

“Abner Chou undertakes the bold and dynamic challenge of understanding and embracing the interpretive perspective of the biblical authors. Join him in the venture. See with new eyes. Understand the Bible. Have it change your life.”

—Jim Hamilton

Professor of Biblical Theology, The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

“This book is a remarkable work on every level. Dr. Chou has a grasp of the sanctified science of hermeneutics, where he has learned from the biblical writers themselves— the prophets of the Old Testament and the apostles of the New Testament. By comprehensive knowledge of the details that yield the true interpretation of biblical texts from Genesis to Revelation; by clear grasp of the progressive nature of divine revelation; by masterful insight into the flow of redemptive history and biblical theology, Chou provides a new clarity on the unity and continuity of prophetic and apostolic hermeneutics, thus showing lucidly that the New Testament writers used the Old Testament contextually “per its original authorial intent.”

This work, however, is not only hermeneutical method stated. It is hermeneutics applied. To show the power of accurate hermeneutics, Chou applies them to the most difficult texts in which the New Testament writers use the Old Testament.

This book will prove to be a rare treasure not only to theologians, but to expositors who face the hard challenges that seem to betray a unified hermeneutic. Dr. Chou, dismissing simplistic solutions as inadequate because they lead to misinterpretation, presents strong arguments for the more complex approach of intertextuality that yields the true interpretation to the diligent student of Scripture. This is a book that should be in the hands of every Christian who takes God’s Word seriously.”

—John MacArthur

Pastor, Grace Community Church

“A perpetual conversation among biblical scholars concerns Scripture’s use of Scripture, both the New Testament’s use of the Old Testament and the Old Testament’s use of the Old Testament. Though essays and books reveal differing, even competing, explanations of Scripture’s use of Scripture, something of a rapprochement among diverse schools of thought seems to be emerging. Abner Chou’s contribution to this conversation reflects this as he engages leading evangelical scholars and finds wide swaths of agreement with them as both they and he take the Scriptures seriously. Whether Chou’s explanations of how the Bible’s writers use earlier Scriptures convinces readers to embrace his understanding of difficult texts, his most central thesis ought to convince readers. For Chou, taking Scripture seriously includes being able to trace and reproduce how the Old Testament prophets and the New Testament apostles and prophets used the Scriptures that existed prior to their own times. Our proper use of Scripture stands in continuity with how Scripture’s writers used Scripture.”

—Ardel B. Caneday

Professor of New Testament & Greek, University of Northwestern

The
HERMENEUTICS
of the
BIBLICAL WRITERS



*LEARNING TO INTERPRET SCRIPTURE
FROM THE PROPHETS AND APOSTLES*

ABNER CHOU

 Kregel
Academic

The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers: Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles

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CONTENTS



Preface	9
Abbreviations	11
Chapter 1: The Quest for Authorial Logic	13
Chapter 2: Groundwork for the Quest: Presuppositions and Method	25
Chapter 3: The Prophetic Hermeneutic: The Prophet as Exegete and Theologian	47
Chapter 4: The Prophetic Hermeneutic: Did the Prophets Speak Better than They Knew, or Better than We Give Them Credit For?	93
Chapter 5: The Apostolic Hermeneutic: Continuity with the Prophets	121
Chapter 6: The Apostolic Hermeneutic: The Theological Fabric of the New Testament	155
Chapter 7: The Christian Hermeneutic: Reading as They Read and Intended	199
Chapter 8: Scripture's Sophistication, First Theologians, and the Hermeneutics of Surrender	231
Bibliography	233

PREFACE



What would cause a college student to stay in his dorm room for all of spring break, eating nothing but ramen and popcorn? For me, it was the discovery of the New Testament's use of the Old and all the implications it brought forth. I was taking a class in advanced hermeneutics at The Master's University when I began to read about the complexities of how the apostles read the Old Testament. Concepts like corporate solidarity, authorial intent, redemptive history, echoes, and allusions showed me the profound depth and complexity of God's Word. I also knew of the challenges. People accused the apostles of being strange in how they interpreted the Old Testament. All of that began one of my missions in life: to investigate this matter thoroughly and (hopefully) vindicate the biblical writers. So, I stayed in my dorm room and read all spring break. That began a journey where I ended up obtaining masters degrees and a doctorate in this area.

