

Isaiah's Predictions in the New Testament

Foreword

The following chart contains the Old Testament as well as the related New Testament passages in the left column with explanatory comments in the right column. In this research, only those predictions given in Isaiah that are mentioned in the New Testament are included. They refer to all facets of the gospel and we will study them in the following order from a chronological viewpoint.

1	John the Baptist	5	Jesus' Death
2	Jesus' Birth	6	Jesus' Victory
3	Jesus' Childhood	7	Gentile Mission
4	Jesus' Ministry	8	The Remnant

John the Baptist

(OT) A voice of one calling: “In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” (Isaiah 40:3-5; all Scripture quotations are from the New International Version unless designated otherwise.)

(NT) This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’” (Matthew 3:3)

Isaiah here uses the theme of ‘roads & highways’ that was typical language to announce future hope and blessings. (Sandy 2002, 221)

The oracle of hope and comfort starts in verse one of chapter 40 and is given after an account of the Assyrian oppression and the prediction of the Babylonian exile in the preceding chapters.

In the New Testament, all four gospel accounts reveal John the Baptist to be ‘the voice’ who goes before the Lord. In harmony with the prediction, he called for repentance that prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus Christ. ‘Preparing the way’ figuratively calls for a change of heart from dishonesty to sincerity, from pride to humility. (Payne 1973, 314; Young 1992, vol.3: 28)

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” – “a voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

And so John came... (Mark 1:2-4a)

He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. As is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God’s salvation.’” (Luke 3:3-6)

“Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent

In Mark, Isaiah’s prophecy is closely connected to Malachi’s word.

(Mal 3:1) Malachi’s similar language (“to clear the way before the LORD”) identifies the ‘voice’ with the ‘messenger’ sent ahead,

John the Baptist who came in the spirit of Elijah. (Mal 4:5; Lk

1:17) The gospel of John reveals that John the Baptist himself was

aware of his role according to Isaiah’s prophecy, denying to be

Elijah (Jn 1:21) but confirming to be ‘the voice.’

It is interesting to note that the ‘glory’ of God Isaiah proclaims in

his prophecy – “And the *glory* of the LORD will be revealed, and

all mankind together will see it” – is replaced by the emphasis on

‘salvation’ in Luke – “And all mankind will see God’s *salvation*.”

God’s glory and his salvation correlate.

us. What do you say about yourself?” John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, “I am the voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Make straight the way for the Lord.’” (John 1:22-23)

Jesus’ Birth

(OT) Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. (Isaiah 7:14)

(NT) All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel” – which means, “God with us.” When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord has

In 734 B.C., Isaiah predicted the birth of our Lord Jesus by the virgin Mary as recorded in the gospel accounts. The virgin birth is the literal fulfillment of Isaiah’s passage. (Kent 1964, 36; Calvin 1999, vol.1: 147; Henry 2000)

Irenaeus pointed out that in 285 B.C. Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew word "ha-'almah" into the Greek word "ha parthenos" in the Septuagint. Both words have the meaning of “the virgin” rather

commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. (Matthew 1:22-25)

“Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favour with God. You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.” ... “How will this be,” Mary asked the angel, “since I am a virgin?” The angel answered, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.” (Luke 1:30-31, 34-35)

than “young woman” as proposed by liberal criticism. (Miller 2006; Hindson 1969, 6-8) Calvin reasonably questions the force of the sign if it is merely about a natural birth of an ordinary son. (Calvin 1999, vol.3: 149) Moreover, the lack of alternative words support the interpretation that Mary is in view here. (Young 1992, vol.1: 288) In retrospect, Matthew’s account about the prediction and its fulfillment forcefully confirms this standpoint.

Payne explains that the prediction reaches out to the gospel age and had no immediate fulfillment in the time of Ahaz. He cites Beegle, “To admit the possibility of an immediate application and still to insist on ‘virgin’ would put one in the awkward position of holding to a virgin birth in the time of Ahaz.” (Payne 1973, 292) Ahaz

rejected the sign Isaiah offered to him in verse 11, and the sign was given to the remnant of Israel rather than to Ahaz. (Calvin 1999, vol.1: 148; Young 1992, vol.1: 283f.) Therefore, the oracle does not imply the necessity of immediate fulfillment.

