

Dr. Dave Mathewson, Hermeneutics, Lecture 24, OT in the NT

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A fourth issue or question that students studying the Old Testament usage in the New Testament have been interested in asking is the use of rabbinic techniques. In an earlier session, again, we talked about some of the ways that early rabbinic literature interpreted the Old Testament using techniques such as midrash pesher, that is to take a text and then to unpack it, explain it, sometimes using the language, this is that, this is what was spoken in an Old Testament text, seeing the Old Testament fulfilled in their own day, or arguing from the lesser to the greater, or connecting texts based on similar wording, etc. etc.

So many have asked the question whether New Testament authors are simply following the standard principles of interpretation and interpretive techniques of their day, and if so, what distinguishes the way a New Testament author utilizes the Old Testament as opposed to the way rabbinic interpreters treated the Old Testament as well. And then finally, one question is that students have raised is can we treat the Old Testament in the same way? Are we permitted to treat the Old Testament in the same way that we find New Testament authors treating it? These are important questions, but other questions have also been raised more recently about how we understand the use of the Old Testament in the New, and one of the issues has been how we classify or categorize usages of the Old Testament in the New. And generally, students of the New Testament have isolated or classified three possible usages.

One is what is known as direct quotation. That is where an author explicitly signals his use of an Old Testament text. That is, he explicitly indicates that he wants his readers to pay attention to an Old Testament text.

And usually this is the direct quotation is indicated by using a quotation formula, something like, just as it is written in Isaiah the prophet, or this took place to fulfill what was spoken of in Hosea, or just as it is written, some formula that indicates that the author's intention to quote from or to point the reader to an Old Testament text. And then usually what you find is a quotation of the Old Testament text that is kept intact, usually. Second is the category of allusion.

Some New Testament students have drawn attention to allusions. That is, in distinction to number one, where the quotation is explicit, it's introduced by a formula, it's usually kept intact in the New Testament text itself. And in an allusion, the author does not signal his intent to point you to an Old Testament text.

But instead, he usually takes the wording and the structure and the concepts and weaves them into his own discourse. So that it's still rather clear that an Old Testament text, especially if one has the requisite knowledge of the Old Testament, it's clear that an Old Testament text is being referred to, but the author does not explicitly signal that with a quotation formula, such as, just as it is written. And the author, the author, instead, usually weaves the language into his own discourse.

That is known as an allusion. And although a little more difficult to identify than a quotation, still the similar structure, the similar vocabulary, similar corresponding meaning, suggest that the author intends to point the reader to a prior Old Testament text. For example, a good example of an allusion is Ephesians chapter 1, 20 through 22, a text I think we may have read before.

But in Ephesians chapter 1 and 20, 20 through 22, we find Paul not explicitly quoting from an Old Testament text, but we do find a number of, we find language in this text that is clearly evocative of Old Testament text. So here's how he describes Christ. He says, referring to God's power that worked in Christ, verse 20, which he,

which God exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and seated him at the right hand in the heavenly realms.

That language of seating him at the right hand, it recalls the vocabulary and language of Psalm 110. Then he goes on and says, he's been seated far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every title that is given not only in the present age, but in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet, which reflects vocabulary in Psalm chapter 8. So without quoting the Old Testament, by taking its language, and even its structure and weaving it into his own discourse, the author, by way of allusion, intends to point us back to key Old Testament texts now to understand the person of Jesus Christ in Ephesians chapter 1. A final and third category is what is often labeled as an echo.

Some would say an echo is a more subtle use of the Old Testament that may not, or subtle reflection of the Old Testament, that may not even be intended by the author. Sometimes it is only a word or two, but the idea is it's kind of more echoes in the mind. It's not as clear as an allusion.

One could see these three as kind of on a scale from more explicit to more subtle. The more explicit being the quotation, more subtle usage as being echoes. Again, often they're almost a whisper of an Old Testament text, and some would say it's not clear that the author, the New Testament author, is intending to refer to this Old Testament text.

