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BOOK REVIEW

Gary Edward Schnittjer. *Old Testament Use of Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2021. li + 1052 pp. Hbk. ISBN 9-70310-571100. \$58.72.

The New Testament use of the Old Testament is among the most challenging fields of inquiry. Given such, a plethora of works have appeared so as to help the interpreter. The subject of the Old Testament use of the Old Testament, however, while no less important, has not, in general, received the same type of academic attention (848). Enter *Old Testament Use of Old Testament*, a book-by-book guide by Gary Edward Schnittjer. Inside this tome (over 1,000 pages!) Schnittjer “surveys hundreds of Old Testament allusions within the Old Testament and provides hermeneutical guidance for interpreting these interrelated Scriptures” (back cover).

Aside from a brief introduction, the bulk of *Old Testament Use of Old Testament* moves along book by book using the Masoretic Text (MT) ordering system. Two relatively unique chapters, “Towards the New Testament” (847–72) and “Networks” (873–84) round off the volume. There is also an exceptionally user-friendly (and most helpful!) glossary (889–903), a fairly extensive bibliography (905–35), and three thorough indices (author, subject, and Scripture/ancient literature). Regrettably, there is no specific index for tracking Hebrew words. Schnittjer explicates that this reference study book is “designed for English Bible readers even while it everywhere investigates verbal parallels based on the Hebrew Text of Scripture” (xx, bold face type removed). With respect to method, the author states:

Many studies distinguish between quotation, allusion, and echo—but that is not usually the problem. How can students tell the difference between real and imagined allusions? The present study focuses on an even nar-

rower kind of allusion that features interpretive interventions. Detecting real exegetical allusions stands at the start, not the end, of the process of evaluating these allusions (xviii).

To be clear, Schnittjer filters out the so-called “false positives” through not including those passages that (a) make “broad allusion without interpretation,” (b) include standard “stock phrases and/or common themes,” and (c) “contain literary connections within the same scriptural book” (xxii).

Every parallel is rated on a scale of A to F with respect to the level of confidence that one may have of interpretive scriptural allusion (xxiii). Schnittjer, using special node(s), leveraged the NASB and iThenticate (plagiarism detection software) so as to increase the precision of his assessments (xlvi, 937). He underscores great care must be taken “not to merely count uses of a term. Patterns of distribution and other factors need to be evaluated” (xxiv). For example, though “ark” (תבה) appears more than twenty times in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament, all but one occurrence appears in Gen 6–9, thus making “a broad non-exegetical allusion in Exod 2:3 highly likely” (xxiv). Much the same thing applies to “Flood” (מבול) in Ps 29:10 (xxiv). While the symbols employed can be complicated, their precision is quite useful in view of Schnittjer’s over-arching rubric.

Schnittjer appreciates that, though some people may disagree with certain aspects of his work, the rating system “helps to clarify the overall judgment amid many complicated and sometimes complex sets of evidence that need to be evaluated along the way. Verifiability and transparency do not remove subjectivity” (xxviii).

One excellent example of the effectiveness of Schnittjer’s controls pertains to 2 Kgs 7:2 and 19 where the author states (469):

Malachi 3:10 sometimes gets cited as an allusion of “windows of the heavens” from the flood story (Gen 7:11; 8:2). If it is, then Malachi could be credited with transforming an image of judgment to one of blessing. However, similar positive expressions like “windows in the heavens” and “showers of blessing” appear elsewhere (2 Kgs 7:2, 19; Ezek 34:26; cf. Gen 49:25).

Following this, he states that the absence (or presence) of the preposition “slices too thin” (469). Schnittjer also (rightly) maintains that the idea “Isa 11:9 alludes to Noah’s flood is unconvincing as it addresses something else” and is based on only “a few common terms” (254).

Regrettably, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament* does not note the connections between another referent to Noah’s flood involving the promises to David and Levi (Jer 33:20–25) and the LORD’s covenant with the day/night to appear at their proper times (Gen 8:22; 9).

