

NON ABSCONDITUM, SED PARADOXUM:
A COVENANT SYMPHONY OF KINGSHIP,
JUDGEMENT, AND HOPE IN
ISAIAH 45:14–25

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A Covenant Symphony of Kingship, Judgement, and Hope in Isaiah 45:14–25

Isaiah, the prince among the prophets, is recognized and studied for many things. Many of Isaiah's features—author, audience, historical context, and theological themes—render its unique status among the prophets. Isa 45:14–25 provides some exegetical challenges which, when studied, help us to elucidate the whole work.¹ Those complexities allow for the exploration of some of Isaiah's characteristics and how they interact with one another.

From general questions concerning authorship and setting to the identification of God's interlocutor in Isa 45:15, the spectrum of responses produces a plethora of opinions on both the book and our section (Isa 45:15–25).

Considering the many controversies surrounding Isaiah as a whole—and especially Isa 45:14–25—in this paper, I use the theme of Ancient Near Eastern (ANE) covenant loyalty as the center of gravity pulling all other themes together; bringing, thus, cohesion to the text, its historical context, and theological themes. I argue that in the context of YHWH's judgement pronouncements, the premise of Isa 45:15–25 is God's self-revelation as the ultimate covenant King.

YHWH has superintended both the gentiles' and Israel's salvation from the beginning. The revelation of this reality leaves humankind without excuse and calls for covenant allegiance to YHWH from every people group during Isaiah's day and until the end of times.

¹ See Oswalt comment at the introduction of the section comprehending Isa:45:14–46:13 in John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapter 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 212.

The Great Isaiah Scroll a Textual Witness for Isaiah

Many discussions on Isaiah begin with the book's authorship. It is important, however, to begin with the text itself. Where does it come from? Prioritizing the text will aid in answering questions concerning authorship and date.

Isaiah is unique among Old Testament (OT) text-critical Scholarship. The *Dead Sea Scrolls* (DSS) preserve twenty-one or twenty-two witnesses to the book.² The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a)—the best-known document from the DSS collection—preserves the prophet's book almost in its entirety.³ This provides an opportunity for research that has remained unparalleled since its discovery back in 1946-47.⁴

1QIsa^a consists of seventeen pieces of sheepskin sewn together into a single scroll measuring twenty-four feet in length by ten inches in height. Paleographic analysis has allowed scholars to date the text to about 125 BCE.⁵ The scroll contains the whole sixty-six chapters of Isaiah written as a consonantal Aramaic square-script text.⁶

² The numbers *twenty-one* or *twenty-two* depend on whether we count the latest discovery of an additional copy south of the Qumran site, in Wadi Murabba‘at. See Donald W. Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants*, Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2020), 21.

In this paper, when referring to the witness of Isaiah found at Qumran as a group, I will use the abbreviation “QIsa.”

³ Perhaps the most authoritative work on QIsa is that of Donald W. Parry, see Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*; However, in terms of 1QIsa, a helpful introduction may be found in Eugene Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Developmental Composition of the Bible*, vol. 169 of *Supplements to the Vetus Testamentus* (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 109–129.

⁴ Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 3. For more information on the event, see Appendix IV, p. X n Y

⁵ Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 21–24; Ellis R. Brotzman and Eric J. Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*, 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 37.

A paleographic exercise on 1QIsa^a is presented in Appendix IV, pp. 62–74.

⁶ Most of the content from the DSS is written in Aramaic square Script—*ktav ashuri*. To read an introduction on the history of the adoption of this Script, see Lewis Glinert, *The Story of Hebrew*, Library of Jewish Ideas (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), 25–27.

For a more comprehensive approach to the history, framework, background, and development of the Aramaic Script, see Ada Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script Styles, Calligraphy & Design* (London: The British Library, 2002), 41–46; Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 26–39. For a sample, see figure 27 in Appendix IV, p 72.

Some fragments are written in paleo-Hebrew, and some in Greek. Brotzman and Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism*, 40–41.

1QIsa^a presents several textual variants when compared to the Masoretic Text (MT); most of them minor.⁷ These variants include haplography, dittography, and transposition, among others.⁸ While some argue that variants reflect a developing text during the 1st cent. BCE,⁹ many of these studies tend to ignore the thousands of textual affinities between 1QIsa^a, the MT, and the versions.¹⁰ Moreover, some scholars have suggested sound theories to explain 1QIsa^a variant patterns—including being the result of a physically damaged source for 1QIsa^a.¹¹

Key to this discussion is the fact that the DSS predate the previous ‘oldest copies’ of the OT by about one thousand years.¹² These scrolls—both the text and the artifact proper¹³—help scholars to better understand the transmission of the Hebrew text.¹⁴

⁷ The best study on the textual variants provided by the Great Isaiah scroll—including also comments on all QIsa witnesses—may be read from Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*.

For an introduction to the variants between the texts in QIsa and the LXX see Arie van der Kooij, “The Old Greek of Isaiah in Relation to the Qumran Texts of Isaiah: Some General Comments,” in *Septuagint, Scrolls, and Cognate Writings: Papers Presented to the International Symposium on the Septuagint and Its Relations to the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Writings* (Manchester, 1990), ed. George J. Brooke and Barnabas Lindars, SCS 33 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 198–199.

⁸ Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 22; Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 263–82; Brotzman and Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism*, 97–141.

⁹ Julio Trebolle Barrera, “Origins of a Tripartite Old Testament Canon,” in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 53–67; Joseph Blenkinsopp, “The Formation of the Hebrew Bible Canon,” in *The Canon Debate*, ed. Lee Martin McDonald and James A. Sanders (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 53–67; Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 5–9; Eugene Charles Ulrich, “The Developmental Composition of the Book of Isaiah: Light from 1QIsaa on Additions in the MT,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 8.3 (2001): 288–305; Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 155–190.

¹⁰ Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 23.

¹¹ Drew Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect?: 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66,” *DSD* 20.1 (2013): 17–50.

¹² Brotzman and Tully, *Old Testament Textual Criticism*, 42; Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 3.

¹³ 1QIsa^a represents how biblical scrolls looked like at the end of the Second Temple era. See Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 21.

¹⁴ Other textual witnesses for Isaiah include the ancient versions in Greek (Isa LXX), Syriac, Latin, the Aramaic Targums, other fragments from the Judean Desert, and the Masoretic Text (represented by the Aleppo and Leningrad Codices). On other textual witnesses, see Emanuel Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible, Qumran, Septuagint: Collected Essays*, Supplements to *Vetus Testamentum* 167 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 121–13.

The relationship between the textual alignments and variants within the versions, DSS, and the MT allow scholars to hypothesize about a pre-Masoretic textual family. Such tradition is entirely plausible and might be represented by a critical edition of the text of Isaiah—an archetype for its MT textual family.

The HBCE website states that: “The HBCE text will not reproduce a single manuscript [...] but will approximate the manuscript that was the latest common ancestor of all the extant manuscripts. This ‘earliest inferable text’ is called the archetype. This [...] is the earliest recoverable text of a particular book.” See,

Society of Biblical Literature, “Methodology & Theory,” *The Hebrew Bible: A Critical Edition*, https://www.sbl-site.org/HBCE/HBCE_Method.html

Authorship and Date

Isaiah ben Amoz of Jerusalem (Isaiah, hereafter) is the only explicit authorial reference and ought to be applied to the whole work (1:1).¹⁵ However, most scholars hold that Isaiah is a composite work of at least two (and perhaps three) authors.¹⁶ One may trace this view back to the comments of Jewish Rabbis Ibn Gekatilyah (ca. 1100 CE) and Ibn Ezra (1092–1167 CE), who expressed doubts concerning Isaiah ben Amoz as the author of certain portions of the book.¹⁷ However, it was until Döderlein (1775) that the conflation-theory appeared in academic circles. Eichhorn (1780–1787) refined Döderlein's thesis by proposing an alternative authorship for chapters 40–66. Finally, Bernard Lauardus Duhm's commentary (1892) won the day by proposing three different authors: Isaiah ben Amoz for Proto-Isaiah¹⁸ (1-39), an

To read an example and explanation of the HBCE methodology applied to the text of Isaiah, see Eugene Ulrich, “The Hebrew Bible Critical Edition of Isaiah 40:1-12,” in *The Text of the Hebrew Bible and Its Editions: Studies in Celebration of the Fifth Centennial of the Complutensian Polyglot*, ed. Andrés Piquer Otero and Pablo A. Torijano, Supplements to the Textual History of the Bible 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 400–412.

From the BHQ website, the German Bible Society explains that the BHQ “aims to provide them [serious students of the Hebrew Bible] with a clear presentation of the surviving evidence of the text’s transmission that is relevant for translation and exegesis.” See Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, “Biblia Hebraica Quinta (BHQ),” *Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft: Academic*, <https://www.academic-bible.com/en/bible-society-and-biblical-studies/current-projects/biblia-hebraica-quinta-bhq/>.

¹⁵ John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapter 1–39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 79–83; J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993), 41–42; John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, vol. 24 of *WBC* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1985), xxv–xxvii; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition and Notes: Volume 1, 1–18*, 6th Pr., vol. 1 of *NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 27–33; But also, see Young's full discussion in Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition and Notes: Volume 3, 40–66*, 3rd Pr., vol. 3 of *NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 583–549.

¹⁶ For a good example on how, presently, multiplicity of authors is assumed rather than discussed or argued for, note how Kratz does not even bother dealing with the possibility of Isaiah ben Amoz as the author of the whole. The prophet is not even mentioned in his section on *Deutero-Isaiah*. Instead, he follows Duhm's conclusions, assuming the impossibility of predictive prophecy. Read in Reinhard G. Kratz, *The Prophets of Israel*, trans. Anselm C. Hagedorn and Nathan MacDonald, Critical Studies in the Hebrew Bible 2 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2015), 68–77.

¹⁷ Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 538; John F. A. Sawyer, *Isaiah through the Centuries*, Wiley Blackwell Bible Commentaries (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2020), 9–10.

¹⁸ Proto-Isaiah, hereafter: PrIs.

anonymous author (or authors) for Deutero-Isaiah¹⁹ (40–54), and another anonymous author for Trito-Isaiah (55–66).²⁰ Today, most adopt a bipartite view of Isaiah's authorship.²¹

In this view, PrIs (1–39) is by the late 8th cent. BCE prophet, Isaiah. By contrast, DIs (40–66) is an anonymous post-exilic composition. Cyrus's decree allowing Jews' return to Jerusalem sets 538 BCE as a *terminus post quem* DIs would have been penned, while both Isaiah references in Second Temple literature²² and the dating of 1QIsa^a sets 2nd cent. BCE as *terminus ante quem*.

There are implicit assumptions underpinning these conclusions. To mention the major presuppositions, regularly, scholars denying Isaiah's unity assume the impossibility of

¹⁹ Deutero-Isaiah, hereafter: DIs.

²⁰ The historical treatment on Isaiah's authorship is an abridged version, and further material from proponents of this theory may be read in John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, 2nd Ed., AB 20 (New York: Doubleday, 1973), xv; Yehezkel Kaufman, *The Babylonian Captivity and Deutero-Isaiah*, trans. C. W. Efron, vol. 4 of *History of the Religion of Israel* (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1970), 66–67; Paul Niskanen, *Isaiah 56–66*, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014), ix–x. To read fair historical assessments of this position by evangelical scholars, see Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, xxvi–xxvii; John Oswalt, *The NIV Application Commentary: Isaiah*, NIVAC (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 33–35.

²¹ Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction, Including the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and Also the Works of Similar Type from Qumran; the History of the Formation of the Old Testament*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 304.

²² G. K. Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy in Evangelicalism: Responding to New Challenges to Biblical Authority* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2008), 126–33.

prophetic predictions—i.e., the specific reference to Cyrus in Isa 44–45.²³ This is known as *vaticinium ex eventu*—a prophecy *after* the fact.²⁴

Further, they assume the unlikelihood of stylistic or thematic variations by one same author.²⁵ Lastly, they observe linguistic characteristics after chapter 40 belonging—so the argument goes—to the post-exilic era.²⁶ All serious treatment of “Deutero-Isaianic” texts must either agree or challenge this pervasive view. The next paragraphs will summarize the major objections against this position.

²³ Motyer agrees with this assessment when he comments that “the fragmentation of the Isaianic literature among multiple authors and along an extended time-line is historically the product of the nineteenth-century rationalism which refused to countenance predictive prophecy.” See Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 25.

Smart notes that DI scholars use this reference to build the “historical situation” of DI’s composition. This is a common practice in *form criticism*. Scholars attempt to locate sections within a work into historical settings that would explain such sections. Commenting on Isa 44.24–45.25, expresses that “The section incorporates elements from all five off Kratz’s layers. From the period just before 539 BC come 44.24–26a; the bulk of 45.1–7; 45.20a, 21. From the Zion layer come the bulk of 44.26b–27 and 45.14. From 520–515 BC come 44.28; expansions in 5.1, 3, 5; the bulk of 45.11a, 12–13; 45.18, 22–23. Material from the images layer comes in 45.15–17, 20b. From the early fifth century BC: 45.8–10, 11b, 19, 24–25 and some expansions.”

See cf. John Goldingay and David F. Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, vol. 2 of *ICC* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 3.

McKenzie, comments that “The most striking feature of Second Isaiah is the two occurrences of the name of Cyrus (xliiv 28, xlv 1). That Isaiah of Jerusalem (First Isaiah) could use the name of a king, in a language unknown to him, who ruled in a kingdom which did not exist in the eighth century BC., taxes probability too far. It is not a question of the vision of prophecy but of the limits of intelligibility; even if the name were by hypothesis meaningful to the prophet, it could not be meaningful to his readers or listeners. Yet Cyrus is introduced without any explanation of his identity, or of why he should be an anchor of hope to the Israelites whom the prophet addresses. If the prophecy is to be attributed to Isaiah of Jerusalem, then these passages must be regarded as later expansions. [...] In the discussion of the historical background below, reasons will appear why Second Isaiah must fall not only in this period, but more precisely between 550 and 540 BC. These reasons rest upon the occurrences of the name of Cyrus in the prophecies.” See McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, xvi–xviii. Kaufman makes a similar argument in Kaufman, *The Babylonian Captivity and Deutero-Isaiah*, 61–73.

²⁴ To read the classic position of *vaticinium ex eventu* in relation to the dating and authorship of Isaiah see Otto Eissfeldt, *The Old Testament: An Introduction, Including the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha, and Also the Works of Similar Type from Qumran; the History of the Formation of the Old Testament*, trans. Peter R. Ackroyd, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 304, 332, 337–340. Interestingly, some evangelical scholars sustain that though no *vaticinium ex eventu* took place, still, the prophecy could not have been written to the original pre-exilic or early exilic audience. Instead, not because of the prophecy *per se*, but because of the addressees, these scholars believe that DIs was the work of a different author. See Schultz analysis and critique of Spark's argument in Richard L. Schultz, “Isaiah, Isaiahs, and Current Scholarship,” in *Do Historical Matters Matter to Faith? A Critical Appraisal of Modern and Postmodern Approaches to Scripture*, ed. James Karl Hoffmeier and Dennis Robert Magary (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 250–251.

²⁵ On variation of language, style, and themes, see McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, xvi–xvii.

²⁶ A helpful and concise exposition of these instances may be found in Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary*, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 43–44.

The Unity of Isaiah: A Defense

First, there is no logical reason to reject a priori the possibility of historically accurate predictions by YHWH's prophets. Such a position—consciously or not—assumes a self-defeating epistemological framework known as *methodological naturalism*.²⁷ Within this framework, there is no plausible empirical evidence that could support prophecy; hence, its rejection becomes axiomatic.²⁸

As to internal variation, there is no compelling reason to discard stylistic and thematic diversity within a single author. Differences may be explained within a unity-view framework by varying emphases, different writing contexts, diverse audiences, and multiple purposes.²⁹ Hence, there is no need to assume that Isaiah intended to write the whole work at the same time, for the same purpose, to the same audience, in a monotonous fashion.³⁰

²⁷ In this view, scientific study must only consider naturalistic-materialistic evidence for research. However, this position is self-defeating. Methodological naturalism assumes the laws of logic, propositional truth, objective epistemology, etc.—all immaterial entities—to formulate arguments and propose theories which deny God's intervention and ability to inspire predictive prophecy. Sadly, a Van Tilian approach to apologetics and a critique of epistemological frameworks and logical consistency is not often addressed as an argument against the logic of those denying God's supernatural ability for inspiring prophecy. However, any system disregarding the possibility of the supernatural has epistemological flaws. For a good introduction concerning Van Til's apologetic, as well as the limits of the Scientific Method—i.e., Methodological Naturalism—and its relationship with the reliability of biblical truth, see John M. Frame, *Apologetics: A Justification of Christian Belief*, Second edition. (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2015), 72–73; Vern S. Poythress, “Science and Hermeneutics: Implications of Scientific Method for Biblical Interpretation,” in *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*, ed. Moisés Silva (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 430–531; Greg L. Bahnsen, *Van Til's Apologetic: Readings and Analysis* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Pub, 1998), 311–404. On epistemological humility, see W. Jay Wood, *Epistemology: Becoming Intellectually Virtuous*, Contours of Christian Philosophy (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), 61–66.

²⁸ Lately, even evangelical scholarship has been skeptical about predictive prophecy. However, denying predictive prophecy is not without consequences for an evangelical theology of Scripture. To read a review of the relationship between predictive prophecy, authority, inspiration, and its relevance for evangelical scholarship, see Richard L. Schultz, “How Many Isaiahs Were There and What Does It Matter? Prophetic Inspiration in Recent Evangelical Scholarship,” in *Evangelicals & Scripture: Tradition, Authority, and Hermeneutics*, ed. Vincent Bacote, Laura C. Miguélez, and Dennis L. Okholm (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2004), 161–70.

²⁹ Many have recognized that the book might be a written anthology of Isaiah's teachings. See Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 26; Young, *The Book of Isaiah I*, 27; R. K. Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament with a comprehensive review of Old Testament studies and a special supplement on the apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 780–785. Additionally, Oswalt has plausibly explained the logic behind apparent dissonances working within the internal framework of the book as a unit. Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 33–41.

³⁰ Seitz addresses this issue extensively in Christopher R Seitz, “Isaiah 1–66: Making Sense of the Whole,” in *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 109–123; Christopher R Seitz, “How Is the Prophet Isaiah Present in the Latter Half of the Book? The Logic of Chapters 40–66 within the Book of Isaiah,” *JBL* 115.2 (1996): 219–40.

Superficially, variation in language—Aramaic roots and Akkadian loanwords in the second half of Isaiah—seem to pose a difficult challenge to those arguing for Isaiah's unity. However, the argument seems to be proving too much. The Biblical corpus provides a very limited access to analyze the nature of Hebrew at Isaiah's time. Conclusions drawn from Hebrew language should be prudent and nuanced.³¹ Moreover, the history of Aramaic might bring some light to this matter.

Though the history of Aramaic language goes as back as the 9th cent. BCE, it was until the 8th cent. BCE that Aramaic's standardization as a language began. By the second half of the 8th cent. and into the dawn of the 7th cent. BCE, Assyrians adopted Aramaic for its simplicity in comparison to the official Akkadian language and its cuneiform script. This smoothed relationships with conquered nations. Merchants also adopted Aramaic as the international trade language then.³² This situates Isaiah—living during the last half of the 8th cent.—at the proper historical-linguistic setting.³³ Consistent with the socio-political and multilingual environment of his time, Isaiah's language reflects the interaction between Hebrew, Aramaic, and Akkadian.³⁴

³¹ Noting our limited access to a linguistic corpus as evidence, towering scholars like Emmanuel Tov have long warned against making too many linguistic assumptions concerning the Hebrew language. Then also, some of these ‘post-exilic’ words are homonyms with distinct Hebrew and Aramaic meanings. Immediately attributing the Aramaic sense to prove Aramaic influence is to beg the question. Further, we ought to allow the possibility of non-genetic variants as the product of a free approach to copying. Scribe-editors could well have chosen later assimilated Aramaic synonyms that would have been better understood by a post-exilic audience. These words would eventually find their way into the MT group. See Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 168.

³² Holger Gzella, *Aramaic: A History of the First World Language*, trans. Benjamin D. Suchard, Eerdmans Language Resources (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2021), 50–144; esp. 50–82; Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew*, 27.

³³ Constant exposition to a multilingual environment for Isaiah ben Amoz is especially probable if we entertain the possibility of a royal origin, him having a place within the royal court, or his father being a scribe. References to Isaiah's royal or scribal connections might be found in Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 17, 72; Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 1–39*, 82; Young, *The Book of Isaiah I*, 30–31.

³⁴ In addition to the refutation presented above, it is interesting to note the many interactions between Hebrew and Aramaic languages in the 8th cent. BCE from archaeological research. The *Ostraca House* excavation provides a good case-study while noting the presence of many Aramaic names from this period, later found in Aramaic archives such as Elephantine. Concerning the *onomastica* present in the *ostraca*, LeMarie comments: “À en juger par l'onomastique, cette population était d'origines diverses; on rencontre quelques noms d'origine égyptienne, un plus grand nombre de noms « yahvistes » typiquement hébreux, et, surtout, beaucoup de noms appartenant au fond sémitique commun et, plus spécialement, « cananéen ». [...] Sans doute ne s'agit-il pas

Additional Problems with a Multi-author View

The forefathers of multi-author theories did not have 1QIsa^a at their disposal, which also attests to its unity. Commentators have long noted chapter 39 in 1QIsa^a ending only one line short from the bottom of the skin-sheet. There is no indication that chapter 40 begins a different work. Instead, the scribe uses that next line to continue a flawless text.³⁵ Other than hypotheses, there is no objective evidence for any historic-textual instance in which two distinct texts circulated independently. Instead, all witnesses objectively attest to a unified work.

Further, there is also a historical mismatch between DIs and other late-exilic and post-exilic literature. Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Malachi are characterized by giving many accurate historical details and abundant references to the temple.³⁶ Daniel, Esther, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles, show much more Aramaic influence; also showing consistency with *their* historical setting and the history of the language. These characteristics are lacking in DIs. Compared to alleged ‘contemporary’ works, DIs stands alone.