A little over a decade from my undergraduate days, I have the privilege of writing in a book what I have learned. The result of this is an effort that goes far beyond myself and I have many to thank. The teacher of the advanced hermeneutics class, Dr. William Varner, was the one who launched my thinking in this area and nurtured me all the way through. I am incredibly grateful to the Lord for him. Another William, Dr. William Barrick, picked up the baton and shaped my thinking as well. Both of them have served as a model of faithful biblical scholarship in the context of a faithful ministry to the Lord. Again, I am immensely grateful to God for their labor of love on my behalf. Even before writing a word on a page, many were already involved in my life to prepare me for this moment.

I am not the best writer, and that really is an understatement. Thus, for me to write a book demands an entire network of support. Foremost is my family. They bore with me patiently through good days and bad. They gave me hugs during the toughest times of writing. When your children understand the editing process by age six, you know they have gone through a lot! So thank you, Nehemiah, Naomi, and Meital for your encouragement. Even our youngest, Hannah, only two months old, participated. I will not forget those nights while I held her while editing the manuscript. She may not remember this time but it will be a precious memory to me. Moreover, my wife, Johanna, played the most instrumental role in all of this. She en-

couraged, strengthened, cared, listened, and prayed for me. She read and responded to my chapters. Her work in so many ways was crucial to this book, and so I want to honor her for it as well. I am truly blessed, and the book you hold in your hands is a demonstration of that.

I also want to thank The Master's University faculty and staff for their help in this matter. Not only did two administrative assistants (Amy Kidder and Megan Low) lend me their immense help, but other faculty had to endure my tireless discussions about what I was writing. I also want to thank my research assistant, Chris Williams, whose help was invaluable in the research and editing process. Special thanks also goes to Peter Goeman, who also gave me insightful and encouraging comments on my manuscript. I always chuckle that even social media provided assistance. As with other writing projects, a Facebook group, Nerdy Language Majors, gave me valuable feedback, affirmation, and encouragement. Finally, the Lord used the students of the college to strengthen me. Not only were they patient with me but they also supported me. Notes, letters, energy drinks, and emails all came to my office in a moving display of the caring community I have at my "workplace." My labor is primarily for these students, whom I desire to know the Word of God and the God of the Word deeply and to live for him fully.

Along that line: As you read this book, if your appreciation for God's Word grows . . . if you are increasingly impressed with its unity and complexity . . . if your hunger to know it increases . . . if you become better aware of how to study it, then I have done my job. My prayer is that God would establish the work of my hands to that end (Ps. 90:17).

ABBREVIATIONS



ABD	<i>The Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , 6 vols. Edited by David Noel Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992.
ANE	Ancient Near East
AOTC	Apollos Old Testament Commentary
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	Walter Bauer, Frederick W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>BibSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CBR	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
EBC	<i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> . 12 vols. Edited by Frank Gaebelien. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.
EEC	Evangelical Exegetical Commentary
GKC	Wilhelm Gesenius, E. Kautzsch, and A. Cowley. <i>Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar</i> . Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910.
GTJ	<i>Grace Theological Journal</i>
HALOT	Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J. Richardson, Johann Jakob Stamm. <i>The Hebrew Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2000.
Heb.	Hebrew (verse)
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IBHS	Bruce K. Waltke, and M. O'Connor. <i>An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax</i> . Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
IBS	<i>Irish Biblical Studies</i>
ICC	International Critical Commentary
JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JPSTC	JPS Torah Commentary
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
LXX	Septuagint

MSJ	<i>Master's Seminary Journal</i>
MT	Masoretic Text
NAC	New American Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIDOTTE	<i>New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis</i> . 5 vols. Edited by Willem VanGemeren. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIVAC	NIV Application Commentary
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OTL	Old Testament Library
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
RB	<i>Revue Biblique</i>
SBJT	<i>Southern Baptist Journal of Theology</i>
STJ	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
TLOT	<i>Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . 3 vols. Edited by Ernst Jenni and Claus Westermann. Translated by Mark Biddle. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.
TOTC	Tyndale Old Testament Commentary
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
VT	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WTJ	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>



THE QUEST FOR AUTHORIAL LOGIC

Even when there is use of the Old Testament with no apparent interest in prophetic fulfillment, there appears to be a redemptive-historical rationale at work behind the scenes. —G. K. Beale¹

We may encounter the subject of hermeneutics in seminary, college, or a class at church. In the classroom, we learn hermeneutics deals with the essential principles by which we accurately understand the Scriptures.² However, the topic is not just some academic subject. Its importance extends far beyond the classroom. Knowing God’s Word is foundational for godly living (Ps. 1:2; 119:11; 2 Tim. 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3). Our thinking about hermeneutics does not just stay in the realm of academia but ultimately shapes how we live and whether or not we please God. What is at stake when we study hermeneutics? Simply put, it is our entire Christian life and ministry. Hermeneutics is not a negotiable issue; it is essential for the Christian walk. God puts a premium on “getting it right” (Neh. 8:8; 2 Tim. 2:15) and condemns those who twist the Scripture (2 Peter 3:16).