To give one example that some others have pointed to, and drawn attention to, in Philippians chapter 1, verse 19, the Apostle Paul, in describing his circumstances actually in prison, in this document that's often known as a prison epistle, but in describing his circumstances in prison in chapter 1, verse 19, Paul says this, Yes, I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the

Jesus Christ, that what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. It's interesting that pray will turn out for my deliverance appears to be almost word for word what is found in Job chapter 13 and verse 16. So there's been a lot of discussion as to whether did Paul intend this allusion or this echo of Job chapter 13 because he doesn't appear to be interested in Job anywhere else, and doesn't appear specifically to reflect Old Testament text in Philippians chapter 1. So some have wondered, was this a reference that the author intended to Job, or is this more of an echo, a subtle usage that the author may not have intended, and should we even make a big deal out of this in interpreting the text? Along with identifying these three usages, quotation, allusion, and echo, when it comes to allusions and echoes in particular, students have been interested in asking, did the author, how do we know if there's an allusion or an echo? And usually the question is answered by saying, well, did the author intend it? And so students have also constructed criteria for determining whether an author has actually alluded to an Old Testament text.

For example, is there similar wording in the text? Does the author seem, the author of the New Testament, when he appears to be alluding to an Old Testament text, is the wording similar enough between the New and Old Testament to justify seeing an allusion? Is there similar structure between the Old and New Testament texts? Does the author refer to the text elsewhere? If one proposes or thinks that the author might be alluding to something from Isaiah, that could certainly be buttressed and justified further if one could demonstrate that the author appears to have been aware of Isaiah or using Isaiah elsewhere in his book. Have others noted a similar reference? Others, New Testament students and commentaries, have they also noticed a similar Old Testament or the same Old Testament reference? That is, have others also heard an allusion and recognized an allusion? Although obviously this last criteria doesn't allow for new insight or discovering allusions that no one else did, but students have been interested in trying to figure out how do we justify? A quotation is a little easier, but when the author does not begin with a formula, just as

it was written or this took place to fulfill what was spoken by Jeremiah or something like that, how do we justify? Well again, things like vocab, similar vocabulary, similar structure, similar meaning and function. Does the author refer to the text elsewhere, seem to quote it or allude it elsewhere? Those are the kind of things that have been pointed to.

At the same time, in addition to these criteria, these criteria are usually used to establish the level of confidence that the New Testament student can come up with, the level of confidence that they can achieve, that they have actually identified an Old Testament allusion. So sometimes you'll see New Testament students talking about whether an allusion is certain, and again this is not so much with quotations, the author clearly signals quotations, but whether an allusion is certain, that is if there's enough similarity in wording, in structure, in function, and there's evidence that the author has used other Old Testament texts and especially other texts from the same book, then some students say we can be certain that the author intended an Old Testament allusion. The next category would be probable, that is we can't arrive at a level of certainty, but there's a high level of probability that the author is indeed intending to refer back to the Old Testament text.

Without the author present to tell us, obviously we can only suggest probability. The third category is possible, some have said some allusions should be put in the category of possible, we can't really be certain, nor can we establish a high level of probability, it's only a possibility that the author really intended this. And then finally, unlikely, that is some proposals for Old Testament reference are really unlikely, there's just not enough there in either context to justify seeing an Old Testament allusion.

So usually these categories mainly appeal to the level of confidence that we can achieve as to whether we have isolated a genuine allusion or echo or something like

that. To add one more comment, recent studies have also been interested in the kind of recent phenomenon of intertextuality, and how that affects the way that we read the Old Testament in the New. And just two foci in that regard, number one is the focus in intertextuality and the focus on intertextual studies is not so much on the author.

Most of the issues I've just raised have been focused mainly on author's intent and historical background, whether the author is intending to point us to Old Testament text, but intertextuality does not restrict connections between the Old and New Testament to only what the author intended. But instead, whether the proposed Old Testament allusion is productive and makes for an insightful or valid reading, or adds fresh insight to the text and makes sense in the context. So the focus isn't on the author and what the author intends, the focus is primarily on the reader identifying a possible correspondence and whether that produces a productive reading of the text.

A second feature of intertextuality is that of dialogue, that is by the New Testament text appearing to allude to an Old Testament text, a relationship is set up in which the interpreter is invited to explore a series of correspondences between the two texts and to ask what difference does it make to read the New Testament text in light of the Old Testament text? What meanings does the Old Testament text carry over in the New Text and how does the New Text transform the Old Testament text? And so the goal is to explore possible interactions between the Old and New Testament texts, seeing the Old and New Testament in dialogue with each other and to ask what that does. So how do we go about in studying the use of the Old Testament in the New and analyzing the use of Old Testament text by New Testament authors? Let me just very briefly make some suggestions based on our previous discussion and then we'll move on to consider some explicit examples. First of all is I would suggest that one of the more helpful tools is to survey commentaries and other works who

draw attention to allusions and usages of the Old Testament, not that that is the final say, but at least it helps us to understand and see what other interpreters of the New Testament, what Old Testament texts they have seen and drawn attention to.

