

## THE RECEPTION OF THE BOOK OF ISAIAH IN PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS\*

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### ABSTRACT

The Book of Isaiah clearly played a key role for Paul, especially when writing (or dictating) his Letter to the Romans, and especially with respect to two fundamental and mutually connected subjects: (i) the composition and unity of a Christian community composed of both Jew and Gentile. This unity and diversity are rooted in God's redeeming work in Christ, which because of the universal nature of sin applies to all people equally; (ii) God's faithfulness in saving Israel, and his plan to redeem all people, whether Jew or Gentile. As Paul's mission progresses, we detect in his letters, from 1 Thessalonians to the Romans, a growing interest in Isaiah and the increasing significance of the book for both his work and his theological reflection. This article summarises the significance of the quotations from the Book of Isaiah in the Letter to the Romans in three parts according to the structure of the letter (chapters 1–8; 9–11; 12–15). The exposition is concentrated only on 15 direct quotations from the Book of Isaiah.

### Key words

Apostle Paul; Letter to the Romans; The Book of Isaiah; Interpretation of the Old Testament; Intertextuality

DOI: 10.14712/23363398.2020.8

There is little doubt that the Apostle Paul used the Scriptures as a key to discerning God's will and interpreting events. It is equally true, however, that had he not come to know Jesus as the Christ, the

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\* This article is supported by the Charles University Research Centre No. 204 052.

promised Messiah of the ends of the ages who legitimised his divinity and ministry by his resurrection, he would have used the very same Scriptures to argue against the new faith in God's redeeming work in Christ.<sup>1</sup> It might even have been his very knowledge of the Scriptures and the traditions of his ancestors (see Gal 1:14<sup>2</sup>) which played the central role in his persecution of the nascent church, just as it did in his proclamation of the gospel after his conversion.

Like any biblical scholar, Paul read and interpreted the Word of God from the perspective of his own experience and in light of whichever context or audience he was dealing with at the time. In other words, his interpretations were subjective and culturally and socially contextualised. He also used Scripture to support his ideas and legitimise his message, mission and status as an apostle. Like many of his contemporaries, he considered himself inspired, and believed he was interpreting the will of God under the guidance of the Holy Spirit (see also 1 Cor 7:40).

Nonetheless, when Paul uses biblical texts, he sometimes appears to make 'mistakes', or to change the text, and it is not always easy to determine the reason for these changes. Are they of his own invention or are they the product of an imperfect memory? Or did they already exist in whichever tradition he was calling upon or in the original text he was working with? Like the Hebrew text, the Greek text of Paul's day was yet to reach its final form, so his quotations could have been based on an earlier version of the LXX<sup>3</sup> and do not necessarily represent a conscious deviation from the original.<sup>4</sup> Stanley and some others

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<sup>1</sup> Frankenmölle suggests that the application of theories of reception to the interpretation of biblical texts is a paradigm shift that has enabled a fresh understanding of Paul's writings. See Hubert Frankenmölle, "Wie geschrieben steht." Ist die paulinische Christologie schriftgemäß? in *Paderborner Universitätsreden*, ed. Peter Freese (Paderborn: Universität, 2004), 9.

<sup>2</sup> Although the Greek text was used as the principal source for this article, all Bible references and quotations use the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) unless otherwise stated. Where the LXX or MT references differ, these are added in brackets.

<sup>3</sup> Wilk refers to a 'revised' edition of the LXX. See Florian Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1998); E. Earle Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2003), 147–148.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture. Quotation Technique in the Pauline Epistles and Contemporary Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 43–45. Whitlock suggests that the quotations that display hebrizing tendencies might have been translated by Paul himself from a Hebrew original or at least 'corrected' according to it. See Jonathan Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration. Studien zur Vorstellung von inspirierter Schrift und inspirierter Schriftauslegung im*

feel it unlikely – other than with the odd exception – that Paul was quoting by heart,<sup>5</sup> but an oral tradition founded in Antiquity and based on memorising cannot be completely ruled out.<sup>6</sup> It is clear from the comment in 2 Timothy 4:13 that access to ‘parchments’ – and a codex – was a possibility even in the first century,<sup>7</sup> but when we consider that within a single letter Paul quotes from texts of various types, we must assume that when he wrote or dictated his letters he generally worked without such aids. Tiwald and Ellis follow Stanley<sup>8</sup> in suggesting that Paul probably carried his own hand-written collections of quotations which he extended over time and used in his letters, which may partly explain the variety of apparent originals; Whitlock suggests these collections might have been thematically organised ‘text-plots’.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, Wilk believes that for the letter to the Romans at least, Paul had access to the Greek version of the book of Isaiah.

An equally important consideration is the perspective from which we judge Paul's use of the Old Testament. Most scholars occupy themselves with Paul's own viewpoint, while that of his audience, especially Gentiles, is very rarely considered. Some important questions must be addressed, however. What meaning did references to Scripture have for

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*antiken Judentum und in den paulinischen Schriften* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2002), 228–229. Shum even believes, and seeks to show through analysis of particular passages, that Paul was working with both Hebrew and Greek texts. See Shiu-Lun Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans: A Comparative Study of Paul's Letter to the Romans and the Sibylline and Qumran Sectarian Texts* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002). If we compare quotations from the Greek and Hebrew versions of Isaiah, however, it is clear, as Wilk shows, that Paul worked exclusively with the Greek. See Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 42. See also Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1989).

<sup>5</sup> Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 16–17, 69–70. Ellis considers it even less likely than was once believed. See Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, 147.

<sup>6</sup> Wagner stresses the practice of committing Bible passages to memory even when an author (Paul or someone else) had access to the written text (Vorlage), whether a complete a scroll of the relevant book or merely extracts (‘testimonia’ – collections of quotations from the Old Testament). Such memorisation enabled the author to draw on passages of Scripture while considering the wider context of the book. See J. Ross Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 20–28.

<sup>7</sup> Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 233.

