

Pearls from the Prophets

Composite 1-38

January 29, 2022

**... [When] we don't rightly divide the Word of God,
we divide the body of Christ.**

Mark Batterson

... as James Dunn puts it:

**'For Matthew, Jesus was not simply
Son of God,
son of David,
Messiah,
Son of Man,
Moses,
prophet.**

**He embodied God's presence and universal authority
in a way that no other servant of God had done before.'**

N.T. Wright

**Others might think of him as one of the prophets;
but Simon has come to recognize him
as the One to whom the prophets pointed.**

**He is not just another signpost,
but the destination to which the signposts have led.**

John Stott

**Consider that Simeon (Luke 2:25ff)
also considered Christ as the one who was to come.**

**The Bible was never given to be an end in itself
but to be a path leading us to God.**

A.W. Tozer

**Without the charismatic appreciation for life in the Spirit
and the wholehearted expression of the holiness stream,
biblical fidelity can descend into a rigid Biblicism –
worship of the written Word
instead of the living Word.**

**And without the tempering of the sacramental life,
evangelism and discipleship
can be reduced to formulas for admittance to heaven
instead of a call to a rich, God-soaked life.**

Richard J. Foster

**The challenge of finding Jesus
is that He is the narrow, unpaved path among hundreds of streets
that seem much broader and well-traveled.**

**These streets are posted with many signs.
Yet follow any of them
and you'll end up in one of a hundred tiny cul-de-sacs
where you can spend a lifetime.**

Rick Mckinley

**This entire planet is about wilderness,
but God is about manna.**

**The journey of life is not about
finding our way out of the wilderness,
but finding the manna inside the wilderness...**

**We can be in the wilderness
and be fed;
those two realities are not mutually exclusive.**

**Life can be painful and beautiful
at the exact same time.**

Annie F. Downs

**What if we have run off with the Teacher's sheet music,
squabbling over every note,
but have never actually heard His symphony?**

**Out of the darkest chord that had ever been played,
He created the most beautiful theme in His symphony.**

Rick Mckinley

To repent is to say to God:

**“I’m blind. I don’t see,
but I want to.**

**Please show me Your heart
in everything.”**

...

Taken as a whole,

**the gospel of Jesus invites us
to yank up the shades on our world.**

**All of creation is a portal that we can look through to
witness how the kingdom of God
continues to arrive.**

Rick Mckinley

**People the most obedient
to commandment and church formulas
can very often be the hardest to convert.**

They've taken the symbol for the substance.

They've taken the ritual for the reality.

**They've taken the means for the end
and become inoculated
from the experience of the real thing.**

Richard Rohr

**This resonates with the theme
of idols that block our relationship with God.**

**Maybe this side of heaven life was made for searching.
Instead of a final destination,
or striving for complete certainty,
maybe our ambitions are like the smell of a pie in the oven -
a reminder and invitation to follow the scent,
to enter,
to keep trying,
keep looking,
and keep discovering.**

Bob Goff

**... authentic God experience always “burns” you,
yet does not destroy you (Exodus 3: 2– 3),
just as the burning bush did to Moses.**

**Early-stage religion is largely preparing you
for the immense gift of this burning,
this inner experience of God,
as though creating a proper stable
into which the Christ can be born.**

**Unfortunately, most people get so preoccupied with their stable,
and whether their stable is better than your stable,
or whether their stable is
the only “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic” stable,
that they never get to the birth of God in the soul.**

Richard Rohr

**Each passage of Scripture is
“part of a larger tapestry
in which each individual piece works together
to bring about the destined and hoped for end”.**

Louis Markos

Research Question

Who is the first person to be called a prophet?

[When Abimelech took Sarai (without knowing she was married to Abram)]

Genesis 20:7

Now return the man's wife, for **he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all who belong to you will die."**

Google research:

Tom: Adam

Walter: Enoch

Name prophets who were somehow associated with themselves being naked.

- Saul, 1 Samuel 19:24; “He stripped off his garments, and he too prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay **naked** all that day and all that night. This is why people say, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”
- David, 2 Samuel 6:20; When David returned home to bless his household, Michal daughter of Saul came out to meet him and said, “How the king of Israel has distinguished himself today, going around **half-naked** in full view of the slave girls of his servants as any vulgar fellow would!” (**not humbled**)
- Isaiah, Isaiah 20:2-3; ... at that time the Lord spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz. He said to him, “Take off the sackcloth from your body and the sandals from your feet.” And he did so, going around **stripped** and barefoot. ... for three years, as a sign and portent against Egypt and Cush ...
- Micah, Micah 1:8; Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and **naked**. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl.
- Mark, Mark 14:52; ... he fled naked, leaving his garment behind.
- Christ, Matthew 27:28; They stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him ...
- Paul, 2 Corinthians 11:27; I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and **naked**.
- PDE: Job 1:21 indicates all the prophets (all people) were born naked
- Walter: consider those who rent their clothes

Many were called “prophets”. Name those who were called “seers”.

**Samuel (the prophet); called a seer when Saul was looking for donkeys,
1 Sam 9:19 (and in 1 Chr 9:22, 1 Chr 26:28)**

Gad (the prophet); called David's seer, 2 Sam 24:11

Hanani (the prophet); called a seer, 2 Chr 16:7

Iddo (the prophet); called a seer, 2 Chr 9:29

Heman; called the king's seer, 1 Chr 25:5

Asaph; 2 Chr 29:30

Jeduthun, called the king's seer, 2 Chr 35:15

Amos (the prophet), called a seer in Amos 7:12

PDE: Jeremiah was asked what he saw by God; 1) the branch of an almond tree, and a pot that was boiling, Jeremiah 1:11-13

Note:

Some seers were said to have kept records, 1 Chr 29:29 and 2 Chr 33:19

See Micah 3:7; the seers will have no answer from God

Where is the only place in the Bible where a prophet offered a human being the opportunity to name the sign?

Isaiah 7:10 records the only place in the Bible where a prophet offered a human being the opportunity to name the sign.

Encountering the Book of Isaiah (Encountering Biblical Studies): A Historical and Theological Survey; Beyer, Bryan E.; p.73

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, “Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.”

**But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test.”
[But Isaiah accused him of trying the patience of God]**

Note:

In a slightly different instance, Isaiah gives Hezekiah a choice in signs – should the shadow go forward or backward 10 steps? (2 Kings 20) [PDE]

Also, Gideon asked to reverse the miracle of the dew (Judges 6) [PDE]

What New Testament books do not have any direct OT quotes?

Philippians

Colossians

1 Thessalonians

2 Thessalonians

1 Timothy

2 Timothy

Titus

Philemon

1 John

2 John

3 John

Jude (though OT incidents are discussed)

Parallel Processing

Introduction

Parallel - Unauthorized Activity (OT)

However, two men, whose names were Eldad and Medad, had remained in the camp.

They were listed among the elders, but did not go out to the tent.

Yet the Spirit also rested on them, and they prophesied in the camp.

A young man ran and told Moses, “Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp.”

Joshua son of Nun, who had been Moses’ aide since youth, spoke up and said, “Moses, my lord, stop them!”

But Moses replied, “Are you jealous for my sake? I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!”

Numbers 11:26-29

Introduction

Parallel - Unauthorized Activity (NT)

“Teacher,” said John,

**“we saw someone driving out demons in your name
and we told him to stop, because he was not one of us.”**

“Do not stop him,” Jesus said.

**“For no one who does a miracle in my name
can in the next moment say anything bad about me,
for whoever is not against us is for us.”**

Mark 9:38-40

Jonah and Paul – a Comparison (similarities)

Consider these similarities between Jonah and Paul:

Both men were Hebrews.

Both had Jewish backgrounds
and believed in the one true God.

Both men were preachers.

Both men were called to preach
unpopular messages in pagan cities.
(Nineveh and Rome both were powerful cities filled with wickedness)

Both men boarded a ship.

Both men experienced a terrible, life-threatening storm.

Both men greatly impacted the rest of the crew.

Both men knew the key to the crew's survival.

Beth Moore

Jonah and Paul – a Comparison (differences)

They differed in at least the following ways:

Paul was compelled by his calling to Rome.

Jonah was repelled by his calling to Nineveh!

Paul faced many obstacles on his way to Rome:

imprisonment, many injustices, inclement weather, & other difficulties.

Jonah's only obstacle was himself!

Paul had to sit and wait for the Lord.

Jonah stood and ran from the Lord!

Paul felt a burden of responsibility for the crew,
although the calamity was not his fault.

Jonah slept while the others worked diligently
to survive the calamity he had brought on them.

Although both men were frightened and probably felt hopeless,
Paul received courage from the Lord.

Jonah revealed a rather amusing cowardice.

Beth Moore

Jonah and Paul – a Summary

Paul and Jonah are great characters to compare and contrast because we can relate to both of them!

Although Jonah was ultimately obedient and surprisingly successful, you will search in vain for a single hint of joy in his life.

Although Paul seemed to suffer at every turn, he had more to say about joy than any other mouthpiece in the Word of God.

Beth Moore

Weeping over the Lost

What do you make of Isaiah's remarkable reaction to the prophecy against Babylon (Isaiah 21:3-4)?

**At this my body is racked with pain,
pangs seize me,
like those of a woman in labor;**

**I am staggered by what I hear,
I am bewildered by what I see.**

**My heart falters,
fear makes me tremble;
the twilight I longed for
has become a horror to me.**

How do you explain it?

**How is it related to Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41)
and Paul weeping for unbelieving Jews (Rom 9:2)?**

If so, what does this teach us about compassion for the lost?

Andrew M. Davis

Isaiah 60:19-22 and Revelation 21:9-25

The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory.

Your sun will never set again, and your moon will wane no more; the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your days of sorrow will end.

Then all your people will be righteous and they will possess the land forever. They are the shoot I have planted, the work of my hands, for the display of my splendor.

The least of you will become a thousand, the smallest a mighty nation. I am the LORD;

Isaiah 60:19-22

And he carried me away in the Spirit to a mountain great and high, and showed me the Holy City, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God. It shone with the glory of God, and its brilliance was like that of a very precious jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal.

I did not see a temple in the city, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. **The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp. The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it. On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.**

Revelation 21:9-25

Weeping over a City

[A Prophecy Against Babylon]

A dire vision has been shown to me:

The traitor betrays, the looter takes loot.

Elam, attack! Media, lay siege!

I will bring to an end all the groaning she caused.

At this my body is racked with pain,

pangs seize me, like those of a woman in labor;

I am staggered by what I hear, I am bewildered by what I see.

My heart falters, fear makes me tremble;

the twilight I longed for has become a horror to me.

Isaiah 21:2-4

**What do you make of Isaiah's remarkable reaction
to the prophecy against Babylon (Isaiah 21:3-4)?**

How do you explain it?

**How is it related to Jesus weeping over Jerusalem (Luke 19:41)
and Paul weeping for unbelieving Jews (Rom 9:2)?**

If so, what does this teach us about compassion for the lost?

Andrew M. Davis

Regular Pre-Class Components

- Prayer List
 - Quote
 - Research or Thought Question
 - Comment from a Previous Class or Parallel
 - Review of the Purpose of the Class
 - Perspective on the Scriptures
 - Interesting Note Concerning Prophecy
 - Example of Poor Prophecy
 - Interpretation of Scripture
 - Prophecy Pointing to Christ (may be deferred to later in the lesson)
- } used in past lessons

I want to cover some introductory and related material each week so that we can examine actual prophetic scripture earlier.

Concept of the Study

Pearls!



Pearl Facts – and Lessons! (1)

We have all heard that pearls come from oysters. But to find a pearl in a wild oyster you would have to crack into hundreds of oysters, as pearls are a very rare discovery. A natural wild pearl in an oyster may also be very small as it takes years for an oyster to grow a large, jewelry quality pearl.

Pearl oysters belong to the pinctada family while the oysters we eat are part of the ostreidae family. Pinctada oysters are found deep in the ocean while the tasty oysters we like to eat are typically found on the shore.

Oysters have an internal organ called a mantle which processes minerals in the oyster's food in order to create nacre which makes up the oyster's shell. If a foreign substance, like a grain of sand, gets stuck in the oyster's mantle, the oyster will cover the irritant with a layer of nacre. Then it will add another layer and another layer until it gets so thick that it creates a pearl.

Pearl Facts – and Lessons! (2)

Oyster pearl farms exist throughout the world and if you own a pearl necklace or bracelet, chances are the pearls came from one of these farms. That doesn't mean cultivated pearls are any less amazing though - that pearl was still grown inside and oyster! Nature is amazing!

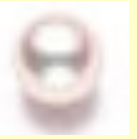
While oyster pearls are beautiful on their own, they also have a delightful significance. The idea that an irritant can be turned into a precious gem is the story which has made oyster pearls timeless. If there is an annoyance or a bother in your life such as the grain of sand in an oyster, simply coat it in a layer of love. Add another layer of patience and another layer of acceptance and continue on until that which annoys you becomes something beautiful.



The Purpose of This Class

2

To study the impact of the Prophets on the Christ –
Looking for “Pearls”



In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe.

The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

Hebrews 1:1-4

The prophets paved the path to establish Jesus as the Christ

Perspectives on Prophecy

Perspective on Prophecy, the Bible, and the Truth

The Bible:

It is what we have to study.

**It is the story of an infinite God
communicating with finite man.**

**We must not become ill
if we cannot digest it all in one big gulp.**

**We must not lose our way
in the incomplete details and apparent disconnects.**

**Our ability to understand prophecy is limited
to how it is revealed to us.**

**God wanted His people to change,
and gave them near-term prophesy;
but it pointed to long-term fulfillment many times as well**

**This is not a intensive study course on the prophets -
we are merely picking some of the pearls.**

Perspective on Prophecy, the Bible, and the Truth

The Old Testament prophets constantly had to condemn “false” or “improper” worship.

Jesus essentially spoke the same message in John 4:24 when He stated that we must worship God in Spirit and Truth.

**God is spirit,
and his worshipers must worship
in the Spirit and in truth.”**

Interesting Notes on Prophecy

Interesting Notes

Early Prophetic History

Initially books of this kind were transcribed on leather or parchment scrolls (see Jer 36:4, Ezek 2:8-10).

Such scrolls were typically of a certain length, not too long, nor too short.

Each of the longer books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel) represents approximately the amount of writing that could easily be contained on one of these scrolls.

The shorter books too were originally written on scrolls, not individually, however, but together on a single scroll.

Because there are twelve of them, they were known as the Book (or Scroll) of the Twelve.

Initially then, there were four prophetic scrolls: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Scroll of the Twelve.

Interesting Notes

In Israel there was a tradition of Spirit-filled “ecstatic” prophets, men like Samuel, Elijah, Jehu, Gad, Nathan and Obadiah. ...

These prophets lived on the love offerings of the people.

The tradition was eventually corrupted, and prophet “unions” were formed to legislate standardized prophets’ fees. ...

God raised up a new prophetic movement, referred to as the “poetic” prophets, which included Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and Amos.

Often these new prophets were not a part of the official prophetic clergy (Amos 7: 13-14).

Their prophecies employed poetry and puns, and they often pronounced God’s judgment on the unionized prophets (Jeremiah 23: 9-40).

Carl F. Ellis

Interesting Notes

In some cases, a prophet (or a group of prophets) was “possessed by the Spirit of God” in an ecstatic trance of some sort (1 Sam 19:18-24).

During such an experience, the prophetic figure did not behave as he normally did, but acted “like another man” (1 Sam 10:6).

Perhaps this condition was similar to that which the apostle Paul experienced, which he described as being “caught up to the third heaven” (2 Cor 12:1-10).

John T. Willis

Interesting Notes

... these prophets were part of an intellectual awakening that was worldwide.

At about the same time that they were speaking in Israel, Socrates and Plato were teaching on the streets of Athens, Gautama Buddha was beginning his mission in India, Confucius and Lao-Tze were spreading their teachings in China, and in Persia the prophet Zoroaster appeared.

John W. Miller

Not saying that these were all inspired by God...

Interesting Notes

Zion was an ancient name for the oldest part of Jerusalem on its southeast ridge, a name apparently going back to times before David's conquest of Jerusalem (2 Sam 5:7).

Solomon enlarged the Zion area, extending the name to the new temple area (1 Kgs. 8:1).

Zion thus became the residence or palace of Yahweh, the God of Israel, where people came to worship and sacrifice to him (Ps. 9:11; 76:2).

Max Anders

Zion became a significant theme for the prophets.

Interesting Notes

Jesus knew himself to be the Son of God, and that in no merely official or formal sense: he was intensely aware of a constant and peculiarly intimate filial relationship to God.

But he did not usually speak of himself in public as the Son of God; his preferred self-designation was “the Son of Man”.

When he stood before the Sanhedrin and the high priest asked him point-blank if he was the Messiah, the Son of the Blessed One, he replied in terms which probably meant, “if that is the language which you insist on using, then my answer must be ‘Yes’; but if I may choose my own language, this is what I say: ‘You shall see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty and coming with the clouds of heaven’” (Mark 14:62).

This is the last recorded occasion on which he used the designation “the Son of Man” and the context with which he supplied it indicates its source.

The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Interesting Notes

In the vision in which Daniel foresaw the time when the saints of the Most High would receive the kingdom, the saints were associated, ... identified, with “one like a son of man”, a man-like figure, who came with the clouds of heaven into the presence of the Eternal God, “the Ancient of Days”, to receive from him the world dominion which had hitherto been wielded by pagan empires, portrayed as wild beasts.

To the “one like a son of man “ in the vision correspond “the saints of the Most High” in the angelic interpretation (Dan 7:13ff, 18, 27).

Jesus appears to have identified his followers with “the saints of the Most High”, as when he said to them, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32).

He spoke of himself as “the Son of Man” in the sense of “that (one like a) son of man” who receives the kingdom in Daniel’s vision, and promised them that they would share that kingdom with him if they were prepared to drink his cup and be baptized with his baptism (Mark 10:38) – that is, share his suffering.

The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Interesting Notes

That Jesus regarded the “necessity” of the Son of Man’s suffering as something “written” concerning him is plain.

“The Son of Man”, he said at the Last Supper, “goes **as it is written of him**” (Mark 14:21), and he submitted to his captors in Gethsemane with the words, “**Let the scriptures be fulfilled**” (Mark 14:49).

And while this evidence is derived predominantly from the Gospel of Mark, it is not confined to it.

In a patently non-Markan passage in Luke, where Jesus speaks of the coming day of the Son of Man’s manifestation, he adds, “But first he must suffer many things, and be rejected by this generation” (Luke 17:25). ...

Nor should we overlook the independent Johannine tradition, in its distinctive idiom, emphasizing that “the Son of Man must be lifted up” (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:34) – an expression in which his suffering and glory are combined.

The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Interesting Notes

The Samaritans did not recognize a succession of prophets as the Jews did:

God's last revelation of his will had been granted to Moses, and there would be no further revelation until the prophet like Moses arose.

It is on the prophet like Moses that what is loosely called the Samaritans' "messianic hope" was fixed.

They had nothing to do with the tribe of Judah or a prince of the house of David: they looked for the prophet whom they called the Taheb, the "restorer".

When, therefore, the Samaritan woman in John 4:19 perceived that Jesus was a prophet, she may have implied much more than a Jewish speaker would have meant by the same words.

The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Interesting Notes

[Isaiah]

The **vision** begins

with heaven and earth

being summoned to listen (1:2),

and it ends with their being so affected by what they hear
that they are transformed

into new heavens and a new earth (66:22).

It is about renewal on a massive scale;

the re-creation of the universe.

Isaiah's **vision** begins

with the historical Jerusalem of his own day,

corrupt and under judgment (1:8),

and finishes with the end-time city of God,

the new Jerusalem,

the joy and delight of the whole earth (65:17-19).

Barry G. Webb

Interesting Notes

History has meaning
because God is taking it somewhere,
and what the **vision** does
is to set the end firmly before us
and call us
to live every moment in the light of it (2:1-5).

Barry G. Webb

Interesting Notes

[Isaiah]

**In terms of theological significance,
the book of Isaiah
is the 'Romans' of the Old Testament.**

Barry G. Webb

Interesting Notes

All four major prophets thus received a divine touch.

**Isaiah for cleansing,
Jeremiah for empowering,
Ezekiel for food,
Daniel for strength.**

Ross McLaren

Interesting Notes

Babylon was in more or less continuous rebellion against Assyria from 721 to 689 BC, when it was decisively crushed by Sennacherib. ...

Babylon was to rise again, and its fate would not be sealed finally until its fall to a coalition of Medes and Persians under Cyrus the Great in 539 BC.
Barry G. Webb

I never really understood that Babylon had two “rises” to power.

Interesting Notes – Old Testament Prophets

Enoch – Genesis 5:24; Jude 14

Abraham – Genesis 20:1, 7

Aaron – Exodus 7:1

Moses – Deuteronomy 34:10

Barak – Judges 4:6; Heb 11:32

Gideon – Judges 6:11; Heb 11:32

Jephthah – Judges 11:1; Heb 11:32

Samson – Judges 13:24; Heb 11:32

Samuel – 1 Samuel 3:20; Heb 11:32

David – 1 Samuel 16:13; Heb 11:32

Gad – 1 Samuel 22:5

Nathan – 2 Samuel 7:2

Ahijah – 1 Kings 11:29

Jehu – 1 Kings 16:7

Elijah – 1 Kings 18:22

Elisha – 1 Kings 19:16

Isaiah – 2 Kings 19:2; Isaiah 1:1

Jonah – 2 Kings 14:25; Jonah 1:1;

Matthew 12:39

Shemiah – 2 Chronicles 12:5

Hanani – 2 Chronicles 16:7

Iddo – 2 Chronicles 13:22

Azariah – 2 Chronicles 15:11-8

Obed – 2 Chronicles 28:9

Jeremiah – 2 Chronicles 36:12;

Jeremiah 20:2

Haggai – Ezra 5:1; Haggai 1:1

Uriah – Jeremiah 26:20

Hananiah – Jeremiah 28:1

Ezekiel – Ezekiel 1:1

Daniel – Daniel 1:1; Matthew 24:15

Hosea – Hosea 1:1

Joel – Joel 1:1; Acts 2:16

Amos – Amos 1:1

Obadiah – Obadiah 1:1

Micah – Micah 1:1

Nahum – Nahum 1:1

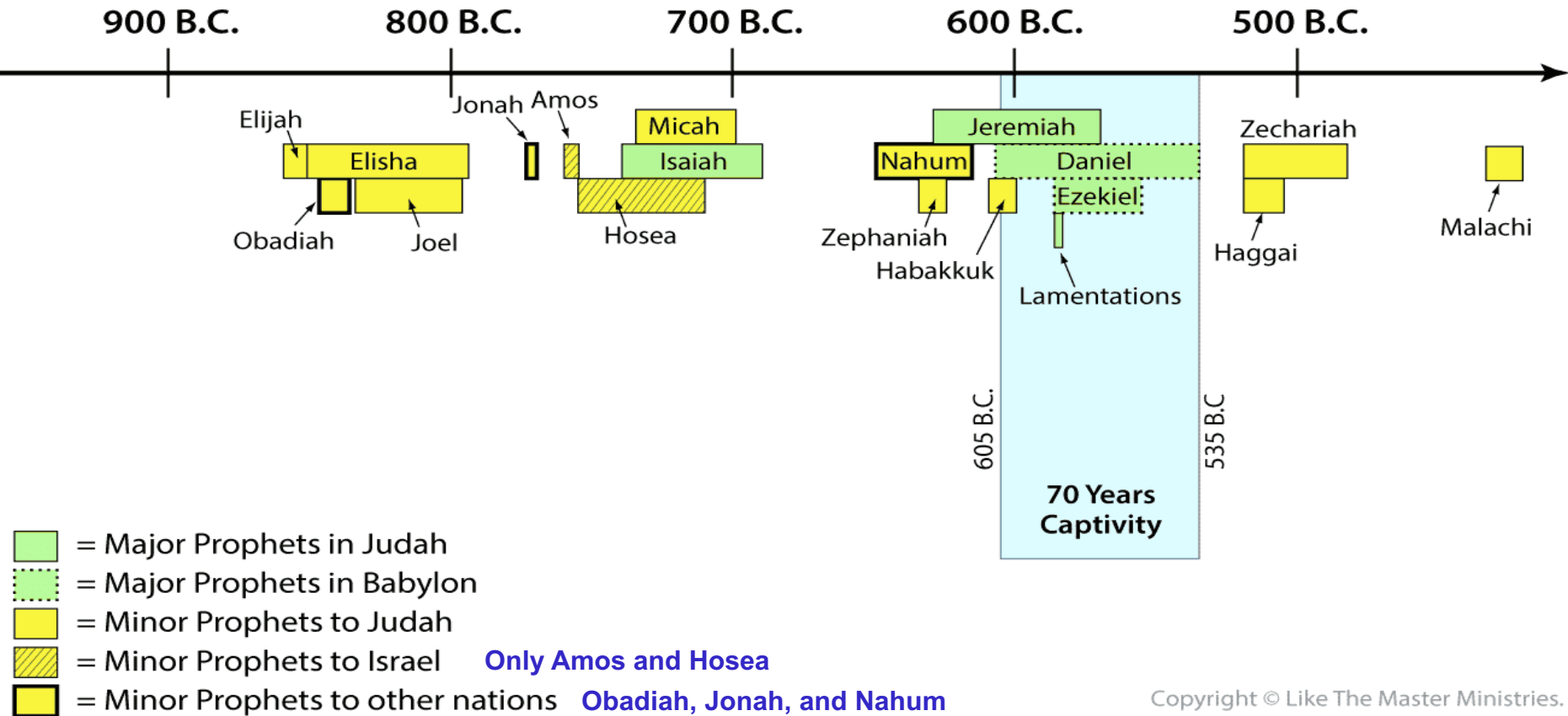
Habakkuk Habakkuk 1:1

Zephaniah – Zephaniah 1:1

Zechariah – Zechariah 1:1

Malachi – Malachi 1:1

Interesting Notes – Major and Minor Testament Prophets



Copyright © Like The Master Ministries.
All Rights Reserved. www.neverthirsty.org

**[some] prophets had international ministry.
Elisha and Elijah were both involved with kings of other nations.
Christopher J.H. Wright**

Interesting Notes – Prophetesses (Lady Prophets)

True Prophetesses

1. Miriam - Exodus 15:20
2. Deborah¹ - Judges 4:4
3. Huldah¹ - 2 Kings 22:14
2 Chronicles 34:22
4. Wife of Isaiah¹ - Isaiah 8:3
5. Anna² - Luke 2:36-38
- 6.
7. Four virgin daughters of Philip
- 8.
- 9.

False Prophetesses

1. Noadiah - Nehemiah 6:14
2. Jezebel - Revelation 2:20

Daughters - 4
¹Wives - 3
²Widows - 1
Marital Status Unknown - 3

Interesting Notes – New Testament Prophets

John the Baptist – Matthew 11:9-11

Jesus Christ – Luke 24:19; John 6:14

Barnabas – Acts 13:1

Simeon – Acts 13:1

Lucius – Acts 13:1

Manaen – Acts 13:1

Judas – Acts 16:32

Silas – Acts 16:32

John, the apostle – Revelation 1:1-3

Two Witnesses – Revelation 11:2-3

There are a total of forty-eight prophets named in the Bible

Interesting Notes

It was generally understood throughout the Israelite society that a prophet was to be remunerated for his services to the people (1 Sam 9:6-8; Amos 7:12), just as the preacher in the New Testament church was to be paid for his work (1 Cor 9:4, 7:14; 2 Cor 11:7-12).

There is some indication that Old Testament prophets wore a special distinctive garment – “a garment of haircloth” (2 Kings 1:8).

John T. Willis

Interesting Notes

- **If we are going to understand the prophets, it is essential that we remember that for them Yahweh was first and foremost (and above everything else) a God of compassion.**

John W. Miller

- **The prophets of Israel were the first people in history to see peace as an ideal. [(Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3), (Isaiah 11:9)].**
- **This is the world's first literature of peace.**

Jonathan Sacks

Interesting Notes

[Isaiah]

Chapter 40 opens by presenting us with his credentials. ...

In every other instance of prophetic commissioning in the Old Testament, the prophet is either addressed by name or clearly identified in the framing narrative, and the names of those so called are revered and honoured. ...

But in the case of ‘Second Isaiah’, we are required to believe that a ‘disciple’ who receives a separate commissioning almost a century and a half after the death of his master, and whose own ministry rivals or even surpasses that of his mentor, has had his identity completely suppressed!

Barry G. Webb

The writer’s evidence for a “One Isaiah” as the only author of Isaiah

Interesting Notes

Moral Benefits of Wisdom

My son, if you accept my words
and store up my commands within you,
turning your ear to wisdom
and applying your heart to understanding -
and cry aloud for understanding,
and **if you look for it as for silver**
and **search for it as for hidden treasure,**
then you will understand the fear of the Lord
and find the knowledge of God.

For the Lord gives wisdom;
from his mouth come
knowledge and understanding.

like hunting
for pearls!

Proverbs 2:1-6

Interesting Notes

When the nation of Israel is still united, the prophets function in dual roles of prophet and priest, or prophet and judge, providing guidance and correction to the king.

Later, when the kingdom divides and the rebellious political structures of the people are no longer under their guidance and influence, the prophets become outsiders, in conflict with the institutions of power.

Richard J. Foster

Interesting Notes

**By contrast [to the Old Testament prophecies],
if you research Islamic prophecies,
you will come up with some vague generalities,
not true prophecies.**

**Buddhism and Hinduism are not known
for making any specific prophecies
about world events.**

Andrew M. Davis

Interesting Notes

- By far the most prevalent mode of divinizing in the world of the prophets was by means of “**inductive**” divinizing. By “inductive” is meant the direct study of observations of concrete objects, in this case with the goal in mind of obtaining divinely revealed knowledge. ... It is estimated that twenty to thirty thousand extant tablets from the library of King Ashurbanipal at Nineveh have to do with omens of this nature – an indication of the fascination people had in that culture for this mode of divinizing.
- ... **intuitive** diviners of the ancient Near East viewed their experiences with their gods ... experienced as divine messages to be delivered to those with whom they had to do.
- ... From the sources available to date, however, it appears that compared to **inductive** divinizing, this intuitive mode of divinizing was relatively rare in the cultures of the ancient Near East.
- ... The outstanding example of **intuitive** divinizing appears to have been the predominant mode of contacting God – and from Israel’s earliest period of history onward.

Interesting Notes

[Isaiah]

[Note] his emphasis
on the personal message of God's forgiveness.

“Though your sins be as scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they be red like crimson,
they shall be as wool” (1:18).

“I have blotted out,
like a thick cloud,
your transgressions, and,
like a cloud, your sins” (44:22 NKJV).

“I, even I,
am He who blots out your transgressions for My own sake;
and I will not remember your sins” (43:25 NKJV).

Warren W. Wiersbe

Interesting Notes

Isaiah announced the Lord's personal word to Cyrus (45:1–7). He called Cyrus "his anointed," using the Hebrew word mashiach, from which the word "messiah" comes.

Typically in the Old Testament, the term designated either priests or kings, though prophets were also anointed.

The anointing designated the Lord's choosing someone for a special purpose. ...

The description of Cyrus as "messiah" is the only time in the Bible that a Gentile is so designated.