We thus cannot but interpret this passage as single-fulfilled in the virgin birth of the Messiah. Apparently, Isaiah and the prophets “spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” (2 Pet 1:21) We know that they did not always have full insight about their oracles. (cf. 1 Pet 1:10-12)

The word ‘Immanuel’ appears again in Isaiah 8:8 and 8:10, each time as the two Hebrew words 'im-manu 'el in the masoretic text and as one word in the Qumran Scroll (𐤇𐤍𐤎𐤅𐤋). Thus we translate

	<p>the word as a name that has the meaning ‘God with us’ as written in Matthew. (Miller 2006) The name is the essence of Isaiah’s statement and shows that God remains faithful in sending his promised Redeemer. In the context of the following chapters and particularly in regard to the titles given in chapter 9, verse 6, it becomes even clearer that ‘Immanuel’ is of divine origin and points to Jesus conceived by the virgin as recorded in Matthew and Luke. (Hindson 1969, 10; Payne 1973, 292f.; Young 1992, vol.1: 290)</p>
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Jesus’ Childhood

<p>(OT) A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. (Isaiah 11:1)</p>	<p>The figurative language of a ‘shoot’ that comes up or a ‘branch’ that bears fruit proclaims hope for blessing that would come after</p>
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(NT) ... and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.” (Matthew 2:23)

judgment. Only a stump is left after the tree is cut. (cf. Is 6:13) As a result of King Ahaz’ unbelief, the tree of David was cut down by Assyria as prophesied in Isaiah’s preceding chapters.

The shoot would come up from the ‘stump of Jesse’ who was the father of David. The prediction of the Branch is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ who was born into David’s family line.

Young (1992, vol.1: 380) writes that “this passage is dependent upon the fountain prophecy in Isaiah 7, and hence is to be interpreted in light of that revelation.” In light of Isaiah 7:14 as discussed above, the Branch can only be Jesus Christ himself.

Jesus’ home town Nazareth was named after the same root נֶצֶר
(*nazer*, branch) and means “sprout town,” thus it is the common

	<p>view that the fulfillment mentioned in Matthew 2:23 relates to Isaiah 11:1. (Payne 1973, 298). Some scholars say that Matthew's plural reference to 'the prophets' points to all prophecies that the Messiah will be despised and thus be called 'Nazarene,' for the city Nazareth itself was despised, too. (Kent 1964, 38; cf. Jn 1:46) The relation between 'Nazarene' and 'Branch' cannot be denied, however.</p>
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Jesus' Ministry

<p>(OT) Nevertheless the gloom will not be upon her who is distressed, as when at first he lightly esteemed the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, and afterward more heavily oppressed</p>	<p>The prophecy is given in the context of the Assyrian affliction mentioned in chapter 8. Verse 22 talks about the 'gloom' that is the continuing theme in the following verse in Isaiah 9:1. The gloom</p>
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her, by the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, in Galilee of the Gentiles. The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined. (Isaiah 9:1-2, KJV)

(NT) Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali – to fulfil what was said through the prophet Isaiah: “Land of Zebulun and Naphtali, the way to the sea, along the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles – the people living in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.”

(Matthew 4:13-16)

was at first ‘light’ and afterward more ‘heavy.’ Then, the ‘great light’ is introduced.

Commentators are divided in their interpretation of the ‘gloom.’

Some say the gloom of the Assyrian oppression is light in contrast to the coming second gloom that would be fulfilled at the Coming of the ‘great light.’ Jesus denounced Capernaum and other cities due to their unbelief (Mt 11:20-24) and came “with the rod of his mouth.” (Is 11:4) The cities were struck desolate in the course of history, yet – according to this viewpoint – the fulfillment of the second gloom in its full measure remains outstanding until Jesus’ Second Coming. (Miller 2006)

Calvin, though he is “not prepared to reject this view,” favours the

	<p>opinion that Isaiah gives an oracle of comfort. He contrast the first affliction by the Assyrians (cf. 2 Ki 15:29) and the second gloom caused by the Babylonians (cf. 2 Ki 17:6) with the comforting Coming of the light Jesus Christ. (Calvin, 1999, vol.1: 179) The comforting aspect of a great light that shines in the darkness, we agree with Calvin, must be admitted.</p> <p>Matthew provides no answer to the question of the second gloom but merely quotes the prediction about the ‘light’ coming to Galilee. It is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ and his choice of Capernaum during his Galilean ministry. (cf. Payne 1973, 295)</p>
<p>(OT) The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has</p>	<p>Isaiah’s text is messianic prophecy. (Lindsey 1982, 16; Young 1992, vol.3: 458) As recorded in Luke, Jesus quoted this passage</p>

sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD's favour and the day of vengeance of our God... (Isaiah 61:1-2a)