<sup>8</sup> Markus Tiwald, *Hebräer von Hebräern. Paulus auf dem Hintergrund frühjüdischer Argumentation und biblischer Interpretation* (Freiburg: Herder, 2008), 19–21; Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic*, l.c.; Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture*, 53–54.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 232, citing C.H. Dodd, *According to the Scriptures. The Substructure of New Testament Theology* (London: Scribner, 1953). Such testimonia were taken in context rather than as isolated statements.

such audiences? Were they able to recognise an allusion to Scripture if it was not explicitly formulated as such? Much of the time we must assume not. We cannot be sure that everything we identify as an echo of an Old Testament text was intended as such by Paul.<sup>10</sup> It might simply have been a natural figure of speech or part of the Jewish heritage with which Paul was working more or less intuitively. Such rootedness in the biblical idiom is disappearing from the modern world but was a more prominent feature of everyday language use in Paul's day. If as Paul says of himself in Galatians 1:14 he exceeded his contemporaries in his knowledge of the traditions of his ancestors, we can safely assume that the biblical mode of expression, in both form and content, came naturally to him and that not every statement that appears to be rooted in the Bible was necessarily intended as a reference to a particular passage of Scripture.

Another significant factor, the detail of which is not accessible to us beyond a few references in the epistles, is the extent to which Paul and other missionaries used the Old Testament in their day-to-day engagement with the communities – in their sermons, instructions, communications, and conversations. We cannot know for sure what Paul's addressees knew of the Scriptures and other traditions and should be careful before we draw conclusions about quotations and allusions and whether or how far the audience was able to identify them.<sup>11</sup> This is certainly true with respect to the Roman community, which Paul had not founded and did not know intimately. Communities such as the Roman church were predominantly from a Gentile background but did include Judeo-Christians who would have been able to share their knowledge and understanding of the most important and most frequently quoted Scriptures. It is possible that these believers could have helped whoever was delivering Paul's message to identify and interpret his references to Scripture, at least the explicit quotations. Four epistles (Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Galatians) contain large numbers of quotations from the Old Testament in addition to (especially in Romans) numerous

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<sup>10</sup> An 'echo' implies that the author was anchored in a certain tradition (in Paul's case Scripture) and as such is less intentional than an 'allusion' or 'quotation'.

<sup>11</sup> In *Paul and the Language of Scripture* (83–251), Stanley examines all the direct (easily identifiable) quotations in Paul's epistles and using a set of clearly defined criteria attempts to determine the source of all the 'deflections' in Paul's quotations. His remarkable and meticulous work must nonetheless be described as achieving a precise set of numbers from an imprecise base: interpretations of the many types of Biblical text used by Paul and with which Stanley works are at best highly arguable.

allusions and echoes. We can surmise that the number of Judeo-Christians in the communities to which these letters were addressed was higher than it was in those communities who received epistles with fewer such references. If implicit references were to be fully understood, some of the recipients would need to have least at the same level of education as Paul, as only such people would be able to decipher the references and interpret them for the rest of the community.<sup>12</sup> We know that Priscilla, Aquila, Apollos, and others of Paul's co-workers would have had the necessary knowledge; we must nonetheless concede that any hypothesis built on the foregoing argument should remain in the realm of speculation. Most recipients undoubtedly understood implicit references less well than clearly signalled quotations.<sup>13</sup>

It is no easy task to distinguish direct quotations from echoes, paraphrases, and allusions. Different scholars suggest different numbers for each and have different ways of defining their terms and doing their sums.<sup>14</sup> What most would agree on is that readers with little or no religious background would have been able to recognise as 'biblical' only those statements that either are clearly identifiable by an introductory formula or reference to an Old Testament character or text or are in an obvious tension with their immediate syntactic context.<sup>15</sup> This article limits itself to such cases, although the letter to the Romans contains many other verses inspired by the book of Isaiah, which was clearly a key source for Paul.

Paul differed little from his Jewish contemporaries in his method of working with sacred texts and in his way of approaching and

<sup>12</sup> Betham considers this not merely possible but probable. He also suggests that illiterate members of the community came to know the texts – from listening to and memorising them in their catechesis – well enough to be able to identify the allusions. Christopher Betham, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letter of Paul to the Colossians* (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 255–256. There is no evidence for this, however.

<sup>13</sup> Because of the complexity of the matter and the limited scope of this article, the focus here is on explicit quotations from Isaiah.

<sup>14</sup> Tiwald mentions 127 such quotations; Longenecker 77 (+ 6 in Eph and the pastoral letters); Whitlock (citing Koch) 88/89 or (citing Michel) 87 (omitting 1 Cor 9:10 and 15:33); Frankenmölle 88. See Markus Tiwald, *Hebräer von Hebräern*, 102; Richard Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 92–95; Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 20; Dietrich-Alex Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge des Evangeliums: Untersuchungen zur Verwendung und zum Verständnis der Schrift bei Paulus* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr-Paul Siebeck, 1986); Otto Michel, *Paulus und seine Bibel* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1972 (1929)); Frankenmölle, *Wie geschrieben steht*.

<sup>15</sup> Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 37.

interpreting Scripture.<sup>16</sup> Annette Steudel has shown similarities in interpretive technique between Paul (in Romans 9–11) and the Qumran (especially the Damascus Document)<sup>17</sup> and suggests that both take a contemporising approach, interpreting texts in light of their own times and communities.<sup>18</sup> Paul's dual hermeneutical key – God's definitive and redeeming work in Jesus Christ, and Paul's own call to be an apostle to the Gentiles – together with his focus on the community certainly place him closer to the Qumranic scholars than to the rabbis, who occupied themselves mainly with the halakha.<sup>19</sup>

The letter to the Romans contains more quotations from Scripture than any of Paul's other letters – almost half his epistolary total. Most of them appear in three passages (4:1–25; 9:6–11:36; and 15:1–12),<sup>20</sup> and most refer to God's plan to draw his chosen people from among both Jews and Gentiles/Greeks. Some fifteen of the forty-two quotations are direct quotations from the book of Isaiah: eight of these are marked *καθὼς γέγραπται* (2:24; 3:10; 9:33; 10:15; 11:8; 11:26; 14:11 [here, *γέγραπται γάρ*]; and 15:21); a further five carry a direct reference to Isaiah (9:27: *Ἡσαΐας δὲ κρᾶζει*; 9:29: *καθὼς προείρηκεν Ἡσαΐας*; 10:16: *Ἡσαΐας γὰρ λέγει*; 10:20–21: *Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει/ λέγει*; 15:12: *Ἡσαΐας λέγει*); one carries a reference to 'Scripture' (10:11: *λέγει γὰρ ἡ γραφή*); and one almost literal quotation is without any reference (11:34, which together with the following verse forms a composite quotation; 11:35 is a free paraphrase of Job 41:11 [LXX 41:3]). Most of the quotations from Isaiah are to be found in chapters 9–11, where Paul discusses the fate and salvation of Israel. In some cases (3:10–18; 11:34–35), the quotations are composites from Isaiah and other books; some (9:33; 11:26) refer to more than one place in Isaiah.

