rearranging letters; and c) that the meaning so obtained can then be applied to present events or circumstances in which it is fulfilled. It is distinguished from rabbinic exegesis only by its greater freedom.¹

One example will illustrate this characteristic better than any attempted explanation. The pesher on Hab 1: 12-13 is a good example. According to the historical context of the book it is the Chaldeans who are ordained and established for chastisement of Israel by God. The phrase which follows, "Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil," is addressed by the prophet to God as part of his protest of what seems contradictory in light of God's character. This passage and its interpretation in 1QpHab is as follows:

"Thou has ordained him to execute judgment; and Thou, O Rock, hast established him to inflict chastisement, even him who is of purer eyes than to behold evil and cannot look on wrong." The interpretation of this saying is that God will not destroy His people by the hand of the nations, but into the hand of His elect will God commit the judgment of all the nations, and by the chastisement which they inflict those who have kept His commandments in the time of distress will condemn all the wicked of His people. For

¹Matthew Black, "The Christological Use of the OT in the New Testament," NTS 18 (1971):1-2.

this is what he means when he says: "of purer eyes than to behold evil." The interpretation of this that they did not commit unfaithfulness according to the lust of their eyes in the epoch of wickedness.¹

In 1QpHab it is not God, but the righteous remnant that is "of purer eyes than to behold evil." It is the righteous remnant who have been ordained by God to punish the wicked not the Chaldeans.²

This is just one example of the following principle reflected in all the commentaries found at Qumran; namely, they did not think of prophetic statements as the message of God which was significant in an earlier time and now also relevant to them. They looked upon the OT as being exclusively concerned with them.

If Isaiah foretold of an invading Assyrian (Isa 10:27), if Micah foretold the destruction of Samaria (Mic 1:6), if Nahum portrayed Nineveh as under the judgment of God (Nah 2:11), if Habakkuk warned concerning the Chaldeans (Hab 1:1-12), if Ezekiel predicted the downfall of Gog and Magog (Ezek 38:1); these persons and events were understood to belong not to the time immediately following the prophetic pronouncements but to a time immediately following the rise of the Teacher of Righteousness. These were simply different designations for Gentile powers which would oppress the people of God at the end time and whose overthrow would be followed by an age of peace and righteousness.³

These, then, are the three general characteristics of Qumran exegesis as reflected particularly in the 1QpHab

¹Gaster, Dead Sea Scriptures, p. 246.

²Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, p. 11.

³Ibid., pp. 9-10, 16.

commentary. What remains now is to show the relationship between this pesher exegesis and the NT. Two related questions need to be addressed. First, is pesher exegesis as reflected at Qumran evident in the NT? Second, if so, to what extent can it be said that the NT writers practiced it? These questions will not be addressed here but will be reserved for the second chapter on Matthew's use of the OT. There is a reason for this. It is Matthew's Gospel, and particularly his formula quotations, of which Matt 27:9-10 is just one example, which have been identified as pesher exegesis reflecting the influence of Qumran. Therefore it is best to reserve the benefits derived from the study of Qumran exegesis and the relationship it has to the NT until then.

Exegetical Presuppositions of NT Writers

When it comes to a study of the NT's use of the OT a consideration of the presuppositions which gave substance to the exegetical methodology of the NT writers is necessary. If one is to appreciate the NT writer's exegetical practices it becomes essential to have an awareness of their basic hermeneutical outlooks and attitudes. This is because "method is inherently a limited instrumentality and indeed a second stage in the art of interpretation. More basic are the perspectives and presuppositions with which the interpreter approaches the text."¹ Two presuppositions

¹Ellis, Prophecy and Hermeneutics, p. 163.

which are closely related will be discussed briefly.

Historical Correspondence

This principle is better known as typological interpretation. That the NT writers saw correspondences between the OT and the events that transpired in the life of Christ is undeniable. John compares Moses' lifting of the serpent on a pole to Christ being lifted up on the cross. Matthew compares Jonah's three days and nights in the great fish to Christ's three days and three nights in the grave.

Historically, typological interpretation was regularly practiced by most readers of the Bible. G. W. Lampe expresses it this way:

Our imaginary reader found a coherent pattern running through every part of Scripture. Each part of it spoke to him of Christ and of the Christian life. He still shared the preconceptions of the New Testament writers themselves, of their patristic interpreters and of all the preachers and commentators down throughout the centuries who had sought to expound the inner meaning of the text and to exhibit the correspondence of types and prophecies with their fulfillment.¹

It was the rise of critical scholarship in the nineteenth century which caused typological interpretation to be discredited. Critical scholarship laid a new emphasis on the diversity of the biblical writings and on the outlook and the theology of their authors. Passages could no longer legitimately be taken out of their setting in history and formed into a single pattern.

¹G. W. H. Lampe and K. J. Woollcombe, Essays on Typology, In Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 22 (London: SCM Press, 1957), p. 11.

In recent years, however, with the renewed emphasis on the unity and continuity of Scripture, typology is once again being given serious attention. It is no longer being discredited, despite its many abuses, as a method of the early christians which has no relevance for our modern understanding of the Bible. If the Bible is a unity in any sense, then it is plain it must, in some sense, be a book about Christ. Typology is simply a method of discovering and interpreting the implications of that fact.¹ Helmer Ringgren expresses the historical development of typological interpretation quite clearly when he says,

From the earliest days the Christian Church has seen in many Old Testament passages prophecies which have been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Modern biblical research has not always been of the same opinion, and has often interpreted those messianic passages in quite a different way. Many good Christians have been offended by this, and the consequence has been the opening of a broad gulf between scholarly and practical interpretation of the Bible: between the historico-critical understanding of a biblical passage and its interpretation in Christian faith. Sometimes it has even been deemed necessary to speak of two quite different interpretations of one and the same passage: the concrete and historical on one hand, and the theological on the other. Consequently it must be hailed with satisfaction that there is a certain tendency in more recent research to defend the messianic import of those biblical passages in quite a new manner. Thus, the traditional Christian interpretation of those passages seems to have received some support from historical exegesis.²

This typological interpretation is based upon a

¹Lampe and Woollcombe, Essays on Typology, pp. 14-17.

²Helmer Ringgren, The Messiah in the Old Testament, In Studies in Biblical Theology, no. 18 (London: SCM Press, 1956), p. 7.

particular view of history. The Hebrews viewed history as the revelation of the divine purpose. The OT is distinguished by its concern with historical fact. Not only does a large part of it take the form of historical narrative but even in the poetic portions reference is constantly made to certain notable events of the nation's past. Distinctive evaluation of the past forms both a constant source of inspiration and an abiding source of faith for the OT saint.¹ With such an understanding of history, early christians were prepared to trace correspondences between God's activity of the past and His action in the present, between events then and events now, between persons then and persons now. Such correspondences were not analogous in nature, or to be employed merely by way of illustration. For the early christians they were incorporated into history by divine intent and therefore to be taken typologically.²

A distinction, however, needs to be made between typological interpretation as practiced by the christian church up until the last century and the typology practiced now by biblical scholarship. Typological interpretation in the past was often bizarre because it could find Christ almost anywhere in the OT. Types and shadows of Christ were found out of total disregard for the historical context.