(NT) The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them,

and proclaimed its fulfillment, applying it to himself. Jesus is the predicted Messiah. He was anointed for his ministry (Mt 3:16; 12:28; Is 11:2) and preached with authority, healed the sick and cast out demons. Only the Anointed can do such works, hence Isaiah's prophecy reveals Jesus as the promised Messiah.

Like in other cases, Jesus refers to the Old Testament Scriptures to appeal to its authority. (Kent 1964, 35; cf. Mt 4:4; 13:14) In John he says, "These are the Scriptures that testify about me." (Jn 5:39b)

Yet the people rejected Jesus, particularly in his home town Nazareth where he cited the scroll. Accordingly, Jesus withdrew and chose Capernaum for his Galilean ministry.

It is noteworthy that Jesus did not quote the second part of Isaiah

<p>“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Luke 4:17-21)</p>	<p>61, verse 2, to proclaim “the day of vengeance of our God.” This part of prophecy awaits its fulfillment until his Second Coming. (cf. Payne 1973, 295)</p>
<p>(OT) Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. (Isaiah 53:4)</p> <p>(NT) When evening came, many who were demon-possessed were brought to him, and he drove out the spirits with a word and healed all the sick. This was to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “He took up our infirmities and carried our diseases.” (Matthew 8:16-17)</p>	<p>The prediction belongs to the fourth Servant Song and, like with all Servant Songs, its ultimate fulfillment rests on the person of Jesus Christ. (Lindsay Jan 1982, 12; cf. Acts 8:26-35; Lk 4:17-21)</p> <p>On the surface, the first part of the verse simply relates to the healing ministry of Jesus. (cf. Payne 1973, 317f.)</p> <p>If we consider the whole Servant Song from Isaiah 52:13-53:12 pertaining to Christ’s suffering, rejection and death, we cannot separate his healing ministry from his redemptive work at the cross. Christ healed by making atonement for our sins, for sin is the cause</p>

	<p>of all grief and sickness. “Christ bore our sins, and so bore our griefs.” (Henry 2000; cf. 1 Pet 2:24a)</p> <p>Litwak in his exposition about the fourth Servant Song understands the motive of the citation to be ‘passion apologetic.’ (Litwak 1983, 388) We agree that Matthew demonstrates Jesus’ suffering to be redemptive and therefore consistent with messianic prophecy.</p>
<p>(OT) Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth.</p>	<p>The text is part of the first Servant Song and points again to the true messianic Servant Jesus. (Payne 1973, 314) The prophecy again concentrates on Jesus’ endowment with the Spirit as well as on his healing ministry but ultimately – especially in connection with the other Servant Songs – culminates at the cross.</p> <p>In the first Song, the Servant’s character and mission is introduced.</p>

<p>In his law the islands will put their hope.” (Isaiah 42:1-4)</p> <p>(NT) Many followed him, and he healed all their sick, warning them not to tell who he was. This was to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah: “Here is my servant whom I have chosen, the one I love, in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him, and he will proclaim justice to the nations. He will not quarrel or cry out; no-one will hear his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out, till he leads justice to victory. In his name the nations will put their hope.” (Matthew 12:15b-21)</p>	<p>(Lindsey 1982, 13) Likewise, Matthew points to Jesus and his ministry which is signified by compassion and humility. Particularly, the Servant will not “raise his voice in the streets.” Matthew records that Jesus even warned the people “not to tell who he was.” Jesus did not seek to be a public figure.</p> <p>The nations will put their hope in the Servant who is the ‘light of the Gentiles.’ Similar to the other prophecies of Isaiah, the Gentile mission is also introduced. (cf. Is 42:6; 49:6)</p> <p>Jesus will fulfill the prophesied task of the Servant, namely justice, at his Second Coming.</p>
<p>(OT) Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed? (Isaiah 53:1)</p>	<p>The quoted text is part of the fourth Servant Song. The fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophesied rejection of the message in the gospel of</p>