<sup>16</sup> Stanley and Ellis come to the same conclusion. Changing a phrase or a word, using a different context, making grammatical changes, adding words, or emphasising one's own ideas were all common practice for authors working with texts in the first century, not only within Judaism but within Antiquity in general. In this context, Ellis refers to midrash.

<sup>17</sup> Annette Steudel, 'Die Texte aus Qumran als Horizont für Römer 9–11. Israel-Theologie, Geschichtsbetrachtung, Schriftauslegung', in *Between Gospel and Election. Explorations in the Interpretation of Romans 9–11*, ed. Florian Wilk and J. Ross Wagner (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 111–120.

<sup>18</sup> For example, they both (Rom 9–11 and 11Q 13) update or contemporise Is 52:7, although in different ways.

<sup>19</sup> Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 237.

<sup>20</sup> Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture*, 142–143.

The quotations cover the whole of the book of Isaiah: eight are from first Isaiah, six from second Isaiah, and three from third Isaiah; two are composites: 9:33 (both from first Isaiah) and 11:26 (from third and first). According to Shum, Romans chapters 1–8 are strongly inspired by second or ‘Deutero’ Isaiah, especially the fourth Servant song,<sup>21</sup> but the direct quotations refer to both Isaiah 52:5 and 59:7–8. It is impossible to agree with Shum’s interpretation, particularly his comments regarding the fourth song, because although elsewhere (10:16; 15:21) Paul does refer directly to the song, what is uppermost in his mind is not the fate of the Servant but the Gentiles’ acceptance of the gospel.

Typical of his time, Paul treats the quotations from Isaiah somewhat freely and sees the ‘inspiration’ of Scripture not in its literal accuracy but in its dynamic power: through a particular Scripture, and through Paul as his ‘inspired’ instrument, God speaks into the situation of the day.<sup>22</sup> Filled with the Holy Spirit and chosen to proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles, Paul feels called to interpret the Word of God, a calling he fulfils – unlike his Jewish rabbinic contemporaries – filled with the Spirit of Christ.

The quotations from Isaiah can be divided into three sections along the lines of the structure of the letter itself: chapters 1–8, chapters 9–11, and chapters 12–15.

## **Part I: Chapters 2 and 3**

### **1. *Rom 2:24 (Is 52:5)***

The first quotation appears towards the end of Paul’s introductory remarks, where from 2:17 he has been highlighting the discrepancy between the teaching and practice of those who know and teach the law but fail to live according to its precepts. He thus establishes a negative ‘type’ of a Jewish teacher of the law or member of the Jewish community who is nonetheless a transgressor of that law. To support his argument that such behaviour can bring only destruction, Paul uses a modified quotation from Isaiah 52:5. Here, Isaiah is recounting the Lord’s word to the Jews in exile, in the diaspora, which is a result of their unfaithfulness and which leads to Israel, and also therefore the

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<sup>21</sup> Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 177–201.

<sup>22</sup> Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 406.



name of the Lord, being held in contempt among the nations.<sup>25</sup> The original context is God's condemnation of those who oppress Jewish exiles, so the statement has an encouraging sense. Paul is speaking not about the Jewish diaspora, however, but about hypocritical behaviour, which he puts on the same level as bringing shame on the name of God.<sup>24</sup> He updates Isaiah's words by changing the prophet's statement of compassion on Israel into a judgement,<sup>25</sup> and does so in the sense of Ezekiel 36:20. There is no direct reference to Isaiah: Paul simply says, 'as it is written', which less knowledgeable readers might at least have understood as referring to a word of Scripture.

For Wilk, this quotation is key (*doppelt hervorgehobener*; double highlighted) as it enables Paul to prove from Scripture that the Jews stood in a state of sin and to show what that sin consisted of.<sup>26</sup>

**2. Rom 3:10–18 (Ps 14:1–3 [LXX 13:1–3]; Ps 5:9 [MT and LXX 5:10]; Ps 140:3 [MT 140:4; LXX 139:4]; Ps 10:7 [LXX 9:28]; Is 59:7–8; Ps 36:1 [MT 36:2; LXX 35:2])**

This whole passage is one long quotation from Scripture (mostly laments from the Psalms); verses 15–17 are an adapted quotation from Isaiah 59:7–8, a reference to Israel's sin against the Lord. Paul's purpose here is to show the universal nature of sin – that it affects and infects both Jew and Gentile – and he carefully weaves together statements that paint a vivid picture of human wickedness and impurity. Unlike his predecessors, Paul removes any distinction between the 'righteous' and the 'unrighteous': human depravity is universal. A similarly critical perspective can be found in the Qumran Hodayot (see 1 QH 9:14–15), although here it is part of a prayer that issues from the conviction of having been chosen by God, which significantly changes the context.<sup>27</sup>

Again, the passage is introduced with the general 'as it is written', which leads us to question the degree to which Paul's readers would

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<sup>25</sup> Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer*, 4th ed. (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012), 81.

<sup>24</sup> Paul uses the Greek text, which differs from the Hebrew. See Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römerbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 87.

<sup>25</sup> Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996), 101.

<sup>26</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 391.