Brian Beyer

Interesting Notes – Isaiah New Testament References

Isaiah 1:9	Romans 9:29	Isaiah 45:23	Romans 14:11
Isaiah 6:9	Luke 8:10	Isaiah 49:6	Acts 13:47
Isaiah 6:9-10	Matthew 13:14-15, Mark 4:12, Acts 28:26-27, John 12:40	Isaiah 49:8	2 Corinthians 6:2
Isaiah 7:14	Matthew 1:23	Isaiah 52:5	Romans 2:24
Isaiah 8:8,10*	Matthew 1:23	Isaiah 52:7	Romans 10:15
Isaiah 8:12-13	1 Peter 3:14-15	Isaiah 52:11	2 Corinthians 6:17
Isaiah 8:14	Romans 9:33, 1 Peter 2:8	Isaiah 52:15	Romans 15:21
Isaiah 8:17*-18	Hebrews 2:13	Isaiah 53:1	John 12:38, Romans 10:16
Isaiah 9:1-2	Matthew 4:15-16	Isaiah 53:4	Matthew 8:17
Isaiah 11:10	Romans 15:12	Isaiah 53:7-8*	Acts 8:32-33
Isaiah 22:13	1 Corinthians 15:32	Isaiah 53:9	1 Peter 2:22
Isaiah 25:8	1 Corinthians 15:54	Isaiah 53:12	Luke 22:37
Isaiah 26:20	Hebrews 10:37	Isaiah 54:1	Galatians 4:27
Isaiah 28:11-12	1 Corinthians 14:21	Isaiah 54:13	John 6:45
Isaiah 28:16	Romans 9:33	Isaiah 55:3*	Acts 13:34
Isaiah 10:11	1 Peter 2:6	Isaiah 56:7	Matt 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46
Isaiah 29:10	Romans 11:8	Isaiah 43:20-1	1 Peter 2:9
Isaiah 29:13*	Matthew 15:8-9 Mark 7:6-7	Isaiah 44:28	Acts 13:22
Isaiah 29:14	1 Corinthians 1:19	Isaiah 59:7-8	Romans 3:15-17
Isaiah 40:3	Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, John 1:23	Isaiah 59:20-21	Romans 11:26-27
Isaiah 40:6-8	1 Peter 1:24-25	Isaiah 61:1-2	Luke 4:18-19
Isaiah 40:13	Romans 11:34, 1 Cor 2:16	Isaiah 61:6	1 Peter 2:9
Isaiah 42:1-4	Matthew 12:18-21	Isaiah 62:11	Matthew 21:5
Isaiah 43:20-21	1 Peter 2:9	Isaiah 64:4	1 Corinthians 2:9
Isaiah 44:28	Acts 13:22	Isaiah 65:1-2	Romans 10:20-21
Isaiah 45:21	Mark 12:32	Isaiah 66:1-2	Acts 7:49-50

Interesting Notes

In studying the prophetic books, it is important to keep in mind the process by which these books came into being, and so to appreciate better the way in which God preserved His word.

Such an approach helps one avoid making the serious mistake of thinking that the prophetic books were arranged in simple chronological order.

John T. Willis

Interesting Notes

The book of Isaiah addresses many issues.

Nonetheless, certain themes appear repeatedly.

Five of the most significant themes are

the remnant,

the sovereignty of God,

the servant,

the Holy One of Israel,

and the Messiah.

Bryan Beyer

Interesting Notes

The prophetic unit we commonly call “Isaiah 53” actually begins in 52:13.

The passage contains fifteen verses and divides symmetrically into five three-verse sections.

These five sections describe the servant’s introduction, the servant’s rejection, the servant’s suffering, the servant’s death, and the servant’s triumph.

Bryan Beyer

Interesting Notes

Herbert Wolf, while arguing for single authorship, suggests the terms “First Isaiah” and “Second Isaiah” might be used in much the same way as we refer to “First Timothy” and “Second Timothy.”

That is, the two are almost separate works (as 1 and 2 Timothy are), and the terminology provides a useful distinction.

Wolf’s suggestion appears useful as long as those who hear the terms are clear on the speaker’s intent.

Bryan Beyer

Interesting Notes

Isaiah's contribution to the New Testament also becomes evident when we examine the data. Approximately one out of every seventeen verses contains material that comes directly from Isaiah. The New Testament writers clearly knew the book of Isaiah well. ...

The New Testament writers' use of Isaianic material falls into three categories.

First, New Testament writers point to events in Jesus's life and in the life of the church as directly fulfilling Isaiah's words.

Second, New Testament writers make secondary application of Isaiah's words to situations in Jesus's life or the life of the early church.

Third, New Testament writers use Isaiah's words because his words, while not directly related to the point they are making, nonetheless fit the sense of what they want to say.

Bryan Beyer

Interesting Notes

This concept of substitutionary suffering at God's hand for the sins of others is unique to Isaiah in the Old Testament prophetic corpus.

Servants of God sometimes suffered as they ministered, and God's hand sometimes used suffering as his instrument to mold people into his image.

But no other servant or prophet actually suffered for the sins of the people, taking their punishment and allowing them to go free.

Bryan Beyer

Interesting Notes

[Jesus Raises a Widow's Son]

They were all filled with awe and praised God.

“A great prophet has appeared among us,” they said.

“God has come to help his people.”

Luke 7:11-16

Interesting Notes

[Jesus Raises a Widow's Son]

They were all filled with awe and praised God.

“A great **prophet** has appeared among us,” they said.

“God has come to help his people.”

Luke 7:11-16

“God has come to help his people” – like Immanuel (God with us)

Interesting Notes

Isaiah knew himself to be mortal and flawed,
but he had the child's courage to say to the Lord,
“Here I am. Send me.”

Madeleine L'Engle

Interesting Notes

**If you read only the New Testament,
it's like joining a meeting very late
and missing the discussions that have happened
and the decisions that have been made so far.**

...

**The New Testament gives us God's final answer,
but it is the Old Testament that tells us
both the scale of the problem
and the scale of God's promise.**

Christopher J.H. Wright

Interesting Notes

**No earthly city has the same significance for us
that Zion had for the Old Testament people of God.**

**‘Our citizenship is in heaven,’ Paul tells us,
and that heavenly city
certainly is not in ruins
as Zion was.**

Barry G. Webb

Other Interesting Notes

Remember our discussion of the gradual execution of God's Plan:

- development of God's "chosen" people that would benefit all people
- guiding them, and establishing a relationship with them
- using judges and prophets to guide the people
- allowing them to have a king, and providing the great "type" in David
- sending prophets to emphasize the rebellion of the people, and the hope for the future in a Messiah that would be a Savior
- the birth, life, and ministry; the death and resurrection of Christ

Consider this earlier example from the Israelites entering Canaan:

**But I will not drive them out in a single year,
because the land would become desolate
and the wild animals too numerous for you.**

Little by little

**I will drive them out before you,
until you have increased enough
to take possession of the land.**

[also consider the 40-yr wander in the wilderness]

Exodus 23:29-30

Mis-informed Pearls of Prophecy

Pearls from the Prophets

1

Mis(in)formed Pearls of Prophecy

Lord Kelvin, world-class scientist and Christian

There is nothing new to be discovered in physics now.

All that remains is more and more precise measurement.

1900 (perhaps mis-attributed)

Radio has no future.

X-rays are clearly a hoax.

The aeroplane is scientifically impossible.

1902

**But He had great quotes
about his belief in God and Christ.**

Telephone Limitations

The telephone was not widely appreciated for the first 15 years because people did not see a use for it.

In fact, in the British parliament it was mentioned there was no need for telephones because **“we have enough messengers here.”**

Western Union believed that it could never replace the telegraph. In 1876, an internal memo read: **“This telephone has too many shortcomings to be seriously considered as a means of communication.”**

Even Mark Twain, upon being invited by Alexander Graham Bell to invest \$5 000 in the new invention, could not see a future in the telephone.

**People love a failed prophecy,
and sometimes work to embellish the truth in the process.**

Thomas Watson, Chairman of IBM

I think there is a world market for maybe five computers.

Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM in 1943 (perhaps mis-attributed, concerning a sales estimate for a particular model)

The idea of internally producing a small, affordable computer was at odds with IBM's corporate culture.

One naysayer remarked that

“IBM bringing out a personal computer would be like teaching an elephant to tap dance.”

1981

Years before IBM launched the personal computer in 1981, Xerox had already successfully designed and used PCs internally... but decided to concentrate on the production of photocopiers.

Even Ken Olson, founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, said in 1977, **“There is no reason anyone would want a computer in their home.”**

Voltaire, Famous French Philosopher

In 1776, at age 82, Voltaire brought to a culmination his disdain for the Bible when he published The Bible Fully Explained. The two-volume work was Voltaire's commentary on the whole Bible. His purpose in writing was to "make the whole building [of Christianity] crumble." ... Of his massive tome, in which he derided the Bible on every page, he stated, **"The subject is now exhausted: the cause is decided for those who are willing to avail themselves of their reason and their lights, and people will no more read this [Bible]."**

However, instead of the Bible becoming irrelevant and no longer believed, [continued to] increase in circulation... [Voltaire's] former house, only fifty-eight years after his death, [began to be] used as a storehouse to house Bibles and Gospel tracts, and printing presses he once employed to print his anti-Christian sentiments [were] being used to print Bibles!

"It is hard for you to kick against the goads" (Acts 26:14b)

Automobile Limitations

In the early 20th century a world market for only 4 million automobiles was predicted because:
“the world would run out of chauffeurs.”

Shortly after the end of World War II (1945), the whole of Volkswagen, factory and patents, was offered free to Henry Ford II.

He dismissed the Volkswagen Beetle as a bad design.

Today, more than 70 million motorcars are produced every year.

The Beetle became one of the best-selling vehicles of all time.

Railroad Limitations

Irish scientist, Dr. Dionysius Lardner (1793 – 1859) didn't believe that trains could contribute much in speedy transport.

He wrote: “**Rail travel at high speed is not possible, because passengers ‘ would die of asphyxia’ [suffocation].”**

Today, trains reach speeds of over 300 mph.

Movie and Television Limitations

In 1927, H.M. Warner, of Warner Brothers, asked,

“Who the xxxx wants to hear actors talk?”

In 1936, Radio Times editor Rex Lambert thought

“Television won’t matter in your lifetime or mine.”

Solid State Limitations

After the invention of the transistor in 1947, several US electronics companies rejected the idea of a portable radio.

Apparently it was thought nobody would want to carry a radio around.

When Bell put the transistor on the market in 1952 they had few takers apart from a small Japanese start-up called Sony.

They introduced the transistor radio in 1954.

Other Predictions about the Future of Science

In 1894, A.A. Michelson, who with E.W. Morley seven years earlier experimentally demonstrated the constancy of the speed of light, said that the future of science would consist of “**adding a few decimal places to the results already obtained.**”

Perhaps the guy who got it wrong most was the commissioner of the US Office of Patents: in 1899, Charles H. Duell, assured President McKinley that “**everything that can be invented has been invented.**”

Remember that Einstein developed the ideas that revolutionized all of physics while working in the Swiss patent office by 1905.

Music Predictions

In 1954, a concert manager fired Elvis Presley, saying, “**You ought to go back to driving a truck.**”

In 1962, Decca Records rejected the Beatles, “**We don’t like their sound, and guitar music is on the way out.**”

Social Predictions

In 1966, Time Magazine predicted,

“By 2000, the machines will be producing so much that everyone in the U.S. will, in effect, be independently wealthy.”

Presidential Election Predictions

1864 – “Mr. Lincoln is already beaten. He cannot be re-elected.”

Horace Greely

Lincoln beat McClellan by a margin of 212 electoral votes to 21.

1936 – “FDR will be a one-term president”

Mark Sullivan

”The race will not be close at all... I’ll stake my reputation as a prophet on it.”

William Randolph Hearst

FDR beat Landon by a margin of 523 electoral votes to 9.

**Most elections produce such bold predictions –
that turn out to be completely wrong!**

The Great Canals

[Suez]

A most futile attempt and totally impossible to be carried out.

Benjamin Disraeli (1858)

The first vessel sailed through the Suez Canal November 17, 1869.

[Panama – begun in 1881 by the French, who sold their claim after completing one-quarter of the work]

The Panama Canal is actually a thing of the past, and Nature in her works will soon obliterate all traces of French energy and money expended ...

Scientific American, 1891

The US purchased the French claims and completed the waterway, which was opened to shipping in 1914.

Entertainment Technology

[Who'll Pay a Whole Nickel to See Moving Pictures?]

[My] invention ... can be exploited for a certain time as a scientific curiosity, but apart from that it has no commercial value whatsoever.

**August Lumiere
(French co-inventor of the Lumiere motion-picture camera), 1895**

[No One Will Pay a Quarter to Hear Talking Pictures!]

The talking motion picture will not supplant the regular silent motion picture. ... There is such a tremendous investment to pantomime pictures that it would be absurd to disturb it....

**Thomas Alva Edison
after the first public demonstration
of his newly invented talking picture machine, 1913**

The Phonograph ... is not of any commercial value.

**Thomas Alva Edison
(inventor of the phonograph), remark to his assistant, 1880**

Communication Technology

[The Telegraph]

I am not satisfied ... that under any rate of postage that could be adopted, its revenues could be made equal to its expenditures.

**U.S. Postmaster General,
rejecting a sale offer by Samuel Morse to sell the rights, 1845**

[Wireless Telegraph]

I do not look upon any system of wireless telegraphy as a serious competitor with our cables.

**Sir John Wolfe-Barry
(Chief Executive of Western Telegraph Company), 1907**

[Telephone]

That's an amazing invention, but who would ever want to use one of them?

Rutherford B. Hayes (President of the United States), 1876

Entertainment Technology (2)

[Radio]

The radio craze ... will die out in time.

Thomas Alva Edison, 1922

[Television]

Video won't be able to hold onto any market it captures after the first six months. People will soon get tired of staring at a plywood box every night.

Darryl F. Zanuck (head of 20th Century-Fox Studios), c. 1946

Space Travel

The foolish idea of shooting at the moon is an example of the absurd length to which vicious specialization will carry scientists working in thought-tight compartments. **[thought-tight – how ironic!]**

A.W. Bickerton, Professor of Physics and Chemistry, 1926

No rocket will reach the moon save by a miraculous discovery of an explosive far more energetic than any known.

Nikola Tesla (American Scientist), 1928

Space travel is utter bilge.

Dr. Richard van der Riet Wooley,
British Astronomer Royal, 1956

Man will never reach the moon regardless of all future scientific advances.

Lee DeForest (inventor of the triode vacuum tube), 1957

Memorable Speech

**The world will little note
nor long remember
what we say here.**

**Abraham Lincoln, U.S. President,
dedicating the national cemetery at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, 1863**

Memorable Note on Prediction

**Sir Winston Churchill was once asked
to give the qualifications a person needed
in order to succeed in politics,
and he replied:**

**“It is the ability to foretell
what is going to happen tomorrow,
next week, next month, and next year.**

**And to have the ability afterwards
to explain why it didn't happen.”**

from Be Comforted (Isaiah) by Warren W. Wiersbe

National Boastfulness

**Whether you like it or not,
history is on our side.**

We will bury you!”

**The premier of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev,
made that statement to a group of Western diplomats
on November 18, 1956.**

**But Khrushchev is dead,
and the Soviet Union no longer exists.**

Khrushchev’s boastful prophecy was not fulfilled.

from Be Comforted (Isaiah) by Warren W. Wiersbe

Long-lasting Technologies

Consider technologies that appeared to be desired or needed forever:

- **Swiss-made precision watches → crystal (Seiko) → digital**
- **photographic film (Kodak) → digital camera**
- **horse-drawn carriages → automobiles**
- **PDE: Sparta Spoke Factory; large business making wooden spokes for wagons**
- **land-line telephones → cell phones**
- **amateur radios → cell phones**
- **Others?**

Charles Schulz as a Cartoonist

Think of those who rejected his work!



Mis(in)formed Pearls of Prophecy

24

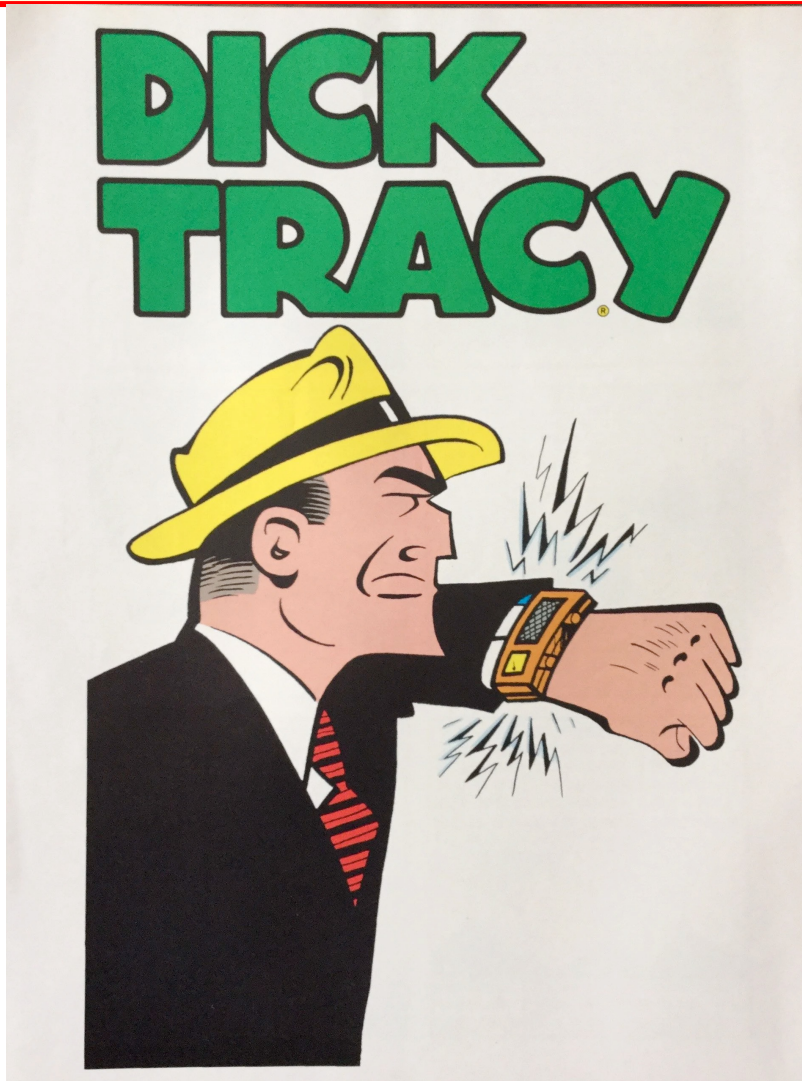
Vincent van Gogh as a Painter

Sold One Painting in His Lifetime! “Starry Night” worth ~ \$100M



Cartoonist Chester Gould (Dick Tracy) [Morris]

Consider the “prediction” of the two-way wrist communicator!



Science-Fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke

**Proposed the concept of
geo-synchronous orbits for communication satellites in 1945**

A geostationary orbit, is a circular geosynchronous orbit 22,236 mi in altitude above Earth's equator and following the direction of Earth's rotation.

An object in such an orbit has an orbital period equal to Earth's rotational period, and so to ground observers it appears motionless, in a fixed position in the sky.

Communications satellites are often placed in a geostationary orbit so that Earth-based satellite antennas (located on Earth) do not have to rotate to track them but can be pointed permanently at the position in the sky where the satellites are located.

Weather satellites are also placed in this orbit for real-time monitoring and data collection, and navigation satellites to provide a known calibration point and enhance GPS accuracy.

Perpetual Motion Machines

The history of perpetual motion machines dates at least back to the Middle Ages. For millennia, it was not clear whether perpetual motion devices were possible or not, but modern theories of thermodynamics have shown that they are impossible. Despite this, many attempts have been made to construct such machines, continuing into modern times.

- a wheel spinning on its axle powered by lodestones; 8th-century
- drawing of a perpetual motion machine appeared in 13th-century
- Leonardo da Vinci made a number of drawings of devices he hoped would make free energy, but was generally against such devices
- Georg Andreas Bäckler designed a self-powered water mill in 1686
- Johann Bessler claimed to have experimented with 300 perpetual motion models before developing what he said were working models (1712)
- the Royal Academy of Sciences in Paris stated in 1775 that they would no longer accept or deal with proposals concerning perpetual motion.
- Many shysters raised money fraudulently using fake machines
- In 1900, Nikola Tesla claimed to have discovered an abstract principle on which to base a perpetual motion machine
- Popular Science, in October 1920, published an article on the lure of this

Perpetual Motion Machines



Bob Propst — The Office Cubicle

While working as a consultant for Herman Miller in the 1960s, Bob Propst introduced America to the open plan office and with it, the office cubicle.

It was designed to "give knowledge workers a more flexible, fluid environment than the rat-maze boxes of offices."

Companies saw his invention as a way to save money, doing away with individual offices and replacing them with open plans and cubicles.

Propst came to lament his invention. "The cubiclizing of people in modern corporations is monolithic insanity," he said.

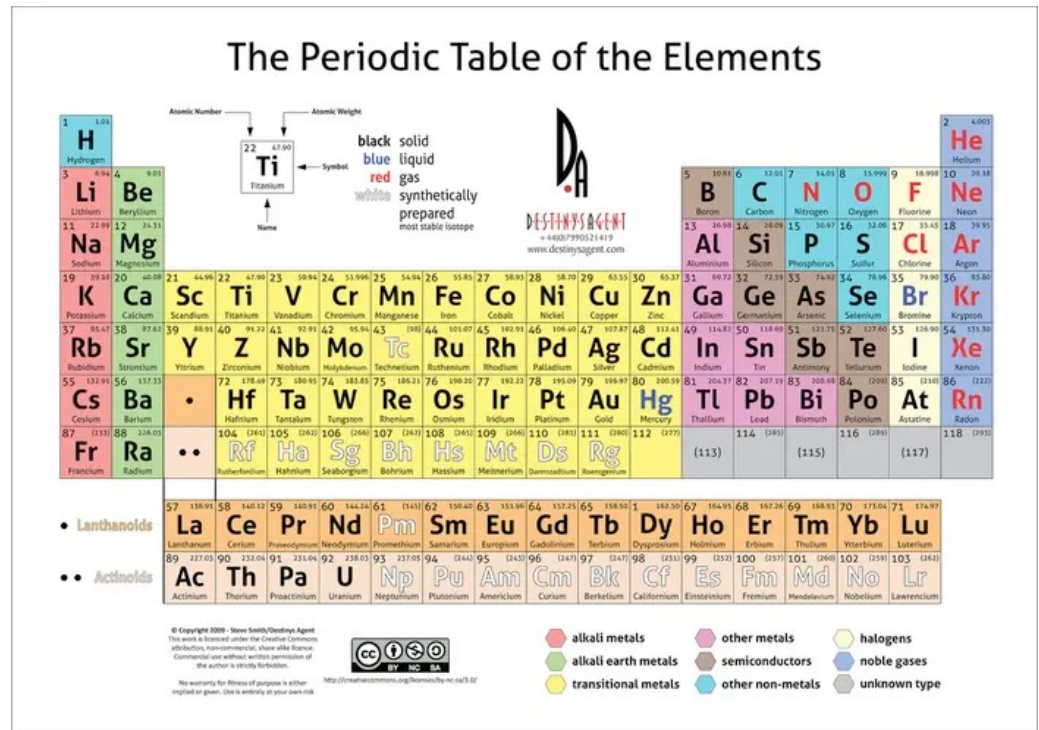


Dmitri Mendeleev — The Periodic Table (seeing the pattern)

Dmitri Mendeleev, a Russian chemist from the late nineteenth century, predicted the modern-day periodic table nearly perfectly. When he began his research in 1863, scientists only knew about 60 or so elements. We've since discovered more than 40 more.

By organizing elements' atomic weight and various properties, Mendeleev started to see patterns. He noted the gaps in the table and predicted elements that would likely fill them in the missing places.

For example, Mendeleev foresaw the addition of germanium, which wasn't discovered until 1886.



<https://www.businessinsider.com/predictions-from-the-past-that-came-true-2013-9#from-1863-when-only-60-elements-were-known-a-russian-chemist-designed-a-periodic-table-that-predicted-the-weights-and-properties-of-the-missing-40-perfectly-4>

Interpretation of Scripture

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Old Testament Texts Quoted in the New]

- 1) Sometimes New Testament writers quote from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament
- 2) ... in the majority of cases, the New Testament quotes the Septuagint (LXX) text
- 3) Sometimes the New Testament writer quotes neither the Hebrew text nor the LXX, but either gives another text or paraphrases the Old Testament text in his own words
- 4) Sometimes the New Testament quotes passages as being from an Old Testament prophet, but which are not found among his writings ... (example Matthew 2:23 – “He shall be called a Nazarene” ... This is not to imply that he did not speak it orally, however.

John T. Willis

Meaning is more important than text and translation.
Consider that the Truth must transcend
the cultures and languages of man

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

A careful study of the contexts of OT passages quoted in the NT indicates that usually the NT writer gives a new meaning to the OT quotation.

There are basically four categories of quotations...

- 1) NT writers apply OT passages to Christ and Christianity which occurred before the Old Testament writers referred to them...
[“them” meaning Christ...]**
- 2) New Testament writers apply Old Testament statements to Christ which were taking place at the same time that the Old Testament writers lived...**
- 3) New Testament writers apply Old Testament statements to Christ which were predictions when the Old Testament writers uttered them, but were fulfilled long before Christ came...**
- 4) Sometimes, two different New Testament writers or speakers apply the same Old Testament passage to different situations...**

John T. Willis

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Here and throughout, we should avoid any suggestion that the Old Testament and its 'religion' or 'theology' was somehow 'bad' and that the Christian dispensation is somehow a 'replacement'.

The author is stressing that Israel's scriptures always looked ahead and saw the key elements of Israel's life as forward-looking signposts, recognizing that when you arrive at your destination you don't need the signposts any more, not because they were bad but because they have done their job.

... scripture itself points beyond itself.

N.T. Wright, and Michael F. Bird

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

**Prophets evolved as the threat grew –
false gods which led to nowhere.**

**The prophets were speaking to people
in life-or-death situations.**

**Consider that these promises
were a structure to build upon.**

The prophets spoke truth to power.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Sometimes groupings of prophetic messages and historical events were made chronologically and sometimes topically.

Often the reasons for gathering certain passages into a unit are very obvious, but other times such a determination is difficult, almost impossible.

Fred M. Wood and Ross McLaren

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

... Paul and John in their respective epistles direct that prophetic utterances in church must be intelligently evaluated and accepted only if their testimony to Christ is unexceptionable –

Paul insisting on the acknowledgment that Jesus is Lord

(1 Corinthians 12:1-3) and

John on the confession of his real incarnation

(1 John 4:1-3).

The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

A major Jewish argument against Christ and Christianity was that they had no authority for their existence in the sacred scriptures, which was (to the Jews) the Old Testament. It was primarily to meet this opposition that the early church used the Old Testament to justify their existence.

John T. Willis

**Jesus replied,
“You are in error
because you do not know the Scriptures
or the power of God.”**

Matthew 22:29

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Literary Tools

for the Use of the Old Testament in the New:

- 1) allegory
- 2) accommodation
- 3) parallel events and ideas
- 4) primary and subordinate meanings; “double meaning” or “double fulfillment”
- 5) typical (or typological) meaning

John T. Willis

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

In Greek, there are two different words for “time”:
the first, **chronos**, refers to simple, chronological time;
the second, **kairos**, points to a temporal convergence,
a critical, opportune moment
when all the strands come together.

For Christians,
the birth of Christ in Bethlehem
marked just such a **kairos**,
one for which the faithful yearned and longed.

[We must] rest contented
in that middle space
between the issuing of the prophecies
and the fulfillment of the **kairos**.

Louis Markos

A second Kairos occurred with the resurrection of Christ. We are living between that second Kairos and the final Kairos, when Christ comes again.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Consider how the New Testament interprets the Old Testament

The New Testament writers used the Old Testament in so many different ways that no one simple explanation can account for all the passages which must be studied.

John T. Willis

... these inspired men did not feel compelled to give an exact quote of biblical material from a particular version in order to use that material.

Evidently, they worked on the principle that basic truths are more important than exact quotations.

John T. Willis

Consider the inability of God to be reduced to such exact quotations (no common language) rather than understanding his true nature.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Consider how the New Testament interprets the Old Testament

The New Testament nowhere states explicitly how it uses the passages it quotes from the Old Testament.

Therefore, the only way to determine this is to examine each passage quoted in its Old Testament context, and each New Testament passage in which an Old Testament text is quoted.

... Since the New Testament does not state how it uses the Old Testament, one must avoid insisting dogmatically that one explanation must be adopted to the exclusion of all others.

John T. Willis

**The story of Christ was imbedded in the fabric of the Bible
and its prophecies,
and when it actually appeared
it was totally unexpected in character.**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Psalms is quoted seventy-nine times. (in Isaiah)

Barry G. Webb

**This illustrates the strong connection
between the prophet Isaiah
and the “Scriptures”.**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

What is really meant by prophecy being **fulfilled**? (1)

Positively, the early church affirmed that the noblest hopes and aspirations expressed in the Old Testament, while they were realized in a limited way in certain outstanding Old Testament figures, have been realized in a **full** and **complete** way only in Christ.

Christ and the early Christians used the word “fulfil”
... to convey this idea.

It is true that sometimes they used this word to affirm that a direct prediction concerning Christ was **literally** fulfilled, but ... this was not what they had in mind.

Rather, they often used the word “fulfil” when referring to an Old Testament passage which **originally** had nothing to do with Christ directly, but which the early church saw as a parallel or an antitype (or something similar) to some event or truth concerning Christ.

John T. Willis

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

What is really meant by prophecy being **fulfilled? (2)**

Another way of saying this is that we do not look for a prescribed, detailed blueprint in what the early church did as much as a theological (God-centered) pattern as to how the early church imitated God, including imitating Jesus.

In other words, how did the early church embody the life of God (the theological pattern) in their own community and mission?

The Acts and the Epistles do not constitute patterns (a specified, detailed blueprint for the true church) for the church but rather explanations, interpretations, and applications of the mystery of Christ for living out the pattern exhibited in the ministry of Jesus who is the image of God and reveals the future.

John Mark Hicks

PDE: We must base our actions on the Greatest Commandments.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

What is really meant by prophecy being **fulfilled? (2)**

Another way of saying this is that we do not look for a prescribed, detailed blueprint in what the early church did as much as a theological (God-centered) pattern as to how the early church imitated God, including imitating Jesus.

In other words, how did the early church embody the life of God (the theological pattern) in their own community and mission?

The Acts and the Epistles do not constitute patterns (a specified, detailed blueprint for the true church) for the church but rather explanations, interpretations, and applications of the mystery of Christ for living out the pattern exhibited in the ministry of Jesus who is the image of God and reveals the future.

John Mark Hicks

PDE: We must base our actions on the Greatest Commandments.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

What is really meant by prophecy being **fulfilled**? (3)

This is what Christians confess, and when they live worthy of that gospel or participate in that gospel, their obedience glorifies God and their confession is proven authentic.

This obedience is not a test of loyalty to a group or a line in the sand about whether a congregation is a true church or not.

Rather, it is about whether people believe the gospel and whether they have internalized the gospel to such an extent that they share their resources with the poor in a way that imitates Christ.

The gospel is not a pattern of prescribed forms for the church.

The pattern is Jesus.

John Mark Hicks

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Scripture is no less inspired and authoritative because it is seen to have passed through many processes before it arrived at its present form.

To assume, as some did in the past, that analysis of the books of Scripture into their sources and examination of the process of compiling and editing casts doubt on their inspiration is a fallacy.

Behind all the long processes by which Scripture was written down we see even more clearly the guiding hand of God.

He did not dictate inerrantly to one person.

He used a host of people and many media to reveal Himself and His purposes to mankind.

Gordon Robinson

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Consider the portal given in Romans 1:19-20 for what may be known about God is plain to them:

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities – His eternal power and divine nature – have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made.

Arguably – God's revelation through creation is a revelation with completely different characteristics than that of His written word. There is no "loss in translation" discussion when pondering in the Andromeda Galaxy or the miracle of birth.

PDE

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

If we stand very close to a mosaic, we will see little pieces of whatever makes it up - pebbles, chunks of glass, shards of pottery, bits of metal.