WHAT IS TRULY CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS?

So what comprises a “good hermeneutic?”³ We may be familiar with the terms “literal-grammatical-historical” hermeneutics or the notion of seeking the “author’s intent” as opposed to our own meaning. The Scripture teaches that the Holy Spirit moved men to write his Word such that their words are the very message of God (2 Peter 1:20–21). Traditionally, we believe we ought to understand the ideas the (dual) author intended through the normal rules

1. Beale, “Jesus and His Followers,” 398.

2. Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 21.

3. The singular of hermeneutic in this work refers to a particular practice of interpretation. The general field of hermeneutics (note plural) refers to the set of principles that one should have in studying Scripture.

of language and the facts of history.⁴ This formulates the basis by which we evaluate right and wrong understandings of Scripture. Accuracy occurs when our reading of a text matches the (dual) author's ideas, and misinterpretation occurs when we misconstrue that intent. This demands examination of historical background, context, grammar, and individual words.⁵

Conversely, how do we know our traditional definitions are correct? Several major works have philosophically defended the principles of literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutics. They show we are morally bound to understand the Scripture in light of God's intention.⁶ They make this case based upon linguistics, the nature of communication, and speech-act theory.⁷ These books rebut the postmodern frameworks of text-centered hermeneutics or reader response, which state any possible notion within the text or whatever the reader sees comprise legitimate meaning.⁸

The philosophical approach is useful to engage these ideas. Nevertheless, hermeneutical philosophy still rests upon our theology which is based upon our understanding of Scripture.⁹ Thus, in the end, the Bible becomes foundational for our hermeneutic. That is fitting since the Scripture speaks to the subject. God demands accurate interpretation of his Word (e.g., Acts 17:11; 1 Tim. 4:13–15; 2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Peter 2:2). The Bible is concerned about hermeneutics.

So we ultimately should go back to the Bible to learn how to study it.¹⁰ Such an approach is not novel. In fact, evangelicals have traditionally used

4. Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 21; Thomas, "The Hermeneutical Landscape," 20–21.

5. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation: A Practical Guide to Discovering Biblical Truth*, 14–16.

6. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*; Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning?*

7. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning?*, 198–263; Stein, "Benefits of an Author-Oriented Approach," 451–66. Speech-act theory refers to characterizing speech as an action. Accordingly, speech has three major components: locution (what is said), illocution (what is meant), and perlocution (intended reaction). This loosely corresponds to a physical action: locution (what one did), illocution (what that communicates to the recipient), and perlocution (the ways one is supposed to respond to the act). A punch is a physical action which may communicate anger, and the responses could include dodging the punch. In the same way, texts have the same mechanisms which relate to authorial intent.

8. Barthes, *The Pleasure of the Text*; Payne, *The Fallacy of Equating Meaning with the Human Author's Intention*; Gadamer, *Truth and Method*; Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class?*

9. Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning?*, 204–6.

10. A major issue with this approach is how we can derive principles and doctrines from the Scripture for the purpose of hermeneutics in the first place. If we are still determining our hermeneutic for Scripture, how can we interpret it to do so? While that question is outside the scope of this book, I can refer the reader to the philosophical defenses of hermeneutics for answers. In sum, God created language and its operation is embedded in the way we communicate. This is why we can understand texts and even pursue authorial intent. As we read the text of Scripture, the Bible explains *why* we could always do this. It solidifies the nature of communication and the reality of authorial intent. Furthermore, Scripture reinforces the absolute moral necessity to seek the authorial intent of the Bible. See Vanhoozer, *Is There a Meaning?*; Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation*.

the doctrines of inspiration, inerrancy, and illumination to ground their understanding of hermeneutics. Reymond states, “the Scripture’s doctrine of Scripture, espousing its own revelatory and inspired character, binds us to the grammatical/historical method of exegesis.”¹¹ Similarly, Zuck comments that in light of the human aspect of inspiration, “Each biblical writing—that is, each word, sentence, and book—was recorded in a written language and followed normal, grammatical meanings, including figurative language.”¹² The list of this type of argumentation goes on.¹³ Evangelicals have rightly stressed that biblical hermeneutics ultimately come from the Bible. God sets the rules for how his Word ought to be understood and that should comprise a “Christian hermeneutic.”

