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# Conceptual blending and the fulfilment quotation in Matthew 12:17–19

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This article revisits the age-old question of the sources of Matthew's fulfilment quotations (FQs), specifically Matthew 12:17–19. Despite the presence of numerous studies on this topic, this study was necessitated by the need to incorporate insights from conceptual blending in order to explore how the source(s) of the quote was used. In addition, this study was also done with a possible view to complementing the textual criticism of Old Testament (OT) texts which happen to be quoted or referred to in the New Testament (NT). The study dwells on intertestamental and cognitive linguistics studies. It was found that Matthew may have composed the Matthew 12:17–19 FQ, and possibly the other FQs as well, aided by conceptual integration mechanisms.

**Contribution:** The source of Matthew's quotation need not wholly be found in a specific historical text but should also include the cognitive operations in the author's mind and intentions, thus resulting in a text that might not have existed in the form represented in the quotation.

**Keywords:** Isaiah 42; Matthew; fulfilment quotation; conceptual blending; cognitive linguistics; textual criticism.

## Introduction

In the New Testament (NT) text portions that are referred to as the fulfilment quotations (FQs), specifically in Matthew's gospel, we ordinarily understand a process that involved the use of Old Testament (OT) text portions that would have been translated to Greek or used as is by the quoting author. These quotations were made to authenticate the ministry of Jesus and prove that what he had done had already been foreseen by the prophets in the OT. However, researchers have had to deal with two apparent problems in the manner in which these quotations were made and presented. Firstly, there is often no precise correspondence between the text Matthew presented in his quotations and any extant OT text. Secondly, the meaning that such texts had in the OT contexts seem to differ from that which Matthew gives them in the NT. This has left some scholars grappling with Matthew's notion of 'fulfilment' and what we may understand of what we have come to refer to as Matthew's 'FQs'.

It is apparent that in the processes that brought about these FQs, complex linguistic processes were also at play in the use of texts and the conveyance of the gospel message by its author. One of the specific approaches in cognitive linguistics that can be used as a methodology in this regard is the process known as conceptual blending. Recently, authors such as Elizabeth R. Hayes have begun to explore the usefulness of conceptual blending in reading and interpreting Bible texts, both in the OT and the NT (Hayes 2008, 2012:143–144). In light of such studies, the present study seeks to establish whether conceptual blending can also be applied to making inquests into the relationship between the sources of quotations and the quotations themselves in the NT. In this study, the question to be answered focuses on the possibility of using conceptual blending to understand how the source or sources of the Matthew 12:17–19 quotation were handled.

The Gospel of Matthew is known to be significantly replete with the fulfilment motif (Viljoen 2007:301–324, esp. 301–302). However, Matthew's FQs usually depart, in part or wholly from those texts in the OT that he supposedly quotes from (Grindel 1967:110–115). For a long time, this area of research continued to receive attention, as Moyise and Menken (2005:64) demonstrated, making several proposals on how Matthew could have come up with the formula quotations and attempting conclusions on what theological significance each of those quotations has.[1] Some contributions in this regard deal with the nature of the formula

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1.Matthew is here taken to be the author of the gospel according to Matthew, although this does not amount to a claim on the authorship of that book.

**TABLE 1:** Isaiah 42:1–2 vis-à-vis Matthew 12:18–19, Column Entries 1–6.

**Isaiah 42:1a/Matthew 12:18a**

| 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | Column |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| נפשי | רצתה | בחירי | אתמך־בו | עבדי | הן | **MT** |
| My soul | is pleased | my chosen one | I uphold/ support | my servant | look | Tr |
| ἡ ψυχή μου | εἰς ὃν εὐδόκησεν | ὁ ἀγαπητός μου | ὃν ᾑρέτισα, | ὁ παῖς μου | ἰδοὺ | GNT |
| My soul | in whom is well pleased | my beloved | Whom I have chosen | my servant | look | Tr = LEB |
| ἡ ψυχή μου· | προσεδέξατο [αὐτὸν] | Ισραηλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου, | ἀντιλήμψομαι αὐτοῦ· | ὁ παῖς μου | Ιακωβ | **LXX** |
| My soul | Has accepted *(him)* | Israel is my chosen *one* | I will *take* hold of him | my servant, | Jacob | Tr= NETS |
| נפשי | רצתה | בחירי | אתמוכה בו | עבדי | הנה | **1QIsaᵃ** |
| My soul | in whom is well pleased | my beloved | Whom I have chosen | my servant | look | Tr |
| η ψυχη μου | ον ευδοκησεν | ο εκλεκτος μου | ανθεξομαι αυτου | ο δουλος μου | Ιδου | **Sym** |
| My soul | for whom is pleased | he is my chosen | I take hold of him | my servant | look | Tr |
| - | - | ³ | αντιληψομαι εν αυτω | δουλος μου | ιδου | **Aql** |
| | | | I will hold fast on him | My slave | look | Tr |

Sym, Symmachus; Aql, Aquila according to Ziegler (1967); LXX, Septuagint according to Ziegler (1967); MT, Masoretic Text according to Elliger and Rudolph (1997); GNT, Greek New Testament, SBL edition; Tr, author's translation; LEB, Lexham English Bible, 2012 edition; NETS, A New English Translation of the Septuagint, 2014 edition.