As we back away from it, looking at more of the whole instead of scrutinizing the parts, we will experience a moment in which the image created by all these little pieces suddenly “pops” out of the background into our vision.

Oh, now I see it! we exclaim.

All the while, we are listening for the heart of the Holy Spirit beating within our own hearts. “

“Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live,”

God calls to us through the prophet Isaiah (55:3).

Richard J. Foster

A similar effect is commonly accomplished with a mosaic of pictures.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

**You can study God expertly in His parts
and miss Him entirely in His Being.**

**Sometimes I think today's evangelicals have dissected God,
put Him in jars,
labeled all His parts,
and then breathed a sigh of relief.**

Rick McKinley

**Consider the poem about the blind men and the elephant
by John Godfrey Saxe [from PDE]**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

I fear that some of what the Bible does say about beauty, though not necessarily using that word, has been screened out by the rather severe traditions of reading and studying scripture that have gone looking for dogma rather than delight.

If you spend your time asking whether the second half of the book of Exodus came from a fourth-century source rather than a tenth-century one and worrying about which bits of text were imported by a later redactor, you may be focusing on the wrong thing.

You would be like someone going into a wonderful art gallery and concentrating on the different types of picture frames.

N.T. Wright (1)

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

... the second half of the book of Exodus is, from one point of view, all about beauty.

It is about the commissioning and construction of the wilderness Tabernacle, whose vivid colors and rich decoration must have been all the more striking in the midst of a barren desert.

And it is to the Tabernacle that John's gospel directs our attention right from the start.

The Word became flesh, he says,
and tabernacled in our midst.

N.T. Wright (2)

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Peter declared]

“To [Jesus] **all the prophets** witness that,
through His name,
whoever believes in Him
will receive remission of sins”

(Acts 10:43 NKJV)

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

**... many Christian communities view
the stories and parables of the Bible
as raw material to be translated
into a single, understandable meaning
rather than experienced as infinitely rich treasures
that can speak to us in a plurality of ways.**

Pete Rollins

**As we live our lives,
we see God's message from different perspectives.**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

**... many Christian communities view
the stories and parables of the Bible
as raw material to be translated
into a single, understandable meaning
rather than experienced as infinitely rich treasures
that can speak to us in a plurality of ways.**

Pete Rollins

**As we live our lives,
we see God's message from different perspectives.**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

**In Romans alone, for instance ...
there are seventy quotations,
cited from seventeen of the thirty-nine Old Testament books
available to him.**

**Isaiah (with twenty citations)
and Psalms (with fifteen)
are his favorites,
but he ranges widely,
covering most of the territory
from Genesis to Malachi.**

Eugene H. Peterson

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

So on the first day of the seventh month Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were able to understand. He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand.

And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law. ...

The Levites ... instructed the people in the Law while the people were standing there. They read from the Book of the Law of God, making it clear and giving the meaning so that the people understood what was being read.

Nehemiah 8:1-8

Even at this point in the history of the land, it was difficult for the average listener to understand the meaning of Scripture without some help.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.) (1)

The disciples came to him and asked,
“Why do you speak to the people in parables?”

He replied, “Because the knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them. This is why I speak to them in parables: [*quoted Isaiah 6:9-10*]

But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears because they hear. For truly I tell you, many **prophets** and righteous people longed to see what you see but did not see it, and to hear what you hear but did not hear it.

Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the **prophet**:

“I will open my mouth in parables,
I will utter things hidden
since the creation of the world.” [*Psalms 78:2*]

Matthew 13:10-12, 13, 34-35

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Discussion with the Sadducees about Marriage at the Resurrection]

**Then the Sadducees,
who say there is no resurrection,
came to him with a question.**

**[Scenario with seven brothers
who were by law all eventually
married to the same woman]**

**At the resurrection whose wife will she be,
since the seven were married to her?"**

**Jesus replied,
"Are you not in error
because you do not know the Scriptures
or the power of God?**

Mark 12:18-24

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

And they asked him,

“Why do the teachers of the law say
that Elijah must come first?” [Malachi 4:5]

Jesus replied,

“To be sure,
Elijah does come first,
and restores all things.

Why then is it **written**
that the Son of Man
must suffer much
and be rejected?

Mark 9:11-12

Interpretation: Seeing the Connections

Theme: the blind and the deaf

**Consider the moment that Helen Keller,
Blind and deaf,
finally grasped what her teacher Anne Sullivan
was trying to teach her!**

**This is perhaps the greatest AHA! Moment
in recorded history!**

**Once she made the connection,
she became a world-renowned figure,
helping others with disabilities.**

It might be that we should be more like Anne Sullivan:

- **seeing the potential in folks when others overlook it**
- **giving of time and energy to pour into the lives of others**
- **enabling others to break through and live life to the fullest**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Theme of “Blindness”

[Ray Stevens’ song: ‘Everything is Beautiful’]

Everything is beautiful in its' own way

Like a starry summer night or a snow covered winter's day

Everybody's beautiful in their own way

Under God's heaven, the world's gonna find a way

There is none so blind as he who will not see

We must not close our minds, we must let our thought be free

For every hour that passes by, you know the world gets a little bit older

It's time to realize that beauty lies in the eyes of the beholder

We shouldn't care about the length of his hair or the color of his skin

Don't worry about what shows from without but the love that lives within

We're gonna get it all together now

and everything gonna work out fine

Just take a little time to look on the good side my friend

And straighten it out in your mind

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Jesus Predicts His Death a Third Time]

Jesus took the Twelve aside and told them,
“We are going up to Jerusalem,
and everything that is written by the **prophets**
about the Son of Man will be fulfilled.

He will be delivered over to the Gentiles.

They will mock him, insult him and spit on him;
they will flog him and kill him.

On the third day he will rise again.”

Luke 18:31-33

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

Theme of “Blindness” [PDE]

– story of the rich man and Lazarus; the rich man was in torment...

“He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

“Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

“‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

“He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Luke 16:27-31

Abraham knew that their minds were closed, and a temporary visit from the grave would not help their depth of understanding.

What are our eyes closed to?

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Blinded by the Veil]

We are not like Moses, who would put a **veil** over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away.

[Exodus 34:29-35]

But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same **veil** remains when the old covenant is read.

It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away.

Even to this day when Moses is read, a **veil** covers their hearts. But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the **veil** is taken away.

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

And we all, who with **unveiled** faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3:13-18

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

The apostle Paul cited Isaiah 54:1
when he **compared**
those who sought to make themselves right with God
by keeping the law of Moses
with those who placed their faith
in Jesus Christ (Gal 4:27).

Bryan Beyer

But the Jerusalem that is above is free, and she is our mother.

For it is written:

“Be glad, barren woman,
you who never bore a child;
shout for joy and cry aloud,
you who were never in labor;

because more are the children of the desolate woman
than of her who has a husband.”

Galatians 4:26-27

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Fulfillment of Isaiah's Prophetic Words (1)]

Verse The Servant's Description Fulfillment in Jesus

52:13 Raised, lifted up, exalted God exalted him

and will exalt him fully at the second coming (Phil 2:9–11)

52:14 Appearance disfigured; Received beating at his trial (Mt 26:67)

**52:15 Sprinkled many nations; Sprinkling of his blood brings
 forgiveness (1 Pt 1: 2)**

**53:3 Despised and rejected; Many rejected him, especially the
 leaders (Jn 11: 47– 50)**

**53:4–6 Suffered for our sin; stricken by God; Died for our sin
 according to God's plan (1 Cor 15: 3)**

**53:7 Silent before oppressors; Silent before accusers at his trial
 (Mk 14: 60– 61)**

53:8 Killed for his people's sin; Died for our sin (2 Cor 5: 14– 15)

**53:9 Assigned a grave with the wicked and rich, but did no wrong;
 Crucified between two robbers, buried in a rich council
 member's tomb (Mk 15: 27– 28, 43– 46)**

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Fulfillment of Isaiah's Prophetic Words (2)]

Verse **The Servant's Description Fulfillment in Jesus**

53:10 **Lord's will to crush him; he will see his offspring God
prepared him as an offering for sin (Rom 5: 9; 2 Cor 5: 21)**

53:12 **Receives great reward because he poured out his life;
Receives great reward because he poured out his life
(Phil 2:9–11; Heb 1:3–4)**

Bryan Beyer

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[God Will Establish Fellowship with His People (Isaiah 25:6–7)]

Isaiah described the intimate fellowship the Lord would establish with his people.

The reference to Yahweh as “the LORD almighty” or “LORD of hosts” stresses God’s power and ability to make it happen.

The Lord would prepare a banquet for his people such as the world had never seen.

Many interpreters link Isaiah’s vision with the apostle John’s vision of the wedding supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6–9).

Bryan Beyer

“Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come,

and his bride has made herself ready...

Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” ... Revelation 19:6-9

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Identity of the servant in Isaiah 49:3, “You are my servant, Israel” (1)]

How can Israel have a mission to itself (Isaiah 49:5–6)?

For this reason, many interpreters have looked beyond the simplest understanding of the term “Israel.” One option is to understand the servant as the Messiah. Certainly much of the language of the passage fits the New Testament description of Jesus.

First, the clear parallel between the sword imagery of Isaiah 49:2 and Revelation 19:15 has been noted above.

Second, the servant’s discouragement may parallel Jesus’s marveling at the people’s unbelief (Mark 6: 6), as well as his painful psychological struggles in the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross (Matthew 27:46; Luke 22:39–46; Hebrews 5:7–10).

Third, the servant’s description as “despised and abhorred” (Isaiah 49:7) parallels Isaiah 53:3, as well as the Gospel narratives that highlight Jesus’s rejection by many.

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[Identity of the servant in Isaiah 49:3, “You are my servant, Israel” (2)]

Fourth, the concept of the servant taking God’s message of salvation to the ends of the earth fits the concept of Jesus’s sacrifice, which covers the sins of all who place their faith in him, as well as his commission to his disciples (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8). ...

Biblical evidence also supports understanding the servant as the faithful remnant of Israel.

During the apostle Paul’s first missionary journey, he and Barnabas testified of Jesus to their audience at Antioch of Pisidia (Acts 13:14–50).

They cited themselves as the fulfillment of Isaiah 49:6; God had commissioned them as a light to the Gentiles (Acts 13:47).

Bryan Beyer

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

All four Gospels (Mt 13:14–15; Mk 4:12; Lk 8:10; Jn 12:40) cite Isaiah 6:9–10 or a portion of it.

Acts 28:26–27 also cites the verses.

The Synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) use the verses in similar fashion and apply them to the same historical context, while in John and Acts, the verses address a different situation.

The citations in Matthew and Acts exactly match the Septuagint.

Bryan Beyer

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

First, the Old Testament contains doctrinal teaching. ...

Jesus **'fulfilled'** it all in the sense of bringing it to completion by his person, his teaching and his work. ...

Bishop Ryle summed it up like this: 'The Old Testament is the Gospel in the bud, the New Testament is the Gospel in full flower.' ...

Second, the Old Testament contains predictive prophecy. ...

Much of it looks forward to the days of the Messiah, and either foretells him in word or foreshadows him in type. Yet this was only anticipation.

Jesus **'fulfilled'** it all in the sense that what was predicted came to pass in him. The first statement of his public ministry was, 'The time has come.' ...

Third, the Old Testament contains ethical principles, or the moral law of God. ...

Jesus **'fulfilled'** them in the first instance by obeying them, for he was 'born under the law' and was determined (as he had already told John the Baptist) 'to **fulfil** all righteousness'.

John Stott

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

... he was challenging the inherited tradition of the centuries and claiming to replace it with his own accurate and authoritative interpretation of God's law.

... In particular, he had not come, he insisted, 'to abolish the Law or the Prophets', but he had come 'to **fulfil** [plērōsai] them'.

The claim sounds innocent enough until we reflect on its implications.

What he is asserting is that all the statements and predictions of both law and prophets found their **fulfilment** in him, and that therefore all the lines of the Old Testament witness converged on himself.

He did not think of himself as another prophet or even as the greatest of the prophets, but rather as the **fulfilment** of all prophecy.

John Stott

Pointing to the Christ

Pointing to the Christ

[The Fulfillment of the Law]

“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.

For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.

Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven.

For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:17-20

Introduction

The Prophets pointed to the Christ

But God has helped me to this very day;
so I stand here and testify to small and great alike.

**I am saying nothing
beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen –
that the Messiah would suffer and,
as the first to rise from the dead,
would bring the message of light to his own people
and to the Gentiles.”**

Acts 26:22-23

[In Rome] They arranged to meet Paul on a certain day, and came in even larger numbers to the place where he was staying.

He witnessed to them from morning till evening, **explaining about the kingdom of God, and from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets he tried to persuade them about Jesus.**

Acts 28:23

Pointing to the Christ

The offer of **living water** at the feast of tabernacles, the annual harvest-home, includes an Old Testament reference which has not been identified with certainty.

It is generally agreed that the offer was made against the background of the ceremony of water-pouring which took place on each of the first seven mornings of the festival.

If we retain the Greek wording and render “out of his inmost part will flow rivers of living water” we may find the Old Testament source in those prophecies which foretell a day when, as it is put in Zechariah 14:8, “living water shall flow out of from Jerusalem” – from under the threshold of the temple, says Ezekiel (47:1), “from the house of the Lord”, says Joel (3:8).

F.F. Bruce

Consider also the times that others brought water out of a rock, etc., like Moses (and even Samson).

Pointing to the Christ

THE PROPHET [John the Baptist]

When he denied that he was the Messiah or the returning Elijah foretold in Malachi 4:4ff, they said, “Are you the prophet?”

John had no need to say “Which prophet?”

He knew that they meant the prophet like Moses, so he answered “No”.

...

... in general the Spirit of prophecy is conceived in the New Testament as the Spirit of messianic prophecy, foretelling through the prophets what was to be fulfilled with the passion and triumph of the Messiah.

F.F. Bruce

Pointing to the Christ

There are two specially important places in the Fourth Gospel where Jesus is hailed as “the prophet”.

In John 6:14, after the feeding of the multitude, the people who had seen this “sign” said, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!”

In John 7:40, after Jesus had stood in the temple court on the last day of the feast of tabernacles and invited those who were thirsty to come to him and receive “living water”, some of his hearers said, “This is really the prophet”.

Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Pointing to the Christ - Parallel

On both occasions they meant “the prophet like Moses”.

A later rabbi is credited with the observation:

**“As the first redeemer caused manna to descend,
... so will the last redeemer caused manna to descend.**

**... As the first redeemer made a well to rise,
... so will the last redeemer bring up water”**

**– the first redeemer being Moses
and the last redeemer the Messiah,
envisaged in his role as a second Moses,
the prophet like Moses.**

F.F. Bruce

Pointing to the Christ

There are two specially important places in the Fourth Gospel where Jesus is hailed as “the prophet”.

In John 6:14, after the feeding of the multitude, the people who had seen this “sign” said, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world!”

In John 7:40, after Jesus had stood in the temple court on the last day of the feast of tabernacles and invited those who were thirsty to come to him and receive “living water”, some of his hearers said, “This is really the prophet”.

Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce

Pointing to the Christ

[Jesus Announces the Good News]

After John was put in prison,
Jesus went into Galilee,
proclaiming the good news of God.

“**The time has come,**” he said.

“The kingdom of God has come near.
Repent and believe the good news!”

Mark 1:14-25

Later in the chapter (vss. 23-24),
a man possessed by an impure spirit cried out,

“What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth?

Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are - the Holy One of God!”

Pointing to the Christ

[Consider the evolution of the prophetic message]

The turning point of his ministry
came at Caesarea Philippi when,
immediately after Simon Peter had confessed him
to be the Christ, he [Christ]

“**began to teach them that the Son of Man
must suffer many things.**” [Mark 8:31]

John Stott

Once there is recognition that Jesus is the Messiah,
He has to teach them about the next level – the Suffering Servant

Isaiah 52-53

Pointing to the Christ

**As a Christian,
I often wonder what it must have been like
for the newly converted Paul
as he took up his beloved Hebrew Scriptures –
most of which he probably had memorized –
and looked at them again with his new eyes of faith.**

**How thrilling it must have been
as all the elusive clues,
all the riddling prophecies
dovetailed together
and a picture slowly emerged
of that same Jesus of Nazareth
whom he had been persecuting.**

Louis Markos

Pointing to the Christ

**After the resurrection,
Jesus himself spoke of the wounds
in his hands and side (John 20:27).**

**But the New Testament doesn't attempt to describe in detail
the severity of Jesus's injuries. ...**

**Therefore, the Old Testament prophecies about Christ's death
tell us more about the humiliating injuries he suffered
than the New Testament does. ...**

**Psalms 22 is a precise prophetic description
of the results of crucifixion,
more graphic than we get
even from the New Testament eyewitness accounts.**

John F. MacArthur

Pointing to the Christ

We also affirm that the Bible is a Christ-centered book; that is, it contains a unified story of redemptive history of which Jesus is the hero.

Because of this Christ-centered trajectory that runs from Genesis 1 through Revelation 22, we believe the Bible has a corresponding global-missions thrust.

Andrew M. Davis

Pointing to the Christ

**In the Old Testament period ...
the People of God were bound up with God
in a relationship
that could be compared with that found
in the New Testament,
where Paul speaks of the Church
as the Bride of Christ.**

George Knight

Pointing to the Christ

At the Festival of Tabernacles Jesus shouts out an invitation, like the invitation at the start of Isaiah 55: “If anybody’s thirsty, they should come to me and have a drink!”

He [Christ] explains: “Anyone who believes in me will have rivers of living water flowing out of their heart, just like the Bible says!” (John 7:37–38).

The biblical reference here, most would agree, is the closing section of the prophecy of Ezekiel (47:1–12).

There, following a long description of the rebuilding of the Temple after the Exile, the prophet describes the river of the water of life flowing out of the Temple and down to the Dead Sea, making it fresh.

It looks as though Jesus is here promising that his followers, those who believe in him and come to him to quench their thirst, will themselves become life carriers, able to quench the thirst of others.

N.T. Wright

Picking the Pearls

Pointing to Christ

Isaiah leaves us in no doubt that the key to it all is God's perfect Servant, our LORD Jesus Christ.

How eloquently and simply the apostle John put it!

Isaiah, he says,

'saw Jesus' glory and spoke about him (John 12:41)'.

Barry G. Webb

Pointing to the Christ

You know in Colossians 1.15 and 18 when Jesus is called the ‘firstborn’, does that mean he is like the first created spiritual being in the universe? ...

First, we should note that ‘firstborn’ was more of a status than an actual birth-order. God calls Israel his firstborn son in several writings (e.g. Ex. 4.22; Jer. 31.9; 4 Ez. 6.58) and this description is also applied to the coming king (Ps. 89.27). The ‘firstborn’ male of a household was ordinarily the appointed heir, even if he was not an actual biological son of the family but was adopted. ...

Second, if Paul had wanted to describe Jesus as a heavenly being, like an angel, whom God made first, he would have done better to use the words *prōtoktistos* (‘created first’) or *prōtoplastos* (‘first made’).

Third, I think Paul’s main point is that Jesus is the father’s delegated authority over both creation (Col. 1.15) and new creation (Col. 1.18). Jesus, in other words, possesses superlative authority over creation and salvation!

Pointing to the Christ

[Isaiah] The prophet wrote about:

- 1) the birth of Christ (Isa. 7:14; 9:6; Matt. 1:18-25);**
- 2) the ministry of John the Baptist (Isa. 40:1-6; Matt. 3:1ff.);**
- 3) Christ's anointing by the Spirit (Isa. 61:1-2; Luke 4:17-19);**
- 4) the nation's rejection of their Messiah (Isa. 6:9-1; John 12:38ff.);**
- 5) Christ, the "stone of stumbling" (Isa. 8:14; 28:16; Rom. 9:32-33; 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6);**
- 6) Christ's ministry to the Gentiles (Isa. 49:6; Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47);**
- 7) the Savior's suffering and death (Isa. 52:13-53: 12; Acts 3:13; 8:32-33; 1 Peter 2:21-25);**
- 8) His resurrection (Isa. 55:3; Acts 13:34);**
- 9) and His return to reign as King (Isa. 9:6-7; 11:1ff.; 59:20-21; 63:1-3; Rom. 11:26-27; Rev. 19:13-15).**

There are many other references in Isaiah to the Messiah...

Warren W. Wiersbe

Pointing to the Christ

**We certainly believe
we must be constrained
to the meaning intended
by the divine Author Himself,
the Holy Spirit of God.**

**However, we also believe the Bible
has a messianic focus,
and our hope is that
the individual authors
will exalt Christ
from particular texts.**

**Luke 24: 25- 27,44-47 and John 5: 39, 46
inform both our hermeneutics [methodology of text interpretation]
and our homiletics [the art and study of preaching].**

Andrew M. Davis

Pointing to the Christ

The New Testament authors understood
the role prophecy would play
in identifying Jesus as the Jewish Messiah:

“As to this salvation, the **prophets** who **prophesied**
of the grace that would come to you
made careful searches and inquiries
seeking to know what person or time
the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating
as He predicted the suffering of Christ
and the glories to follow”

(1 Peter 1:10-11 NASB, emphasis mine).

J. Warner Wallace

Pointing to the Christ

**Isaiah prophesied under the reign of four kings of Judah
(over the course of about sixty-four years).**

**Maybe that's why he is responsible
for more messianic prophecy
than any other Jewish prophet.**

J. Warner Wallace

Pointing to the Christ

**The gospel of Jesus Christ
is the gospel of Isaiah 40
transposed into a new, higher key.**

And it, too, is far too important to be contained.

**It must be shouted from the housetops,
not just for the cities of Judah,
but for all the world to hear.**

Barry G. Webb

Pointing to the Christ

The gospel of Jesus Christ
is the gospel of Isaiah 40
transposed into a new, higher key.

And it, too, is far too important to be contained.

It must be shouted from the housetops,
not just for the cities of Judah,
but for all the world to hear.

Barry G. Webb

Remember that the book of Isaiah itself
is referred to by some as the “fifth” gospel.

Pointing to the Christ (1)

After Jesus was resurrected and spent time with them, his followers started reading their Bibles, their Hebrew Bibles, their Genesis-through-Malachi Bibles, with fresh eyes.

They quite literally ransacked the Scriptures for hints and anticipations of the Messiah that they now believed had lived among them in Jesus: his birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension. ...

As these first Christians were avidly reading their Bibles, everywhere they looked they came across anticipations and hints of the Messiah just as Jesus had revealed him. ...

Eugene H. Peterson

Pointing to the Christ (2)

They delighted in coming across fore-shadowings of the Messiah, reading between the lines, putting two and two together, filling in the blanks, discovering the background of the person they knew as Jesus.

They found a fullness they had not expected as they fashioned and developed a narrative sense of Jesus the Christ.

They now realized the depth and immensity that had been implicit throughout their Bibles for such a long time.

Later, as the Holy Spirit prompted four of them - Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John - to write the story for the next generations, these phrases and fragments of scriptural text were woven into what they were writing.

And Paul, the earliest writer of what later became incorporated in the New Testament, could hardly write a paragraph that didn't echo something from their Hebrew Bibles.

Eugene H. Peterson

Pointing to the Christ

“I will make three booths; one for you, one for Moses, one for Elijah.”

... One problem with this statement is that Peter misses the unique identity of Jesus and puts him on par with Moses and Elijah. ...

Peter’s blunders reveal an important truth: awakening does not mean we understand and think and say and do the right things.

...

Moses is gone. Elijah is gone. The cloud is gone.

He’s not glowing anymore.

He’s just regular old Jesus.

The lesson is that the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) all point to Jesus.

Jesus is the one who “gets” them, who understands perfectly what their intent was.

John Ortberg

Pointing to the Christ

Matthew and Mark, Luke and John, Paul and others wrote, ... their favorite and most used reference was Psalm 110. ...

Psalm 110 is either quoted or alluded to fifteen times: eight direct quotes and seven allusions. ...

Psalm 110 employs the images of king and priest in such a way that the popular stereotypes were totally reversed. ...

Two sentences in Psalm 110 are statements of direct address from Yahweh, “the LORD,” and one of them is addressed to “my lord.”

The Christians now understood “my lord” as Jesus. Verse 1 opens the psalm with “The LORD [Yahweh] says to my lord [Jesus]: ‘Sit at my right hand, till I make your enemies your footstool.’”

And then, precisely halfway through the psalm, at verse 4, comes this: “The LORD [Yahweh] has sworn and will not change his mind, ‘You [Jesus] are a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.’”

Eugene H. Peterson

Pointing to the Christ

Isaiah's sermon was the turning point for those people:

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. ...

Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion,
herald of good tidings [**gospel!**];

...lift [your voice] up, fear not;
say to the cities of Judah,

‘Behold your God!’” (Isaiah 40:1, 9).

Eugene H. Peterson

[PDE] Consider scriptures about God longing that his children be comforted, as with:

Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.

Matthew 23:37

‘He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death’ or mourning or crying or pain...

Revelation 21:4

Pointing to the Christ

The Bible as a whole comes to us in the form of narrative,
and it is within this large,
somewhat sprawling biblical narrative
that we encounter the form of **gospel**,
which I would render more precisely
as “incarnational storytelling,”
God revealing himself in human form:

“... the Word became flesh and...
we have beheld his glory,
glory as of the only Son from the Father” (John 1:14).

Eugene H. Peterson

Pointing to the Christ

Isaiah was much more than a prophet.

He was an evangelist
who presented Jesus Christ
and the good news of the **gospel**.

Isaiah's "Servant Song" about Jesus (Isa. 52:13-53:12)
is quoted or alluded to
nearly forty times in the New Testament.

Warren W. Wiersbe

Five times in his letters
Paul referred to Isaiah 53.

Warren W. Wiersbe

In our lives, do we point to the Christ?

Pointing to the Christ

Then he said to them,

“So thick-headed! So slow-hearted!

Why can't you simply believe all that the **prophets** said?

Don't you see that these things had to happen,
that the Messiah had to suffer
and only then enter into his glory?”

Then he started at the beginning,
with the Books of Moses,
and went on through all the **Prophets**,
pointing out everything in the Scriptures
that referred to him.

Luke 24:25-27

Pointing to the Christ

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Consider the number of times in the Servant Passage Isaiah 52-53 that claims the servant Messiah bears our sins and punishment:

- 1) 4 he took up our pain and bore our suffering
- 2) 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions,
- 3) he was crushed for our iniquities;
- 4) the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
- 5) and by his wounds we are healed.
- 6) 6 the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
- 7) 8 for the transgression of my people he was punished.
- 8) 10 though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,
- 9) 11 He will bear their iniquities.
- 10) 12 For he bore the sin of many
- 11) and made intercession for the transgressors.

How much clearer can the idea be made?

Pointing to the Christ

Awake, awake, Zion, clothe yourself with strength! ...

For this is what the LORD says:

**“You were sold for nothing,
and without money you will be redeemed.”**

Isaiah 52:1-3

**What is the significance of the fact
that Zion was redeemed
without silver or gold?**

**How does 1 Peter 1:18-19 fulfill that image
by pointing to the blood of Christ?**

Andrew M. Davis

For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.

1 Peter 1:18-19

Pointing to the Christ

[The NT writers saw all the OT as pointing to Jesus Christ (2)]

First, Jesus directly fulfilled the prophetic word.

That is, prophets predicted certain things about his life that came true as they said it would.

... Isaiah 42:1–4: Servant of the Lord quietly brings about God's kingdom.

Matthew 12:18–21: Jesus quietly brings in God's kingdom.

Second, Jesus secondarily fulfilled the prophetic word.

That is, some prophecies had their immediate application in another person or event but later were fulfilled in him. ...

Third, Jesus filled full the prophetic word.

That is, the New Testament writers saw events in Jesus's life and work as paralleling concepts of which the prophets had spoken and hence "filling them full" of meaning.

Bryan Beyer

Picking the Pearls

Pointing to Christ

[The Rock]

Do not tremble, do not be afraid.

Did I not proclaim this and foretell it long ago?

You are my witnesses.

Is there any God besides me?

No, there is no other Rock; I know not one.”

Isaiah 44:8

The Rock is a very ancient title for the LORD

(Genesis 49:24, Deuteronomy 32:4,15,18,30, 31, Psalm 18:31),

applied in the New Testament to Christ (1 Cor. 10:4).

Barry G. Webb

**They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink;
for they drank from the spiritual Rock that accompanied them, and that
Rock was Christ.**

1 Corinthians 10:3-4

Pointing to the Christ

[Servant of the LORD]

**God expected us to be His servants,
but we failed,
so he gave us the powerful example –
His suffering servant.**

[Isaiah refers to Israel as a polished arrow (49:1–6)]

But who is the Servant?

**... You are my servant, Israel,
in whom I will display my splendor (49:3).
His name is Israel!**

**... the nation of Israel was called to be,
and therefore one who is truly worthy of the name –
God's perfect Servant.**

Barry G. Webb

Jesus Christ is the Ultimate Presentation of God's Perfect Servant.

Picking the Pearls

Pointing to Christ

Peace (šālôm) is perhaps the richest word in the Old Testament.

‘Shalom’ stands for complete wholeness, the sum total of covenant blessing, the full enjoyment of all that God has promised. ...

One day Zion would experience peace; that is the good news of 52:7.

But before peace in this full and final sense could be realized the relationship between God and his people had to be put right.

The problem of their sin had to be dealt with to God’s total satisfaction.

And that, as we saw in chapter 53, is what the Servant achieves.

The witnesses in 53:5 are aware that their relationship with God has been fully restored, not by anything they have done, but by what the Servant has done for them: **‘the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed’.**

Barry G. Webb

Pointing to the Christ

What the word “prophetic” must mean here is that Christ alone perfectly fulfilled the pattern of the way that God works to save the world.

Christ did so by voluntarily suffering what Israel suffered unwillingly and as a just punishment for her sins. Christ alone filled that pattern full, so to speak, and allowed the glory of God to be perfectly revealed through Him.

We remember that at His baptism He had identified Himself with Israel. So the glory of God is really revealed in “Israel” after all (Isaiah 44:23 – 49:3).

This means that Second-Isaiah’s picture describing the experience of Israel in Babylon actuated the first movement in the chain reaction which ended only when Christ stepped on to the Cross, and when, as Third-Isaiah and the book of Revelation both understand, God will finally resurrect all things, and create a new heaven and a new earth.

George Knight

Pointing to the Christ

**The Old Testament is a journey that leads to a destination,
and the destination is Jesus Christ.**

It was a very long journey, with many twists and turns, stops and starts.

**It was a journey that was interrupted and threatened
by all kinds of bad things and bad people. ...**

**This is the story of God leading God's people towards God's Messiah,
Jesus of Nazareth.**

That is the constant direction of movement. Jesus is the destination.

The Old Testament tells the story that Jesus completes. ...

**Not only must we see the Old Testament as a story
that makes sense in the light of Jesus
but also we have to understand Jesus
in the light of the story that goes before.**

Christopher J.H. Wright

Pointing to the Christ

Citations of Isaiah 52:13–53:12 in the New Testament Isaiah Verse(s):

Isaiah 52:15	Romans 15:21
Isaiah 53:1	John 12:38; Romans 10:16
Isaiah 53:4	Matthew 8:17
Isaiah 53:7–8	Acts 8:32–33 (Septuagint)
Isaiah 53:9	1 Peter 2:22
Isaiah 53:12	Luke 22:37

The significant usage of this passage by many New Testament writers provides early testimony to the link the early church made between Isaiah's words and the life and ministry of Jesus. ...

The New Testament cites the book of Isaiah over sixty times. Seven of these come from Isaiah 52:13–53:12. The New Testament, the most historical and well-documented record of Jesus's life and ministry, must be taken seriously in its claims regarding Jesus's **fulfillment** of Isaiah's words. People who observed Jesus's ministry firsthand saw in him an undeniable connection with the **suffering servant**.