¹S. G. F. Brandon, History, Time and Deity: A Historical and Comparative Study of the Conception of Time in Religious Thought and Practice (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965), pp. 106-7.

²Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis, pp. 94-95.

Many times the relationships between the phenomena of the OT passage and Christ were forced to the extreme.

The controls critical, biblical scholarship have brought to typological interpretation are welcome ones. The new typology sees generic, organic relationships between the OT phenomena and the NT interpretation in Christ.¹ Therefore, redemption in Christ is rightly compared to the Israelite's redemption out of Egypt. Christ's death on the cross is rightly compared to the serpent Moses hung on a pole which brought deliverance to the people bitten by snakes.

The proper use of typological interpretation does not do away with the OT context. Jesus in fulfilling the OT Scriptures cited in the NT has given them a new meaning, in which their original meaning is not set aside but caught up in something far more comprehensive and far reaching than was foreseen before he came.²

Christological Interpretation

Actually the basis or foundation for typological interpretation is seen in this second presupposition of NT writers. The two are closely related. The early christians believed that Christ was the culmination of history. This is not to say that they considered themselves to be living

¹Walter Kaiser, "The Promise of God and the Outpouring of the Holy Spirit: Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:16-21," in The Living and Active Word of God, eds. Morris Inch and Ronald Youngblood (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1983), p. 110.

²Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, p. 77.

in the end of time. They were not thinking in terms of time as measured by a clock. The end, τέλος lay in the quality of finality of the revelation in Christ.¹ The OT ended somewhat quickly on a note of expectation (Mal 3:1-3, 4:5-6). The NT begins without any hesitancy at all on the note of fulfillment.

The basis of this Christological interpretation which saw correspondences with the OT Scriptures was the teaching of Jesus Christ himself. Christ was the one who opened up the OT Scriptures and showed the disciples how they spoke of him (Luke 24:25-27, 44-45; John 5:39). The disciples learned from Christ and most likely many of the OT passages used in the NT are the very ones he expounded to them.

¹Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, s.v. "History," by C. R. North, 2:610-11.

CHAPTER III

MATTHEW'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

The purpose of this chapter is fourfold. First to examine the phenomena of the quotations. Second, to discuss briefly the text form of the formula quotations. Third, to examine the meaning and significance of πληρόω as found in the formula quotations. Fourth, to examine the characteristics of Matthew's hermeneutics in quoting the OT. Does he violate the context of the OT? If not, is there a reasonable explanation of how he does use the OT?

The Phenomena of the Quotations in Matthew

Of the books which comprise the NT, the employment of the OT in Matthew's Gospel is particularly prominent. All three of the major divisions of the OT--the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings--are represented. The bulk of the quotations come from the Psalms, Deuteronomy, Isaiah and Jeremiah in that order.¹ Estimates as to the number of quotations vary somewhat. In comparison with the other Gospels Westcott and Hort computed ninety four references to the OT in Matthew, forty nine in Mark, eighty in Luke and twenty

¹Robert Coleman, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," Southwestern Journal of Theology 5 (1962):29.

in John.¹ W. G. Scroggie is somewhat more generous listing one hundred and thirty quotations and allusions to the OT in Matthew.²

The considerably large amount of OT material in Matthew's Gospel is not hard to understand at all. The audience to whom he writes and the purpose for which he writes makes this feature readily understandable. The author was doubtless a Jewish christian writing to other Jews for the purpose of proving that Jesus was the Messiah. His recipients were, like Matthew, well indoctrinated in the Hebrew Scriptures.³ The use of the OT in Matthew in particular and the NT in general is just further indication that both testaments are organically related to one another and that the OT is indispensable for an understanding of the NT.⁴

The Text Form of Matthew's Formula Quotations

The text form of the formula quotations have historically been the subject of wide debate. This is because these particular citations are said to exhibit a text form which is quite unique when compared to Matthew's other

¹B. F. Westcott and F. J. Hort, The New Testament in the Original Greek (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949), pp. 602-5.

²W. G. Scroggie, A Guide to the Gospels, rep. ed. (London: Pickering & Inglis, Ltd., 1952), p. 267.

³Coleman, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," p. 29.

⁴Homer Kent, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," BSac 121 (1964):34.

citations and the other synoptic Gospels. Though a number of explanations have been given to explain the text form of the formula quotations,¹ two of the more important theories will be briefly considered.

The School of Matthew Hypothesis

First, in his book The School of Saint Matthew, Krister Stendahl advanced the hypothesis that the first Gospel emanates from a 'school' which practiced a pesher type exegesis in choosing from among and adapting known variant readings of the OT text. To support his thesis Stendahl emphasized the mixed text displayed in the formula citations. He attempts to draw extensive parallels with the Habakkuk commentary which derives from the Qumran 'school' and displays a similar use of the OT.² In his own words he has set out "to prove the close affinity between the type of Old Testament interpretation to be found in a certain group of Matthew's quotations and the way in which the sect of Qumran treats the book of Habakkuk."³

By way of criticism it will be shown that the very basis upon which this hypothesis rests; namely, the unique text form of the formula quotations, is highly questionable.

¹See Robert Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in Saint Matthew's Gospel (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), pp. 151-74.

²Ibid., p. 155.

³Krister Stendahl, The School of Matthew and Its Use of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1968), p. 31.

In his published Ph.D. dissertation for the University of Manchester Robert Gundry did a rather exhaustive study of the text form of Matthew's quotations and allusions as compared to the other Gospels. His conclusions were as enlightening. First, the formal quotations which Matthew shares with Mark are almost purely from the LXX. Second, in other formal and allusive quotations in Matthew, Mark and Luke the text form is very mixed. Quotations in the synoptics show contact with the Hebrew, Targums, LXX, the Peshitta, Theodotian, Rabbinic tradition and apocryphal literature. This mixture stands in contrast to the purely septuagintal text form of quotations throughout the rest of the NT.¹ The LXX, Aramaic and Hebrew elements in the synoptic quotations harmonizes with the trilingual character now known to have existed from archeological data in first century Palestine.²

The thing which binds the formula quotations together is the fulfillment formula with which they are introduced. In text form the formula quotations are no more non-septuagintal than the rest of the quotations in the synoptics excluding Mark's formal quotations.³ Gundry's conclusions do not deny that the formula citations are similar in many respects to the exegesis at Qumran. What is denied is

¹Gundry, The OT in Matthew's Gospel, p. xi. See pp. 9-150 for a more detailed analysis.

