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## Citations and Allusions to Jewish Scripture in Early Christian and Jewish Writings through 180 C.E.

Bradley H. McLean

Lewiston/Queenston/Lampeter: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992

138 pp. U.S. \$49.95

McLean's slim volume is not a book well-suited to leisure reading, or to "reading" at all. It is a work of reference, whose parameters are clearly set out in the title. McLean is interested in the ways in which texts from the Hebrew Bible were used by early Jewish and Christian authors, with the cut-off point being set—arbitrarily but judiciously—at 180 C.E. (A.D.). The motive force is to set the New Testament quotations of Old Testament texts in the broader context of their interpretive after-life. What is produced is a lengthy index of OT references, each reference glossed with further references where they are quoted or alluded to by later Jewish and Christian authors.

Given the difficulty in deciding between what should be classed as a "citation" and what as an "allusion" in the vast array of literature available from this period, McLean used very practical means to make the task more manageable. The NT editions of Nestle-Aland (26th) and United Bible Societies (3rd ed.) along with W. Dittmar's *Vetus Testamentum in Novo* (Göttingen, 1903) were used to take a "poll" on the OT quotes in the NT: where two or more of these witnesses agree, McLean finds a "citation"; where only one of these identified a quote, McLean gives this as an "allusion". For other works, McLean relied on Scripture indices, or where they were lacking, he compiled an index himself (this for Josephus's *Jewish Antiquities* and the Temple Scroll from Qumran [11QTemple]). To make the limits of the literature surveyed explicit, McLean gives a Table of Abbreviations, keyed to a bibliography at the end of the work. A wide range of literature is represented; in addition to the NT one finds some Apocryphal works, a selection of Dead Sea Scrolls, post-apostolic writings, Josephus and Philo, some Gnostic materials, plus others.

All of this gives an important resource for thinking about the development of biblical traditions and the context in which the NT writings arose. Too often the NT is seen as almost hermetically sealed from its environment, with Jesus, Paul, John (and others) appearing from nowhere on the horizon. But, as has been increasingly recognized in recent years, this is a serious mistake. McLean's reference work can go a long way to locate the traditions out of which the NT and subsequent Christian exegesis appeared. As McLean remarks in the introduction, "the index presents a visual picture of the degree of interest attracted by various scriptural texts" (7), and the work is valuable on this level.

It is very important that a reference work be complete and accurate if it is to be dependable. Here, it must be noted, McLean's work falls short.

There are errors of omission in the Table of Abbreviations; occasional slips were noted in spot checks in the index; and the bibliography does not always cite the most recent or most accessible editions of the works surveyed. Especially lamentable is McLean's seemingly haphazard approach to the Apocryphal books, which sketch an important trajectory into the NT writings. Some works not in the Table of Abbreviations show up in the index anyway (Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom of Solomon), but more often they are simply ignored. This is most unfortunate. Some errors might have been caught simply through more careful editing, but the problematic fashion in which the Apocryphal works (and the Gnostic tractates) have been treated comes at the level of design and execution.

Meanwhile, McLean has produced a handy guide to the early exegesis of the Scriptures of synagogue and church. While its shortcomings mean that the work will be less useful to professional scholars, it nonetheless effectively opens out the world of early biblical interpretation. One hopes McLean will find a way to enhance this promising start—an electronic edition of a work like this makes very good sense, for example. It is also unfortunate that such a slim volume is priced so steeply: this is a deterrent to many who would benefit by having this volume in their library.

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**The Macmillan Book of Earliest Christian Meditations**  
Forrester Church and Terrence J. Mulry  
New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. and London: Collier  
Macmillan Publishers, 1989  
xi + 190 pages

With this volume the editors have completed a trilogy that began with *The Macmillan Book of Earliest Christian Prayers* and continued with *The Macmillan Book of Earliest Christian Hymns*. Their aim in this anthology of devotional materials is "not to produce a carefully annotated scholarly work but rather to offer an accessible ('user friendly') collection of devotional literature for the spiritual refreshment of lay people, ministers, and scholars" (ix). The collection of writings drawn from the devotional literature of the first six centuries not only invites meditative-devotional reading but also furnishes fascinating glimpses into the spiritual life of the earliest Christians and their theological-ethical articulations.

The anthology is composed of seven sections, each with an introduction that emphasizes *genre* more than themes or content. Section I, "The Source", draws from the NT sayings of Jesus, Hebrews and James. Section