

# The Old Testament in Matthew's Gospel

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## **Introduction**

For any scholarly work to have credibility, it must prove that it has been well researched, and the authorities cited therein must attest to that fact. Matthew, as a learned fellow par excellence, proved that his Gospel was not a mono or solo gospel but was bolstered by the Masoretic text by the numerous citations he made from the Masoretic text. In this paper, the researcher discusses who Matthew was, his Gospel, and attempts to discuss the different types of Old Testament citations in Matthew's Gospel, how he cited them, his interpretive method, and why he cited from the Old Testament extensively. The research method used in this paper is analytic.

## **The Person Matthew**

Mathew was a tax collector (Matt. 9:9) whose duty was to collect tolls levied against various merchandise being carried by various caravans.<sup>1</sup> He is also called Levi and worked under Herod Antipas. He allegedly wrote Oracles in the Hebrew Language and wrote the Gospel bearing his name. The Gospel he wrote was written for Jewish-Christians in a Jewish environment.<sup>2</sup> Some accounts explain that he was stabbed, burned, or even beheaded, but little is known about how he died, yet he is honored as a martyr.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Danny McCain, *Notes on the New Testament Introduction* (Bukuru, Plateau State: Africa Christian Textbooks, 2014), 175-176.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Saint-Matthew> Accessed March, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Ryan Nelson, <https://overviewbible.com/matthew-the-apostle/> Accessed March, 2022.

## The Gospel of Matthew

This Gospel reveals the most about the whole account of the birth, life, teaching, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.<sup>4</sup> Its coming first among the Synoptics is due to the tradition in the late second century A.D. that he wrote first but scholars had long disproven that.<sup>5</sup> Matthew's Gospel is traditionally attributed to an individual mentioned in the Gospel itself who was one of Jesus' disciples. It appears to be the product of first-century Jewish Christianity, but a Jewish Christianity significantly attuned to the Greek-speaking Gentile world.<sup>6</sup> Since he was writing to a Jewish Christian audience, his primary focus was the fulfillment of Jesus' messianic prophecies.<sup>7</sup> Irenaeus and Origen understood Mathew as one of Jesus' apostles who wrote the Gospel in Hebrew, later translated into Greek. It is also worth noting that some internal evidence supports this tradition as the manuscripts of the Gospel uniformly bear the heading " the Gospel According to Matthew."<sup>8</sup>

Justice Alhassan Idoko posits that this Gospel reveals the mystery of the messianic mission, which was to be the suffering son of man in this first coming.<sup>9</sup> N. T. Wright and Michael F. Bird aver that the book provides a theological and ethnographic map for locating Christian identity at the intersection of Jewish

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<sup>4</sup>Samuel Olugbenga Olagunju, *A Concise Introduction to the New Testament* (Ogbomoso: Oguniyi Publishers, 2012), 72.

<sup>5</sup> <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/matthew/0> Accessed March, 2022.

<sup>6</sup> J. Ramsey Michaels, "Gospel of Matthew," in *Mercer Dictionary of the Bible*, eds. Watson E. Mills, Roger A. Bullard, Joel F. Drinkard et al (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University, 1984), 558.

<sup>7</sup> Howard Clark, *The Gospel of Matthew and its Readers: A Historical Introduction to the Frist Gospel* (Indiana: University Press, 2003), 8.

<sup>8</sup>Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, Rev.ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 187.