Bryan Beyer

Information on the Prophets

Introduction

Early Prophetic History

[definition as a spokesman or mouthpiece]

... God sent Moses to Pharaoh, and Moses tried to excuse himself because he was not a good speaker (Exodus 6:28-30).

But God replied, “See, I make you (Moses) as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother shall be your **prophet**” (Exodus 7:1).

from John T. Willis

Note comparison between Exodus 4:16 and 7:1
in both Moses is like God and Aaron is his spokesman or prophet;
in the first the audience is the Israelite people,
and in the second the audience is Pharaoh

Introduction

The Origin of Israelite Prophecy

When Israel was in the wilderness, Moses assembled seventy elders (Numbers 11:24-30).

The Lord gave unto them a portion of the spirit of Moses and they “prophesied.”

A young man rushed into this group and reported that two men were prophesying in the camp.

This disturbed Joshua, and he urged Moses to forbid them to prophesy.

But Moses declared that he wished that all of God’s people were prophets.

from John T. Willis

Introduction

History of Prophets in Israel

Moses described as a prophet, in the Old and New Testaments.

72 tribal elders described as prophets.

Abraham, Aaron, Miriam, Deborah, Samuel, and David are also called prophets.

These prophets pointed to Christ...

Description of functions, reliability, types of messages, and teaching methods of a prophet.

Warning to those attempting to teach...

Introduction

The Origin of Israelite Prophecy

There are a number of passages which indicate that Moses was regarded as a “prophet” (Deut 18:15-22, Hosea 12:13, Acts 3:22-23).

After Moses’ death, the biblical author comments:

“There has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face” (Deut 34:10).

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Others that were called Prophets

Like Moses, Abraham (Gen 20:7), Aaron (Ex 7:1; Num 12:6), Miriam (Ex 15:20; Num 12:6), and Deborah (Judges 4:4) are called “prophets”.

And yet it appears that these individuals (and perhaps Moses himself) were not “prophets” in the same sense as those who were connected with the “prophetic movement” in Israel which originated with Samuel and continued well into the Persian period.

The apostle Peter later said: “And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came afterwards, also proclaimed these days” (Acts 3:24). (This he said just after alluding to Deuteronomy 18:15,19, where Moses is called a “prophet”).

In the New Testament church there were “apostles” who did not belong in the same category with the Twelve and Matthias and Paul, such as Barnabas (Acts 14:14), Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25 – in this verse “apostle” is often translated “messenger” in the English versions)...

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Even David was called a Prophet

David said about him [Psalm 16:8-11 (see Septuagint)]:

“I saw the Lord always before me.

Because he is at my right hand,

I will not be shaken.

Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices;

my body also will rest in hope,

because you will not abandon me to the realm of the dead,

you will not let your holy one see decay.

You have made known to me the paths of life;

you will fill me with joy in your presence.”

Fellow Israelites, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day.

But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne.

Acts 2:25-30

Introduction

Functions of a Prophet

- **spokesperson (speak, preach)**
- **seer (predict (not primary function) doom or hope); 1 Sam 9:9, 11; 2 Sam 24:11; Amos 7:12**
- **messenger (relevant to present and future times)**
- **watchman**
- **assayer**

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Tests to distinguish between true and false Prophets

- **Unreliable:**
 - formal training
 - ecstatic experience,
 - popularity,
 - self-affirmation,
 - sincerity
- **Partially reliable:**
 - practicing what they preach,
 - predicting doom,
 - making a prediction that comes true (see Deut 13:1-3),
 - preaching to return to the truth, not create a new one
- **Reliable:**
 - how scripture is used,
 - experience of persecutions due to his message,
 - confession that they would not do this on their own,
 - would not teach people to worship or serve other “gods”

Each generation faces the difficult task of distinguishing between God’s true spokesmen and impostors. The Old Testament tells of numerous conflicts between prophets, each claiming to be genuine messengers of God.

John T. Willis

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Types of Prophetic Speeches

- sermon (occasionally)
- oracle or announcement of doom or threat
- lament, as with a professional mourner
- imitating court trials
- oracles of hope or promises

from John T. Willis

... most sayings that the prophets delivered publicly were between two and ten verses long and lasted no more than two or three minutes.

Generally, these sayings were not delivered at any set locality or time, but the prophet took advantage of the best situation he could find.

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Teaching Methods of the Prophets

- **historical lessons**
- **allegory**
- **Illustration**
- **proverbs**
- **sarcasm (example from Luke 18:9-14 and Hosea 4:13)**
- **word plays or puns (check footnotes in certain English translations)**
- **symbolic names (see examples)**
- **symbolic acts (see examples)**

from John T. Willis

Introduction

The Prophet as a Messenger of God

... a prophet in Israel was thought of as someone who received divine messages which were then spoken to those to whom the prophet was set.

... Jeremiah tells us in one of his more revealing self-disclosures that at times divine thoughts forced their way into his consciousness even when he did not want them to (Jeremiah 20:8-9).

Meet the Prophets; John W. Miller

Since a prophet maintained a close communion with God and spoke God's word to the people, he was commonly recognized as a man of God. [Samuel (1 Sam 9:6-10), Elijah (1 Kings 17:18,24), and Elisha (2 Kings 4:8,14)]

... Each of these men had gained this reputation by formally and publicly proclaiming God's word.

My Servants the Prophets; John T. Willis

Introduction

History of Prophets in Israel

Moses described as a prophet, in the Old and New Testaments.

72 tribal elders described as prophets.

Abraham, Aaron, Miriam, Deborah, Samuel, and David are also called prophets.

These prophets pointed to Christ...

Description of functions, reliability, types of messages, and teaching methods of a prophet.

Warning to those attempting to teach...

Introduction

Messages from God [PDE]

- **God uses many methods to communicate with us:**
 - **The Creation**
 - **His Inspired Word**
 - **The patriarchs**
 - **The prophets**
 - **Angels**
 - **Animals (like Balaam's donkey)**
 - **and if these don't work, even the stones would cry out (Luke 19:40)**

We must take care if we become a part of the communication process:

**Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers,
because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.**

James 3:1

Introduction

The Prophetic Movement in Israel

The prophetic movement in Israel emerged about the same time as the monarchy, and at first served as a stimulus to the people to resist the dangers which the Philistine invasion posed to Israelite politics and religion, (cf. 1 Sam 7:3-4).

from John T. Willis

Introduction – Put your mind into the Culture...

Dynamic Historical Environment – Israel (the Northern Kingdom)

805 Assyrian king Adad-nirari III overruns Damascus and Syria

Jehoash of Israel takes over territory in Syria

After Adad-nirari, Assyria had weak kings, and Israel and Judah grew

Jereboam II extended the borders of Israel

745 Assyria became powerful again with Tiglath-pileser III

Israel declined in power with kings assassinated, civil war, etc.

Ahaz, king of Judah, formed an alliance with Assyria

He defeated Syria and Israel; and carried off Israelites of Galilee

Samaria became a land of intermarriages of mixed peoples

727 Tiglath-pileser was succeeded by Shalmanezar V

He put a siege around Samaria, but was succeeded by Sargon II

721 Sargon II captured Jerusalem and carried its inhabitants into exile

Judah had to pay heavy tribute to Assyria

Hezekiah, king of Judah, rebelled (with Babylonian influence)

Sennacherib invaded Judah and laid siege to Jerusalem

The world was in dynamic confusion with would-be super-power nations warring to establish control. Israel lived in the midst of this.

Introduction – Put your mind into the Culture...

Dynamic Historical Environment – Judah (the Southern Kingdom)

- 626** Jeremiah receives his call
- 627** Josiah's reform
- 614** conquest of Ashur
- 612** conquest of Ninevah
- 609** conquest of Carchemish
- 609** Josiah killed at Megiddo by Pharaoh Neco of Egypt
- 605** Daniel and others carried into Babylonian captivity – first stage
- 598** Jehoiachin and 10,000 leading citizens carried into exile – second stage
- 576** Jerusalem razed to the ground and the temple burned
more Jews carried into Babylonian captivity
- 587** Gedaliah made governor over Judah
- 582** Jeremiah and Baruch taken into Egypt

Jeremiah: 626 – 580

Zephaniah: 628 – 622

Nahum - 614

Habbakkuk – 605

Ezekiel - receives his call in 593

Introduction – Put your mind into the Culture...

Dynamic Historical Environment – General

[The Transition in World Power from Assyria to Babylon]

... shortly after Ashurbanipal's death, the great Assyrian empire began to crumble.

The Scythians and Cimmerians made numerous invasions into the Assyrian domain from the North between 630 and 624 B.C.

Nabopolassar became King of Babylon (626-605 B.C.) and successfully liberated Babylon from Assyrian domination.

To the east, the Medes began to rise in power, and under their King, Cyaxares, they combined forces with the Babylonians in an attempt to throw off Assyrian rule once and for all.

In a series of four major battles, the Assyrians were conquered, and Babylon became the new mistress of the ancient Near Eastern world.

John T. Willis

Further evidence of the dynamic confusion in the world.

Pearls from the Prophets

Timeline for the Prophets (from John T. Willis)

Time, BC -->

750 - 700	650 - 600	550 - 500	500 and later
Amos	Zephaniah	Isaiah 40-66	Malachi
Hosea	Habakkuk	Haggai	Joel
Isaiah 1-39	Jeremiah	Zechariah	Jonah
Micah	Ezekiel	Obadiah	
	Nahum		



722 BC

Israel
conquered by
Assyria



586 BC

Judah conquered by
Babylonia

With one or two exceptions all of these prophets lived in a few hundred year period between 750 and 450 B.C., and the majority can be dated to a two hundred year period, 750-550.

Meet the Prophets; John W. Miller

Pearls from the Prophets

Periods of the Prophets (from John T. Willis)

The Beginning			The Middle		The End
Establishment of the Kingdom(s)			Rise of Assyria	Rise of Babylon	Rise of Persia
Abraham	Moses	David	Fall of Israel	Fall of Judah	Restoration and new beginnings
2000	1250	1000	721	586	537
Pentateuch		Psalms	Isaiah 1-39	Nahum	Isaiah 40-66
			Hosea	Habakkuk	Obadiah
			Amos	Zephaniah	Haggai
			Micah	Jeremiah	Zechariah
				Ezekiel	Malachi
					Joel
					Jonah

If we exclude Jonah (the book is about him, not by him) only two of these prophets lived north of Jerusalem (Hosea, Jeremiah), and only Hosea was from the northern kingdom.

Meet the Prophets; John W. Miller

Introduction

The Prophetic Movement in Israel

- Began shortly before the kingship / monarchy
- Dynamic Historical Environment – Israel (the Northern Kingdom)
- Dynamic Historical Environment – Judah (the Southern Kingdom)
- Israel lived in the midst of this
- **Timeline for the Prophets**
- **Periods of the Prophets**

Seeing the Connections

Seeing the Connections

Why Study the Prophets?

Why then study the prophets?

There are many reasons, but these certainly are two of them: as a stimulus to our putting reason and faith back together and as a provocation to think seriously about the future of our world and what might be required for it to become a better place for all.

Meet the Prophets; John W. Miller

Seeing the Connections

Why Study the Prophets?

Reading the book The Gospel according to God, by John F. MacArthur, made me realize how meaningful the prophecy of Isaiah is to the fact of Jesus being the Christ (our Savior).

Particularly chapters 52-53, even considering a contemporary meaning – this points to the powerful love of a suffering Savior.

The book of Isaiah is sometimes called the “fifth Gospel.”

John F. MacArthur

The evidence of copies of the book of Isaiah from the Dead Sea Scrolls that are dated long before the time of Christ give tremendous weight to the prophetic message.

Seeing the Connections – Jesus' Reading (1)

Jesus begins His ministry with a quote from Isaiah as it pertains to Him

[After being tempted by Satan in the wilderness]

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

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, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him.

Seeing the Connections – Jesus' Reading (2)

Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written [Is 61:1,2 and Is 58:6]:

“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,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.”

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.

He began by saying to them, “Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”
Luke 4:14-21

After he had provided purification for sins,
he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.

Hebrews 1:3

Seeing the Connections

How Should We Study the Prophets?

The emphasis is not so much on how the prophetic literature came into being, but how it relates to and was used by the New Testament writers to show the truth, existence, and purpose of the Christ.

We must be careful about studying the prophets in too much detail, looking too close – this can obscure the real and full message.

We do not want to get into the realm of “analysis paralysis”.

We do not want to miss the forest for the trees!

Digging too deeply into the Bible – (like focusing on “different Isaiah’s”, etc.) is a bit like pursuing an understanding of what goes on in a vacuum-tube television set by examining on only one resistor.

We sometimes divide information on a subject to the point of unrecognizability.

Seeing the Connections

How Should We Study the Prophets?

We must realize that this is a developing story with respect to Israelite history, the messengers (prophets) of God, and the birth of the new Kingdom with Christ as its King.

The Old Testament weaves a tapestry of mostly current or near-term pronouncements that assemble into something much more powerful when viewed from a higher, longer-term perspective.

The people of Israel became tuned into a higher layer of meaning when looking at or studying the scriptures.

This is shown in the way that the Hebrew writer uses quotes from the Old Testament.

Consider the analogy of preparing the soil for the seed, which Jesus used in his parables.

Seeing the Connections

How Should We Study the Prophets?

Prophets prepared the way for Christ, as a farmer plows the fields to get ready for eventual harvest. Looking at a plowed field is difficult to understand the huge bounty that will come, but the clues are there. Jesus used this analogy.

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.”

Luke 10:1-2

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”

Luke 3:4

This is the one about whom it is written: “‘I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.’”

Luke 7:27

Seeing the Connections

What does “Scripture” mean in the New Testament

For the **word of God** is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Hebrews 4:12

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the **Holy Scriptures**, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All **Scripture** is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

2 Timothy 3:14-17

“Scripture” to the New Testament writers related to the Old Testament, though it now has become applicable to the New Testament writers as well.

Seeing the Connections

What does “Scripture” mean in the New Testament

Above all, you must understand that
no prophecy of **Scripture**
came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things.
2 Peter 1:20

[referring to the letters of Paul]

He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other **Scriptures**, to their own destruction.

2 Peter 3:16

Peter is apparently treating Paul’s letters as equivalent to Scripture

Seeing the Connections

Peter “quotes” from the Gospels

He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying,

“This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

2 Peter 1:17; quoting from Matthew 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35

“Scripture” to the New Testament writers related to the Old Testament, though it now has become applicable to the New Testament writers as well.

Seeing the Connections

Perception of Prophetic Messages

There is must be a development of understanding – the total truth cannot be presented all at once to people, especially when it concerns such a long-term plan.

Consider that Christ several times tried to tell the disciples about the fact that He would be crucified and in three days He would rise again. [Matthew 12:40; Mark 8:31, 9:31, 10:34; John 2:19-20]

He stated this very clearly, but they did not understand it until after the resurrection.

The only accurate understanding of prophecy is when it is explained by God.

Seeing the Connections

Example of Connectivity

... note that when Jesus and the apostles tried to explain the relationship between Jesus and his people (the church), they simply borrowed figures from the Old Testament which applied to God and Israel.

- Paul told the Ephesians that Christ loved the church as a husband loves his wife (Ephesians 5:22-23).
- Jesus explained that God was the husbandman, he was the vine, and his disciples were the branches. And he warned his disciples that if they did not bear good fruit, they would be cast off and burned (John 15:1-8).
- Jesus told the beautiful parable about a boy who took his father's gifts and spent them on harlots in a far country. But his father never stopped loving him, and when the young man returned home, his father welcomed him and accepted him back into his full favor (Luke 15:11-32).

A knowledge of the Old Testament helps greatly to fully appreciate such New Testament illustrations and ideas.

John T. Willis

Seeing the Connections

Why Study the Prophets?

Consider the work of the prophets as a type of connecting tissue, which ties together the different pieces of God's message by linking people who lived in one time to events which occur at a different time – some / many beyond their own lifespan.

Think of God not being bound by time, and prophecy provides glimpses of His perspective and providence.

PDE

Consider analogies of the parts of the body working together to accomplish the purpose of the whole:

- **1 Corinthians 12:12ff; unity and diversity in the body**
- **Ephesians 4:15-16; the whole body joined by ligaments**
- **Colossians 2:19; held together by ligaments and sinews**

Pearls from the Prophets

Where Jesus Quoted from the Old Testament

Genesis	Exodus	Deut	Psalms	Isaiah	Hosea	Malachi
8			7	6		
1	2	5	7	4	1	1
2:24	20:13	8:3	8:2	61:1-2	6:6	3:1
	20:14	6:16	118:22-23	29:13		
		6:13	110:1	56:7		
		6:4-5	35:19	8:14-15		
		17:6	69:4			
			22:1			
			31:5			

**What Christ did not quote directly from the OT is very interesting
– our favorite Ps 23, for instance...**

But, He was the Shepherd!

Note that He also did not quote from Isaiah 52-53...

Pearls from the Prophets

Where Jesus Quoted from the Old Testament – 11 Types

#	NT quote	OT passage	Occasion
1	Matthew 4:4	Deuteronomy 8:3	The Temptations
	Matthew 4:7	Deuteronomy 6:16	
	Matthew 4:10	Deuteronomy 6:13	
2	Mathew 5:21	Exodus 10:13	Sermon on the Mount
	Matthew 5:27	Exodus 20:14	
3	Luke 4:18, 19	Isaiah 61:1, 2	Hometown Sermon
4	Mathew 9:13	Hosea 6:6	Confrontations with The Jewish Rulers
	Mark 10:7, 8	Genesis 2:24	
	Mark 12:29, 30	Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5	
	Matthew 15:7-9	Isaiah 29:13	
	John 8:17	Deuteronomy 17:6	
5	Luke 7:27	Malachi 3:1	Tribute to John
6	Matthew 21:16	Psalms 8:2	Triumphal Entry
7	Luke 19:46	Isaiah 56:7	Temple Cleansing
8	Matthew 21:42, 44	Psalms 118:22, 23	Parable about Israel
9	Mark 12:36	Psalms 110:1	Simple Question Session
10	John 15:25	Psalms 35:19; 69:4	Last Passover
11	Matthew 27:46	Psalms 22:1	On the Cross
	Luke 23:46	Psalms 31:5	

Pearls from the Prophets

Which Old Testament Books are Referenced in the New?

direct quotes	
meaningful references	
	# quotes
1. Genesis	27
2. Exodus	27
3. Leviticus	11
4. Numbers	2
5. Deuteronomy	28
6. Joshua	
7. Judges	
8. Ruth	
9. 1 Samuel	2
10. 2 Samuel	3
11. 1 Kings	2
12. 2 Kings	1
13. 1 Chronicles	1
14. 2 Chronicles	1
15. Ezra	
16. Nehemiah	
17. Esther	
18. Job	3



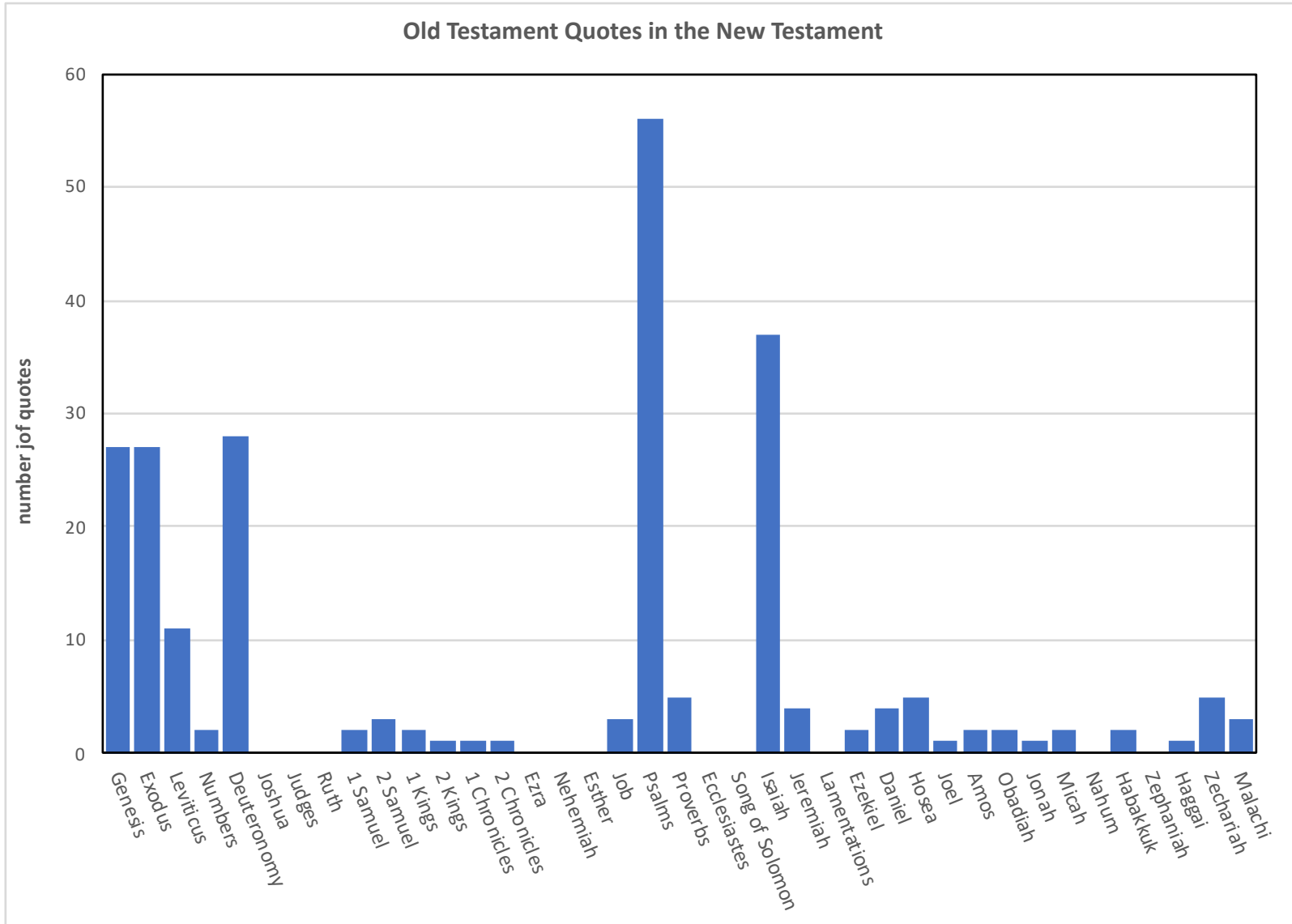
 Quoted by Jesus

direct quotes	
meaningful references	
	# quotes
19. Psalms	56
20. Proverbs	5
21. Ecclesiastes	
22. Song of Solomon	
23. Isaiah	37
24. Jeremiah	4
25. Lamentations	
26. Ezekiel	2
27. Daniel	4
28. Hosea	5
29. Joel	1
30. Amos	2
31. Obadiah	2
32. Jonah	1
33. Micah	2
34. Nahum	
35. Habakkuk	2
36. Zephaniah	
37. Haggai	1
38. Zechariah	5
39. Malachi	3

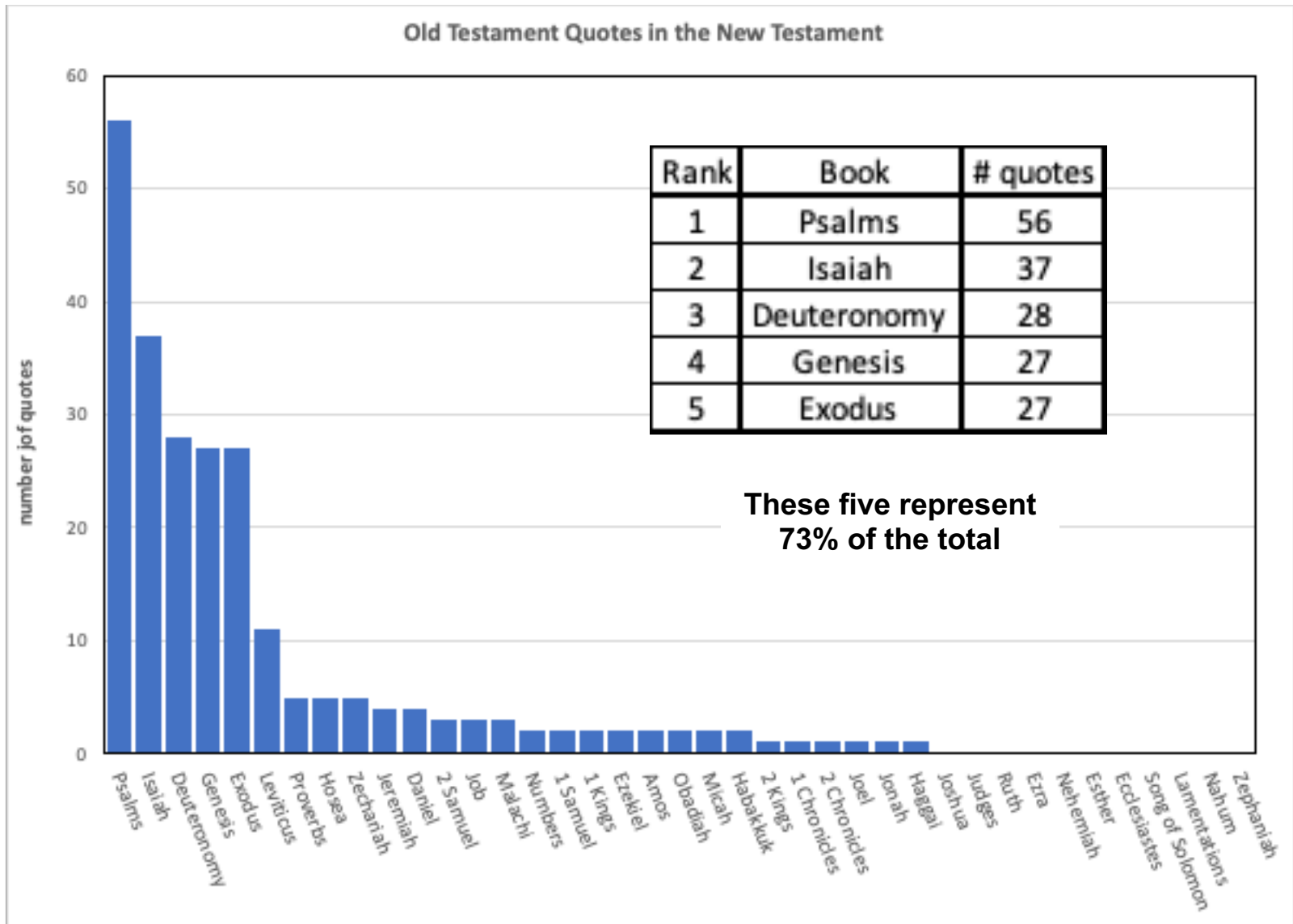


Pearls from the Prophets

Which Old Testament Books are Referenced in the New?













Which Old Testament Books are Referenced in the New?



Pearls from the Prophets

OT Quote Occurrences in the NT (Hebrews)

-  quote from prophets
-  quote from Psalms
-  quote from other OT book
-  quote from the Pentateuch
-  other indirect references

-  indirect reference
-  indirect reference
-  indirect reference
-  indirect reference
-  prophet emphasis if other references

vrs v	chapters -->												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	N				E		G		E				
2	Ps		E					E	E		G		
3				L				E		G			
4				N				E		G			
5			var				N		E	G		D	
6								N,E					
7								L,E	J,E	E			
8						D		J		G			
9	I									G	N		
10								L,N					
11	I								M	G		E	
12				J				L		G	I		
13		I		Ps				N,E		G			
14	Ps					G	I						
15						G				G	D	L	
16			J			E			J	E	E		
17		D	N						J	G	G	I,E	
18			N			N				G	D		
19						L	L		var		D,E		
20										G	E	var	
21									E,L		G	D	
22									L	E	G,E		
23										E	Ps		
24										E			
25													
26										N		Hg	
27									G	I	E	I	
28										D	E	D	
29											E	D	

Picking the Pearls

Prophetic Verses Applied to Christ in the New Testament

Amos 9:11-12	in	Acts 15:16-18
Hosea 1:10	in	Romans 9:26
Hosea 2:23	in	Romans 9:25
Hosea 11:1	in	Matthew 2:15
Hosea 13:14	in	1 Corinthians 15:55
Isaiah 1:9	in	Romans 9:29
Isaiah 6:9-10	in	Matthew 13:14-15, John 12:39-41, Acts 28:26-27
Isaiah 7:14	in	Matthew 1:23
Isaiah 8:14	in	1 Peter 2:8
Isaiah 8:18	in	Hebrews 2:13
Isaiah 9:1-2	in	Matthew 4:15-16
Isaiah 10:22-23	in	Romans 9:27-28
Isaiah 11:10	in	Romans 15:12

from John T. Willis

Introduction

Individuals and Events that Jesus Referred to

- 1) The creation of Adam and Eve (Gen 1:27 ; 2:24; Mk 10:6-8)
- 2) The murder of Abel (Gen 4:10; Lk 11:51)
- 3) The corruption of Noah's day and the flood (Gen 6-7; Lk 17:26-27)
- 4) The corruption of Lot's day and the fire (Gen 19; Lk 17:28-29)
- 5) The worldliness of Lot's wife (Gen 19:26; Lk 17:32)
- 6) The faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Mt 22:32)
- 7) Moses and the burning bush (ex 3; Mk 12:26)
- 8) Moses and the heavenly manna (Ex 16:15; Jn 6:31)
- 9) Moses and the brazen serpent (Num 21:18; Jn 3:14)
- 10) David and the showbread (1 Sam 21:6; Mt. 12:3-4)
- 11) Solomon and the Queen of Sheba (1 Ki 10:1; Mt 12:42)
- 12) Elijah, a widow, and the famine (1 Ki 17:1, 9; Lk 4:25-26)
- 13) Naaman and his leprosy (2 Ki 5; Lk 11:51)
- 14) The murder of Zechariah (2 Chr 24:20-21; Lk 11:51)
- 15) Daniel and the abomination of desolation (Dan 9:27, 11:31, 12:11; Mt 24:15)
- 16) Jonah and the great fish (Jon 1:17; Mt 12:40, 16:4)
- 17) Jonah and the repentance of the Ninevites (Jon 3:4-10; Lk 11:30; Mt 12:41)

half
relate
to
Moses
and
before

Introduction

Individuals and Events that Jesus Referred to

There is a foundation backbone structure that prophecy of Christ and the church is really built upon – promises of:

- 1) covenant rest,**
- 2) Davidic rule,**
- 3) God's chosen people to bless all nations,**
- 4) a remnant shall return (remain),**
- 5) all nations will be blessed (Abraham, etc.),**
- 6) God wants a relationship (of love) with his people**

Picking the Pearls – Introduction to Isaiah 1

Pearls of Great Price

**Again,
the kingdom of heaven is like
a merchant looking for fine pearls.**

**When he found one of great value,
he went away
and sold everything he had
and bought it.**

Matthew 13:45-46

**In our study of the prophets and their messages,
we will be hunting for Pearls
that are of immense value!**

Pearls of Great Price

Dipping into Isaiah at random and picking out a verse here and there is of little value for an understanding of the Book of Isaiah as the Word of God.

... if we are ever to understand Isaiah and his mind, it is important for us to discover just what king, or which historical incident, Isaiah refers to if we are to see how the Word was “becoming flesh” even in the days before the birth of Christ.

George Knight

Even though we may miss much of the complete historical meaning, we will still go searching for pearls!

There are also many other interesting passages that we will not include in this study.

Seeing the Connections

Picking the Pearls

**We will be picking the “pearl” passages,
and will start with Isaiah,
as Jesus did.**

**These pearls are not necessarily prophecies directly related to Christ,
but themes that are very meaningful to us.**

Bring in your own ideas of pearls we should discuss!