Finally, a central theme in the second half of Isaiah is YHWH’s uniqueness expressed by its ability to know the future. Multi-author proponents have failed in explaining why these secondary authors would lie by styling their work as future prophecy and then argue for prophecy as *the* distinct mark of divinity. Producing false proof—using *vaticinum ex eventu*—

nécessairement d’un échantillon représentatif de tout le peuple d’Israël, cependant cette centaine d’ostraca permet de bien saisir concrètement la diversité d’origine de la population du royaume du nord, et, par là même, tous les problèmes politiques et religieux que cette diversité devait poser.” The many Aramaic names present in this collection from the Northern Israel kingdom during the 8th cent. does not necessarily prove Aramaic influence upon the Hebrew used in the Southern kingdom of Judah. However, considering the constant interaction between these two nations, it should raise the question as to how convincing the argument is from low-Aramaic influence upon the Deutero-Isaianic text. In my estimation, this kind of argument is weak on its own, and should only be used as supportive-secondary evidence. See cf. André LeMaire, *Inscriptions Hébraïques: Les Ostraca* (Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1977), 1:47–55.

³⁵ Beale, *The Erosion of Inerrancy*, 125. Multi-author view adherents know this. However, they explain the fact as a witness to the ‘ancient nature’ of the hypothetical conflation.

³⁶ Smart, HT of 2 Is., 8: “It is usual to consider historical questions first and by themselves, and then, having established the prophet and his writings firmly in their historical situation, to give attention to his theology. This procedure, applied to Second Isaiah, has in the past had disastrous results, for the simple reason that the historical evidence about it a very considerable haziness and uncertainty.” James D. Smart, *History and Theology in Second Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 35, 40-66* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1965), 8.

calls into question both the author's claim, and YHWH's trustworthiness.³⁷ These scholars also owe a plausible explanation as to how and why people—aware of a circulating Proto-Isaianic text would receive a deceitful work (DIs).

In conclusion, without an a priori rejection of predictive prophecy, the unity of the book and Isaiah's authorship are well warranted. I, therefore, reject multiple authors. Instead, I embrace Isaiah as the author of the whole work. It follows that the book's composition should be dated to the second half of the 8th cent.

The mention of the four kings (1:1)—Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah—along with the references to the prophet's calling (6:1–13)³⁸ give us an estimate date for Isaiah's ministry between 748 and 686 BCE. His work could have been written and collected as was produced. A final edition was made likely close to the end of his life or posthumously by his disciples.³⁹

Historical, Theological, and Canonical Contexts for Isaiah 45:14–25

Isaiah's historical context informs our understanding of authorial intent and will aid us in recognizing theological patterns throughout the book and in Isa 45:14–25. At the same time, I will consider canonical placement in different traditions as a secondary exegetical tool to better explain the pericope.

³⁷ This is pointed out by Oswalt when he (rhetorically) asks: “*If we do not have actual evidence supporting our conviction that God knows the future, what claim upon human hearts does such a conviction have? What is the value of an argument for which the evidence has to be manufactured?*” See John N. Oswalt, “The Implications of an Evangelical View of Scripture for the Authorship of the Book of Isaiah,” in *Bind up the Testimony: Explorations in the Genesis of the Book of Isaiah*, ed. Daniel Isaac Block and Richard L. Schultz (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2015), 287–289.

³⁸ There are many opinions on when exactly Uzziah died; but a span ranging from 748–734 BCE covers most scholars' positions. See Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 234, n.5.

³⁹ Motyer argues for Isaiah himself as the final editor of his work. See Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 30–31.

Thought this is entirely possible, the biblical reference to Isaiah's disciples (8:16) ought not to forfeit the possibility that, in Isaiah's final years or shortly after his death, his disciples authoritatively edit, copied, and taught what his teacher proclaimed in life. At the end, the whole composition was recognized as the product of Isaiah ben Amoz (2 Chro 26:22; 32:32) possibly as early as 515 BCE. See Richard L. Pratt, “1–2 Chronicles,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 525–28.

*Historical Context*⁴⁰

Isaiah ministers in troublesome times of military turmoil within the ANE. His calling to ministry (Isa 6:1–4) provides a helpful starting point. Uzziah died. A good king has fallen. Political instability is at the order of the day. The Neo-Assyrian Empire is on the rise under the leadership of Tiglath-Pileser III. With his aggressive and cruel policies, northern tensions are creating political pressures for the kingdom of Judah.

Nevertheless, Isaiah sees the LORD seated on his throne. The world is altered; YHWH is at peace, ruling. Further, the interests of the peoples seem to be political—how to join the better party. Isaiah’s image is clear: YHWH is King. He alone deserves loyal allegiance.

Uzziah’s son, Jotham, does not show the faithfulness or strength of his predecessor. Jotham is forced to appoint his son Ahaz as coregent. Eventually, Ahaz becomes the acting king for Judah. The Assyrian advance causes the eastern Mediterranean nations to seek a new coalition—like that of Qarqar in 853 BCE. Ahaz is invited to join. He refuses. Instead, he voluntarily displays himself (and Judah) as a vassal before Tiglath-Pileser III; willing to serve the Assyrian program.⁴¹ In 732 BCE, the Assyrians conquer Damascus. In 722 BCE, Samaria falls in under Shalmaneser V (2 Kgs 18:9–11). Shalmaneser dies that year and Sargon II succeeds him.

Hezekiah succeeds Ahaz. Unlike him, Hezekiah refuses joining other nations against Assyria, turning to YHWH instead (2 Kgs 18:1–5). Sargon II continues the Assyrian expansion. By 715 BCE, every city-state but Judah had fallen. However, revolts in northern Assyria pause Sargon II’s advance. He dies in 705 BCE and his son Sennacherib succeeds him.

⁴⁰ Isaiah’s prophecies deal directly with three major empires in ANE history: the Neo-Assyrian, the Babylonian, and the Persian. Hence the historical context of the composition and the historical context of the primary intended audience may differ. Since I uphold the unity of Isaiah, the historical context of the composition is what will be explained in the following section. The historical context of the intended audiences will be touched upon in the exposition proper of Isa 45:14–23, below.

⁴¹ To review some archaeological findings on this episode of history, see John D. Currid, *The Case for Archaeology: Uncovering the Historical Record of God’s Old Testament People* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2020), 245; James Bennett Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 1:193.

Eventually, Sennacherib captures most of the Judean cities, but YHWH protects Jerusalem (2 Kgs 18:13–20:6). Hezekiah boasted before Babylonian envoys showing them the treasury of the temple, so Isaiah rebukes him. The last interaction between Isaiah and Hezekiah comes as a prophecy of Jerusalem’s doom (2 Kgs 20:12–19).⁴²

Theological Context

Isaiah’s interpreter should have three questions in mind. Who determines historical events? Who is the rightful King of the nations? Who deserves total allegiance?⁴³ The people of both the Israel and Judah were—as every other nation—tempted to answers those questions considering the immediate political climate alone. Their responses were not only swearing allegiances to kings and kingdoms, but to their deities.⁴⁴

⁴² Oswalt has a helpful treatment on the historical background of Isaiah, extending to the Babylonian and Persian kingdoms (as he considers Isaiah’s future readers in his work). See Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 18–33.

⁴³ Beate Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, vol. 6 of *Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), 145–197, esp. 176 helps us understand how the Assyrian *Weltanschauung* led them to see their empire as the whole cosmos—making them rulers “of the universe.” Speaking about the relationship of the center and periphery of the empire—representing order and anti-order respectively—she comments: “The imbalance in status between center and periphery allowed for only one ‘correct’ political solution: universal empire as programmatically stated in the Assyrian coronation ritual. By divine command, the king was obliged to enlarge the borders of his empire outward, toward the unknown. Such expansion mirrors the path taken by Gilgameš in his march to the lands beyond the cosmic ocean, as it is conveyed in the *Babylonian Map*. The fluid geographical notion of imperial boundaries—which responded to political realities—generated a concept of empire that extended across the entire universe and whose borders were thus equivalent to the border of the cosmos. This dynamic conception of political borders obliged the king to keep expanding his frontiers so as to align with those of the cosmos.”

⁴⁴ When a nation is threatened their theology is challenged (2 Kgs 19:10–13). Hence, politics and theology are intertwined in the ANE. Notice how every king is judged by its theological convictions. When foreign nations are welcomed as allies, other gods are assimilated into the theological milieu (cf. Deut 7:2, 5, 16). See John H. Walton and Andrew E. Hill, *Old Testament Today: A Journey from Ancient Context to Contemporary Relevance*, 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 209–223; William B. Fullilove, “1–2 Kings,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 230–244; Robert B. Chisholm, *Interpreting the Historical Books: An Exegetical Handbook*, Handbooks for Old Testament Exegesis 2 (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006), 115–118; Victor P Hamilton, *Handbook on the Historical Books: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 415–468;

Beate Pongratz-Leisten has dealt extensively with the relationship between kingship, cult, and religion in Assyria and other Mesopotamian empires. To read her discussion, see Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 198–218, esp. 202–205.

Finally, James Bennett Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 2:42–69, lists ANE treaties in which the suzerain king began by binding the covenant treatise with the conquered nation by an oath to a god, or even a list of gods. See especially ANET 531–532, and esp. ANET 534–541.

Isaiah provides a different a distinct approach. From beginning to end, the answer to those questions is: *YHWH alone*. As sovereign, YHWH decrees the past, present, and future of nations and individuals. As King, YHWH will exercise his kingship through judgment and redemption. Therefore, YHWH alone deserves total allegiance. This also sets Isaiah's prophecy apart from other ANE prophetic practices.⁴⁵ On the one hand, the manner and method of his prophecy comes directly by the authoritative word of YHWH. On the other, his purpose is not at all political.⁴⁶ He does not present YHWH as needy; but creation as in need of him. Isaiah prophesizes against Israel, Judah, Assyria, against the forthcoming Babylonian empire, and against every other nation that would not submit to YHWH's lordship. At the same time, he promises hope upon anyone who trusts in YHWH alone—regardless of their origin.

Isaiah's theology sets YHWH as transcendent and immanent, bringing blessing and cursing, as judge and redeemer, creator, and consummator of all things.⁴⁷ These paradoxical realities resolve while considering YHWH as being in covenant relationship with *all*

⁴⁵ See John H. Walton, *Ancient Israelite Literature in Its Cultural Context: A Survey of Parallels between Biblical and Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 2nd. print with corrections and additions., Library of Biblical Interpretation (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 201–214, for a good discussion. While there are some proper points of contact, especially in pre-monarchic and pre-classical Israelite prophecy, the classical period of prophecy better underscore the distinctions and uniqueness of the prophets of YHWH.

⁴⁶ Within those practices that separated Israel's prophetism from that of the ANE we may list the application of extispicy—reading sacrificial animal's entrail—as a means for inductive divination, the political motivation behind prophetism, and charisma as a necessary element for the office. All these characteristics are present in ANE prophetism, while absent in Israel's prophets. On the other hand, prophets in Israel were called by God, proclaimed God's message—regardless of its content, addressees, or consequence—and this messages where received by God's word instead of inductive ecstatic states.

On ANE prophetism, see Martti Nissinen, *Prophets and Prophecy in the Ancient Near East*, ed. Peter Machinist, Writings From the Ancient World 12 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003); Kratz, *The Prophets of Israel*, 11–17; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *A History of Prophecy in Israel*, Revised and enlarged. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 41–48.

On the use of liver models for prophecy and divination in Assyria, see Pongratz-Leisten, *Religion and Ideology in Assyria*, 360–378.

On prophecy and prophetism in Israel, see Eugene H. Merrill, *Kingdom of Priests: A History of Old Testament Israel*, 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008), 392–403; Edward J. Young, *My Servants the Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1952); Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament with a comprehensive review of Old Testament studies and a special supplement on the apocrypha*, 741–757.

⁴⁷ Willem VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word: An Introduction to the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 254–87; Willem A. VanGemeren, “Isaiah,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2016), 254–73; Richard S. Hess, *The Old Testament: A Historical, Theological, and Critical Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 534–38.

humankind. Isaiah's ministry is better understood after considering ANE covenantal practices.⁴⁸ As King, YHWH authorized Isaiah as covenant messenger—a herald to remind the people about the covenant-loyalty owed to him. Isaiah 45:14–25 provides a theological cluster in which all these themes concur in harmony.

Canonical Context⁴⁹

Before turning to the text, it is important to explore some exegetical insight from canon studies.⁵⁰ The Jewish tradition recognizes Isaiah as authoritative early on. Though its position

⁴⁸ Meredith G Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1997), 57–62; John H. Walton and Andrew E. Hill, *Old Testament Today: A Journey from Ancient Context to Contemporary Relevance*, 2nd Edition. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013), 210; John H. Walton, “New Observations on the Date of Isaiah,” *JETS* 28.2 (1985): 129–32; Miles V. Van Pelt, “Introduction,” in *A Biblical-Theological Introduction to the Old Testament: The Gospel Promised*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2016), 36.

⁴⁹ The question of canon—and especially of the Hebrew canon—is extraordinarily complex and discussing the multiplicity of views concerning not only the definition of *canon*; but also, its nature, origin, authority, reception, and exegetical utility is beyond the purpose of this work. Throughout this study, I am adopting or assuming three things; first, Kline’s understanding of the Biblical canon as a covenantal document; second, Kruger’s approach to the ontological definition of the biblical canon against a purely historical definition; third, with some caution, the idea that the placing of the books within the canon follows a certain logic. This logic, I believe, reflects general convictions that relate the content of the book with the surrounding works within the canon.

To read more on Kline’s perspective on the biblical canon as an ANE document, see Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*. To better understand the ontological definition of canon, see Kruger’s two works on the matter, Michael J. Kruger, *The Question of Canon: Challenging the Status Quo in the New Testament Debate* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013); Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012). Also, Van Pelt’s Intro in the BTIOT is a helpful introduction on issues of Canon and Hermeneutical Insight. See Van Pelt, “Introduction.”

To read a standard historical approach to canon definition as community-determined, a helpful text would be *Canon Debate*, for OT, see Lee Martin McDonald and James A Sanders, eds., *The Canon Debate* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 21–263; Greg Goswell, “The Order of the Books in the Greek Old Testament,” *JETS* 52.3 (2009): 449–66.

Further, Goswell recognizes the possibility canonical placing as bringing some exegetical insight, but he tends to be more conservative about defanging an “original order” to the OT canon and see both the Hebrew and Greek orders as equally valid. Also, though he recognizes and understand the mayor arguments made by Kline, he is more reluctant to interpret the canon as a covenant document. See Gregory Goswell, “Should the Church Be Committed to a Particular Order of the Old Testament Canon?,” *HBT* 40.1 (2018): 17–40; Greg Goswell, “The Two Testaments as Covenant Documents,” *JETS* 62.4 (2019): 677–92; Gregory Goswell, “Making Theological Sense of the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament Canon,” *JETS* 64.1 (2021): 77–94.

See also my own evaluation and discussion of OT Canon in Appendix II, bellow; pp 40–48.

⁵⁰ Richard L. Schultz, “Integrating Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: Literary, Thematic, and Canonical Issues,” in *A Guide to Old Testament Theology and Exegesis: An Introductory Articles from the New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*, ed. Willem VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999), 182–202; VanGemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word*, 79–99; Hess, *The Old Testament*, 532–34.

among the prophets changes, it is always within the *Nevi'im*, and within the Latter Prophets.

Isaiah, therefore, functions as an authoritative interpretation of covenant history.⁵¹

There are two placements for Isaiah within OT canon traditions. Isaiah is the first among the prophets in Jesus ben Sira and the MT. However, Baba Bathra (b.B Bat. 14b) places Isaiah after Jeremiah and Ezekiel and prior to the Twelve.⁵² An initial position usually comes as a chronological account of the order in which revelations were uttered—first by Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and then by the parallel chronological order within the Twelve. The alternative placing may be explained by a different approach to chronology—paring the superscriptions of Isa 1:1 and Hos 1:1—or by theological emphasis on consolation and pilgrimage of all nations, found at the end of both Isaiah and the Twelve.⁵³

It is interesting that the LXX canon places prophecy at the end. These hints to a redemptive-historical logic showing YHWH as God of history, with an overarching plan of redemption ending at the eschaton with all nations' assimilation into the covenant.⁵⁴

All things considered, there are theological points of contact between both the Jewish and Greek traditions, aiming especially to God as sovereign ruler and an eschatological hope for all nations.

⁵¹ Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 57–62; Van Pelt, “Introduction,” 36–37.

⁵² Blenkinsopp, “The Formation,” 61.

⁵³ Goswell, “Making Theological Sense of the Prophetic Books of the Old Testament Canon” 82–87; also, Blenkinsopp sees a theological connection with an emphasis on the eschaton. See Blenkinsopp, “The Formation,” 65–66. In my estimation, it might be the case that both reasons could be at work in the author’s mind at the same time. I do not believe they are mutually exclusive.

b.B Bat. 14b–15a states:

מִכְדִּי יִשְׁעָה קָדִים מִנְרָמִית וַיְהִזְקָאֵל לִיְקָדְמִיהָ לִישְׁעָה
בְּרִיאָה כִּיּוֹן דָּמְלָכִים סָופִיהָ חֹרֶבֶןָ וִירָמִיתָ כּוֹלִיהָ חֹרֶבֶןָ
וַיְהִזְקָאֵל רִיאָהָה חֹרֶבֶןָ וַסִּפְרִיהָ נְחַמְּתָא
וִישְׁעָה כּוֹלִיהָ נְחַמְּתָא סְמִכְנֵן חֹרֶבֶןָ לְחֹרֶבֶןָ נְחַמְּתָא

Which translates:

“Now, Isaiah precedes Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Let Isaiah be first! [Because] it stands that the Kings ends with destruction, and Jeremiah is completely destruction; but Ezekiel begins with destruction but ends with consolation, and Isaiah is completely consolation; we lay destruction with destruction, and consolation with consolation.” (Translation my own.)

⁵⁴ Goswell, “The Order of the Books in the Greek Old Testament,” 459–60.

Exposition of Isaiah 45:14-25

Textual Context, Boundaries, and Structure

Textual Context

Isa 45:14–25 is placed within Isaiah’s second half. After chapter 39, historical narratives cease, and everything becomes predictive prophecy. At this point, Isaiah has already uttered judgment against all surrounding nations. However, Isaiah’s ministry as covenant messenger, explaining God’s decree in history, is not over. Now, Isaiah will utter a song in *crescendo*—a symphony with judgement, hope, and restoration motifs.⁵⁵

Chapters 40–66 are intended to comfort God’s people (40:1). Hence, the section is directed primarily to God’s people—and considering Isa 6:12–13, the audience seems to be God’s people in the *future*.⁵⁶ The covenantal language in this section is ubiquitous; moving from present realities of fear and judgment—covenant curses—to past events of YHWH’s deliverance—covenant faithfulness.⁵⁷ There are also allusions of Israel as a blessing for the nations (Isa 42:6, [cf. Gen 12:3; Deut 1]). More evident is, perhaps, YHWH’s self-presentations as covenant King (Isa 43:15) using formulas like בְּהִזְמָנָה יְהוָה מֶלֶךְ־יִשְׂרָאֵל וְגַם־לֹא יְהוָה אֱבֹאוֹת אָנִי (Isa 44:6.).⁵⁸

The ‘first and last’ references are interesting. Throughout the second section, YHWH is denouncing the idols’ futility while challenging them (and their worshipers) to giving an

⁵⁵ Williams provides a meta-study comparing four studies in ancient Hebrew poetry, and Hodayot. The parallels between Isaiah’s songs and the Hodayot hymns are undeniable when their structure is analyzed. Gary Roye Williams, “Aspectos Formales de La Poesía Hebrea a Través de Los Siglos: Una Comparación de Cuatro Sondeos,” *Kairós (Guatemala)* 58 (2016): 61–105.

⁵⁶ So Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 33–41.

⁵⁷ Other covenantal themes include the Abraham-Jacob mentions; echoes of Israel’s choosing from among many nations (Isa 41:9, 43:1, 44:1 [cf. Deut 7:1–25]); and encouragement to not fear (Isa 41:10, 43:1, 44:8 [cf. Deut 31:6]). For a study on the relationship between prophecy in Israel and the theme of covenant, see Ernest W. Nicholson, “Prophecy and Covenant,” in “*The Place Is Too Small for Us*”: *The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*, ed. R. P. Gordon, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 5 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995), 345–53.

⁵⁸ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 336–37, 334; John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, vol. 25 of *WBC* (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1987), 145; Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 169–70.

account of history—from *beginning to end*—not only in terms of its chronology, but of its *thelos* (cf. Isa 41:21–29, 44:6–8 24–47:7, 11–13).

Idols cannot answer; God can. In the next song, Isaiah sets forth YHWH’s response. First, God states his intent to redeem his people (Isa 44:21–24). Then, beginning with creation, and summarizing the history of his people and ministry of his prophets, he moves to the returning exiles and the reconstruction of Jerusalem’s city and temple (Isa 45:13). YHWH mentions Cyrus by *name* as a token of his ability to answer his own challenge (Isa 44:28, 45:1). He proceeds to direct a future message to Cyrus explaining the *thelos* of raising him to power—thus fulfilling the second challenge (Isa 45:2–7).⁵⁹

Boundaries

The unit begins with the formula: “Thus says the Lord (פֶּה אָמַר יְהוָה [45:14a]).” The first addressees are Israel’s remnant (cf. 43:1–4). The movement opens with the pagan nation’s surrender and recognition of YHWH as only true and living God (45:14). The positive view of nations is a thematic thread interwoven throughout the whole section. All after 45:14 is either a reaction (45:15–17), an explanation (45:18–19), or commands (46:20–22) linked to that declaration. The section ends with God’s oath—every nation will swear allegiance to him in the end (45:23) by confessing that righteousness and salvation are found in him alone (45:24–25).⁶⁰

What comes after this is a denouncement of the pagan nations’ idolatry as foolish (46:1–3), after which judgement against Babylon and the Chaldeans follows (48:1–22). Hence,

⁵⁹ Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 192–206; Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 157–58; Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 352–62.

⁶⁰ Agreeing with this division, Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 352, 364–67; Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 158–63; McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, 80–84.

Oswalt sees the section extending up to 46:16, but he sees a subsection ending in 45:25. See Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 518526; Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 211–26.

On the other hand, Goldingay and Payne agree with the ending point at 45:25, but begin the wider section at 44:24, with the beginning of the Cyrus prophecy. See Goldingay and Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, 3–64.

because these sections deal negatively with foreign nations—though part of the larger Cyrus’ Prophesy—they will not be considered in conjunction to our pericope.

The positive YHWH-gentiles relationship is a theme providing cohesion to the pericope.⁶¹ In addition, Isa :45:14–25 coherence is clear from its logical progression. Subsections within the pericope are: 1) Salvation for Israel. 2) Judgement and Salvation for the Nations. 3) Salvation reaffirmed in a final kingly declaration. The thematic relationships within these subsections argue for the integrity of the whole.