However, in the process of formulating our hermeneutic from the Scripture, we run into a significant problem. It begins with the question of how our “Christian hermeneutic” precisely operates. We may know the principles and convictions, but how does that play out when we approach a text? We can put together all the word studies, historical backgrounds, and grammar but how does that actually produce the author’s intent or meaning? Moreover, how do we connect our interpretation of our text with theology? How do we know which principle to draw from a text? How do we know whether an author intended a certain theological idea or not? What should we learn from the stories of Scripture? Is the point of David and Goliath that we can slay our own giants? If not, what is the real idea of that text and how do we know? We encounter a similar conundrum when we ask how to preach or teach Christ from the Old Testament. Should we read Christ into every text even if he is not in view in the original context? Once again, what is the bridge between what the text says and the theology it conveys? These questions show we not only seek to learn from the Scripture hermeneutical principles but also hermeneutical practice (i.e., how to apply those principles in our study of Scripture).

The Bible provides an answer to those questions as well. Conversely, this is where the problem arises. The way the biblical writers used the Scriptures may be a little more “troubling,” particularly when we look at the New Testament’s use of the Old. The apostles seem to read the Old Testament “creatively.” For example, Paul seems to believe the rock in Israel’s wilderness wanderings was Christ, when the Old Testament makes no mention of this (1 Cor. 10:4).¹⁴ Matthew applies an Old Testament text to the Messiah, even though it was originally about Israel (Hos. 11:1 in Matt. 2:15).¹⁵ That same gospel writer later claims Jeremiah prophesied about Judas, even though the

11. Reymond, *Systematic Theology*, 49.

12. Zuck, *Basic Bible Interpretation*, 61–62.

13. Ramm, *Protestant Biblical Interpretation*, 123; Couch, *Classical Evangelical Hermeneutics*, 25–28.

14. Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 727–30.

15. France, “Formula-Quotations of Matthew 2,” 233–51; Hagner, *Matthew 1–13*, 36.

quotation comes from Zechariah (Zech. 11:13, in Matt. 27:9).¹⁶ Paul uses an Old Testament text, which says that people are cursed for *not keeping* the law, to condemn those who actually *keep* the law (Gal. 3:10; cf. Deut. 27:26). Peter cites Psalm 109:8 to argue that the church should elect a new apostle to take Judas' place, when that psalm does not refer to Judas at all (Acts 1:20). In each of these instances, the apostles seem to ignore the original context of the Old Testament. These examples are just a minute sample of the problems within the New Testament's use of the Old.¹⁷ Do they indicate there is something more than a literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutic for our hermeneutic to be truly "Christian"?

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTION

Thus, our desire to have a biblical hermeneutic has led us into quite a dilemma. Ironically, by studying the Bible to learn how to avoid misinterpretation, we seem to run into it. Should we do as the apostles say but not as they do?¹⁸

We are not the first to go down this path. Scholars have wrestled with this question and have come up with a variety of solutions. Some argue since the apostles were inspired, we do not have the ability to repeat their hermeneutical methods.¹⁹ Others maintain the apostles had a new hermeneutic, which warrants a certain degree of freedom to reinterpret the Bible.²⁰ They argue the New Testament writers illustrate we need to read the Scriptures in new ways and that such spiritualization and allegorization is a truly "Christian hermeneutic." Still others contend the apostles upheld the context of the Old Testament. They claim that if we examine the Old Testament further, this would be clear to us.²¹ Though there are various views, everyone agrees hermeneutical discussions inevitably arrive at the New Testament's use of the Old.²² The way the biblical writers used the Bible is the *crux interpretum*

16. Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew*, 696.

17. See Thomas, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," 247–51; Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 113–65.

18. See Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 165. Enns' comments (although I disagree with his final conclusions) on this matter are insightful. "If we follow the apostles, we may wind up handling the Old Testament in a way that violates some of our interpretive instincts . . . if we don't follow them, we are either admitting that the New Testament authors were misguided in showing us how Jesus is connected to the Old Testament, or that their hermeneutic is theirs alone and cannot be reproduced today."

19. Moo, "The Problem of Sensus Plenior," 206, 210.

20. Riddlebarger, *Case for Amillennialism*, 38–39. Riddlebarger argues that the NT's use of the OT gives way to re-interpret OT prophecies. Similarly, see Longman, "Messiah," 33. Longman argues that the resurrection provides us with a new lens to read the OT as it really is.

