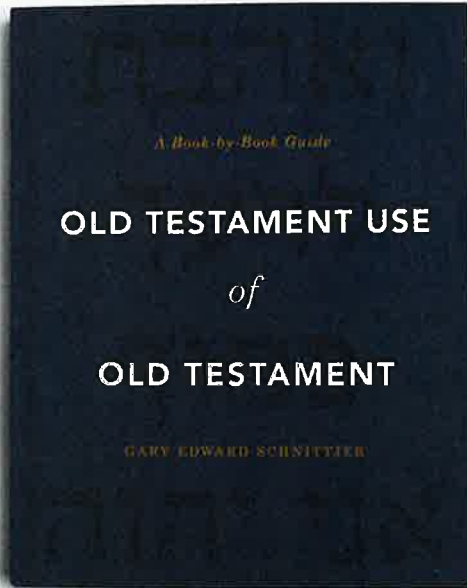


Old Testament



GARY EDWARD SCHNITTJER

Old Testament Use of Old Testament

A Book-by-Book Guide

ZONDERVAN ACADEMIC | AUGUST 17, 2021

978-0-310-57110-0 | 1,104 PAGES | HARDBACK | \$74.99 ⓘ

REVIEWED BY BETH M. STOVELL

One of the famous ideas within Protestant tradition is that Scripture interprets itself (the Latin phrase for this is *Scriptura sacra sui ipsius interpres*). This means that one part of Scripture often shows us the best way to interpret other parts of Scripture. While this phrase is often used to describe how the New Testament provides insight into itself or into the Old Testament, it is equally true that the Old Testament provides us a guide for how to interpret itself. We can see this by the way later Old Testament authors use and interpret the writings of earlier Old Testament authors. For example, watching how Isaiah uses Exodus can teach us how to better understand both Isaiah and Exodus.

This premise is essential for Gary Edward Schnittjer's new book, *Old Testament Use of the Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide*. Schnittjer's introduction shows this emphasis in its first pages, where he explains, quoting Vos:

Scripture's inclusive sense of revelation applies to scriptural exegesis of Scripture. "The Bible contains besides the simple record of direct revelations, *the further interpretation* of these immediate disclosures of God by inspired prophets and

apostles." (xviii, citing Vos, "Inaugural Address," 33; italics Schnittjer's).

Schnittjer's goal is to provide a book-by-book guide to this progressive revelation, showing how the Old Testament uses the Old Testament and highlighting themes and modes of interpretation that arise from his study.

In his introduction, Schnittjer highlights the debates among biblical scholars about how the Old Testament uses other parts of itself. He details his method for identifying intentional uses of the Old Testament in terms of quotation, paraphrase, and allusion. Schnittjer argues that, unlike echoes that may or may not be provable examples, quotation, paraphrase, and allusion are demonstrable examples of when one Old Testament author intentionally uses another. While he uses the English text for all of his discussion in the book, Schnittjer's bases his analysis on "verbal parallels in the Hebrew text" (xx). In other words, the evidence for Schnittjer's arguments is always based on the original Hebrew text, which provides solid data for his analysis. (This evidence is available in an e-resource titled "Old Testament Use of Old Testament in Parallel Layout.") Yet he explains

his examples using the English text to keep the book accessible to a broader audience. This combination of academic rigor provided to a wider readership is one of the great strengths of the book. While scholars may quibble with some of Schnittjer's specific examples, his careful deliberation of the Hebrew text and his rating system of different levels of certainty of Old Testament use give the scholarly reader assurance of the depth and rigor of his method underneath the accessible surface of this guidebook.

Schnittjer studies each book of the Old Testament one by one. Each chapter begins with a list of references showing how a particular biblical book uses the Old

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Testament (e.g., use of the Old Testament in Kings), how the rest of the Old Testament uses that book (e.g., use of Kings in the Old Testament), and major uses of the book in the New Testament (e.g., use of Kings in the New Testament).