**TABLE 2:** Columns 7–12.

**Isaiah 42:1b/ Matthew 12:18b**

| 12 | 11 | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | column |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| יוציא | לגוים | משפט | עליו | רוחי | נתתי | **MT** |
| He will bring | to the nations | justice | upon him | my spirit | I have placed | Tr |
| ἀπαγγελεῖ | τοῖς ἔθνεσιν | καὶ κρίσιν | ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν | τὸ πνεῦμά μου | θήσω | GNT |
| He will proclaim | to the Gentiles | and justice⁵ | on him | my Spirit | I will put | LEB |
| ἐξοίσει | τοῖς ἔθνεσιν | κρίσιν | ἐπ᾽ αὐτόν, | τὸ πνεῦμά μου | ἔδωκα | LXX |
| He shall bring forth | to the nations | judgement | upon him | my spirit | I have put | NETS |
| יוציא | לגואים | ומשפטי | עליו | רוחי | נתתי | **1QIsaᵃ** |
| He will bring | to the nations | and my justice | upon him | my spirit | I have/will put | Tr |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | Sym |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | Aql |

Sym, Symmachus; Aql, Aquila according to Ziegler (1967); LXX, Septuagint according to Ziegler (1967); MT, Masoretic Text according to Elliger and Rudolph (1997); GNT, Greek New Testament, SBL edition; Tr, author's translation; LEB, Lexham English Bible, 2012 edition; NETS, A New English Translation of the Septuagint, 2014 edition.

quotations from a hermeneutical point of view, as in the case of Kirk (2008:77–99), while others try to tackle the problems apparent on a more text-critical level, as in the case of Menken (2001:451–468) and Van Rooy (2015:12). At this juncture, the present article enters the debate, largely from a text-critical and a cognitive linguistic perspective.

## Text critical analysis[2]

The rendering of אתמך (Table 1, column 3) in Matthew 12:18a by a lexeme belonging to the frame of choosing can be explained by the possibility of the misreading (or using a corrupted text) of the Hebrew text. Due to the similarities of the graphemes, אתמך [uphold, support] can be mistaken for אחמד [to please or to choose].[4] Incidentally, the lexeme אחמד is used in another conspicuously messianic passage in Isaiah 53:2.

From the evidence presented in the tables, we may conclude that Matthew's source(s) in 12:17–19 appear to be from an MT-type text or a text very close to the MT tradition (Johnson 1943:135). Furthermore, one gets the impression that the author of the quotation wants to render his source text, not as is, but in a way that agrees with what has been witnessed by him or by other sources that he has access to. As a basic assumption to the pursuant study, we would like to posit that the person who did the rendering was none other than Matthew or someone within the so-called 'School of Matthew'.[6]

## Methodology: Matthew 12:17–19 and conceptual blending

The theory of conceptual blending is a cognitive linguistic approach broadly applied to the field of linguistics, focusing on aspects of grammar but especially on meaning construction (Fauconnier & Turner 2003:57–86). In this regard, it is important to note that conceptual blending 'is useful for memory and manipulation of otherwise diffuse ranges of

2.Translations marked with Tr are those of the author. In some of the translations presented in the table, I make use of already available translations such as the Lexham English Bible (LEB) or the New English Translation of the Septuagint (NETS), but where I differ with any of these translations or where I need to maintain consistency on a word or phrase, I present my own translation in *italics*.

3.Empty blocks for the Sym (Symmachus) and Aql (Aquila) Greek versions in this table show that there is either no variant text cited in the critical apparatuses of the Göttingen edition or that no textual evidence is available at all for such readings.

4.This would especially be the case assuming that the Greek New Testament (GNT) used a Hebrew source with a Hebrew square script that is close to that of 1QIsaᵃ (or 11Q14).

5.A slight agreement here concerning the conjunction between GNT and 1QIsaᵃ against MT (=LXX) may indicate that Matthew's source in this instance was identical to 1QIsaᵃ, rather than the MT. It does not, however, mean that Matthew had a text typically like 1QIsaᵃ before him. 1QIsaᵃ still differs from GNT in terms of the additional possessive pronoun translated 'my'.

6.This is a term used by Stendahl to refer to a group of disciples or a school for teachers and leaders of the church, possibly under Matthew's guidance (Stendahl 1968:35, 195–206).

**TABLE 3:** Columns 12–18.

**Isaiah 42:2/Matthew 12:19**

| 18 | 17 | 16 | 15 | 14 | 13 | Column |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| קולו | בחוץ | - | ולא ישמיע | ולא ישׂא | לא יצעק | MT |
| His voice | in the street | - | Nor will he cause to hear/ announce | Neither will he lift up | He will not cry out | Tr |
| τὴν φωνὴν αὐτοῦ. | ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις | τις[7] | οὐδὲ ἀκούσει | οὐδὲ κραυγάσει, | οὐκ ἐρίσει | GNT |
| His voice | in the streets | anyone | nor will hear | or cry out | he will not quarrel | LEB |
| ἡ φωνὴ αὐτοῦ | ἔξω | - | οὐδὲ ἀκουσθήσεται | οὐδὲ ἀνήσει, | οὐ κεκράξεται | LXX |
| His voice | outside | - | Nor will it be heard | neither will he lift up | He will not cry out | NETS |
| קולו | בחוץ | - | ולוא ישמיע | ולוא ישא | לוא יזעק | 1QIsaᵃ |
| His voice | in the street | - | Nor will he cause to hear/ announce | Neither will he lift up | He will not cry out | Tr |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | Sym |
| - | - | - | - | Non decipietur Neither will he disappoint. | - | Tr |
| - | - | - | - | - | - | Aql |

Sym, Symmachus; Aql, Aquila according to Ziegler (1967); LXX, Septuagint according to Ziegler (1967); MT, Masoretic Text according to Elliger and Rudolph (1997); GNT, Greek New Testament, SBL edition; Tr, author's translation; LEB, Lexham English Bible, 2012 edition; NETS, A New English Translation of the Septuagint, 2014 edition.

meaning' (Fauconnier & Turner 2003:57). In the words of Fauconnier and Turner (2003):

> [T]he essence of the operation is to construct a partial match between two input mental spaces, to project selectively from those inputs into a novel 'blended' mental space, which then dynamically develops emergent structure. (pp. 57–58)

'Emergent structure' could be understood as the new unique result of the blending of the two or more mental spaces involved. A typical example given by these authors is that of the regatta in which two boats, the *Northern Light* and the *Great American II*, both travelled the same course but on different occasions. The speeds of these boats were then compared during the trip of the second one, as if they were in a race, thus resulting in an emergent blended frame.[8] In expounding the theory of conceptual integration, Fauconnier and Turner stated that there may be clear observable instances of blending one can identify but in other cases, blending may be so routine and mundane that it is hardly noticeable except under scrutiny. It is also important to remember that conceptual blending or conceptual integration does not necessarily need to be metaphoric or anaphoric in nature (Fauconnier & Turner 1998:133–187), nor do those involved in its outcome need to be aware of the operations.