²Robert Gundry, "The Language Milieu of First Century Palestine," JBL 83 (1964):404-9.

³Gundry, The OT in Matthew's Gospel, p. 152.

that a particular school of exegetes are responsible for the formula citations as proved by their unique text form which is similar to the text form of 1QpHab.

Testimonia Hypothesis

This second hypothesis arises from the fact that the NT not only has a distinctive treatment of the OT but also reflects a distinctive selection of biblical material. Testimonia is the current name for the systematic collections of OT passages, usually messianic in nature, which are thought to have been used by early christians for an apologetic purpose.¹ The testimonia hypothesis was developed to explain four problems concerning OT citations in the NT. They are: 1) the attribution of citations to wrong authors; 2) the formula quotations found in Matthew; 3) the divergence of OT citations from the LXX; 4) and composite quotations.² These collections were said to be brought together as an anti-Judaic polemic, antedating all of our NT writings and were the source upon which the NT writers drew for their quotations.³

That such collections were made among the Jews of the first century was confirmed in 1956 when more material was made available from Qumran cave four. A Hebrew text

¹Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "4Q Testimonia," p. 513.

²Ibid., p. 515.

³Longnecker, Biblical Exegesis, p. 89.

was found there and given the name 4Q Testimonia. J. M. Allegro who published the text says of it, "There can be little doubt that we have in this document a group of testimonia of the type long ago proposed . . . to have existed in the early church."¹ The text consists of a single page measuring about twenty three centimeters high and fourteen centimeters wide. Its text is a compilation of the following biblical passages: Deuteronomy 5:28-29, 18:18-19, Numbers 24:15-17, Deuteronomy 33:8-11, and finally a section which is not entirely scriptural.²

In evaluating this hypothesis several factors need to be kept in mind.³ First, no single theory is adequate to comprehend all the phenomena of biblical citation in the NT. Second, like the school of Matthew hypothesis, the text form of the formula quotations is really not unique to Matthew when compared with the other Gospels. Third, peculiarities of text form may be the result of the existence of families of texts differing from the MT which are no longer extant. Fourth, the phenomena of composite quotations which is probably the chief reason for postulating the existence of testimonia collections may be best explained by Jewish homiletical and targumic techniques and may be unrelated in

¹J. M. Allegro, "Further Messianic References in Qumran Literature," JBL 75 (1956):174.

²Fitzmyer, "4Q Testimonia," p. 530.

³M. P. Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," JSJ 2 (1971):55.

the NT to a testimonia source. The composite quotations are possibly an example of the rule of Deuteronomy 19:15 where two or more witnesses are required to give validity to a matter.¹

Matthew the Targumist

It is probably best to account for the mixed text form of Matthew's citations by holding the traditional view that Matthew was his own targumist and drew on a knowledge of the Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek textual traditions of the OT. The same applies for the other synoptic writers. This seems to be the most logical approach since the church emerged from the Jewish synagogue where targumizing was practiced regularly.² Prophetic consciousness also reinforced targumic adaptation. The source of Matthew's peculiar texts therefore may well be a consecrated spiritual mind with the NT gift of prophecy rather than a testimonia book or a school of Matthew.³

πληρῶ in the Formula Quotations

The study of πληρῶ in Matthew's formula quotations becomes rather important with regard to the hermeneutics of Matthew. The basic meaning of πληρῶ is to "make full or to

¹Jindrich Manek, "Composite Quotations in the New Testament," *Communio Viatorum* 13 (1970):186-87. See also Albert Sundberg, "On Testimonies," *NovT* 3 (1959):270.

²Gundry, *The OT in Matthew's Gospel*, pp. 172-74.

³B. D. Hillyer, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," *EQ* 36 (1964):25.

fill."¹ This word is used quite frequently in the NT along with other words which are very similar in meaning. The thing which distinguishes πληρόω from other words is not its frequency but rather the fact that it is a technical term used in connection with the fulfillment of Scripture and also a designation of the fulfillment of time in an eschatological sense.² It therefore has a theological significance. Theologically the word often has the meaning "to complete, finish, bring to an end, to achieve, to reach the full measure, or to make up that which is lacking or deficient."³ Matthew no doubt employed the term because his intent was to show how the events in the career of Jesus fulfilled OT predictions.

Debate has often occurred over the significance of the prepositions that are used in Matthew's formula quotations. ἵνα occurs five times (Matt 1:23, 2:15, 4:15, 12:18-21, 21:5), ὅπως three times (Matt 2:23, 8:17, 13:35) and τότε twice (Matt 2:18, 27:9). Debate has centered around whether ἵνα expresses purpose (in order that) or result (so that). That ἵνα has a telic force is supported by the fact that the preposition ὅπως is used in some of the quotations. If ἵνα were to express result one would not expect Matthew

¹BAGD, p. 670.

²Dictionary of New Testament Theology, s.v. "πληρόω," by R. Schippers, 1:735.

³Robert Ibach, "That It Might Be Fulfilled (Matthew 2:15)," (Unpublished Bachelor of Divinity Monograph, Grace Theological Seminary, 1966), p. 21. See also TDNT, s.v. "πληρόω," by G. Delling, 6:295.

to use ὅπως but instead ὥστε or ἵνα. Most scholars would agree that Matthew intends to express purpose in the formula quotations.¹ This fulfillment means that in the today of the NT era God's saving purpose achieves its full measure in Christ.²

An Evaluation of Matthew's Hermeneutics

It has been suggested by some that the apologetic interest of the NT writers and particularly Matthew has caused them to lift OT passages out of their original context in order to give them a Christological interpretation.³ The formula quotations of Matthew are particularly vulnerable to this kind of accusation. The question that needs to be addressed is, "Is this accusation true?" The writer will only briefly answer it here and hopes to show by the example of Matthew 27:9-10 in the next chapter that the accusation is untrue in the way it is stated.

The key to this whole problem of OT context verses prophetic fulfillment in the NT is this: if these and other OT quotations are regarded as direct predictions of events which did not happen until Jesus, then the NT writers are

¹A. T. Robertson, Word Pictures in the New Testament, vol. 1: The Gospel According to Matthew (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930), p. 11. Bruce Metzger, "The Formulas Introducing Quotations of Scripture in the NT and the Mishnah," JBL 20 (1951):297-307. Henry Alford, The Greek Testament, vol. 1: The Four Gospels (Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1958), pp. 8, 333.

²TDNT, s.v. "πληρόω," by G. Delling, 6:296.