Hence, the structure of Isaiah 45:14–25 may be represented as follows:

I. Salvation for Israel	vv.14–19
a. Prophecy: Pagan Nations will Surrender	v.14
i. Nations’ Acts of Surrender	v.14a–b
ii. Nations’ Declaration of Surrender	v.14c
b. <i>Deus Absconditus</i> Claim	v.15
i. YHWH is a Hidden-God	v.15a
ii. YHWH is God and Savior	v.15b
c. <i>Deus Absconditus</i> Rebuke	vv.16–19
i. The Prophet’s Comments	vv.16–18b
ii. YHWH’s Response	vv.18c–19
II. Judgement and Salvation for the Nations	vv.20–22
a. Judgment for the Nations	vv.20–21
i. First Challenge	v.20
ii. Second Challenge	v.21
b. Salvation for the Nations	v.22
i. Call to Repentance	v.22a
ii. Declaration of Authority	v.22b
III. Salvation Reaffirmed: A Final Pronouncement	vv.23–25
a. Prefatory Oath	v.23a–b
b. Universal Stipulation	v.23c–24a
c. Curse for Covenant Breakers	v.24b
d. Blessing for God’s People	v.25

⁶¹ Oswalt asserts that many of the themes for these sections have already appeared previously in the book. The uniqueness of this passage has to do with the positive light in which pagans are viewed: “the promise that idol-makers will affirm that God is the LORD.” Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 212.

Salvation for God's People

Pagan Nations will Surrender

The first section states the voluntary surrender of foreign nations to God's people. The opening formula (בְּהִנֵּה אָמַר יְהוָה [14a]) shows YHWH as speaker throughout verse 14. The text uses a nations triad—Egypt, Cush, and Seba—reflective of wealthy nations and representative of gentiles (cf. Isa 45:23c).⁶²

Benefiting from other nation's wealth also echoes covenant blessings (Deut 6:10–11, 28:7, 10, 12; Josh 24:13; Ps 105:44). This reality is underscored by the fact that Hebrew people were not merchants. Historically, trading has been initiated by kings, and then a merchant class may appear. However, perhaps due to the limited relationship Israel was to have with surrounding nations (cf. Deu 7:2), trade did not develop in the nation until very late in its history and mostly involved kings alone (1 Kgs 10:28). In contrast, we see Egypt and other nations' peoples trading early in the biblical account (cf. Gen 37:25–28). The lack of international trade by God's people makes the reception of other nations' wealth even more astonishing.⁶³

The Hebrew clearly emphasizes Israel's centrality by fronting a preposition with the second singular personal pronoun before all the verbs in verse 14 (אַלְיךָ, אַלְיךָ, אַלְיךָ, אַלְיךָ, אַלְיךָ). The *crescendo* here is noticed by the change in subject from the merchandise to the nations. The first two verbs may well be referring to wealth (עַבְדוּ and יִשְׁבְּדוּ). The next four, however, are better understood having the nations as subjects (וַיַּעֲבְּדוּ בָּזָקִים, גָּלָנוּ). There is an embedded explanation as to why foreign nations have surrendered to God's people: they have realized that the only God, YHWH, is present among them (אֵת כֵּן אֵל וְאֵין עוֹד אֶפְס אַלְקִים [14c]). In other words, surrendering to Israel is a consequence of surrendering to YHWH.

⁶² Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 206–8 comments about the covenantal language in 45:14 in relation to 43:3; see also Oswalt, *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, 211–15; Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 161; Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 264–66.

⁶³ De Vaux has a helpful section on trading and the merchant class in Israel in comparison to other ANE nations in Roland de Vaux, *Ancient Israel, Volume 1: Social Institutions* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1965), 1:78–79.

Deus Absconditus: Who is saying what?

What follows, however, is puzzling. On the one hand, the response contains an elevated address: אלְךָ יְשָׁרָאֵל מָוֵשָׁע (15b). Nonetheless, the identification of YHWH as אל מִשְׁתַּחַר (15a)—*Deus Absconditus*⁶⁴ or a ‘Hidden God’—has no positive precedence in Scripture.⁶⁵ In fact, the opposite is true. The term poses a reverse of the Aaronic blessing (Num 6:24–26) and is a sign of covenant cursing.⁶⁶ To support this argument, three things may be noted: first, the identity of the speaker(s); then, the purpose of God’s prophecy (14) in YHWH’s explicit response; and lastly, the speaker’s spiritual condition.

The speaker’s identity is contested. Commentators have proposed Cyrus, Isaiah, the foreign nations, and Israel as possible speakers. Watts identifies Cyrus as the speaker.⁶⁷ However, YHWH’s address to Cyrus ended in 45:7 and is referred to in the third person in 45:9, 11, 13. In addition, Cyrus has not been born by that time, which would turn this verse into a prophecy concerning Cyrus’s response for which we have no witness of fulfilment.⁶⁸ Duhm wrote against the prophet as a possibility for it would break the flow of the argument.⁶⁹ The very next section (16–18) is clearly from the prophet and in direct opposition to the statement of verse 15a.⁷⁰ Oswalt favors the foreign nations as speakers. Yet, considering the declaration at verse 14c—acknowledging who and where is God—YHWH’s hiding is difficult to understand.⁷¹

⁶⁴ The phrase *Deus Absconditus* comes from the Latin from Isa 45:15a “Vere tu es Deus absconditus” and was immortalized by Martin Luther’s doctrine of the God who hides himself.

⁶⁵ For various reasons, many Rabbis and Christian theologians have approached this text positively. Exploring every reason given is not the purpose of the present work. For a helpful discussion of the many positions taken in Jewish interpretation and church history concerning this verse, see Sawyer 267–268.

⁶⁶ See in how many instances people pray to God so that he *would not* hide himself from them or God’s hiddenness is treated as negative: Gen 4:14; Deut 31:18, 32:20; Job 13:24; Ps 10:1, 11, 13:1, 22:24; 27:9, 44:24, 55:1, 69:17, 88:14, 89:46, 102:2, 104:29, 143:7; Jer 33:5; Ezek 39:23–24, 29; Mi 3:4.

For God’s hiding treated positively, see Ps 51:9.

⁶⁷ Watts, *Isaiah 34–66*, 159–61.

⁶⁸ Also, see Oswalt’s refutation in Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 213.

⁶⁹ Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 216.

⁷⁰ In 8:13; 54:8, the prophet does speak about a God who hides. Nevertheless, the context is different—one of judgement.

⁷¹ Concerning verse 15 as a positive or negative utterance, Oswalt holds to a “mixed view.” However, the response in 16–19 stands in clear contrast to 15a. See Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 215–16.

I believe that context calls for holding Israel as the speaker. The nations as addressees only come explicitly in verse 20: פָּלִיטִי הָגָזִים: ⁷² There is an addressee change at some point; the question is where to locate that change.

First, the addressees in verses 14 and 16–17 are God’s people.⁷³ Also, the expression אל מסתתר is prevalent among Hebrew literature. The problem is that אל מסתתר in verse 15 is being misused. God’s hiddenness in the OT represents covenant curse. However, YHWH has announced covenant blessing in verse 14. This is the reason why the *Absconditus* expression encounters such forceful rebuke (16–19).

The *Absconditus* clause finds two responses in the following lines. First, the prophet paraphrases the previous prophecy (14) by stating Israel’s salvation and the coming shame for the idol-makers (16–17). The connector כי in verse 18 allows the reader to understand all of 16–18b as Isaiah’s speech.

There is a stark contrast between the foreign nations and Israel. The former will *be put to shame* (בוש) and *confounded* (כלם), while the latter *will not* be put to shame nor confounded for all eternity. Instead, Israel will receive everlasting salvation (זולמים) [17a]). This contrast is posed by the text’s structure where *shame* and *confusion* are the framework within which the pagans’ perdition and Israel’s salvation are exposed (בושׁו וְגַם־גַּכְלָמו) [16a] [17b]).⁷⁴ Whereas God’s self-revealing (14) is a sign of blessing (cf. Ps 31:16, 67:1, 80:3, 7, 19), the *shame–confusion* pair is often found in imprecatory

⁷² On the one hand, Knight recognizes the spiritual condition of Israel not being able to see God’s blessing, on the other, he also believes it is the nations who are praising God by hiding himself in Israel. See George A. F. Knight, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Theological Commentary on Isaiah 40–55* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1965), 141.

⁷³ When speaking about the addressees, we need to bear in mind that certain sections have different addressees at different times. For Isaiah’s day, the section was one of rebuke. However, for those in exile, this is a verse on hope and future victory. For the post-exilic community, it is also a section on God’s faithfulness, and for the church today is an eschatological hope of the submissions of the nations to Christ. On different audiences and how theological themes applied to each, see Oswalt, *NIVAC Isaiah*, 19–51.

⁷⁴ Williams refers to this pattern as ABBA, or *paralelismo concéntrico* [concentric parallelism]. He identifies this construction only as 3% of parallelisms within Isa 40–45. Williams, “Aspectos Formales,” 100.

declarations against enemies (cf. Ps 70:3; Isa 41:11; Jer 14:3). Thus, the prophet clarifies Israel's covenant standing before the LORD.

Isaiah continues by providing a couple of layered comment–meta-comment antiphonal duets as he introduces YHWH's next speech (18a–18b). These comments are written in an ABAB structure,⁷⁵ where 'As' form parallel statements about who God is—creator of the universe—while 'Bs' function as the prophet's personal commentaries interpreting 'As'. Thus, 'Bs' meta-comments operate also as clarifying statements. This is consistent with Israel's misinterpretation of the prophecy (14–15). Since Israel misunderstood why God revealed the surrendering of the nations, Isaiah is now careful to further explain each introductory phrase.

As a result, he presents God as 'Creator of the heavens (בָּרוּא הַשָּׁמֶן [18a]),' interpreting this as meaning that YHWH is the true God (הָוֹא הַאֱלֹהִים [18b]). Next, he introduces the LORD as 'He who formed the earth (יָצַר הָאָרֶץ וְעַשָּׂה [18c])' explaining then the purpose for which the earth was formed. Earth was not made for chaos and emptiness, but for habitation (קָוָנוּת הַיּוֹם [18d]). With this, Isaiah introduces YHWH as creation's rightful ruler. As the Creator, it is God's prerogative to ascribe a *thelos* for all-things created.⁷⁶

Then, the next section states YHWH's response to the "Hidden-God" claim. A preface (18e), a truth claim (19a–19b), and an explanation (19c) form the structure of his response. The preface אַנְּיִם יְהֹוָה וְאֵין עוֹד (18e) echoes covenantal addresses stressing YHWH's uniqueness (cf. Exod 20:2–3; Deut 4:35, 39, 32:39; 2 Sa 7:22; 1 Kgs 8:60). The truth-claim in 19a–19b is a parallel construction essentially contradicting the *Absconditus* clause. God *has not* spoken in secret (לֹא בְּסַתֵּר [19a]) nor says things beyond Israel's capacity to understand (לֹא אָקָרֶת [19b]). By contrast, YHWH explains that he 'speaks righteousness and

⁷⁵ The verse fits the description on William's discussion of *Unidades Básicas* [basic unities] within Hebrew poetry as a *parallelismo tetrástico tipo ABAB* [Tetrastich Parallelism ABAB]. However, my claim must be qualified. Though A–A (creator of Heaven–former of earth) are clearly parallels, B–B are parallel in purpose. B–B further explain A–A. Nonetheless, since the explanations differs, the parallel is not as strong as in A–A. See William's definition on Williams, "Aspectos Formales," 84.

⁷⁶ Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 210–12.

reveals uprightness (מִשְׁרִים אָנָי יְהוָה דִּבֶּר אֶצְקָמָגִיד [19c]).’ YHWH has revealed the future surrendering of the nations as proof that he alone is the living God.

Notwithstanding, Israel interprets this revelation as “God hiding himself.” The vocatives אלְךָי יִשְׂרָאֵל מוֹשִׁיעַ (15b) may be explained by the cultic ritualism that was still pervasive within Israel.⁷⁷ This attitude is consistent with Israel’s *Stiz im Leben*, spiritual condition (Isa 29:13), and expected response to Isaiah’s ministry at the time of the prophecy (cf. Isa 6:9–10; 29:14).⁷⁸

Deus Absconditus, then, is not a positive remark within Isaiah 45. A stone-hearted Israel has failed to see God’s sovereign power at work.⁷⁹ Israel is blind and deaf before YHWH’s blessing. Both the prophet and YHWH admonish Israel’s response bringing to memory God’s mighty acts and character. In the next section, God will further his argument and address now his plan to judge and save the nations.

Judgement and Salvation for the Nations

Judgement

At verse 20, the change of addressees is evident. In a trail-like fashion,⁸⁰ God calls the surviving nations to gather their proofs and make their case. The verbal mood also changes from indicatives to volitionals.⁸¹

⁷⁷ A similar ambivalent attitude is attested clearly in the book of Malachi. Whereas Malachi is directed to the covenant community, and cultic practices are still being performed, Malachi accuses the priests and the people of pure ritualism. The outward formalities were there, the inward contrition was not. In light of Isa 6:9–10, and 29:13–14, it is not difficult to imagine a similar situation at the time Isaiah delivered this prophecy.

⁷⁸ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 238–240; Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 1–39*, 532–33; Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 386; Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition and Notes. Volume 2, 19–39*, 4th Pr., vol. 2 of *NICOT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 319–22.

⁷⁹ Schultz notices Spark’s comment regarding chapter 45 of Isaiah as being negatively received by the Jews, and then he comments that Spark does not give a clear reason as to why this is the case. Perhaps this interpretation of the *Deus Absconditus* clause may be behind Spark’s logic. Schultz, “Isaiah, Isaiahs, and Current Scholarship,” 250.

⁸⁰ DeVaux concerning Judgement and trials. 150–158. Especial emphasis on the King as supreme judge.

⁸¹ Most verbs in 20–22 are imperatives, only יְעַזֵּב in 21 is an imperfect jussive. All are volitional forms.

The first challenge is for the nations to gather (קְבַּץ) and approach (בָּוֹא) and **גַּם** (and) the LORD. This challenge is followed by a double declaration of helplessness. The idol-worshipers have no knowledge (לֹא יְعַרְבָּה) and their gods cannot save (לֹא יָשַׁעַ). God's accusation here displays a vibrant contrast with his own ability to save (14, 15, 17, 21, 22, 25) and the knowledge he has bestowed upon his people through the previous prophecy (14) and Isaiah's ministry.⁸²

The second challenge calls the nations to build up their case (הַגִּידוּ וְהַגִּישׁוּ)⁸³ and take counsel together (יַעֲצְזֵבּוּ יְחִזְקֵוּ) to answer a set of questions. The questions are rather rhetorical and do not need individual analysis.⁸⁴ The point is that the nations can identify YHWH as the only God able to foretell the future. They are left without excuse. The rhetoric device is clarified by the last question: **כַּלְוֹא אָנָּי יְהֹוָה** (21b). These challenges end with YHWH twice reaffirming his identity as the only God (אֵין זָוַחַת... וְאֵין־עֹז אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלָעֵד) [21c]—one righteous and able to save (עַל־צְדִיקָה וּמֹשֶׁעָה) [21c].

Salvation

The last set of imperatives in verse 22 are remarkable. A covenantal call to *turn* to the LORD for salvation (פָּנָא־אֶלְيָהָה נָשְׁעָנוּ) is universally given—to all the ends of the earth (כָּל־אָפָּסִיד־אָרֶץ), not only to Israel. Throughout the OT, Israel is warned against covenant-breaking by turning to idols (Lev 19:4, 31, 20:6; Deut 29:18, 30:17, 31:18, 20) and called to turn to the Lord instead.⁸⁵ This turning is reciprocal. When God's people turn to him, he also turns to them in blessing (Lev 26:9; 2 Kgs 13:23; Ezek 36:9).

⁸² This is especially true when considering the prophecy concerning Cyrus.

⁸³ Most translations add the word *your case* in verse 21 to clarify the judicial rhetoric from this section. While the Hebrew words are absent, the addition is helpful and fits the context.

⁸⁴ To see a detailed grammatical analysis, see Appendix I; pp 32–39

⁸⁵ The covenant call to *return* to the LORD in the OT is best attested by the verb **שׁוּב** rather than **פָּנָה** (cf. Jer 3:1, 22; Ezek 18:30; Zech 1:3; Mal 3:7). Nonetheless, as shown above, **פָּנָה** is also used on occasion with the same force and intent. The semantic correspondence between the two terms is further attested by the LXX, rendering both **פָּנָה** and **שׁוּב** with the verb ἐπιστρέφω in Jer 3:22; Ezek 18:30; Zech 1:3; Mal 3:7 and Isa 45:22. Perhaps the lexical choice of **פָּנָה** over **שׁוּב** in Isa 45:22 is conditioned by the use of **שׁוּב** in verse 23.

The inclusion of the nations in this call to repentance is central to the pericope. The expression פָנָוְאָלִי וְהַנְשָׁעָו must be understood as all humankind.⁸⁶ Contrary to Israel's self-understanding as *the* exclusive covenant people, here, YHWH insinuates a universal inclusion of the nations in the future. Rather than perdition, salvation is offered to 'the ends of the earth.'⁸⁷ Once again, the Creator as covenant King presents himself as having the prerogative of salvation.⁸⁸ The reason why YHWH is able to offer salvation to pagans is the fact that he alone is God (כִּי אֲנִי אֱלֹהֶיךָ אֵין עוֹד) [Isa 45:14, 18, 21[x2], 22]. Previously, Isaiah has echoed the covenant of works by identifying all humankind as covenant breakers (וְהָאָרֶץ חָנָפָה מִתְהַשְּׁבִּיק כִּי־עָבְרוּ תּוֹרַת חֶלְפָו הַקְּפָרִ בְּרִית עַוְלָם) [Isa 24:5]). The consequences of breaking the eternal covenant are universal (Isa 24:1–4, 6). On the other hand, one reason God has given as to why he has chosen to save Israel is that he is the creator (cf. Isa 40: 28, 42:5, 43:1, 15, 44:24, 45:12). By the same logic, since YHWH is creator of all, he is free to save all nations. Indeed, all humankind—Israel and gentiles—are bind by covenant—everlasting or with Abraham—to owe him covenant allegiance.

Final Indictment

The final section (23–24) resembles much the official pronouncement of a King giving the verdict after a trial.⁸⁹ At the same time, it is impossible to miss the covenantal structure in which this is presented. Here, YHWH's speech switches back from imperatives to predominantly perfect verbs.

⁸⁶ Young, *The Book of Isaiah III*, 216.

⁸⁷ Some have argued against the inclusion of the nations in this passage from Isa 11:12 and 43:5; nevertheless, the context on those verses makes clear that *the ends of the earth* refer exclusively to the dispersed Jews, while the context in Isa 45 fits better with a universal inclusion of the gentiles.

Oswalt lays Whybray and Snaith's argument for an Israel-exclusive view and responds in Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 223–224.

⁸⁸ Oswalt's logic is that since God is creator of all, he may save whoever he wants. See Oswalt, *NICOT, Isa 40–66*, 223.

⁸⁹ See covenant lawsuits structures in Herbert B. Huffmon, "Covenant Lawsuit in the Prophets," *JBL* 78.4 (1959): 285–286.

The LORD, summarizing the result of the trial, swears by himself (כִּי נִשְׁבַּעֲתִי [23a]). As has been a theme of this pericope, this kind of oath is crafted to present YHWH as the highest authority.⁹⁰ His word is surely to be fulfilled (וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אָזְקָה דָּבָר וְלֹא יִשּׁוּב [23b]). The content of the oath—that which surely will happen—is introduced by the particle כִּי. At the end, all peoples will submit to YHWH. This submission, as expressed back in verse 14, is shown by action and confession. Kneeling before a king was common in the ANE as an act of reverence and surrender.⁹¹ This surrender is universal (תִּכְרֹעַ כָּל-פְּרֹ�ְךָ [23c]).

Nevertheless, not all submission is voluntary. Only those who wholeheartedly confess the LORD as God will enjoy the blessing of salvation. Positively, the confession speaks of those who recognize that righteousness and strength are found in YHWH alone (אֵיךְ בַּיהֲנָה לְיִאָמֶר אָזְקָות [24a]).⁹² Negatively, there will be those at the end who will remain angry with God—they will be put to shame (עָזְרִיו יִבּוֹא וַיִּבְשֹׁו כָּל הַגְּנָחָרִים בָּו [24b]). In the end, there is assurance that ‘Israel’s offspring’ will be saved (בַּיהֲנָה יִצְּקָו וַיִּתְהַלֵּל כָּל-זָרָע יִשְׁרָאֵל [25]).

From a covenantal perspective, the King has made a universal stipulation of repentance, submission, and swearing allegiance to him alone (23b–24a). Those who fail to acquiesce will receive covenant cursing (24b), while covenant blessing is promised for those who comply (25)—despite their ethnic origin. Either way, in joy or anger, the day will come in which all creation will bend their knee, and every tongue will recognize YHWH as the only God.⁹³

⁹⁰ Covenant treatises were commonly prefaced by an oath to the god or gods involved as witnesses of the covenant. See p.7, N.46. In contrast, YHWH swears by himself. He is the highest authority.

⁹¹ When reading the Amarna letters, it is fascinating to see how kneeling is of the greatest importance in the ANE. Even in writing, the matter is not set forth until a lesser vassal or servant has written that he “kneels” before the king, sometime, kneeling “seven times seven.” See Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East I*, 1:262–77.

⁹² Masoretic accents have been purposefully left in this quotation as an aid due to the complexity of the syntax. See p.39, n.128 on Appendix I.

⁹³ Paul observes the five-fold repetition of the word כָּל in verses 22, 23 (x2), 24, and 25. See his comment and discussion on Paul, *Isaiah 40-66*, 271.

Isaiah's OT Song in NT Times: Paul to the Philippians

The final question to explore is that of intertextuality.⁹⁴ Perhaps the most representative text would come by Paul's letter to the Philippians—the *Carmen Christi* (Phil 2:5–11). In context, Paul is quoting an early hymn that praises Jesus's humiliation and exaltation as an argument for humility within the Philippian church.

The first half of this hymn (Phil 2:5–8) speaks of Jesus existing prior to incarnation⁹⁵ in the form of God (ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων [Phil 2:6a])⁹⁶ and having equality with God (τὸ εἶναι ἵστα θεῷ [Phil 2:6b]). This equal-with-God–form-of-God being humiliated⁹⁷ himself by taking a servant form, born in the likeness of men.