<p>(NT) Even after Jesus had done all these miraculous signs in their presence, they still would not believe in him. This was to fulfill the word of Isaiah the prophet: “Lord, who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” (John 12:37-38)</p> <p>But not all the Israelites accepted the good news. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our message?” (Romans 10:16)</p>	<p>John concentrates on the person Jesus Christ. The majority of Jews rejected him and his words despite all the signs he performed.</p> <p>Again, the function of this quotation is ‘passion apologetic.’ (Litwak 1983, 392) As prophesied, the Servant meets with disbelief.</p> <p>In Romans, the rejected message is identified with the preaching of the gospel. Paul and the apostles continued with Jesus’ ministry and his message but were rejected, too. Israel will understand and repent later, however. (cf. Is 53:2-9; Rom 11:26)</p>
<p>(OT) The LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth: “Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your Saviour comes! See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him.’” (Isaiah</p>	<p>Matthew’s quotation refers back to Isaiah as well as to Zechariah.</p> <p>The introductory words are taken from Isaiah 62:11 and the rest is quoted from Zechariah 9:9. Both predict the Coming of Jesus</p>

<p>62:11)</p> <p>(NT) This took place to fulfil what was spoken through the prophet: “Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” (Matthew 21:4-5)</p>	<p>Christ to Zion. Whereas Isaiah speaks about his Coming in general terms, Zechariah predicts Jesus’ triumphal entry in Jerusalem on a donkey in detail.</p> <p>According to Isaiah, the Saviour brings reward and recompense, which will be fulfilled at his Second Coming. (cf. Payne 1973, 309)</p>
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Jesus’ Death

<p>(OT) He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth. By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the</p>	<p>Isaiah’s fourth Servant Song focuses on the Servant’s sacrificial death. (Lindsey 1983, 21) As recorded in Acts, Philip explains that the prophet is not talking about himself but about Jesus. The reference supports the interpretation that the Servant in all four Songs is our Lord Jesus. (Lindsey 1982, 12)</p>
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<p>transgression of my people he was stricken. (Isaiah 53:7-8)</p> <p>(NT) The eunuch was reading this passage of Scripture: “He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before the shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth. In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.” The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. (Acts 8:32-35)</p>	<p>The prediction concerns the core of the gospel. Jesus deliberately died as an atoning sacrifice “for the transgression of my people.” He acted like a sheep that stands dumb before its slaughterer. “When they hurled insults at him, he did not retaliate.” (1 Pet 2:23)</p> <p>When Jesus stood before his accusers, he kept silent. (cf. Mt 26:63; Mk 15:5; Jn 19:9)</p> <p>The whole fourth Servant Song is uniquely fulfilled in Jesus’ ministry. These two verses talk about his crucifixion and in particular about his conduct at his trials.</p>
<p>(OT) He was assigned a grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death, though he had done no violence, nor was any deceit in his mouth. (Isaiah 53:9)</p>	<p>Again the fourth Servant Song is quoted in the New Testament. This time Peter exalts Jesus who is our example to follow and cites Isaiah to support his teaching that Jesus was without sin.</p>

<p>(NT) To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” (1 Peter 2:21-22)</p>	<p>Jesus was the perfect lamb without blemish. He never sinned, neither by deeds nor by words. This correlates with his silence at the trial, when even in the midst of suffering “no deceit was found in his mouth.” (1 Pet 2:21-22; cf. Is 53:7)</p> <p>Because of his innocence, Jesus was assigned an honourable burial with the rich. (cf. Young 1992, 352f.) This is fulfilled in the service of Joseph and Nicodemus who buried Jesus according to Jewish burial customs. (cf. Jn 19:38-42)</p>
<p>(OT) Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:12)</p>	<p>Jesus’ quotation of Isaiah as recorded in Luke refers again to the fourth Servant Song and is fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ himself, in particular in his death at the cross between the two criminals. (cf. Lk 23:32)</p>

<p>(NT) “It is written: ‘And he was numbered with the transgressors’; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfilment.” (Luke 22:37)</p>	<p>It is noteworthy that Jesus himself referred to this passage and “explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.” (Lk 24:27) The prophecy shows the validity of Jesus’ messianic claim, and so the motive and value of this citation is again ‘passion apologetic.’</p>
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Jesus’ Victory