After the reference list, each chapter has an analysis of the hermeneutical profile of the use of Scripture in the specific Old Testament book, an exploration of how the Old Testament as a whole uses the book, and an analysis of the "filters" for each book. These filters are intended to be exemplary rather than comprehensive, demonstrating some of the ways the Old Testament themes of the book develop throughout the Old and New Testaments. Also, these filters are "non-exegetical" (Schnittjer's term), as they have less evidence for their direct connection between biblical books. Instead, they show how themes build on one another across the Old Testament and create continuity throughout Scripture (xxiii).

After the book-by-book analysis, Schnittjer adds a chapter called "Toward the New Testament." This chapter incorporates the results of the rest of the book, highlighting how studying the Old Testament's

use of itself gives us insight into the New Testament and continued meaning for today. In many ways, this chapter functions as an interpretive heart to the overall book. It explains how the specific examples found throughout the book develop ways of interpreting and understanding the Old Testament and how this moves into key ideas within the New Testament.

The book could be read cover to cover, but at 1,100 pages it will likely function for more readers as a reference work to study specific Old Testament books, themes, and uses of the Old Testament within itself. Schnittjer provides a helpful section titled "How to Use This Book" in his introduction (xliii-xlvi). Here he not only details the careful use of symbols and lists for added simplicity throughout the book, but also explains the glossary, networks, and additional resources, which add depth for readers and for teaching professors.

Books like Schnittjer's that focus on the use of the Old Testament within the Old Testament are not new, but they are less common than books on the use of the Old Testament in the New. They are also less common for the audience this particular book targets: the educated reader interested in the Bible. Most books that explore inner-biblical allusion and/or citation within the Old Testament are written as scholar-to-scholar books. They are generally very technical in their descriptions, academic in their purposes, and often full of academic jargon. One of the great strengths of Schnittjer's book is its accessibility to the educated reader. The combination of academic rigor and accessibility makes this book a helpful tool for research and as a classroom textbook. The book could be used in Old Testament studies courses, Old Testament theology courses, use of the Old Testament in the New courses, and exegesis and hermeneutics courses in undergraduate and graduate/seminary contexts.

Another great strength is the interpretive networks section near the end of the book. This section demonstrates graphically a series of networks where one text builds on another around particular ideas and themes in the Old Testament and into the New. An example of such networks is "new exodus." Schnittjer shows how the exodus account in Exodus 23:20-33 is used by Isaiah 40:3-10 (as well as Isa 11:15-16; 35:8-10) and Malachi 3:1, which are in turn used in the New Testament by Mark 1:2-3; Matthew 3:3; Luke 3:4-6; John 1:23, and 1 Peter 1:24-25 (880). Such a tracing of the new exodus network gives readers a starting place for exploring this theme in a broader way. The value of these interpretive networks is showing how conceptions

develop in the Old Testament and into the New in specific ways that are traceable across biblical passages. Such an approach builds on recent developments in conceptual theory in biblical studies.

Yet these interpretive networks seem to prioritize certain networks over others. For example, one might be surprised that networks such as shepherds, Divine Warrior, God's Spirit and presence, and anointing/messiah are lacking in this analysis, despite their equal prevalence in the rest of Schnittjer's work (and the Old Testament as a whole). Schnittjer does account for this lack by saying that these networks "are not an end but point back to other scriptural contexts that also may bear on the target context" (xliii). While it is impossible for Schnittjer to cover everything, the lack of these networks does point to a potential weakness in the book. The themes Schnittjer chooses to highlight are often shaped by his own interests and likely his theological affiliations. Scholars with different theological traditions may question some of Schnittjer's choices at times. For example, a Pentecostal or charismatic biblical scholar might wonder at the lack of engagement with the Spirit in Schnittjer's work and his tendency to strongly emphasize salvation history and progressive revelation over notions of continuity. This is not a failing of the book, but simply a side effect of one person writing on such a comprehensive topic. This may encourage other scholars to build on Schnittjer's work in new ways, covering areas he missed.