Jesus' humiliation is not to be ignored here. It comes as the fulfilment of what is known in Reformed theology as *Pactum Salutis*. The Son is fulfilling his part of this covenant in becoming incarnate and obeying the Father unto death. The Son is sent as is fitting from him who eternally proceeds from the Father—*generatio*. The Son is the incarnate *word*—*procession verbi*.⁹⁸ As the Father speaks and accomplishes his purposes through his word, it is fitting that the Son, who eternally proceeds from the Father, is sent forth accomplishing God's

⁹⁴ To explore the question, I have chosen the *Carmen Christi* from Philippians 2:5–11, as it is perhaps that which more fully brings together the major elements explored in the paper. Nevertheless, other cases of intertextuality are worth noting, and those are laid out in the last Appendix. See Appendix III, pp 47–56.

⁹⁵ Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Sin and Salvation in Christ*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 3:238; Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison, trans. George Musgrave Giger (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1992), 2:313–4 XIII.vi.13; Thomas H. McCall, *Which Trinity? Whose Monotheism? Philosophical and Systematic Theologians on the Metaphysics of Trinitarian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 62.

⁹⁶ All NT quotations come from the NA28 critical edition.

⁹⁷ Technically, κενώω means to empty (inflected, ἐκένωσεν; AAI–3S). However, this is not to be understood as the Son renouncing his deity (*kenosis*). Paul explains that his ‘emptying’ was by way of addition, not subtraction. This second model centers in the assumption of the human nature as concealing the divine (*occultatione dei* or *krypsis*). See Oliver Crisp, *Divinity and Humanity: The Incarnation Reconsidered*, Current Issues in Theology (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 118–53; Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison, trans. George Musgrave Giger (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1997), 1:285, III.xxviii.4; Thomas F. Torrance, *Incarnation: The Person and Life of Christ*, ed. Robert T. Walker (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008), 65–82.

Hence, well understood, the text does not point to the Son loosing anything, but rather his voluntary humiliation in through the act of incarnation. See Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 3:407–8.

⁹⁸ R. Kendall Soulen, “*Generatio, Processio Verbi, Donum Nominis: Mapping the Vocabulary of Eternal Generation*,” in *Retrieving Eternal Generation*, ed. Scott R. Swain (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017), 132–46.

redemption, just as he accomplished creation.⁹⁹ Hence, the Son is the means by which God both creates and redeems.

Still, incarnation is a trinitarian operation, as the Son is sent from the Father, and conceived by the Spirit—such that both Father (Phil 2:11b) and Son (Phil 2:9) receive glory as God. Hence, when we see in the Christ’s humiliation, the historical starting point of the fulfilment of the *Pactum Salutis*,¹⁰⁰ we also acknowledge its culmination in Christ’s exaltation as covenant King for all nations¹⁰¹—where Paul is heading with his allusion to Isa 45:23.

During his life on earth, Jesus submitted to the Father as covenant mediator of God’s people (Phil 2:8). In exchange, God exalted him giving him a name above all others (Phil 2:9)—*donum nominis*.¹⁰²

It is then that Paul alludes to Isa 45:23 LXX. Notice the parallels:¹⁰³

<p>ὅτι ἐμοὶ <u>κάμψει</u> <u>πᾶν γόνυ</u> <u>καὶ ἔξομολογήσεται</u> <u>πᾶσα γλῶσσα τῷ θεῷ</u></p> <p>Isa 45:23c LXX</p>	<p>ίνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ <u>πᾶν γόνυ κάμψῃ</u> ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων <u>καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα</u> <u>ἔξομολογήσηται</u> ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρός.</p>
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Phil 2:10–11

The allusion in Phil 2:10–11 is clear. Three things are to be noted: 1) changes in Isa 45:23 LXX from the Hebrew 2) changes from Isa 45:23 LXX to Phil 2:10–11 3) Paul’s purpose for using Is 45:23 LXX.

⁹⁹ Incarnation is also linked with the acts of creation. Incarnation is the crown of creation, the purpose of it. Creation is preparatory for an eternally conceived incarnate state. Also, God’s self-revelation is utterly manifested in the Son’s incarnation. Furthermore, incarnation was eternally conceived because the Son’s glory was eternally planned. So, Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 3:277–79. In other words, Jesus’s manifestation as covenant King of all creation was planned from eternity, from before creation—indeed, YHWH is able to foretell the things to come, for everything obeys and flows from his decree.

¹⁰⁰ Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics, Sin and Salvation in Christ*, 3:263; J. V. Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption* (Fearn, UK: Mentor, 2016), 136–138, 173–181.

¹⁰¹ Fesko, *The Trinity and the Covenant of Redemption*, 92–93.

¹⁰² Soulent, “Generatio, Processio Verbi, Donum,” 132, 146.

¹⁰³ Underline text and italics have been added. Underline text signals correspondence proper. Italics aim to show identity correspondence between θεός in the LXX and Ἰησοῦς (or Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς) as κύριος in the NT.

First, LXX renders the Hebrew **עֲבֹשׁ** with the Greek ἔξομολογέω rather than the expected ὄμνύω. At this point, there is no Hebrew variant that would explain the change.¹⁰⁴ One must be careful not to assume to much uncritically from LXX language change. Complexities when studying the quality and rationale of a translation are many, and multifaceted.¹⁰⁵ Lexical choice might occur for a number of reasons. Sometimes, what seems to be a change on a surface level, when studied closely integrating documentary evidence shows to be consistent with the sense of the Hebrew *Vorlage*.¹⁰⁶ In any case, Isa LXX witnesses BS*LC follow the MT and use ομειται instead of ἔξομολογήσεται.¹⁰⁷ This leads some scholars to ask why Paul chose ἔξομολογέω. Some have tried to read an emphasis of *praise* as the logic behind Paul’s choice. Again, the question is complex, and we must be careful not to assume without evidence that Paul had accesses to both renderings. What can be said with the evidence at hand, is that within the 3rd cent. BCE and the 1st cent. CE documentary evidence favor an official use for ἔξομολογέω in legal contracts.¹⁰⁸ If choice is in granted, Paul might be stressing the legal aspect of the event, binding those involved in the ἔξομολόγησις in submission to the κύριος for judgement—a picture that would resembles the image of Is 45:23—

¹⁰⁴ 1QIsa^a 45:23a only shows the addition of a *waw* for יְבָשָׂת. See Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 324.

¹⁰⁵ Mirjam Van der Vorm-Croughs, *The Old Greek of Isaiah: An Analysis of Its Pluses and Minuses*, SCS 61 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014), 1–30; van der Kooij, “The Old Greek of Isaiah in Relation to the Qumran Texts of Isaiah: Some General Comments.”

¹⁰⁶ For lexical choice and lexicography in the LXX—especially considering its place within post-Classical Greek—see William A. Ross, *Postclassical Greek and Septuagint Lexicography*, Septuagint and Cognate Studies 75 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2022).

¹⁰⁷ Where BS*LC stand as follow: B, Codex Vaticanus (4th cent. CE); S*, the original hand in Codex Sinaiticus (4th cent. CE), L, Lucianic recension (ca. 2nd–3rd CE); C, Codex Ephraemi (5th cent. CE).

¹⁰⁸ I am not at all against the *praise* aspect in Carmen Christi—it is a song to Christ as God after all. My argument is that this aspect does not necessarily need to be derived from lexical choice between ὄμνω and ἔξομολογέω. ἔξομολογέω seems to have a legal force in practice just as strong as ὄμνω. Providing a full translation for each occurrence is beyond the scope of this work. Yet, for reference, see P.Hib 1 30 (3rd cent. BCE), P.Mich 2 121r (42 CE), P.Dura 13 (76–100 CE), Chr.Mitt 247 (86 CE) in Duke Collaboratory for Classics Computing and the Institute for the Study of the Ancient World, “APIS #ἔξομολογ Search,” *Papyri.Info*, https://papyri.info/search?DATE_MODE=LOOSE&DATE_END_TEXT=100&DATE_END ERA=CE&DOC S_PER_PAGE=15&STRING1=%23%E1%BC%90%CE%BE%CE%BF%CE%BC%CE%BF%CE%BB%CE%BF%CE%B3&target1=TEXT&no caps1=on&no marks1=on.

Apart from the grammatical changes in tense-form and aspect from Isa 45:23 LXX to Phil 2:10–11, it is interesting to note the two Pauline additions to the text. The first, ‘ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων’ supports the universal aspect of the coming confession of allegiance to Christ; an aspect present in Isa 45:22–25. The second, pertains to the confession proper. Whereas in Isa LXX the content of the confession comes later in verses 24–25 (λέγων Δικαιοσύνη καὶ δόξα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἥξουσιν, καὶ αἰσχυνθήσονται πάντες οἱ ἀφορίζοντες ἑαυτούς, ἀπὸ κυρίου δικαιωθήσονται καὶ ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἐνδοξασθήσονται πᾶν τὸ σπέρμα τῶν νιῶν Ἰσραὴλ), Paul summarizes the confession as κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς. This is a verbless nominative predicative clause translated as ‘Jesus Christ is Lord.’

Paul’s second addition might be serving a double purpose. First, he might be to show that it is in Jesus Christ that Isa 45:23–25 comes into fulfilment. In other words, Jesus is the means by which both the world’s salvation and judgement have come. The second is to identify Jesus with YHWH. This is seen by the change in the subject before whom the world is kneeling and confessing. In Isa LXX 45:23, this subject is referenced by τῷ θεῷ, which Sinaiticus’ original hand registers with κ—*nomen sacrum* for κύριος, YHWH.

The identification is clearer when considering Isa 45:22 LXX. Here, YHWH presents himself as him through which salvation for every nation comes (ἐπιστράφητε πρὸς με καὶ σωθήσεσθε, οἱ ἀπὸ ἐσχάτου τῆς γῆς [Isa 45:22a])—the only living God (ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ θεός, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλος [Isa 45:22b]). This is the subject to which the Isa LXX translator refers using the personal pronoun ἐμοὶ in Isa 43:23a LXX.

In alluding to Isaiah’s OT song, Paul captures all this and applies it to Jesus with a NT hymn. He is making Jesus—through whom salvation comes—equal with YHWH—the only God, the incomparable God (Isa 45:22). Jesus was given the name of YHWH, the name which is above every other name—*donum nominis*. Jesus is the covenant King before whom every nation shall kneel, for Jesus is God.

Conclusion

Is God hidden (Isa 45:15)? After revisiting textual matters and history of Isaiah's criticism, we conclude that there is no objective foundation to abandon Isaiah's unity.

When ANE covenantal practices are understood and applied as the historical backdrop of Isaiah, the many theological themes, style, audiences, prophecies, and tones fit into its ANE context, while maintaining the uniqueness of Israelite monotheism. The theme of covenant seems to pull together all Isaiah's features.

Historically, there is a continuity within both textual evidence and accepted church belief that holds to Isaiah as united and coherent, so much so, that the apostle Paul is able to allude to it and apply it to the newly formed gentile church.

God saves through judgement, reveals through Christ's humanity, redeems both Israel and the nations; indeed, a God of paradox. Our text is a good witness of Isianic cluster pericopes binding themes and emphases from “PrIsa and DIsa” flawlessly.

The task is hard, but labor shall continue. But more academic studies need to be done in future generations because these strengthen evangelical's confidence, showing that there are good theological, historical, biblical, and rational grounds to maintain a high view of Scripture. Indeed, God's word has been sent forth in righteousness, and is shall not return (Isa 45:32b). Peoples came and made their case; they have no knowledge (Isa 45:20–21). The call to turn to God for salvation is still to be sang today (Isa 45:22a), for YHWH has revealed in Jesus for the redemption of nations (Isa 45:22b–25; Phil 2:5–11). God may be a God of paradox, but he is not hidden—*Deus Paradoxum sed non absconditum est.*

Appendix I: Commented Translation of Isaiah 45:14–25

Hebrew Text: Isaiah 45:14–25

פֶּהוּ אָמַר יְהוָה יְגִיעַ מִצְרַיִם וִסְחָרִ-פּוֹשֵׁן וִסְכָּאִים אֶנְשֵׁי מִדָּה עַלְיָה יַעֲבָרְוּ וְלֹא יְהִי אֲחָרֵיךְ יַלְכֵוּ בָּזָקִים יַעֲבָרְוּ וְאַל-יַהְיֵה
 יְשַׁפְּחָוּ אֲלֵיכְךָ יַתְפְּלִלוּ אֲךָ בְּךָ אֶל וְאַיְוּ שָׂרֵד אֲסָפֵס אֲלֵקִים:
 אֲלֹא אַתָּה¹⁴ אֶל מִסְתָּפֵר אֲלֹתֵךְ יְשָׁרָאֵל מִשְׁעָעָה:
 בָּרוּשׁוּ וְגַם-נִגְכְּלָמוּ כְּגָלָם יְחִינָה¹⁵ קָלְכֵוּ בְּכֶלֶמֶה חָרְשֵׁי אִזְקִים:
 יְשָׁרָאֵל¹⁶ נוֹשֵׁעַ בִּיהְוָה תְּשֻׁוֹתָה עֲוֹלָאִים לְאַתְּבָשׁוּ וְלְאַתְּכָלָמוּ עַד-עוֹלָמִי עַד:
 כִּי כָּה אָמַר יְהֹוָה בָּוֹרָא הַשְׁלָמִים הֵוָא הַאֲלָהִים יָצַר הָאָרֶץ וְעַשְׂלָה¹⁷ הֵוָא לְנוֹנָה לְאַתָּה בְּרָאָה לְשָׁבֵת יִצְרָה אֲנִי יְהֹוָה וְאַיְוּ
 שָׂוד:
 לֹא בְּפִתְּרָה דְּבָרָתִי בָּמְקוּם אָרֶץ חָשָׁךְ לֹא אָמַרְתִּי לְגַרְעַע יַעֲלֵב¹⁸ תְּהִוָּה בְּקַשְׁוֹנִי אֲנִי יְהֹוָה דְּבָר אַדְקָה מִגֵּד מִישְׁרִים:
 הַקְּבָצָו וְכָאָה הַתְּנַגְּשָׁו יְחִינָה¹⁹ פְּלִיטִי הַגּוֹם לֹא יָקָעוּ הַנְּשָׁאִים אֶת-עַזְמָם וּמִתְּפָלֵלִים אֶל-אֶל לֹא יוֹשִׁיעָנָה:
 הַגִּידָו וְהַלִּישָׁו אָרְךָ יְנַעֲזָו יְחִינָה²⁰ מִי הַשְׁמִיעָנָה אֶת מִקְדָּם מִאָז גַּיְעָה²¹ קָלוֹא אֲנִי יְהֹוָה וְאַיְרָעָד אֲלָהִים מִבְּלָעָד אֶל-צְדִיקָה
 וּמוֹשִׁיעָ אַיְזָן זָוְתָה:
 פְּנִירָאֵל²² וְהַנְּשָׁעָר כָּל-אָפְסִידָאָרֶץ²³ כִּי אַנְיָאֵל וְאַיְזָן עַזָּה:
 כִּי גַּנְשְׁבָעָתִי²⁴ נְלָא מִפְּי אַדְקָה דְּבָר וְלֹא יְשֻׁוּב כִּי-לְלִי²⁵ תְּכַרְעַכְלְבָרָה²⁶ תְּשַׁבְּעַכְלְלִשְׁוֹן:
 אֲךָ בִּיהְנָה²⁷ לְלִי אָמָר²⁸ אַדְקָות וְלֹא עַדְיוֹ יְבָאֵב²⁹ וְנַבְשָׁו³⁰ לְלִכְתָּרִים³¹ בָּוָה:
 בִּיהְנָה יַאֲדָקוּ וַיְתַהְלָלוּ כָּל-גְּרָעָ יְשָׁרָאֵל:

Translation¹⁰⁹

¹⁴ Thus¹¹⁰ says the LORD:¹¹¹

“Egypt’s produce,¹¹²

and the merchandise¹¹³ of Cush,

¹⁰⁹ The following translation is my own. Though there are many solid Bible translations already, the toil of making one’s own translation is rewarding, and has good historical precedence. To read a short introduction on the story and utility of Bible translations, see Andreas J. Köstenberger and David A. Croteau, eds., *Which Bible Translation Should I Use? A Comparison of 4 Major Recent Versions* (Nashville: B&H Academic, 2012), 4–23.

¹¹⁰ Particle indicating *manner*. See Bill T. Arnold and John H. Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 2nd Ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 146–47.

¹¹¹ This is a common introduction from one who is a messenger from a higher authority in the ANE. See the Akkadian Letters of Mari and Amarna in Pritchard, *The Ancient Near East I*, 1:260–77.

¹¹² HALOT proposes two hypothetical forms for the word: יְגִיעַ or יְגִיעָנָה. The word seems to refer either to *toil* or *labor* (Isa 55:2; Ps 78:46; Job 39:11), or to *the produce* of that *toil* (Dt 28:33; Jr 3:24, 20:5; Ezk 23:29; Hos 12:9; Ps 109:11). Again, HALOT attributes the second sense to this text. The context seems to fit this decision. This יְגִיעָנָה is being granted to the people of God as something positive. Though *Egypt’s labor* could be grammatically correct, it would be hard to read that as something positive for Israel; especially considering their past history with Egypt, where Egypt’s labor was *upon* them. Hence, the *produce of that labor* seems to fit the context better. Finally, BHS apparatus notes that the plural construct form יְגִיעָנִי has been proposed instead of the singular construct יְגִיעָנָה. I do not find this necessary. First, there are certain singulars nouns that may refer to pluralities. Such nouns are called *collective singulars*. Second, the singular would be consistent with Cush’s סְחָרִים, also a singular masculine construct (+waw conjunctive). See, Ludwig Köhler, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Jakob Stamm, *The Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*, computer file, ed. M. E. J. Richardson, Logos Ed. (Leiden, The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill, 2000), 385–86.

More on *collective singulars*, see Paul Joüon and Takamitsu Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Subsidia Biblica 27 (Roma: Pontificio istituto biblico, 2006), 466–67.

¹¹³ Such as with יְגִיעָנָה, it has been proposed that סְחָרִי should instead read סְחָרָה. A few observations are welcomed. First, to note that the *shureq* accompanying the word סְחָרִי is but a *waw conjunction* having suffered a

and the Sabeans¹¹⁴ —men of stature¹¹⁵—

They¹¹⁶ shall *all*¹¹⁷ come onto you,¹¹⁸
and they shall be for you,¹¹⁹

change from *waw* with *vocal shewa* to a *shureq* due to the rules of *shewa*, in which a word cannot begin with two *vocal shewas*. Second, the proposed reading also strives to place a masculine plural construct instead of a singular construct noun. I believe the nature of the word allows us to understand it as a collective. Technically, both עֲזִים and סָהָר could be catalogued as *umbrella terms*; technically known as *hyperonyms*. This kind of nouns are superordinate nouns that denote a category to which other subordinate nouns belong (like *color* to *red, blue, and yellow*). It is not uncommon to find in some contexts a noun in the singular, being an umbrella term, meaning a plurality of many of the subordante items that could be allocated under it. Hence, both *produce* and *merchandise* could be taking the place of a list such as *grain, barley, papyri, spices, wood, etc.* Hence, there is no need to explicitly propose a plural form when the singular might denote a collective. In any case, due to how English works, even if we would adopt the propositions for עֲזִים and סָהָר the translation in the English would remain unaffected. Finally, there are no witnesses for the proposed change in the Hebrew. The OGIsa translates ἐμποτία, which remains singular. The Western and Eastern traditions of the Syriac do agree on the use of the plural form **אֲזִים**, in which the plural is marked by the *seyame* on top of the word.

¹¹⁴ Gentilic. See Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 738.

¹¹⁵ The construction אֲנָשִׁים מִזָּה seems to be a *dislocation* or *Casus Pendens*. This is background information in relation to the main noun—אֲנָשִׁים—which is somewhat disconnected from the rest of the discourse. See, Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 10–11. This feature is being carried in translation by the *M-dash*, as a parenthetical comment concerning the *Sabeans*.

¹¹⁶ The subject ‘they’ includes the aforementioned group of pagan nations—Egyptians, Cushites, and Sabeans. This plural subject on the next six verbs is marked by the addition of the third-masculine-plural prenominal suffix to imperfect forms to denote future events (עָבָרְוּ, יָלְכוּ, יָשְׁמַחוּ, יָצְרַרְוּ). Hence, Egyptians, Cushites, and Sabeans, *will come over, will be, will walk, will come over, will prostrate, and will implore*.

¹¹⁷ In translation, the word *all* has been added in cursive script to add some of the emphasis that the Hebrew shows. See fn 9.

¹¹⁸ The next six clauses differ from the regular VSO word-order commonly attributed to the Hebrew language. Indeed, it seems to be a case of fronting or *preposing*. Many alternative explanations have been proposed on how *preposing* works in Biblical Hebrew. Moshavi’s *Word Order in the Biblical Hebrew Finite Clause* is a good resource to expand on these cases. She explains three models attributing preposing to distinct syntactical goals: *Preposing as Emphasis, Preposing as Background and Temporal Sequencing, and Preposing as Information-Structure*. Because of the complex structure of the following six clauses, each case will be dealt with separately. See, Moshavi, *Word Order in the Biblical Hebrew Finite Clause*, 18–47.

However, some preliminary observations are welcomed here. First, it is worth noting that there is a parallel structure: A-B-C, A’-B’-C’. The first line of each set of three clauses is marked by preposing of a prepositional phrase (*prep-pp*) + Qal Imperfect 3MP (QImpf3MP) of the verb עָבַר. In addition, each line is formed by a pair of words, following the same *prep-pp+Impf3MP*. It is also noteworthy that the second clause of each set (B and B’) affix a *waw conjunction* to the prepositional phrase. In terms of semantic cohesion signaling continuity between these two sets, each clause shares the *pagan nations* as the subject, while the *second-masculine-plural prenominal suffix* (2MP-PreSfx) as the indirect object (IO). Hence, we are dealing with a parallel structure. On *Semantic Cohesion and Continuity*, see Matthew H. Patton and Frederic C. Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse: A Guide to Working with Biblical Hebrew Prose and Poetry*, ed. Miles V. Van Pelt (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2019), 155, 213–15.

