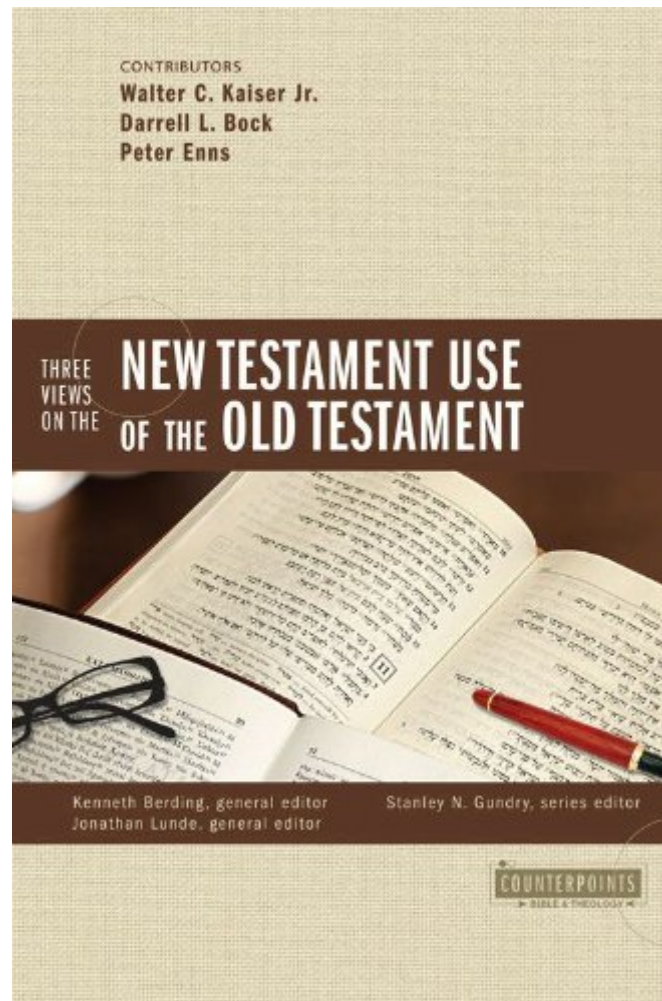


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# Three Views On The New Testament Use Of The Old Testament (Counterpoints: Bible And Theology)



## Synopsis

To read the New Testament is to meet the Old Testament at every turn. But exactly how do Old Testament texts relate to their New Testament references and allusions? Moreover, what fruitful interpretive methods do New Testament texts demonstrate? Leading biblical scholars Walter Kaiser, Darrel Bock and Peter Enns each present their answers to questions surrounding the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament. Contributors address elements such as Divine and human authorial intent, the context of Old Testament references, and theological grounds for an interpretive method. Each author applies his framework to specific texts so that readers can see how their methods work out in practice. Each contributor also receives a thorough critique from the other two authors. A one-stop reference for setting the scene and presenting approaches to the topic that respect the biblical text, *Three Views on the New Testament Use of Old Testament* gives readers the tools they need to develop their own views on this important subject. The Counterpoints series provides a forum for comparison and critique of different views on issues important to Christians. Counterpoints books address two categories: Church Life and Bible & Theology. Complete your library with other books in the Counterpoints series.

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## Customer Reviews

The book begins with an introduction by Dr. Jonathan Lunde which serves to frame the interaction which follows. He identifies the central question as being the relationship between the Old Testament and the New Testament authors' intended meaning. Surrounding this central issue he identifies five "orbiting questions": 1. Is *sensus plenior* an appropriate way of explaining the NT use of the OT? 2. How is typology best understood? 3. Do the NT writers take into account the context of the passages they cite? 4. Does the NT writers' use of Jewish exegetical methods explain the NT use of the OT? 5. Are we able to replicate the exegetical and hermeneutical approaches to the OT that we find in the writings of the NT? (12) The participants in this discussion (Walter Kaiser, Darrell Bock, and Peter Enns) articulate their positions by addressing these questions and by illustrating how their view works in particular biblical texts. First, Walter Kaiser argues for the "single meaning, unified referents" view. Whereas many scholars see a problematic disparity between the NT authors' meaning and that of the OT authors, this perspective claims that closer exegetical investigation reveals complete harmony between the two. Kaiser goes even further down this line of thinking by arguing that the Old Testament writers understood where their prophecies were moving. Consequently, he rejects any appeal to *sensus plenior* or to the use of Jewish exegetical methods to explain any supposed tension. Second, Darrell Bock argues for the "single meaning, multiple contexts and referents" view. While acknowledging that there is disparity between the NT and the OT meanings, he nevertheless argues that they are fundamentally connected.

"Three Views on the New Testament Use of the Old" is a collection and interaction of three essays on the topic of how to understand the New Testament authors' use of the Old Testament. The three contributors to the book are Walter Kaiser (single meaning, unified referents view), Darrell Bock (single meaning, multiple contexts and referents view), and Peter Enns (fuller meaning, single goal view). Each of the three lengthy chapters includes an essay by one of the contributors espousing his view followed by two short responses by the other contributors. Co-editor Jonathan Lunde lays the conceptual foundation for the rest of the work in the introduction and orients the reader to the book's primary question when he writes, "When New Testament authors appeal to OT texts in order to support or validate their arguments, the relationship between their meanings and that which was originally intended by their OT forebears is the central question" (pg. 11). In addition to this central

question the contributors are also asked to address five "orbiting questions" in their essays. These five questions are: 1. Is *sensus plenior* an appropriate way of explaining the NT use of the OT? 2. How is typology best understood? 3. Do the NT writers take into account the context of the passages they cite? 4. Does the NT writers' use of Jewish exegetical methods explain the NT use of the OT? 5. Are we able to replicate the exegetical and hermeneutical approaches to the OT that we find in the writings of the NT? The five questions provide the conceptual framework for the contributor's essays and encapsulate some of the specific points of debate in the overall discussion. The general purpose of the work as a whole is modest.

Do the New Testament writers use the OT in its grammatical historical sense, or do they give it a deeper meaning unforeseen by the OT writers? These questions and more are developed in this volume. Walter Kaiser defends the single meaning, unified referents viewpoint. He believes that the NT writers presented Christ as the fulfillment of the OT, and that they didn't bring out a deeper meaning unforeseen by the OT writers. Kaiser rejects the notion that 1 Peter 1:10-12, 2 Peter 1:19-21, and John 11:49-52 are examples that support the *sensus plenior* (deeper meaning viewpoint) reading of the text. Moreover, he presents John 13:18 as a direct fulfillment of Psalm 41:9, Acts 15 as a direct fulfillment of Amos 9:9-15, and Acts 2:30-35 as a direct fulfillment of Psalm 16. Darrell Bock effectively counters Kaiser, noting that Psalm 41 probably had an initial application to Ahithophel's betrayal of David, and that Psalm 16 was probably the Psalmist's reflection on his own experience in its initial application. But Bock contends that the general meaning of Psalm 41 remains the same in the NT: It's about a good king being betrayed by a friend. Similarly, Psalm 16 is about a future beyond the grave. In Bock's own essay, he develops this idea more fully. He notes that Psalm 2 is about people opposing God and His regent king, and Acts 4 sticks with this same meaning, only that the enemy of God is not just the Gentile nations, now it is Israel in their opposition to the apostles! Peter Enns goes on to say that the NT writers did not always stick with the original meaning that the OT writers had in mind. He believes that Paul and other NT writers used *pesher*, *midrash*, and other hermeneutical tools that were prevalent during the era of Second Temple Judaism.

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