

Matthew's Use of Isaiah's Prophecy

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Matthew's Gospel and Isaiah's Prophecy

<i>Matthew's Gospel: Explicit Quotations of</i>	<i>Isaiah's Prophecy of Exile and Restoration from Exile</i>
The angel Gabriel explains Jesus' conception to Joseph. This is Isaiah's virgin birth prophecy, 1:21 – 23	Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah being born of a virgin (almah), 7:14
John the Baptist begins his ministry and is 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness', 3:1 – 3	This is the beginning of Isaiah's vision of the 'return from exile' and the 'redemption of Jerusalem' starting from Isa.40.
Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee, guided by Isaiah's prophecy of light shining in darkness in Galilee, 4:12 – 25	Isaiah's saw the Messiah ministering in Galilee first, bringing light into darkness, 8:22 – 9:1
Jesus heals, using physical healing as representations of his spiritual healing, 8:16 – 17	Quoting from Isaiah's Servant Song from Isa.53:4
Jesus clarifies his identity to John the Baptist, 11:4 – 5	By quoting Isaiah 35:5; 42:1 – 9; 61:1 – 2
Jesus will bring justice to the Gentiles, 12:18 - 21	By quoting Isaiah's Servant Song, 42:1 – 9
Jesus teaches the parable of the soils, 13:1 – 20	Using 'restoration from exile' motifs from Isa.55 (seed, rain, thorns, word)
Jesus says that Isaiah gives the precedent for parables, 13:14 – 15	'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand' Isa.6:10
Jesus is frustrated with the Pharisees for their hypocrisy and invalidation of God's commands, 15:7 – 9	Quotes Isa.29:13; frustration over Israel's holier than thou attitude prophesied in Isa.65:2 – 5
Jesus challenges Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard and the equal wage (20:1 – 16) and a parable of the vineyard and the wicked tenants (21:33 – 46)	Isaiah challenged Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard in Isa.5:1 – 8
Jesus spoke of laying a new cornerstone for a new Temple, 21:42	Isaiah spoke of the Messiah being a new cornerstone for a new Temple, 8:14 – 15 and again in 28:16 – 17. Psalm 118:22 – 23 shares this idea with Isaiah, and Jesus quotes from this Psalm.
Jesus speaks of the sun and moon being darkened, the stars and heavens being shaken, 24:29	Quoting from Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4

<i>Matthew's Gospel: Quotes and Allusions to</i>	<i>Isaiah's Prophecy of Exile and Restoration from Exile</i>
The angel Gabriel explains Jesus' conception to Joseph. This is Isaiah's virgin birth prophecy, 1:21 – 23	Isaiah prophesied of the Messiah being born of a virgin (almah), 7:14
John the Baptist begins his ministry and is 'the voice of one crying in the wilderness', 3:1 – 3	This is the beginning of Isaiah's vision of the 'return from exile' and the 'redemption of Jerusalem' starting from Isa.40.
Jesus passes through water and then the 'fire' of temptation, 3:13 – 4:11	God promised to be with 'Israel' through water and fire, 43:2
Jesus begins his ministry in Galilee, guided by Isaiah's prophecy of light shining in darkness in Galilee, 4:12 – 25	Isaiah's saw the Messiah ministering in Galilee first, bringing light into darkness, 8:22 – 9:1
Jesus pronounces beatitudes, 5:1 – 12	Isaiah prophesied a Messianic reversal using the same language in 57:12 – 21 and distinguishes between the faithful remnant and the remainder of Israel in the same terms, Isa.65:13 – 15
Jesus heals the Roman centurion's slave and praises the centurion for his faith. 8:5 – 13	Isaiah foresaw a time when foreigners would be fully welcomed into the covenant people's worship, contrary to the Mosaic Law. Contrast Isa.56:1 – 8 with Dt.23:1 – 6
Jesus heals, using physical healing as representations of his spiritual healing, 8:16 – 17	Quoting from Isaiah's Servant Song from Isa.53:4
Jesus brings his disciples across a stormy sea and casts demons into it, 8:23 – 34	Suggesting the New Exodus of Isaiah 40 – 43
Jesus casts out demons from Gentiles, 8:28 – 34	Suggesting the conquering Messiah passage of Isaiah 61:1 – 2
Jesus forgives sins, 9:1 – 13 etc.	Echoes Isaiah's Servant Song from Isa.53
Jesus calls a remnant in Israel, making an analogy to new wine, 9:9 – 13	Remnant preserved, analogy to new wine. Isa.65:8 – 9