Concerning the first complete clause in the *direct speech*—יְהִי יָגַע מִצְנִים וְסָהָרִים וְבָאִים אֲנָשִׁים מִזָּה עַלְיָה—*יְהִי יָגַע מִצְנִים וְסָהָרִים*—the *segolta* after מִזָּה allows us to approach עַלְיָה as a somewhat distinct unit from יְהִי יָגַע. And so, we come upon our first case of preposing in YHWH’s direct speech. Here, we see a SIOV structure. After the long subject, we perceive the pp עַלְיָה having the 2MP-PreSfx as IO followed by the QImpf3MP form יְעַבְּרֵוּ. The purpose of this SIOV seems to fit into Moshavi’s explanation of *Informational Focus*, or Patton’s *New Topic* category for preposing. This means that, as direct speech begins, it is expected to find the subject first as a marker that new information is about to be conveyed. See Moshavi, *Word Order in the Biblical Hebrew Finite Clause*, 35; Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 93–94.

¹¹⁹ As we approach the second clause on the first set of three, we notice that the *pre-pp* also adds a *waw conjunctive*, most likely with the purpose of *adding* to the previous idea. In addition to this, most authors agree that *preposing* is a matter of emphasis, especially when that which is preposed is a *prepositional phrase+prenominal suffix* as an IO. See, Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 92–93; Ronald J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*:

they will walk after you;¹²⁰
They will come over¹²¹ in chains,¹²²
and they shall prostrate¹²³ before you,¹²⁴
they will implore¹²⁵ to you, *saying*:¹²⁶

An Outline (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 97–98; Robert Bornemann, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1998), 217–18.

¹²⁰ In the third clause—the last of the first set—preposing must be attributed to *expansion*. The lack of conjunction (asyndeton) marks the clause as an expansion of the previous idea. Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 95.

This gives the reader a fuller picture of what the first and second verbs imply. The pagan nations that Israel is constantly being tempted to follow and ‘walk after,’ as it were, will become followers. They will approach Israel, they shall be for the benefit of Israel, and they will be followers of Israel. YHWH is painting a picture of eschatological hope in which ‘the last will be first’, and ‘the first will be last’; the ‘greater shall serve the lesser’—common themes throughout both the Old and New Covenants.

¹²¹ The repetition of the QImpf3MP form of עבר brings continuity and cohesion to the YHWH's poetic utterance.

¹²² As a new set of three two-word clauses begins, each clause follows closely its mirroring clause above. This applies also to the function of each *prep-pp*. In addition, the second set of *prep-pps* also serve the purpose of *intensification*. Each intensifying factor will be treated separately. On this first clause, notice that the pagan nations are not only coming over to Israel, but are now coming **בָּקָרִים**, *in chains*. This description adds to and intensifies the victorious eschatological image of a nation that is itself about to suffer exile. On *intensification* as a function of *preposing*, see Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 95–96.

¹²³ Traditionally, it was thought that the form **וַיַּעֲקֹשׁ** came from the *hithpael* stem from the verb **הָשַׁׁשׁ** with *methatesis*. However, most current grammars concur in that **וַיַּעֲקֹשׁ** is a rare occurrence of the *hištaphel* stem from the verb **הָחַח** II—to *prostrate*. The *hištaphel* stem is only attested in the Hebrew Bible with this verb, and that only 170 times. The majority view today is that this is an archaic derived stem coming through Ugaritic, another Semitic language. It maintains a reflective-causative aspect. Ugaritic shows a *št* stem as the reflexive of the *š* stem, at the same time, it shows the verbal root *hwy*—to prostrate—forming *yištħwy*, a form too similar to **וַיַּעֲקֹשׁ** to be ignored. See Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 64–65; Christo H. J. VanDerMerwe, Jackie A. Naudé, and Jan H. Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, Reprint. in paperback (with minor revisions)., Biblical Languages: Hebrew 3 (Sheffield, AL: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 139; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 157–158, 195; Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 295–96, 1457; William Lee Holladay, ed., *A Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament: Based upon the Lexical Work of Ludwig Koehler and Walter Baumgartner*, 13th Ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 97, 365; Michael James Williams, *Basics of Ancient Ugaritic: A Concise Grammar, Workbook, and Lexicon* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 84, 114; Daniel Sivan, *A Grammar of the Ugaritic Language*, Handbook of Oriental Studies. The Near and Middle East = *Handbuch Der Orientalistik*. Erste Abteilung, Der Nahe Und Mittlere Osten 28. Bd (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 109.

Concerning our analysis, the reflective-causative aspect of the *hištaphel* stem, in conjunction with the lexical meaning of bowing down or prostrating, also denotes an intensifying *ethos* in the development of discourse. Previously, it was said that the pagan nations would be *for* God's people; now the pagan nations *bow down* or *prostrate fall* before them.

¹²⁴ Here, again, we observe the *waw conj. + prep-pp + Impf3MP* as an *addition* and *intensification*. Lit. the preposition **לְ** could have been translated as *to*, or *toward*. However, to ease the reading of the translated text, I selected the word *before*. See Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 456–57.

¹²⁵ My decision to translate the verb יִתְפָּלֵל as *implore* comes from the fact that, as a *hithpael*—a causative-reflexive stem, it should be interpreted together with וְתַפְלִלְךָ. At the same time, the fact that this clause functions as an *expansion* of the previous clause allows to understand that that the pagan nations are *pleading* while *prostrating* before the people of God. Finally, this is the sixth time in which preposing is used, and so the *intensive* factor ought to be considered. Hence, I understand יִתְפָּלֵל not only as pleading, but *imploring, begging*.

¹²⁶ The word ‘saying’ has been added to bring clarity to the content of the pagan nations’ plea; hence, it is written in cursive script. Also notice that, following this paragraph, the text reaches a third level of *embedded speech* (1. Isaiah, 2. YHWH, 3. The pagan nations). On embedding, see Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 84–87.

‘Surely,¹²⁷ God is in you,¹²⁸
and there is no¹²⁹ other,¹³⁰
there is no other¹³¹ God *besides him.*’¹³²

15 Surely,¹³³ you¹³⁴ are¹³⁵ a God who hides himself!¹³⁶
O, God of Israel!¹³⁷

¹²⁷ The particle **הנה** here functions as an *affirmative emphasizing particle* (also known as *asseverative*). See Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 45; Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 141.

¹²⁸ Apparently, Verbless clauses—also called, nominal clauses—are extremely common in Hebrew poetry. The first position is often attributed to *topicalization*. In this case, the pagan nations who have been the subject from the beginning are uttering speech within YHWH’s speech, the form **הנה**, being in the first position would then serve as a *pagan nations—people of God* contrast.

¹²⁹ Particle of non-existence.

¹³⁰ The particle **עתה** here conveys the sense of something *else* or something *more*. In this case, the particle **עתה** evokes its probable substantive origins meaning *repetition* or *continuation*. See Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 795–96; Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, and Charles A. Briggs, *The New Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon: With an Appendix Containing the Biblical Aramaic*, trans. Edward Robinson (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1979), 728–29; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 307.

¹³¹ **ספָא** is functioning here as a negative particle with the especial nuance of *no more*, or *no other*. See Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 307.

¹³² Nominal clause formed by **יְהִי** **אָנָה** **ספָא**, conveyed in translation by the copula—to be.

¹³³ The origin of the **אָנָה** particle has been explained in various forms. One theory equates **אָנָה** with **הנה** and explains the addition of a final *nun* as a consonantal lengthening of the word for added emphasis. A similar phenomenon has been observed in the Aramaic particles **קָה** and **קָהָה**, and hence, this theory finds its support on this unique example. Nevertheless, there are other morphological circumstances at play in the Aramaic that have not been convincingly accounted for in the Hebrew **אָנָה**. For instance, Eitan explains that the doubled *kaph* in the Aramaic does not resembles the **אָנָה** Hebrew particle. While the theory is not convincing, a good observation is that the particle **אָנָה** has a close semantic relationship with **הנה**—both in their *asseverative*, and in their *adversative* uses as adverbial particles in Biblical Hebrew. An Akkadian source has also been proposed and equated with the Hebrew **הנה**. The better explanation seems to be that proposed by Eitan, which accounts for **אָנָה** as a fusion of the particles **הנה** and **אָנוֹ** (**אָנוֹ=הָנָה+הָנוֹ=הָנָה**). Considering this explanation; the semantic overlap with **הנה** is explained, while also accounting the *emphatic* element—which **הנה** brings. Further, the combination of the two particles accounts for the Masoretic pointing in **אָנָה**. The *he* drops, as is consistent with its weak nature, and the *aleph* suffers compensatory lengthening turning the *patach* into a *qamets*. See, Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 47; Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *BDB*, 38; Hayim Tawil, *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew: Etymological-Semantic and Idiomatic Equivalents with Supplement on Biblical Aramaic* (Jersey City, NJ: Ktav Publication House, 2009), 18; Israel Eitan, “Hebrew and Semitic Particles. (Continued) Comparative Studies in Semitic Philology,” *AJS* 45.3 (1929): 197–200.

¹³⁴ BHS apparatus: *fortasse legendum* (perhaps to be read) **הָנָהָה** instead of **הָנָהָה**. This is a somewhat odd proposal. **הָנָהָה** would be the result of the preposition **הָנָהָה** with the second person feminine singular pronominal suffix. Perhaps what the editor has in mind is Jerusalem as the people of God, which is regularly referred to in the feminine singular. Accepting such a reading would translate: ‘Surely, the God who hides himself is with you.’ And, since the two following clauses are vocatives, the change in reading does not disrupt the flow of the passage. The response of the pagan nations would end after **עַמְּךָ** in verse 15. On the other hand, there is no attestation for that reading either; hence, there is no textual evidence for such a proposition. I decided to stay with the MT.

¹³⁵ Copula verb inserted in translation, this is a *Verbless or Nominal Clause*.

¹³⁶ **מְתַחַרְתָּה** as an Active Participle, Absolute-Masculine-Singular in the *hithpael* stem from the verb **מְתַחַרְתָּה**—to hide—with *samek-taw* metathesis. The function of the participle here is adjectival and attributive, agreeing in gender, number, and definiteness with the modifying noun **אָנָה**. The reflective-causative aspect of the *hithpael* comes into translation by the word *himself*.

¹³⁷ This seems to be a *vocative noun* in a construct chain. As a proper name, **אֱלֹהִים** is in the absolute while **אָנָהָה** is in the construct; hence, God of Israel. In prose, a vocative is usually marked by the definite article. However, this does not happen often in poetry. A noun by itself used as address, especially in poetry, usually is expressed as a vocative, and with an exclamation mark. In translation, the English discourse marker referencing address “O” is used. See Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 10; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 476; Heinrich Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, trans. James Kennedy (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2005), 200.

O, Savior!¹³⁸

16 All of them together¹³⁹ will be put to shame¹⁴⁰ and humiliated.¹⁴¹

The crafters of idols will go¹⁴² in humiliation.

17 Yet, Israel¹⁴³ will be saved¹⁴⁴ by the LORD¹⁴⁵ with an everlasting salvation.¹⁴⁶

¹³⁸ This instance is akin to the preceding note, a vocative without the construct chain. However, it must be noted that there is no noun in view, but an *Hiphil* Participle, Absolute-Masculine-Singular form from **עָשָׂה**—to help, save. *HALOT* has a separate entry on the form **עָשֵׂה** in addition to **עָשָׂה**, meaning *savior* or *deliverer*. See Köhler, Baumgartner, and Stamm, *HALOT*, 448, 562; Brown, Driver, and Briggs, *BDB*, 446.

¹³⁹ BHS Apparatus here states: ‘^{a-a} frt dl’—a *correctional directive* under the category of *Evaluative Expressions*—meaning that perhaps the phrase **אָלָלָם יְהִי** (‘*all of them together*’) should be altogether deleted. The weight of this emendation is difficult to test as is not carried by any witness, and the editor does not explain the reason why the emendation was suggested. However, it is worth noting that both the LXX and the Peshitta follow the MT by using **πάντες** and **اصْبَرْ** respectively. On the utility and interpretation of the BHS Apparatus, see Reinhard Wonneberger, *Understanding BHS: A Manual for the Users of Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*, SubBi 8 (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1984), 40–44.

¹⁴⁰ The verb here is a, Perfect-Active, 3MP form in the *Qal* stem from **בָּזַה**. There are a couple of interesting features to note here. First, thought the verb is *active* in voice, the decision of translating it in the passive comes from the context. The verb **בָּזַה** is certainly to be *ashamed*, but also to be *ashamed because of X*. Contextually, it is YHWH who has brought shame and has humbled these nations. Hence, the passive voice in translation helps center the event on the true agent, who is YHWH. Second, this is an instance of a *Rhetorical Future*—also known as *Perfect Profeticum*. A *Rhetorical Future* occurs when the perfect tense—usually associated with the past—is used to convey information about a promised future. This is common in prophetic writing (hence, *Perfect Profeticum*). The intent is to show the surety of the event at hand. The promised event is so sure from the speaker’s perspective, that it is conveyed *as if* it has already occurred in the past. This is closely associated with the relationship of *Perfect* with the *realis* and the *Imperfect* with the *irrealis*. Jaques Doukhan has a helpful section on the Hebraic conception of time. See Jacques Doukhan, *Hebrew for Theologians: A Textbook for the Study of Biblical Hebrew in Relation to Hebrew Thinking* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1993), 204–7; Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 68; Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 485–91.

¹⁴¹ Perfect-Active, 3MP form in the *Niphal* stem from **כָּלַם**; *Rhetorical Perfect*. The *Niphal* stem brings that passive voice to the front and makes evident that it is YHWH who has humiliated the pagan nations.

¹⁴² Perfect-Active, 3MP form in the *Qal* stem from **הָלַךְ**; *Rhetorical Perfect*.

¹⁴³ Preposing here serves a contrastive function. This is evidenced in translation by the addition of the English particle ‘*Yet*.’ See Patton and Putnam, *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 91–92.

¹⁴⁴ Perfect-Active, 3MP form in the *Niphal* stem from **כָּלַם**; *Rhetorical Perfect*. Again, the *Niphal* stem highlights YHWH’s intervention.

¹⁴⁵ The use of the **בְּ** preposition here is noteworthy. This is an instrumental use of **בְּ**. Also called *beth instrumenti*. In this case, it denotes personal agency. This is more clearly conveyed in the Greek by the use of the preposition **ὑπὸ** +genitive in the construction ‘**ὑπὸ κυρίου**’. See Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 118; VanDerMerwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 281; Bornemann, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 33; Doukhan, *Hebrew for Theologians*, 28; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 457–58; Andrew Steinmann, *Intermediate Biblical Hebrew: A Reference Grammar with Charts and Exercises* (Saint Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2009), 76–77.

On the use of the Greek preposition **ὑπὸ** with the genitive, see Murray J. Harris, *Prepositions and Theology in the Greek New Testament: An Essential Reference Resource for Exegesis* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2012), 219–23; Daniel B Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics an Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament; with Scripture, Subject and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 389.

¹⁴⁶ The construction **עַל־מִשְׁׁעַת עַלְמִים** is functioning as a *Cognate Accusative* or an *Accusative of Internal Object*. The Function of such a construction is to emphasize the idea of the event with a noun that is semantically related with the lexical root of the main verb. In this case, the verb **עָשָׂה** is further emphasized by the noun **מִשְׁׁעָת**. Moreover, the emphasis grows even stronger when the *Cognate Accusative* is further qualified by an adjective—so, **מִלְּגָדָל**. These functions are clear both in the LXX: ‘**Ισραὴλ σώζεται ὑπὸ κυρίου σωτηρίᾳ αἰώνιοι**;’ and in the Latin Vulgate: ‘*Israël salvatus est in Domino salute aeterna*’. The idea of the *internal object* as means or manner is even more evident in the Latin, where the accusative case has been changed to an ablative, and in which the Cognate Ablative is a subcategory of either the Ablative of Manner or of Means. On the Hebrew Cognate Accusative, see Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 22; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of*

You shall not be put to shame,¹⁴⁷
Nor shall you be humiliated for all eternity.¹⁴⁸

18 For¹⁴⁹ thus says the Lord,¹⁵⁰ Creator¹⁵¹ of the Heavens¹⁵² —He is God!¹⁵³
He who formed¹⁵⁴ the Earth and made¹⁵⁵ it—He established it!¹⁵⁶
He did not create it empty,¹⁵⁷ but formed it to be inhabited:¹⁵⁸

“I am the LORD,
and there is no other.¹⁵⁹
19 I did not speak in secret,
in a land of darkness.
I did not tell the seed of Jacob:
‘Seek me¹⁶⁰ in emptiness.’¹⁶¹

Biblical Hebrew, 420–21; Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 167; VanDerMerwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 424, 244–45.

On the Greek use of the Cognate Accusative, see Wallace, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics an Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament; with Scripture, Subject and Greek Word Indexes*, 189–90.

On the Latin use of the Cognate Ablative, see John F. Collins, *A Primer Ecclesiastical Latin* (Washington, DC: Catholic Univiversity of America Press, 1991), 318,50–51.

¹⁴⁷ Back to the usual Imperfect aspect for future events.

¹⁴⁸ Notice the clear contrast between the future of the idol crafters and the future of Israel. The verbs are mirrored maintaining the stems and changing only the aspect to emphasize such contrast.

¹⁴⁹ The particle יְ here seems to be functioning in its causative use. What comes next is the cause, or the reason why the previous statement will come to pass. See Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 160; VanDerMerwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 301.

¹⁵⁰ See FN 2. Similar introduction. After this and until verse 24, YHWH is speaking.

¹⁵¹ This is a *Qal* stem Active-Participle, Masculine-Singular form of the verb בָּרָא —to create. This participle might be on a *construct state*, having הַמְּנֻשָּׁה as the end of the construct chain; thus, translated ‘Creator of the Heavens.’ Alternatively, it might be in the *absolute state*; thus translated, ‘the One who created the heavens’ —having הַמְּנֻשָּׁה as the object of the participle. These possibilities do not change the main meaning of the phrase.

¹⁵² The complete phrase, בָּרוּא הַשְׁמִימִים, is a *Nominative Absolute*, or *Casus Pendens*. The Nominative there is further explaining who the previous noun is; in this case, who *The LORD* is. See Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 551–53.

¹⁵³ Verbless clause in which the 3MS Personal Pronoun is functioning as a subject. Similar to 1 Kg 18:39; seems to be a left dislocation. Also, Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 10–11.

¹⁵⁴ Also *Qal* Participle

¹⁵⁵ Also *Qal* Participle w/3fsprsffx

¹⁵⁶ Similar to FN 44.

¹⁵⁷ Only 20 occurrences of the word שָׁתָּה in the Old Testament, 11 of them are found in Isaiah—twice in the pericope. The word is closely related to the Egyptian concept of Chaos. Since Egypt is evoked at the beginning of the pericope, it is appropriate to consider if this might be a case of what Dr. John Currid calls *Polemical Theology*. YHWH is not only setting himself as the only true God, but doing so by way of taunting other nations’ conceptions of power and fear such as chaos.

¹⁵⁸ First occurrence of a *Qal* stem Infinitive Construct form here, from the lexical from יִשְׁבַּ —to sit, establish, inhabit.

¹⁵⁹ The construction אָנָּי יְהֹוָה וְאֵין שָׁוֹد is formed by two verbless clauses, the first being: אָנָּי יְהֹוָה, meaning I am God. Here, we see the first personal pronoun (אָנָּי) as usual, functioning as a subject. The copula serves to identify the speaker (1CS) with the LORD (יְהֹוָה). The second verbless clause is formed by the particle of non-existence + a *waw conjunctive* (וְאֵין), followed by the particle שָׁוֹد.

¹⁶⁰ Imperative

¹⁶¹ BHS Apparatus proposes בְּתַהְוָה as an alternative, adding a *beth* preposition. If שָׁתָּה is functioning adverbially, there is no further need to clarify by adding the *beth* preposition. On Adverbial Accusatives, see Arnold and Choi, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 25; Joüon and Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 425–30; Waltke and O’Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 169–73; VanDerMerwe, Naudé, and Kroeze, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 241–45.

I am the LORD,¹⁶²
who speaks¹⁶³ righteousness,
and reveals¹⁶⁴ uprightness.

20 Be gathered and come!
Draw near together,
You survivors of the nations!

Those who carry their wooden idols,
and those who pray to a god that cannot save,
they have no knowledge.

21 Declare and set forth *your case!*¹⁶⁵
Indeed, let them seek counsel together.

Who has proclaimed these things from of old,
And from that time has made them known?
Am I not the LORD,
And there is no other God beside me?

I am a righteous God
and a savior,
There is none other,
except for me.

22 Turn to me and be saved,
All the ends of the earth!
For I am the LORD,
and there is none other.

23 I have sworn¹⁶⁶ by myself!
Righteousness has gone forth from my mouth—a word,
And it will not turn back,
For to Me every knee will bow,
every tongue will swear.
They will say¹⁶⁷ to Me:

¹⁶² For the second time in this embedded speech, YHWH is asserting that he is indeed the LORD. Previously, what followed were negatives concerning his divine speech, now positives on that same regard will follow.

¹⁶³ בָּרָךְ is a *Qal* Participle form, Active, Masculine-Singular in the Absolute state. The participle here is functioning substantively.

¹⁶⁴ תָּגַת is a *Hiphil* Participle form, Masculine-Singular in the Absolute state from the verb תָּגַת—to announce. In the *Hiphil* stem, to reveal (to cause it to be announced).

¹⁶⁵ Though the Hebrew does not explicitly state “your case” the context is clearly a judicial trial, and YHWH’s call to set forth is either to the case or the proofs of their case for idolatry. On judicial procedures, see de Vaux, *Ancient Israel. Vol. 1*, 1:155–157.

¹⁶⁶ Any use of swearing might be properly taken as an exclamation. See Ewald, *Syntax of the Hebrew Language of the Old Testament*, 201.

¹⁶⁷ BHS Apparatus notes a^ל בָּרָךְ a^ל בָּרָךְ (a-a) λέγων, l(egendum) cf 1QIs^a

There are many interesting things given by the BHS apparatus. First, the transposition of a-a to the beginning as attested by the LXX and Syriac ^A and ^W. Then, the variety of witnesses concerning the verbal aspect of בָּרָךְ. LXX as VPAP-NMS (λέγων); Syriac as Peal Impf3MP (מְלָאכָה). DSS, as Impf3MS (בָּרָךְ). The legendum

24 ‘Only in the Lord are righteousness and strength.¹⁶⁸
They will come to Him,
And all who were angry at Him will be put to shame.
25 In the LORD all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory.’”

(לאמָר) Qal Inf. Cnstr., seems to carry a sense of purpose. It is very possible that **יֹאמַר לְיָ** be the original reading. Frist, in **לְיֹאמַר לְ**, *dittography* could explain the omission of the second *yod* (from **יֹאמַר**, to say). Then, since Qal3MS (*a perfect profeticum*) is consistently used throughout to speak of future events, such a mistake would have risen few questions, if any. Transposition is only shown in translation, so it is most likely accommodation to the expected syntax of the target language. The legendum arguing for an infinitive construct (לאמָר) seems odd, considering that two *yods* in the **לְיֹאמַר לְ** construction would need to have been added at some point if the original reading was indeed **לְאָמָר**.