<sup>27</sup> Pollman describes Paul's approach to quoting Scripture as Dekontextualisierung. See Ines Pollman, *Gesetzeskritische Motive im Judentum und die Gesetzeskritik des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2012), 198.



have been able to distinguish the various parts of this lengthy quotation and determine their provenance. Shum suggests that in chapters 1–8, Paul is drawing a parallel between the figure of Jesus and the suffering Servant of the Lord, especially in relation to his solidarity with the many.<sup>28</sup> Although there is no doubt that Paul knew these passages and knew how they were interpreted with respect to Christ, in Romans this is not his main idea. Romans 4:25 could be seen as a reference to Isaiah 53:6, but the relationship here is one of meaning not lexis;<sup>29</sup> Romans 5:6,8b (Is 53:8) and 5:19b (Is 53:11) could be viewed in a similar way. His audience is unlikely to have understood it as a reference to Isaiah; it was more likely taken as a traditional interpretation of the meaning of Jesus' death on the cross.

### *A summary of the use of quotations from Isaiah in Romans chapters 1–8*

The first part of Romans contains two quotations from Isaiah. Unlike the original texts, the quotations aim to show that Jew and Gentile stand in the same relation to God, that is, as sinners. Paul makes use of the critical potential of the book of Isaiah with respect to the chosen nation: its exile among the Gentiles and departure from God's laws have catastrophic consequences. The universal nature of sin – which removes any distinction between the 'righteous' and the 'unrighteous' – creates a new arena for God's redeeming work.<sup>30</sup>

## **Part II: Chapters 9–11**

Romans 9:27–33 forms a de facto whole and includes three quotations from the book of Isaiah. All are connected to the prophet Hosea, and all help Paul cement his argument regarding faith in God's redeeming work in Christ, which he presents as the fulfilment of God's promises and the only possible way to salvation.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 202.

<sup>29</sup> Partial literary agreement is only in the use of the verb παραδίδωμι.

<sup>30</sup> In my view, Shum's insistence that Paul's references to the universal nature of sin and the salvific role of Jesus' death are an elaboration of Isaiah's fourth Servant song is not sufficiently grounded.

**3. Rom 9:27–28 (Is 10:22–23; an echo of Is 28:22 is also possible<sup>51</sup>)**

The quotation from Isaiah follows one from Hosea (Rom 9:25–26), which is introduced with a clear reference to the prophet. Hosea's words 'my people' and 'not my people', originally intended to mean Israel, are taken up by Paul and applied to the Gentiles.<sup>52</sup>

Paul introduces his reference to Isaiah (10:22–23) with an unusual formula: Isaiah is 'crying out'. A number of changes are made from the Greek of the original: 'people' is replaced by 'the number of sons'<sup>53</sup> (LXX; NRSV has 'children of Israel') and the end is shortened; 'God' is replaced by 'the Lord'; the reference to destruction and the righteous is omitted; and 'the whole land' is changed to 'on the earth' (possibly influenced by Is 28:22).

The message of Isaiah's original prophecy was both negative – or at least cautionary – and positive: it is not possible to build upon the multitude as it can be reduced to a minimum because of Israel's unbelief, but this 'minimum' will be saved by the Lord; punishment will thus result in justice and the fulfilment of God's plan. Paul uses the verses in a similar sense but interprets them Christologically. He does not develop the idea of the saved 'remnant' and the 'descendants' (Rom 9:29; NRSV has 'survivors') but emphasises the resolute nature of God's decision concerning the Gentiles, who together with the remnant of Israel will become God's people.

**4. Rom 9:29 (Is 1:9)**

Like the previous quotation, here we have the central concept of the 'remnant', the bearer of hope despite the punishment that has fallen upon Israel because of their unfaithfulness in not believing God in Jesus Christ. This remnant, to which he, Paul, also belongs, and through which Israel has the hope of salvation, has believed and been saved. Paul's use of the quotation corresponds to the original intention of the statement from Is 1:9, but he extends the interpretive context to include the Gentiles.

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<sup>51</sup> Because of the very different content, Shum suggests the verse is no more than a 'linguistic inspiration'. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 211.

<sup>52</sup> See a similar treatment in 1 Peter 2:10.

<sup>53</sup> Shum suggests that Paul does so to avoid confusion with Hosea (where 'laos' applies to the Gentiles; in Isaiah it applies to Israel) or is quoting by heart. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 207.

Wilk considers the quotations from Romans 9:27–29 especially important (*mehrfach hervorgehobene*; highlighted multiple times) as they serve to emphasise the argument of 9:6–26 and prepare the way for the message of the verses that follow in 9:30–10:3. The salvation of the remnant ‘represents a temporary and limited fulfilment of [God’s] promise and guarantees its application to the whole of Israel’.<sup>54</sup>

### 5. *Rom 9:33 (Is 28:16; 8:14)*

This verse is a composite of two passages from Isaiah with the common theme of ‘stone’; a similar passage can be found in 1 Peter 2:6–8. Some scholars (Koch and Dodd, for example) believe that the combination is a pre-Pauline tradition (Koch oral; Dodd written)<sup>55</sup> and that Paul is therefore quoting from Isaiah on the basis of an existing text; the quotation is introduced with the general ‘as it is written’. Shum is certain that Paul is quoting directly from a scroll of Isaiah he might have had access to in Corinth.<sup>56</sup> The passage concerns the rejection of human attempts to achieve their salvation without regard to God. It is not completely clear, however, if Isaiah’s stone was a reference to God or the temple:<sup>57</sup> in Isaiah 28:16, the prophet is speaking primarily about the foundation of a new temple; in 8:14 the ‘stone’ is the Lord God who dwells in the temple.

Paul is using the quotation to show that by trusting in its own efforts, Israel failed to fulfil all righteousness and so attain the goal of the Law: it rejected Jesus Christ, who is the culmination of the Law (see Rom 10:4), and therefore missed the will of God, while the Gentiles took hold of righteousness through faith. Jesus Christ is the

<sup>54</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 393. Similarly, Zeller suggests that Paul’s argument opens the space for an unexpected work of God among his addressees. This work transcends all limitations and ends in the salvation of both Jew and Gentile. The quotations Paul used can be read in this light. See Dieter Zeller, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1985), 181–182. See also Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul*, 109–117. The remnant Paul refers to in relation to Isaiah is not only the consequence of God’s wrath, but also hope for Israel. Gentiles are, however, included in this hope (according to Hosea’s prophecy): ‘Paul located contemporary Israel in the same position as Isaiah’s audience, between desolation and hope. In the present time, Israel suffers under the wrath of God and desperately needs to hear the message of reconciliation and release proclaimed by Isaiah – and now by Paul himself’ (117).