In the case of Matthew's fulfilment quote in Matthew 12:18–19, there are similarities that can be observed between Matthew's witness context (the events in Jesus' life that Matthew witnesses and records) and that of the prophetic text of Isaiah, which forces him to make connections between the two and come up with an emergent frame: the fulfilment frame.[9] I posit here,

therefore, that the identification of fulfilment by Matthew constitutes an emergent space, which is a result of the blending of at least two mental spaces. In other words, the fulfilment quote in Matthew 12:18–19 implies that, if this particular prophetic context of Isaiah is viewed in light of the events of the witness context, what we have is fulfilment of the nature Matthew spells out in the quotation. We may therefore conclude that the recognition of fulfilment by Matthew constitutes a blended space. His presentation of the FQ represents a demonstration of how the fulfilment, or blend in this particular case, comes about. It may be observed here that the fulfilment text by Matthew does not itself constitute the blended space but is a tool Matthew utilises to reveal the blended space, the fulfilment. Following from this, we can also assume that as Matthew uses the fulfilment quote to reveal how the blended space comes about, the fulfilment quote should at least contain some features of the whole conceptual integration that has produced the blended space of fulfilment. Hence, we can study conceptual integration evoked by the involved texts to understand something of the blend informed by Matthew's FQ.

As alluded to earlier, reference will be made in this article to Matthew's witness space, referring to Matthews' awareness of the events in Jesus's life as he found them in his sources or from any personal experiences that he might have had of Jesus' ministry. In addition, I shall label the text that Matthew presents purporting to quote the prophetic source text as the fulfilment text, while the source text as it appears in the MT of Isaiah 42:1–2 will be labelled the prophetic text. The fulfilment text draws from the prophetic space (represented by the prophetic text) and also from the witness space, represented by Matthew's context and his sources.

At this stage, it is important to briefly retrace what it should have meant for Matthew to declare fulfilment in his FQs. Typically, we find that Matthew identifies fulfilment when he compares an event in his witness context with the text of words (usually from the prophets) of the OT (Viljoen 2007:308). In other words, to identify fulfilment, Matthew compares the words (oral, written or in thought) describing

7. It can be understood here that the tricky reading in relation to the rest of the sentence forced the GNT to supply the subject pronoun τις. Had the translator made use of the LXX, there would have been no need to make this addition, as the LXX has already been smoothed out.

8. For more detailed information on this example, see Fauconnier and Turner (2003:58).

9. What we call here 'Matthew's witness context' is a complex notion. As a considerable number of scholars on Matthew generally posit mainly two sources (Q and Mark) as sources that Matthew might have used to compose his gospel, the term 'Matthew's witness context' may well then refer to the information available to Matthew from those sources. These sources can be expected to have painted a picture of Jesus' ministry that had taken place concerning Jesus. However, it may also include other personal experiences by Matthew that were not part of any of the mentioned sources. Thus, 'Matthew's witness context' in our case will include both information from his sources and from his own or from fellow members of the so-called School of Matthew.

events in his witness context corresponding in some way to words of a text from Scripture (the prophets), leading him to such expressions as: 'this happened to fulfil what was written …' within the corpus of the 10 FQs (e.g. Mt 1:22 and 12:17). At this stage, one already finds that there may be conceptual challenges in the process described here. This is because words of a text are being compared with an event which may not necessarily be in the form of text or even contain any of the explicit words that are written in the source text. Alternatively, the prophetic text is compared with what happens in Matthews's written sources, and similarities are identified as fulfilment. Yet if Matthew must show correspondence between the event and the prophetic text, he has to decode the event into text that will be comparable with the prophetic text. The converse may also be true – as he may need to decode the prophetic text into an event in order to compare it with the event that has now taken place. This process may subconsciously cause Matthew to be not so rigid with the correspondences he has to draw. He typically has a lot of freedom conceptually to decode certain scenes in his context identifying corresponding text in the OT perceived to be prophecies of those events. A classic case in point is the birth announcement of Jesus in Matthew 1:18–23. In this context, the angel announces the birth of Jesus to Joseph in the dream, and Matthew matches this to Isaiah 7:14 with the words, 'the virgin will give birth to a son and they will call him Immanuel' (Mt 1:23). In the narration that Matthew provides in his gospel, however, nowhere does he explicitly refer to Mary as a virgin. We can only assume that he concluded that Mary was a virgin and this was common knowledge in his time. Furthermore, we notice that the name of the child according to Isaiah 7:14 was Immanuel, but according to the angel in the dream, it would be Jesus. In the entirety of his gospel, Matthew seldom uses Immanuel as Jesus' name. The differences do not pose a challenge to Matthew, probably because he took the name from Isaiah 7 as indicating the significance, the essential meaning of the child being born among the people and not the name he would be called by (Philips 2017: 164–165). It seems to be a stretched justification for such a quote, but it appears that Matthew had this much leeway to interpret events and assign scriptural significance as he perceived them (Kirk 2008:81; MacCasland 1961:145–147).

From a technical point of view, what constitutes fulfilment in Matthew therefore only happens when he was able to make the connections between the two mental spaces and conclude that a specific event in his witness space amounts to fulfilment of a prophetic text or context, something which Fauconnier and Turner call 'completion' (Fauconnier & Turner 2003:57). In other words, the simple mental operation of comparing two events separated in time takes place first in Matthew's cognition. In this process, Matthew finds that there are similarities in concepts such as YHWH's address to a human being as 'my beloved', 'object of God's pleasure' and notions such as justice dispensation, and nonviolent, nonaggressive confrontation of antagonists by a favoured one of YHWH.[10]
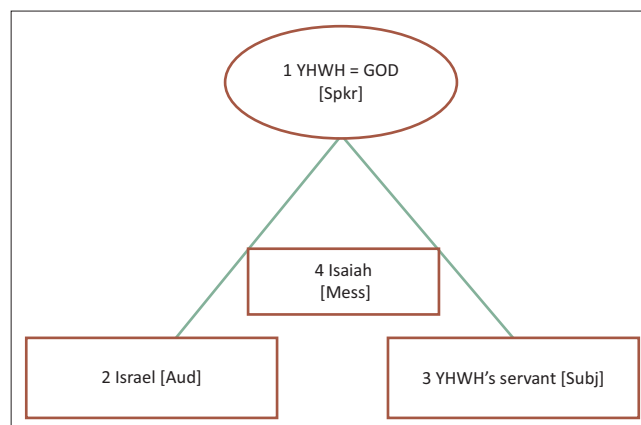