³S. V. McCasland, "Matthew Twists the Scriptures," JBL 80 (1961):143-48.

guilty of taking texts out of their original context for apologetic purposes, displaying ignorance or indifference to the original meaning of the text.¹ However, the NT treats the OT passages as anticipations and not direct predictions having no relevance to the people to whom the prophecies were given. From the standpoint of the Jew living at the time of the original prophetic utterance, the utterance was about something significant to the OT Israelite. It was something that happened or was happening in history. Matthew's idea of fulfillment says, in effect, that the event that the OT Jews thought to be significant turns out to be only an anticipation of an event of a similar kind but ultimately more significant in God's purposes for salvation of mankind. It is in this sense that the latter fulfills the former.²

This solution to Matthew's hermeneutics agrees well with the definition of πληρόω which occurs in the fulfillment formula in Matthew. Because the OT writings are an organic part of the progressive revelation of redemption, the purpose of Matthew was to exhibit Jesus as the Messiah of whom the OT prophets had spoken. These prophecies, though not directly predictive of Christ and having relevance for the people to whom they were spoken, can be regarded as fulfilled only when all the truth included in them

¹DNTT, s.v. "πληρόω," by R. Schippers, 1:737

²Ibid.

has attained living realization.¹ That there was more truth from God's standpoint than the OT writer understood is confirmed by the statement "this is fulfilled which was spoken by (ἔνο) God through (δία) the prophet." God was the direct source of prophetic utterance and the prophet the intermediate agency. Therefore, it is possible to say that certain prophecies which were uttered with no direct reference to the Lord and whose primary and specific purpose had no relation to him were used and filled with new meaning in him.

The preceding statement needs qualification. This is not to say that this permits interpreters of Scripture today to find Christ anywhere in the OT. This has been and unfortunately still is the fault of many in interpreting the OT. There are temporal controls with regard to christological interpretation of the OT. The writer believes such interpretation was limited to the days of the NT. It was the apostles and those associated with them who had the special guidance and illumination of the Holy Spirit with regard to these matters. This, however, does not hinder christological interpretation. The NT contains a wealth of OT material, both quotations and allusions, which are applied to Christ. Following the interpretation of NT authors is valid christological interpretation.

It remains now to study one of these formula quotations and then to compare the relationship between Qumran

¹Coleman, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament," p. 32.

materials and what has been observed with regard to Matthew's exegesis.

CHAPTER III

MATTHEW'S USE OF ZECHARIAH 11:12-13

It will be the purpose of this chapter to give a particular example of the things discussed so far in chapters one and two. The writer has picked this formula quotation from among the other ten in Matthew because it is one of the more controversial of Matthew's formula quotations. The passage under discussion reads as follows:

Then what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "They took the thirty silver coins, the price set on him by the children of Israel, and they used them to buy the potter's field, as the Lord commanded me."

In studying this particular use of the OT by Matthew the method will be to first examine the contexts of the passages which are pertinent to this study. Second, to compare the text of Matthew 27:9-10 with Zechariah 11:12-13. Third, to answer two questions. First, why does Matthew ascribe the quotation to Jeremiah when it clearly comes from Zechariah? Second, how is Zechariah being used in Matthew?

The Context of Pertinent Passages

There are three significant passages with regard to this particular use of the OT in the NT: Zechariah 11:4-17, Jeremiah 19:1-13 and Matthew 27:3-10.

Zechariah 11:4-17

The difficulty in the interpretation of the book of Zechariah has been felt from earliest times. The fact that this book plays such a significant role in the NT has only added to the frustration of scholars. This significance is due to the fact that Zechariah 9-14 is the most quoted section of the prophets in the passion narratives of the Gospels and next to Ezekiel, Zechariah has influenced the writer of Revelation more than any other OT writer.¹ Nevertheless, the main divisions of the book seem clear enough. After a brief introduction (1:1-6) there come three blocks of material. First, the visions (1:7-6:15). Second, the oracles concerning fasting (7:1-8:23). Third, the eschatological writings which are divided into two parts (9-11, 12-14).²

The characteristics of the last six chapters are quite different from the first eight. Gone are the bold outlines that have gone before. Instead there are enigmatic references to enemies of former days, grim battles, bitter weeping, interspersed with assurances of peace, prosperity and ultimate victory.³ It is within these last chapters that Zechariah 11:12-13 are located. The more immediate context of the two verses is 11:4-17.

¹Joyce Baldwin, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, In The Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1972), p. 59. See F. F. Bruce, "The Book of Zechariah and the Passion Narratives," BJRL 43 (1960-61):336-53.

²Ibid., p. 74.

³Ibid., p. 59.

This portion has been called the most enigmatic section in the Bible. There is probably no other which has given rise to such a variety of interpretation.¹ The problem seems to come when one tries to identify specifically the historical situation of the passage. Two prominent positions have been advanced. First, some take Zechariah 11:4-17 as referring to historical details of the Maccabean Era or to the conquest of Alexander the Great and subsequent Ptolemaic rule.² Others understand the events recorded as pre-exilic occurring at the time of the decline and fall of either the northern or southern kingdom.³

The writer feels it is best to look at Zechariah 11:4-17 in its historical and grammatical context as an outline of the personal history of the prophet himself. It alludes to the historical events of the immediate past easily recognized by the prophets contemporaries but unknown to us. Therefore, the three shepherds were contemporary with Zechariah. They were leaders with whom Zechariah could not share his commission for reasons not fully known to the contemporary reader. Therefore, speculation is fruitless.

¹Robert C. Dentan, The Book of Zechariah, vol. 6 in The Interpreter's Bible (New York: Abingdon Press, 1956), p. 1102.

²Douglas R. Jones, "A Fresh Interpretation of Zechariah IX-XI," VT 12 (1962):241-59; E. G. H. Kraeling, "The Historical Situation in Zechariah 9:1-10," AJSL 41 (1924-25):24-33; M. Treves, "Conjectures Concerning the Date and Authorship of Zechariah IX-XIV," VT 13 (1963):196-207.

³R. Winterbotham, "The Good Shepherd of Zechariah 11," Expositor, Series five, 6 (1897):127-39.

The apparent inability of critical scholarship to identify the specific historical and geographical references in Zechariah 11 would suggest that the role or purpose of the oracle lies in something else besides historical reference. The canonical intention is to get across a theological message; namely, judgment to enemies and blessing to Israel. The story's capacity to illuminate both past and future events of the divine dealing with Israel is additional warrant for seeing a peculiar canonical use of the historical material for a theological goal.¹

With regard to Zechariah 11:12-13 there are two things of significance that need comment. The thirty shekels of silver figure prominently in this passage as well as in Matthew 27:9-10. Debate over the significance of the thirty pieces of silver still continues. Though some attempt to make the thirty silver pieces a large sum of money² the context seems to demand that the payment by the flock was a sign of contempt for the shepherd. In a 1968 publication, Erica Reiner demonstrated from Sumerian literature that to treat anything 'like thirty shekels' was a Sumerian cliché or expression for showing contempt.³ The phrase is used one

¹Brevard Childs, Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), pp. 480-81; R. K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1969), p. 955.