Seeing the Connections

Picking the Pearls

Too many of us tend to skim over or otherwise ignore / pay less attention to the words of the prophets, so hopefully this study can freshen our outlook on this part of OT literature.

The intricate historical and linguistic details will be left to the references that I list.

In my preparation I have found that there are too many pearls to cover in a single class series, so we will leave some out, but plan to teach this in (at least) two sessions.

Seeing the Connections

My List of Special Prophetic Themes

- **impotent idols**
- **stretching out the heavens**
- **the blind and deaf**
- **water in the desert**
- **no other God**
- **light for the Gentiles**
- **God will save a remnant**
- **renewal and regrowth**
- **the Messiah (Christ)**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah

The name Isaiah means
“the Lord saves,”
which is a concise summary
of his prophecy.

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah

Isaiah is divided into two sections, the first containing thirty-nine chapters and the second twenty-seven chapters.

The Bible also is divided into two sections: the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New.

The Gospel according to God, John F. MacArthur

Interesting things are not always meaningful things.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

That second major division of Isaiah begins and ends exactly where the New Testament begins and ends.

It opens with the ministry of John the Baptist (Isa. 40:3–5), as does the New Testament (Matt. 3:3; Mark 1:3; Luke 3:4–6; John 1:23).

It concludes with the new heavens and the new earth (Isa. 65:17; 66:22), which is also how the New Testament ends (Revelation 21–22).

The Gospel according to God, John F. MacArthur

This is more interesting, and more meaningful.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

Even the backslidden people of Judah in Isaiah's time were not convinced they needed that kind of redeemer.

They were hoping instead for a powerful political figure.

They wanted a conquering messiah who would vindicate the Jewish people, liberate the nation from their earthly oppressors, and elevate Israel to world dominance politically and militarily.

The Gospel according to God, John F. MacArthur

Remember that Isaiah is looking backward from a prophetic viewpoint near the end of world history.

The Gospel according to God, John F. MacArthur

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

... the Book of Isaiah turns out to be a highly complex mosaic of prophetic words and reports, emanating from an ongoing tradition of prophetic activity and spanning a period of centuries.

John W. Miller

[school of prophets] ... in Isaiah 8:16-18 ... we are told that at a critical moment early in his prophetic career Isaiah did something that, so far as we know, no other prophet before him had done: he bound up and sealed his “instruction” from God “in the heart” of his disciples – that is, he had a group of his followers memorize messages and thereby established what might be termed an Isaianic group or “school,” one that must have felt itself responsible for preserving the spiritual legacy of its founder.

John W. Miller

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

... Isaiah's disciples may well have taken notes of what he said for future reference.

This they would do upon the only cheap and available material they could find, viz. potsherds.

These bits of jars were thus ideal for writing short notes on, and a prophet's disciple probably made notes of his master's words on these indestructible potsherds.

Then he would pop all the little pieces into a leather bag.

But it would never occur to our eager and conscientious disciple to date the fragments he preserved.

He left that difficult task to the unknown editor who later on put together all the material that the contemporary disciples of Isaiah had first preserved.

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

[Second Isaiah]

**Perhaps those commentators are right
who suggest that each of the chapters we possess
was a sermon passed secretly from hand to hand
under the very noses of the proud but scared Babylonians.
George Knight**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

This period after the return was a period of great literary activity and of the careful editing of material that had come from the heroic days of the past. By this time papyrus scrolls had become available on the market. The papyrus plant, which grows well in the delta of the Nile, produces long narrow leaves, which can be dried and glued together in strips to form a very useful writing material. Egypt was now marketing this writing material. Egypt was now marketing this writing material in standard lengths.

It is obvious that the Gospels of Matthew, Luke, and John are of the length they are, because they conform very closely to the length of a standard scroll. Mark, again, as we know, is not complete; at one time, before its end was lost, it must have filled a standard scroll and occupied about the same length of papyrus as the other Gospels. The whole Book of Isaiah would just fill nicely two of those standard scrolls.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

To conclude the story of the book's composition we are to recall that, in the centuries immediately preceding the Christian era, the more expensive material known as vellum was coming on the market, and came to be used especially for the preservation of sacred literature.

Vellum was made of the prepared skins of animals. These were then cut to size and stitched together to form lengths similar to those in which papyrus could be obtained.

A still later writing material is known to us by the word "Codex". The latter comprised polished sheets of vellum stitched together much in the shape of a modern book.

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

The so-called “St. Mark’s Isaiah”, however, one of the first Dead Sea Scrolls to be discovered, and which originated from the second century before Christ, is still written on sections of vellum stitched together to form a scroll.

In this manuscript “Isaiah” is copied in a clear hand, in columns working from right to left, the columns each occupying an area much the same as that of the printed space on the page of a modern book.

“Isaiah” must then have been complete and in its present form well before the second century B.C.

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

Unlike the covenant made at Sinai (a covenant which could be broken), Yahweh's covenants with Zion and with David were forever.

John W. Miller

These then are the overarching themes that we encounter, again and again, in Isaiah's writings:

- 1) Yahweh's plan;**
- 2) the rationale behind this plan;**
- 3) the plan's consequences for public policy.**

John W. Miller

Isaiah's prophecies released a new dynamic into biblical faith: an intensified search for a viable future.

John W. Miller

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

**... this book covers a period of over two hundred years –
two vitally important centuries
in the story of God’s People, Israel.**

George Knight

**“Isaiah” is thus a unity of revelation
despite its diversity of origin, period, and style.**

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

An interpretation of the authors' text based on content and apparent location

Book 1	Book 2	Book 3
Messages of Isaiah of Jerusalem	Messages of a prophet in Babylon	Messages of a prophet in Judea
740-700 B.C.	546-538 B.C.	537-520 B.C.
Chs. 1-39	Chs. 40-55	Chs. 56-66
First Isaiah	Second Isaiah	Third Isaiah

Does the Bible state categorically that the book was written by only one man?

Does the alternate possibility alter your belief in Scripture?

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

**The view taken in this commentary
is that there was only one author
of the Book of Isaiah –
the man Isaiah who prophesied
”during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz,
and Hezekiah, kings of Judah” (1:1).**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

**I reject the anti-supernatural bias of scholars
who must have a “Second Isaiah” (or even a “Third Isaiah”)
because they cannot accept how any human
could name Cyrus as Israel’s deliverer
more than a century before his parents named him.
(Isaiah 44:28; 45:1,13)**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah - Introduction

[Digging too deeply into the Bible...]

Consider the idea of multiple/different Isaiah's writing the book.

**Looking too far into the depths of things that we do not understand
is like pursuing an understanding of what goes on
with one component in your iphone or television set.**

We sometimes divide things into the point of unrecognizability.

This is an example of what is called "analysis paralysis".

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Introduction – NT Quotations

Matthew:	9	(7:14, 40:3, 9:1, 53:4, 42:1, 42:4, 6:9, 29:13, 56:7)
Mark:	6	(40:3, 6:9, 29:13, 66:24, 56:7, 53:12)
Luke:	7	(42:6, 49:6, 40:3, 61:1, 6:9, 56:7, 53:12)
John:	4	(40:3, 54:13, 53:1, 6:10)
Acts:	5	(66:1, 53:7, 55:3, 49:6, 6:9)
Romans:	19	(52:5, 59:7-8, 29:16, 10:22, 1:9, 8:14, 28:16, 52:7, 53:1, 10:20, 65:1, 65:2, 29:10, 59:20, 27:9, 40:13, 45:23, 42:4, 11:10, 52:15)
1 Corinthians:	5	(29:14, 64:4, 28:11, 22:13, 25:8)
2 Corinthians:	2	(49:8, 52:11)
Galatians:	1	(54:1)
Ephesians:	2	(11:5, 59:17)
Hebrews:	1	(8:17-18)
1 Peter:	6	(40:6, 28:16, 8:14, 53:9, 53:5, 8:12)
Revelation:	1	(22:22)

Picking the Pearls – Looking at the Text

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

**Isaiah had the clearest vision of
the pre-incarnate Christ
of any Old Testament prophet.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

**In Isaiah 1 God is summoning his sinful people, Israel,
to a court trial.**

Andrew M. Davis

**Isaiah blasts his listeners right from the start
without any warm-up!**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Hear me, you heavens! Listen, earth!
For the Lord has spoken:

“I reared children and brought them up,
but they have rebelled against me.

The ox knows its master,
the donkey its owner’s manger,
but Israel does not know,
my people do not understand.”

Isaiah 1:1-4

Out of God’s creation,
it is man that does not understand that he has a master (Lord)!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Why should you be beaten anymore?

Why do you persist in rebellion?

**Your whole head is injured,
your whole heart afflicted.**

**From the sole of your foot to the top of your head
there is no soundness -
only wounds and welts
and open sores,
not cleansed or bandaged
or soothed with olive oil.**

Isaiah 1:5-6

**God's people were like an uncooperative animal
that had to be beaten to perform properly –
and their wounds were very serious.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Your country is desolate,
your cities burned with fire;
your fields are being stripped by foreigners right before you,
laid waste as when overthrown by strangers.

Daughter Zion is left
like a shelter in a vineyard,
like a hut in a cucumber field,
like a city under siege.

Unless the Lord Almighty
had left us some survivors,
we would have become like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.

Isaiah 1:7-9

**Note the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah,
which will be further pursued in the next section.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

[Paul discussing God's Plan and Providence]

It is just as Isaiah said previously:

“Unless the Lord Almighty
had left us descendants,
we would have become like Sodom,
we would have been like Gomorrah.”

Romans 9:29

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom;
listen to the instruction of our God,
you people of Gomorrah!

“The multitude of your sacrifices—
what are they to me?” says the Lord.

“I have more than enough of burnt offerings,
of rams and the fat of fattened animals;
I have no pleasure in the blood of bulls and lambs and goats.

When you come to appear before me,
who has asked this of you,
this trampling of my courts?

Isaiah 1:10-12

**God is not pleased with false worship –
activities without a true relationship with Him.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

**No book in the Bible so clearly exposes
the falsehood of salvation by religious works
as does Isaiah. (1:11)**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Stop bringing meaningless offerings!

Your incense is detestable to me.

New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations—

I cannot bear your worthless assemblies.

Your New Moon feasts and your appointed festivals

I hate with all my being.

They have become a burden to me;

I am weary of bearing them.

When you spread out your hands in prayer,

I hide my eyes from you;

even when you offer many prayers,

I am not listening.

Isaiah 1:13-15a

God is angry with having to suffer insincere worship!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Your hands are full of blood!

Wash and make yourselves clean.

**Take your evil deeds out of my sight;
stop doing wrong.**

Learn to do right; seek justice.

Defend the oppressed.

**Take up the cause of the fatherless;
plead the case of the widow.**

Isaiah 1:15b-17

[God wants us to take care of the weak and oppressed!]

Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

James 1:27

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

**“Come now, let us settle the matter,”
says the Lord.**

**“Though your sins are like scarlet,
they shall be as white as snow;
though they are red as crimson,
they shall be like wool.**

**If you are willing and obedient,
you will eat the good things of the land;
but if you resist and rebel,
you will be devoured by the sword.”**

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

**“Come now, let us
reason together...”**

**Other translations
(KJV, RSV, ASV)**

Isaiah 1:18-20

God offers cleansing to those who respond to Him.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

[Isaiah 1:16-20]

In verses 16-20

**is one of the most famous calls
to repentance and salvation
found anywhere in Scripture.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

See how the faithful city
has become a prostitute! [unfaithful]

She once was full of justice;
righteousness used to dwell in her -
but now murderers!

Your silver has become dross,
your choice wine is diluted with water.

Your rulers are rebels,
partners with thieves;
they all love bribes
and chase after gifts.

They do not defend the cause of the fatherless; [helpless]
the widow's case does not come before them.

Isaiah 1:21-23

God condemns the city as He did Sodom and Gomorrah

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 1

Therefore the Lord, the Lord Almighty,
the Mighty One of Israel, declares:

“Ah! I will vent my wrath on my foes
and avenge myself on my enemies.

I will turn my hand against you;

**I will thoroughly purge away your dross
and remove all your impurities.**

I will restore your leaders as in days of old,
your rulers as at the beginning.

Afterward you will be called
the City of Righteousness,
the Faithful City.”

Isaiah 1:24-26

God will restore His Kingdom into one of Righteousness!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 2

**This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw
concerning Judah and Jerusalem:**

**In the last days
the mountain of the Lord's temple will be established
as the highest of the mountains;
it will be exalted above the hills,
and all nations will stream to it.**

Isaiah 2:1-2

Interestingly, the first part of this vision also appears in Micah 4:1-5.

**The form of this sermon sounds like a call to worship
introduced by a prophetic announcement of salvation.**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

God's Kingdom will reign supreme!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 2

**The New Jerusalem
will be on the highest mountain
to give the best perspective
on the True Vision of God.**

**Jesus claimed that the physical mountain was not the important thing.
(see John 4)**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 2

Many peoples will come and say,

“Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the temple of the God of Jacob.

**He will teach us his ways,
so that we may walk in his paths.”**

The law will go out from Zion,
the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

He will judge between the nations
and will settle disputes for many peoples.

They will beat their swords into plowshares
and their spears into pruning hooks.

Nation will not take up sword against nation,
nor will they train for war anymore.

on a statue outside
UN headquarters
(PDE)

Isaiah 2:3-4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 2

Come,
descendants of Jacob,
let us walk
in the light of the Lord.

Isaiah 2:5

God's Law will flow from the Kingdom, and we must follow Him

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 2

**Stop trusting in mere humans,
who have but a breath in their nostrils. [not the True Spirit]**

Why hold them in esteem?

Isaiah 2:22

Added note: we must not follow man

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 4

In that day the Branch of the Lord will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and glory of the survivors in Israel.

Those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, will be called holy, all who are recorded among the living in Jerusalem.

The Lord will ... cleanse the bloodstains from Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and a spirit of fire.

Then the Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over those who assemble there **a cloud of smoke by day and a glow of flaming fire by night; over everything the glory will be a canopy.**

It will be a shelter and shade from the heat of the day, and a refuge and hiding place from the storm and rain.

Isaiah 4:2-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 4

[Isaiah 4:3]

**“He who is left” (NIV, those who are left)
appears twenty-seven times in Isaiah
with the double meaning
of disaster and hope.**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

I will sing for the one I love

a song about his vineyard:

My loved one had a vineyard
on a fertile hillside.

He dug it up and cleared it of stones
and planted it with the choicest vines.

He built a watchtower in it
and cut out a winepress as well.

Then he looked for a crop of good grapes,
but it yielded only bad fruit.

Isaiah 5:1-2

The Song of the Vineyard: Isaiah 5:1-7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

“Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah,
judge between me and my vineyard.

What more could have been done for my vineyard
than I have done for it?

When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?

Now I will tell you

what I am going to do to my vineyard:

I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed;

I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled.

I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated,
and briars and thorns will grow there.

I will command the clouds not to rain on it.”

Isaiah 5:3-6

The Song of the Vineyard

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

The vineyard of the Lord Almighty
is the nation of Israel,
and the people of Judah
are the vines he delighted in.

And he looked for justice,
but saw bloodshed;
for righteousness,
but heard cries of distress.

He looked for justice
(**mišpāṭ**) but saw
bloodshed (**mišpāḥ**) for
righteousness (**ṣedāqâ**)
but heard cries of
distress (**ṣe'āqâ**).

Isaiah 5:7

Isaiah 5:1-7 contains Isaiah's famous Parable of the Vineyard. Our Lord has made pointed reference to it in his own Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen (Matthew 21:33-41).

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

Isaiah's First Song of the Vineyard → Jesus' Application

[The Parable of the Tenants]

“Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and moved to another place. When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.

“The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third. Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. ‘They will respect my son,’ he said.

Matthew 21:33-37

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

[The Parable of the Tenants]

“But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, ‘This is the heir. Come, let’s kill him and take his inheritance.’ 39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

“Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?”

“He will bring those wretches to a wretched end,” they replied, “and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.”

Matthew 21:38-41

This latter part is a contrast to the passage in Isaiah and has echoes of the parable of the wedding feast (Matthew 22:1-14) where those originally invited were too busy to come and ultimately those who ran the vineyard well were those who seemed to be less likely.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener.

He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful.

You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

Remain in me, as I also remain in you.

No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine.

Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

I am the vine; you are the branches.

If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit;
apart from me you can do nothing.

John 15:1-5

We are God's grape, and He wants us to be great!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5 (PDE)

Are you a small and lonely grape

Clutching to the vine

Waiting for the day when you'll

Become your Savior's wine

Don't give up hope ye heavy laden

You don't want to be a raisin

'Cause there's a grape, grape joy in Jesus

In the vineyard of the Lord

Amy Grant, "Grape, Grape Joy"

We are God's grape, and He wants us to be great!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 5

**Woe to those who call evil good
and good evil,
who put darkness for light
and light for darkness,
who put bitter for sweet
and sweet for bitter.**

**Woe to those
who are wise in their own eyes
and clever in their own sight.**

Isaiah 5:20

We must know the difference between Good and Evil

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – First Five Chapters

The teachings which appear in Isaiah chapters 1 and 5 deal with major aspects of daily living and with the true nature of religion.

John T. Willis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

Evidently Isaiah was a regular worshipper at the Jerusalem temple.

As a matter of fact,

he was there when he received his prophetic call (see Isaiah 6:1,4).

John T. Willis

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord, high and exalted, seated on a throne; and the train of his robe filled the temple.

Above him were seraphim, each with six wings ...

And they were calling to one another:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty;
the whole earth is full of his glory.”

See Revelation 4:1-8

At the sound of their voices the doorposts and thresholds shook and the temple was filled with smoke.

Isaiah 6:1-4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

“Woe to me!” I cried. “I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty.”

Then one of the seraphim flew to me with a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with tongs from the altar. With it he touched my mouth and said, “See, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for.”

Isaiah 6:5-7

... Isaiah realizes that he too is a leper – a spiritual leper – a “man of unclean lips”. ... first he had to be cleansed.

This cleansing could not come from himself, but only from the Lord.

John T. Willis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

[He saw the Lord, perhaps not "physically"]

**... it seems likely that Isaiah means
that he saw the Lord
in a way that he had never seen him before,
i.e., as the real king of Israel...**

John T. Willis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying,
“Whom shall I send?
And who will go for us?”

And I said,
“Here am I.
Send me!”

Isaiah 6:8

**Surely many of God’s people
were in the temple worshipping on that day,
and many heard this divine challenge,
but Isaiah alone responded.**

John T. Willis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

He said, “Go and tell this people:

“Be ever hearing,
but never understanding;
be ever seeing,
but never perceiving.’

Make the heart of this people calloused;
make their ears dull
and close their eyes.

Otherwise they might
see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts,
and turn and be healed.”

See Matthew 13:14-15,
Mark 4:12, Luke 8:10,
John 12:40, Acts 28:26,
Romans 11:8

Isaiah 6:9-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

This is why I speak to them in parables:

“Though seeing, they do not see;
though hearing, they do not hear or understand.

In them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah:

“You will be ever hearing but never understanding;
you will be ever seeing but never perceiving.

For this people’s heart has become calloused;
they hardly hear with their ears,
and they have closed their eyes

[blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts].

Otherwise they might see with their eyes,
hear with their ears,
understand with their hearts

and turn, and I would heal **[forgive]** them.’

Matthew
13:13-14,
Mark 4:12,
Luke 8:10,
John 12:40,
Acts 28:26

Matthew 13:13-15

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

**Seeing and not believing,
is like standing in the middle of the road
with a car coming towards you,
and you not moving out of the way.**

from Terri Rigney

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

[Paul describes the history of Israel's rejection of God]

This occasioned Paul's lament for Jewish unbelief,
using Isaiah 6.9-10

(a passage quoted in all four gospels to similar effect)
as a key scriptural prediction of Israel's recalcitrance.

N.T. Wright

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

[Isaiah 6:9-10]

In the New Testament

**this passage is quoted four times
to explain why Jesus used parables
to teach the people.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

**Seeing and not believing,
is like standing in the middle of the road
with a car coming towards you,
and you not moving out of the way.**

from Terri Rigney

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

Then I said, “For how long, Lord?”

And he answered:

“Until the cities lie ruined
and without inhabitant,
until the houses are left deserted
and the fields ruined and ravaged,
until the LORD has sent everyone far away
and the land is utterly forsaken.

And though a tenth remains in the land,
it will again be laid waste.

But as the terebinth and oak
leave stumps when they are cut down,
so the holy seed will be the stump in the land.”

Isaiah 6:12-13

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 6

[the stump (the holy seed) which will be left]

There is much disagreement among scholars as to the meaning of “the holy seed” here, but in the context it seems to refer to a small group of people whom Isaiah was able to reach in his preaching, i.e., Isaiah’s disciples.

John T. Willis

For longer-term application, it should refer to the “stump of Jesse” as will be discussed further in the Pearl from Isaiah 11.

The stump imagery indicates new growth in the midst of decay.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

When Ahaz ... was king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and Pekah ... king of Israel marched up to fight against Jerusalem, but they could not overpower it. (1)

Now the house of David was told, “Aram has allied itself with Ephraim”; so the hearts of Ahaz and his people were shaken, as the trees of the forest are shaken by the wind. (2)

Then the Lord said to Isaiah, “Go out, you and your son Shear-Jashub [a remnant will return], to meet Ahaz ... (3)

Say to him, ‘Be careful, keep calm and don’t be afraid. Do not lose heart because of these two smoldering stubs of firewood ... (4)

Yet this is what the Sovereign Lord says:

“It will not take place,
it will not happen, (7)

If you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.” (8b)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

**The promise “a remnant will return”
is a word-play on the name of Isaiah’s first son,
Shear-jashub (see 7:3).**

John T. Willis

**Willis gives this the near-term meaning: if you don’t trust in the Lord,
only a remnant of Judah’s army will return from the battle.**

**‘Shear- Jashub’ means ‘a remnant shall return’
or ‘a remnant shall repent’.**

**Both are possible, but since the immediate context here is one of faith
versus unbelief rather than exile and return, the latter meaning is
almost certainly the primary one.**

Barry G. Webb

**A very near-term prophecy with a long-term meaning as well
(a remnant will return from captivity).**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

Again the Lord spoke to Ahaz, “Ask the Lord your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights.” (10,11)

But Ahaz said, “I will not ask; I will not put the Lord to the test.” (12)

Then Isaiah said, “Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of humans? Will you try the patience of my God also? (13)

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: “The virgin [or young woman] will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel [God with us].

He will be eating curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, for before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

The Lord will bring on you and on your people ... the king of Assyria.” (14-17)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

But after he had considered this,
an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said,
“Joseph son of David,
do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife,
because what is conceived in her
is from the Holy Spirit.

She will give birth to a son,
and you are to give him the name Jesus,
because he will save his people from their sins.”

All this took place
to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:

“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son,
and they will call him Immanuel”
(which means “God with us”).

Matthew 1:20-23

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

The statement “before the child (Immanuel) knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good” (verse 16) refers to food, not to ideas or morals. Verse 15 supports this. “He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.” In other words, verses 15-16 do not mean that by the time that Immanuel “reaches the age of responsibility” (say approximately twelve), Pekah and Rezin will no longer be a threat.

Now the reason this little two-year-old child, Immanuel will select “curds and honey” is that by the time (approximately three years after Isaiah gave the sign – 732 B.C.) the land would be so devastated by the Assyrian invasion that only curds and honey would be available to the few who would be left, as verses 21-22 make clear.

John T. Willis

A very near-term sign

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

... there is no reason why ‘alma cannot mean a “young woman” of marriageable age in the Hebrew text of Isaiah 7:14, and mean a “virgin” in the New Testament Greek, which follows the Septuagint (LXX).

John T. Willis

The birth of Jesus was definitely a virgin birth, as attested to by:

Luke 1:34

(not just called a “virgin”,
but Mary knew she had not been with a man).

Consider: how could the people of Isaiah’s time understand the meaning of a prediction such as that of a virgin birth?

But after the fact and with the proof of Christ (especially His resurrection) that meaning could be understood with a higher-level of significance.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7

[The virgin in Isaiah 7]

“Immanuel” means “God is with us” –
right here, now, not just in heaven,
but here ... at this important juncture in Israel’s history.

And the new baby would be a constant reminder of the fact.

God had made that promise long ago
when he appeared to Moses and said:
“But I will be with you” (Exodus 3:12).

Christ magnified this - He took it to the next level of meaning

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

The Lord said to me,

“Take a large scroll and write on it with an ordinary pen:

Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz

[“the spoil speeds, the prey hastens”, or

“quick to the plunder, swift to the spoil”].” (1)

So I called in Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah
as reliable witnesses for me. (2)

Then I made love to the prophetess,
and she conceived and gave birth to a son. (3a)

And the Lord said to me, “Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.

For before the boy knows how to say ‘My father’ or ‘My mother,’
the wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria
will be carried off by the king of Assyria.” (3b-4)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Similarities between Names (John T. Willis)

Immanuel (Isaiah 7)

- 1) a young woman – v. 14
- 2) shall conceive – v. 14
- 3) And bear a son – v. 14
- 4) And shall call his name Immanuel – v. 14
- 5) For before the child knows how – v. 16
- 6) To refuse the evil and choose the good – v. 16
- 7) The land whose two kings you are in dread will be deserted – v. 16
- 8) The Lord will bring upon you (Judah) ... the king of Assyria – v. 17

Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Isaiah 8)

- 1) the prophetess – v. 3
- 2) conceived – v. 3
- 3) and bore a son – v. 3
- 4) call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz – v. 3
- 5) for before the child knows how – v. 4
- 6) to cry “my father” or “my mother” – v. 4
- 7) the wealth of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria will be carried away before the king of Assyria
- 8) the Lord is bringing up against them the waters of the river ... the king of Assyria ... and it will sweep on into Judah – vss 7-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Similarities between the Two Signs (John T. Willis)

These similarities show that these two signs meant the same thing, namely,
that within a short time Pekah and Rezin
would no longer be a threat to Ahaz,
but if (or since) Ahaz sent to Tiglath-pileser III for help
in the end he and Judah would be hurt.

Consider: This is somewhat like the two of Pharaoh's dreams as interpreted by Joseph – they had the same ultimate meaning.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Similarities between the Two Signs (John T. Willis)

[When Hezekiah was visited by Babylonian emissaries]

**Isaiah saw that Merodach-baladan II
had a much deeper purpose in mind –
rebellion against Assyria.**

John T. Willis

**Isaiah knew that this was a prelude to disaster
(not relying solely on God for protection.)**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy,
he is the one you are to fear,
he is the one you are to dread.

He will be a holy place;
for both Israel and Judah he will be
**a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.**

And for the people of Jerusalem he will be
a trap and a snare.

Isaiah 8:13-14

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

[Israel's Unbelief]

Jesus said to them,

“Have you never read in the Scriptures:

“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;
the Lord has done this,

and it is marvelous in our eyes’?

See Psalm 118:22
and Isaiah 28:16;
also Zech 10:4

“Therefore I tell you that the kingdom of God
will be taken away from you

and given to a people who will produce its fruit.

**Anyone who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces;
anyone on whom it falls will be crushed.”**

When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard Jesus' parables,
they knew he was talking about them.

Matthew 21:42-45

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

[Israel's Unbelief]

What then shall we say?

That the Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained it, a righteousness that is by faith; but the people of Israel, who pursued the law as the way of righteousness, have not attained their goal. Why not? Because they pursued it not by faith but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone.

As it is written:

“See, I lay in Zion a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him
will never be put to shame.”

Romans 9:30-33

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

[The Living Stone and a Chosen People]

For in Scripture it says:

**“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.”**

Now to you who believe, this stone is precious.

But to those who do not believe,

**“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,” and,
“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”**

**They stumble because they disobey the message –
which is also what they were destined for.**

1 Peter 2:6-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

**I will wait for the Lord,
who is hiding his face
from the descendants of Jacob.**

I will put my trust in him.

**Here am I,
and the children the Lord has given me.**

**We are signs and symbols in Israel
from the Lord Almighty,
who dwells on Mount Zion.**

Isaiah 8:17-18

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 8

Both the one who makes people holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters. He says,

“I will declare your name to my brothers and sisters;
in the assembly I will sing your praises.” [Psalm 22:22]

And again,

“**I will put my trust in him.**”

And again he says,

“**Here am I,**
and the children God has given me.”

Hebrews 2:11-13

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress.

In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but **in the future** he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan –

**The people walking in darkness
have seen a great light;
on those living in the land of deep darkness
a light has dawned. (1-2)**

**See Matthew 4:15-16,
Luke 1:79**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

[Jesus Begins to Preach]

When Jesus heard that John had been put in prison, he withdrew to Galilee. Leaving Nazareth, he went and lived in Capernaum, which was by the lake in the area of Zebulun and Naphtali - to fulfill what was said through the prophet Isaiah:

“Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali,
the Way of the Sea, beyond 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.”

See Matthew 4:15-16,
Luke 1:79

See Psalm 23:4a

Matthew 4:12-17

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

[Zechariah's Song]

And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High;
for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,
to give his people the knowledge of salvation
through the forgiveness of their sins,
because of the tender mercy of our God,
**by which the rising sun will come to us from heaven
to shine on those living in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the path of peace."**

Luke 1:76-79

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

For to us a child is born,
to us a son is given,
and the government
will be on his shoulders.

And he will be called
Wonderful Counselor,
Mighty God,
Everlasting Father,
Prince of Peace. (6)

Note similarity of the
first part to Luke 1:32-33
(later slide)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

**This one verse contains perfect proof of
the deity of the Messiah,
the doctrine of the incarnation,
which was the stumbling block
for the Jewish opponents of Jesus.**

Andrew M. Davis

**John Willis shows an argument that the words in Isaiah 9:6
represent a single name.**

This is a little difficult to believe in a name that compound and long.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

Of the greatness of his government and peace
there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne
and over his kingdom,
establishing and upholding it
with justice and righteousness
from that time on and forever.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this. (7)

Here it may be noted that the New Testament nowhere applies Isaiah 9:6-7 to Christ, nor does the New Testament apply any of the four titles in this passage to Christ.

John T. Willis

[That does not mean it is not a vital prophetic passage to consider.]

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

But the angel said to her,
“Do not be afraid, Mary;
you have found favor with God.

the angel quoted from
these passages...

You will conceive and give birth to a son,
and you are to call him Jesus.

Similar to Isaiah 7:14

He will be great
and will be **called the Son of the Most High.**

Similar to Isaiah 9:6b

The Lord God will give him
the throne of his father David,
and he will reign over Jacob’s descendants forever;
his kingdom will never end.”

Similar to Isaiah 9:7a,b

For no word from God
will ever fail.

Similar to Isaiah 9:7c

Luke 1:30-33,37

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

[Isaiah 9:7]

The Christian Standard Bible (CSB) says,

“The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end.”

That is a fine translation, but perhaps more dynamic is the more famous KJV:

“Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end”
(emphasis added).

What is the “increase” of Christ’s government?

How is it that it will never end?

The Hebrew word translated “increase” (or “vast”) gives a sense of ever-growing abundance (7:22), of multiplication (Gen 1:28).

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 9

[Isaiah 9:7]

So Christ's kingdom will be characterized by the never-ending multiplication of its prosperity.

How can that be true in heaven, especially because there will no longer be babies born or any form of procreation (Matt 22: 30)?

I think that in heaven Christ's subjects will be morally perfect and will not forget anything they have learned; but they will still be learning, constantly growing in their estimation of the greatness of Christ's person and achievements.

We will never stop increasing in our love for him and our passionate, knowledgeable worship of him.

Morris: Heaven will certainly not be boring!

Andrew M. Davis

HSL: We won't like it if we don't agree with God!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 7-9

**... it is fascinating to reflect on the fact
that the outworking of God's purposes in history
through the whole of chapters 7 – 9
is associated (either figuratively or literally)
with the birth of children.**

Truly his strength is made perfect in weakness!