21. Beale, "Hosea 11:1 in Matthew," 699; Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," 88–89.

22. Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 156. Enns again insightfully describes the issue. "What do we do with all this information? It is not enough simply to take note of the apostolic hermeneutics and then move it to the side. We must ask what we can learn from this about the nature of the Bible and what it means to interpret it today."

in fully answering how we have a Christian/biblical hermeneutic. It is an issue we cannot ignore.²³ How can we genuinely claim to have a hermeneutic based upon the Scripture which ignores the Scriptures where the biblical writers interpreted previous revelation? A hermeneutic that does not take all Scripture into account is not a biblical hermeneutic.

Silva highlights even greater dangers in disregarding this matter:

If we refuse to pattern our exegesis after that of the apostles, we are in practice denying the authoritative character of their scriptural interpretation—and to do so is to strike at the very heart of the Christian faith.²⁴

Accordingly, if we really want a hermeneutic based upon all of God's Word, we must deal with this issue. The matter of the New Testament's use of the Old is not just an erudite academic discussion. Rather, it is at the core of who we are as interpreters of the Scripture. Do we learn how to understand Scripture from its writers or is there some reason why their hermeneutic is different than our own?

Responding to this issue is easier said than done. It involves a whole host of other matters including (but not limited to) textual criticism, literary theory (e.g., intertextuality, echoes),²⁵ and the Greek translation of the Old Testament.²⁶ It also includes historical backgrounds, in particular, the hermeneutical methodology of the apostles' contemporaries and second temple Jewish literature.²⁷ Having all that in mind, one can proceed to do an exegetical analysis of both Old Testament and New Testament texts. The interpreter must understand the contexts of both texts and figure out how they precisely interact. On top of that, the exegete must think through a wide range of interpretative options,²⁸ biblical theological implications,²⁹ as

23. Ibid.

24. Silva, "Text Form and Authority," 164.

25. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 14–21.

26. Nicole, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," 18–19; McLay, "Biblical Texts and the Scriptures," 38.

27. Fitzmyer, "Old Testament Quotations in Qumran," 297–333.

28. These include *sensus plenior* or that the apostles disclosed the fullest sense of the OT text. See Moo, "The Problem of Sensus Plenior," 354; Thomas, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," 242. Another possibility is that they used the method of their contemporaries. See Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 190778. Still others argue that they used the OT in context. See Beale, "Jesus and His Followers," 398; Weir, "Analogous Fulfillment," 72–76. Yet others contend that they simply abused the OT. See McCasland, "Matthew Twists the Scripture," 146–48; Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 156–58. For a listing of various possibilities, see Thomas, "The New Testament Use of the Old Testament," 254–64; Bock, "Use of the Old Testament 1," 220.

29. This includes issues such as typology and corporate solidarity. See Beale, "Jesus and His Followers," 391. It also encompasses the issue of the nature of the fulfillment of prophecy. Is there just one fulfillment of a prediction or multiple or is it a generic actualization of the prophet's message? See Kaiser, *The Messiah in the Old Testament*, 30–31; Beecher, *The Prophets and the Promise*, 383.

well as systematic theological concerns.³⁰ Dealing with all of these issues is dizzying. The New Testament's use of the Old is a complex puzzle to be sure.

However, while all the matters above carry great importance, they can sidetrack us from the matter at hand. More information does not always bring more clarity (cf. Eccl. 12:12). Rather, we need to ask the right question to obtain a useful answer. Beale's quote at the beginning of this chapter points us back to such a fundamental question: *What was the author thinking?* How did he reach his conclusion?³¹ That is the question we need to ask. All of the factors above revolve around that issue. Even more, this is the heart of the topic of the "New Testament's use of the Old." The very word *use* refers to the way the apostles thought about and applied the Old Testament.³² Thus, the author's logic is the essential matter.

A variety of scholars have affirmed this assertion.³³ Discussing this matter from the vantage point of biblical theology, Hamilton states:

The biblical authors used biblical theology to interpret the Scriptures available to them and the events they experienced. For the believing community, the goal of biblical theology is simply to learn the practice of interpretation from the biblical authors so that we can interpret the Bible and life in this world the way they did.³⁴

On the literary level, Hays also acknowledges the author's rationale is the key question. He also acknowledges very little has been done to elucidate this idea:

Even those studies concerned with theological issues have little to say about Paul as interpreter of Scripture. This is a regrettable state of affairs, because the question of how Paul read Scripture is of great importance for grasping the logic and purpose of his arguments. Is there some method or hermeneutic that can account for Paul's exegesis?³⁵

Hays' quote calls on us to ask and answer the issue of the author's logic, which he observes we have often failed to do. Before we can call

30. Enns, *Inspiration and Incarnation*, 156–58; Beale, "Jesus and His Followers," 399–404.

31. Beale and Carson, "Introduction," xxv.

32. Ibid. Beale and Carson asked the writers of the book to answer "to what theological use does the NT writer put the OT quotation or allusion?" To which they further comment, "In one sense this question is wrapped up in all the others" (xxv).