**FIGURE 1:** The structure of the prophetic (P) mental space.

At the same time, there are also elements that are evidently dissimilar: Identification of a personality as YHWH's servant is scarcely available in Matthew's context, as far as his record is concerned. So also, the identification of Jesus as specifically 'chosen by YHWH' (only in the Mt 12:18 quotation is this title suggested for Jesus). Furthermore, if we consider the Matthew 12:18–19 fulfilment text, we find that although it draws from contexts of the baptism and the transfiguration, those events are not named as such in the fulfilment quote or in the source text.[11] This leads us to observe that for fulfilment to take place in Matthew's context, there must just be enough agreement to establish a correlation between the spaces and hence to engender fulfilment.

## Discussion
### The blended spaces as perceived from the fulfilment quotation

The unit of text in Isaiah 42:1–2, Matthew's supposed source text, can be considered to be a mental space, which we will call the P space. Smaller, more specific mental spaces can be traced from the first few sentences of Isaiah 42:1–2. Primarily, we can identify the main mental space, a scene in which there are four main elements (or role players), although it is also possible to argue for three: (1) YHWH [Spkr] is speaking to (2) an audience [Aud], concerning (3) a subject (Subj), who is only identified as 'My Servant',[12] through (4) Isaiah the prophet [Mess].[13] This mental space can be depicted as in Figure 1.

The mental space in Isaiah 42:1–2 has several correspondent mental spaces in Matthew's witness context, specifically the epiphanic scenes in Matthew. In that context, (1) the voice from heaven [Spkr] ( φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν ) addresses (2) an

events of Matthew's day, where Jesus did not seek open confrontation with the public officials of his day.

11.In other words, there is no key that points a reader to the original context from where some allusions included in the fulfilment text were taken.

12.While YHWH addresses an entity identified as 'My servant' at numerous places in Isaiah, generally, these personalities are recognisable as referring either to Israel, Jacob, Isaiah or some other named king of the time, all except the 'My servant' of Isaiah 42; 52–53.

13.In this article, we will refer to the author of Isaiah 42 simply as Isaiah, and this should not be taken to rule out the arguments that the book of Isaiah was probably authored by two or three different persons (often referred to as proto-Isaiah, Deutero-Isaiah and Trito-Isaiah) (see Hill & Walton 2000:415–417).

audience present [Aud], about (3) a subject, Jesus [Subj] who is undergoing baptism in water (Mt 3:17). Another event in Matthew 17:5 is similarly constructed, and both these events can be understood to have the structure represented in Figure 2. Apparently, the communication between the YHWH and the audience is more direct in this instance, without the need of a messenger [Mess] as in Isaiah 42.

Across these three mental spaces, we have some correspondence of at least these elements: Spkr, Aud and Subj. In the given diagram, we have distinguished three levels of blending. Firstly, at the very top of the diagram, we have the letters P, FA (Fulfillment Quotation in context A) and FB (Fulfillment Quotation in context B), representing the blend of the communication network as described here. In this part, FA and FB refer to the witness contexts (or fulfilment contexts) in Matthew 3:17 and 17:5, respectively. The fulfilment quote is identified as FQ. The structure of these mental spaces is such that they are composed of relations that involve a Spkr, a Subj and the Aud. There are four such elements in P1, but there are three in each of the FA1 and FB1 spaces, hence indicating selective projection. Blending is effectively achieved by tracing links through these mental spaces (because of the similarity in structure) and therefore by pattern completion, so that the events in Matthew's witness context (see FA and FB in Figure 3) are traced by Matthew back to the P space by virtue of the similar structure.

On the second level of this diagram, we have operations of the blending by means of identity descriptions. Thus, there is the prophetic (P1) space whose subject–predicate relations in the form *X is n of Y* are somewhat reflected in the witness contexts FA1 and FB1. For example, in Isaiah 42:1, the servant is the chosen of YHWH and in Matthew 3:17, the baptism candidate is the beloved Son of the Voice from heaven.

On the third level is shown blending that takes place by reference to the function of the servant (Subj). Here P2 and P3 are elements of mission activity attributed to the Subj, often introduced by the phrase, 'He will …'. For the correspondent parts in the witness context relating to the fulfilment space, we have correlated the mission statements P1 and P2 with



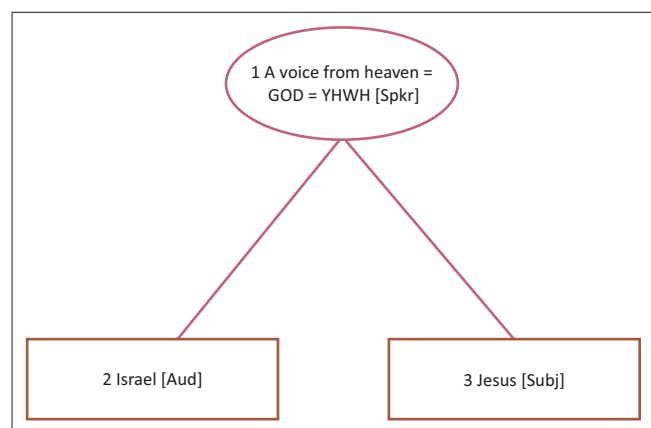1 A voice from heaven = GOD = YHWH [Spkr]

2 Israel [Aud]

3 Jesus [Subj]

**FIGURE 2:** The structure of the witness context mental spaces (FA and FB).

what we believe Matthew might have understood of Jesus' mission that had already taken place (or was taking place) in his witness context. These are indicated in the text boxes marked FG1 and FG2. All these parts of the conceptual blend ultimately contribute to the fulfilment quote FQ that we find in Matthew 12:17–19 and are indicated in Figure 3. The generic space is that of the identity and function of the servant or messianic figure.[14]