<sup>55</sup> Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 214.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 215–216.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 221.

cornerstone; a stumbling block. This stone is a judge, but for believers it also provides firm ground and certainty.<sup>38</sup>

The quotation is important because it highlights the fundamental role of God's redeeming work in Christ, which also has an '*ent-scheidenden* [decisive] *Charakter*' for Israel.<sup>39</sup>

Faith in God's work in Christ, in salvation through Christ, leads to attainment of the righteousness that was sought through the Law. Here, Paul is thinking of more than simply the fulfilment of the instructions of the Law or the state of being convinced of one's own strength and probity.

### **6. Rom 10:11 (Is 28:16)**

Quoting directly from the LXX (which differs from the MT), Paul returns to Isaiah 28:16 to drive home his point that salvation comes through faith in God's redeeming work in Christ. The quotation is used in a different context from 9:33. No one who believes in Jesus and professes him as the resurrected Lord will ever be put to shame. The stone is no longer a judge but the resurrection of Jesus Christ and faith in that resurrection. The universal aspect of the statement is emphasised by the pronoun 'no one' (ἄς), which is missing from the quotation in Romans 9:33.

It is clear from both quotations that Paul is applying Isaiah's monotheistic statements both to God and to Christ, the Lord, who is co-sovereign and co-unique with God the Father.<sup>40</sup> This quotation, which like 9:33 is introduced by a general reference to Scripture, emphasises the role played by faith in God's redeeming work accomplished in the resurrection of Jesus. The verse from Isaiah corresponds to the unmarked quotation from Joel 2:32 (LXX 3:5) in Romans 10:13. By repeating the reference to Isaiah 28:16, and 'based on his commitment to the validity of the gospel for both Jew and Gentile',<sup>41</sup> Paul is able to anchor in Scripture his fundamental criterion, which is faith (πίστις).

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<sup>38</sup> See also Frank Schleritt, 'Das Gesetz der Gerechtigkeit. Zur Auslegung von Römer 9:30–33', in *Between Gospel and Election*, ed. Wilk and Wagner, 271–297 (in summary 296–297).

<sup>39</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

<sup>40</sup> Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 223.

<sup>41</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 390.

### 7. *Rom 10:15 (Is 52:7)*

The original context of Isaiah's prophecy is the salvation of Zion/Israel. It is a prelude to the fourth Servant song, which promises the people's return and the renewal and flourishing of Jerusalem. In Romans 2:24, Paul had already quoted – and slightly adapted and re-contextualised – a verse from the same chapter (Is 52:5). Here, after the universalist statement of the previous verses, and in the joyful tone of Isaiah, he describes the proclamation of the gospel as the source of joy, hope and salvation. Paul's preacher – the one who is 'sent' – is probably himself, and the quotation confirms his mission to proclaim this same joyful message of salvation. The passage does not specify who the preachers are to be sent by, but the use of the passive voice and the context of the quotation strongly suggest the sender is God. Verses 14 and 15 stress the role of those who preach the gospel, Paul included. Paul omits the second part of Isaiah's original statement, however, and goes on to criticise Israel. The positive message becomes one of judgement: despite the best efforts of the preachers, the message was rejected by the majority of the people (Israel). The promise of salvation in Isaiah 52:1–12 is followed by the fourth Servant song, which speaks of Israel's rejection of the chosen Servant. Again, we must assume that Paul knew this passage and was familiar with the contrast between the Lord's redeeming work in the Servant/Christ and those who did not accept him. It is clear from the following verse, however, that his main subject is the rejection of the joyful message. To sum up, the quotation, which is introduced by the general 'as it is written', emphasises the role of the gospel herald sent by God and the nature of the message that brings peace and joy.<sup>42</sup>

### 8. *Rom 10:16 (Is 53:1)*

Paul introduces the quotation with a direct reference to the book of Isaiah. Although the verse is from the fourth Servant song, the main theme is not the Servant but the contrast between the unbelief of Israel and the faith of the Gentiles. Paul was undoubtedly aware of the parallel between the fate of the Lord's Servant and Jesus, and that it was difficult for Israel to believe that Jesus was the Messiah, but his main concern is faith – or the lack of it – and the disobedience of the Jews rather than

<sup>42</sup> Unlike Wilk, who plays down its importance. See Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 389.

the fate of Jesus as such; he is once again emphasising the unbelief of (most of) Israel.<sup>45</sup>

### **9. Rom 10:20–21 (Is 65:1–2)**

By opening the quotation with Ἡσαΐας δὲ ἀποτολμᾷ καὶ λέγει (NRSV has ‘Isaiah is so bold as to say’), Paul emphasises not only the importance of the message of this verse but also Isaiah’s courage to speak the words God gave him.<sup>44</sup> Isaiah boldly delivers the Lord’s proclamation of the destruction of the chosen people – especially the leaders – and the salvation of those who had been on the periphery but are now those from whom he will create a new and obedient nation. The Greek text of Isaiah 65:1–2 plays with the difference between ἔθνος (Gentiles) and λαός, that is, between the ‘people’ (the nations) to whom the Lord God has revealed himself and the (chosen) people who are unfaithful and rebellious and do not respond to God’s pleas (‘all day long I have held out my hands’) and continue to follow the path of inequity.<sup>45</sup> Uppermost in Isaiah’s mind was the chosen people: his words are words of warning, announcing judgement, but at the same time they are words that promise a new reality and God’s faithfulness.