33. Schreiner, *Pauline Theology*, 15. "The task is not merely to reproduce Paul's thinking on various topics, but to rightly estimate what is most important in his thinking and to set forth the inner connections between the various themes." See also, Beale, "Jesus and His Followers," 391. "The answer which makes most sense of the data is that Jesus and the apostles had an unparalleled redemptive-historical perspective on the Old Testament in relation to their own situation."

34. Hamilton, *God's Glory in Salvation through Judgment*, 42.

35. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture*, 10.

the apostles odd, reject their hermeneutic, or accept their hermeneutic, we need to understand what they actually did. Only then can we see if we should do as they do or as they say or, as I will argue, both.

THE QUEST FOR AUTHORIAL LOGIC

Asking the question of the author's rationale leads us to what I would like to term "the quest for authorial logic." Beale's quote at the opening of the chapter unveils this before us. In addressing what the apostles thought, he notes a "redemptive-historical rationale" working in the background. The quest for authorial logic concerns bringing the biblical writers' logic that is in the background to the foreground. It is our search to understand the underlying methodology and reasoning that guides their reading of Scripture. This quest is far from new or revolutionary.³⁶ Even so, it is helpful to create a clear niche for this type of study, which is at the heart of the New Testament's use of the Old.

We should further articulate the nature of this endeavor. One may begin discussing the author's rationale by describing *what* the apostles thought. Some have described what the biblical writers thought about a variety of Old Testament passages or a variety of theological topics.³⁷ Others talk about what the apostles thought relative to their interpretative presuppositions.³⁸ These observations are important and the questions of "what" are vital. It is difficult to evaluate the logic of apostolic hermeneutics if we have not determined what they thought, or the key presuppositions involved in their conclusions.

However, the quest for authorial logic deals with more than this. Scholars want to know *how* the biblical writers derived their presuppositions, how they chose to use that presupposition with a given passage, and even how they chose to use a particular text in their argument.³⁹ For instance, why did Matthew use Hosea 11:1 to prove his point when he could have equally cited Exodus 4:23 which has similar language? What makes Hosea 11:1 a better choice than another passage for Matthew's purpose? These questions are important, and to brush them off is to tacitly admit that the apostles are random. We need to think through these issues.

36. See quotes above in fn. 32; see also, Moyise, *Paul and Scripture*, 1. In discussing Paul's own hermeneutic, Moyise states, "However, what is potentially more useful than just citing Paul's answers to first-century questions is to study *how* Paul interpreted Scripture."

37. Schreiner, *Pauline Theology*, 15; Moyise, *Paul and Scripture*, 1, 15–30; Hofius, "Fourth Servant Song," 185–8.

38. Beale, "Jesus and His Followers," 392; Kaiser, "Eschatological Hermeneutics," 92–96; Robinson, *Corporate Personality in Ancient Israel*, 10; Wright, *Climax of the Covenant*, 140–41.

39. Moyise, "Reply to Greg Beale," 55–58; Barclay, "The Paradox of the Cross in the Thought of St. Paul," 428.

Consequently, this shows the quest for authorial logic should not just answer a “what” question but also the “how” question. This is a quest to know how or the process by which the biblical writers interpreted a text, derived presuppositions, associated them with certain texts, and came up with their assertions. This book intends to begin to answer the “how question” in regards to the New Testament’s use of the Old.

AN INITIAL SUGGESTION: THE EXISTENCE OF THE PROPHETIC HERMENEUTIC

While it may appear completely counterintuitive, I suggest an investigation of the apostles’ use of the Old Testament begins in the Old Testament itself. One can certainly see why one might begin in the New Testament in dealing with the New Testament’s use of the Old. Since we are figuring out how the apostles used antecedent revelation, it is reasonable to pay attention to their claims, methods, and presuppositions. Nonetheless, we will inevitably end up in the Old Testament because the apostles point us in that direction. The apostles deal with prior revelation and so to grasp what they meant and thought, we need to understand the source. I suggest greater attention on the Old Testament may help us unlock the thoughts of the apostles.

This inkling is not without merit. Accepted methodology requires an investigation of the Old Testament.⁴⁰ Scholars advise us to take heed of the interconnectedness and complexity of that part of the Bible.⁴¹ They frequently appeal to the idea observed by C. H. Dodd that quotations made by the New Testament writers actually point to entire contexts in the Old Testament.⁴² Based upon this, those investigating the New Testament’s use of the Old pay attention to how a reference to the Old Testament provides a window into bigger theological ideas and themes. Those concepts—including corporate solidarity, exile, and God’s plan—can often help explain how the apostles were thinking.⁴³ Scholars acknowledge the Old Testament contributes to our understanding of the apostles.