Schnittjer describes the audience for this book as "students and ministers of the word" (xvii). The book is written in a register that makes Schnittjer's key points accessible to those studying Scripture in academic settings primarily or to those with some academic training. While usually Schnittjer's writing style could be understood by a general reader, he occasionally uses theological terms without sufficient explanation, assuming some theological training by his reader. For example, in his introduction, Schnittjer quotes Richard Hays's phrases for Paul's form of interpretation as "ecclesiocentric hermeneutic" or an "ecclesiotelic reading" (xxxvii). While Schnittjer explains what Hays means by these terms, he does not break down what "ecclesio-," "-centric," "-telic," or "hermeneutic" mean in themselves. He assumes an awareness of these complex theological terms. Unfortunately, these terms are also not available in Schnittjer's otherwise helpful glossary. This suggests the book is best suited for audiences who have training in theological vocabulary or those willing to have a theological dictionary nearby.

These critiques aside, Schnittjer's work is an epic and valuable addition to biblical scholarship and to biblical teaching. This book provides a guide for how the Old Testament uses the Old Testament that can be used across a variety of classrooms, in a variety of kinds of scholarship, and recommended to pastors and other ministers of the word who have an inclination toward further Old Testament (and New Testament) understanding. It is a thoughtful journey into interpreting the Old Testament and its impact on the New that will give insight to all who read it. **D**

New releases in Old Testament


1 and 2 Kings

David T. Lamb

The Story of God Bible Commentary
Tremper Longman III, general editor

Zondervan Academic / December 14, 2021

978-0-310-49096-8

640 pages / Hardback / \$49.99 

A new commentary for today's world, *The Story of God Bible Commentary* explains and illuminates each passage of Scripture in light of the Bible's grand story. Its story-centric approach is ideal for pastors, students, Sunday school teachers, and laypeople alike.


Abraham's Silence

The Binding of Isaac, the Suffering of Job, and How to Talk Back to God

J. Richard Middleton

Baker Academic / November 16, 2021

978-0-8010-9801-7

272 pages / Paperback / \$26.99 

Widely respected biblical theologian, creative thinker, and public speaker J. Richard Middleton suggests we have misread and misapplied the story of the binding of Isaac and shows that God desires something other than silent obedience in difficult times.

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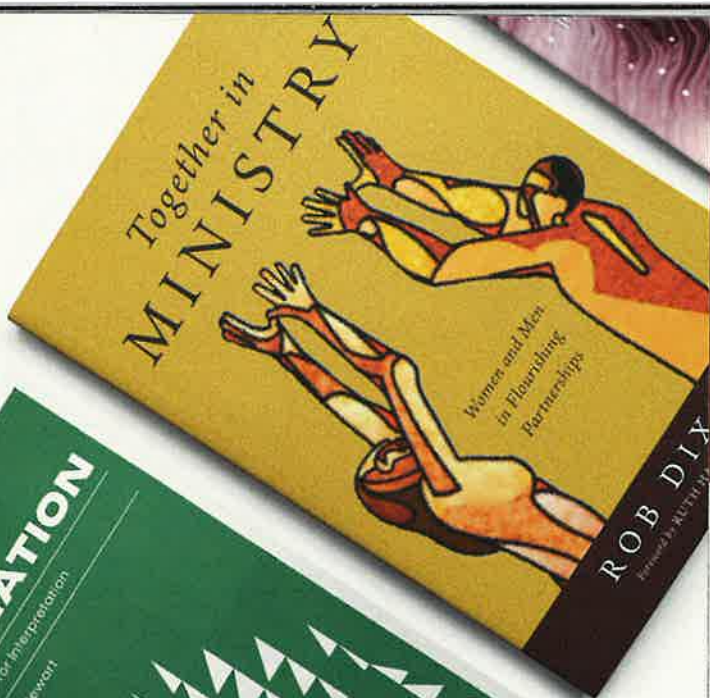
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