¹⁶⁸ The syntax of the whole phrase is puzzling. The verse begins with the opening words of the content of the speech: “*Only in the LORD...*” Then, the speech is interrupted to make a background note: “—for me they will say—...” finally, the speech reassumes with the words: “*righteousness and strength.*” To solve the syntactical challenges, a first step might be sorting text by function. Hence, I divide *continued speech* from *new speech*. Continued speech, which has YHWH as the speaker (vv. 18, 19, 21, 22 explicitly state this), is marked by YHWH as the IO through the *lamed* preposition + 1CS prenominal suffix—**לְיָ**. This same construction is repeated in verse 24, and the main verb being **מָרָ**. Hence, the first clause would be **מָרָ לְיָ** — ‘*They will say to me*’. The close relationship between **לְיָ** and **מָרָ** may also be noted by the conjunctive *merekha* under **לְיָ** (joining it with **מָרָ**), and the disjunctive *tiphkha* under **מָרָ** (separating it from **מָרָ** וְ**צְדָקָה וְעֲזָבָה**) accents that join them together. This leaves the rest of the words up to the *athnakh pause* as the first clause of the content of *new speech*: **אָמָר בְּיִהְנָה צְדָקָה וְעֲזָבָה**. Now, the *verbless clause* is clearer: “*Only in the LORD are righteousness and strength.*” On disjunctive and conjunctive Hebrew accents, see Mark D. Futato, *Basics of Hebrew Accents* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2020); VanDerMerwe, Naudé, and Kroese, *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*, 45–47; Bornemann, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, 102–6.

Appendix II: Canon as Covenant: Origins, Logic, Theology, and Hellenistic Accommodation of the Old Testament Canon

The question of canon is puzzling, intersecting both biblical and theological studies. Many advances towards a *theology of canon* have been done for the NT.¹⁶⁹ However, this same question remains obscure for the OT. Most studies focus on the historical development rather than the logic and theology of the OT canonical order *per se*.¹⁷⁰

Here, I propose that canon in the HB portrays a logic reflective of transcendental unity. As suggested by Kline and others, the logic behind HB canon-model reveals a covenantal structure. However, the *Hellenization* of the OT canon is not haphazard either. Both models may help aid our interpretation as secondary—though, indeed, helpful—exegetical tools. This, I aim to explore.

Origins of the Hebrew Canon

It is commonly accepted that by the time of the writing of the NT, three things were recognized about the Hebrew canon. First, there was an OT canonical macrostructure familiar to most—if not all—Jews both in Jerusalem and in the diaspora (Matt 7:12; Luke 24:44).¹⁷¹ Second, there was an assumption that the readers and writers of the NT worked with an understanding of a fixed collection of books included within the Hebrew canon (Rom 3:2). Third, this OT canon

¹⁶⁹ At the forefront of NT canon theology there are Kruger’s works arguing for a self-authenticating canon. Kruger’s theological and apologetical principles, I believe, may well be applied to the OT canon as well. See Kruger, *Canon Revisited*; Kruger, *The Question of Canon*.

¹⁷⁰ For example, Harrison, *Introduction to the Old Testament with a comprehensive review of Old Testament studies and a special supplement on the apocrypha*, 260–88; Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986).

¹⁷¹ Beckwith deal with many of the witnesses of the canon, most of which predate Jesus’ era. The great majority work with the three-fold structure as portrayed in this paper. Even Craig Evans, in his chapter on *The Scriptures of Jesus and His Early Followers* in The Canon Debate, recognizes that the Law and the Prophets cannot be disputed, and there must be at least a separate list of writings that were recognized as sacred, even if the full list cannot be fully delineated. See Roger T. Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 16–62; Lee Martin McDonald and James A Sanders, eds., *The Canon Debate* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2019), 185–195.

was regarded as Holy Writ (Rom 1:2; 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pe 1:19-21).¹⁷² Thus, it is right to ponder the question of origins. How was it that, by the time of the NT, these facts were in place? How did the Hebrew canon come to be?

Granting that the canon of the OT finds its origin in God's own mind and purpose, the historical question cannot and ought not to be answered independent from the theological one.¹⁷³ God revealed himself in the time of Moses. This was not new. God had revealed before at many points in human history (to the first fathers [Gen 2:16-17; 3:9, 16-19], to Noah [6:13-21; 7:1-4; 8:16-17; 9:1-17], Abraham [12:1-3; 15:1-21; 17:1-21], etc). What was innovative was the instruction and practice of preserving this revelation in human script; and copying it for future generations (Deut 17:18). In fact, God himself seems to have been the initiator of this *inscripturation* process (Exod 31:18; Deut 9:10). Hence, once God has revealed his Word to men and instructed them to write it down, canonization proper takes place.¹⁷⁴

When God inspired the Pentateuch, he also set a model by which the rest of Scripture would be written. Simultaneously, he set a standard by which his people would recognize further inspired material. First, he delivered to Moses a covenantal structure of canon, akin to

¹⁷² This is also shown by the fact that only some books and not others were placed in the Temple, a holy place. See Beckwith's treatment of the *Temple as the Shrine of the Canon* in Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and Its Background in Early Judaism*, 80-86.

¹⁷³ I reject the idea that skepticism from scholars researching the question of origins grants them the liberty of stripping the original writers and recipient communities through the ages of their own beliefs. One needs to consider the theology of the authors in order to explain the origin of the canon. In other words, regardless of one's stance concerning the theology this canon presents, it is inconsistent to approach the question of origin from a 'purely historical' perspective, neglecting its theological aspect.

See for example Murphy's comment cited in Willis J. Beecher, "The Alleged Triple Canon of the Old Testament," *JBL* 15 (1896): 118.

Also, on the relationship between canon and theology, see John Goldingay, "Old Testament Theology and the Canon," *TynBul* 59, no. 1 (2008).

For a response to Goldingay, see Christopher R Seitz, "Canon, Narrative, and the Old Testament's Literal Sense: A Response to John Goldingay, 'Canon and Old Testament Theology,'" *TynBul* 59, no. 1 (2008): 27-34.

¹⁷⁴ This is an idea similar to Kruger's proposition of the *Ontological Definition of Canon*. See Kruger, *The Question of Canon*, 40-45; Kline, *The Structure of Biblical Authority*, 23.

that used in the ANE,¹⁷⁵ which he most likely expected to be followed by latter Scripture.¹⁷⁶ Second, he explained the way of recognizing his prophets (Deut 18:21-22). This test included a curse for anyone falsely presuming to speak in God's name (Deut 18:20). Finally, Moses clarified that this initial covenantal canonical model (the Torah) was complete, and nothing should be added or changed (Deut 4:2).¹⁷⁷

After Moses' writings, the following Scriptures were most likely understood as developments of the blessings or curses of the original covenant document. As such, they were to be understood bearing in mind the same covenant giver and the same covenant community the first five books had. As a result, the Prophets and the Writings came into existence both as Covenant History and Covenant Life that flows from the overarching Covenant Document that was the Torah.¹⁷⁸ Though the process of revelation took place through time, it is not so, as some argue, that each of the divisions of the Hebrew Canon represent a period in which the community "canonized" new writings investing them with authority. Instead, the tripartite

¹⁷⁵ J. Nicholas Reid, "Ancient Near Eastern Backgrounds to Covenants," in *Covenant Theology: Biblical, Theological, and Historical Perspectives*, ed. Guy Prentiss Waters (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020), 447-65.

¹⁷⁶ This covenantal structure supersedes any other thematic paradigm that can be proposed as an all-encompassing theme that captures the theology of the OT. This is not to say that other themes cannot be identified as prominent themes throughout the OT canon (such as that of *the land, blessing, the people of God, redemption, etc.*) but that all of those would be in one way or another includer by the theme of covenant. As Packer has well said, the theme of Covenant should serve as the hermeneutical framework for the whole Scriptures. See J. I. Packer, "Introduction On Covenant Theology," in *The Economy of the Covenants Between God and Man* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2010), [31];

Against this view, see Greg Goswell, "The Two Testaments as Covenant Documents," *JETS* 62, no. 4 (2019): 684-685.

¹⁷⁷ A distinction is to be made here. We must differentiate between what I'm calling the *Covenantal Canonical Model* (of which the Torah is the primary example) and what's known as the *Torah Model*. The Covenantal Model is set forth by proponents such as Meredith Kline and Miles Van Pelt, who argue that the form of the Torah (and the whole OT Hebrew Canon) follows after the model of ANE covenants. On the other hand, the Torah Model mostly sustains that the links between each of the divisions of the Tanak is marked by the theme of Torah. Though both models end up with the same three-fold division, they differ in their methodology and explanation of that same observable phenomenon.

For the argument pro Torah Model, see Stephen Dempster, "An' Extraordinary Fact': Torah and Temple and the Contours of the Hebrew Canon," *TynBul* 48, no. 1 (1997): 23-56;

For a response, see Hendrik Jacob Koorevaar, "The Torah Model as Original Macrostructure of the Hebrew Canon: A Critical Evaluation," *Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 122, no. 1 (2010): 64-80.

¹⁷⁸ Van Pelt, "Introduction," 30-33.

division was an integral development of aggregates with the same authority as the Law since their inception; rather than a purely historical one.¹⁷⁹

Logic and Theology of the Hebrew Canon

Once we relate the overarching theme of covenant with a covenantal canonical model, the macrostructure governing the OT is clear and logical. Though some have argued against the fixed three-fold division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, it is still the majority consensus that this is the macrostructure of the OT received and affirmed by the time of the NT.

The Three-Fold Structure of the Hebrew Canon

This macrostructure is governed by the covenant proper, and then covenantal out-workings in the history of God's people.¹⁸⁰ Hence, the tripartite structure was born. The covenant proper included the *Law*—establishing the benevolence of the King (YHWH) by creating mankind and providing a deliverer, covenant stipulations, covenant blessings and covenant curses.

Next, the first aspect of these covenant out-workings —that of covenant history and exhortation— came about. Thus, the *Prophets* came to existance. The Former Prophets (FP) (Josh, Judg, 1–2 Sam, 1–2 Kgs) are written to vindicate the name of YHWH showing that exile was a product of the kings' failure to follow the covenant and leading the people in doing so; not of YHWH's weakness. The Later Prophets (Isa, Jer, Ezek, & The Twelve) serve as a prophetic warning or exhortation using the FP to caution Israel, Judah, and other nations about the consequences of their sins against YHWH; but also, to provide hope and grace through the expectation of a coming Messiah.

¹⁷⁹ Beecher, “The Alleged Triple Canon of the Old Testament,” 118–28.

¹⁸⁰ See Kline’s thoughtful explanation of Meredith G. Kline on the relationship between Canon and Covenant in Meredith M. Kline, “Meredith G. Kline on Covenant Community and Canon,” *Unio cum Christo* 2, no. 1 (April 2016): 11–25.

Finally, while living in the covenant community, covenant wisdom in the form of hagiography, hymns, poems, and proverbial collections was gathered. To this collection was given the name of *The Writings*, which delineated various aspects of covenant life.

Theological Insights from the Hebrew Canon

This threefold division has been widely attested by different witnesses and hence is overall, an established fact. That different books undergo one or more editorial processes ought not to bother us too much. First, we consider the question of canonical structure in its finalized form.¹⁸¹ Second, the editorial process producing the finalized form of the Hebrew Canon favor the view that there is a specific purpose to the ordering of those books. Third, once again, what happens *in time* from creation's perspective should not undermine the eternal purposes of the *out-of-time* Creator. God knew the final form of the Hebrew Canon to be circulating in NT times because he decreed it to be so. Hence, it is crucial to consider the three-fold structure of the Hebrew Canon when we deal with OT theology.¹⁸² The question at hand is, what does the Hebrew Canon as a whole, as well as each of its parts, say about God? Emphasis of each sections tell us different things about the one true God in relation to the people he is covenantally dealing with.

First, the order of the Hebrew Canon underscores the sovereignty of God. As stated before, He, from the beginning, had a purpose in mind for his people. Moreover, when we adopt this covenantal structure, we uphold a God that is both transcendent as King and covenant initiator; but also immanent, willing to condescend with humanity filling the immense gap

¹⁸¹ It is rather pointless to adjudicate a fixed purpose to an unfixed work. And since God's Word was always sufficient for the covenant people during the progressive revelation process, it is not the case that sufficiency depends on the completion and collection of the whole counsel of God. Adam had only the one commandment, and that had to be enough for him. In the same way, people after Moses had the Torah, and while the Prophets and the Writings were being inscripturated, that Torah was sufficient. In a similar fashion, the people in the first century had the OT, while the NT was being written, and that OT was understood to be enough.

¹⁸² Before going deeper into this, we ought to distinguish the macrostructure from the microstructure of the Hebrew Canon. Here, I will be dealing with the macrostructure previously discussed, and let the reader decide which of the microstructures within the threefold covenantal divisions convinces him best.

between creator and creature by way of covenant. Third, each division sets forth truths both concerning God and men.

The Law shows preeminently God's authority and grace, and men's dependency on God as both Creator and Redeemer. The Prophets show both God's faithfulness to his covenant people as well as his longsuffering and steadfast love. Simultaneously, they point to our sin as the cause leading us away from him and into miserable situations. The Writings set forth God's wisdom by way of instruction and example both in and outside the land, both in situations of blessing and discipline. This, in turn, gives the people a voice—a model to address God—during both blessing and suffering, underscoring God's willingness to hear his people, and respond in hope.

Hellenization of the Hebrew Canon

If what we've proposed so far is true, and there is some exegetical value to the traditional model of the Hebrew Canon, why change? This again leads us to some historical considerations. At least two factors ought to be considered. First, the creation of the LXX which was marked by a non-organized translation of independent books after the LXX proper.¹⁸³ This in turn, facilitated the possibility of rearrangement in the centuries to come. At the same time, second temple Judaism was characterized by a grand-scale Hellenization process which covered everything from language to philosophy and literature.¹⁸⁴ This explains Josephus comment on the Hellenized arrangement of the OT Canon in *Against Apion*, switching the emphasis from covenant related to genre driven.¹⁸⁵ The adoption by the Christian church, which was born in

¹⁸³ McDonald and Sanders, *The Canon Debate*, 68–90; Natalio Fernández Marcos, *The Septuagint in Context: Introduction to the Greek Version of the Bible* (Atlanta: SBL, 2009), 35–83; Karen H. Jobes and Moisés Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*, 2nd Ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 13–62.

¹⁸⁴ To read a good introduction on Early Judaism, see James C. VanderKam, *An Introduction to Early Judaism*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022).

¹⁸⁵ Peter Katz, "Old Testament Canon in Palestine and Alexandria," *ZNW* 47 (1956): 191–217; Greg Goswell, "The Order of the Books in the Greek Old Testament," *JETS* 52, no. 3 (2009): 449–466.

an already Hellenized context is therefore expected, and indeed fixated by Jerome's Vulgate (400 CE). Nevertheless, the order of the LXX is not without purpose either.

Theological Insights from a Hellenized Canon

After grouping books by genre, the Pentateuch is still at the beginning. The history of God's people come later as is expected from a continued narrative (Gen–Chr). Poets come next, perhaps as the theological expression taking place during the history of God's people (Job–Song). The prophets are placed last. This is perhaps the most interesting movement. It is not uncommon for prophecy to evaluate history in a poetic fashion. In addition, there's a unique feature in prophetic writing: the eschaton. Most prophetic books—to a greater or lesser degree—deal with this question. Most also finish by expressing hope not only to Israel, but to all nations. It is therefore logical that a collection of sacred books with a target audience that included both Hellenistic Jews and pagans would place a final note of hope at the end of the canon.

An Evaluation of Both Models

Favorably, the Hellenistic OT canon is sorted in such a way that one may find a book easily if aware of its genre. In addition, this canonical tradition might underscore God's eternal purpose to redeem the nations. Other than these, theological insights from the Greek canon are hard to derive. Negatively, the resulting theological disconnect with covenantal themes provided in such an array appears to be a greater loss than the aforementioned gain. The NT itself seems to favor a covenantal order in two ways. First, by its references to the Law, Prophets, and Writings. Second, by following a similar structure presenting the Gospels as the King's covenant favor in the new covenant, Acts as new covenant history, Epistles as new covenant

life, and Revelation as an Epilogue to the whole canon.¹⁸⁶ If this is so, I believe it would be much more helpful to return to the original Hebrew macro-structure for the OT.¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, this hope might be far-fetched. In any case, the least we may do, is consider the OT original macro-structure when studying the OT, and the theological insights a covenantal canon structure may bring forth.

¹⁸⁶ It may be argued against this position, that the Gospels-Acts-Epistles-Revelation order answers purely to chronology and genre, just as the Greek OT canon order. Some distinctions are to be made. First, when we speak of the Hellenized canon, we are speaking of rearrangement, not the original macro-structure. Second, when we consider God's sovereignty, the ANE context of the OT was a secondary mean through which its macro-structure was achieved. Similarly, chronology and genre are the secondary means through which the NT macro-structure is reached. And yet, the NT agrees also with the ANE covenantal structure only when one respects each's context and original reception. Hence, the Hellenization of the OT canon disrupts the clear overarching covenantal structure of the whole. Nonetheless, more work needs to be done in these areas.

¹⁸⁷ Interestingly enough, Goswell, while recognizing that there is hermeneutical insight through the placement of any given book within the Hebrew canon, he also believes that the Greek order is 'ancient enough'—preventing scholars to argue for the preference of one order over against the other. See Goswell, "The Order of the Books in the Greek Old Testament," 465–66; Goswell, "Should the Church Be Committed to a Particular Order of the Old Testament Canon?," 17–40.

Appendix III: Isaiah 45:14–25 and Intertextuality

Isaiah 45:14–25 is full of echoes from the OT and is either quoted or alluded to in the New Testament several times. The following section limits itself to explore clear examples of intertextuality, allusions, or thematic echoes chosen due to their relevance in relation to the overarching argument of Isa 45:14–25. Not all extant allusions, echoes, or citations will be dealt with and not all examples will be explored at the same length, but only as they serve the purpose of the present work.

Old Testament Intertextuality

Genesis 22:16: *I have sworn by myself*

After God's intervention to save Isaac from death, the Angel of the Lord calls to Abraham and repeats the covenant promise of Gen 12:3, 15:5, and 17:1–14. In Gen 22:16, however, the covenant promises here are introduced by the formula בְּנִשְׁבָעֲתִי for the first time. This 'swearing by himself' is at the same time a reference to what took place in Gen 15:9–21. There, Abram asks the LORD concerning the promised land (Gen 15:8). Consequently, the LORD makes a unilateral covenant with Abram. Essentially, the LORD sworn by himself there.

The Abrahamic covenant includes the *blessing of all nations* and the *multiplication of Abrahamic offspring* (Gen 12:3, 15:5, 18–21, 17:4–8, 22:16–18).¹⁸⁸ By using the same formula (בְּנִשְׁבָעֲתִי) in Isa 45:23a, the blessing of the nations is recaptured in Isa 45:14, 22–24, while Isa 45:25 might be an allusion of their inclusion as the offspring of Israel (hence, Abraham's offspring).¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁸ See Schnittjer notes on the Abrahamic Covenant Network in Gary Edward Schnittjer, *Old Testament Use of Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Guide* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Academic, 2021), 876.

¹⁸⁹ Motyer makes the connection with Gen 22:16. However, he emphasizes God's word rather than the covenantal connection I have proposed. Perhaps this is because he connects Isa 45:21 with the Abrahamic covenant. If this is the case, then the difference is a minor one and the point stands. See J. A. Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 366.

Goldingay and Payne do make a connection with the blessing of the nations as promised to the patriarchs, and the ingathering of the nations as the fulfilment of this promise. See John Goldingay and David F. Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, vol. 2 of *ICC* (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 58.

Psalm 86: All the nations shall come and worship

Psalm 86 is a prayer attributed to David and hence, predates Isaiah 45 by many centuries. Many thematic parallels in Isa 45:14–23 echo Ps 86. In his distress, David calls upon the LORD 86:1–6, while he recognizes the uniqueness of YHWH אֵין־כְּמוֹךָ בְּאֶלְ�הִים אֶלְךָ [Ps 86:8a] ... אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים ... לְבָקָר [Ps 86:10b]). As noted above, YHWH's uniqueness is central to Isa 45 (14, 18, 21[x2], 22).

Further, framed between these expressions of singularity, David speaks prophetically of *all nations* coming in submission and glorifying God in Ps 86:9: כָּל־גּוֹים אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂית יָבוֹא וַיַּשְׁתַּחַווּ לְפָנֵיכָךְ אֶלְךָ וַיַּכְבְּדוּ לְשָׁמְךָ. Thus, the inclusion of all nations as worshipers of YHWH in Isa 45:14, 22–25 has at least one clear precedence in Ps 86:9. Verses 11–15 continue speaking of the LORD as savior and deliverer.

Ps 86:16–17 again show themes present in Isa 45. In Ps 86:16, David calls upon the LORD that he will *turn* to him (פָנָה אֲלֵינוּ). God's turning will result in *strength* and *salvation* (חִזְקָה־עָזָק לְעַבְדָךְ וְהוֹשִׁיבָה לְבָנוֹ־אָמֵת). By way of contrast, David speaks of those who hate him (as God's anointed) as people who will *be put to shame* (בּוֹשֵׁב). God's turning resulting in salvation (Isa 45:22a), salvation described in terms of strength (Isa 45:24a), and the contrast between salvation and shame (Isa 45:16–17, 24–25) are all themes that we have explored above.

Other Themes and Connections from the Old Testament

Moyer makes at least five other connections to other Psalms,¹⁹⁰ while Seok has a complete study on the relationship of Isaiah 40–55 with Psalm 33.¹⁹¹ An interesting connection is the

Also, McKenzie notes the connection with the oaths YHWH made to the Israel and David involving all nations. See John L. McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, 2nd Ed., AB 20 (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 84.

Paul only notes the connection with Gen 22:16 without further comment. See Paul, *Isaiah 40-66*, 272.

¹⁹⁰ Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah*, 363–367.