²Samuel Feigin, "Some Notes on Zechariah 11:4-17," JBL 44 (1925):209.

³Erica Reiner, "Thirty Pieces of Silver," in Essays in Memory of E. A. Speiser, ed. by W. W. Hallo (New Haven,

other place in the OT. In Exodus 21:32 thirty silver pieces were compensation for a slave gored to death by an ox. To offer this amount was equivalent to saying that the shepherd was valued by them as much as a common slave.

The other significant feature of these verses is the textual variant which some feel figures prominently in Matthew 27:9-10. The MT reads *אל-ה'יוצר* and the textual apparatus suggests the reading *אל-ה'אוצר*. For support they give the Syriac version as containing the variant reading proposed. The Hebrew *יוצר* means 'potter' and *אוצר* means 'treasury, storehouse.' Therefore, when Judas threw the money into the temple Matthew was reading the variant reading *אל-ה'אוצר* instead.¹ The evidence, however, for the reading is poor. The Syriac Peshitta dates from the fourth or early fifth century and could easily have been influenced by the Greek text of Matthew 27:3-10 rather than the other way around. The reading may also reflect an interpretive attempt on the part of the translators. The writer prefers the MT and thinks it fits best in the context of Matthew 27 as well.

Jeremiah 19:1-13

In literary form this passage is a continuous prose narrative which extends to Jeremiah 20:6. The whole passage (19:1-20:6) fits into a larger literary unit which includes

CT. American Oriental Society, 1968), pp. 186-90.

¹H. Q. W. Meyer, Meyer's Commentary on the New Testament, vol. 1: Commentary on Matthew (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1884), p. 493.

chapters eighteen, nineteen and twenty which are built around the potter-pot theme.¹ The narrative (19:1-20:6) recalls how Jeremiah was commanded by Yahweh to take an earthenware jar and proceed to a point outside the potsherd gate. There, before witnesses he had taken with him, he was to smash the vessel. As he did so he was to announce that Jerusalem was to be smashed beyond repair.²

Though some suggest that other passages in Jeremiah are also combined with Jeremiah 19 and used in Matthew 27, such as Jeremiah 18:1, 2 and 32:6-9,³ the evidence seems to point to the fact that only the material from Jeremiah 19 was in Matthew's mind. The fact is that Zechariah's prophecy by itself does not fully satisfy the requirements of Matthew's fulfillment passage. The question needs to be asked, "Where in the OT is there mention of a plot of ground used for burial purposes, which became known as the Field of Blood because innocent blood had been shed? The answer is Jeremiah 19:1-13. The resemblances are significant. First, Judah and Jerusalem have shed innocent blood (Jer 19:4, Matt 27:4). Second, the chief priests and elders are prominent (Jer 19:1, Matt 27:3, 6, 7). Third, a potter is mentioned (Matt 27:7, 10; Jer 19:1, 10). Fourth, the Valley of Hinnom

¹J. A. Thompson, The Book of Jeremiah, NICOT (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1980), p. 445.

²Ibid.

³Stendahl, The School of Matthew, p. 122.

has its name changed to Valley of Slaughter which is about the same as Field of Blood (Jer 19:6, Matt 27:8 [cf. Acts 1:19]). Fifth, the valley becomes a well known burial place (Matt 27:7, Jer 19:11).¹

Matthew 27:3-10

With regard to the context of these verses several things are of particular importance. First, there are no significant textual variants in these verses that would change the meaning of the passage to any substantial degree. Variants that do occur have to do with things such as spelling, synonyms and alternate case endings. Such variants can be significant but here they present no problem.

Second, the account of Judas' suicide has been a subject of hot debate for a long time. The essence of the debate is that Luke's account (Acts 1:18) seems to contradict Matthew's. It is not the purpose of this paper to discuss this problem in detail because resolving it would not contribute to the study of this particular use of the OT in the NT. The details of Judas' death are not all that important. Therefore the author does not give all the data which would solve the apparent contradiction with Acts 1:18. That two different traditions are being followed is a bit premature and not enough evidence is available to make such an assertion. The important thing to remember is that the exact

¹William Hendriksen, Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew, In New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1972), pp. 947-48.

details of his death are not important to the narrative's purpose.

Third, Judas' remorse took place, so it seems, immediately after Jesus was condemned. The word for remorse is an aorist passive of μεταμέλομαι. This verb occurs five times in the NT and is a synonym of μετανοέω. It is especially the emotional element that is stressed in μεταμέλομαι over against μετανοέω.¹ These same words are used in Paul's argument in 2 Corinthians 7:8-11. Here the distinction between the two words is clearly brought out: "Godly sorrow brings repentance (μετάνοιαν) that leads to salvation and leaves no regret (αμεταμελήτων), but worldly sorrow brings death." The point of Matthew is that Judas, though experiencing remorse, had no basic change of heart. His remorse was similar to that of Cain (Gen 4:14). His was a feeling of guilt and fear of what might be the result for himself.

Fourth, the textual variant for γυγιη-7N in Zechariah 11:13, 14 is often supported by the fact that this is the way Matthew understands the OT passage. Since Matthew uses the phrase κορβανῶν as well as κερამέως it has been suggested that he was aware of both readings. Whether Matthew knew of another reading or not he could not have intended εἰς τὸν κορβανῶν to have fulfilled a reading γυγιη-7N in Zechariah. His Gospel clearly states that the money did

¹Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, s.v. "μεταμέλομαι," by O. Michel, 4:626-29. Dictionary of New Testament Theology, s.v. "μεταμέλομαι," by F. Laubach, 1:356-57.

not go to the κορβανῶν. It was not permissible to put the money there since it was responsible for the death of a person and Judas had merely thrown the money into εἰς τὸν ναὸν which is not the same as εἰς τὸν κορβανῶν.¹

Comparison of Texts

It will be the purpose here to compare the texts of the Greek NT, the LXX and the MT for any important variants that might arise between them. Below these versions are arranged according to the section of Matthew 27:3-10 to which they relate.²

Matt 27:5, 6, 9	Zechariah 11:13 LXX	MT
καὶ ῥίψας τὰ ἀργύρια εἰς τὸν ναὸν (ἀνεχώρησεν . . .) οἱ δὲ ἀρχιερεῖς λαβόντες τὰ ἀεγύρια εἶπαν οὐκ ἔξεστιν βακεῖν αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν κορβανῶν	καὶ ἐνέβαλον αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸν οἶκον κυρίου εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον	וְאִשְׁלַח בֵּית יְהוָה לְאֵל הַיּוֹצֵר
τὸτε ἐπληρώθη τὸ ῥύθρον διὰ Ἱερεμίου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος καὶ ἔλαβον τὰ τριάκοντα ἀργύρια τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἔδωκαν αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν τοῦ κεραμέως καθὰ συνέταξέν μοι κύριος	κάθεσ αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ χωνευτήριον	הַשְׁלִיכָה לְאֵל הַיּוֹצֵר
	καὶ ἔλαβον τοὺς τριάκοντα ἀργυροὺς καὶ σκέψαι εἰ δόκιμον ἔστιν ὃν τρόπον ἐδοκιμάσθην ὑπερ αὐτῶν	וְקָח שְׁלֹשִׁים דָּרַקִּים הַיֶּקֶר אֶקְרָא יְקָרָתִי מֵעַל יָמַי
	καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με	וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי

¹Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 123.

