

Jesus' Use and Understanding of the Old Testament

NT Text	OT Scripture Reference	Significance
<p style="text-align: center;">Matt. 4:1-12</p> <p>Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. ² And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry. ³ And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴ But he answered, “It is written, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.”</p> <p>⁵ Then the devil took him to the holy city and set him on the pinnacle of the temple ⁶ and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down, for it is written,</p> <p>“He will command his angels concerning you,’ and</p> <p>“On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.”</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Deut. 8:3</p> <p>³ And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word^[a] that comes from the mouth of the LORD.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Psalm 91:11-12</p> <p>¹¹ For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways.</p> <p>¹² On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.</p>	<p>Jesus’s had extensive knowledge of the OT scriptures and knew how to precisely apply them.</p> <p>Jesus knew the Word of God so well that he could reference from memory the exact texts that refuted Satan’s temptation. He did this for all three temptations. In all three situations here, he quoted from Deuteronomy 6 and 8. He knew which scriptural truths and principles to bring out to cast down Satan’s attempts to lure him into sin.</p> <p>(Satan quoted this text from Psalm 91 to try and lure Jesus into jumping off the pinnacle of the temple.)</p>

<p>7 Jesus said to him, “Again it is written, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’” 8 Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. 9 And he said to him, “All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.” 10 Then Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan! For it is written,</p> <p>“You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve.”</p> <p>11 Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and were ministering to him.</p>	<p>Deut. 6:16 16 “You shall not put the LORD your God to the test, as you tested him at Massah.</p> <p>Deut. 6:13 13 It is the LORD your God you shall fear. Him you shall serve and by his name you shall swear.</p>	
		Jesus Understood the Spirituality of the Law
<p>Matt. 5:27-28 27 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ 28 But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart.</p>	<p>Deut. 5:18 And you shall not commit adultery</p>	<p>The Law of Yahweh was meant to be embraced and obeyed by God’s people with their whole heart and mind, not just in external behavior.</p>
<p>Matt. 5:38-39 38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.</p>	<p>Lev. 24:20 20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; whatever injury he has given a person shall be given to him.</p>	<p>God’s people were not to repay evil for evil but instead good for evil.</p>
<p>Matt. 7:12 12 “So whatever you wish that others would do</p>		<p>Jesus is saying that this principle is found woven throughout the first 5 books of the OT and all the</p>

to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.		prophets.
		Jesus used OT characters to teach about himself, or to illustrate important principles
<p>Matt. 12:39-40</p> <p>39 He answered, “A wicked and adulterous generation asks for a sign! But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.</p>	Book of Jonah	Jesus interpreted Jonah’s experience of being swallowed by the huge fish as a prophecy of his own death and resurrection. Jesus knew the redemptive significance of the OT incidents and experiences of God’s people.
<p>Luke 17:32</p> <p>32 (Δ)Remember Lot's wife.</p>	<p>Gen. 19:26</p> <p>26 But Lot's wife, behind him, looked back, and she became a pillar of salt.</p>	
		Jesus’ Understood the Heart of OT Religion
<p>Luke 2:49</p> <p>49 And he said to them, “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?”</p>	<p>Isa. 64:8</p> <p>But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand.</p>	This text shows that at age 12 Jesus not only understood that the OT reveals God as Father but that he had a personal, intimate relationship with his heavenly Father.
<p>Matt. 22:35-40</p> <p>35 And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” 37 And he said to him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38 This is the great and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. 40 On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”</p>	<p>Deut. 6:4-5</p> <p>4 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. [b] 5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.</p> <p>Lev. 19:18</p> <p>18 You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the Lord.</p>	It was this understanding that true religion was based on, first of all, love for Yahweh. Secondly, love for one’s neighbor defined the way God would have us relate to our fellow human beings. It was this understanding that enabled him to discern the hypocrisy of many of his fellow Jews, whose religion had slipped into legalism – keeping a list of rules, many created by men and not by God – giving people a false sense of their approval by God, when, in fact, their surface religion was opposed to the true religion of love and devotion to God and loving service to one’s neighbors.

		Jesus knew how to apply principles in the OT to contemporary situations.
<p>Mark 10:6-8 6 But from the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ 7 ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, 8 and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two but one flesh.</p>	<p>Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.</p> <p>Gen. 2:24 Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.</p>	<p>Jesus understood from Genesis 1 and 2 that God’s purpose for marriage was for lifetime commitment, not divorce.</p>
<p>Mark 7:9-10 9 And he said to them, “You have a fine way of (Q)rejecting the commandment of God in order to establish your tradition! For Moses said, ‘Honor your father and your mother’; and, ‘Whoever reviles father or mother must surely die.’</p>	<p>Exo. 20:12 “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.</p> <p>Exo. 21;17 17 “Whoever curses his father or his mother shall be put to death.</p>	<p>Jesus demonstrated how some of the Jews had hypocritically developed an elaborate argument to excuse themselves from taking care of the financial needs of their elderly parents.</p>
		Jesus declared his great redemptive acts which are found in the OT
<p>Mark 8:31 And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.</p>	<p>Isa. 52:13-53:12 (L)But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; (53 v.5)</p> <p>Psalm 16:9-11 For you will not abandon my soul to (R)Sheol, or let your (T)holy one see (L)corruption (v.10).</p>	<p>The OT prophesied the death and resurrection of the Messiah. Jesus focused on this central revelation from the OT to explain his own suffering and victory over death.</p>
		Jesus understood the meaning of Yahweh’s words which were often missed by people.

<p style="text-align: center;">Mark 12:18,26</p> <p>18 And (AM)Sadducees came to him, (AN)who say that there is no resurrection...</p> <p>26 And as for the dead being raised, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the bush, how God spoke to him, saying, 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Exo. 3:6</p> <p>6 And he said, (A)"I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for (B)he was afraid to look at God.</p>	<p>Here Jesus demonstrates to the Sadducees who denied the resurrection from the dead that even at Moses' encounter at the burning bush, Yahweh declared that these three patriarchs of the Hebrew religion still lived on even though they had died.</p>
<p>Jesus announced that the OT prophecies of the Messiah were fulfilled in himself.</p>		
<p style="text-align: center;">Luke 4:16-21</p> <p>16 He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, 17 and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:</p> <p>18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free,</p> <p>19 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."^[c]</p> <p>20 Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Isa. 61:1-2</p> <p>The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the poor;^[a] he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;^[b]</p> <p>2 to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor...</p>	<p>Jesus' announcement here was so clear and bold that his own townspeople tried to kill him by pushing him off a cliff but he escaped.</p>

everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”		
		Jesus Declared that He Himself Came to Fulfill the Law and the Prophets
Matt 5:17 ¹⁷ “Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.”		
		Jesus Reveals that he is the Centerpiece of the whole OT
Luke 24:44 44 Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”		Jesus is referring to all the references to himself found in the 3 major parts of the OT, in other words, in the entire OT. He is making an astounding claim: he is saying that the whole OT was chiefly about him, predicting his coming and his ministry, his person and work, his death, resurrection, and ascension.
		Jesus Applied to Himself Significant OT Designations of Yahweh’s Fundamental Relationship to His People
John 8:12 Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”	Psalm 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?	Yahweh is the light and salvation of his people. Jesus is the light of the world.
John 10:10 I am the good shepherd.	Psalm 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd....	Yahweh is the great Shepherd of his people. Jesus is the good Shepherd of his people.