¹⁹¹ From all these, Seok mentions only Isa 45:23 in relation to Ps 33:9 twice; but the relationship is rather obscure. See Jinsung Seok, “‘God as Creator and Sovereign’: The Intertextual Relationship of Psalm 33 with the Book of Isaiah,” *ACTS* 신학저널 33 (2017): 11–47. [Note that in page 36, the connection is made with Ps 33:6. This seems to be an editorial error, for the verse quoted is Ps 33:9].

relationship between creation's account in Genesis and the theme of God as Creator in Isaiah and the many theological implications this bears upon the text.¹⁹² In relation to this, Isaiah's use of the lexeme יְהֹוָה ought to be noted. The term appears twenty times in the Hebrew Bible (HB), eleven of which occur in Isaiah. Isa 45:18–19 uses the term twice after alluding to God's creative activity and the power of His word, hence, a specific connection with Gen 1:2 is warranted.¹⁹³ The force of the argument seems to be that YHWH is not a God of chaos, emptiness, vanity, or destruction. On the contrary, as Creator of all things, he has a redemptive plan for all nations. Such as the LORD ordered everything after Gen 1:2, so he will order again all things in the eschaton. The ANE's fragile political situation was never the endgame.

New Testament Intertextuality

Romans 14:11: Every knee shall bow

Paul's Christological use Isa 45:23 has been dealt with above in the analysis of Phil 2:10–11 and the Carmen Christi. Its Christological use in Rom 14:11 is disputed.¹⁹⁴ I favor the position that Paul is not using Isa 45:23 here in a Christological fashion.

¹⁹² See, for example John N Oswalt, "Creatio Ex Nihilo: Isa It Biblical, and Does It Matter?," *TJ* 39.2 (2018): 165–80.

¹⁹³ The relationship between Gen 1:2 and Isa 45:18–19 is disputed. Goldingay and Payne have a helpful discussion of the different positions in Goldingay and Payne, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 40-55*, 52–54.

Young argues (*contra* Duhm) for a connection with Gen 1:2. See Edward J. Young, *The Book of Isaiah: The English Text, with Introduction, Exposition and Notes: Volume 3, 40–66*, 3rd Pr., vol. 3 of NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 210–212.

McKenzie also notices the connection but interprets it as a general ANE expression of a worldview that holds to a creation–chaos cycle. By doing this McKenzie sadly ignores the context of Isa 45:18 almost altogether, where YHWH says that he does not create in יְהֹוָה, nor for that purpose. See McKenzie, *Second Isaiah*, 83.

By contrast, Paul argues that this mention might be a "hidden polemic against Gen 1:2." In other words, Paul sees a contradiction between Gen 1:2 and Isa 45:18. Paul, also fails to understand Gen 1:2 and assumes that in the Genesis account, there was a pre-existent primeval chaos from which God created everything. See Paul, *Isaiah 40-66*, 269. For an introduction to *polemical theology* and a balanced understanding of the relationship between the historical account presented in Gen 1:2 and the ANE ahistorical creation myths, see John D. Currid, *Against the Gods: The Polemical Theology of the Old Testament* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013), 25–46, esp. 34–46.

¹⁹⁴ G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 684–86; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NIGNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 833–48, esp. 847–48.

In context, Paul is warning the Roman church against harshly judging others. The interesting insight from Rom 14:11 is the reference to God's oath, and the universal nature of future judgement. Both will be dealt with jointly.

Paul quotes Isa 45:23 as follows:

γέγραπται γάρ·
ζῶ ἐγώ, λέγει κύριος, ὅτι ἐμοὶ κάμψει πᾶν γόνυ
καὶ πᾶσα γλῶσσα ἔξομολογήσεται τῷ θεῷ.

Here, Paul's formula reveals his apostolic acceptance of Isa 45 as scripture. This is no small thing for evangelical scholarship. Though Paul does not mention Isaiah's authorship here—though he certainly holds to it (cf. Rom 10:16–21)—the text definitely recognizes the whole work as authoritative by its time.¹⁹⁵

As an assurance that judgment is certain, Paul does allude to God's oath. The change from κατ' ἐμαυτοῦ ὄμνύω (Isa 43:23a LXX) to ζῶ ἐγώ, λέγει κύριος might not be intentional. The formula ζῶ ἐγώ, λέγει κύριος is found eighty-five times in the LXX, though most of the occurrences happen in the book of Ezekiel LXX (x65). Paul might be taking the liberty to change from an oath announcement to the actual oath formula. The only other change is the transposition of πᾶσα γλῶσσα before ἔξομολογήσεται, where Isa 43:23 LXX presents ἔξομολογήσεται πᾶσα γλῶσσα. This change does not have grammatical consequences.

The application of this text is important. Since Paul is addressing both Jews and gentiles, the universal judgement presented in Isa 45:23 fits, and it serves his argument well.

Hebrews 6:13–20: *He swore by himself*

Though most commentators connect Heb 6:13 to Gen 22:16, the fact that Isa 45:23a is an echo of Gen 22:16 warrants the possibility of Isa 45:23a playing some role within the argument of Hebrews. On the other hand, regardless of how much influence Isa 45:23a might have had on

¹⁹⁵ Other texts might be used to argue from Isianic authorship of DIs from the NT: Matt 3:3, 4:14–16, 8:17, 12:18–21; Mark 1:2; Luke 3:4–6, 4:16–21; Jhon 1:23, 12:37–41; Acts 8:27–34; Rom 10:16–21.

Heb 6:13, since Hebrews goes on to explain the utility of God's swearing by himself, Heb 6:13–20 becomes an exegetical tool to understand divine oaths.¹⁹⁶

Whereas Heb 6:13 immediately mentions Abraham—thus precluding many to explore further connections—his mentioning is only in passing at that point. It is more important to note God's as the primary actor whose oath serves to secure the promises of his covenant (Heb 6:17), akin to Isa 45:23–25. Another possible connection is the mention of the ‘two unchangeable things’ (ἴνα διὰ δύο πραγμάτων ἀμεταθέτων) which are the basis of encouragement for holding fast (Heb 6:18). Most commentators agree that these two things are God's word and God's oath. In the Gen 22:16 narrative these elements are only implicitly present. By contrast, Isaiah 45:23 LXX explicitly sets both elements: κατ' ἐμαυτοῦ ὁμοῦ οὐκέτι μὴν ἔξελεύσεται ἐκ τοῦ στόματός μου δικαιοσύνη, οἱ λόγοι μου οὐκ ἀποστραφήσονται. If Heb 6:13 more naturally alludes to Gen 22:16, then Heb 6:18 more naturally recalls Isa 45:23a–b LXX.

Conversely, Heb 6:15–20 helps explain the purpose of swearing by something. Heb 6:16 states that oaths are made by something greater than oneself. This aid our understanding of why God is swearing by himself in Isa 45:23a: He is the greatest being, and there is none above. Verses 15, 17, and 19–20 in Heb 6 also illuminates a secondary purpose of the oath: God's people must be patient and encouraged while the fulfilment of covenant blessings is realized (cf. Isa 40:1, 45:25).

Revelation 3:9: *They shall bow to you*

In dealing with the Philadelphian church, the Lord promises to deliver the covenant people's enemies to them. As in Isa 45:14 LXX (προσκυνήσουσίν σοι), in Re 6:9 enemies shall come

¹⁹⁶ Only Ellingworth explicitly mentions a connection with Isa 45:23 through his discussion. See Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 334–49.

and bow before them (προσκυνήσουσιν ἐνώπιον τῶν ποδῶν σου).¹⁹⁷ (carson, beale; beale commentary.)

In addition, two things are worth noting. First, Jesus has switched the ethnic identity of the enemies. In Isa 45:14 LXX, the enemies are the pagan nations, while God's covenant people seem to be the Jews. Jesus identifies unbelieving Jews as false Jews. Or worst, as τῆς συναγωγῆς τοῦ σατανᾶ τῶν λεγόντων ἐαυτοὺς Ἰουδαίους εἶναι, καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν ἀλλὰ ψεύδονται (cf. also Re 2:9). These people will not only bow down to those of Philadelphia (primarily gentiles). At the end—like the submission-confession structure in Isa 45:14—these fake-Jews will recognize that God loves the gentiles (γνῶσιν ὅτι ἐγὼ ἡγάπησά σε). Thus, Jesus challenges the ethnic identity as securing a place of blessing within the covenant community.

Moreover, the reason for victory is given in verse 10: keeping God's word and enduring. As a result, they will be spared of the universal judgement of Christ. These, again, are themes that play a major role in our pericope.

Luke 13:17: Strength for the weak, shame for the adversaries, glory to God

In the gospels, scholars have argued for allusions of Isa 45:16–17, 24 applied to Jesus' response to the synagogue's ruler after healing a woman on the Sabbath in Luke 13:17.¹⁹⁸ The text comes as Luke's commentary to the situation. The woman had been ill for eighteen years by a debilitating spirit, conditioning her to a bend over–posture and weakness (ἰδοὺ γυνὴ πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας [Luke 13:11]). Jesus heals her by his word, giving her back strength and a right posture—freeing her of her weakness (ἰδὼν δὲ αὐτὴν ὁ Ἰησοῦς προσεφώνησεν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῇ· γύναι, ἀπολέλυσαι τῆς ἀσθενείας σου [Luke 13:12]).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹⁷ Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 1097.

¹⁹⁸ Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 334.

¹⁹⁹ Isa 45:24 LXX renders the Hebrew **רֹאשׁ** with δόξα. The Latin Vulgate follows this interpretative move by rendering *imperium* instead. However, the Peshitta follows the Hebrew more closely using **لَهْوَ** (root, **لَهْوَ**; lex form, **لَهْوَ**), strength or power. Sokolof 1144; Payne, 430

It is interesting to note the shame–glory parallel, which is pervasive throughout our pericope, and becomes clearer in verses 24b–25. The verb for shaming in Isa 45:16–17 LXX, 24 (αἰσχύνω) and the verb used in Luke 13:17 (καταισχύνω) share a common root.²⁰⁰ After shaming, Isa 45:25 LXX prophesies that ἐν τῷ θεῷ ἐνδοξασθήσονται πᾶν τὸ σπέρμα τῶν οὐών Ισραὴλ. The Lukan account ends noting that πᾶς ὁ ὄγλος ἔχαιρεν ἐπὶ πᾶσιν τοῖς ἐνδόξοις τοῖς γινομένοις ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ.

All in all, this account resembles much the progression of salvation needed, weakness stated, salvation provided through word and act, shaming of the enemies and glory to God we see in Isaiah 45:14–25. As to the plausibility of Jesus fulfilling the prophecy at a micro–level, I believe an argument could be made, but the reader must make his own mind.

Other Themes and Connections to the New Testament

After Jerusalem’s council, in Acts 15:18, James ends his first address by saying that the salvation of the gentiles was ‘known of old,’—γνωστὰ ἀπ’ αἰῶνος—by God. Some believe that the wording echoes Isa 45:21 LXX ‘ἴνα γνῶσιν ἂμα τίς ἀκουστὰ ἐποίησεν ταῦτα ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς.’ To be sure, the evidence seems scarce to arrive to any undisputed conclusion. Nevertheless, the context of the salvation of gentiles, and the many other prophets James alludes or echo in his speech could be arguments in favor of holding a connection between Isa 45:21 LXX and Acts 15:18.²⁰¹

Other possible echoes in the NT include notes of God revealing himself, Jesus not having spoken in secret during his trial in John 18:20,²⁰² the Spirit revealing all things to believers in John 16:13–14.²⁰³ Also, there is the possibility of a minor connection between the

²⁰⁰ Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and William Arndt, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 517.

²⁰¹ See discussion in Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 591–592.

²⁰² See, Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 500.

²⁰³ Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 495.

unknown god of Acts 17:22–23—Ἄγνωστῳ θεῷ, and Isa 45:15 LXX which reads σὺ γὰρ εἶ θεός, καὶ οὐκ ἴδειμεν, ὁ θεὸς τοῦ Ισραὴλ σωτήρ. The theological connection is indeed warranted. However, as in the text of James, it seems to be an echo at best. Notwithstanding, if the connection is made, it helps to underscore God’s self-revelation, rather than his hiddenness.²⁰⁴

Overall, all these connections help the interpreter either support thesis derived from Isa 45:14–25, or better understand some insights and nuances of the text.

²⁰⁴ See discussion in Beale and Carson, *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*, 594.

Appendix IV: An Archaeological Note and Paleographic Exercise from 1QIsa^a

Archaeological Note

The Qumran caves discovery revolutionized the world of biblical archaeology as few others have. The vast number of documents prompted a whole field of research involving archaeology, paleography, linguistics, history, etcetera. Some suggest that there are still some more manuscripts buried and waiting to be discovered.²⁰⁵ Hence research on the DSS is still an ongoing topic.²⁰⁶ Its importance for biblical research is still unparalleled.²⁰⁷

The discovery of the Scrolls brought back to life archaeologist's interest in Khirbet Qumran. Given the significance of this event, especially for those of us who are convinced in the doctrine of the preservation of Scripture, my purpose here is to present basic notions of both the DSS caves' history, and the argument that links it to Khirbet Qumran. Then, I will present a sample of paleographical work on a portion of Isa 445:14–25 from 1QIsa^a.

The main purpose of archaeology is to reconstruct ancient life as close as possible, by the observation, preservation, and record of buried remains.²⁰⁸ The nature of this remains varies from great cities in need of whole teams and several expeditions to be unearthed, to small coins that someone may find along an ancient road, and from great collections of documents, such as the DSS, to small inkpots and writing artifacts.

²⁰⁵ Safrai Baruch, "More Scrolls Lie Buried," *BAS/SBL*, The Dead Sea Scrolls, 1, 1 (2007): 21–29.

²⁰⁶ Alfred J. Hoerth and John McRay, *Bible Archaeology: An Exploration of the History and Culture of Early Civilizations* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005), 155.

²⁰⁷ Blaiklock proposes that any archaeological treatise of either the Old or the New Testament not dealing with this discovery is incomplete. See E. M. Blaiklock, *The Archaeology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), 141.

²⁰⁸ Currid defines archaeology as the systematic study of the material remains of human behavior in the past. He then, quotes Roland de Vaux—the chief archeologist at Khirbet Qumran after the Dead Sea Scrolls discovery—when he stated that: "Archaeology, therefore, is limited to the *realia*, but it studies all the *realia* [...] everything that exhibits a trace of the presence or activity of man. Archaeology seeks, describes, and classifies these materials." It is this realism of the material objects of archeological inquiry that led Stuart Piggott to say that archeology is the "science of rubbish." See Currid, *The Case for Archaeology*, 4–5.

Limits of Archaeology—A Disclaimer

Regardless of how fascinating the idea of reconstructing the past sounds, reality is more complex. There are many limitations to archaeology; limitations we must recognize to make proper use of it as another tool, as opposed to *the only* tool to understand the past. These limitations are either in the extent of evidence, or in the interpretation of such evidence.²⁰⁹

As it pertains to our topic, limitations concerning the interpretation of evidence may explain that some scholars disregard the fact of a scribe using the last line of the 1QIsa^a scroll to continue writing a flawless text—changing from 1QIsa^a 39 to 1QIsa^a 40—as a good reason to uphold Isaiah’s unity. On the other hand, limitations concerning evidence proper would the the fragmentary nature of some portions of 1QIsa^a. Add to these the “politics of archaeology” and then the strong since that archaeology seem to be stop looking so strong.²¹⁰ Thus, given the archaeology’s interpretative nature, the more informed it is in relation to other helping sciences, the better its results will be—these helping sciences include biblical and theological studies.

²⁰⁹ Currid mentions that archaeology is limited in the information that it provides, while Matthieu Richelle deals with these difficulties by dividing them into two major groups: those that have to do with the interpretation of data; and those which are inherent to excavations. The limits linked to the interpretation of data are basically those that recognize a variety of opinions in how the same facts are to be understood by scholars. These include 1) some lack of certitude in the identification of sites, 2) correlations that are possible, but not necessarily proven, and 3) the mere interpretative nature of the results and conclusions in contrast to the material reality of the facts. On the other hand, the fact that the object of an excavation being in ruins, the partial nature of an excavation site, and the fact that not all the results of the excavations are often published, as is the case with Qumran, are limits that proceed from the nature of excavations themselves. See, Currid, *The Case for Archaeology*; Matthieu Richelle, *The Bible & Archaeology* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2018), 50–60.

²¹⁰ Jodi Magness takes the pains to explain what I call ‘*The Politics of Archeology*’, this is, what is the way in which archeological sites are managed, and who has the power to disclose information regarding those sites. She also goes into the details of the case of Khirbet Qumran and clear the way off from any conspiracy theory. See, Jodi Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Studies in the Dead Sea Scrolls and Related Literature (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 3.

Read also the Hershel Shanks’s archaeological autobiography, in which he relates the major pains and toils of accessing, studying, and publishing information about the DSS. See, Hershel Shanks, *Freeing the Dead Sea Scrolls and Other Adventures of an Archaeology Outsider* (London: Continuum, 2010).

The Importance of Archaeology to Biblical Sciences

Those of us who are committed to the inerrancy of Scripture have the advantage of using Scripture as an inerrant guide to interpret archaeological data. However, whereas Scripture is inerrant, it does not always make exhaustive statements about everything archaeologists wonder. So, we too, as Scripture believers, should be prudent and cautious²¹¹ in the way we use Scripture to interpret archaeological discoveries.

There are many ways to relate archaeology and the Bible.²¹² Currid's view—Informed by his Reformed—sustains that the Bible does not need to be proven. Rather, Biblical archaeology serves to “illumine, confirm, and give ‘earthiness’ to the Scriptures.” In this sense, archaeology might be called a servant to Scripture.²¹³

Khirbet Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls Sites

Geography

Both Khirbet Qumran and the DSS caves (or Qumran Caves) are situated close to one another,²¹⁴ north-west to the Dead Sea. From north to south, these sites are located in the western shore of the Dead Sea in the Rift Valley

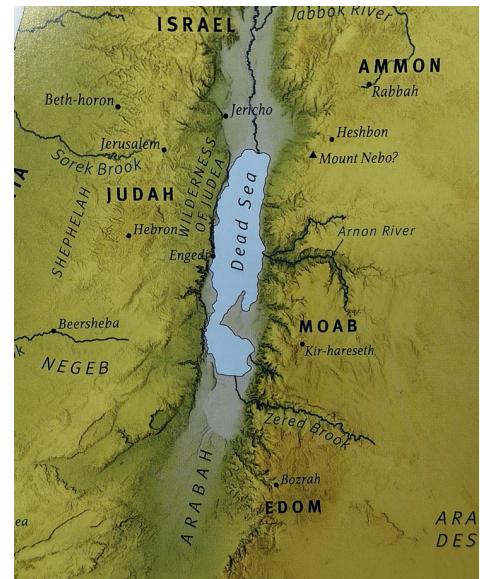


Figure 1: Geography of the Sites. ESV Atlas of Archaeology, Crossway

²¹¹ To be cautious is *not* to be suspicious. We take what the Bible says at face value. Nevertheless, we must not go beyond what it says and consider unwarranted assumptions in our interpretation of archaeological data.

²¹² Richelle offers various views concerning this relationship. The major three are 1) biblical history proved by archaeology. 2) Archaeology as the only source of history. 3) Archaeology to demythologize the Bible. Richelle explains that when the first expeditions were planned, the explorers went with their Bibles at hand and with the purpose of proving the Bible right, by confirming and illustrating what it said by the archaeological discoveries of the time. Concerning archaeology as the *only* historical source, this view is held by scholars who think that most of the Bible is constituted by historical fiction. There are both theological and scientific reasons why this view is considered by some as radical and unrealistic. This is probably the epitome of skepticism.

Finally, some approach of archaeology as a judge for the Bible. Perhaps the most renowned proponent of this approach would be Israel Finkelstein. However, Nadav Na'aman, colleague to Finkelstein, remarks that archaeology is so limited in what it can do, that it is unreasonable to think of it as the '*High Court*' in historical matters. See, Richelle, *The Bible & Archaeology*, 62–67.

²¹³ Currid, *The Case for Archaeology*, 3.

²¹⁴ Cave one stands a little over 800 meters from the archaeological site, while other caves are as near as 250 meters from the site.

region. The Dead Sea stands out as being the lowest point on earth at 1,300 ft below sea level. It is important to note that, due to its location, Qumran site is prone to earthquakes.²¹⁵ The sites are in what is called the Judean Wilderness.²¹⁶ It is the peculiarity of the climate found there that allowed the preservation of the DSS.

Because of the Palestinian geography, the rain clouds coming from the Mediterranean Sea in the east and towards the Dead Sea in the west are interrupted by the Central Highlands.²¹⁷ This results in a precipitation rate of 2-6 inches per year for the Judean Wilderness.²¹⁸ It is the aridity of the place that makes it ideal for preservation of the DSS. The origin of the word *Qumran* is uncertain; however, the site gets its name from the Wadi Qumran nearby that region.²¹⁹

The Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The discovery of the Scrolls has many accounts. These are the things common to most. The first cave (1Q) was discovered in the winter of 1946-47 by accident by Bedouin pastors that were keeping their livestock near that area. In this



Figure 2: Cave 4 at Qumran. Wikipedia Commons

cave there were ten different jars, many of which were empty. One of these jars, however, contained three scrolls, two of which were wrapped in linen. The Bedouin pastors removed other four scrolls after that from this same cave. The seven scrolls were 1) one complete and 2) one partial copy of the book of Isaiah, 3) the Community Rule (also known as the Manual

²¹⁵ Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran*, 19–20.

²¹⁶ John D. Currid and David P. Barrett, *Crossway ESV Bible Atlas* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 22–24.

²¹⁷ Currid, *The Case for Archaeology*, 16.

²¹⁸ Currid and Barrett, *Crossway ESV Bible Atlas*, 32.

²¹⁹ Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran*, 24.

of Discipline), 4) the *Pesher of Habakkuk*, 5) The War Scroll, 6) The Thanksgiving Hymns (or Hymn Scroll), and 7) the Genesis Apocryphon.