Jesus looks ahead to when he, as the bridegroom, 'is taken away from them,' 9:14 – 17	This is probably a quotation from Isa.53:8, 'By oppression and judgment he was taken away'
Jesus clarifies his identity to John the Baptist, 11:4 – 5	By quoting Isaiah 35:5; 42:1 – 9; 61:1 – 2
Jesus will bring justice to the Gentiles, 12:18 - 21	By quoting Isaiah's Servant Song, 42:1 – 9
Jesus teaches the parable of the soils, 13:1 – 20	Using 'restoration from exile' motifs from Isa.55 (seed, rain, thorns, word)
Jesus says that Isaiah gives the precedent for parables, 13:14 – 15	'Seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand' Isa.6:10
Jesus shepherds and feeds people in the wilderness, 14:14 – 22	Feeding in a wilderness was described in Isa.55:1 – 3 and 65:10 – 12
Jesus is frustrated with the Pharisees for their hypocrisy and invalidation of God's commands, 15:7 – 9	Quotes Isa.29:13; frustration over Israel's holier than thou attitude prophesied in Isa.65:2 – 5
Jesus challenges Israel's historic relation to material wealth, 19:13 – 31	Isaiah foresaw a time of expanding Israel's traditional land boundaries in Isa.54:2
Jesus challenges Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard and the equal wage, 20:1 – 16	Isaiah challenged Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard in Isa.5:1 – 8
Jesus turns tables in the Temple and says its role as a house of prayer is being betrayed, 21:12 – 13	Isaiah and Jeremiah called the Temple a 'house of prayer' (Isa.56:7, Jer.7:11) and spoke of its betrayal
Jesus challenges Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard and the wicked tenants, 21:33 – 46	Isaiah challenged Israel's leadership using a parable of the vineyard in Isa.5:1 – 8
Jesus spoke of laying a new cornerstone for a new Temple, 21:42	Isaiah spoke of the Messiah being a new cornerstone for a new Temple, 8:14 – 15 and again in 28:16 – 17. Psalm 118:22 – 23 shares this idea with Isaiah, and Jesus quotes from this Psalm.
Jesus denounces the scribes and Pharisees for their hypocrisy, 23:1 – 38	Frustration over Israel's holier than thou attitude prophesied in Isa.65:2 – 5
Jesus prophesies Jerusalem's destruction. 24:1 – 51	Isaiah prophesied Jerusalem's destruction in Isa.1; 29:1 – 4; 65:1 ff.
Jesus speaks of the sun and moon being darkened, the stars and heavens being shaken, 24:29	Quoting from Isaiah 13:10 and 34:4
Jesus' death and resurrection inaugurates a covenant where 'forgiveness of sins' is offered to 'many', 26:28	Isaiah prophesied about the Servant's teaching going out to the Gentile coastlands in Isa.42:6 and 49:6
Jesus says that his death is to fulfill all the Scriptures of the prophets, 26:56	In Matthew, Isaiah has certainly been chief among the prophets
Jesus' crucifixion is paralleled to the Suffering Servant, restoring humans to paradise, 26:57ff.	Isaiah's Suffering Servant restores Israel (and the nations) from exile in Isa.53 (see below)
Jesus' great commission to his disciples on a mountain in Galilee, 28:16 – 20	Draws from Isaiah's vision of kingly rule emanating out from a renewed 'Mt. Zion' of God's presence, 2:1 – 4, and also a vision of enlarging the tent of dwelling because reconciliation to others is offered, 54:2