That should be qualified though, the more I do that it appears that sometimes commentaries simply repeat and rely on what other commentaries before them have said. So they may not have done their own work, they may just be assuming what others have said. But a good place to start is with other commentaries and tools that will help point your attention to possible Old Testament allusions.

Quotations are more easy to identify, but allusions, even echoes, more subtle uses of the Old Testament, you'll find help sometimes in commentaries. But further than that I would say simply be aware of and listen to the New Testament, listen to the New Testament text, have your ears open to hear possible correspondences between the Old Testament and the New Testament. This assumes a knowledge of the Old Testament, so the more you are, the more you know the Old Testament, the more you are aware of the Old Testament text and their context, the better position you will be to hear resonances in the New Testament text.

Third, identify the type of reference as much as possible, whether it's a quotation, whether you're dealing with an allusion, or whether more subtly you're dealing with an echo. Fourth, consider the form of the text. I think it is valid to ask, is the author drawing primarily in the Septuagint? Is the form of the Old Testament text mainly the Hebrew text? And does there seem to be a difference? Does that seem to make a difference in how you understand the use of the Old Testament in the New? Next, what is the meaning of the Old Testament text in its original context and setting, historically and literally? What appears to be the original meaning and intention of the Old Testament text? Another one, the next one, is consider how the Old

Testament text was interpreted in early Judaism by early Jewish and rabbinic interpreters.

Ask, for example, in the Dead Sea Scrolls or other rabbinic literature, even the pseudepigrapha and apocalyptic literature, and here you'll have to rely on commentaries and other specialized works on the use of the Old Testament in the New, is ask how was this text, Old Testament text, apparently interpreted and utilized in early Jewish and rabbinic interpretation? And the next is to consider how the New Testament author has utilized the Old Testament text. How does it function in its New Testament context? What meaning does the Old Testament text bring into the New Testament? That is, I like to ask the question, what meaning would be missing in the New Testament text if I did not read it in light of its Old Testament subtext, the text that the author appears to be drawing on? How has the author utilized it? Again, does it appear to be a straightforward prediction fulfillment? Is it more of a typological, analogical, or utilized just perhaps by way of illustration or something like that? How does the author seem to be using the Old Testament text? How is it functioning in its context? And further, explore. I think one of the insights of intertextuality is to understand the concept of dialogue.

Explore possible interactions between the two texts. This may be an example of a phenomenon that we talked about with author's intent, is when you begin, even to find perhaps or discover Old Testament more subtle usages, and even when you start comparing Old and New Testament contexts and see connections, sometimes it's very difficult to know whether the author intended any of those or not. And sometimes it may simply be an issue of the type of thing we talked about with author's intent.

Is it the kind of thing where if the author were present and you said, were you referring to this Old Testament text? The author might say, no I wasn't, but now that

you identified that or now that you raised that issue, that certainly makes sense. And I would accept that as a valid insight into my work. Or again, the author may intend to allude back to an Old Testament text, but as you explore it, you may see certain connections.

And again, if you were to ask the author, the author might say, no I did not intend those connections, but now that you observe those, that makes sense. And I would accept that as valid insight into my text. So I would agree that although I still think that we have to ask the question of what the author might have intended, as far as alluding to Old Testament texts, that probably we can't restrict ourselves to that.

And that has to be our starting point, but we might find subtle allusions or connections between texts that we can't be confident that the author intended, but still make sense of the text and are valid given what we know about the author, given what we know about the Old and New Testament texts and their context, that this seems to be a valid understanding and reading of the text. So another question is to ask whether the New Testament author seems to use an Old Testament text consistent with or similar to the way it was used in Rabbinic Judaism and in early Jewish interpretation. But again, ultimately then I think the sixth question to ask, or the sixth principle, is to explain how an understanding ultimately of the Old Testament text makes a difference in the way you interpret the New Testament text.