It is interesting that Paul does not quote here the part of the verse that contains a direct reference to the ‘ethnos’ (1b); he quotes only 65:1a and 65:2a. In every case, Paul reads this passage from Is 65:1–2 in light of God’s election of the Gentiles in contrast to the unbelief of the Jews, and prepares the ground for explaining the role of the Gentiles – and their relation to Israel – in the history of salvation.<sup>46</sup> The passage opens with a question concerning faith in the message that is being proclaimed (Rom 10:16; Is 53:1) and closes by stating that Israel ignored the joyful message of the gospel because of its ‘historically documented’ deafness to God’s call, God’s offers. Isaiah reproaches the people for their wrongdoing, idolatry and wickedness; Paul is not concerned about this, ‘only’ about the rejection of God’s offer in Christ, which, paradoxically, was taken up by the Gentiles.

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<sup>45</sup> Wilk also notes the use of the first-person plural in the complaint about Israel. See *ibid.*, 391.

<sup>44</sup> Whitlock, *Schrift und Inspiration*, 225.

<sup>45</sup> Shum interprets verse 1 in light of Dt 32:21. See Shum, *Paul’s Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 229–231. Paul quotes it in the previous verse but changes the repeated αὐτοὺς to ὑμᾶς.

<sup>46</sup> Throughout chapters 9–11, Paul refers to the Jewish people using the traditional and theologically significant ‘Israel’ or ‘Israelites’. The only exceptions are ἐξ Ἰουδαίων (9:24) and Ἰουδαίου (10:12), which are fixed phrases.

Romans chapter 10 is Paul's attempt to solve the mystery of why Israel ignored God's voice – the gospel – even though Christ is the goal of the very Law that Israel had itself so zealously sought to fulfil. They failed to attain true righteousness – full communion with God – because, preoccupied with a sense of their own righteousness, they did not hear God's new word, while the Gentiles heard and believed.

Wilk suggests that these quotations from Isaiah, and their relation to Deuteronomy 32:21, are of special importance because (a) they introduce Paul's mission (which some Judeo-Christians found so difficult to accept) to proclaim God's grace towards Israel and his redeeming work on their behalf, and (b) they create a bridge between Paul's arguments in Romans 10:1–24 and those in 11:1–24(27).<sup>47</sup>

### **10. Rom 11:8 (Is 29:10)**

The quotation is introduced with the general formula 'as it is written', but other than the central themes of 'a sluggish spirit' and 'eyes that would not see', very little remains of what Isaiah originally wrote. The quotation may also be an echo Deuteronomy 29:4,<sup>48</sup> which likewise speaks of God not giving Israel eyes to see and contains a reference to 'this day'.

Blind eyes, deaf ears, and hard hearts are popular themes in the Old and New Testaments (see also Mk 8:18 and parallel; Jn 12:40) and generally denote unfaithfulness towards God. The quotation from Isaiah 29:10 is part of a tirade against Israel which nonetheless concludes with a promise to the humble and the lost. Paul broadens the meaning of Isaiah's words – and of other possible references to the Old Testament – to explain why Israel did not accept the gospel and the Gentiles did. In the previous verse, however, in accordance with the continuation of Isaiah's prophecy into a promise to the humble and the lost, Paul states that although (most of) Israel failed to reach its desired goal, this goal was reached by those who were elect. By the 'elect', Paul is referring to those Jews, including Paul himself, who believed the gospel, and he quotes various examples and statements from Scripture to show that this 'remnant' was also designated, chosen, by God.

<sup>47</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 393–394.

<sup>48</sup> See also Jer 5:21, Ez 12:2 and Is 6:9. The words of Dt 29:4 are addressed to those who were about to enter the promised land and are an appeal to be grateful to the Lord (the verse speaks of a lack of such gratitude and a lack of understanding concerning God's 'great wonders') and to observe the Law.



In both Isaiah and Romans, it is the Lord who stupefies the spirit and darkens the eyes of Israel; it is only the Lord, therefore, who can wake Israel from that same stupor. This is the thrust of what Paul is saying. It seems that the following quotation from Psalm 69:22–23 (LXX 68:22–23) is linked to the quotations from Deuteronomy and Isaiah mainly through the motif of eyes and the reference to God's acts.

Shum believes that Paul's focus is the verse from Deuteronomy (29:3), to which he added part of the verse from Isaiah (29:10).<sup>49</sup> Wilk sees the quotation as a composite, the specific purpose of which – especially the fragment from Isaiah – is to describe the situation and its consequences and create a basis for subsequent statements and explanations (Is 11:8c–10).<sup>50</sup> The loss of sight and hearing opens a space for God's work among the Gentiles and the consequent awakening of Israel through 'jealousy'.

#### **11. Rom 11:26–27 (Is 59:20–21; 27:9)**

These verses, a combination of two passages from Isaiah (59:20–21 and 27:9), are again introduced with the general 'as it is written'. Coming at the end of a long prophecy of judgement on Israel, the verses of Isaiah 59:20–21 bring the promise of salvation from the Lord, which will come despite the people's transgression. The Lord himself will come to Zion and re-establish justice; he will banish unrighteousness from Jacob. The initiative is all on the Lord's side, and this is a fulfilment of the covenant. Isaiah goes on to speak about the restoration of the glory and dignity of Israel/Jerusalem/Zion, the provider and guarantor of which is the Lord. The extra quotation from Isaiah 27:9 emphasises the forgiving of Jacob's sin. The context is similar: Jacob will be restored when he turns away from worshipping false gods. Both passages carry hints of eschatology.

In verse 26, Paul recalls the joyful vision of Jacob's restoration and addresses the question of the fate of all Israel, not only the elect remnant. In verse 27, he reflects on the forgiveness of sins as a fulfilment of the covenant. Although not stated explicitly, what is in view is acceptance of God's redeeming work in Christ Jesus. Christ is the fulfilment of the covenant; through him sin is removed from Israel and from all humanity.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 234.

<sup>50</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 390.