<p>(OT) Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. (Isaiah 55:3)</p> <p>(NT) The fact that God raised him from the dead, never to decay, is stated in these words: “I will give you the holy and sure blessings</p>	<p>The prophecy goes back to the Davidic Covenant in 2 Samuel 7:13, where the LORD declared to David: “I will establish the throne of his kingdom for ever.” This is the ‘everlasting covenant’ Isaiah prophesied about. (cf. 2 Sam 23:5) The covenant is firmly achieved by Jesus the Son of David and in particular by his resurrection from</p>
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<p>promised to David.” (Acts 13:34)</p>	<p>the dead. The King and his kingdom are eternal, and so are the “sure blessings promised to David.” (Payne 1973, 318)</p> <p>The quotation in Acts is part of Paul’s sermon to the people in Pisidian Antioch. Together with cited prophecies from Psalms, Isaiah’s passage confirms Jesus being the promised Messiah.</p>
<p>(OT) By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. (Isaiah 45:23)</p> <p>(NT) For we will all stand before God’s judgment seat. It is written: “‘As surely as I live,’ says the Lord, ‘Every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.’” (Romans 14:10-11)</p>	<p>The Messiah will reign in his kingdom and judge the people. Payne (1973, 287) refers to God’s millennial rule as the fulfillment of this prophecy. Without regard to the millennial issue, Paul mentions the coming judgment through Christ. (cf. 2 Cor 5:10) His dominion will last forever, and his judgment “will be the highest exercise of that dominion.” (Henry 2000) Isaiah’s prophecy supports Paul’s teaching about the coming judgment. (cf. Murray 1965, 184)</p>

(OT) On this mountain he will destroy the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. The Sovereign LORD will wipe away the tears from all faces; he will remove the disgrace of his people from all the earth.
(Isaiah 25:7-8)

(NT) When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.”
(1 Corinthians 15:54)

The LORD will gloriously reign on Mount Zion (cf. Is 24:23), and “on this mountain” he will destroy death, the reason for the sheet of mourning. (Young 1992, vol.2: 195f.) The redemption from death will result in a ‘feast’ and ‘banquet,’ which are metaphors for the beautiful future that awaits the elect. (Sandy 2002, 159; cf. Is 25:6)

Though a literal fulfillment during a millennial rule of Christ is possible, the context points to a deeper meaning.

The quotation passage in 1 Corinthians 15 shows that Isaiah’s prophecy will eventually be fulfilled at Jesus’ Second Coming, when “the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.” (1 Cor 15:52; cf. 1 Thess 4:16-17)

Again, Paul supports his teaching in the New Testament with the

	<p>quotation of Old Testament prophecy. This, in turn, provides further insight for the understanding of Isaiah’s words.</p>
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Gentile Mission

<p>(OT) “It is too small a thing for you to be a servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Isaiah 49:6)</p> <p>(NT) Then Paul and Barnabas answered them boldly: “We had to speak the word of God to you first. Since you reject it and do not consider yourselves worthy of eternal life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For this is what the Lord has commanded us: ‘I have</p>	<p>After the Servant is already introduced as ‘light of the Gentiles’ in the first Servant Song (Is 42:6), the theme is here repeated and emphasised in the second Song. The phrase points to the Gentile mission that started with the apostles as recorded in Acts.</p> <p>Citing this prophecy, Paul implies that Isaiah spoke of the church age when the gospel is proclaimed to all nations and the ministry among the Jews extends to the Gentiles. At the moment of Paul’s quotation, he himself turned from the Jews to the Gentiles and</p>
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<p>made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’” (Acts 13:46-47)</p>	<p>Isaiah’s prophecy met its fulfillment. Although Jesus the Servant was primarily in view (Lindsey 1982, 137), Paul in Acts applies the prophecy to himself.</p>
<p>(OT) “I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation that did not call on my name, I said, ‘Here am I, here am I.’ All day long I have held out my hands to an obstinate people, who walk in ways not good, pursuing their own imaginations...” (Isaiah 65:1-2)</p> <p>(NT) And Isaiah boldly says, “I was found by those who did not seek me; I revealed myself to those who did not ask for me.” But concerning Israel he says, “All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and obstinate people.” (Romans 10:20-21)</p>	<p>According to the quotation passage in Romans, Isaiah’s description of “those who did not ask for me” denotes the Gentiles, for the Israelites are contrasted to them being the “disobedient and obstinate people.” Thus, Isaiah refers again to the Gentile mission. Paul quotes this passage in the context of an extensive teaching about Israel and supports his exposition by citing prophecy. Israel knew beforehand about the Gentile mission through the prophets Isaiah and Moses. (cf. Rom 10:19)</p>