So again, it's not enough just to recognize possible connections and allusions and echoes and quotations, but ultimately one wants to ask what difference does this actually make in interpreting the New Testament text. So those are just a kind of a collection of issues or questions that I think are valid and important to raise in understanding the New Testament. Use of the Old, again the Old Testament is significant because New Testament writers, as they conceptualize how Christ brought fulfillment, they utilized examples from the Old Testament, they utilized Old

Testament texts and understood how ultimately the Old Testament was fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ.

As I said, there are a number of works to help you in the form of commentaries. One recent compendium of research on the Old Testament use of the New is a book edited by Don Carson and Greg Beal called *A Commentary on the Old Testament Use in the New Testament*, and is a series of essays that covers each book of the New Testament, from Matthew to Revelation, and discusses works through chapter by chapter, and discusses quotations, but also allusions and sometimes echoes to Old Testament text, and theologically and hermeneutically, how that makes a difference in the way one interprets a New Testament text, or the passage that is being dealt with. So what I want to do now is examine just a handful of Old, New Testament passages that clearly utilize the Old Testament in their own composition, and my focus is primarily going to be on allusion, though I'll deal with a couple of quotations, but I primarily want to focus on allusions or echoes, those examples of the use of the Old Testament where Old Testament text is taken up, and its wording and structure is woven in to the composition, where the author does not necessarily signal his use of an Old Testament by a quotation formula.

And I want to look at an example from the Gospels, and then we'll look at a couple of examples from the Epistles, both Paul and what are known as the General Epistles, we'll look at an example from Hebrews, and then look at a couple of examples from the Book of Revelation, which probably more extensively than any other book alludes to the Old Testament, although it never signals it by a quotation formula. Again, another reason I've done this, too, is in the past, most studies of the Old Testament in the New have focused primarily on direct quotations, where the author, again, signals his intent to point to a new Old Testament text with a quotation formula, but recently, in the last 20 years or so, there's been more of a resurgence of drawing attention to allusion, again, allusions and echoes, more subtle

usages of the Old Testament. But let me start with the Gospels, and I want to turn back to Matthew chapter 2. We've already noted that in Matthew chapter 2, the author quotes extensively from the Old Testament, which functions to explain the movement of Jesus in his early childhood.

You almost find the Old Testament used to justify the different geographical movements of Jesus, starting with, in chapter 2, starting with the fact that he's born in Bethlehem, then when he goes to Egypt and back, etc. You find Old Testament quotes in Matthew 2 often used to explain the geographical movements of Jesus, again, to justify the early childhood of Jesus, to show that early events were nothing less than a fulfillment of Old Testament text. One of those that we looked at in chapter 2 and verse 5, where the author quotes or has the Jewish leaders quote from Micah chapter 5 and verse 2, that is that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem appears to be as close as anything to a rather straightforward prediction fulfillment.

But another text that we raised in in chapter 2 and verse 15 of Matthew, the author quotes from Hosea chapter 11 and verse 1, out of Egypt I have called my son, which when you go back to Hosea chapter 11 and verse 1, that doesn't appear to be a prophecy at all of the life of Jesus Christ. In fact, it's it's simply seems to be just a historical report of how God preserved and dealt with his people and how he loved his people Israel. And so chapter 11 and verse 1 of Hosea seems to be a reference to the nation of Israel, and there's really no hint in that verse that it's a prophecy of a coming Messiah or anything like that, which raises the question, why does Matthew use it here in chapter 2 and verse 15 of Matthew? Why does he use Hosea 11 and verse 1 to refer to an early event in the life of Jesus Christ? Most likely, most likely it is because Matthew is using it more typologically or analogically, that is, he sees an event in the old covenant where God deals with his people and preserves and loves his people now being repeated in a greater way in light of fulfillment in Christ.

So Matthew doesn't claim, seem to be claiming that Hosea 11 and verse 1 was actually a prediction or there's a second level of meaning, there's a prediction in there of a coming Messiah that now Matthew has discovered. Instead, Matthew seems to be saying that this with God preserving his son, his greater son Jesus Christ in Egypt in Matthew chapter 2, seems to fill up or repeat a pattern that is established in the Old Testament when God preserved and kept his greater son or his son, which is the nation of Israel. And furthermore, when you read Matthew carefully, it becomes clear that Jesus is seen as recapitulating and actually fulfilling the true destiny of the nation of Israel.