<sup>51</sup> From this perspective, it would seem appropriate to interpret Rom 10:4 in the sense that Jesus is the goal, the fulfilment of the Law. Romans chapters 9–11 are not about

Stanley suggests that the link between these two passages had been made before Paul, most likely in oral tradition;<sup>52</sup> Shum sees the link as Paul's.<sup>53</sup> More significant than the question of origin is the change of preposition: the Lord will come ἔνεκεν (to) Zion in Isaiah 59:20, but ἐκ (from or out of) in Romans 11:26.<sup>54</sup> Stanley considers this shift also as pre-Pauline, even Judaic, and that it has to do with eschatological expectation – the expression ἐκ Σιών in connection with the awaited salvation from the Lord can be found elsewhere (Ps 14:7 [LXX 13:7]; 110:2 [LXX 109:2]; Jl 3:16 [LXX 4:16]; Am 1:2; Ob 21; Mi 4:2); Shum considers even this change Pauline.<sup>55</sup> Another fundamental question surrounds the significance that should be attributed to this quotation. Is it, as Shum believes, simply a 'proof-text', a quotation that confirms what had already been said, or does it represent a fundamental statement about the future salvation of Israel? In Isaiah, the saviour who comes to – or from – Zion is undoubtedly God himself. Some scholars understand the statement as referring to the salvation of Israel *in toto*, outside the gospel and by special intervention from God.<sup>56</sup> It is true that in chapter 11, Paul does not refer to salvation through Christ, but from what we know of his view of salvation, the existence of two paths is hardly acceptable – the parable of the olive tree in Romans 11:16–24 also speaks of a single path. It must be acknowledged, however, that a door is open: Paul's only certainty – and here he relies on Isaiah – is that all Israel will be saved. The composite quotation carries extra weight by coming at the end of a passage about the Gentiles and is clearly linked to the quotations in Romans 9:6–13, which speak of the coming of a saviour (9:9), and especially about Jacob (9:13). With this quotation and the comment that follows, Paul concludes his discourse on Israel's ambivalent relationship to salvation in Christ and God's plan to use Israel to benefit the Gentiles by stressing God's faithfulness, which will be manifested in the final salvation of all Israel. In

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the opposition between Law and faith, but between the salvific role of the Law and salvation through Christ, that is, the rejection of God's saving work in Christ (the 'hardening' of Israel) and God's plan of salvation.

<sup>52</sup> Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture*, 170.

<sup>53</sup> Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 236.

<sup>54</sup> The Hebrew text uses the preposition preposition לְ (לְכֹהֵן לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֱלֹהֵי). The preposition ἔνεκεν can be understood to mean 'because of'.

<sup>55</sup> For a discussion on this subject, see Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 238–239.

<sup>56</sup> For a list of works, see *ibid.*, 242; Pamela Eisenbaum's *Paul Was Not a Christian. The Original Message of a Misunderstood Apostle* (New York: HarperOne, 2009) could now be added to such a list.

the face of Gentile-Christian conceit (11:25a), Paul clearly shows that God's promise is the final word on the 'question of the fate of Israel' and by fulfilment of this promise, the election of Israel will reach its goal.<sup>57</sup> Any possible discussion concerning Israel's fate is then rounded off with the next quotation, which refers to the ungraspable nature of God's sovereignty.

***12. Rom 11:34–35 (Is 40:13; Job 41:11 [MT and LXX 41:3])***

The final three – rhetorical – questions address the subject of God's sovereignty. Without pointing it out, Paul quotes here almost word for word from Isaiah 40:13 – with a possible echo of Job 41:11 (LXX 41:3) – in a hymn-like doxology that expresses the greatness of God and the unsearchable nature of his ways. Paul is either quoting by heart from his great knowledge of Isaiah or using Isaiah's language automatically, naturally. This ability to quote at will enables him to adapt Scriptures according his purpose. Elsewhere, in Romans 11:35, he omits the end of Isaiah 40:13; in 1 Corinthians 2:16, he leaves out the middle section.

***A summary of the use of Isaiah in Romans chapters 9–11***

1. Paul uses a profusion of references to Isaiah; the whole book is clearly very familiar to him. Most of the quotations in this section announce God's judgement on Israel for its unfaithfulness. This is not merely rhetoric; it represents the transposition of judgement and accusation onto those Jewish contemporaries of Paul who rejected – or did not accept – the gospel.

2. Paul is also influenced by the promise and eschatological vision of the salvation of Israel as narrated in Isaiah and from these prophecies argues for the final salvation of Israel and proclaims the unchanging nature of God's election and sovereignty.

3. The book of Isaiah serves Paul not only as proof of his convictions but as a source of inspiration and a lens through which he seeks to tackle the tricky subject of the relationship between God's faithfulness to and election and salvation of Israel and the Gentiles' acceptance of God's redeeming work in Jesus.

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<sup>57</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

### Part III: Chapters 12–15

After a brief interlude, quotations from Isaiah re-appear in chapters 14 and 15.

#### **13. Rom 14:11 (Is 45:23; 49:18?)**

In this parenthetic section of his letter, Paul uses Isaiah to support his comments concerning the conflict over dietary habits and observation of the religious calendar: the conflict between 'the weak and the strong'. Here, Isaiah helps Paul emphasise that the Lord is the judge to whom all will be held accountable, and that we should be mindful of this in our relationships with others. There is no direct relation to the broader context of Isaiah chapter 45, only the emphasis on God's sovereignty, which is to be respected because God, not man, is the Lord of all; God alone is the final judge of human conduct and all will answer to him for their deeds. Isaiah 45 concerns God's sovereign and eschatological offer, which will ultimately be acknowledged by everybody: Israel and the Gentiles.

The opening "As I live," says the Lord', which follows Paul's 'it is written', does not appear in the passage Paul is quoting but is widespread in the Old Testament (Is 49:18, for example).<sup>58</sup> Relationships in the community are under God's (the Lord's) authority: belonging to Christ, coming under his rule, is to be the defining criterion for considerate and respectful behaviour in a community of the weak and the strong.<sup>59</sup> In verse 9, Paul uses the name 'Lord' for Christ, and is clearly using it as a title for God, the Lord; because the quotation is introduced with the formula 'it is written', Paul must by 'Lord' mean God. The ambiguous use of titles began in verses 3 ('God') and 4 ('Lord') and re-appears in verses 6 and 8; verse 9 clearly ascribes the title 'Lord' to Christ; verses 10 and 12 speak of God's judgement, from which we understand that the whole passage, including the quotation, is probably

<sup>58</sup> Koch, *Schrift als Zeuge*, 184–185. Koch suggests that the beginning of the quotation from Rom 14:11 was taken from Is 49:18. The first-person singular, 'as I live, says the Lord', appears often in Ezekiel, once only in Isaiah (49:18), and once in Jeremiah (22:24), Zephaniah (2:9) and Numbers (14:28). The third-person singular, 'as the Lord lives', is widespread in the Old Testament. Stuhlmacher sees this reference as an indication that Paul is quoting from memory. See Peter Stuhlmacher, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 200.