<sup>9</sup> Justice Alhassan Idoko, *The Gospels Amplified, Vol 1 Matthew and Mark* (Jos, Nigeria: Challenge Press, 1989), 18.

heritage and faith in Jesus.<sup>10</sup> S. McKnight notes that the theology of this book centers on Christology, the Kingdom of Heaven, salvation-history, and discipleship.<sup>11</sup>

Regarding its purpose, most scholars opine that it was written to prove that Jesus was the prophesied Messiah that was to come. Wright and Bird assert that the purpose was to draw out the manifold ways in which the story of Jesus of Nazareth brought Israel's long and prophecy-laden story to its God-ordained goal.<sup>12</sup> Merrill C. Tenney concurs that the book's primary purpose is clearly stated in the book in Matthew 1:1, the account of the lineage of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.<sup>13</sup> Samuel Olugbenga Akintola asserts that the Gospel seems to be pro-eschatological and apocalyptic; miraculous elements are heightened, and solid ecclesiastical interest.<sup>14</sup> The book links together the prophecies of the coming Messiah with the fulfillment of prophecy in the person of Jesus.<sup>15</sup>

According to Robert H. Gundry, the dating of the book can only be approximated. He opines that if Mathew utilized Mark and Mark dates from the period A.D. 45-60, Matthew dates slightly later in or after that period.<sup>16</sup> Merrill C. Tenney concurs with this submission and situates the book between A.D. 50 and

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<sup>10</sup> N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird, *The New Testament in its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians* (Causton Street, London: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 579.

<sup>11</sup> S. McKnight, "The Gospel of Matthew," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* eds. Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight and I. Howard Marshal (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 532.

<sup>12</sup> Wright and Bird, 588.

<sup>13</sup> Merrill C. Tenney, *New Testament Survey* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1961), 143.

<sup>14</sup> Samuel Olugbenga Akintola, *Understanding Vital Issues in the New Testament* (Oritamefa, Ibadan: Baptist Press, Nigerian Limited, 2021), 121-122.

<sup>15</sup> Walter M. Dunnett, *Exploring the New Testament* (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 2001), 17.

<sup>16</sup> Robert H. Gundry, *A Survey of the New Testament, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed* (Carlisle, UK: The Paternoster Press, 1994), 161.

A.D. 70 and would have been circulated by those who worked in and from the church of Antioch.<sup>17</sup>

## **Types of Old Testament Quotations in Matthew's Gospel**

There are generally two types of quotations in Matthew's Gospel when referring to his usage of the Old Testament. They are fulfillment quotations and allusive quotations. Fulfillment quotations are also called Formula quotations which are either ten or twelve depending on the criteria used.<sup>18</sup> They cover Jesus' birth (1:23, 2:6, 15, 18, 23), entry into Galilee (2:15), his healings, compassion, and gentleness (12:18-21), his teaching parables, entry into Jerusalem, passion, and death (26:56, 27:9-10).<sup>19</sup> There have been scholarly debates about whether the citations reflect the LXX and its origins. Scholars have questioned if Matthew is responsible for their text form or whether it is his source and the theology of the citations.<sup>20</sup> These quotations are distinctive in that, unlike those taken over from Mark and Q (the text of which is consistently dependent upon the LXX), they exhibit a mixed text, that is, a text reflecting dependence upon the Hebrew (Masoretic) text of the Old Testament but also influenced by the LXX and other contemporary text forms.<sup>21</sup> Below is a list of Matthew's fulfillment quotations;<sup>22</sup>

Jesus' name (Matt. 1:23) Isaiah 7:14

Jesus' birthplace in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:6) Micah 5:2

Jesus' sojourn in Egypt (Matt. 2:15) Hosea 11:1

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<sup>17</sup> Tenney, 143.

<sup>18</sup> Devadhas Lijo, "Use of Old Testament Quotations in Matthew"  
<https://www.academia.edu> Accessed March, 2022.

<sup>19</sup> Lijo.

<sup>20</sup> Lijo.

<sup>21</sup>D. A Hagner, *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* eds. Geoffrey Bromiley, Everette F. Harrison, Roland K. Harrison et al (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979), n.p.

<sup>22</sup> Moyise, 39.