Israel was God's son in the Old Testament, but now Jesus Christ as God's greater son recapitulates the story of Israel, but now brings it to conclusion. He fulfills and accomplishes what Israel failed to do. And so because of that assumption, the author can take an Old Testament text that referred to Israel, God's son, and now apply it to his son, Jesus Christ, to show that in the same way that God preserved his son in the Old Testament, in the age of fulfillment, God once again is acting to preserve his son, the new Israel, and the fulfillment of Israel's destiny, which is the person of Jesus Christ.

But beyond that, to draw your attention to more subtle or elusive uses of the Old Testament, I'm convinced that virtually everything going on in Matthew chapter 2, especially the early verses, has an underlying Old Testament story or subtext going on. So for example, just to highlight to start with the easiest one, when you read this story about a baby who is born and whose life is threatened by an oppressive evil king who wants to kill him, who makes an order to kill all the baby boys in the kingdom, and then the baby boy is preserved and kept in Egypt, and even the mention of Egypt, what does that recall? It doesn't take a lot of reflection to recall the original Exodus story, where Moses, Israel's deliverer, is born as a baby, and the

Pharaoh tries to kill him and issues an order for all the baby boys to be put to death, yet this one is preserved in Egypt. And so it's difficult to not see the correspondences, so that I think Matthew intentionally is crafting this story, though it is historical, and I take it as reflection of what actually happened, Matthew is simply making clear the correspondences of that story to the original Exodus to demonstrate that now, once again, God is raising up a deliverer in a new Exodus to rescue and deliver his people.

In fact, in verse 20, remember when Jesus goes to Egypt because Herod's trying to kill him, after Herod dies, an angel appears to Joseph in verse 20 of chapter 2 of Matthew and says, those who are seeking his life are dead. Interestingly, that is almost verbatim of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of Exodus chapter 4 verse 19, those who are seeking Moses' life to kill him. Now they are dead, so Moses doesn't have to fear for his life.

So again, Jesus is being portrayed as a new Moses, who, like Moses in the Old Testament, was the Savior, Deliverer, and Rescue of his people. Once again, God in a new Exodus is raising up Jesus as the Deliverer and Savior of his people. Just very quickly to mention the notion of the star over Bethlehem in association with a Messianic king, a Davidic probably recalls Balaam's oracle in Numbers chapter 24 and verse 17 of a star that will rise.

Again, even though Matthew doesn't quote that text, he seems to be alluding to it and weaving it into his own story. Another interesting part of the story is the account of the Magi, the so-called wise men, though wise men probably is not as good a term as a Magi. In other words, these are foreign astrologers, most likely, and who come to visit Jesus in Matthew chapter 2. And what is intriguing about this is to ask, what might be significant about Matthew having the Magi come and visit Jesus? We saw that in contrast to Luke, who has shepherds come, now Matthew has these Magi,

these foreign astrologers now coming to visit Jesus, and they bring him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

And what is the significance of that? In my opinion, Matthew is still working with Old Testament text. That is, the Old Testament still forms kind of the underlying subtext that is informing Matthew's own story. And the text I want to draw your attention to is Isaiah chapter 60.

Isaiah chapter 60 is part of Isaiah's vision or prophecy of future restoration of Israel and God's people. Remember, they have been carted off into exile, and Isaiah anticipates a time when the people will return, God will restore his people, God will restore the people to their city, to their land. And chapter 60 of Isaiah is an anticipation or prophecy of that.

And as I read it, I want you to keep your ears open to possible echoes or resonances with the Matthew text. So chapter 60, Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. Sounds like the rising star shining over Bethlehem, indicating the arrival of the messianic king.

See, darkness covers the earth, and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you, and his glory appears over you. Lift up your eyes, or I'm sorry, verse 3, nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn, reflecting the magi coming to the star, to the light of the star, to Bethlehem. Lift up your eyes and look about you, all assemble and come to you.

Your sons, that be the nation of Israel, now being restored, they come from afar, from exile, your daughters are carried on the arm, then you will look and be radiant, your heart will throb and swell with joy, the wealth of the seas will be brought to

you, and the riches of the nations will come to you. Herds of camels will come to your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. Let me skip down a little bit.

Verse 8, who are those that fly along the clouds like doves in their nests? Surely the islands look to me, and look to me, and the lead are the ships of Tarshish. All these images of of the glory that will surround the restoration of Israel. Verse 10, foreigners will rebuild your walls, and their kings will serve you, though in anger I struck you in favor, I will show you compassion.