Barry G. Webb

The Kingdom is all about growth!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 10

[The Remnant of Israel – potential long-term future prophecy]

In that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will no longer rely on him who struck them down but will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel. A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob will return to the Mighty God. **Though your people be like the sand by the sea, Israel, only a remnant will return.** Destruction has been decreed, overwhelming and righteous. Isaiah 10:20-22

In that day the Lord Almighty will be a glorious crown,
a beautiful wreath for the remnant of his people.

Isaiah 28:5

Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah will **take root below and bear fruit above.** For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant, and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors. **The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.**

Isaiah 37:31-32

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 10

Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:

**Though the number of the Israelites
be like the sand by the sea,
only the remnant will be saved.**

Romans 9:27

We will return to this in Isaiah 59:17 and relate to the armor of God.

[Isaiah 10:20-23]

The word remnant appears in each of verses 20, 21, and 22.

The apostle Paul quotes them in Romans 9: 27- 28
to explain why only some Jews were believing in Jesus.

Throughout Israel's history,
only a small portion of the nation were genuine believers.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 11

**A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse;
from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.**

See Revelation 5:5

**The Spirit of the Lord will rest on him—
the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the Spirit of counsel and of might,
the Spirit of the knowledge and fear of the Lord—
and he will delight in the fear of the Lord.**

**See
Matthew 3:16,
John 1:32**

**He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes,
or decide by what he hears with his ears;
but with righteousness he will judge the needy,
with justice he will give decisions
for the poor of the earth.**

Isaiah 11:1-4a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 11

He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth;
with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Righteousness will be his belt
and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Isaiah 11:4b-5

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 11

In that day the Root of Jesse
will stand as a banner for the peoples;
the nations will rally to him,
and his resting place will be glorious.

In that day the Lord
will reach out his hand a second time
to reclaim the surviving remnant of his people

Isaiah 11:10

And again, Isaiah says,

“The Root of Jesse will spring up,
one who will arise to rule over the nations;
in him the Gentiles will hope.”

Romans 15:12

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Comment relating to chapters 1, 9, and 11

[The prophetic view of the future]

**... a new Jerusalem will arise out of the ashes of the old –
a Jerusalem faithful and upright,
as in the days of old (Isaiah 1:21-26; 9:1-6; 11:1-9).**

John W. Miller

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Comment relating to chapters 1, 9, and 11

**In New Testament terms,
9:6-7 was fulfilled in his incarnation,
and 11:1-9 will be fulfilled in his second advent.**

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 12

**“I will praise you, Lord.
Although you were angry with me,
your anger has turned away
and you have comforted me.**

**Surely God is my salvation;
I will trust and not be afraid.**

**The Lord, the Lord himself,
is my strength and my defense;
he has become my salvation.”**

**With joy you will draw water
from the wells of salvation.**

Isaiah 12:1-3

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 11-12

What brought him [Isaiah] to such depths of despair was not (as for Baruch) the bleak future, or even (as we might imagine) the severe opposition he encountered among the elite of Jerusalem (that was something he had anticipated from the very beginning of his prophetic career).

It was rather, he informs us, the discovery that the people of his own village, Anathoth – yes, even of his own family – were plotting to kill him (Is 11:18-21; 12:6).

John W. Miller

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Prophecies of Doom Against Nations

Chapter 13-14a:	Babylon
Chapter 14b:	Philistines
Chapter 15-16:	Moab
Chapter 17:	Damascus
Chapter 18:	Cush
Chapter 19:	Egypt
Chapter 20:	Egypt and Cush
Chapter 21a:	Babylon
Chapter 21b:	Arabia
Chapter 22:	Jerusalem
Chapter 23:	Tyre
Chapter 24:	the Earth

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 19

Isaiah 19:17-25

**are some of the most delightfully clear prophecies
in the Old Testament of God's saving intentions
for the whole world.**

Andrew M. Davis

**Ray: Consider Jonah, and the desire of God to save any who would
repent (not just Israelites).**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 20

In the year that the supreme commander, sent by Sargon king of Assyria, came to Ashdod and attacked and captured it - at that time the Lord spoke through Isaiah son of Amoz.

He said to him, “Take off the sackcloth from your body and the sandals from your feet.” And he did so, going around stripped and barefoot.

Then the Lord said, “Just as my servant Isaiah has gone **stripped and barefoot for three years**, as a sign and portent against Egypt and Cush, so the king of Assyria will lead away stripped and barefoot the Egyptian captives and Cushite exiles, young and old, with buttocks bared - to Egypt’s shame.

Isaiah 20:1-4

What an embarrassing object lesson asked of Isaiah by God:
Going around naked (wearing some kind of underwear?)

Amazing is that this action was to prophesy against Egypt and Cush.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 20

Isaiah 20, one of the strangest chapters in the whole book, shows God's command to his prophet, Isaiah, to act out Egypt's humiliation by going around naked and barefoot for three years as a sign against Egypt and Cush.

Andrew M. Davis

God worked the image of the forthcoming captivity through this Isaiah's humiliation of nakedness.

Consider the humiliation of David's emissaries to the Ammonites when they had their beards half cut off and their buttocks bared. 2 Sam 10

**More importantly, consider the humiliation of Christ, as he was stripped and nailed to the cross, exposed to the people. Matthew 27:28
[how better to show true love?]**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 20

For the three years of the revolt (713-711) Isaiah had gone about stripped and barefoot, like a disgraced captive (3).

He may have been completely naked or, more likely, barefooted and stripped of his outer clothing.

His feet were certainly bare, and so, probably, were his buttocks (4).

His action was a sign and portent, that is, it was invested with special, divine significance.

It is highly improbable that he remained stripped round the clock, so to speak.

More likely he appeared this way in public at least once each day over the three-year period.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 21

And the lookout shouted,

“Day after day, my lord, I stand on the watchtower;
every night I stay at my post.

Look, here comes a man in a chariot
with a team of horses.

And he gives back the answer:

‘Babylon has fallen, has fallen!

**All the images of its gods
lie shattered on the ground!’”**

Isaiah 21:8-9

In Revelation the same language is used,
but Babylon is then likely a symbol for Rome.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 21

A second angel followed and said,

“Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great,”
which made all the nations drink
the maddening wine of her adulteries.”

Revelation 14:8

After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven.

He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor.

With a mighty voice he shouted:

“Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great!”

She has become

a dwelling for demons and

a haunt for every impure spirit,

a haunt for every unclean bird,

a haunt for every unclean and detestable animal.

Revelation 18:2

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 22

[during the impending capture of Jerusalem, the people thought]

... when all seemed lost,

[they] cynically ate and drank and amused themselves, saying,

let us eat and drink,

for tomorrow we shall be dead” (Isaiah 22:13).

John W. Miller

[during the impending capture of Jerusalem, the people thought]

If I fought wild beasts in Ephesus

with no more than human hopes,

what have I gained?

If the dead are not raised,

“Let us eat and drink,

for tomorrow we die.”

1 Corinthians 15:32

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 22

I will place on his shoulder
the key to the house of David;
what he opens no one can shut,
and what he shuts no one can open.

Isaiah 22:22

[during the impending capture of Jerusalem, the people thought]

“To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write:

These are the words of him
who is holy and true,
who holds the key of David.

What he opens no one can shut,
and what he shuts no one can open.

Revelation 3:7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Other Pronouncements

Chapter 25:	Praise to the Lord
Chapter 26:	A Song of Praise
Chapter 27:	Eventual Deliverance of Israel
Chapter 28:	Woe to the Leaders of Ephraim and Judah
Chapter 29:	Woe to David's City
Chapter 30:	Woe to the Obstinate Nation
Chapter 31:	Woe to those who rely on Egypt
Chapter 32:	the Kingdom of Righteousness
Chapter 33:	Distress and Help
Chapter 34:	Judgment Against the Nations
Chapter 35:	Joy of the Redeemed

Isaiah 24-27: these chapters are often called “the Little Apocalypse”; they form an addendum to the whole book, though it takes the form of an inset in first Isaiah.

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 25

[Praise to the Lord]

Lord, you are my God;

I will exalt you and praise your name,
for in perfect faithfulness

you have done wonderful things,
things planned long ago.

You have been a **refuge** for the poor,

a **refuge** for the needy in their distress,

a **shelter** from the storm

and a **shade** from the heat.

Isaiah 25:1,4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 25

[Praise to the Lord]

On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare
a **feast** of rich food for all peoples,
a **banquet** of aged wine -
the best of meats and the finest of wines.

On this mountain he will destroy
the shroud that enfolds all peoples,
the sheet that covers all nations;
he will swallow up death forever.

Isaiah 25:25:6-8a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 25

[Praise to the Lord]

**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

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 25

[Praise to the Lord]

**The Sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears
from all faces;
he will remove his people's disgrace
from all the earth.**

The Lord has spoken.

**In that day they will say,
“Surely this is our God;
we trusted in him,
and he saved us.**

**This is the Lord,
we trusted in him;
let us rejoice and be glad in his salvation.”**

Isaiah 25:8b-9

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 25

For the Lamb at the center of the throne
will be their shepherd;

‘he will lead them to springs of living water.’

‘**And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**’”

Revelation 7:17

‘**He will wipe every tear from their eyes.**

There will be no more death’

or mourning or crying or pain,

for the old order of things has passed away.”

Revelation 21:4

Death will be eliminated...

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 26

Isaiah 26 is a magnificent chapter
for the redeemed to cling to
while riding out the convulsive storm
of redemptive history.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 26

You, LORD,
give perfect peace to those
who keep their **purpose** firm [whose mind is steadfast]
and put their trust in you,

Trust in the LORD forever,
for the LORD,
the LORD himself,
is the Rock eternal. [Rock of Ages]

Isaiah 26:3-4

Isaiah 26:3 is one of the great verses in the Bible
on an abiding peace in the midst of afflictions.

Andrew M. Davis

We must keep our purpose firm

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 26

But your dead will live, Lord;
their bodies will rise -
let those who dwell in the dust
wake up and shout for joy -
your dew is like the dew of the morning;
the earth will give birth to her dead.

Isaiah 26:19

Isaiah 26:19 is one of the clearest prophecies
of the bodily resurrection of the dead
in the Old Testament.

Andrew M. Davis

A prelude to the theme of resurrection

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 26

[Isaiah 26:19]

**This verse repeats in some way
the promise of victory over death given in 25:8...**

**John Oswalt concludes
that this verse along with 25:8
“represents the highest conception of resurrection
in the Old Testament” ...**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 27

[The New Song of the Vineyard]

“Sing about a fruitful vineyard:

I, the Lord, watch over it; I water it continually.

I guard it day and night so that no one may harm it.

I am not angry.

If only there were briers and thorns confronting me!

I would march against them in battle;

I would set them all on fire.

Or else let them come to me for refuge;

let them make peace with me, yes, let them make peace with me.”

In days to come Jacob will take root,

Israel will bud and blossom

and fill all the world with fruit.

Isaiah 27:2-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 27

[The new song of the vineyard (27:2-6) – compare to (5:1-7)]

First song (chapter 5)

no fruit

no rain

abandoned (wall removed)

thorns and briers

overrun

Second song (chapter 27)

fruit

rain

guarded

no thorns and briers

spreads out

At the end of the song the LORD speaks like a lover whose love for his beloved is so intense that he almost wishes someone would attack her so that he might have the satisfaction of defending her (4)! ...

The song finishes in verse 5, but verse 6 then makes the great reversal plain. The world will no longer invade the vineyard; the vineyard will invade the world, filling it with fruit.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 27

[The Gathering of the People]

In that day

the Lord will **thresh** from the flowing Euphrates
to the Wadi of Egypt,
and you, Israel,
will be gathered up one by one.

And in that day a great trumpet will sound.

Those who were perishing in Assyria
and those who were exiled in Egypt
will come and **worship the Lord**
on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

Isaiah 27:12-13

Note the ideas of harvest, the trumpet, the gathering,
and worship (on the holy mountain).

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapters 28-33

**Isaiah chapters 28, 29, 30, 31, and 33
all begin with “Woe,”
the prophetic word of warning
that God’s judgment is coming.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[God's response to the rejection of Israel]

Very well then,

with foreign lips and strange tongues

God will speak to this people,

to whom he said,

This is the resting place, let the weary rest”;

and, “This is the place of repose” -

but they would not listen.

Isaiah 28:11-12

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[Speaking in Tongues]

In the Law it is written:

**“With other tongues
and through the lips of foreigners
I will speak to this people,
but even then they will not listen to me,
says the Lord.”**

1 Corinthians 14:21

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[God's response to the rejection of Israel]

So this is what the Sovereign Lord says:

**“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;
the one who relies on it
will never be stricken with panic.**

I will make justice the measuring line
and righteousness the plumb line;

[... justice will prevail]

quoted in Romans
9:33 and 1 Peter 2:26;
referred to in
Ephesians 2:19-22

Isaiah 28:16-17a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

The Lord Almighty is the one you are to regard as holy,
he is the one you are to fear,
he is the one you are to dread.

He will be a holy place;
for both Israel and Judah he will be
**a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.**

And for the people of Jerusalem he will be
a trap and a snare.

Many of them will stumble;
they will fall and be broken,
they will be snared and captured.”

Isaiah 8:13-15

Consider the earlier reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[The cornerstone idea is similar to Psalm 118:22-24:]

**The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone;**
the Lord has done this,
and it is marvelous in our eyes.

The Lord has done it this very day;
let us rejoice today and be glad.

Psalm 118:22-24

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[The Living Stone and a Chosen People]

As you come to him, the living Stone –
rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him –
you also, like **living stones**,
are being built into a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood,
offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God
through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:4-5

Peter then quotes Isaiah 28.16, Psalm 118.22, and Isaiah 8.14
in quick succession to stress that Christ is the chosen 'stone' ...

N.T. Wright

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

For in Scripture it says:

**“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.”**

1 Peter 2:6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

Now to you who believe,
this stone is precious.

But to those who do not believe,

**“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”
and,**

**“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”**

They stumble because they disobey the message –
which is also what they were destined for.

1 Peter 2:7-8

Note that the passage in 1 Peter combines all of the cornerstone ideas
quoted from Psalms and Isaiah.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

For in Scripture it says:

**“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.”**

Now to you who believe, this stone is precious.

But to those who do not believe,

**“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”**

and,

**“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”**

2 Peter 2:6-8a

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

They stumble because they disobey the message –
which is also what they were destined for.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's special possession,
that you may declare the praises of him
who called you out of darkness
into his wonderful light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are the people of God;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

reference the
children of Hosea

2 Peter 2:8b-10

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

[The Living Stone and a Chosen People]

As you come to him, the living Stone –
rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him –
you also, like **living stones**, [expandable]
are being built into a spiritual house
to be a holy priesthood,
offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God
through Jesus Christ.

1 Peter 2:4-5

Peter then quotes Isaiah 28.16, Psalm 118.22, and Isaiah 8.14
in quick succession to stress that Christ is the chosen 'stone' ...

N.T. Wright

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

For in Scripture it says:

**“See, I lay a stone in Zion,
a chosen and precious cornerstone,
and the one who trusts in him
will never be put to shame.”**

1 Peter 2:6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

Now to you who believe,
this stone is precious.

But to those who do not believe,

**“The stone the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone,”**
and,

**“A stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall.”**

They stumble because they disobey the message –
which is also what they were destined for.

1 Peter 2:7-8a

Note that the passage in 1 Peter
combines all of the cornerstone ideas quoted from Psalms and Isaiah.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

They stumble because they disobey the message –
which is also what they were destined for.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation,
God's special possession,
that you may declare the praises of him
who called you out of darkness
into his wonderful light.

Once you were not a people,
but now you are the people of God;
once you had not received mercy,
but now you have received mercy.

reference the
children of Hosea

1 Peter 2:8b-10

Consider the reference to the stone

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

... they pursued it not by faith
but as if it were by works.

They stumbled over the stumbling stone.

As it is written:

**“See, I lay in Zion
a stone that causes people to stumble
and a rock that makes them fall,
and the one who believes in him
will never be put to shame.”**

As Scripture says,

“Anyone who believes in him will never be put to shame.”

Romans 9:32-33, Romans 10:11

**quoted in Romans 9:33 and 1 Peter 2:4-8;
referred to in Ephesians 2:19-22**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 28

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers,
but fellow citizens with God's people
and also members of his household,
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
with **Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.**

In him the whole building is joined together
and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

And in him you too are being built together
to become a dwelling
in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[God's response to the rejection of Israel]

The Lord has brought over you a deep sleep:
He has sealed your eyes (the prophets);
he has covered your heads (the seers).

Isaiah 29:10

Note the use of the concepts of **prophets** and **seers** in the verse text.

[... others hardened their heart ...]

God gave them a spirit of stupor,
eyes that could not see
and ears that could not hear,
to this very day.

Romans 11:8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[God's response to the rejection of Israel]

The Lord says:

“These people come near to me with their mouth
and honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.

quoted in
Matthew 15:8-9 and
Mark 7:6-7

Their worship of me

is based on merely human rules they have been taught.

Therefore once more I will astound these people
with wonder upon wonder;

the wisdom of the wise will perish,
the intelligence of the intelligent will vanish.”

quoted in
Corinthians 1:19

Isaiah 29:13-14

We take God's principles and derived our own codes
for our own benefit!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[In response to the Pharisees' attack concerning the washing of hands]

He replied,

“Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites;
as it is written:

“**These people honor me with their lips,
but their hearts are far from me.**

**They worship me in vain;
their teachings are merely human rules.’**

**You have let go of the commands of God
and are holding on to human traditions.”**

Mark 7:6-8

Note the last part of Jesus' statement – a summary or conclusion

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[Paul discusses the wisdom of the cross]

For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written:

**“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.”**

Where is the wise person?

Where is the teacher of the law?

Where is the philosopher of this age?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

1 Corinthians 1:18-21

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[God's response to the rejection of Israel]

Woe to those who go to great depths
to hide their plans from the Lord,
who do their work in darkness and think,
“Who sees us? Who will know?”

You turn things upside down,
as if the potter were thought to be like the clay!

Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it,
“You did not make me”?
Can the pot say to the potter,
“You know nothing”?

we have reversed
the values

consider
Romans 9:19-21

Isaiah 29:15-20

We cannot hide what we do from God!
Adam and Eve had no luck with this, either!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 29

[Paul discussing how God uses His creation]

One of you will say to me:

“Then why does God still blame us?
For who is able to resist his will?”

But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God?

“Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it,
‘Why did you make me like this?’”

Does not the potter have the right to make
out of the same lump of clay
some pottery for special purposes
and some for common use?

some are teachers, etc.,
1 Corinthians 12:28ff

Romans 9:19-21

God, as Creator, can do with us whatever He wants!
But He loves us and is not like an evil puppet-master.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 32

[The Kingdom of Righteousness]

**See, a king will reign in righteousness
and rulers will rule with justice.**

[Christ]

**Each one will be like a shelter from the wind
and a refuge from the storm,
like streams of water in the desert
and the shadow of a great rock in a thirsty land.**

**Then the eyes of those who see will no longer be closed,
and the ears of those who hear will listen.**

**The fearful heart will know and understand,
and the stammering tongue will be fluent and clear.**

Isaiah 32:1-4

**Note how in the new regime that people will now see and hear, a
change from Isaiah 6:9-11.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 32

[The land has been made a wasteland...]

... till the **Spirit** is poured on us from on high,
and the desert becomes a fertile field,
and the fertile field seems like a forest.

The Lord's justice will dwell in the desert,
his righteousness live in the fertile field.

The fruit of that righteousness will be peace;
its effect will be quietness and confidence forever.

a preview of heaven?

Isaiah 32:15-17

In the last two verses I am reminded of Psalm 85:10-11:

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.
Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from previous chapters

**... in three remarkable poems,
in Is 9:1-6, 11:1-9, and 32:1-8,
a portrait of the leadership
that Isaiah envisions as arising in Jerusalem
in the aftermath of the approaching disasters
is sketched.**

John W. Miller

Isaiah tries to warn the people of the approaching disaster.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 33

**Lord, be gracious to us;
we long for you.**

**Be our strength every morning,
our salvation in time of distress.**

Isaiah 33:2

A great devotional quote and prayer!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 33

Chapters 28 – 29

The crisis:

foolish leaders and false counsel.

Chapters 30 – 31

False solution:

dependence on Egypt.

Chapters 32 – 33

True solution:

the reign of the LORD as king
in the midst of his people.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 34

**All the stars in the sky will be dissolved
and the heavens rolled up like a scroll;
all the starry host will fall
like withered leaves from the vine,
like shriveled figs from the fig tree.**

Isaiah 34:4

Isaiah 34 prepares the earth for the second coming of Jesus Christ.

**In Matthew 24:29-31 Jesus quotes Isaiah 34:4
about the stars falling from the sky
and the heavenly bodies being shaken.**

Revelation 6:12-17 is filled with similar images.

Andrew M. Davis

A prelude to the Apocalypse; definitely not a short-term prophecy

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 34

**The stars of heaven and their constellations
will not show their light.**

**The rising sun will be darkened
and the moon will not give its light.**

Isaiah 13:10

**This combines with the previous passage
in a New Testament reference.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 34

“Immediately after the distress of those days

“the sun will be darkened,
and the moon will not give its light;
the stars will fall from the sky,
and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.’

“Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven.

And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn
when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven,
with power and great glory.

And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call,
and they will gather his elect from the four winds,
from one end of the heavens to the other.

Matthew 24:29-31

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 34

I watched as he opened the sixth seal.

There was a great earthquake.

The sun turned black like sackcloth made of goat hair,
the whole moon turned blood red,

and the stars in the sky fell to earth,

as figs drop from a fig tree

when shaken by a strong wind.

The heavens receded like a scroll being rolled up,
and every mountain and island was removed from its place.

...

For the great day of their wrath has come,
and who can withstand it?"

Revelation 6:12-17

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 35

Strengthen the feeble hands,
steady the knees that give way;
say to those with fearful hearts,

“Be strong, do not fear;
your God will come,
he will come with vengeance;
with divine retribution
he will come to save you.”

Isaiah 35:3-4

God will encourage us, and we must encourage others.

“Your God Is Coming to Save You” Isaiah 35:4

These words so obviously go infinitely beyond anything that happened in the Old Testament that they must refer to the salvation God wrought in Jesus Christ.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 35

Then will the eyes of the blind be opened
and the ears of the deaf unstopped.
Then will the lame leap like a deer,
and the mute tongue shout for joy.

Theme: blind, deaf, dumb

Water will gush forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert.
The burning sand will become a pool,
the thirsty ground bubbling springs.

**Theme: water in the
desert**

In the haunts where jackals once lay,
grass and reeds and papyrus will grow.

Theme: regrowth

Isaiah 35:5-9

The benefits of this encouragement are great!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 35

**And a highway will be there;
it will be called the Way of Holiness;
it will be for those who walk on that Way.**

Isaiah 35:10

[Isaiah 35:8-10]

The descriptions of the highway in verses 8-10 are very significant.

**First, the name - the “Holy Way” or “Highway of Holiness” –
implies the need for absolute purity from sin.**

Andrew M. Davis

God wants us to walk the Worthy Way!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 35

**How does the image of a desert being transformed
speak both about our spiritual transformation in Christ
and the physical transformation of the universe
coming in the new heaven and new earth?**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 35

The “highway” is one of Isaiah’s favorite images.

Those who obey the Lord

have a level and smooth road to walk (Isa. 26:7–8).

When God calls His people back to their land,

He will prepare the way for them (40:3–4)

and lead them safely (42:16).

He will remove obstacles

so the people can travel easily (49:11; 57:14; 62:10).

God’s highway will be called

“The way of holiness” (35:8).

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Historical Passages

Chapter 36:	Sennacherib Threatens Jerusalem
Chapter 37:	Jerusalem's Deliverance Foretold
	Hezekiah's Prayer
	Sennacherib's Fall
Chapter 38:	Hezekiah's Illness
Chapter 39:	Envoys from Babylon

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 37

“This will be the sign for you, Hezekiah:

“This year you will eat what grows by itself,
and the second year what springs from that.

But in the third year sow and reap,
plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

Once more a remnant of the kingdom of Judah
will take root below and bear fruit above.

For out of Jerusalem will come a remnant,
and out of Mount Zion a band of survivors.

The zeal of the Lord Almighty
will accomplish this.

Theme: remnant

Isaiah 37:30-32

This is a real, near-term type of sign.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

The arrangement of chapters 40-66 is not accidental.

“The Book of Consolation” is divided into three sections; each focuses on a different Person of the Godhead and a different attribute of God.

Chapters 40-48 exalt the greatness of God the **Father**;
chapters 49-57, the grace of God the **Son**,
God’s Suffering Servant;
and chapters 58-66, the glory of the future kingdom
when the **Spirit** is poured out on God’s people.

Warren W. Wiersbe

Note the references to the Spirit in 59:19, 21; 61:1; and 63:10–11, 14

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

A voice of one calling:

**“In the wilderness prepare
the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert
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 people will see it together.**

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.”

**See
Matthew 3:3,
Mark 1:3,
Luke 3:4-6
(the most complete),
John 1:23**

Isaiah 40:3-5

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

[John replied]

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
‘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.

Matthew 3:3, Mark 1:3, Luke 3:4-6, John 1:23

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

**“All people are like grass,
and all their faithfulness is like the flowers of the field.**

**The grass withers and the flowers fall,
because the breath of the Lord blows on them.**

Surely the people are grass.

**The grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of our God endures forever.”**

Isaiah 40:6b-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

For you have been born again,
not of perishable seed,
but of imperishable,
through the living and enduring word of God.

For,
“All people are like grass,
and all their glory is like the flowers of the field;
the grass withers and the flowers fall,
but the word of the Lord endures forever.”

And this is the word that was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:23-25

See also James 1:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

**But the rich should take pride in their humiliation –
since they will pass away like a wild flower.**

**For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant;
its blossom falls and its beauty is destroyed.**

**In the same way,
the rich will fade away
even while they go about their business.**

James 1:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

See, the Sovereign Lord comes with power,
and he rules with a mighty arm.

See, his reward is with him,
and his recompense accompanies him.

He tends his flock like a shepherd:

He gathers the lambs in his arms

and carries them close to his heart;

he gently leads those that have young.

Isaiah 40:10-11

Verse 11 is a great passage to describe the coming of Christ.
from Be Comforted (Isaiah) by Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand,
or with the breadth of his hand marked off the heavens?

Who has held the dust of the earth in a basket,
or weighed the mountains on the scales
and the hills in a balance?

Who can fathom the Spirit of the Lord,
or instruct the Lord as his counselor?

Whom did the Lord consult to enlighten him,
and who taught him the right way?

Who was it that taught him knowledge,
or showed him the path of understanding?

See
Romans 11:34,
1 Corinthians 2:16

Isaiah 40:12-14

Fuller understanding: see Colossians 1:9 and 2:2

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!

How unsearchable his judgments,
and his paths beyond tracing out!

**“Who has known the mind of the Lord?
Or who has been his counselor?”**

**“Who has ever given to God,
that God should repay them?”**

For from him and through him and for him are all things.
To him be the glory forever!

Amen.

Romans 11:33-36

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

The person with the Spirit
makes judgments about all things,
but such a person is not subject to merely human judgments,
for,

**“Who has known the mind of the Lord
so as to instruct him?”**

But we have the mind of Christ.

1 Corinthians 2:15-16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

Do you not know?

Have you not heard?

**The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.**

Isaiah 40:28a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

He will not grow tired or weary,
and his understanding no one can fathom.

He gives strength to the weary
and increases the power of the weak.

Even youths grow tired and weary,
and young men stumble and fall;
but those who hope in the Lord
will renew their strength.

They will soar on wings like eagles;
they will run and not grow weary,
they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:28b-31

God never gets tired, and He gives us strength!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

Here is the definite promise of divine help, but it is important to notice that such help is described in three different forms, and not all of them ought to be expected in anyone situation.

This realization is of crucial importance in saving us from false expectations.

For example, there is the promise here that God's strength can take the form of ecstasy, enabling one **“to mount up with wings as eagles,”** to soar away in an atmosphere of sheer exuberance.

John Claypool

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

... A second way that God's help is described in Isaiah is in terms of strength for activism - **“they shall run and not be weary.”**

Here, too, is another valid shape of religious experience - the inspiration to do a job or to solve a problem or get on with some task.

John Claypool

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

... Fortunately, there is one other form that the promise of God's strength takes: **"They shall walk and not faint."** ... When there is no occasion to soar and no place to run, and all you can do is edge along step by step, to hear of a Help that will enable you "to walk and not faint" is good news indeed. ...

Some people feel the sequence of this Isaiah passage is all turned around and that the highest form of God's help ought to be the soaring of ecstasy. They say it should read, "First you walk, then you run, and finally you mount up with wings as an eagle." But I think the writer knew what he was doing when he set down the promises as he did, for in the dark stretches of life, the most difficult discipline of all is not that of soaring or even of running. It consists of "keeping on keeping on" when events have slowed you to a walk, when it seems that in spite of everything you are going to crumple under the load and faint away.

John Claypool

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

One Step at a Time

One step at a time, dear Savior:

I cannot take any more;

The flesh is so weak and hopeless:

I know not what is before.

One step at a time, dear Savior:

I am not walking by sight;

Keep step with my soul, dear Savior:

I walk by faith in Thy might.

Refrain:

One step at a time, dear Savior,

Till faith grows stronger in Thee;

One step at a time, dear Savior,

Till hope grows stronger in me.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

**Within the section Isaiah 40-55
there lie enclosed four so-called “Servant Songs”.**

- 1) 42:1-7,**
- 2) 49:1-6,**
- 3) 50:4-9, and**
- 4) 52:13 – 53:12.**

George Knight

**[Isaiah] remembered how his people had once been slaves in Egypt,
but had been rescued from being servants to Pharaoh in order to be
servants of the living God (cf. Exodus 4:23).**

George Knight

**But the people of Israel did not understand
that they were designed to be servants to the entire world,
not just to God.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 40

Gotta Serve Somebody

Refrain:

But you're gonna have to serve somebody, yes indeed

You're gonna have to serve somebody

It may be the devil or it may be the Lord

But you're gonna have to serve somebody

Bob Dylan

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 41

So do not fear,
for I am with you;
do not be dismayed,
for I am your God.

I will strengthen you
and help you;

I will uphold you
with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41:10

God is an ever-present help!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 41

**For I am the Lord your God
who takes hold of your right hand
and says to you,**

**Do not fear;
I will help you.**

Isaiah 41:13

God is an ever-present help!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 41

“The poor and needy search for water,
but there is none;
their tongues are parched with thirst.

But I the Lord will answer them;
I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

I will make rivers flow on barren heights,
and springs within the valleys.

I will turn the desert into pools of water,
and the parched ground into springs.

**Theme: water in
the desert**

Isaiah 41:17-18

Note that God provided water for the Israelites in the wilderness.

... they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them,
and that rock was Christ. 1 Corinthians 10:4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

“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 smoldering 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.

In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

Isaiah 42:1-4

God is an ever-present help!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

... the Pharisees went out and plotted how they might kill Jesus.

Aware of this, Jesus withdrew from that place.

A large crowd followed him, and he healed all who were ill.

He warned them not to tell others about him.

Matthew 12:14-16

Continued...

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

This was to fulfill 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 smoldering wick he will not snuff out,
till he has brought justice through to victory.

In his name the nations will put their hope.”

Consider the baptism of Jesus: heaven opened, the Holy Spirit descended, God said, “You are my Son, whom I love, with whom I am well pleased” (Luke 3:21)

Matthew 12:17-21

Jesus is meek and gentle in heart (Matthew 11:28-30)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

This is what God the Lord says -
the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,
who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,
who gives breath to its people,
and life to those who walk on it:

**Theme: stretching
the heavens**

“I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness;
I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you
to be a covenant for the people
and a light for the Gentiles,
to open eyes that are blind,
to free captives from prison
and to release from the dungeon
those who sit in darkness.