Wailing in Ramah (Matt. 2:18) Jeremiah 31:15  
Jesus' dwelling in Capernaum (Matt. 4:15) Isaiah 9:1  
Jesus' healing ministry (Matt. 8:17) Isaiah 53:4  
Jesus' healing ministry (Matt. 12:18) Isaiah 42:1-4  
Jesus' parabolic ministry (Matt. 13:35) Psalm 78:2  
Jesus' triumphal entry (Matt. 21:5) Zechariah 9:9  
Jesus' betrayal (Matt. 27:9) Zechariah 11.12

### **Allusive Quotations**

These are quotations that may not be cited verbatim but the meaning assigned to them by the author is as a result of a particular text they have in mind. Robert Gundry posits that there exists in the synoptic tradition, and pre-eminently in Matthew, a large body of allusive quotations in which the Old Testament only colors the language.<sup>23</sup> Stanley Zantarski, concurs with Gundry and posits that Matthew quotes the Old Testament 53 times, but when allusions are added, it sums up to 93 times, meaning that allusions in Matthew are about 43 times.<sup>24</sup> Citing F. Johnson, Gundry notes that the problem with these citations is that allusive quotations could have been made only from memory so that textual variants cannot be considered significant. It also alleged that allusions are not based on attempting to cite the Old Testament accurately.<sup>25</sup> This implies that Mathew may just have decided not to cite the text but rather allude to them. An allusive quotation instead reflected the language and phrase-forms with which the writer was most familiar and in which he habitually thought.<sup>26</sup> The problem with

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<sup>23</sup> Robert Gundry, *The Use of The Old Testament in St. Matthew's Gospel with Special Reference to the Messianic Hope* (Leiden, Netherlands. J. Brill, 1967), 1.

<sup>24</sup> Stanley Zantarski, "How many times does the Gospel of Matthew quote the Old Testament?" <https://www.quora.com/How-many-times-does-the-Gospel-of-Matthew-quote-the-Old-Testament> Accessed March 2022.

<sup>25</sup> Gundry, 2-3.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 3.

allusive citations is that they are either out of context or contradict the context.<sup>27</sup> An example of this is seen in Mathew 28:16-20, where verse 18b alludes to Daniel 7:13-14. Matthew equally alludes to this text in 24:30-31 and 26:64. These do not refer to the Parousia in Daniel 7:13-14 as Matthew makes them but instead refer to the present rulership of the exalted Lord.<sup>28</sup>

## **The Way Matthew Uses the Old Testament**

David L. Baker avers that almost all New Testament writers frequently quoted from the Old Testament, and such quotations inevitably involved interpretation of Old Testament texts.<sup>29</sup> Mathew, therefore, was not the only one who did that. Stephen Motyer notes that the New Testament signals an engagement with the Old Testament that touched every page at the start.<sup>30</sup> The citations recognize that the New Testament is not complete without the Old Testament in a nutshell. R. McL Wilson submits that Matthew alone has over fifty quotations, and some have been entire passages lifted bodily from the Old Testament, particularly from the prophets.<sup>31</sup> The exact number of the citations varies amongst scholars, primarily because of allusions. While different direct quotations would have been

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<sup>27</sup> Robert L. Browley, "Evocative Allusions in Matthew: Matthew 5:5 as a Test Case"

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/45681456\\_Evocative\\_allusions\\_in\\_Matthew\\_Matthew\\_55\\_as\\_a\\_test\\_case#read](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/45681456_Evocative_allusions_in_Matthew_Matthew_55_as_a_test_case#read) Accessed March 2022.

<sup>28</sup> Luz, Ulrich. "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew." *The Harvard Theological Review* 97, no. 2 (2004): 119–37. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4495079>.

<sup>29</sup> David L. Baker, *Two Testaments, One Bible: The Theological Relationship between the Old and New Testaments*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Nottingham, England: Apollos, 2010), 32.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Motyer, "Old Testament in the New Testament," in *Evangelical Dictionary of the Biblical Theology* ed. Walter A. Elwel (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Books, 1996), 582.