²Ibid., p. 122.

Matt 27:5, 6, 9

Zech 11:13 LXX

MT

καθῶ συνέταξεν
κύριος τῷ Μωυσεῖ¹כאשר צוה
יהוה את משה

Based upon a comparative study of these texts, it is not quite accurate to say that Matthew 27 quotes exclusively from Zechariah for in certain important respects it deviates from both the MT and the LXX form of that passage.²

The major changes that have taken place between the NT and the text form of the MT and LXX are changes from first person singular to third person plural. In the LXX and MT it was Zechariah as God's representative who took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them to the potter (LXX = ἔλαβον; MT = נקבא). In Matthew 27:7 the chief priests and elders of the people are the ones who did that and therefore when Matthew quotes the OT he changes to the third person plural. It is true that ἔλαβον of verse nine can be first person singular but its parallel with ἔδωκαν³ (aorist active indicative third person plural) makes ἔλαβον third person plural also. The significant point here is that Matthew felt no difficulty at all in the fact that Zechariah the prophet gives the money to the potter and in his narrative the chief priests give the money for the essential point is that the money is paid to the potter.

¹These passages, though not in the LXX or MT or Zechariah 11:12, 13 do resemble that which is in Matthew 27:10. (Cf. Exod 40:25; Num 8:3, 22; 9:5; 27:11; 31:31.)

²Gleason Archer, A Survey of OT Introduction (Chicago: Moody Press, 1964), p. 411.

³There is a textual note in the UBS textual apparatus

The phrase in the NT τὴν τιμὴν τοῦ τετιμημένου ὃν ἐτιμήσαντο ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ, is a rather free rendering of the phrase מְלִיחָה יִקְרָה יִשְׂרָאֵל in the MT. The LXX translation is very different from both.¹ There are several points of difference between the MT and the NT. First, ἐτιμήσαντο translates יִקְרָה and changes the first singular to the third person plural. Second, the phrase ἀπὸ υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ merely identifies the מְלִיחָה suffix of מְלִיחָה יִקְרָה. Third, יִקְרָה "the price" becomes read as the adjective יִקְרָה "the honored one" and is translated by τοῦ τετιμημένου in the NT which the evangelist refers to Jesus Christ.² Here again as above the differences arise out of the fact that the application of the OT passage is causing Matthew to accommodate the text to the contemporary situation of which he writes. But the essential message of the passage conveyed in the original context is not destroyed.

The phrase καὶ ἔδωκαν αὐτὰ εἰς τὸν ἀργὸν τοῦ κερμαμέως is also a loose rendering of the MT's וְיָקְרָה אֶת-הַיָּצוּר וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִהְיֶה אֵלֵינוּ. The most significant change here is the insertion of τὸν ἀργὸν into the fulfillment text since it is not in the MT. The solution seems to be that Matthew is

with regard to ἔδωκαν. Some manuscripts read ἔδωκα among them Codex Sinaiticus. But as Stendahl observes [K. Stendahl, *The School of Matthew*, p. 125] the context seems to demand the use of the third person plural and it is highly likely that ἔδωκα was a later correction to make closer agreement with the MT.

¹Willoughby C. Allen, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), p. 288.

²Meyer, *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 494.

allowing the facts upon which he is commenting to creep into his translation of Zechariah 11:12-13.¹ It is true that 11:13 does speak of the potter twice but he does not mention the potter's field. Because the priests did purchase a field with the discarded money Matthew works this into his interpretive rendering of Zechariah 11:12-13. It is here that the passage in Jeremiah which speaks of the Valley of Slaughter and a potter comes into focus.

The last phrase καθὰ συνέταξέν μοι κύριος translates the Hebrew phrase וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֵלַי. In this particular instance the LXX is actually a more literal rendering of the Hebrew. The LXX reads καὶ εἶπεν κύριος πρὸς με. It is generally agreed that the NT rendering imitates the statement of Moses in Exodus 40:25 but maintains contact with Zechariah. It looks like the Zechariah passage put into the words of Exodus 40:25 or 9:12.²

Matthew's Use of Zechariah 11:12-13

Having looked at the contexts of three pertinent OT and NT passages and compared the texts of the LXX, MT and the Greek of the NT, it remains to come to some conclusions with regard to two questions. First, why does Matthew attribute to Jeremiah what seems clearly to come from Zechariah? Second, in what way is Matthew using Zechariah 11:12-13?

¹Allen, The Gospel According to Matthew, p. 288.

²Gundry, The Use of the OT in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 127.

The Name Jeremiah in the Fulfillment Formula
of Matthew 27:9-10

That the name of Jeremiah has been attached to the OT citation of Matthew 27 has perplexed biblical scholars for some time. A rather large number of solutions have been offered in an attempt to explain this problem. It will not be the purpose of this section to discuss in detail each proposed solution but to state some of the major ones and then come to some type of conclusion as to the best solution. The following are some of the more significant attempts to deal with this apparent problem.¹

(1) Surprisingly, a very common proposal is that Matthew made an error. The writer, however, feels that those who propose such a solution have surely failed to consider the consequences involved in such a proposal. It is better to admit an unsolved problem than to ascribe an error to a biblical writer.

(2) Since the Syriac Version has omitted the name Jeremiah, some have proposed that the inclusion of it did not appear in the original autograph. Not only does the Syriac omit the name but in the marginal notations the name

¹The following sources discuss in more detail the solutions to this problem and those who have proposed them. Hugh Ross, "The Old Testament Quotation in Matthew XXVII.9-10," *Biblical World* 1 (1883):345-54; Robert McCabe, "The Problem's Related to Zechariah's Authorship of Chapters 9-14," (Research paper, Temple Baptist Seminary, 1979), pp. 4-16; Robert Martin, "The Problem of the Name Jeremiah in Matthew 27:9," (Bachelor of Divinity Thesis, Grace Theological Seminary, 1960), pp. 18-56.

Zechariah is found.¹

(3) The inclusion of Jeremiah has also been attributed to a copyist's error. It has been suggested that Ζαχαρίου was written in an abbreviated form such as Ζριου and an early copyist took this for 'Ιριου, an abbreviated form of 'Ιερεµαίου. Such a solution is total conjecture not having any substantial evidence for support.