**Theme: light for
the Gentiles**

Theme: blind

Isaiah 42:5-7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

“Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

Luke 2:28-32

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him.

Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother:

“This child is destined to cause
the falling and rising of many in Israel,
and to be a sign that will be spoken against,
so that the thoughts of many hearts
will be revealed.

And a sword will pierce your own soul too.”

Luke 2:33-35

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

[Song of Praise to the Lord]

Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise from the ends of the earth...

Isaiah 42:10

He wants us to be creative with our own song of praise!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

I will lead the blind by ways they have not known,
along unfamiliar paths I will guide them;

I will turn the darkness into light before them
and **make the rough places smooth.**

These are the things I will do;
I will not forsake them.

Theme: blind

Isaiah 42:16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet:

“A voice of one calling in the wilderness,

‘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 people will see God’s salvation.**”

Luke 3:4-6

This is actually a quote from Isaiah 40:3-5

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 42

[Israel Blind and Deaf]

**“Hear, you deaf;
look, you blind, and see!**

**Who is blind but my servant,
and deaf like the messenger I send?**

**Who is blind like the one in covenant with me,
blind like the servant of the Lord?**

**You have seen many things,
but you pay no attention;
your ears are open,
but you do not listen.”**

Theme: blind

Isaiah 42:18-20

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

But now, this is what the LORD says -
he who created you, Jacob,
he who formed you, Israel:

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have summoned you by name;
you are mine.

When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers,
they will not sweep over you.

When you walk through the fire,
you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze.

... in Scripture,
water and fire not
only picture total
destruction under
the wrath of God but
also purification
from sin (Num 31:23;
Isa 4:4; Ezek 36:25).
Andrew M. Davis

Isaiah 43:1-2

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions
and to overcome all the power of the enemy;
nothing will harm you.

However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you,
but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

Luke 10:19-20

Mark's gospel spoke of a similar situation as indicated in later sources.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

I baptize you with **water** for repentance.

But after me

comes one who is more powerful than I,
whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.

He will baptize you

with the Holy Spirit and **fire**.

Matthew 3:11

John the Baptist baptized in water to prepare the way for Christ,
He claimed that Jesus would baptize with fire.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

For I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior;
Since you are precious and honored in my sight,
and because I love you,
I will give people in exchange for you,
nations in exchange for your life.

Do not be afraid, for I am with you;
I will bring your children from the east
and gather you from the west.
I will say to the north, 'Give them up!'
and to the south, 'Do not hold them back.'
Bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the ends of the earth -
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made."

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

**His favorite name for God is
“the Holy One of Israel,”
and he uses it twenty-five times in his book.**

**(It is used only five times
in the rest of the Old Testament.)**

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

[Israel's Only Savior]

**“You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord,
“and my servant whom I have chosen,
so that you may know and believe me
and understand that I am he.”**

**Before me no god was formed,
nor will there be one after me.**

Theme: no other god

Isaiah 43:10

Isaiah speaks many times about there being “no other god”.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

[Israel's Only Savior]

**I, even I, am the Lord,
and apart from me there is no savior.**

Theme: no other god

**I have revealed and saved and proclaimed -
I, and not some foreign god among you.**

**You are my witnesses,” declares the Lord,
“that I am God.**

**Yes, and from ancient days
I am he.**

**No one can deliver out of my hand.
When I act, who can reverse it?”**

Isaiah 43:11-13

There is no other god!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 43

[Israel's Only Savior]

**“Forget the former things;
do not dwell on the past.**

See, I am doing a new thing!

**Now it springs up;
do you not perceive it?**

**I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.”**

Theme: water in the desert

**... because I provide water in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland,
to give drink to my people...**

Isaiah 43:18-20

Consider the water provided to the Israelites in the wilderness.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Israel the Chosen]

For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;

Theme: water in the desert

I will **pour out my Spirit** on your offspring,
and my blessing on your descendants.

They will spring up like grass in a meadow,
like poplar trees by flowing streams.

Isaiah 44:3-4

In parallel to the water poured on the ground causing plants to grow,
The Spirit poured out on us causes spiritual growth.

The thought “pour out my Spirit” will return in Joel (and Acts)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[The Lord, Not Idols]

“This is what the Lord says -
Israel’s King and Redeemer,
the Lord Almighty:

I am the first and I am the last;
apart from me there is no God.

Theme: no other gods

Isaiah 44:6

”no other gods”; see other verses including 45:5, 18, 21-22; 46:9

”the first and the last”; like the Alpha and Omega (Revelation)

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

The blacksmith takes a tool
and works with it in the coals;
he shapes an idol with hammers,
he forges it with the might of his arm. ...

Theme: impotent idols

The carpenter measures with a line
and makes an outline with a marker;
he roughs it out with chisels
and marks it with compasses.

He shapes it in human form,
human form in all its glory,
that it may dwell in a shrine.

Isaiah 44:12-13

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

He cut down cedars,
or perhaps took a cypress or oak.

Theme: impotent idols

He let it grow among the trees of the forest,
or planted a pine, and the rain made it grow.

It is used as fuel for burning;
some of it he takes and warms himself,
he kindles a fire and bakes bread.

But he also fashions a god and worships it;
he makes an idol and bows down to it. ...

He also warms himself and says,
“Ah! I am warm; I see the fire.”

Isaiah 44:14-16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

From the rest he makes a god, his idol;
he bows down to it and worships.

Theme: impotent idols

He prays to it and says,

“Save me! You are my god!”

**Theme: blind
(see the
similarity to us)**

They know nothing, they understand nothing;
their eyes are plastered over so they cannot see,
and their minds closed so they cannot understand.

No one stops to think,
no one has the knowledge or understanding to say, ...

“Shall I bow down to a block of wood?”

Isaiah 44:17-20

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Jerusalem to Be Inhabited]

“This is what the Lord says -
your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:

I am the Lord,
the Maker of all things,
who **stretches out the heavens**,
who **spreads out the earth** by myself,
who foils the signs of false prophets
and makes fools of diviners,
who overthrows the learning of the wise
and turns it into nonsense,
who carries out the words of his servants
and fulfills the predictions of his messengers,

Theme: stretched heavens

see 1 Cor. 1

Isaiah 44:24-26a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Christ Crucified Is God's Power and Wisdom (1)]

For the message of the cross is foolishness
to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

For it is written:

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” [Isaiah 29:14]

Where is the wise person?

Where is the teacher of the law?

Where is the philosopher of this age?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

1 Corinthians 1:18-20

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Christ Crucified Is God's Power and Wisdom (2)]

For since in the wisdom of God
the world through its wisdom did not know him,
God was pleased through the foolishness
of what was preached to save those who believe.

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,
but we preach Christ crucified:
a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
but to those whom God has called,
both Jews and Greeks,
Christ the power of God
and the wisdom of God.

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom,
and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

who says of Jerusalem,
‘It shall be inhabited,’
of the towns of Judah,
‘They shall be rebuilt,’
and of their ruins,
‘I will restore them,’

...

who says of **Cyrus**,
‘He is my shepherd
and will accomplish all that I please;
he will say of Jerusalem,
“Let it be rebuilt,”
and of the temple,
“Let its foundations be laid.”’

Isaiah 44:26b-28

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

**A new exodus is about to occur,
one that will make the exodus from Egypt
pale by comparison (43:16-20).**

**Jerusalem is about to be rebuilt
and its temple restored (44:28 - Cyrus).**

John W. Miller

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

I am the Lord, and there is no other;
apart from me there is no God.

Theme: no other God

I will strengthen you,
though you have not acknowledged me,
so that from the rising of the sun
to the place of its setting
people may know there is none besides me.

I am the Lord, and there is no other.

I form the light and create darkness,
I bring prosperity and create disaster;
I, the Lord, do all these things.

Isaiah 45:5-7

Consider: how does God create darkness and disaster?

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

[Zoroastrianism:

**two powers (Gods) – one Good (Light) and one Evil (Darkness),
with Light ultimately winning over Darkness;
to counter Cyrus' and the beliefs of the Medes and the Persians,
the prophet countered with:]**

**Isaiah combats other
philosophies**

“I am the Lord, and there is no other,” declares Israel’s God in 45:6,

“I am not just half of the one Reality, the other half being Evil.

I form Light, and create Darkness:

I make weal

**(or ‘peace’ i.e. all that is positively and constructively good),
and create woe**

(all that is the opposite of what is good):

I am the Lord who do[es] all these things.”

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

“You heavens above,
rain down my righteousness;
let the clouds shower it down.

Let the earth open wide,
let salvation spring up,
let righteousness flourish with it;

I, the Lord, have created it.

Isaiah 45:8

Beautiful Language:

Similar words to Isaiah 32:16-17; also Psalm 85:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

The Lord's justice will dwell in the desert,
his righteousness live in the fertile field.

The fruit of that righteousness will be peace;
its effect will be quietness and confidence forever.

Isaiah 32:16-17

Love and faithfulness meet together;
righteousness and peace kiss each other.

Faithfulness springs forth from the earth,
and righteousness looks down from heaven.

Psalms 85:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

**“Woe to those who quarrel with their Maker,
those who are nothing but potsherds
among the potsherds on the ground.**

**Does the clay say to the potter,
‘What are you making?’**

**Does your work say,
‘The potter has no hands’?**

**Woe to the one who says to a father,
‘What have you begotten?’
or to a mother,
‘What have you brought to birth?’**

Isaiah 45:9-10

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

“This is what the Lord says -
the Holy One of Israel, and its Maker:

Concerning things to come,
do you question me about my children,
or give me orders about the work of my hands?

It is I who made the earth
and created mankind on it.

Theme: stretching the heavens

My own hands **stretched out the heavens;**
I marshaled their starry hosts.

Isaiah 45:11-12

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Jerusalem to Be Inhabited]

“This is what the Lord says -
your Redeemer, who formed you in the womb:

I am the Lord,
the Maker of all things,
who **stretches out the heavens**,
who **spreads out the earth** by myself,
who foils the signs of false prophets
and makes fools of diviners,
who overthrows the learning of the wise
and turns it into nonsense,
who carries out the words of his servants
and fulfills the predictions of his messengers,

Theme: stretched heavens

see 1 Cor. 1

Isaiah 44:24-26a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Christ Crucified Is God's Power and Wisdom (1)]

For the message of the cross is foolishness
to those who are perishing,
but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

For it is written:

**“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise;
the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” [Isaiah 29:14]**

Where is the wise person?

Where is the teacher of the law?

Where is the philosopher of this age?

Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?

1 Corinthians 1:18-20

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 44

[Christ Crucified Is God's Power and Wisdom (2)]

For since in the wisdom of God
the world through its wisdom did not know him,
God was pleased through the foolishness
of what was preached to save those who believe.

Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom,
but we preach Christ crucified:
a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles,
but to those whom God has called,
both Jews and Greeks,
Christ the power of God
and the wisdom of God.

For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom,
and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.

1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

**I will raise up Cyrus in my righteousness:
I will make all his ways straight.**

**He will rebuild my city
and set my exiles free,
but not for a price or reward,
says the Lord Almighty.”**

Isaiah 45:13

**Ray: Consider how the conquering nations sent the inhabitants into exile, and the land became a wasteland, with lions causing havoc. They needed to put people back that cared for the (their) land)
[2 Kings 17:24-28]**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

For this is what the Lord says -
he who created the heavens,
he is God;
he who fashioned and made the earth,
he founded it;
**he did not create it to be empty,
but formed it to be inhabited -**

he says:

“I am the Lord,
and there is no other.”

Theme: no other God

Isaiah 45:18

God made the word to be inhabited!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

“Turn to me and be saved,
all you ends of the earth;
for I am God, and there is no other.

Theme: no other God

By myself I have sworn,
my mouth has uttered in all integrity
a word that will not be revoked:

Psalm 110:4;
Hebrews 7:21

Before me every knee will bow;
by me every tongue will swear.

Philippians 2:10-11

They will say of me,
‘In the Lord **alone**
are deliverance and strength.’”

Isaiah 45:22-24a

God made the word to be inhabited!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

The Lord has **sworn**
and will not change his mind:

“You are a priest forever,
in the order of Melchizedek.”

Psalm 110:4

And it was not without an oath!

Others became priests without any oath,
but he became a priest with an oath when God said to him:

“The Lord has **sworn**
and will not change his mind:
‘You are a priest forever.’”

Because of this oath,
Jesus has become the guarantor of a better covenant.

Hebrews 7:20-22

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

... at the name of Jesus
every **knee** should **bow**,
in heaven
and on earth
and under the earth,
and every **tongue acknowledge**
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:10-11

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 acknowledge God.’”

Romans 14:10c-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 45

[Philippians 2.6–11]

The logic of the poem forces us to acknowledge that Paul knows perfectly well, in quoting Isaiah 45.23 in the closing verses, just how enormous a claim he is making.

In that passage, one of the most fiercely monotheistic statements in the Old Testament, YHWH declares that he is God, and there is no other; to YHWH and him alone every knee will bow and every tongue swear.

N.T. Wright, N. T. and Michael F. Bird

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 46

**“With whom will you compare me or count me equal?
To whom will you liken me that we may be compared?**

**Some pour out gold from their bags
and weigh out silver on the scales;
they hire a goldsmith to make it into a god,
and they bow down and worship it.**

**They lift it to their shoulders and carry it;
they set it up in its place,
and there it stands.**

From that spot it cannot move.

**Even though someone cries out to it,
it cannot answer;
it cannot save them from their troubles.**

**Theme: impotent
idols**

Isaiah 46:5-7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 46

[polytheism]

Their land is **full of idols**;
they bow down to the work of their hands,
to what their fingers have made.

Isaiah 2:8

While Paul was waiting for them in Athens,
he was greatly distressed to see
that the city was **full of idols**.

Acts 17:16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 46

Remember this,
keep it in mind,
take it to heart, you rebels.

Remember the former things, those of long ago;
I am God,
and there is no other;
I am God,
and there is none like me.

**Theme: no other
God**

I make known the end from the beginning,
from ancient times,
what is still to come.

I say,
'My purpose will stand,
and I will do all that I please.'

Isaiah 46:8-10

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 48

“Listen to me, Jacob,
Israel, whom I have called:

I am he;

I am the first and I am the last.

My own hand laid the foundations of the earth,
and my right hand spread out the heavens;
when I summon them,
they all stand up together.

**Theme: stretching
the heavens**

Isaiah 48:12-13

“I am the Alpha and the Omega,” says the Lord God, “who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty. ... **the First and the Last**, the Beginning and the End.

Revelation 1:8, 21:6, 22:13

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 48

This is what the Lord says -
your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel:

I am the Lord your God,
who teaches you what is best for you,
who directs you in the way you should go.

If only you had paid attention to my commands,
your **peace** would have been **like a river**,
your well-being like the waves of the sea.

Your descendants would have been like the sand,
your children like its numberless grains;
their name would never be blotted out
nor destroyed from before me.”

Isaiah 48:17-19

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

[the Lord] says:

“It is too small a thing
for you to be my 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 my salvation
may reach to the ends of the earth.”

**Theme: light for
the Gentiles**

Isaiah 49:6

**Light for the Gentiles; reference Isaiah 42:6 (previously discussed),
Luke 2:31-32, Acts 13:47, Acts 26:23**

God wanted the Israelites to save the world, but they wanted to rule it.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

For my eyes have seen your salvation,
which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:
a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel.”

Luke 2:30-32

For this is what the Lord has commanded us:
“I have made you **a light for the Gentiles,**
that you may bring salvation
to the ends of the earth.”

Acts 13:47

... I am saying nothing beyond what the **prophets** and Moses said
would happen that the Messiah would suffer and, as the first to rise
from the dead, would bring **the message of light to his own people and
to the Gentiles.**”

Acts 26:22-23

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

This is what the Lord says:

**“In the time of my favor 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,
to say to the captives, ‘Come out,’
and to those in darkness, ‘Be free!’**

Isaiah 49:8-9

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

As God's co-workers we urge you
not to receive God's grace in vain.

For he says,

**“In the time of my favor I heard you,
and in the day of salvation I helped you.”**

I tell you,

now is the time of God's favor,
now is the day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:1-2

An interesting concept: being one of God's co-workers!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

They will feed beside the roads
and find pasture on every barren hill.

**Theme: water in
the desert**

They will neither hunger nor thirst,
nor will the desert heat or the sun beat down on them.

He who has compassion on them will guide them
and lead them beside springs of water.

Ref: Psalm 23:2-3

I will turn all my mountains into roads,
and my highways will be raised up.

Isaiah 49:10-12

... in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.
Proverbs 3:6

**Also, see the parallel about making the roads smooth for Christ;
But this scripture shows that God will do this for us, too.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

Rugged hills and valleys extend from Jerusalem down to Jericho and the Jordan Valley.

Jerusalem, at an elevation of approximately 2,500 feet, sits about 3,100 feet above the valley, which actually lies below sea level.

Thus, the journey from Jericho to Jerusalem involved over fifteen miles of uphill walking. ...

Consequently, the leveling of the area's hills and valleys into a plain would be a truly incredible blessing.

Brian Beyer

**Teach me to do your will, for you are my God;
may your good Spirit lead me on level ground.**

Psalm 143:10

**PDE: Having a level place is wonderful,
but our world is richer for having views of mountains and valleys.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 49

See,
I have engraved you
on the palms of my hands;

Isaiah 49:16a

This is a tender way of expressing how much we mean to God.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 50

He who vindicates me is near.

Who then will bring charges against me?

Let us face each other!

Who is my accuser?

Let him confront me!

It is the Sovereign Lord who helps me.

Who will condemn me?

Isaiah 50:8-9

Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen?

It is God who justifies.

Who then is the one who condemns?

No one.

Christ Jesus who died –

more than that, who was raised to life –

is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Romans 8:33-34

If God is for us, who
can be against us?
Romans 8:31

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 51

Listen to me,
you who pursue righteousness
and who seek the Lord:

search for pearls!

Look to the rock from which you were cut
and to the quarry from which you were hewn;
look to Abraham, your father,
and to Sarah, who gave you birth.

When I called him he was only one man,
and **I blessed him and made him many.**

God is in control!

Isaiah 51:1-2

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 51

And do not think you can say to yourselves,
‘We have Abraham as our father.’

I tell you that out of these stones
God can raise up children for Abraham.

Matthew 3:9 (similar in Luke 3:8)

“Abraham is our father,”
they answered.

“If you were Abraham’s children,” said Jesus,
“then you would do what Abraham did.”

John 8:39

Against all hope, **Abraham** in hope believed and so became the **father**
of many nations, just as it had been said to him,
“So shall your offspring be.”

Romans 4:18

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 51

The Lord will surely comfort Zion
and will look with compassion on all her ruins;
he will make her deserts like Eden,
her wastelands like the garden of the Lord.

**Theme: water in
the desert**

Joy and gladness will be found in her,
thanksgiving and the sound of singing.

“Listen to me, my people;
hear me, my nation:

Instruction

will go out from me;

my justice

will become **a light to the nations.**

**Theme: light to
the nations**

Isaiah 51:3-4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 51

**My righteousness draws near speedily,
my salvation is on the way,
and my arm will bring justice to the nations.**

...

**Lift up your eyes to the heavens,
look at the earth beneath;
the heavens will vanish like smoke,
the earth will wear out like a garment
and its inhabitants die like flies.**

**But my salvation will last forever,
my righteousness will never fail.**

**the universe will
end, but not
God's kingdom**

Isaiah 51:5-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 51

(51:12–16)

This opening part of the passage is basically an affirmation that the covenant between the LORD and Israel is still intact:
I am the LORD your God and You are my people (15–16).

This is the language God had used when he had first claimed Israel as his own at the exodus.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

“And now what do I have here?”
declares the Lord.

“For my people have been taken away for nothing,
and those who rule them mock,”
declares the Lord.

“And all day long
my name is constantly blasphemed.

Isaiah 52:5

As it is written:

“**God’s name is blasphemed**
among the Gentiles
because of you.”

Romans 2:24

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

Therefore **my people will know my name;**
therefore in that day they will know
that it is I who foretold it.

Yes, it is I.” [”**Here am I**”, NAS]

How beautiful on the mountains
are the feet of those who bring good news,
who proclaim peace,
who bring good tidings,
who proclaim salvation,
who say to Zion, “Your God reigns!”

Isaiah 52:6-7

And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?

As it is written:

“**How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!**”

Romans 10:15

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

Depart, depart, go out from there!

Touch no unclean thing!

Come out from it and be pure,

you who carry the articles of the Lord's house.

Isaiah 52:11

God commanded them to depart because Babylon was a condemned city (Jer. 50:8ff.; 51:6, 45). He warned them not to linger but to get out quickly while they had the opportunity (Isa. 48:20). They did not have to flee like criminals, but there was no reason to tarry.

He also cautioned them not to take any of Babylon's uncleanness with them. "Touch no unclean thing" (52:11) would certainly include the whole Babylonian system of idolatry and occult practices that had helped to ruin the Jewish nation (47:11–15). Paul made the application to believers today in 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1.

Warren W. Wiersbe

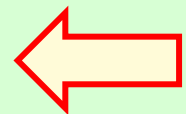
Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

Do not be yoked together with unbelievers. For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what does a believer have in common with an unbeliever? What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God.

As God has said:

“I will live with them and walk among them,
and **I will be their God, and they will be my people.**”



Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord.
Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” ...

Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

See, my **servant** will act wisely;
he will be raised and lifted up and highly exalted.

**Just as there were many who were appalled at him -
his appearance was so disfigured
beyond that of any human being
and his form marred
beyond human likeness -
so he will sprinkle many nations,
and kings will shut their mouths because of him.**

Theme: Christ

For what they were not told,
they will **see**,
and what they have not **heard**,
they will **understand**.

Theme: blind

Isaiah 52:13-15

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52 and 53

**... the Suffering Servant passage of Isaiah 53
[is] actually 52:13–53:12.**

Fred M. Wood and Ross McLaren

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

It has always been my ambition
to preach the gospel where Christ was not known,
so that I would not be building
on someone else's foundation.

Rather, as it is written:

**“Those who were not told about him will see,
and those who have not heard will understand.”**

Romans 15:20-21

The main body of the Jews, in their blindness to the truth, rejected the gospel, and thus Paul who preached it. Therefore, he said to the Jews,

“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.”

Acts 13:46

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 52

**Both the context and the content make clear
that the final three verses in Isaiah 52
actually introduce (and belong to)
the passage that spans all of chapter 53.**

John F. MacArthur

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

**No chapter in the entire Bible
so clearly expounds the principle of substitutionary atonement
by which Jesus Christ saves sinners
as does Isaiah 53.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

The messianic interpretation of Isaiah 53 was held by Jewish rabbis till the twelfth century.

After that, Jewish scholars started interpreting the passage as a description of the sufferings of the nation of Israel.

Warren W. Wiersbe

Isaiah 53 is quoted or alluded to in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament chapter.

The index of quotations in the appendix of my Greek New Testament gives at least forty-one different citations, and this may not be all of them.

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

**Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?**

He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering,
and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised,
and we held him in low esteem.

The NT does
not mention
the appearance
of the Messiah

Isaiah 53:1-3

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[Belief and Unbelief Among the Jews]

Even after Jesus had performed so many 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

But not all the Israelites accepted the good news.

For Isaiah says,

“Lord, who has believed our message?”

Romans 10:16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

**Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,**

yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and **by his wounds we are healed.**

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;

and **the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.**

Isaiah 53:4-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

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 fulfill what was spoken
through the prophet Isaiah [Septuagint]:

**“He took up our infirmities
and bore our diseases.”**

a conscious choice!

Matthew 8:16-17

**Matthew 8:14–17 applies Isaiah 53:4
to our Lord’s healing ministry
and not to His atoning death.**

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

Isaiah 53:4 - 6 –

**Those three verses
may well be**

**the most magnificent verses
in the entire Old Testament.**

Theme: Christ

John MacArthur

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;

he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.

By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
Yet who of his generation protested?

For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.

Isaiah 53:7-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[Philip and the Eunuch]

This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

**“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter,
and as a lamb before its 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.”**

[Septuagint]

**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 8:30-35

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

The Ethiopian eunuch was reading Isaiah 53:7-8 and queried the evangelist Philip,

“I ask you, who is the prophet saying this about – himself or someone else?”

The very next verse settles forever the question for Christians:

“Philip proceeded to tell him the good news about Jesus, beginning with that Scripture” (Acts 8:34- 35).

Isaiah 53 is “about Jesus” and no one else.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

**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.**

Theme: Christ

Isaiah 53:8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

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.”** [see Isaiah 53:9]

When they hurled their insults at him,
he did not retaliate;
when he suffered, he made no threats.

Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.

“He himself bore our sins” [see Isaiah 53:5, 10]
in his body on the cross,
so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness;

“by his wounds you have been healed.” [see Isaiah 53:6]

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

**Who has believed our message
and to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?**

He grew up before him like a tender shoot,
and like a root out of dry ground.

He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him,
nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering,
and familiar with pain.

Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised,
and we held him in low esteem.

The NT does
not mention
the appearance
of the Messiah

Isaiah 53:1-3

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

**Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,**

yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

But he was pierced for our transgressions,
he was crushed for our iniquities;

the punishment that brought us peace was on him,
and **by his wounds we are healed.**

We all, like sheep, have gone astray,
each of us has turned to our own way;

and **the Lord has laid on him
the iniquity of us all.**

Isaiah 53:4-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

**He was oppressed and afflicted,
yet he did not open his mouth;**

**he was led like a lamb to the slaughter,
and as a sheep before its shearers is silent,
so he did not open his mouth.**

**By oppression and judgment he was taken away.
Yet who of his generation protested?**

**For he was cut off from the land of the living;
for the transgression of my people he was punished.**

Isaiah 53:7-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

**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.**

Theme: Christ

Isaiah 53:8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

Theme: Christ

Yet it was the Lord's will

to crush him and cause him to suffer,

and though the Lord makes his life an offering for sin,

he will see his offspring and prolong his days,

and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand.

After he has suffered,

he will see the light of life

and be satisfied;

by his knowledge

my righteous servant will justify many,

and **he will bear their iniquities.**

Isaiah 53:10-11

It was God's will to allow Christ to suffer to save mankind.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

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.

For he bore the sin of many,
and made intercession
for the transgressors.

Theme: Christ

see also
Mark 15:28 and
Luke 22:37

Isaiah 53:12

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

[The Suffering and Glory of the Servant]

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 fulfillment.”

Luke 22:37

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

Isaiah 52:3-53:12

describes the servant of the Lord

in a way

**which can hardly be applied
to Israel or the remnant.**

Theme: Christ

John T. Willis

In other words, these words can only refer to the Messiah, the Christ.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

John R. Sampey,
Old Testament scholar
and former president of
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary,
called a portion of Isaiah
the heart of the Old Testament.

Theme: Christ

Students who studied under Sampey
said that he could not teach Isaiah 52:13-53:12
without weeping.

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

**Quite uniquely,
the focus is on the servant's suffering
(42:4; 49:7; 50:4-9; 52:13-53:12)
leading to his sacrificial death
for the sins of others.**

Theme: Christ

Reward and victory come only after death.

Such language is startlingly new.

**“This is the first such statement in the Old Testament
and it surpasses everything previously said
of a servant in Yahweh's service”.**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

As North says, “It is true that he nowhere quotes directly from the passages which modern scholars delimit as the Servant Songs, though he did say of Isaiah 61:1-2a, which is so similar in spirit to the Songs that some scholars have included it in the song cycle:

Theme: Christ

‘Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing’ (Luke 4:21).

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favor...
Isaiah 61:1-2a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

It is clear that Jesus thought of his sufferings as having been ‘written of him’ (Matt. 26:24,54,56; Luke 18:31), and it would be hypercritical not to include Isaiah 53 and the related passages among ‘the scriptures’ to which he referred.

The ‘many’ of Mark 10:45 is strongly reminiscent of the fourfold ‘many’ in Isaiah 52:14-15; 53:11-12.

Theme: Christ

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

... with a dense series of allusions to Isaiah 53, Peter adds that Christ bore in his body the sins of others. ...

Theme: Christ

The crucifixion was an atoning death that has brought healing.

This is one of the clearest statements in the whole New Testament of the fact that Jesus, the Messiah, took upon himself the punishment that his people deserved.

N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

... in Luke's narrative,
Jesus at the Last Supper recites the words
'And he was numbered with the transgressors'
from Isaiah 53.12
as a prophetic prediction
of his forthcoming Passion. ...

Theme: Christ

When Peter wanted to explain
the atoning nature of Jesus' death,
he delved into Isaiah 53.4–6...

N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

... after another 'Passion prediction' (20.17–19),
the mother of James and John
requests positions of power
in the coming kingdom.

Theme: Christ

Jesus responds with two Isaianic images
about drinking the cup of God's wrath (Isa. 51.17, 22)
and giving his life as a ransom for others (Isa. 53.10–12).

N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 53

**Jewish people,
whose exposure to the Scripture
is limited to texts
that are read aloud in their synagogues each week
will be completely unfamiliar with Isaiah 53.**

Theme: Christ

**The entire passage is always omitted
from the scheduled public readings.**

John F. MacArthur

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 54

[The Future Glory of Zion]

“Sing, barren woman,
you who never bore a child;
burst into song, shout for joy,
you who were never in labor;
because more are the children of the desolate woman
than of her who has a husband,”
says the Lord.

Isaiah 54:1

Isaiah is certainly the prophet of song;
he mentioned songs and singing
more than thirty times in his book.

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 54

But the Jerusalem that is above is free,
and she is our mother.

For it is written:

“Be glad, barren woman,
you who never bore a child;
shout for joy and cry aloud,
you who were never in labor;
because more are the children
of the desolate woman
than of her who has a husband.”

Galatians 4:26-27

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 54

[The Future Glory of Zion]

Though the mountains be shaken
and the hills be removed,
yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken
nor my covenant of peace be removed,”
says the LORD, who has compassion on you.

“Afflicted city, lashed by storms and not comforted,
I will rebuild you with stones of turquoise,
your foundations with lapis lazuli.

I will make your battlements of rubies,
your gates of sparkling jewels,
and all your walls of precious stones.

**All your children will be taught by the LORD,
and great will be their peace. ...”**

**consider the
comparison
to heaven!**

Isaiah 54:10-13

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 54

[The Future Glory of Zion]

It is written in the Prophets:

‘They will all be taught by God.’

Everyone who has heard the Father
and learned from him
comes to me.

John 6:45

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

[Invitation to the thirsty]

Theme: thirsty

**Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters...
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!**

**Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.**

Isaiah 55:1-2a

[Isaiah 55:2]

**This royal feast offers first the beverages then the “choicest of foods.”
The three beverages focused on are water, wine, and milk.
These three represent different aspects of what Christ yearns to do for
our souls. water (John 4:14), milk (1 Pet 2:2), wine (Jesus changed the
water into wine at the wedding in Cana, John 2:1ff)**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

[Invitation to the thirsty]

Theme: thirsty

Why spend money on what is not bread,
and your labor on what does not satisfy?

Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good,
and you will delight in the richest of fare.

Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live.

I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
my faithful love **promised to David**.

Seek the Lord while he may be found; call on him while he is near.

Isaiah 55:2b-3, 6

[Our Lord probably had Isaiah 55:2 in mind when He said,
“Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which
endures to everlasting life” (John 6:27 NKJV).

Warren W. Wiersbe

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

[Invitation to the thirsty]

**Let the wicked forsake their ways
and the unrighteous their thoughts.**

**Let them turn to the Lord,
and he will have mercy on them,
and to our God,
for he will freely pardon.**

Isaiah 55:7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

“We tell you the good news:

What God promised our ancestors he has fulfilled for us,
their children,
by raising up Jesus.