<sup>31</sup> R. McL Wilson, "Mathew's Use of the Old Testament," in *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible in Five Volumes*, Merrill Tenney and Steven Barabas, eds., (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan 1975), 112.

easier to ascertain, there are alluded citations, which makes it challenging to know the total number.

By Indicating the direct fulfillment of Old Testament Prophecy. G. K. Beale notes that this is done to show that something that has happened in Jesus' life is not coincidental, and this sometimes comes with an introductory formula or may not come with one. (Matt 2:5-6 and 3:3).<sup>32</sup> What triggered Matthew's invention of the fulfillment quotation formula was the continued parting of ways with Judaism by those outside the movement of Christianity as a distinct and novel religion.<sup>33</sup> Matthew wanted to show that though Christianity may seem new, it had the same roots as Judaism in the Old Testament Scriptures. They were not a strange movement that could not be traced from the Old Testament.

He also uses it in typology, which is the study of analogical correspondences among persons, events, institutions, and other things within the historical framework of God's special revelation that is prophetic from a retrospective view."<sup>34</sup> That is to say that many of the events or even places and people serve as types over in the New Testament. For something or an event to qualify as a type for the New Testament, it must have its direct foundation in the Old Testament. Matthew understood this and used the Old Testament in that light. Beale notes that the main difference between a direct fulfillment of prophecy and indirect typological fulfillment is that, the direct fulfills what was explicitly predicted by the words of a prophet, while the indirect fulfills what was implicitly foreshadowed by historical events, which have been narrated (Matt 2:14-15, 8:17).<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> G. K. Beale, *Handbook on the New Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2012), 55.

<sup>33</sup> Ulrich Luz, "Intertexts in the Gospel of Matthew," *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 97, No. 2 (April, 2004):119-137.

<sup>34</sup> Beale, 57.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, 58.

Mathew uses the Old Testament by indicating that the affirmations that are not-yet-fulfilled Old Testament Prophecies will assuredly be fulfilled in the future.<sup>36</sup> Some of the predictions may have happened already, but some are yet to happen. This brings to bear the principle of double fulfillment of prophecies. Sometimes an Old Testament prophecy is appealed to, not to indicate beginning fulfillment, but to affirm that it will assuredly be fulfilled at the very end of the age (Is. 65:17 and 66:22 which both talk of the new earth God will create).

It is also used by Indicating an analogical or illustrative use of the Old Testament to emphasize a broad or universal principle.<sup>37</sup> This connotes picking an event or happening from the Old Testament and comparing it to something in the new covenant age. The reason is to illustrate or draw an analogy (or perhaps a contrast) between the two and to emphasize a broad or universal principle.<sup>38</sup>

By copying what Jesus did with regards to citing the Old Testament. Michael P. Knowles opines that Matthew's interpretive methodology was learned from Jesus since he customarily quoted from the Old Testament.<sup>39</sup> In affirmation to Knowles, C. E. Evans posits that Jesus, an average Palestinian Jew who had disciples and taught in the Synagogue, will naturally cite the Old Testament.<sup>40</sup> According to this author, Matthew was not doing something new but was only a good student of his master. Jesus and his teachings are likely not to be understood if the Old Testament is left out in the New Testament account. While the Old Testament Scriptures were

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 66.

<sup>37</sup> Beale, 67.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, 67.

<sup>39</sup> Michael P. Knowles, "Scripture, History, Messiah, Scriptural Fulfillment and the Fullness of Time in Matthew's Gospel," in *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament* ed. Stanley E. Porter (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2006), 66.

<sup>40</sup> Evans, 579.

always received in the early Church as authoritative and divine, the writings of the New Testament only gradually came to be acknowledged as a body of inspired Scripture and as equal in value and authority to the Old.<sup>41</sup> Thus if Mathew wanted to gain readership, he had to cite from the Old Testament to justify his claims about Jesus.