In Figure 3, the bold, solid arrows connecting some elements or spaces in this diagram point to the parts of text and hence mental spaces where Matthew's fulfilment quote differs in some way from his source text (P). It is these 'imperfect' correlations that shall henceforth be our focus of discussion. Before we deal with the modifications between elements or spaces shown by the bold arrows, we may also note that there were some elements that Matthew chose not to marry or clarify, yet where there is no obvious agreement between the prophetic spaces (in Isaiah) and the fulfilment spaces (in the Matthean context). Firstly, 'My Servant', a title from P1 is neither textually indicated to be corresponding to the title 'My Son' of FB1 and FC1, nor does that title occur in any of Matthew's references to Jesus in Matthew's witness account. However, it is plain that the assumption Matthew makes by making this quotation is that the title 'My Servant' refers to Jesus. Matthew leaves this unreconciled, probably because the link would have been fairly obvious to his readers: almost anyone sharing his exegetical view of Isaiah could deduce from these contexts that 'My Servant' is realised in the witness context as Jesus, the Messiah.[15] The vital relations involved may include those of representation, analogy and role (Hayes 2012:144) and can be understood to lead to the unique blend: YHWH's Servant represents Jesus. The analogical link between these two mental spaces is quite straightforward because the topology of the two mental spaces is similar.

Another element that is not witnessed explicitly in Matthew's witness context is the statement in Isaiah that the servant is 'chosen' by YHWH (communicated by the phrase, 'my Chosen' in Isaiah). This notion is absent in the witness spaces. One could explain its absence as because of the fact that the choice motif, was just as well a part of messianic expectations as that of the Messiah himself, and hence part of the generic mental space. In other words, to mention a 'chosen servant' motif may have been seen as synonymous with the mention of the messianic motif. Israel is chosen, king David is chosen, Jacob/Israel is chosen, and YHWH's servant is chosen. In a certain sense, there is a link between all these identity values (David, Israel, Jacob, the prophet, the king), which can all be understood to have carried the value of a servant of YHWH, and hence a messianic pre-figuring of some kind (see Is 37:35; 44:1, 21). And in an exegetical trend recognised by Kirk, Jesus embodies these figures in his fulfilment of the Scriptures role (Kirk 2008:94).

14. Compare with the role-value compression mechanisms of blending in Hayes (2012:146–151).

15. Matthew emphasises Jesus as the Son of David and the messianic king in his gospel testimony, hence alluding to the familiarity of these concepts in the minds of his audience. In this regard, see Blomberg (2007:1–109).
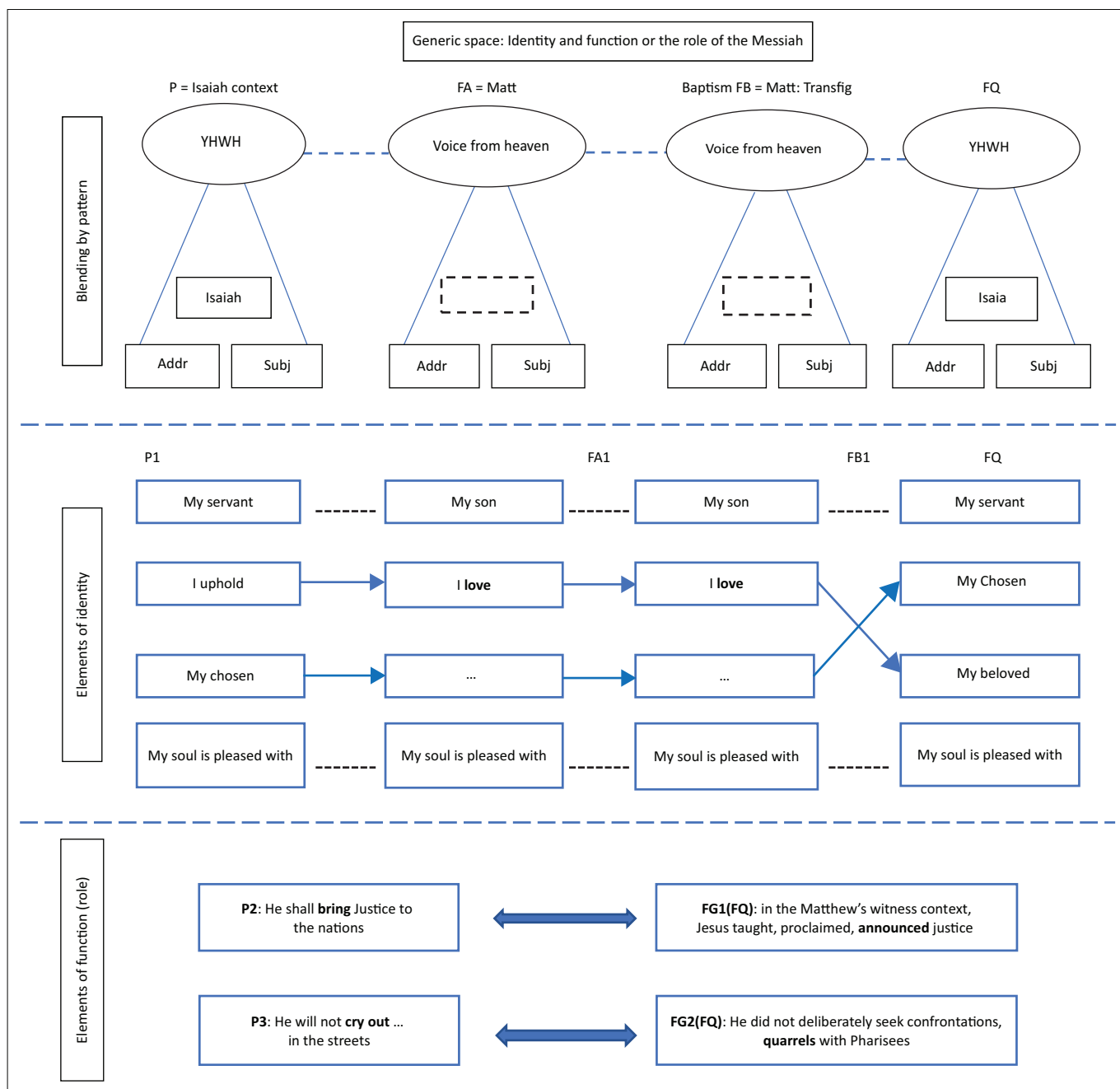
**FIGURE 3:** Three streams of conceptual blends between the prophetic and the witness contexts.