<p>(OT) In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. (Isaiah 11:10)</p> <p>(NT) And again, Isaiah says, “The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him.” (Romans 15:12)</p>	<p>In Payne’s view the nations will rally to the ‘Root of Jesse’ Jesus Christ during the millennium. (Payne 1973, 286)</p> <p>Together with other prophecies (2 Sam 22:50; Ps 18:49; Deut 32:43; Ps 117:1), Paul cites Isaiah in a larger context to show that the Gentile nations, too, are accepted by God as promised to Abraham long before. (cf. Rom 15:7-8)</p>
<p>(OT) ...so will he sprinkle many nations, and kings will shut their mouths because of him. For what they were not told, they will see, and what they have not heard, they will understand. (Isaiah 52:15)</p> <p>(NT) It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building someone else’s foundation. Rather, as it is written: “Those who were not told</p>	<p>Isaiah’s passage is part of the fourth Servant Song. Paul refers to this prophecy to justify his preaching to the unreached people. Though Paul’s interpretation is Christological, his focus is on Isaiah’s prophecy of his missionary activities. (Litwak 1983, 393)</p> <p>We still can see Isaiah’s words fulfilled in the present age that started with the apostles. Up to the present day there are unreached</p>

<p>about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand.”</p> <p>(Romans 15:20-21)</p>	<p>people, and missionaries go out and preach to them.</p> <p>Payne refers from verse 15b to the millennium. (Payne 1973, 287)</p> <p>Regardless the time, Christ’s sacrifice reaches out to the Gentiles.</p>
<p>(OT) “Sing, O barren woman, you who never bore a child; burst into song, shout for joy, you who were never in labour; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 54:1)</p> <p>(NT) But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother. For it is written: “Be glad, O barren woman, who bears no children; break forth and cry aloud, you who have no labour pains; because more are the children of the desolate woman than of her who has a husband.” Now you, brothers, like Isaac, are children of promise.</p>	<p>After the prediction of Christ’s suffering and atonement at the cross in chapter 53, Isaiah prophesies about the benefits of his atonement. The ‘barren’ and ‘desolate’ woman will be more numerous than the nation Israel who was married with the Lord. (Payne 1973, 307; Young 1992, vol.3, 360) Here, Isaiah speaks of the church that includes the Gentiles on the basis of God’s promise.</p> <p>The Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant are figuratively contrasted in Galatians by Sarah and Hagar, Jerusalem and Mount Sinai. Like Isaac, the children of promise are born by the free</p>

<p>(Galatians 4:26-28)</p>	<p>mother Jerusalem, where the gospel was preached first. (cf. Acts 1:8) Paul again cites Isaiah to show that his teaching is in line with Old Testament prophecy.</p>
<p>(OT) This is what the LORD says: “In the time of my favour I will answer you, and in the day of salvation I will help you; I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people, to restore the land and to reassign its desolate inheritances...” (Isaiah 49:8)</p> <p>(NT) As God’s fellow-workers we urge you not to receive God’s grace in vain. For he says, “In the time of my favour I heard you, and in the day of salvation I helped you.” I tell you, now is the time of God’s favour, now is the day of salvation. (2 Corinthians 6:1-2)</p>	<p>The Servant was formed to be a covenant for the people, to “bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.” (Is 49:6) The ‘day of salvation’ has come after the establishment of the New Covenant in the blood of Christ. (cf. Payne 1973, 315)</p> <p>Paul emphasises on the fact that the New Covenant is established and urges the people not to reject this grace. Isaiah’s prophecy is fulfilled, thus “<i>now</i> is the day of salvation.”</p>

The Remnant

(OT) Though your people, O Israel, be like the sand by the sea, only a remnant will return. Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous. The Lord, the LORD Almighty, will carry out the destruction decreed upon the whole land. (Isaiah 10:22-23)

(NT) Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Though the number of the Israelites be like the sand by the sea, only the remnant will be saved. For the Lord will carry out his sentence on earth with speed and finality.” (Romans 9:27-28)

Though God promised to Abraham that he makes his “descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore”

(Gen 22:17), “not all who are descended from Israel are Israel.”