### **Matthew's Hermeneutical Method of the Old Testament**

Some scholars have argued that Matthew used the pesher method found in some Dead Sea scrolls in the Qumran community as the literary pattern used to construct his extended defense of Jesus' claims to be the promised Messiah.<sup>42</sup> Lee Campbell avers that Pesher refers to an application of Old Testament texts disregarding the context of the passages where those texts are found.<sup>43</sup> This method of interpretation is tied to a word, text, or Old Testament allusion and then related to a present person, place, or thing. The interpretations are generally aloof from the source or context and lack any coherent methodology.<sup>44</sup> Walter Kaiser Jr. notes that the Pesher often modifies Old Testament texts in the process to fit the new theological and historical needs of the community.<sup>45</sup>

However, Campbell refutes the fact that Mathew never used the pesher method and posits that *pesher* commentaries use citations from various sources. It appears that many of Matthew's translations are his own, and his citations do not

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<sup>41</sup> S. Burnham, "The Value of the Old Testament for a Correct Knowledge of the New," *The Old Testament Student*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (Dec., 1885): 157-161

<sup>42</sup> Patrick, James E. "MATTHEW'S 'PESHER' GOSPEL STRUCTURED AROUND TEN MESSIANIC CITATIONS OF ISAIAH." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 61, no. 1 (2010): 43-81, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/43665020>.

<sup>43</sup> Lee Campbell, "Matthew's Use of the Old Testament: A Preliminary Analysis" <https://dwellcc.org/learning/essays/matthews-use-old-testament-preliminary-analysis> ,Accessed March, 2021.

<sup>44</sup> Lee Campbell.

<sup>45</sup> Walter Kaiser Jr., *The Uses of the Old Testament in the New* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1985), 24.

show interpretive or selection bias typical of *Pesher*.<sup>46</sup> Campbell rather opinionates that Mathew was simply apologetic.<sup>47</sup> That is to say, Matthew was simply defending the truth as found in the Old Testament. This researcher's position is that Mathew used the Persher method because many of the Scriptures he quoted violated the Old Testament context. To bolster this, Richard Mead posits that the historical Old Testament situation was utterly ignored.<sup>48</sup> Scriptures like Matthew 1: 22- 23 (she will give birth to a son, and you shall call him Immanuel) is supposedly the fulfillment of Isaiah 7:14, which has for its context the reign of Ahaz, king of Judah, and the Syro-Ephraimite war (734 BC). Two enemy kings, in particular, Rezin of Syria and Pekah of Israel, troubled the kingdom of Judah and wanted Ahaz to join their coalition against Assyria.<sup>49</sup> Isaiah approached Ahaz, king of Judah, and asked him to ask the Lord for a sign affirming that Jehovah would destroy the enemies of Ahaz, thus confirming the instruction not to join their coalition. The "son" Isaiah is referring to is perhaps his son, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, and Isaiah's wife, the "prophetess," is the "virgin."<sup>50</sup> Matthew 2:15, discussing how Jesus was kept in Egypt till Herod died, is supposedly the fulfillment of Hosea 11:1, according to Saint Matthew. But taking the baby Jesus to Egypt is out of context because the immediate context of Hosea 11:1 is the relationship between Jehovah and Israel. Jehovah, as Father, is reminding Israel, his "Son," that He has always loved them, and the proof of this love can be found in the origins of Israel, the religious exodus of Israel from Egypt.<sup>51</sup> Juxtaposing Matthew 2:17-18 as a fulfillment of Jeremiah

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<sup>46</sup>Campbell.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Richard T. Mead, "A Dissenting Opinion about Respect for Context in Old Testament Quotations," *The Right Doctrine from the Wrong Texts? Essays on the Use of the Old Testament in the New*, ed. G.K. Beale (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994), 154-155.

<sup>49</sup> Nicholas J. Frederick, "The Use of the Old Testament in the New Testament Gospels" (Lecture note, Brigham Young University, n.d), 126.