(4) It has also been suggested that the name is accurate and that the responsibility for Zechariah 9-11 goes to Jeremiah and not Zechariah. Thy hypothesis would be that Jeremiah wrote the material and Zechariah subsequently borrowed it from Jeremiah. Under inspiration the Holy Spirit desired to reclaim these chapters for their real author.

(5) Others have proposed that Jeremiah is supposedly a general reference to the prophetic section of the OT. That there is evidence for the fact that Jeremiah stood at the head of the prophetic books is without dispute. The mention of Jeremiah then would be tantamount to saying "in the prophets."

The solution which appears to be the most cogent advocates that Matthew has combined two OT passages from Zechariah and Jeremiah. That these conflate or composite citations played an important role in the NT might be due to the rule of Deuteronomy 19:15 wherein two or three witnesses are

¹See the textual apparatus of Eberhard Nestle, ed., *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 26th ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelstiftung, 1979), p. 81.

required to give validity. This rule was held in high esteem in the Jewish circles in which the books of the NT were written.¹

Why Matthew uses Jeremiah's name instead of Zechariah still awaits a solution. It is true that either name would have been acceptable. However, is there a reason for the name Jeremiah? It is probable that either the evangelist attributes to the greater and better known of the two prophets the words belonging to the other² or he makes the ascription to Jeremiah because of the manifestness of the quotation as coming from Zechariah and the lack of verbal resemblance to Jeremiah would cause the Jeremiah side to be lost.³

An example of the former solution might be Mark 1:1-2. Mark quotes from Malachi 3:1 and Isaiah 40:3 but attributes the quotation to Isaiah. This is possibly because he is the greater of the two. An example of the latter solution is the quotation in 2 Chronicles 36:21. Here 2 Chronicles 36:21 verbally draws from Leviticus 26:34 yet ascribes it to Jeremiah (25:12, 29:10) from which the number seventy is drawn.⁴

¹Manek, "Composite Quotations in the New Testament and their Purpose," p. 186.

²H. G. Mitchell, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Haggai and Zechariah, ICC (New York: Charles Scribner's Press, 1912), p. 311.

³Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 125.

⁴Robert McCabe, "The Problem's Related to Zechariah's Authorship of Chapters 9-14," pp. 15-16.

Matthew's Use of the Old Testament Passages

It was precisely because the members of the primitive church were looking for the "consolation of Israel" that they found a ready messianic interpretation for OT passages such as the ones under consideration.¹ That the NT writers did not abuse the OT context has already been discussed in the section on Matthew's hermeneutics. With the advent of Christ the NT writers saw that all the truth contained in the OT had not been fully exhausted. The people, events and institutions of the OT, under the guidance of a sovereign Lord were being directed toward a predetermined goal which was Jesus Christ.²

The events contemporary with Matthew and Zechariah 11 do have significant resemblances. First, the leadership of Jesus as well as that of Zechariah was held in low esteem by many of those who were the objects of such leadership. The very basis for the application of Zechariah 11:4-17 in Matthew 27:9-10 must be found in the fact that Zechariah occupied the place for the time being of Yahweh's representative. He was commissioned to lead, was rejected and treated contemptuously.³ Second, as the thirty shekels of silver were given to Zechariah, so Jesus was betrayed for the same

¹Harrison, Old Testament Introduction, p. 956.

²Mitchell, Commentary on Haggai and Zechariah, p. 311.

³Winterbotham, "The Good Shephard of Zechariah 11," p. 136.

contemptible sum of money. Third, as the silver pieces at which the labor of Zechariah had been appraised was thrown to the potter, so the thirty pieces with which Jesus was betrayed landed in the hands of a potter upon the purchase of his field. Fourth, in both cases the throwing took place in the house of the Lord.¹

Because of these parallels Matthew sees a correspondence so singular that he takes the events of Zechariah 11 as finding their ultimate significance in the divine purpose in Jesus Christ.

That Matthew also draws from Jeremiah 19 in connection with the betrayal of Judas and the Field of Blood is also quite demonstrable. There are several parallels already touched upon previously (pp. 45-46) with Jeremiah 19:1-13. First, Matthew sees parallels between the guilt of Judah and Jerusalem in shedding innocent blood and that of Judas (Matt 27:4, Jer 19:4). Second, he sees parallels in the two occurrences of קנין in Jeremiah 19:1, 11 and the fact that the chief priests bought a field of a potter (Matt 27:9, 10; Jer 19:1, 11). Third, the chief priests and elders figure prominently in both accounts (Matt 27:3, 6, 7; Jer 19:1). Fourth, the Valley of Hinnom, the very valley where the potter's field has been located traditionally,² has its

¹Hendriksen, Commentary on Matthew, pp. 946-47.

²On the location of the Field of Blood see Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary, s.v. "Akeldama," by B. Van Elderen, 1:94-95; Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible, s.v. "Akeldama," by K. W. Clark, 1:73-74.

name changed to the Valley of Slaughter which is similar to the Field of Blood (Jer 19:6, Matt 27:8). Fifth, the valley becomes a well known burial place (Matt 27:7 and Jer 19:11).¹

Because of these parallels with Jeremiah 19, Matthew sees the bloodshed and murder of innocent people in Jeremiah as reaching its fullest measure in Judas who betrayed and as a result was responsible for the murder of the Lord of Glory.

The OT contexts of Jeremiah and Zechariah are not directly messianic of Christ. They were real events and people of their own time. However, in the progress of revelation and in the salvific purposes of history Matthew sees these passages as coming to their full potential or significance in the divine person of Jesus Christ who is the of biblical history.

¹Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 125.

CHAPTER IV

QUMRAN PESHER AND MATTHEW'S USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

It remains now to compare the exegetical practices of the Qumran community with the use of the OT in Matthew's Gospel. As mentioned previously, caution should be exercised to avoid one of two extremes: placing the exegesis of Matthew side by side with Qumran or seeing no relationship at all between the two. It is the purpose of this brief chapter to examine some of the more observable similarities as well as the differences.

That there are similarities between Qumran and NT exegetical methods cannot be denied. The Jewish roots of the NT have always made it a priori that the NT's use of the OT would resemble that of contemporary Judaism to some extent. Granted there are certain things that are more similar than others.

There is one particular characteristic which has basically been the very foundation for all the writing on Qumran peshar and the NT. It is the eschatological element which brings the pesharim into the closest contact with the NT.¹

¹Merril Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament," JSJ 2 (1971):51.