Your gates will always stand open, they will never be shut, day or night, so that men may bring you the wealth of the nations. The kings led in triumphal procession, for the nation or kingdom that will not serve you will, will not serve you, will perish, it will be utterly ruined. The glory of Lebanon will come to you, the pine and fir and cypress together to adorn the place of the sanctuary, and I will glorify the place of my feet.

One other text I wanted to read, uh, kind of skipping ahead to verse 16, you will drink the milk of the nations and be nursed at the at the breast of royalty, then you will know that I the Lord am your savior, your redeemer and mighty one of Jacob. Instead of bronze, I will bring gold and silver in place of iron. So notice this imagery of the kings and nations bringing wealth to Jerusalem as they, as it is restored.

In my opinion, Matthew is picking up that story from Isaiah chapter 60. He's clearly alluding to Isaiah 60 by having foreign dignitaries bring their wealth, gold and frankincense and myrrh, by bringing that wealth to Jerusalem or to Bethlehem, as they come and visit the the messianic king, the deliverer. It's as if Matthew is saying, therefore, that Matthew is suggesting that Isaiah's promise of restoration, the restoration of God's people, the coming, the coming age of salvation, the coming

kingdom of God, the new creation has already been inaugurated in the person of Jesus Christ.

And that is demonstrated by foreign dignitaries, these wise men bringing the wealth, bringing their wealth, and these foreigners bringing their wealth to worship Jesus in response to a light, the rising light of the rising star. So without quoting Isaiah chapter 60, I think Matthew has clearly indicated his intent to allude to other Old Testament texts, such as Isaiah 60, to demonstrate how they are now being fulfilled in the coming of the person of Jesus Christ. So Isaiah 60, as well as the whole Exodus motif, are important subtexts for Matthew's own story of Jesus.

And he weaves, again, he weaves a number of texts together to demonstrate how Jesus, his life, especially his early childhood in chapter 2, brings to fulfillment and brings to a climax a number of these texts. To move on to some examples from epistolary literature, especially Paul's letters, I'll give an example, one very brief example in Galatians chapter 1, and then look at a slightly more extensive example in Ephesians chapter 2. But Galatians chapter 1 and verse 15, we've already looked at this text in relationship to literary context, and how in chapters 1 and 2, Paul is arguing that his apostleship and the gospel that he preaches is not something that comes through human appointment or human teaching, but is solely dependent on a revelation through Jesus Christ. One of the things he says in that context, in chapter 1 verse 15, he says, but when, this is Galatians 1 15, Paul says, but when God who set me apart from birth and called me by his grace was pleased to reveal his son in me.

Now the question is, why would he mention being set apart at birth? That seems to be an interesting thing to say here. Why didn't he just say God called me, God appointed me to be an apostle. Why does he mention that he was set apart at birth? Is this simply Paul's pro-life perspective coming out? Is Paul simply emphasizing the dignity of human life, even at conception, that therefore this is a valid, this is an

important text for supporting anti-abortion or pro-life? I certainly don't want to deny this text could have a bearing on that, but the significance of this passage, I think, is not so much Paul's judgment on when human life begins.

But instead, this statement is actually one that Paul finds in the Old Testament. And I want to just look briefly at two texts that Paul may have been thinking of. Chapter 1 and verse 5 of Jeremiah is the first one.

In Jeremiah chapter 1 and verse 5, which at the very beginning of the book, Jeremiah is establishing his credentials as a prophet and discussing his call as a prophet, which will justify and provide justification and authenticity for what he is about to say in the rest of the book. In verse 5, he says, I'll back up to verse 4, the word of the Lord came to me, Jeremiah, saying, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart.

I appointed you as a prophet to the nations. Then another interesting text to back up a book is in Isaiah chapter 49. Isaiah chapter 49 and verse 1, we see similar language in reference to the servant.

Several of these chapters, the most well-known one being chapter 53 in Isaiah, are addressing the servant. Chapter 49, verse 1, listen to me, you islands, hear this, you distant nations. Before I was born, this is the servant speaking, before I was born, the Lord called me.

From my birth, he has made mention of my name. Especially in light of the Jeremiah chapter 1 verse 5 text, this language in Galatians 1.15 is primarily as an Old Testament allusion meant to portray Paul as conceiving of his own commission in line with the Old Testament prophets. That Paul sees his apostolic calling as having the same authority as an Old Testament prophet.