(Rom 9:6) The covenant promise does not guarantee salvation for

the Jews on the basis of ancestry. Rather, only the remnant is

saved, the ‘children of the promise’ on the basis of ‘righteousness

that is by faith.’ (cf. Rom 9:8; 9:30)

As in Galatians, Paul in his letter to Rome used many passages of

Old Testament prophecy to teach about the New Covenant. Here,

Paul focuses on Israel and explains “God’s purpose in election.”

(Rom 9:11; cf. Murray 1965, 14ff.)

	<p>Isaiah wrote in the context of Assyrian oppression. The destruction decreed upon the whole land came first through the Assyrians and later through the Babylonians in 586 B.C. Some decades later, a remnant returned from exile. Here, history serves as a typological pattern which points to the spiritual remnant at the time of the final judgment God will bring upon all people. (cf. Murray 1965, 40; Young 1992, vol.1: 371)</p>
<p>(OT) “...for both houses of Israel he will be a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall.” (Isaiah 8:14)</p> <p>“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone, a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation; the one who trusts will never be dismayed.” (Isaiah 28:16)</p>	<p>“It cannot be doubted that Paul applies both passages to Christ.” (Murray 1965, 44) By quoting Isaiah, Paul denotes the ‘righteousness by faith’ in Christ. The majority of Israel rejected him and pursued a righteousness that is by works. In this sense, Christ became the ‘stumbling-stone’ that makes them fall and</p>

<p>(NT) They stumbled over the “stumbling-stone”. As it is written: “See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame.” (Romans 9:32-33)</p>	<p>eventually crushed at the last judgment. (cf. 1 Pet 2:8; Mt 21:44; Lk 2:34; Young 1992, vol.1, 313)</p> <p>Isaiah 28:16 declares that the stone will be a sure foundation for the one who trusts and believes. The stone contrasts the “covenant with death” on which Israel relies in the preceding verse.</p> <p>Paul combines Isaiah 8:14 with 28:16 to illustrate the significance of the stone for both unbelievers and believers. “It is Jesus Christ who divides men; they are known by their attitude toward Him.” (Young 1992, vol.2: 287)</p>
<p>(OT) “The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,” declares the LORD. “As for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the LORD. (Isaiah 59:20-21)</p>	<p>Isaiah’s prophecy relates to Israel, to “those in Jacob who repent of their sins.” Whereas we might interpret Israel in this context as being “the seed according to election, the true Israel” (Young 1992,</p>

(NT) I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: “The deliverer will come from Zion; he will turn godlessness away from Jacob. And this is my covenant with them when I take away their sins.” (Romans 11:25-27)

vol.3: 441; cf. 1 Thess 1:10), Paul quotes Isaiah in the context of teachings about ethnic Israel rather than spiritual Israel. Paul speaks of the ‘fullness’ of Israel in relation to the Gentiles. (cf. Rom 11:12) The ‘fullness’ will come when the deliverer “will turn godlessness away from Jacob.” According to Payne, this will be at the time of the millennium, when “the Redeemer will come to Zion.” (Is 59:20; Payne 1973, 294) The prophecy is given certainty by covenantal promise in both Isaiah and the quotation.

The tension between Old Testament prophecy and New Testament interpretation cannot be overlooked. Murray rightly teaches, “This express application is an index to the principle of interpretation which would have to be applied to many other Old Testament

	passages which are in the same vein as Isaiah 59:20,21, namely, that they comprise the promise of an expansion of gospel blessing such as Paul enunciates in verses 25, 26.” (Murray 1965, 99)
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Summary

Exegetical insight about topics such as the Servant, the Gentiles, Israel and the remnant is the value of such a project. We get an impression on how Jesus himself or the apostles saw Old Testament prophecy fulfilled from the New Testament perspective. The Servant Songs, especially the fourth, have apologetic value to prove Jesus’ messianic claims. In general, Christological prophecy abounds. Sometimes the prophets point to Jesus’ First Coming, sometimes to his Second Coming. Some predictions are interpreted literally; some were typologically given in a certain historical context or even more complex as in the case of Isaiah’s play on words in chapter 11:1. Many quotations are used to support and illustrate New Testament teachings, particularly in regard to the New Covenant related to the Mosaic Covenant. The value of Old Testament prophecy is apparently great.

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