As it is written in the second Psalm:

“‘You are my son;
today I have become your father.’

God raised him from the dead
so that he will never be subject to decay.

As God has said,

“‘I will give you the holy and sure blessings
promised to David.’

Acts 13:32-34

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

All the while,
we are listening
for the heart of the Holy Spirit beating within our own hearts.

“Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live,”

God calls to us through the prophet Isaiah (55:3).

Richard Foster

Our hearts must be in “sync” with the Holy Heart!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways,”
declares the Lord.

“As the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Psalm 103:11

Isaiah 55:8-9

We are just a speck, but one that God loves!

**Consider how the “height” of the heavens has grown to be without limit
as time has moved forward!**

**We must align in the same direction;
the magnitude of the “vector” is not as critical. [PDE]**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

As the rain and the snow
come down from heaven,
and do not return to it
without watering the earth
and making it bud and flourish,
so that it yields seed for the sower
and bread for the eater,
so is my word that goes out from my mouth:

they understand the
“water cycle” [Tom]

It will not return to me empty,
but will accomplish
what I desire
and achieve the purpose
for which I sent it.

Isaiah 55:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

[Isaiah 55:6-11 – Isaiah using the imagery of a salesman]

**The salesman called on the customers
to do something quite unexpected.**

**Instead of paying him money for their product,
they had to seek the Lord. ...**

**Normally the expression meant
to go to the temple to worship (see Deut. 12:5; Ps. 105:4),
but the people in exile had no temple.**

**The prophets changed this to mean
to seek God's way of life,
his lifestyle for his people (Amos 5:4-7, 14-15).**

Homan Old Testament Commentary: Isaiah; Max Anders

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 55

You will go out in joy
and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills
will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field
will clap their hands.

Isaiah 55:12

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

This is what the Lord says:

“Maintain justice
and do what is right,
for my salvation
is close at hand
and my righteousness
will soon be revealed. ...

Isaiah 56:1

A thousand years in your sight
are like a day that has just gone by,
or like a watch in the night.

Psalms 90:4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

[Those not part of the “chosen” people will be included (1)]

Let no foreigner who is bound to the Lord say,

“The Lord will surely exclude me from his people.”

And let no eunuch complain, “I am only a dry tree.” [not barren]

For this is what the Lord says:

“To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths,

who choose what pleases me

and hold fast to my covenant -

to them I will give within my temple and its walls

a memorial and a name

better than sons and daughters;

I will give them an everlasting name

that will endure forever.

these I will bring to my holy mountain

and give them joy in my house of prayer.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

[Those not part of the “chosen” people will be included (2)]

Their burnt offerings and sacrifices
will be accepted on my altar;
for my house will be called
a house of prayer for all nations.”

The Sovereign Lord declares -

he who gathers the exiles of Israel:

“I will gather still others to them
besides those already gathered.”

Isaiah 56:3-8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

[Embracing the World, Isaiah 56:3-8]

The import of this passage is that they were not to adopt a legalistic attitude which would stand in the way of this happening.

They were to be an open community, warmly embracing all who genuinely bound themselves to the LORD (3, 6). ...

Something much more is in view than the rebuilding of the Jerusalem temple and the inclusion of formerly excluded people in the worship associated with it.

The conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26–40 is a beautiful example of it.

This man was both a foreigner and a eunuch, and interestingly it was the scroll of the prophet Isaiah that he was reading when Philip the evangelist met him.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

[Jesus cleansing the temple]

“It is written,” he said to them as he taught them,

“**My house will be called
a house of prayer,**

but you are making it
‘a den of robbers.’”

Matthew 21:13, Mark 11:17, Luke 19:46

Jesus quotes verse 7 in Mark 11:17,
showing that the temple
was always meant to have a worldwide focus,
a yearning for the nations
to come to faith in the one true God.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 56

[Global Gospel]

**“Do not... say to yourselves,
‘We have Abraham as our father.’**

**I tell you that out of these stones
God can raise up children for Abraham” (Matthew 3:9).**

**Many expositors contend the words
“these stones”
mean “the Gentiles.”**

**The covenant with national Israel
was always conditional.**

Fred M. Wood and Ross McLaren

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 57

The righteous perish,
and no one takes it to heart;
the devout are taken away,
and no one understands
that the righteous are taken away
to be spared from evil.

Those who walk uprightly
enter into peace;
they find rest as they lie in death.

Isaiah 57:1-2

Isaiah 57:1-2 is a vital reminder that the godly are taken out of this world to be spared from evil and by dying enter into peace in Christ.

This will help especially those
who grieve over Christians who die young.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 57

[Prepare the Way]

And it will be said:

**“Build up, build up, prepare the road!
Remove the obstacles out of the way of my people.”**

Isaiah 57:14

Consider the comparison between this and an earlier passage:

A voice of one calling:

**“In the wilderness prepare the way for the Lord;
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.**

Isaiah 40:3

**Isaiah 40:3: Prepare the way for the Lord
Isaiah 57:14: prepare the way for the people**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 57

[Comfort for the Contrite]

For this is what the high and exalted One says -
he who lives forever, whose name is holy:

“I live in a high and holy place,
but also with the one
who is contrite and lowly in spirit,
to revive the spirit of the lowly
and to revive the heart of the contrite.

compare this
passage with
Psalm 51

Isaiah 57:15

My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit;
a broken and contrite heart
you, God,
will not despise.

Psalm 51:17

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 57

**Isaiah 57:15 is one of the greatest verses in the book;
it describes God's person and dwelling place,
as well as those with whom God desires to dwell.**

God is revealed as the

“High and Exalted One, who lives forever, whose name is holy.”

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

“Shout it aloud, do not hold back.

Raise your voice like a trumpet.

Declare to my people their rebellion

and to the descendants of Jacob their sins.

For day after day they seek me out;

they seem eager to know my ways,

as if they were a nation that does what is right

and has not forsaken the commands of its God.

They ask me for just decisions

and seem eager for God to come near them.

Isaiah 58:1-2

The people have only the illusion of worship.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

**‘Why have we fasted,’ they say,
‘and you have not seen it?’**

**Why have we humbled ourselves,
and you have not noticed?’**

**“Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please
and exploit all your workers.**

**Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife,
and in striking each other with wicked fists.**

**You cannot fast as you do today
and expect your voice to be heard on high.**

Isaiah 58:3-4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen,
only a day for people to humble themselves?

Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed
and for lying in sackcloth and ashes?

Is that what you call a fast,
a day acceptable to the Lord?

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
to loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
to set the oppressed free
and break every yoke?”

Fasting is really a conscious choice to pause and focus on God... not just one day a week.

It is more of a tool to facilitate worship.

Isaiah 58:5-6

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

Is it not to share your food with the hungry
and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter -
when you see the naked, to clothe them,
and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Then **your light** will break forth like the dawn,
and your healing will quickly appear;
then your righteousness will go before you,
and **the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.**

Isaiah 58:7-8

Compare this to
Matthew 25:31ff,
and contrast with
Corban, Mark 7:11

You are the light of the world... let your light shine before others, that
they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

Then you will call, and the Lord will answer;
you will cry for help,
and he will say: **Here am I.**

Compare this to
Isaiah's statement
"Here am I".
(Isaiah 6:8)

"If you do away with the yoke of oppression,
with the pointing finger and malicious talk,
and if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry
and satisfy the needs of the oppressed,
then your light will rise in the darkness,
and your night will become like the noonday.

Isaiah 58:9-10

God said to Moses, "**I am who I am.**

This is what you are to say to the Israelites:

'I am has sent me to you.'"

Exodus 3:14

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship]

The Lord will guide you always;
he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land
and will strengthen your frame.

You will be like a well-watered garden,
like a spring whose waters never fail.

Isaiah 58:11

This comment on “false” fasting
is a warning to us all.

We must worship God from the heart –
in spirit and in truth.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

**Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins
and will raise up the age-old foundations;
you will be called Repairer of Broken Walls,
Restorer of Streets with Dwellings.**

Isaiah 58:12

**The rebuilding of ancient ruins is a clear allusion
to the rebuilding of Jerusalem by the exiles,
but it is also a metaphor for the building of a work
for the glory of God that will last eternally –
even the building of the heavenly temple of God
with living stones rescued [see 1 Peter 2:5]
from the wreckage of Satan's devastation
(Matt 16:18; 1 Pet 2:5).**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[The Sabbath --> Lord's Day]

“If you keep your feet from breaking the Sabbath
and from doing as you please on my holy day,
if you call the Sabbath a delight
and the Lord's holy day honorable,
and if you honor it by not going your own way
and not doing as you please or speaking idle words,
then you will find your joy in the Lord,
and I will cause you to ride in triumph ...

For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

We must
worship, not just
one day a week,
but every day.

Isaiah 58:13-14

... God's good intentions for the Sabbath
are nowhere clearer in all of Scripture than in these two verses.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 58

[True Fasting / True Worship - Summary]

- The people they seem eager to know my ways (but it is an illusion)
- You cannot fast as you do today and expect God to hear you
- Fasting is really a conscious choice to pause and focus on God... not just one day a week.
- God desires a “fast” which helps the poor and oppressed; feeding the hungry and sheltering them
- If we worship as God desires, He will be present for us, and we will be His light to the world – His helper in restoring others’ lives devastated by Satan

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[The Power of God]

**Surely the arm of the Lord
is not too short to save,
nor his ear
too dull to hear.**

Isaiah 59:1

[Isaiah 59:1-8]

**Sinners make wispy cobwebs
as a flimsy covering for themselves (v. 6),
but it will not shield them from God's holy eyes.**

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[The Rejection of God by People]

But your iniquities have separated
you from your God;

your sins have hidden his face from you,
so that he will not hear.

No one calls for justice;

no one pleads a case with integrity.

They rely on empty arguments, they utter lies;
they conceive trouble and give birth to evil.

Their feet rush into sin;

they are swift to shed innocent blood.

They pursue evil schemes;

acts of violence mark their ways.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[Feet swift to shed blood]

**The way of peace they do not know;
there is no justice in their paths.**

**They have turned them into crooked roads;
no one who walks along them will know peace.
So justice is far from us,
and righteousness does not reach us.**

[truth-twisters!]

**We look for light, but all is darkness;
for brightness, but we walk in deep shadows.
Like the blind we grope along the wall,
feeling our way like people without eyes.
At midday we stumble as if it were twilight;
among the strong, we are like the dead.**

Isaiah 59:8-10

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

As it is written:

“There is no one righteous, not even one;
there is no one who understands;
there is no one who seeks God.

All have turned away,
they have together become worthless;
there is no one who does good,
not even one.”

[Psalms 14:11-3, 53:1-3]

“Their throats are open graves;
their tongues practice deceit.” [truth-twisters!]

[Psalms 5:9]

“The poison of vipers is on their lips.”

[Psalm 140:3]

“Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.”

[Psalm 10:7]

“Their feet are swift to shed blood;
ruin and misery mark their ways,
and the way of peace they do not know.”

[Isaiah 59:6-7]

Romans 3:10-17

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[The Rejection of God by People]

So justice is driven back,
and righteousness stands at a distance;
truth has stumbled in the streets,
honesty cannot enter.

Truth is nowhere to be found,
and whoever shuns evil becomes a prey.

The Lord looked and was displeased
that there was no justice.

The image is that these characteristics are like people being pushed around by a bully.

Isaiah 59:11b-15

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[The Rejection of God by People]

God steps in –
through the Messiah

He saw that there was no one,
he was appalled that there was no one to intervene;
so his own arm achieved salvation for him,
and his own righteousness sustained him.

He put on righteousness as his breastplate,
and the helmet of salvation on his head;
he put on the garments of vengeance
and wrapped himself in zeal as in a cloak.

Isaiah 59:16-17

... this powerful picture of God girding on his armor expresses the truth that he will not stand by while his people are destroyed;

He is totally committed to saving them.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[The Armor of God]

Stand firm then,

with the belt of truth buckled around your waist,
with the breastplate of righteousness in place,
and with your feet fitted with the readiness
that comes from the gospel of peace.

In addition to all this,

take up the shield of faith,
with which you can extinguish
all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

Take the helmet of salvation
and the sword of the Spirit,
which is the word of God.

Through Christ we also
have access to this armor!

Ephesians 6:14-17

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[Looking to a new covenant]

**“The Redeemer will come to Zion,
to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,”
declares the Lord.**

Isaiah 59:20

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[All Israel Will Be Saved]

I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery,
brothers and sisters,
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 in this way 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.”

This refers to Isaiah 27:9

Romans 11:25-27

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 59

[Looking to a new covenant]

“As for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the Lord.

“My Spirit,
who is on you,
will not depart from you,
and my words that I have put in your mouth
will always be on your lips,
on the lips of your children
and on the lips of their descendants
from this time on and forever,”
says the Lord.

Isaiah 59:21

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 60

[The Glory of Zion]

“Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord rises upon you.

See, darkness covers the earth
and thick darkness is over the peoples,
but the Lord rises upon you
and his glory appears over you.

Nations will come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your dawn.

Theme: light to
the nations

Isaiah 60:1-3

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 60

[The Glory of Zion]

No longer will violence be heard in your land,
nor ruin or destruction within your borders,
but you will call your walls Salvation
and your gates Praise.

The sun will no more be your light by day,
nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you,
for the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your God will be your glory.

Your sun will never set again,
and your moon will wane no more;
the Lord will be your everlasting light,
and your days of sorrow will end.

**Theme: light to
the nations**

Isaiah 60:18-19

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

**The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.**

**He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
and provide for those who grieve in Zion --**

Isaiah 61:1-3a

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[Application to Christ]

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, and 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 proclaim good news to the poor [in spirit].**

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
**to set the oppressed free [from sin and death],
to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”**

Luke 4:16-19

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[Application to Christ]

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.

He began by saying to them,
“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.”

Luke 4:20-21

What an explosive way to launch his ministry!

**The idea of “preaching good news to the poor”
is also found in Matthew 11:5 and Luke 7:22**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61 (FFB 1)

When the imprisoned John the Baptist sent his messengers to ask Jesus if he was the Coming One after all, or if they had to look for someone else, he was perhaps disturbed by the discrepancy between the purifying judgment by wind and fire which he had said the Coming One would execute and the ministry in which Jesus was actually engaged.

When Jesus told John's messengers to go back and tell their teacher what they had seen him do and heard him say – “the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them” (Luke 7:22) – he knew that John would recognize the fulfilment of those prophetic words of Isa. 35:5ff and similar scriptures which foretell how on the day of Yahweh's saving action “the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; then shall the lame man leap like a hart and the tongue of the dumb sing for joy.**”**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61 (FFB 2)

Above all, the proclamation of the good news to the poor or afflicted was a sign that the year of Yahweh's favour had come, according to the announcement of the Spirit-anointed speaker of Isa. 61:1ff, which (as we are told in Luke 4:17-19) Jesus chose as his text and applied to his ministry in his programmatic sermon in the synagogue of Nazareth.

F.F. Bruce

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

The prophet Isaiah seemed to be writing about the Jubilee year in Isaiah 61:

This passage from Isaiah was Jesus' inauguration speech at the beginning of his ministry.

When he finished reading it in the synagogue, he rolled up the scroll and sat back down.

C. Christopher Smith

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[Good news for the poor (61:1–6)]

The Servant-Messiah speaks as an anointed preacher, and the burden of his preaching is the year of the LORD's favor (2).

This is almost certainly an allusion to the Year of Jubilee as described in the law of Moses.

Every fiftieth year was to be proclaimed a year of release in which debts were cancelled, slaves were freed, and people who had been forced to sell their family property because of poverty received it back again.

It was called the 'Year of Jubilee', literally 'Year of the Ram's Horn', because of the horn trumpet which was blown to announce its arrival.

Barry G. Webb

As in the Jubilee, our debts are cancelled, and we have a fresh start!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.

They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.

Isaiah 61:3c-4

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

Strangers will shepherd your flocks;
foreigners will work your fields and vineyards.

And you will be called priests of the Lord,
you will be named ministers of our God.

You will feed on the wealth of nations,
and in their riches you will boast.

Instead of your shame
you will receive a **double portion**,
and instead of disgrace
you will rejoice in your **inheritance**.

And so you will inherit
a **double portion** in your land,
and everlasting joy will be yours.

Isaiah 61:5-7

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[Interesting note about the double portion]

Elisha's request for a double share of Elijah's spirit (2 Kings 2:9, 10) does not mean

that he wished to be twice as good as his predecessor

but that he be recognized as his heir

(the first-born always received

twice as much as the other, Deuteronomy 21:17).

Gordon Robinson

**The double portion was not about double power!
The record does not indicate Elisha had twice the power of Elijah.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

**“For I, the Lord, love justice;
I hate robbery and wrongdoing.**

**In my faithfulness I will reward my people
and make an everlasting covenant with them.**

**Their descendants will be known among the nations
and their offspring among the peoples.**

**All who see them will acknowledge
that they are a people the Lord has blessed.”**

Isaiah 61:8-9

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

I delight greatly in the Lord;
my soul rejoices in my God.

special clothing

For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.

For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.

special growth

Isaiah 61:10-11

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 62

[Zion's New Name]

For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
for Jerusalem's sake I will not remain quiet,
till her vindication shines out like the dawn,
her salvation like a blazing torch.

The nations will see your vindication,
and all kings your glory;
you will be called by a **new name**
that the mouth of the LORD will bestow.

You will be a crown of splendor in the LORD's hand,
a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Isaiah 62:1-3

The New Jerusalem will be a sparkling, awesome, place
that represents the glory of God!

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 62

[Zion's New Name]

No longer will they call you **Deserted**,
or name your land **Desolate**.

But you will be called **Hephzibah**,
and your land **Beulah**;
for the LORD will take delight in you,
and your land will be married.

As a young man marries a young woman,
so will your Builder marry you;
as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride,
so will your God rejoice over you.

see Ephesians 5:22ff

Isaiah 62:4-5

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 61

[The Good News]

The LORD has made proclamation to the ends of the earth:

“Say to Daughter Zion, ‘See, your Savior comes!

See, his reward is with him,

and his recompense accompanies him.’”

They will be called the **Holy People**,

the **Redeemed of the LORD**;

and you will be called **Sought After**,

the **City No Longer Deserted**.

Isaiah 62:11-12

At times the description of Zion in this chapter is very concrete – its name, its land, its walls. In other places it is more abstract: glory, salvation, righteousness. But in a sense the last verse of the chapter is the key to it all.

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 64

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down,
that the mountains would tremble before you!

... come down to make your name known to your enemies
and cause the nations to quake before you! ...

Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

see
next
slide

You come to the help of those who gladly do right,
who remember your ways. ...

Isaiah 64:1-5

We must do the will of God gladly, because we agree with it.
Not because we believe that we earn our salvation.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 64

[Zion's New Name]

Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

Isaiah 64:4

[None of the rulers of this age understood ...]

Since ancient times no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God besides you,
who acts on behalf of those who wait for him.

1 Corinthians 2:9

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 64

All of us have become like one who is unclean,
and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags;
we all shrivel up like a leaf,
and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Yet you, LORD, are our Father.
We are the clay, you are the potter;
we are all the work of your hand.
Do not be angry beyond measure, LORD;
do not remember our sins forever.
Oh, look on us, we pray,
for we are all your people.

Isaiah 64:6-9

**Consider how distasteful it is to God to cleanse our sins!
The blood of Christ is required; the cleansing is at a spiritual level!**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[Rejecting God]

**“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

“Here am I” – compare these statements by God and Isaiah

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

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

[Isaiah 65:1]

Paul quoted this verse in Romans 10:20 to speak of God’s grace displayed in the amazing harvest of Gentiles into the church of Christ.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[Value]

This is what the Lord says:

**“As when juice is still found in a cluster of grapes
and people say, ‘**Don’t destroy it,**
there is still a blessing in it,’
so will I do in behalf of my servants;
I will not destroy them all.**

Isaiah 65:8

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[similar to the parable...]

Then he told this parable:

“A man had a fig tree growing in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, ‘For three years now I’ve been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven’t found any.

Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?’

“‘Sir,’ the man replied, ‘leave it alone for one more year, and I’ll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine!

If not, then cut it down.’”

Luke 13:6-9

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[Value]

“See, I will create
new heavens and a new earth.

The former things will not be remembered,
nor will they come to mind.

Isaiah 65:17

But in keeping with his promise
we are looking forward to
a new heaven and a new earth,
where righteousness dwells.

2 Peter 3:13

Then I saw “**a new heaven and a new earth,**”
for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away...

Revelation 21:1

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[New Heavens and Earth]

**“Never again will there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not live out his years;
the one who dies at a hundred
will be thought a mere child;
the one who fails to reach a hundred
will be considered accursed.**

**They will build houses and dwell in them;
they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.**

Isaiah 65:20-21

**Isaiah 65:21 suggests that we'll build houses
and live in them on the New Earth.**

Randy Alcorn

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

... there is just no easy way to harmonize Isaiah 65:17-20 with Revelation 21:1 and 4.

The task of explanation is easier for millennial interpreters, for this passage seems very much to describe the vast improvement of earthly life in a millennial kingdom with Christ reigning on earth, as described in Revelation 20:1-6.

Andrew M. Davis

God is working with His people slowly, to bring them into an understanding of what the Kingdom of Heaven will be.

He must get them to start looking at something that leads them into the idea of eternal life.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[New Heavens and Earth]

No longer will they build houses and others live in them,
or plant and others eat.

For as the days of a tree,
so will be the days of my people;
my chosen ones will long enjoy
the work of their hands.

They will not labor in vain,
nor will they bear children doomed to misfortune;
for they will be a people blessed by the Lord,
they and their descendants with them.

Isaiah 65:22-23

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[New Heavens and Earth]

**Before they call I will answer;
while they are still speaking I will hear.**

**The wolf and the lamb will feed together,
and the lion will eat straw like the ox,
and dust will be the serpent's food.**

**They will neither harm nor destroy
on all my holy mountain,"
says the Lord.**

Isaiah 65:24-25

Compare:

**... while I was still in prayer, Gabriel... came to me in swift flight about
the time of the evening sacrifice.**

Daniel 9:21

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

[Isaiah 65:17-25] All of this amazing peace and prosperity is common in the language of prophetic writing. Yet these words are among the most controversial in the book of Isaiah. The difficulty lies in trying to harmonize the images in these nine verses with other passages of Scripture, most especially the teaching about the new heaven and new earth in 2 Peter 3 and Revelation 21–22. John’s vision in Revelation of the new heaven and new earth includes the death of death. But in Isaiah 65:20 we have merely the deferral of death, resulting in remarkably long life: ...

To make matters more confusing, that verse contains two other things we would not expect in the eternal state: infants born and people being accursed. No one will suffer under a curse in heaven, and heavenly marriage and procreation are ruled out by Jesus’s statement to the Sadducees in Matthew 22: 30.

Andrew M. Davis

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

Isaiah 65:25 provides a literary “flashback” to Isaiah 11:6.

Isaiah linked his description of the new heavens and the new earth with his earlier description of God’s kingdom.

God’s shalom would be so complete that it would prevail even among natural enemies in the animal kingdom.

Bryan Beyer

The word shalom relates to complete and overall peace; what someone has considered as “flourishing”.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 65

**God will create a new heavens and new earth
that totally overshadows the present.**

Isaiah 65:17

Life will be far better than the present (eternal life...?)

Isaiah 65:20-23

**There will be peace even
among former predators and prey.**

Isaiah 65:24-25

**God in His design sent Christ at just the right time,
as He brings us (mankind) into spiritual maturity
in a slow and deliberate manner.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

[Judgment and Hope]

This is what the Lord says:

“Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.

Where is the house you will build for me?
Where will my resting place be?

Has not my hand made all these things,
and so they came into being?”
declares the Lord.

“These are the ones I look on with favor:
those who are humble and contrite in spirit,
and who tremble at my word.

Consider
Psalm 51:17

Isaiah 66:1-2

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

[Stephen's speech]

“However,
the Most High does not live in houses made by human hands.

As the prophet says:

“Heaven is my throne,
and the earth is my footstool.

What kind of house will you build for me?
says the Lord.

Or where will my resting place be?

Has not my hand made all these things?’

Acts 7:48-50

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

[Judgment and Hope]

For when I called,
no one answered,
when I spoke,
no one listened.

Isaiah 65:12

They did evil in my sight
and chose what displeases me.”

Isaiah 66:4b

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

[Throughout the World]

**I will set a sign among them,
and I will send some of those who survive to the nations ...
and to the distant islands
that have not heard of my fame
or seen my glory.**

**They will proclaim my glory
among the nations.**

Isaiah 66:19

[The Lord would send messengers to the nations who would declare his glory. Such a statement anticipates Jesus's words as he sent his disciples into the world to reach the nations (Matthew 28:18–20). ...

The term translated “islands” has occurred many times already in Isaiah to denote the ends of the earth. Thus the proclamation of God's messengers will know no limits.

Bryan Beyer

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

[Judgment and Hope]

“As the new heavens and the new earth
that I make will endure before me,”
declares the Lord,

“so will your name and descendants endure.

From one New Moon to another and from one Sabbath to another,
all mankind will come and bow down before me,”
says the Lord.

“And they will go out and look on the dead bodies
of those who rebelled against me;

the worms that eat them will not die,

the fire that burns them will not be quenched,

and they will be loathsome to all mankind.”

Isaiah 66:22-24

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

... And if your eye causes you to stumble,
pluck it out.

It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye
than to have two eyes and be thrown into hell,
where “the worms that eat them do not die,
and the fire is not quenched.’

Mark 9:46-48

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

The Bible is full of picture language from beginning to end.

[Isaiah] ... his pictures and his poems

are quite the best way of expressing the great truth

that God will someday effect a total redemption

that will change the whole basis of His vast creation.

George Knight

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

In the second half of the book
the new creation unfolds from his saving work
like a bud bursting into bloom,
and the last verse challenges us never to take it lightly,
but to ponder (as we shall for all eternity)
the greatness of our redemption
and the terrible fate
from which we have been saved.

What can we do but worship?

Barry G. Webb

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Pearls from chapter 66

And so as we come to the end of Isaiah, we discover that the prophet begins and ends with Yahweh, the sovereign Lord of history.

The vision Isaiah received (1:1) came from God, and at the end of Isaiah's prophecy, all nations recognize God's supremacy either willingly or unwillingly (66: 23–24).

Not only is history going somewhere, but fundamentally, history is not about humanity but about the God of humanity, the God of the universe.

The apostle Paul's words provide an excellent summary of Isaiah's message: "For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen." (Rom 11:36)

Bryan Beyer

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

Resurrection

We do not have to press deep into the Old Testament before discovering that there is a confident and constant hope in God's love for his people even beyond the veil of death. ... So, on the one hand, the hope of the biblical writers, which was strong and constant, focused not upon the fate of humans after death, but on the fate of Israel and its promised land. The nation and land of the present world were far more important than what happened to an individual beyond the grave. But on the other hand, the constant love of YHWH was never merely a theological dogma to the ancient Israelites. In many parts of their literature, and supremely the Psalms, we find evidence that they knew this love in **vivid personal experience**. It gave rise to the suggestion that, despite the widespread denials of such a thing, YHWH's faithfulness would after all be known not only in this life but also in a life beyond the grave.

N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

The realm of the dead below is all astir
to meet you at your coming;
it rouses the spirits of the departed to greet you -
all those who were leaders in the world;
it makes them rise from their thrones -
all those who were kings over the nations.

Isaiah 14:9

[This] most lively biblical scene of continuing activity in Sheol merely confirms this. Isaiah 14 offers a splendid depiction of the king of Babylon arriving in the underworld to join the erstwhile noble shades who are there already.

N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird

Isaiah goes on to describe the anguish of these leaders,
but it is clear that there is a belief in a consciousness afterlife.

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

Isaiah 24-27 –

In these chapters

**Isaiah gives the Old Testament's strongest statements
about victory over the grave.**

Max Anders

This was not a completely new idea to Isaiah's listeners!

**God has led His people throughout the years
into an understanding of the afterlife.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

**But your dead will live, Lord;
their bodies will rise -
let those who dwell in the dust
wake up and shout for joy -
your dew is like the dew of the morning;
the earth will give birth to her dead.**

Isaiah 26:19

**Isaiah 26:19 is one of the clearest prophecies
of the bodily resurrection of the dead
in the Old Testament.**

Andrew M. Davis

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[The Resurrection of Christ]

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand.

By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

1 Corinthians 15:1-3

Note how Paul interprets Isaiah as the Law!

Interpretation (Prophecy, Scripture, etc.)

[The Resurrection Body]

I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. 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.” [Isaiah 25:8]

“Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting?” [Hosea 13:14]

The sting of death is sin,
and the power of sin is the law.

1 Corinthians 15:50-56

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

What kind of body will it be?

**Paul describes it as a body (in some physical sense)
that is imperishable (as opposed to what we have now).**

**The exact nature is bound to be beyond our understanding,
but somehow a mix of imperishable body
which will be the vessel to carry our soul.**

**We should be able to recognize each other
not by physical image,
but from the spiritually transparent heart / soul.**

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – Thoughts about Resurrection

The resurrection was the last major topic in Paul's letter we know as First Corinthians (1 Cor 15:12–58).

Paul described the certainty of Christ's resurrection and its impact on all believers - when he returns, they will rise as he did (1 Cor 15:20–22).

Paul assured his readers that in that day, Isaiah's words would come true (1 Cor 15:54).

Death, the last enemy, would be destroyed forever (1 Cor 15:26).

Bryan Beyer

... he will **swallow up death** forever.

Isaiah 25:8a

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

Picking the Pearls

Isaiah – End Story

- **Parable of the Pearl of Great Price**
- **Parable of the Horse Stalls**
- **Parable of the Search for Optimized Performance**
- **Composite Lesson Learned**

Bibliography (1)

General

- 1) **Meet the Prophets, by John W. Miller**
- 2) **My Servants the Prophets, by John T. Willis**
- 3) **Basic Christianity, by John Stott**
- 4) **Searching for the Pattern, by John Mark Hicks**
- 5) **The New Testament in Its World, by N.T. Wright and Michael F. Bird**
- 6) **Broken Signposts: How Christianity Makes Sense of the World, by N.T. Wright**
- 7) **Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer, by Rowan Williams**
- 8) **Unfashionable: Making a Difference in the World by Being Different, by Tullian Tchividjian**
- 9) **The Great Partnership, by Jonathan Sacks**
- 10) **The Gospel according to God, by John F. MacArthur**
- 11) **Free at Last?: The Gospel in the African American Experience, by Carl F. Ellis**
- 12) **The Ryrie Study Bible**
- 13) **The Time is Fulfilled, F.F. Bruce and William Barkley**
- 14) **How to Preach and Teach the Old Testament for All Its Worth; Christopher J.H. Wright**
- 15) **The Case for Jesus: The Biblical and Historical Evidence for Christ; Brant Pitre**

Bibliography (2)

Isaiah

- 1) Prophets of Israel (1) Isaiah; George Knight
- 2) Holman Study Guide: Isaiah
- 3) Historians of Israel, Gordon Robinson Christ-Centered Exposition – Exalting Jesus in Isaiah
- 4) The Message of Isaiah; Barry G. Webb
- 5) Be Comforted (Isaiah); Warren Wiersbe
- 6) Encountering the Book of Isaiah (Encountering Biblical Studies): A Historical and Theological Survey; Beyer, Bryan

Jeremiah and Lamentations

- 1) Prophets of Israel (2) Jeremiah and Ezekiel; William Neil
- 2) Holman Study Guide: Jeremiah and Lamentations

Ezekiel

- 1) Holman Study Guide: Ezekiel

The “Twelve”

- 1) Prophets of Israel (3) the Twelve
- 2) Christ-Centered Exposition – Exalting Jesus in Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

Picking the Pearls

End of Isaiah