<sup>50</sup> Frederick, 127.

<sup>51</sup> Frederick, 127.

13:15, where Rachel mourns over her children, is out of context. Matthew 4:15-16, as fulfilling Isaiah 9: 1-2, is also problematic, and Matthew 27: 9, which is cited from Zechariah 11: 13 and presented as the motive of the story of the thirty pieces of silver.

However, some scholars like Craig Keener aver that Matthew was not ignoring context but rather comparing Jesus' ministry with Israel's history and the promises in the contexts evoked by those texts.<sup>52</sup> This researcher opines that Matthew did use the peshet method, which is informed by the phrases Mathew uses besides some of the verses he quotes, "so that what was prophesied by so and so will be fulfilled." Steve Moyise adds that it even becomes much more difficult to understand what Matthew means by the word 'fulfill.'<sup>53</sup> That word is not supposed to be used alongside his writings if the context does not support that. Another complication is found in the fact that the quotations are not from the original Hebrew but some versions, more generally the Septuagint.<sup>54</sup> Not only has Mathew cited scriptures out of context, but he has also been accused of citing some texts wrongly, like the case of the Shema in Matthew 22:37; In loving the Lord with all one's heart.<sup>55</sup> This researcher contests this submission by Paul Foster because both Deuteronomy 6:5 and Matthew 22:37 basically refer to heart only that Deuteronomy used *lebab* in Hebrew to mean heart and Matthew 22:37 uses *Kardia* in Greek to mean heart.

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<sup>52</sup> <https://craigkeener.com/does-the-new-testament-quote-the-old-testament-out-of-context/> Accessed March, 2022.

<sup>53</sup> Steve Moyise, *Jesus and the Scriptures: Studying the New Testament Use of the Old* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2010), 40

<sup>54</sup> Crawford H. Toy, "The New Testament as Interpreter of the Old Testament," *The Old Testament Student*, Dec., 1888, Vol. 8, No. 4 (Dec., 1888):124-133.

<sup>55</sup> Paul Foster, "Why Did Matthew Get the Shema Wrong? A Study of Matthew 22:37?" *Journal of Biblical Literature*, Summer, 2003, Vol. 122, No. 2 (Summer, 2003): 309-333.

## **Why Matthew Made Extensive Use of the Old Testament**

He wanted to emphasize not only the coming of Jesus but to prove that everything that happened to Him at birth, infancy, ministry, and death were all part of the divine plan.<sup>56</sup> This is evident in the many phrases used by Matthew regarding how an event happened to fulfill what the ...said. The texts used by Matthew were therefore often edited by him to fit into whatever context he was discussing.<sup>57</sup>

The scriptural citations from the Old Testament were brought in for the benefit of the gentile converts to make sure that in believing in Jesus, they would take seriously as well the Jewish Scriptures that so marvelously foretold Jesus' coming.<sup>58</sup> Jesus's coming had been spoken as well as His coming in the prophets and David.<sup>59</sup> This assertion by Michael Knowles is problematic because Matthew's audience were Jewish Christians who definitely knew Greek. How then can his audience suddenly change to gentile converts?

Matthew, as a Jew, wanted Judaism to fulfill its destiny as heir to the promise given to Abraham in Genesis 12:3 that through him, all the nations would be blessed.<sup>60</sup> According to Michael Knowles, the numerous citations from the Old Testament were a sign that what God had promised Abraham had happened in the person of Jesus.

One of the reasons why there are many citations of the Old Testament texts in Matthew's Gospel is because Mathew was a Jewish Christian who was engaged in mission and ministry to

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<sup>56</sup> Knowles, 560.

<sup>57</sup> Maarten J.J. Menken, "The Old Testament Quotation in Matthew 27:9-10: Textual Form and Context," *Biblical*, 2002, Vol. 83, No. 3 (2002): 305-328.

<sup>58</sup> Michaels, 560.