In both the NT writings and the pesharim the exegesis is pneumatic and eschatological. By pneumatic it is meant that this eschatological understanding of the OT cannot be understood by human wisdom alone. It was God who has opened up this understanding to a few select individuals. By eschatological it is meant that both the NT writers and Qumran believed they were either on the brink of the fulfillment of OT prophecy or actually experiencing that fulfillment. This similarity lent a fervency to the NT and Qumran which stands in contrast to the arid academicism of the rabbis.¹

Another major parallel between Qumran and the NT is that the mechanics of treating the OT are targumically oriented. In both sources words are often changed in the citation of OT passages to allow for smoothness and suitability in the application of the message in a contemporary, historical situation.² This noticeable difference of citation can be attributed to creative renderings of the text in order to apply it to the current situation or at times the NT writers and Qumran commentators chose from among various forms of the biblical text that reading which lent itself best to their interpretation. An example of the first of these is seen in Matthew 27:9, 10. Matthew does some adaptation of the text of Zechariah 11:12-13 to suit his interpretive

¹F. M. Cross, The Ancient Library of Qumran and Modern Biblical Studies, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1961), p. 218.

²Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 205.

purposes. This adaptation of the text is mostly seen in the change from first person singular to third person plural as well as in the insertion of τὸν ἄγρὸν in 27:10. A field is not mentioned in Zechariah, only a potter. Since the priests took the money and bought the potter's field, Matthew adapts the text to fit his application. The point is that the money did go to the potter. An example of the second is the LXX text of Psalm 40:6 "a body hast thou prepared for me." In its citation in Heb 10:5 this reading fits better than the MT's "ears hast thou dug for me" although this reading would lend itself equally well with regard to the Lord's obedience to the Father in the context of Hebrews. In the same way, the reading "Thou hast bestowed gifts on men" from Psalm 68:18 in the Targum and Peshitta is preferred by Paul in Ephesians 4:8 because it is more in keeping with the thought of the triumphant Christ conferring gifts on His church. However, if Paul had known only the MT and LXX reading, "Thou hast received gifts among men," that could have been understood in a similar way as Christ receiving from the Father that he might give to his people.¹

These then are the two major similarities between the NT and Qumran. In the mechanics of handling the text both rest on the targumic method. With regard to peshet in the eschatological writings of Qumran, what is it but only the

¹Bruce, Biblical Exegesis in the Qumran Texts, p. 70.

targumic method applied to prophecy believed to be fulfilled or on the verge of fulfillment.¹

To view Qumran exegesis as compared with Matthew's Gospel from another angle, scholars are sometimes more impressed by the contrast between them than by the similarities. To begin with, Qumran stands in the midst of a fulfillment process, whereas the dominant NT perspective is that prophecies have already reached fulfillment in the person of Christ.² This has been proposed as the reason for the lack of 'fulfillment formulae' in the Qumran literature. Qumran theology is dominated by a forward look and an expectation of what is to come about in the eschaton, whereas christian theology is more characterized by a backward glance seeing the culmination of all that preceded in the advent of Christ. It is because of this that the following distinction is made: the NT's use of the OT is not merely eschatological but more importantly christological, centered in the person of Christ.³ In the NT the person of Jesus Christ looms larger than the Teacher of Righteousness at Qumran. Jesus' role is also preeminently redemptive in contrast to the role of the Teacher of Righteousness. His role was to open up the OT Scriptures in light of contemporary events of the

¹Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 174.

²Ibid., p. 205.

³Fitzmyer, "The Use of Explicit Old Testament Quotations in Qumran Literature and the New Testament," pp. 303-4. Miller, "Targum, Midrash and the Use of the OT in the NT," p. 81.

last days.¹

Without a doubt the greatest dissimilarity between the exegesis of Qumran and the NT is that both Qumran and rabbinic hermeneutics are oblivious to the OT context from which they draw their material. The writer has previously called this atomizing exegesis (p. 20). This atomizing method is clearly seen from the pesher on Habakkuk 1:12-13 referred to earlier. If care is taken to understand the precise purpose and meaning of an OT citation it becomes evident that the NT writers did not play fast and loose with the OT context. The grammar and historical meaning are assumed and NT exegesis often begins where grammatical-historical exegesis ends. The OT has a wider meaning than its immediate historical application. Grammatical exegesis can only circumscribe what the text says; to determine the meaning of the text one must not only select the proper grammatical possibilities but also fit it into a proper interpretation of OT history as a whole.²

That Matthew did not abuse the OT context in Matthew 27:9-10 has been demonstrated in spite of the fact that this particular OT citation is often used as an example of disregard for the OT context. Zechariah 11:4-17 speaks of Zechariah's commission as shepherd over the nation as God's representative. His leadership was rejected and in gratitude

¹Gundry, The Use of the Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel, p. 205.

²Ellis, Paul's Use of the Old Testament, pp. 147-48.

for his efforts his value was set at the contemptible sum of thirty silver pieces. Because the correspondence with Jesus Christ is so real Matthew takes Zechariah 11 as finding its ultimate significance in the divine purpose in Jesus Christ. The grammatical-historical context of Jeremiah 19: 1-13 is that Jeremiah is to take a clay jar from a potter, go down to the Valley of Hinnom and there proclaim judgment on the leaders of Israel for their idolatry and shedding the blood of the innocent. As a result of their bloodshed God warns through Jeremiah that the place will be called the Valley of Slaughter. Therefore what the people did in shedding the blood of the innocent finds its ultimate meaning in Judas' betrayal and crucifixion of Christ who was without spot or blemish and in the purchase of Akeldama.

Though there are many similarities between NT exegesis and that of Qumran there are also many differences. The Jewish context in which the NT was born, significant though it was, is not what was distinctive and formative in the exegesis of the earliest believers. Early Christian exegesis was a creative thing, based upon the exegetical patterns learned from Christ himself and guided by the Holy Spirit.¹

¹C. F. D. Moule, The Birth of the New Testament, In Harper's New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1962), p. 58.

CONCLUSION

Throughout the process of research and writing this thesis the writer has confirmed three basic characteristics of the NT's use of the OT which he had in mind when he began to approach this study.

First, the method of exegesis employed by the early church shows some significant similarities with the exegetical presuppositions and practices that were common within various branches of Judaism in their day. The adaptation of OT citations to make them fit the contemporary situation without destroying the OT context from which they came seems quite common in the NT and particularly in Matthew 27:9, 10. This targumizing procedure as practised in the NT is probably the most frequent of the explanations given for the variant textual forms in the NT citations from the OT and rightly so.

Second, important as the traditional Jewish method of handling the Scriptures was, it was Jesus Christ who first directed the minds of the apostles to the OT as the source from which they might find illumination upon the meaning of his mission and destiny. If the apostles had been asked from where they learned their interpretation of the prophetic Scriptures, they would have acknowledged they received it from Jesus Christ.

Third, there burned within the hearts of the early christians the fresh realization that they were living in the days of fulfillment of God's promises in the OT. These promises were summed up in Jesus Christ. They also were conscious of the fact that the Holy Spirit was guiding their minds to understand the Scriptures in a fresh way as Jesus had said the Spirit would.

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