Jesus' Use of Isaiah in the Beatitudes

Jesus	Fulfills Isaiah's (the Old Testament's) Hopes for Renewal
<p>³ Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>	<p>Example passage: Isaiah 57:12 – 21, exemplifying Isaiah's use of terms</p>
<p>⁴ Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.</p>	<p>¹² "I will declare your righteousness and your deeds; But they will not profit you.</p>
<p>⁵ Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.</p>	<p>¹³ When you cry out, let your collection of idols deliver you. But the wind will carry all of them up, And a breath will take them away. But he who takes refuge in Me will inherit the land And will possess My holy mountain."</p>
<p>⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.</p>	<p>¹⁴ And it will be said, "Build up, build up, prepare the way, Remove every obstacle out of the way of My people."</p>
<p>⁷ Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.</p>	<p>¹⁵ For thus says the high and exalted One Who lives forever, whose name is Holy, "I dwell on a high and holy place, And also with the contrite and lowly of spirit In order to revive the spirit of the lowly And to revive the heart of the contrite.</p>
<p>⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.</p>	<p>¹⁶ For I will not contend forever, Nor will I always be angry; For the spirit would grow faint before Me, And the breath of those whom I have made.</p>
<p>⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.</p>	<p>¹⁷ Because of the iniquity of his unjust gain [opposite of mercy] I was angry and struck him; I hid My face and was angry, And he went on turning away, in the way of his heart.</p>
<p>¹⁰ Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.</p>	<p>¹⁸ I have seen his ways, but I will <i>heal</i> him; I will lead him and restore comfort to him and to his mourners, ¹⁹ Creating the praise of the lips. Peace, peace to him who is far and to him who is near," Says the LORD, "and I will <i>heal</i> him."</p>
<p>¹¹ Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.</p>	<p>²⁰ But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud. ²¹ "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."</p>

Jesus' Use of Isaiah in the Parable of the Soils

Jesus' Parable of the Soils	Jesus' Explanation	Isaiah's Vision of Restoration Available to All
<p>^{13:3} 'Behold, the sower went out to sow; ⁴ and as he sowed, some seeds fell beside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.</p> <p>⁵ Others fell on the rocky places, where they did not have much soil; and immediately they sprang up, because they had no depth of soil. ⁶ But when the sun had risen, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.</p> <p>⁷ Others fell among the thorns, and the thorns came up and choked them out.</p> <p>⁸ And others fell on the good soil and yielded a crop, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.</p> <p>⁹ He who has ears, let him hear.' ¹⁰ And the disciples came and said to him, 'Why do you speak to them in parables?' ¹¹ Jesus answered them, 'To you it has been granted to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been granted. ¹² For whoever has, to him more shall be given, and he will have an abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has shall be taken away from him. ¹³ Therefore I speak to them in parables; because while seeing they do not see, and while hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand. ¹⁴ In their case the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled, which says, 'You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; you will keep on seeing, but will not perceive; ¹⁵ for the heart of this people has become dull, with their ears they scarcely hear, and they have closed their eyes, otherwise they would see with their eyes, hear with their ears, and understand with their heart and return, and I would heal them.' [Isa.6:9]</p>	<p>¹⁶ But blessed are your eyes, because they see; and your ears, because they hear. ¹⁷ For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous men desired to see what you see, and did not see it, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear it.</p> <p>¹⁸ Hear then the parable of the sower. ¹⁹ When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what has been sown in his heart. This is the one on whom seed was sown beside the road.</p> <p>²⁰ The one on whom seed was sown on the rocky places, this is the man who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹ yet he has no firm root in himself, but is only temporary, and when affliction or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he falls away.</p> <p>²² And the one on whom seed was sown among the thorns, this is the man who hears the word, and the worry of the world and the deceitfulness of wealth choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.</p> <p>²³ And the one on whom seed was sown on the good soil, this is the man who hears the word and understands it; who indeed bears fruit and brings forth, some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty.'</p>	<p>^{55:1} 'Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost. ² Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And delight yourself in abundance. ³ Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, According to the faithful mercies shown to David. ⁴ 'Behold, I have made him a witness to the peoples, A leader and commander for the peoples. ⁵ 'Behold, you will call a nation you do not know, And a nation which knows you not will run to you, Because of the LORD your God, even the Holy One of Israel; for He has glorified you.' ⁶ Seek the LORD while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the LORD, And He will have compassion on him, And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon. ⁸ 'For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,' declares the LORD. ⁹ 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts. ¹⁰ For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, And do not return there without watering the earth And making it bear and sprout, And furnishing seed to the sower and bread to the eater; ¹¹ So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it. ¹² For you will go out with joy And be led forth with peace; The mountains and the hills will break forth into shouts of joy before you, And all the trees of the field will clap their hands. ¹³ Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will come up, And instead of the nettle the myrtle will come up, And it will be a memorial to the LORD, For an everlasting sign which will not be cut off.'</p>