<sup>59</sup> Franz Delitzsch, "Must We Follow the New Testament Interpretation of Old Testament Texts?" *The Old Testament Student*, Nov., 1886, Vol. 6, No. 3 (Nov., 1886):77-78.

<sup>60</sup> Michaels, 560.

Gentiles. He wanted to ensure that the Jewish heritage and Jewish Scriptures were not abandoned as the Christian message moved quickly across significant cultural barriers.<sup>61</sup> This researcher contests the submission that Mathew's mission was to the Gentiles because his Gospel was targeted at Jewish Christians. G.K. Beale posits that because many Jews who had become Christians were concerned about their family members who did not believe in Jesus, Matthew was also concerned and wrote his Gospel with that in mind trying to do everything possible in proving by use of the Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus was that promised Messiah and the son of David.<sup>62</sup>

Beale posits that there is so much citation of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Matthew because of his background and training. Since Matthew was one of the few literate people of his day, he probably may have served as a scribe in Jesus' team, which means that as a good scribe, he could not write without demonstrating that he was one, which was evidenced in his making citations from the Old Testament as he presented his writing.

Matthew wrote to the Jews, and he was interested in proving to them that Jesus was the fulfillment of ancient Scriptures. As a result, they would have wanted a clear explanation of precisely which prophecies Jesus was supposed to have fulfilled, so he had to make use of the Old Testament.<sup>63</sup> David L. Baker avers that he wrote to inform, convince and evangelize regarding Jesus being the Messiah.<sup>64</sup> Gleason L. Archer and G.C. Chirichigno assert that Jesus was being presented as the fulfillment of the Messianic promises of the Old Testament and

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<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2007), 47.

<sup>63</sup> John Drane, *Introducing the New Testament: Completely Revised and Updated* (Sandy Lane West, Oxford: A Lion Book, 1986), 174.

<sup>64</sup> Baker, 129.

adds that the audiences throughout the Mediterranean world were supposed only to consult the Old Testament to verify the truth of the apostolic claims that Jesus in person and by his work had fulfilled the Old Testament.<sup>65</sup> His Messianic theme is therefore encapsulated in his prophecies being fulfilled, his deity, kingdom, His redemption, and passion. Regarding the fulfillment of Scriptures, C. A. Evans asserts that Jesus fulfilled the Hebrew Scriptures through three components – the Legal, the prophetic, and the analogical.<sup>66</sup> The legal component stipulated that Jesus had personally fulfilled the requirements of the Law but that He was also the Law's master interpreter. Prophetically He not only fulfilled the prophecies but as Israel's greatest prophet and analogically by the fact He was the incarnation of wisdom itself as well as an unparallel master teacher.<sup>67</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Having discussed who Mathew was, his Gospel, the different types of Old Testament citations in Matthew's Gospel, the way he cited them, his interpretive method, and why he cited from the Old Testament extensively, this researcher opines that Matthew's usage of the Old Testament definitely in most cases may have been out of context, it did not contradict the events in the New Testament that he linked them up. The central point in this researcher's assertion is that Jesus was indeed the promised Messiah and Matthew used every available tool at his disposal to prove to the Jews that He was. Because some prophecies in the Old Testament could have had more than one

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<sup>65</sup> Gleason L. Archer and Gregory Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1983), ix.

<sup>66</sup> C. A. Evans, "The Old Testament in the Gospels," in *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels*, Joel B. Green, Scot McKnight and I. Howard Marshal, eds., (Leicester, England: Intervarsity Press, 1992), 585.

<sup>67</sup> Craig Evans, "New Testament Use of the Old Testament," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, T. eds., Desmond Alexander, Brian S. Rosner, D. A. Carson et al (Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 77.

fulfillment, it is possible that the Old Testament scriptures Matthew used were in that category such that they may have fulfilled in the Old but were also fulfilling as when he wrote the proof being that they did not contradict the New Testament.

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