We can take these observations a step further in our discussion of authorial logic. I propose the interconnectedness and intricacy of the Old Testament reveals something deeper about the prophets themselves: They had their own hermeneutic. Those familiar with the New Testament’s use of the Old often refer to the “apostolic hermeneutic,” a term discussing the New Testaments writers’ interpretative methodology. Perhaps an Old Testament counterpart exists. One factor that supports this is how scholars

40. Nicole, “The New Testament Use of the Old Testament,” 25–26.

41. *Ibid.*; Beale, “Jesus and His Followers,” 390; Wright, “Justification: Yesterday, Today, and Forever,” 51–53.

42. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures*, 110, 126–27. See also Nicole, “The New Testament Use of the Old Testament,” 25–26; Beale, “Jesus and His Followers,” 390, n10. Beale’s note provides a list of other scholars who champion Dodd’s thesis.

43. Beale, “Rejoinder to Steve Moyise,” 166.

have recognized the reality of *intertextuality* in the Old Testament. The word “intertextuality” is a key term in this book and, for my purposes, discusses how the biblical writers allude to other parts of Scripture. It specifically refers to how the inspired authors expounded upon previous revelation in their own writings.⁴⁴ Such activity in the Old Testament argues for the existence of a “prophetic hermeneutic.” The Old Testament writers themselves were exegetes and theologians who understood and correlated their texts with previous revelation. This formed intentional “networks of texts” in the first canon.

In light of these correlations, the observation of Dodd gains even greater traction. Individual Old Testament texts are windows into larger contexts because they are *intentionally* part of a series of passages the prophets have woven together.⁴⁵ The apostles thought through certain passages with certain biblical theological ideas because the prophets had already made those associations. The Old Testament writers derived certain concepts from their careful exegesis of prior revelation and integrated those concepts into their own writings. These become the presuppositions and backbone of the apostolic rationale.

Thus, the apostles are not arbitrary; their thoughts and assumptions are directly tied to interconnected Old Testament texts woven together by the prophets. *However, if this is true, then the apostles follow the prophetic hermeneutic and logic.* The continuity between prophetic and apostolic hermeneutics provides the *modus operandi* of the apostolic rationale. While we may be

44. Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation*, 7–14; Broyles, “Traditions, Intertextuality, and Canon,” 167. See also, Huizenga, *New Isaac*, 43–58. As should be clear in this chapter and will be made clearer in the next, I use the term simply as one text alluding to another without any postmodern baggage attached. Some argue such a use of intertextuality is incorrect for it originated and was purposed to discuss deconstructive ideas. Thus, the term should be jettisoned unless one deals in those perspectives. See Meek, “Intertextuality,” 280–91. Ironically, those who deny authorial intent insist on using a term in the way the author supposedly intended. Furthermore, as Huizenga points out, this criticism is not valid in this case for two reasons. First, the critique is often against biblical scholars who illegitimately use the term to discuss the issues of historical criticism and sources. My use in this work argues against this and in a sense, deconstructs the higher critical school. Second, Huizenga observes even Kristeva, the founder of intertextuality, engages texts and intertextuality the way biblical scholars have dealt with it. He rightly notes the issue is not what intertextuality is as a property of texts but rather if the purpose and foundation that originally surrounded the term are true. Is deconstructionism legitimate? As will be later discussed, my answer is no. At the same time, the characteristic of intertextuality, the interconnectedness of texts, is still true apart from that baggage. In fact, the way biblical scholars, like Hays, use the term legitimately fits within the author’s intent of that term. Inner-biblical exegesis and allusion are also suitable descriptors; however, they fall somewhat short since they often imply a one to one textual correlation as opposed to the fact that a text could be interwoven with a network of texts. Hence, intertextuality, with the qualifications given, is still a useful term.

45. Broyles, “Traditions, Intertextuality, and Canon,” 167–75; House, *Old Testament Theology*, 57; Kaiser, *Toward an Old Testament Theology*, 24.

tempted to look at the apostolic hermeneutic, the key to the authorial logic of the New Testament may very well be in the prophetic hermeneutic.