## Conceptual blending involving 'uphold' or 'chosen'

We have observed in the text-critical analysis of the texts involved that Matthew might have read the Hebrew אתמך [uphold] as אחמד [choose, delight or take pleasure in]. From the quotation, it is apparent that Matthew focused on the choosing aspect of the polysemous word אחמד. As this lexical unit is polysemous and had already been used in the context of another (significant) messianic prophecy in Isaiah 53:2, Matthew might have found it suitable to use it in his FQ in Matthew 12:18–19, because it no doubt strengthens the messianic perspective. Furthermore, Matthew's source text also contains another lexeme referring to the domain of choice (בחר), although it is located at a different place. This lexeme for choice is significantly messianic, having strong covenantal

overtones in the OT (Brown, Driver & Briggs 1977:103–104; Wildberger 1997:212–224). The blend, in this case, is one that is brought about firstly by similarity in orthography between a lexical item in the messianic prophetic text, 'uphold' and one in an adjacent messianic prophetic text, 'choice'. Secondly, the blend is achieved and strengthened mentally by drawing from the context of the prophetic text itself that has another lexeme from the domain of choice. The result is that the blend comes about from a complex blending of more than two mental spaces as shown in Figure 4.

## Conceptual blending involving 'my chosen one' and 'my beloved'

Coming to this word (בהירי), Matthew is faced with a small challenge. He does not want to repeat the same concept of
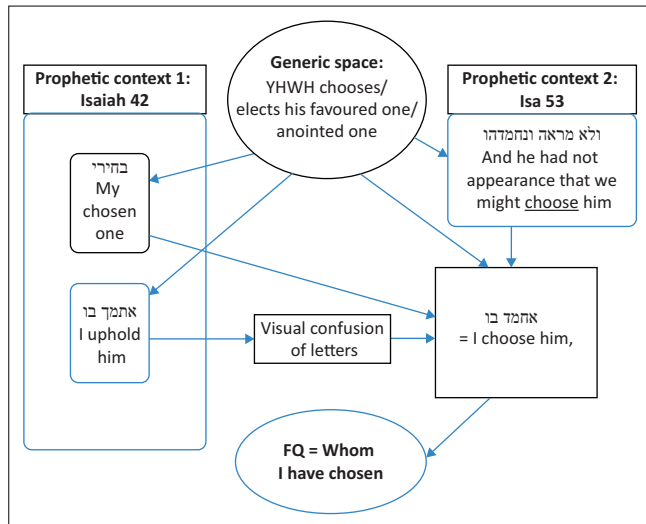
**FIGURE 4:** Complex conceptual blending facilitating use of *ὃν ᾑρέτισα* for the Hebrew אתמך־בו.



**FIGURE 5:** Conceptual blending demonstrating the transition from 'choose' to 'love'.

choice that he has just used previously in the same verse. At the same time, Matthew is aware of the powerful notion of the Divine love for the Messiah that is profusely occasioned in the witness space (reflected in Mt 3:17 and 17:5) but somehow conspicuously inexplicit in the prophetic text. Matthew therefore possibly relates the notion of 'choice' with that of 'love'.[16] Simply put, one can reason that what is chosen is loved. Hence, a relation can be argued to exist between these two lexemes. Furthermore, the notion of divine love for YHWH's servant permeates the whole Isaiah 42:1–4 context, although inexplicit. Hence, Matthew feels compelled to make the implicit explicit in the prophetic text by placing the word 'love' in the mouth of Isaiah. He chooses to place this word in correspondence to a lexeme of choice (בחר), which is no longer needed there. The total sum of this action is to communicate that in Isaiah 42:1–4 (especially with the word בחירי), the prophet speaks implicitly about YHWH's love for his servant, just as he uses the word 'servant' to refer to the Messiah. It can further be implied that Matthew could have reasoned that the revelation of the Messiah moves from the less obvious revelation in the prophetic text to the more obvious ones in the fulfilment context; hence, we can see the conceptual blending processes of elaboration and pattern completion clearly at play in this instance as demonstrated in Figure 5.

## Conceptual blending involving 'bring' and 'announce'

The bringing frame involves the movement of a theme with the help of an agent towards a certain goal.[17] In Isaiah, the agent is the servant, the theme is the justice or judgement carried out and the goal is the nations (see Table 2). Theologically, it is generally to be understood that judgement or justice belongs to YHWH and is subsequently brought from YHWH
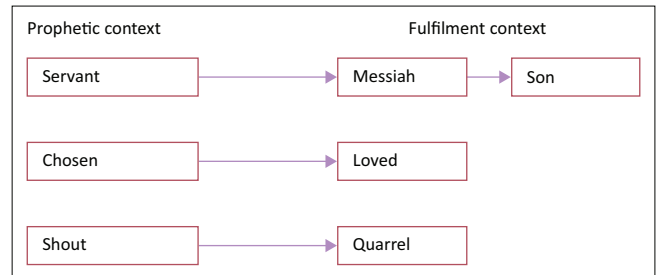
to the nations by YHWH's servant. In Isaiah 41:1–2, there is still a great deal of uncertainty as to how the servant will 'bring' this justice, and to the essential nature of the 'justice'.[18] However, in Matthew's context, Mathew sees Jesus bringing the justice of God to the people by 'telling' or 'announcing' to them God's justice and judgement. Hence, apparently, this reasoning is based on the metaphor: to announce a message is to cause a message to move spatially from point A to point B. In this regard, Matthew can make parallels between 'telling' (announcing) in his own context and 'bringing' in the Isaiah context. He thus draws analogical correspondences between the two mental spaces that share the common conceptual structure: source–path–goal. The bringing of justice in the Isaiah 42 space was figurative of the gospel announcements that Jesus was doing in the Matthean witness space (see Figure 5). Matthew prefers to cite 'announce' in his quotation, even though it does not occur in the prophetic text, because it helps make clearer connections between the prophetic space and his own witness space. Matthew's hearers can thus make clear connections between the prophecy (in its original text) and the Matthean context, using Mathew's quotation text. It is interesting to note that Matthew scarcely uses the lexical unit (LU) ἀπαγγέλλω to describe Jesus' teaching and proclamations in his context (Matthew). Despite this fact, it is an LU far closer to words describing Jesus' actions in the witness context such as διδάσκω, κηρύσσω and εὐαγγελίζω than one such as ἐκφέρω.[19]