So again, in trying to argue his case here, that his apostolic commission and his gospel does not come about by human beings, by quote, by alluding to the Old Testament concept of a call narrative, where such as we found in Isaiah 49, we find in Jeremiah, this idea of God setting him apart at birth, or setting him apart while he was still in the womb, is the language of prophetic commission. So that Paul conceives of himself in line with Old Testament prophets, or in light of Isaiah 49, perhaps as functioning as the servant himself. So this is one part of Paul's argument, I think, that would be missed if we were not aware of the Old Testament background that again, Paul appeals to not through a direct quotation, but by alluding to an Old Testament text.

Another, another example of slightly more extensive of again, how Paul appeals to Old Testament texts through allusion through weaving its wording and structures into his own discourse is found in Ephesians chapter two, and verses 11 through 22. And I will, I'll just read part of this, because again, it's important to hear what's going on in order to open our ears to hear resonance, resonances with Old Testament text. So in chapter two, starting, starting with verse 11, therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth, and called uncircumcised by those who are themselves are the circumcision.

Immediately, we notice an Old Testament allusion, not to a specific text, but to the notion of circumcision, which is a very important feature of the the Mosaic covenant back in the Old Testament. So the idea of even circumcision already evokes an Old Testament idea and concept, if not a specific text. Then he goes on and says, remember that at that time, you were separated from Christ, excluded from the citizenship in Israel, and foreigners to the covenants.

There's another term covenants, which would clearly notice it's plural as well, probably clearly recalls the major covenants made with with with Abraham between God and Abraham, God and David, the Mosaic covenant. So again, by by just the word covenants, the author evokes an entire section of Israel's history, the covenants that God made with them. Without you or without hope without God in this world, but now in Christ Jesus, you who are once far away, have been brought near through the blood for he himself is our peace, is Jesus himself is our peace, who made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing in his flesh the law, a clear allusion back to the Mosaic law, with its commandments and regulations, his purpose was to create in himself one new man, one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace.

And in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through Christ Jesus, then skip down to verse 17. He came and preach peace to those who are far away. And those who are near for through him, we both have the access, another Old Testament term of access in the temple, access to the father by one spirit.

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens. But now your fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household build upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself, the chief cornerstone. I'll stop there.

But let me draw attention to a couple of other things besides circumcision and the law and covenants as clear references back to Old Testament concepts, if not specific texts. But for example, notice the the repeated reference to preaching peace to those who are far and those who are near that language. In Paul, those who are far seem to be Gentiles who are now included within the new people of God.

But this language of peace, Christ being our peace of preaching peace to those who are far and those who are near evokes, once again, evokes language from the

prophet Isaiah. In chapter, for example, in chapter 52 and verse seven, a text that many of us have heard. Notice in 52 verse seven, the author says, how beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings and proclaim salvation.

But even more significant, chapter 57 and verse 19 of Isaiah, chapter 50, I'm sorry, 57 and verse 19. He says, creating peace on the lips of the mourners in Israel, peace, peace to those far and those near. Now, Paul picks up this language of preaching peace or peace to those far and those near and weaves this into his own context.

But furthermore, notice this reference to creating one new humanity. This probably reflects the new creation language found throughout the book of Isaiah, especially in 43 verse 19. We find God creating new things.

Chapter 62, this is Isaiah chapter 62 and verse two, as well. Chapter 65 and verse 17 would be another one where the author indicates a new creation, I will create a new heavens and a new earth. So you have this new creation language.

In chapter 62 and verse two, the nations will see your righteousness and all the kings your glory, and you will be called by a new name. So this language of newness and new creation probably now reflected in Paul's creation of a new humanity. The idea of foreigners being excluded, Isaiah chapter 56 and the first part of verse three refers to the exclusion of foreigners or the inclusion of foreigners.

Isaiah chapter 56 and verse three. Again, all of this in the context of Israel's restoration and their future future act of God's restoring. He says in 56.3, let no foreigner who has bound himself to the Lord say, the Lord will surely exclude me from his people.

So Isaiah 56 anticipates a time that at restoration, even foreigners will not be excluded. And so now Paul indicates a time where those who were formerly foreigners and aliens are now included in the one people of God. Even the reference to Jesus Christ as the chief cornerstone in verse 20 is a reflection of Isaiah chapter 28 and verse 16.