Pedagogically, there is much to commend in this hefty yet not-unwieldy book. *Old Testament Use of Old Testament* is quite user-friendly. The writing is lucid and clear with Schnittjer pitching things just right, including, at times, pop culture references, such as *The Matrix* (285). The book abounds with charts, diagrams, and informative, stimulating graphic material. The typography is superb, and the numerous headings make for easy argument tracking.

Schnittjer’s delineation of the competing aims of diachronic and synchronic studies with respect to the authorship, text, and readership dialectic is the clearest explanation that I have read to-date, particularly when combined with the enlightening illustration (xxxiv–xxxvi).

Another welcome fact is that Schnittjer ably distinguishes between each of the different Hebrew stems with respect to their sense and meaning (*qal*, *niphal*, *hiphil*, etc.) In this way, his analysis is free from many of the all-too-common exegetical and word-study fallacies (such as the root fallacy or basic meaning fallacy, for instance) that often plague language studies.

Schnittjer also leverages a substantial amount of Hebrew grammars, such as *IBHS*, *GKC*, Joüon, and Williams (*Williams’ Hebrew Syntax*. 3rd ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007). Unfortunately, the most up-to-date and linguistically informed grammar, namely, Christo H. van der Merwe, Jacobus A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar* (2nd ed. New York: Bloomsbury, 2017) is not cited. Schnittjer also does not refer to Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (2nd ed. Cambridge: Cam-

bridge University Press, 2018), despite its important updates with nomenclature and linguistics. While Schnittjer notes the fluidity of allusion, echo, indirect citation (paraphrase), and intertextuality (896), these matters could have been significantly refined through engaging with one of this topic's foremost scholars, namely, Stanley E. Porter. Rather inexplicably, there is not a single reference to any of Porter's (many) articles or books (Cf. Douglas S. Huffman, "A Two-Dimensional Taxonomy of Forms for the NT Use of the OT," *Themelios* 46 (2020) 306–18).

Concerning textual criticism, while Schnittjer makes good use of *BHK*, *BHS*, and *BHQ* (where available) alongside scholarly editions of many other important witnesses, such as the Qumran documents, for example, and/or the Greek Old Testament/Septuagint (LXX), the Brill Septuagint Commentary Series (Stanley E. Porter, Richard S. Hess, and John Jarick, eds.) fails to make an appearance. This is quite odd since this series (alone) offers an appreciation of the text-critical characteristics of a single Greek manuscript.

In a similar way, Schnittjer's comment(s), "MT represents the more difficult reading and is preferred" (130) is somewhat misleading. *Lectio difficilior lectio potior* ("The more difficult reading is preferable") should always be subordinate to the greater rule *utrum in alterum abiturum erat?* ("Which would have been more likely to give rise to the other?"). One also laments that there is no discussion in *Old Testament Use of Old Testament* about how linguistic modeling might impact interpretation, intertextuality, and textual criticism.

Another objection is the author's somewhat odd choice of lexicons. To be clear, though Schnittjer does sometimes use Cline's *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew Revised* (1993–2016) (5, 43, 350), for the most part, he employs either *HALOT* or Cline's *The Concise Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2009). Would it not have been prudent to have made more reference to the full-fledged *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew* (1993–2016) alongside these other notable works?

A more minor criticism is the strange flip-flop between pointed and un-pointed Hebrew texts throughout the book. This rather irritating phenomenon can occur in the same paragraph of

main-body text and does not depend on whether it is a word, phrase, or a longer discourse that is being analyzed (e.g., 12, 31, 236, 244, 305). There is also the odd use of transliteration (81, 350, 855). The attention to certain fine details, though, such as the notation of the disjunctive accents of the MT, including special shading (98), is most welcome.

Lastly, while this volume is unquestionably full of helpful information and is most certainly a vast repository of fascinating details, it is difficult to appreciate the absenteeism of many fine commentators throughout Schnittjer's work. To be clear, many readers will notice the conspicuous absence of many key works which ought to have been engaged with by Schnittjer.

These infelicities aside, many will be thankful to have Schnittjer's *Old Testament Use of Old Testament* on their shelves. Its primary readers will likely be the invested layperson, pastors, ministers, Christian educators and leaders, as well as Bible College/Christian university students.

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