THESIS: CONTINUITY OF PROPHETIC, APOSTOLIC, AND CHRISTIAN HERMENEUTICS

Let us not lose sight of the original issue. I have argued hermeneutics is important for our Christian life. That causes us to ask what is a truly Christian hermeneutic. We need to figure out the convictions the Bible requires us to have when approaching it, and how to apply those principles to bridge exegesis and theology. Within that, we need to understand how the apostles and prophets are thinking and how that resolves the tension between what the Bible prescribes hermeneutically and what its writers practice.

I contend the answer to these matters revolves around the following statement: The prophetic hermeneutic continues into the apostolic hermeneutic, which is the Christian hermeneutic. We can learn how to study the sacred text from what the biblical writers instructed us to do as well as from seeing them use Scripture, provided we understand what they were doing.

This is where the quest for authorial logic plays an essential role in the discussion. Grasping the biblical writers' rationale helps us to see they were not hermeneutical hypocrites. Instead, they practiced what they preached with immense precision and thereby laid out for us how to read Scripture better. The way they read is the way they wrote and the way we should read them. By this, their hermeneutic is our hermeneutic.

The rest of the book builds a case that we can and should learn from the master interpreters of Scripture, the very writers themselves. Consequently, each chapter will answer how the biblical authors were interpreting and reasoning as well as how that shapes our hermeneutical practice. (I will, though, answer the latter question more thoroughly at the end of the book.)

With this in mind, the next chapter begins our quest for authorial logic by establishing important foundational issues in approaching the endeavor. Based upon this, the third chapter will discuss the prophetic hermeneutic and observe that the Old Testament writers were exegetes and theologians in their own right. They carefully interpreted Scripture, and via new revelation expounded upon its theological themes and implications. As a result, as opposed to writing "better than they knew," the prophets wrote better than we give them credit for. The fourth chapter shows that the prophets intentionally wrote with a trajectory moving toward, and setting up for, the New Testament.

In the fifth chapter, we will observe that the apostles continued the logic developed in the Old Testament. They did not change the meaning of previous revelation but under the superintendence of the Spirit, fleshed out its implications in the current era. In fact, as the sixth chapter points out, this interpretative approach is pervasive in the New Testament. The apostles followed the logic of their Old Testament counterparts, and as a

result are uniform in the way they handle the same texts. Such hermeneutical consistency is part of the fabric of New Testament theology.

The seventh chapter shows how the hermeneutical continuity between the prophets and apostles moves to us. The Christian hermeneutic is no different than what the biblical writers engaged in. Their hermeneutical practice confirms the traditional exegetical method. Their intertextual logic also shows how they developed theology. The biblical writers often advanced biblical theological themes by picking up on previous revelation and developing certain ideas therein. This gives us a strategy to bridge exegesis and theology. By seeing how their writings expounded upon the ideas and implications of past revelation, we can see the theological topics they discussed and developed.

Consequently, as we think the biblical writers' thoughts after them, we immerse ourselves in their logic, we read the text the way they read it, and their hermeneutical rationale becomes our own. The prophetic and apostolic hermeneutic is, thereby, the Christian hermeneutic.

Those versed in the New Testament's use of the Old will see that my thesis resonates with Beale, Kaiser, Carson, Hamilton, Caneday, and Bock.⁴⁶ That is true. These individuals (and more) have immensely shaped my thinking on the topic. Although all of us will deviate from each other on some points, these are variations on a theme: The apostles used the Old Testament contextually. That is at the core of how we all explain the New Testament's use of the Old, and I intend to argue systematically in this book why that core is justified. However, my goal in this is not merely to verify a certain viewpoint of the New Testament's use of the Old but to thereby demonstrate that the way we read Scripture is thoroughly justified.

Thus, this book uses the New Testament's use of the Old to teach us the nature of hermeneutics and interpretation. My mission is to vindicate the prophets and apostles and to use them to help shape our own understanding of God's Word. They are not hermeneutical ignoramuses who have abused the Scripture. We do not know better than them. Rather, being moved by the Holy Spirit, they were brilliant—and we ought to humbly follow them. Their faithful hermeneutic provides us the certainty that the way we were traditionally taught to interpret the Bible is the method the Bible upholds. Literal-grammatical-historical hermeneutics is not a modern formulation but how the biblical writers read the Scriptures. The Christian hermeneutic follows the prophets and apostles, and is thereby a hermeneutic of obedience.

46. Bock, "Evangelicals and the Use of the Old Testament in the New, Part 2," 315–19; Carson, *Collected Writings on Scripture*, 280–83; Beale, *Handbook*, 2–13; Kaiser, "Single Meaning, Unified Referents," 88–89; Hamilton, "The Skull Crushing Seed of the Woman," 30–31; Caneday, "Curse of the Law," 185–209.