The founding stone or the chief cornerstone of the restoration of Jerusalem. Furthermore, is it also possible having heard all of these resonances from Isaiah and all of these allusions and echoes, is it possible that the reference in verse 20 to the foundation of this household being the apostles and prophets might be an allusion to Isaiah 54, where in in verses 11 and 12, I believe, or 11 through 13, the restoration of Jerusalem is seen in terms of foundation of the different building blocks and precious stones, where the foundation is identified as a very precious stone. And we saw earlier, interestingly, the Qumran community interpreted this section of Isaiah 54 as referring to foundational members of, metaphorically, foundational members of the Qumran community.

Is it possible that with all these other allusions to Isaiah that maybe Paul is alluding to Isaiah 54 and the restoration of Jerusalem with its foundations, now he sees this being fulfilled in the establishment of God's household, the church, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So Isaiah's program of restoration then, the new creation, the restoration of God's people, a new people, including Gentiles, now this is fulfilled in the death of Jesus Christ and creating a new humanity, a new people of God, consisting of Jew and Gentile, the church, and the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile, the hostility being removed between the two, and now bringing peace and reconciliation. All of this Paul conceives as the fulfillment of, nothing less than the fulfillment of what Isaiah was already prophesying.

The promised restoration is now being fulfilled in Jesus Christ in creating this one new humanity. So again, once again, by reading a New Testament text in light of the possible Old Testament background, the possible Old Testament subtext, in the case of Ephesians by, again, in chapter 2, although Paul never quotes from the book of Ephesians, he seems to take up its language, its images, its structures, and now weaves it into his own discourse to demonstrate how the death of Jesus Christ and the new humanity, the people of God, the church made of Jew and Gentile, how that is the fulfillment of it, and the climax of the restoration that Isaiah anticipated throughout the chapters of his prophecy. A final text in the letters, the epistolary sections of the New Testament that I want to talk about briefly is Hebrews chapter 6 and 4 through 6, and I'll read that again because one needs to hear the New Testament text in order to be able to hear the resonances with the Old Testament.

And likewise, one needs to hear the New Testament and be aware of the New Testament text to hear echoes and resonances in the New Testament text that one reads. But Hebrews chapter 6 and 4 through 6, 6, 4 through 6 is actually probably the more well-known of a series of five rather severe warnings that occur throughout the book of Hebrews. We find one in chapter 2, in chapter 3 and 4, and then in chapter 6, and then there's a couple more in chapter 10 and 12.

But sprinkled throughout the book of Hebrews are these rather severe warnings, and I don't want to discuss in a lot of detail why the author does that. It's basically related to the situation that he's addressing. But we find these series of warnings, and perhaps the most well-known warning is found in Hebrews chapter 6 and 4 through 6. So I want to read it, and then when we will kind of introduce it and then begin to explore how might the Old Testament background help us to understand this text.

Because as we read it, it will be clear that the author does not quote from the Old Testament. And in fact, there have been very few of all the reading I've done in this

text, there have been very few, at least earlier, I think it's changing a little bit, but there have been very few who have acknowledged or found any Old Testament references in this passage. So we'll want to explore, does this text seem to reflect Old Testament passages, and how that might make a difference in the meaning of this text and the way we read it.

But Hebrews chapter 6, 4 through 6, again, this is the third in a series of warning passages where the author's basically warning his readers, don't turn back from the gospel, don't turn your backs on the new covenant salvation that Jesus Christ has brought, but embrace him in faith, no matter what the consequences. So he's trying to get the readers not to walk away from Christ and the gospel that they have apparently believed in and been presented with, don't turn your backs and go back to Judaism, but embrace Jesus Christ in faith, no matter what the consequences. Here's the warning in chapter 6, 4 through 6, It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, who have shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God, and the powers of the coming age, if they then fall away, or better, and who then fall away, it's impossible for them to be brought back to repentance, because to their loss, they are crucifying the Son of God all over again, and subjecting him to public disgrace.

And what I want to focus on in the next session, are that list of the descriptions of the persons being depicted, that is, these persons that are being described in 4 through 6, have tasted the heavenly gift, they've shared in the Holy Spirit, they've tasted the goodness of God's word, they've tasted the powers of the coming age, and then they've fallen away. And those are the parts or elements of this text that I want to focus on, and ask how the Old Testament might help us to understand that. So in the next session, we'll try to explore the Old Testament, possible Old Testament background of this description in Romans, I'm sorry, Hebrews 6, 4 through 6.