Matthew's Crucifixion Narrative & Isaiah's Prophecy of the Suffering Servant

Jesus' Crucifixion According to Luke	The Suffering Servant According to Isaiah
<p>Jesus intends to fulfill 'the Scriptures of the prophets' (Mt.26:56). Given that he says this when the disciples are trying to resist arrest, it is likely that Jesus is thinking about Isaiah 53:12: 'he was numbered with the transgressors.' This refers first to the sword-bearing disciples, who will be mistaken for revolutionaries, and later to the two criminals. It marks off the beginning of the crucifixion narrative. Note that Luke quotes that phrase from Isa.53:12 (Lk.22:37) showing his awareness of Jesus being the Suffering Servant and invoking the entirety of Isaiah 53 during his trial, death, and resurrection.</p>	<p>And was numbered with the transgressors (Isa.53:12)</p>
<p>Judas: 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood' (27:4) Pilate's wife: 'Have nothing to do with that righteous man' (27:19) Pilate: 'Why, what evil has he done?' (27:23) Centurion: 'Truly this man was the Son of God' (27:54)</p>	<p>He had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth (Isa.53:9)</p>
<p>'And those passing by were hurling abuse at him, wagging their heads and saying, 'You who are going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross.' In the same way the chief priests also, along with the scribes and elders, were mocking him and saying, 'He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe in him. He trusts in God; let God rescue him now, if He delights in him'; for he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" The robbers who had been crucified with him were also insulting him with the same words.' (27:39 – 44) 'About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have You forsaken me?'" (27:46)</p>	<p>Yet we ourselves esteemed him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted (Isa.53:4)</p>
<p>'The high priest stood up and said to him, 'Do you not answer? What is it that these men are testifying against you?' But Jesus kept silent.' (26:62 – 63) 'Then Pilate said to him, 'Do you not hear how many things they testify against you?' And he did not answer him with regard to even a single charge, so the governor was quite amazed.' (27:13 – 14)</p>	<p>Like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so he did not open his mouth (Isa.53:7)</p>
<p>'And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up his spirit. And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth shook and the rocks were split. The tombs were opened, and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the tombs after his resurrection they entered the holy city and appeared to many.' (27:50 – 53)</p>	<p>He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our peace fell upon him, and by his scourging we are healed (Isa.53:5, 11 – 12)</p>
<p>'At that time two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left.' (27:38) 'When it was evening, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate ordered it to be given to him. And Joseph took the body and wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the entrance of the tomb and went away.' (27:57 – 60)</p>	<p>His grave was assigned with wicked men, yet he was with a rich man in his death (Isa.53:9)</p>
<p>Jesus' death and resurrection extends forgiveness to all nations, as exemplified by the last supper. (26:27 – 28)</p>	<p>Thus he will sprinkle <i>many nations</i>, kings will shut their mouths on account of him, for what had not been told them they will see, and what they had not heard they will understand (Isa.52:13)</p>