## Conceptual blending involving 'cry out' and 'quarrel'

With regard to Isaiah 42:2, Matthew represents the Hebrew לא יצעק [he will not cry out] with οὐκ ἐρίσει [he will not quarrel] while an equivalent such as the LXX's οὐ κεκράξεται [he will not call out] would have been a better gloss (see Table 3). We posit here therefore that Matthew, while he would fully agree with the LXX rendering of the Hebrew lexeme, chooses to render the lexeme from the point of view of the actual events in the life of Jesus, as he interpreted or had experienced them. He thus shows that the word 'cry out' ultimately points to the action of quarrelling. In other words, the Prophet Isaiah was not referring to literal crying out of the Servant of YHWH and hence of Jesus in his witness context but rather to quarrelling or brawling. This further means that, in view of the context that Matthew

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16. That this change was from the hand of Matthew (or the composer of Matthew's gospel) has been observed by Menken (2004:72, 134). See also in this regard Phillips (2017:254).

17. FrameNet Index, viewed 07 May 2021, from https://framenet.icsi.berkeley.edu/fndrupal/frameIndex.

18. On the meaning of the term משפט, see Hayes (2012:144).

19. Here see LXX Isaiah 42:1.

refers to, Jesus did not parade himself for public fame, fight for recognition or stand his ground to contest his right to carry out his ministry. Rather he humbly turned away from potential situations of defensive argumentations. This particular part of the quotation is the very one that causes Matthew to immediately make the quotation in 12:17. The quotation is introduced in Matthew 12:17 after Jesus had some confrontations with the Pharisees on the issues of the Sabbath laws (vv. 1–13). After Jesus had given them the unexpected replies, they seek violent confrontation, to kill him (v. 14), but Jesus peacefully avoids such potential confrontation by 'withdrawing' (v. 15). Some common people still followed Jesus and he healed their sicknesses, but he asked them not to broadcast or make his name famous (v. 16). Thus, Jesus rather sought to keep his work from the attention of public authorities (Blomberg 2007:42) and even refrained from using it as a defensive weapon in his arguments. In that sense, therefore, he did not shout, nor was his voice heard in the streets (see Figure 6). Interestingly, there seems to be no lexical unit for arguing used in Matthew where Jesus is the subject, let alone in situations involving Jesus' confrontation with the Jewish authorities – not even the use of the related συζητέω that appears no less than six times in Mark! In that regard, Jesus certainly does not quarrel in the Matthean witness context. On the other hand, Jesus does cry out (κράξας) outside of Jerusalem, on the cross (27:50), the kind of which Matthew is not interested in at this point. The 'crying out' of P3 is connected by metaphorical association to 'quarrel' of FG2 (see Figure 3). In other words, to cry out or shout out in Isaiah 42:1–2 is to seek attention and engage in defensive argumentations.

### Lexical order: 'uphold' paired with 'chosen' and 'my chosen' paired with 'my beloved'

In the quotation text, the lexical unit 'choose' has been moved one step backward to come just after the LU 'servant', when compared with the prophetic text in Isaiah 42. The lexical unit 'beloved', which was supposed to occupy the position
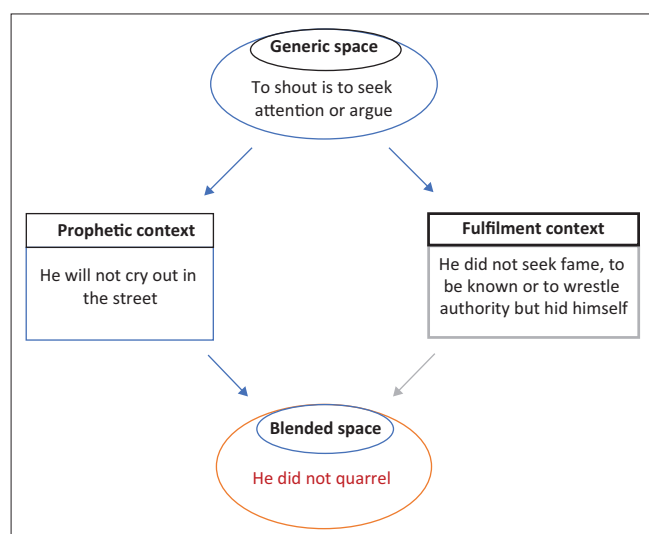


**FIGURE 6:** Conceptual blending facilitating the transition from 'cry out' to 'quarrel'.

of 'uphold' is placed instead just before the position for 'pleasure'. The total effect of these changes in the lexical order is such that 'beloved' and 'pleasure' are closely connected just as they are closely connected in Matthew's fulfilment context (ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα) (see Mt 3:17; 17:5). The changes in the quotation's lexical order as compared with the prophetic text strongly suggest that Matthew constructs his fulfilment quote in this way partly to reflect the phrase, ὁ ἀγαπητός, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα ([my] beloved, in whom I am well pleased) as closely as possible while trying to cause as little disruption to the Isaiah prophecy text as possible. The reorientation of text that Matthew performs here, apart from being driven to do so because of the blends we have observed here, happens also to achieve a strong reflection of the theophanic events in Matthew's witness context. This can be compared with the different figures that one may perceive from a single picture, as in the case of the classic ambiguous image, 'my wife and mother-in-law'.[20] In other words, just by reorganising the text, Matthew manages to draw links between the prophetic text and the events of his witness context (Mt 3:17; 17:5). This in turn places emphasis on the fact that the Matthean events recorded in Matthew were a fulfilment of Isaiah 42:1–2. The direct cause of this change can be attributed to the analogy–disanalogy vital relation identified by Fauconnier and Turner (2002:98–99). Without necessarily changing the words themselves but the order, Matthew causes his readers to see the analogy between Isaiah's prophecy and Matthew's witness context of Jesus. From a casual reading of Matthew's quote, it does not immediately become apparent that the order of words in the quotation is not precisely the same as that in the source Isaiah 42 text.