<sup>59</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 389–390.

intentionally ambiguous.<sup>60</sup> We find a wholly Christocentric appropriation of Isaiah 45:23b in Philippians 2:10–11.

#### **14. Rom 15:12 (Is 11:10)**

This quotation from Isaiah follows the short series of quotations from the Psalms and Deuteronomy which begin in verse 9 and give praise to the Lord for his mercy. There is something of a discontinuity – an ideological shift – between the quotations from Psalms/Deuteronomy and the verse from Isaiah. From explicit praise of the Lord, attention moves to the ‘root of Jesse’, who is the hope of the Gentiles. From a focus on the problem of the weak and the strong in the community, Paul moves on to praise God’s generosity in Christ, who gave himself freely for all.

The quotations from Scripture culminate in the quotation from Isaiah 11:10, which is introduced by an explicit reference to the prophet. Paul’s aim is to show his readers the greatness of God’s offer in Jesus, the pinnacle and model of God’s love, so that they may be moved to a similar generosity. God’s positive move towards his people presupposes an appropriate response. The quotation from Isaiah seeks to emphasise what the readers have received as Gentiles. The promise to Israel applies also to them, so they should behave towards each other in an appropriate manner. The quotations provide a positive motivation for Paul’s readers: Jesus Christ is the promised shoot from the stump of Jesse, the Messiah, the sovereign Lord, the ruler over the nations and the hope of salvation for the Gentiles; he is the Christ who ‘did not please himself’ (verse 3), who unites all people. The community should therefore come together in praise of God. Paul is also preparing the way for the conclusion to the letter in 15:14–33.<sup>61</sup>

#### **15. Rom 15:21 (Is 52:15)**

Using the common formula ‘as it is written’, Paul quotes a verse from the fourth Servant song.<sup>62</sup> Even here, however, his subject is not the Servant’s suffering applied to Jesus but the proclamation of the gos-

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<sup>60</sup> Wilckens sees the intentional intermingling of Christocentrism and theocentrism as typical Pauline theology. See Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer III* (Zürich-Braunschweig, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benzinger Verlag, Neukirchener Verlag, 1989), 85.

<sup>61</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 394.

<sup>62</sup> He has already quoted from it in 10:16.

pel by Paul himself in areas his mission is yet to reach. There is no doubt that the content of Paul's proclamation is God's redeeming work in the death and resurrection of Jesus (which corresponds to the fate of the Servant), and that this is something that should evoke wonder in believers, but what Paul has primarily in mind is his mission to those who are yet to hear the gospel. Any suggestion that he had the whole song in mind is purely speculative.<sup>63</sup>

What is significant is the placing of the quotation towards the end of the parenthetic part of the letter and its use in the context of Paul's apostolic ministry. Paul is anxious to legitimatise his missionary activity, including his plan to carry out a mission in Spain, and is at the same time seeking to open a door for himself to the Roman Christian community and to define his relationship to it.<sup>64</sup>

### *A summary of the use of quotations from Isaiah in Romans chapters 14 and 15*

In chapters 14 and 15, where he addresses the issue of 'the weak and the strong' in the Christian community, Paul uses passages from Isaiah to emphasise the unity of Christian believers, Jew and Gentile, a unity founded on God's redeeming work in Christ, the fulfilment of God's promises, and the attitude that follows from it: gratitude towards God (praising him together) and consideration towards one another (respecting each other's differences). Paul also seeks to legitimise his own mission, including his mission further west, and his standing among the Christian community in Rome.

### **Summary**

Wilk distinguishes four main roles for the quotations from and allusions to Isaiah in Paul's letters.

1. *Situational.* They serve the apostle as reference points in difficult situations and help him explain the attitudes and behaviour appropriate to those who profess faith in Christ (Romans chapters 9–11).

2. *Compositional.* They provide structure to the letters (Rom 9:27–29; 15:12).

<sup>63</sup> Shum detects the influence of this song on the whole letter: 4:25; 5:1; 5:18–19; 8:32. See Shum, *Paul's Use of Isaiah in Romans*, 256.

<sup>64</sup> Wilk, *Die Bedeutung des Jesajabuches für Paulus*, 392.

3. *Argumentational.* At critical points, they crystallise Paul's thinking and help him move his argument forward (Rom 9:33; 10:16; 11:8; 15:21).

4. *Hermeneutical.* They provide an interpretive lens for other, related quotations from Scripture (Rom 11:8).<sup>65</sup>

Any single quotation can fulfil more than one of these purposes, and it is in the letter to the Romans that the four aspects are applied to their fullest extent.

The book of Isaiah clearly played a key role for Paul, especially when writing (or dictating) his letter to the Romans, and especially with respect to two fundamental and mutually connected subjects: (i) the composition and unity of a Christian community composed of both Jew and Gentile. This unity and diversity are rooted in God's redeeming work in Christ, which because of the universal nature of sin applies to all people equally; (ii) God's faithfulness in saving Israel, and his plan to redeem all people, whether Jew or Gentile. Related to these themes is Paul's presentation of himself as a representative of the 'remnant' which already has a share in salvation, and of his mission to the Gentiles, through which he is carrying out God's work. As Paul's mission progresses, we detect in his letters, from 1 Thessalonians to Romans, a growing interest in Isaiah and the increasing significance of the book for both his work and his theological reflection: 'As the culmination of the Pauline reception of Isaiah, this letter also constitutes its sum.'<sup>66</sup> Paul regards himself not only as one who preaches redemption for Gentiles but also, in the cosmic drama of redemption, as a 'chosen instrument through whom God will provoke his own people to jealousy and so effect their salvation'.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 399–401.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 404.

<sup>67</sup> Wagner, *Isaiah and Paul*, 359.