Following these observations, Matthew's reference to Isaiah 42:1–2 is apparently not the classic quotation that his own wording of it tends to lead us to understand. As other scholars have observed, the identification of messianic fulfilment in a text such as Isaiah 42 appears to imply that Matthew understands a different meaning to that which its historical context seems to signify. Yet in all this, we observe the skill that Matthew shows in being able to bring into correspondence the two separate mental spaces involved here and managing to identify fulfilment of one in the other. This new fulfilment space or the blended space as presented by Matthew tends to lead one to understand a 'new' meaning of the Isaiah 42 text from the one the historical audience of Isaiah might have understood. Without Matthew's fulfilment text in question, few would have dared to think of Isaiah 42 and Matthew's witness context, as he relates it in the verses prior to 12:17, as being in a prophecy and fulfilment relation.

## Conclusion

There are several ways in which conceptual blending as we have applied it to Matthew's FQ in Matthew 12:18–19 is

typical of the mechanism of conceptual blending as explained by those who have advanced it. Yet there also appear to be some compatibility challenges. Without getting into detail, we may identify some of the typical blending mechanisms we find in our study to include: the existence of a generic space, cross-space mapping, selective projection, link to the original spaces of elements in the blended space, pattern completion and elaboration. A detailed analysis of the involvement of each of these aspects of conceptual blending in the Matthew 12:18–19 fulfilment quote requires a separate discussion platform from the present one.

According to Fauconnier and Turner (2003:60), there are four main types of blending networks: simplex, mirror, single scope and double scope. The case of Matthew's fulfilment frames appears to be a combination of both the mirror and the single scope blends. In a mirror, a common organising frame is shared by all the spaces in the network. In Matthew, the input and blended spaces all point to frames that give information on the identity and function or role of the Messiah, showing common or shared organisation in these spaces (Hayes 2012). However, there is also an aspect of single scopes in that the blend (or set of blends) takes the perspective of one input frame: the prophetic space frame. This is therefore somewhat a nontypical version of blending, yet one in which there is undoubtedly conceptual blending involved. The major types of blending networks identified here serve only as 'prototypes, along a continuum' of pluriform blends that humans unconsciously produce in the process of meaning construction. Hence, categories of meaning such as categorisations, analogies, counterfactuals, metaphors, rituals, logical framing and grammatical constructions can all be situated in this continuum (Fauconnier & Turner 2003:59). Yet there are certainly governing or constitutive principles that must be met for conceptual blending to be understood in a specific case, and four have been identified to date: topology, unpacking, web and integration. The cases of blending studied here appear to meet all these, although there may be difficulty with relation to unpacking, which requires that the blend all by itself should prompt for the reconstruction of the entire network. The problem with this lies in the fact that the fulfilment text in Matthew's blend, although produced with the prophetic and the fulfilment spaces in view, appears to be arbitrarily produced. In that respect, one cannot tell without prior knowledge of the Isaiah text that the concept 'love' should be retraced to the lexical unit 'uphold' and 'quarrel' should be retraced to 'shout'. However, given this scenario, prior knowledge of the input spaces is always a requirement. In the classical boat race example that Fauconnier and Turner have provided, one has to be informed about the two input spaces to be able to untangle the blend.

There are still challenges in recognising FQs such as Matthew 12:17–19, as resulting from conceptual blending. Fulfilment by itself seems not to require any sophisticated conceptual operation, at least of the same rigour and intensity as the ones we find in the classical examples such as those of the regatta.[21] This is because it is difficult to identify fulfilment as a separate mental space. Traditionally, fulfilment is a result of analogical connections between the prophetic space and the fulfilment event. However, in Matthew, the understanding of fulfilment is not so straightforward and several scholars have been trying to figure out the essence of fulfilment as Matthew conceived it. One such is Kirk, who concludes that in Matthew, 'to fulfil' should be understood in the sense of making something full. It is not simply a parallel link between a strictly predictive prophetic text and its purported realisation at some later date. In Matthew:

> [O]T words apply to Jesus in ways that differ from the meaning they held in their original contexts while maintaining a degree of similarity between the events of Jesus' life and the original event, spoken of or prophesied. (Kirk 2008:97)

Philips (2017:28) also puts forward the understanding that Jesus fills up the OT forms, types and images in the sense of being 'more than' their previous expression. The net effect of all this is that the FQs are not simply a result of connections between the prophetic and the witness contexts (what might simply be identified as cross-space mappings). Instead, they represent the emergence of new meaning applied to the prophetic texts when the witness context is taken into consideration and in this sense, they do represent blended spaces. If YHWH's servant represented Israel[22] or an unknown eschatological figure to the OT communities, we know that in Matthew's witness context, he represents Jesus, who now is no longer just the Jesus of the NT but 'the Jesus' preconceived and pre-lived in the OT. Matthew's witness context cannot give this meaning by itself – it requires the authoritative reference of the OT context to furnish this identity and view of Jesus.

The notions on the nature of fulfilment raised here are still being debated. What begins to emerge from this study is a call to understand fulfilment in Matthew as a process that involves conceptual integration, among other things. The result is that even the wording of the FQ text itself begins to manifest evidence of this kind of blending. What is also critical in our study is that through detailed analysis of the FQ in Matthew 12:18–19, and bearing in mind mechanisms of conceptual blending, fairly convincing explanations can be given to textual departures in the FQ as compared against its purported source text in the OT.

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21.See above.

22.So the LXX.

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G.M. is the sole author of this article.

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## Data availability

Data sharing is not applicable to this article as no new data were created or analysed in this study.

## Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the author.

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