These Bedouin pastors sold the scrolls to a man in Bethlehem named Kando, who then sold four of them to a member of the Syrian Orthodox Church—Athanasius Yeshua Samuel. Kando, then, sent another lot of three scrolls to Eleazar Lippa Sukenik, an archaeologist and biblical scholar who was the first one to recognize their authenticity as 1st cent. documents and make a connection with the Essenes. In 1954, Samuel went to the US to sell the four scrolls in his possession. There, Yigael Yadin—Sukenik’s son—purchased the remaining scrolls. In this way, all seven scrolls from Cave 1 came to the possession of the state of Israel.²²⁰

Excavations by Roland de Vaux

In February of 1949, Roland de Vaux and G. Lankester Harding returned to Cave 1 to continue excavation labors. There, they found some pottery, pieces of white linen cloth, and more manuscript fragments. These discoveries, among those of other caves later to be excavated would prove important in relating the original scroll owners to the people who inhabited Khirbet Qumran in the Hellenistic same period. At first, de Vaux and Harding—having worked also at Khirbet Qumran—found no evidence of any relationship between that site and Cave 1. They went along with the common understanding of Qumran as a Roman fort.²²¹ After some years of working at the Qumran caves, both de Vaux and Harding change their view and sustained a direct connection between both sites: Khirbet Qumran was most probably the community where the scrolls were originated. When they changed, most scholars followed.²²²

²²⁰ Some of the works consulted and compared to produce this brief account were the following: Blaiklock, *Archaeology of the New Testament*, 141–43; Henry Thomas Frank, “How the Dead Sea Scrolls Were Found,” *BAS/SBL, The Dead Sea Scrolls* 1.1 (2007): 7–19; Hoerth and McRay, *Bible Archaeology*, 150–52; Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran*, 25–29; Walter G. Williams, *Archaeology in Biblical Research* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1965), 72–75.

²²¹ Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran*, 27.

²²² Even Avi-Yonah, one of the first proponents of the for hypothesis, changed his view after reviewing the new evidence de Vaux’s Cave 1 excavations uncovered.

Evidence for a Relationship Associated to Scribal Practices

Pottery

Due to the growing interest in the DSS, de Vaux and Harding returned to Khirbet Qumran in 1951. It was until then that, de Vaux and Hardin observed that some of the pottery found in Khirbet Qumran (L1-L5) was identical to that found in Cave 1. This led him to conclude that there must

have been a direct connection with the DSS. Then he notices that this was also the case in relation to other Qumran caves.²²³ Jodi Magness has commented that: “That the types found in the caves (including the “scroll jars”) are identical in form, fabric and date with those from the settlement attests to the connection between the scrolls and the settlement.”²²⁴

Inkpots and the Scriptorium

At Khirbet Qumran, de Vaux found a room with two inkpots. The named the place ‘The *Scriptorium* (L30).’ In the room next to it (L31), another inkpot was also unearthed. In addition to the inkpots, a plastered bench and a table were uncovered at *Locus 30* in Khirbet Qumran. This was the evidence that led de Vaux (and many others) to conclude that writing activity was going on at Qumran at the time the site was abandoned.



Figure 3: Manuscript Pottery Types from Q1. Free domain.



Figure 4: Inkpot found at The Scriptorium. BAS Website

²²³ Magness, *The Archaeology of Qumran and the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 27–28; To expand on introductory discussions about the importance of pottery in archaeological science see, Magness, 11–12; Currid, *The Case for Archaeology*, 195–200; And John D. Currid, *Doing Archaeology in the Land of the Bible: A Basic Guide* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999), 79–86.

²²⁴ Jodi Magness, “Not a Country Villa,” *BAR* 22.6 (1996): 72.

Lack of Manuscripts found at Khirbet Qumran Explained

Megen and Peleg—arguing against a relationship—point out the fact that no papyri or parchment were found at Khirbet Qumran. He remarks this as an oddity if we suppose that this was a site dedicated to writing.²²⁵ Thus, the lack of manuscript fragments or manuscript materials at Khirbet Qumran, may, at first glance, appear as lack of evidence. Megen and Peleg raise a fair question. If inkpots are clear evidence of writing activity, how do scholars explain the lack of writing material there?

Excavations have shown that a fire that took place at Qumran between 4 BCE and 68 CE. This fire would have consumed any writing material such as papyri or parchment fairly quickly. Other archaeological evidence, as Roman arrowheads dating to the 1st century C.E found in L12, L13 and L17, were also unearthed at the site. This evidence also give another reason why the DSS were “hidden.”

Paleographic Exercise²²⁶

Paleography—the study and examination of ancient script—is a complex discipline, albeit rewarding. Its purpose is to analyze the characteristic of texts and scripts to provide an approximate date in which such text was produced. Regularly, through detailed observation of the textual features, the paleographer compares his observations against texts that are fairly set in terms of dating. This “set dates” may be accomplished either by internal references—the text provides a date somewhere—or by scientific methods—such as Carbon 14 dating.

However, Hebrew paleography presents especial challenges. When compared to other languages—like Greek or Latin—there is a paucity of Hebrew textual evidence available for

²²⁵ Yizhak Magen and Yuval Peleg, “Back to Qumran: Ten Years of Excavation And Research, 1993–2004,” in *Qumran, the Site of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Archaeological Interpretations and Debates*, ed. Katharina Galor, vol. 57 of *STDJ* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 55–113.

²²⁶ All Images credited to the Israeli Museum, which has made the entire scroll digitally available for research at: <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah>.

study prior the Medieval times. Since paleography is, by nature, a comparative science, the difficulty of Hebrew paleography is that there is not much material to make such comparisons. And, though there are some other scientific methods available for dating, these many times are overly expensive and might damage the manuscript. As a result, Hebrew paleographers have had to resort to ingenious methods—like comparison with epigraphical data—which allow them to provide quite decent estimates. Thus, even with its difficulties, paleography is still today the number-one technique for Hebrew manuscript dating.

Nonetheless, date is only one result from any paleographic study. By noticing patterns in manuscripts, paleographers can tell if there was one scribe, or many; if the scribe was trained, or not; if he wrote fast or slow; and even a possible purpose for the manuscript in antiquity.

For the paleographical analysis, my purpose is, overall, descriptive. 1QIsa^a's date has been well established—ca. 125 BCE—and I do not pretend to re-invent the wheel. Instead, this is a personal exercise and is not intended to be comprehensive.²²⁷ May it function as an invitation for any reader to get acquainted with some basic notions, challenges, and delights of paleography.

This descriptive analysis will begin with some general remarks concerning 1QIsa^a. Then, I will note the transition from 1QIsa^a 39 to 1QIsa^a 40; as it was mentioned above. After this, I will observe some of the details concerning hand, script, and scribal habits that might have produced some textual variants when compared to the MT. Finally, I will share some brief readings from 1QIsa^a 45:14–23 including a transliteration to modern Hebrew font, and the MT vocalized text.

²²⁷ For a complete work on paleography, see Ada Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew Script: History, Palaeography, Script Styles, Calligraphy & Design* (London: The British Library, 2002).

Though not exclusively on 1QIsa^a, Tov's Scribal Practices deal with most of the content of 1QIsa^a. See Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, SJD 54 (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

General Characteristics

Having Qumran Cave 1 as its provenance (1Q), 1QIsa^a consists of seventeen pieces of sheepskin sewn together into a single scroll measuring twenty-four feet in length by ten inches in height. The scroll presents fifty-four columns of text, with approximately twenty-nine lines each.²²⁸

The manuscript has been preserved in good form for the most part. Nevertheless, it does show signs of some damage. Some loci show lacunas which may be small and almost irrelevant, to major losses of text. The text has been described as *free* in its copying approach. Also, at least two hands are distinguishable—the first, working 1QIsa^a 1:1–33:24, and the second copying 1QIsa^a 34:1–66:24.²²⁹ The scribal hands will be compared and described below. Both scribes, on occasion, commit mistakes and use marginal notes to correct or clarify those. Finally, some especial signs and symbols are present, and will be explained below.

To find a text within 1QIsa^a, locators are given by using the column designator—a roman numeral in uppercase letters—and the HB chapter and number.

Writing Surface

The sheepskin texture is evident in any close-up image of the text. Even from the distance (fig. 5), the rugged skin-

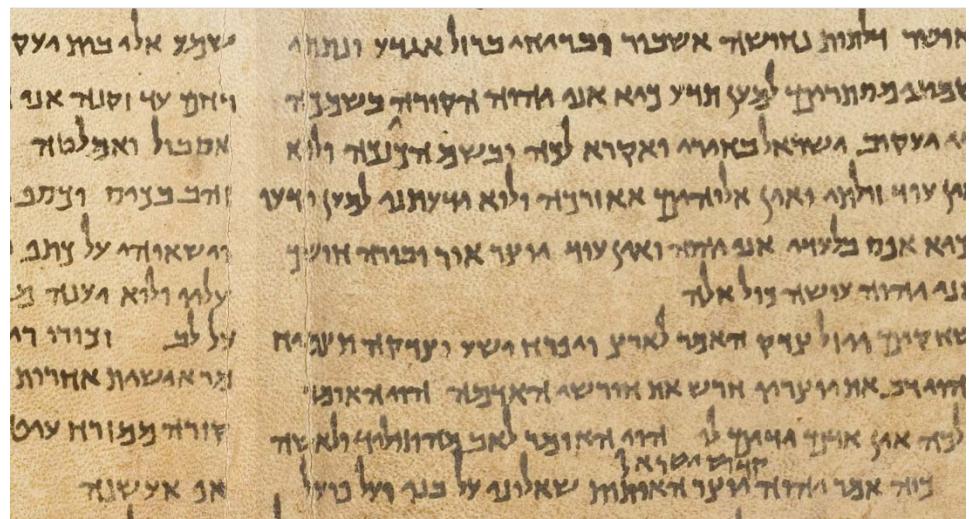


Figure 5: 1QIsa^a Sheepskin Material. Exhibit A. Image from The Israel Museum.

like pattern is visible.

²²⁸ Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 21–24.

²²⁹ Tov, *Textual Criticism*, 369–76; Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, 19–23; Parry, *Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls*, 22.

These desert-like shapes are the natural cutaneous mosaicism of any land-mammal. The beige color answers also to the leather-like nature of this material. When hydrated, this would have provided a soft yet durable surface in which to write.

Enlarging this image (fig. 6, 7), both the mosaicism and the cracks due to dry weather are evident in the blank space between written lines, and in the margins.

Though there is good historical evidence concerning the authenticity of this piece, it is worth noting that the cracks do not present “ink-bleeding.”

This phenomenon occurs when forgers first dry the material to make it look old, and then proceed to write on top of it. Since, in those cases, the cracks are already present, the ink “bleeds” through the crack, and leaves an

unnatural mark in the manuscript. When dealing with papyrus, old ink written before the crack appeared would have been absorbed by the material. However, in sheepskin, the ink cannot penetrate to the hypodermis, and the cracks produce blank spaces.

This sheepskin was marked with horizontal lines to provide a guide—known also as ruler, or scoring—for the scribe.²³⁰ For materials like sheepskin, it is possible that the score

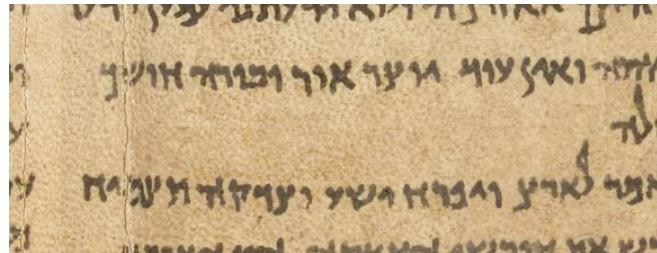


Figure 6: 1QIsa^a Sheepskin Material. Exhibit B. Image from The Israel Museum.

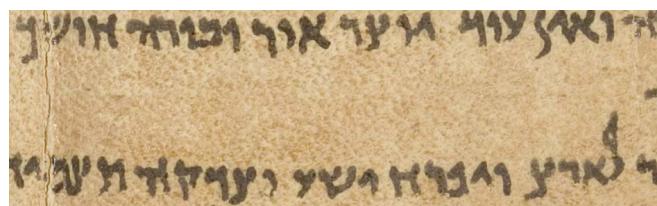


Figure 7: 1QIsa^a Sheepskin Material. Exhibit C. Image from The Israel Museum.



Figure 8: 1QIsa^a Sheepskin Material. Ruling. Exhibit A. Image from The Israel Museum.

²³⁰ For a complete treatment of the topic, see Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judean Desert*, 53–64.

was made with a sort of reed or some other hard, sharp, and straight device. This would have been pressed against the sheepskin while being prepared. Once the scribe would start writing, the baseline would have been clear. At most portions in 1QIsa^a, the scoring is still noticeable. Dry weather fixed the marks in place so that the patterns are still visible to the naked eye.

In addition to the horizontal ruling, a vertical ruling would be provided to delineate the limits of each column. Scribes tended to respect more the vertical margins at the beginning of each line that the end.

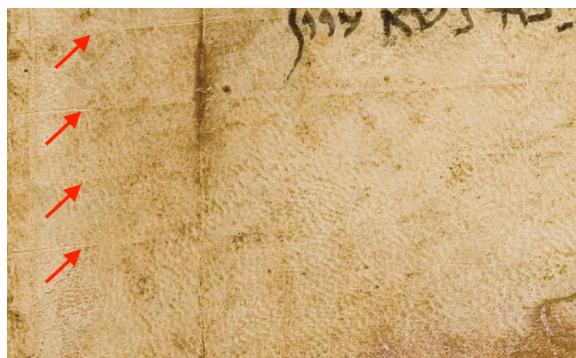


Figure 9: 1QIsa^a Col XXXVII–Col XXXIX. Image from The Israel Museum.

Red arrows point to the places where the score is guiding the Scribe.

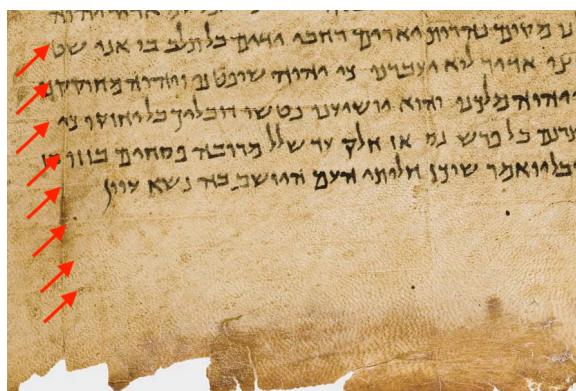


Figure 10: 1QIsa^a Col XXXVII–Col XXXIX. Image from The Israel Museum.

Red arrows point to the places where the score is guiding the Scribe.

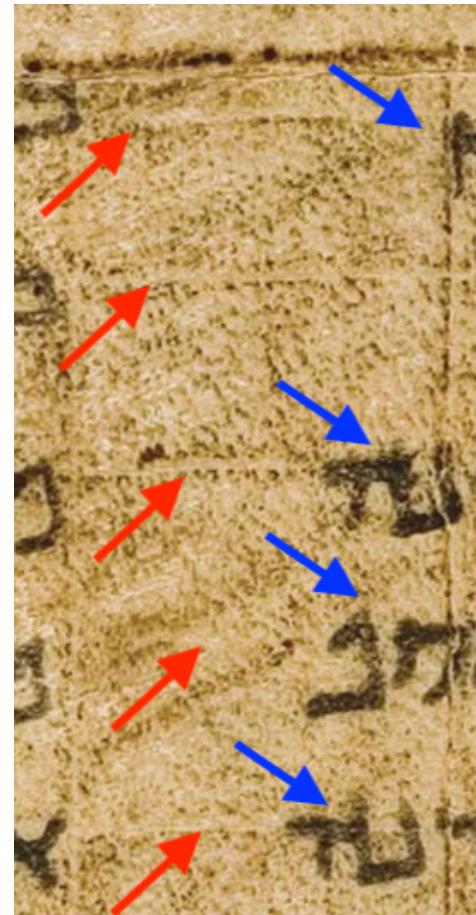


Figure 11: 1QIsa^a Col XXXVII–Col XXXIX. Image from The Israel Museum.

Red arrows point to the places where the score is guiding the Scribe. Blue, where the scribe did not respect the horizontal margin.

Script Characteristics and Writing Materials

The Early Hasmonean Script—dated to the second half of the 2nd cent. BCE—is the most representative script from the Judean desert discoveries. Clearly, within the textual witnesses portraying this kind of script, the Great Isaiah scroll stands as paramount.²³¹

The script used is non vocalized Aramaic square, slow, and small. Ornamentation starts to show as a small serif in some letters. Final mem is prominent, but other final forms are not yet seen, or very similar to non-final forms.

The strokes are regularly thick and clean, made from top to bottom and from upper left to down write. The writing tool is a frayed calamus, which, in conjunction with the soft nature of the sheepskin, explains the pleasant thickness and roundness of the signs. Scribes begin the stroke at the baseline, except for *lamed*. On occasion, *beth* and *kaph*; *waw* and *zayin*; and *resh* and *daleth* are hard to distinguish from one another.

Location of the Pericope

The text of Isaiah 45:14–25 is located within Col XXXVIII and Col XXXIX in 1QIsa^a.



Figure 12: 1QIsa^a Col XXXVII–Col XXXIX. Image from The Israel Museum.

The two central columns contain Isa 45:14–25.

²³¹ For a helpful introduction to more technical aspects of the Hasmonean script, see Yardeni, *The Book of Hebrew*, 170–171.

The text is written in a continued fashion. On occasion, some spaces are left to begin a new section of the book. Isa 45:14 begins on Col XXXVIII, line 21. The first words have been lost due to the significant lacuna with an uneven scalene quadrilateral shape.

The Two Hands of 1QIsa^a

It has long been noted that 1QIsa^a is a collaborative effort between two scribes. It is likely that they did not work at the same time since it would have been difficult to foretell how many columns the task of the first scribe would have taken. Instead, more plausibly, the second scribe began its work after the first had finished.

These two hands are often referred to as Scribe A for Col I– XXVII and Scribe B for Col XXVIII–ff. For what follows in this exercise, we will use such nomenclature. Overall, Scribe B seems more cautious, meticulous, and slow when compared to Scribe A. Scribe B is more consistent in style. It is possible that Scribe B was a senior scribe, since there are some corrections in Col I– XXVII —the section written by Scribe A—which are consistent with Scribe B’s hand.

Scribal Hand A: יִשְׂרָאֵל

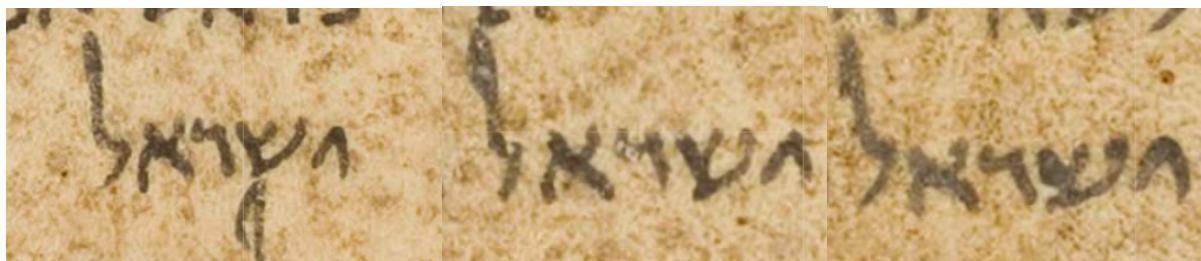


Figure 13: 1QIsa^a Scribe A—Israel. Images from The Israel Museum. From left to right, Samples 1 (left), 2 (center), and 3 (right).

In these three different samples of the word יִשְׂרָאֵל, we notice some features from Scribe A. First, we see the differences even within Scribe A’s own handwriting. See the different thickness in *šin*, sample 3 being thicker and less stylized than sample 1. Thickness varies between strokes, and so gives the appearance of irregularity even within the same word. Sample 1 presents a thinner *reš* and *lamed* than samples 2 and 3. The *reš* also in Samples 1 and 3 seem to be composed by two strokes without raising the writing tool. However, in Sample 2 *reš* clearly presents two independent strokes. Considering the similarities, overall, Scribe A’s handwriting is tilted to the left, clearly seen in the *aleph* and *reš* of each Sample. Scribe A’s *lamed* is written fast, so that the mast’s ornament is difficult to perceive. Sample 2 presents a wider mast, while it is reduced in Sample 3, and almost imperceptible in Sample 1. Finally, Scribe A presents a very sharp *yod*—always in an acute angle, better perceived in Sample 1.

Scribal Hand B: ישראלי

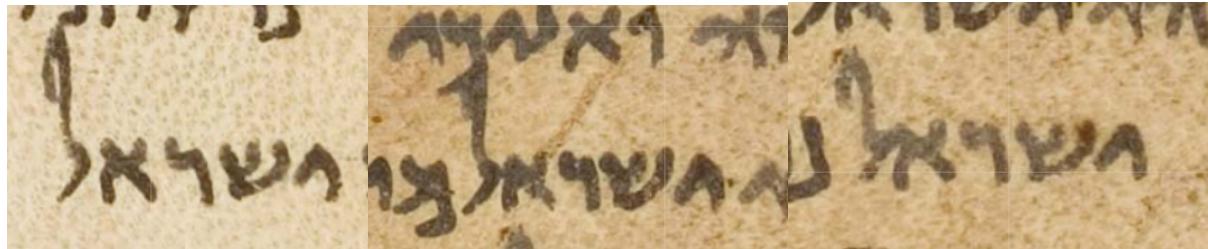


Figure 14: 1QIsa^a Scribe B—Israel. Images from The Israel Museum. From left to right, Samples 1 (left), 2 (center), and 3 (right).

Scribe B seem to follow a more consistent pattern. When considering thickness and shape of each letter, it holds a more pleasant and uniform style than Scribe A. Each *lamed* shows more variation at the end of its words, however, there is care in drawing the mast. *Šin* are consistent—drown in three strokes. Beginning up and left, the first stroke is a delicate curve ending slightly more to the right and in the bottom. From this initial stroke, two others follow. First, the smaller medial stroke, then the larger right last curvature. The order is evident from Sample 3, where both the thickness and saturation of the stroke fade as the calamus loses ink.

Scribal Hand A and B: Final *Mem*

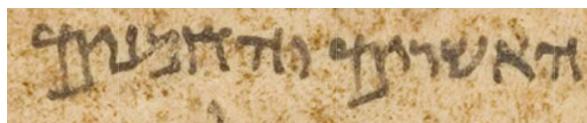


Figure 15: 1QIsa^a 17:8 Scribe A—Mem. האשרים והתמנים. Image from The Israel Museum.



Figure 16: 1QIsa^a 45:18 Scribe B—Mem. האלוהים, השמיים. Image from The Israel Museum.

As mentioned above, final *mem* in Hasmonean period then to be more prominent than the rest of the letters. This is both true for Scribe A (fig. 15) and Scribe B (fig. 16). Yet, Scribe A shows a brusquer change in comparison to the other signs. The horn in Scribe's A *mem* is formed by an abrupt curvature retroverting toward *mem*'s roof, and sometimes, even forming a loop. Scribe B in turn, is more subtle. *Mem*'s horn in B is forms by leaving the calamus in place longer, so that ink will accumulate and form a wider pool, which gives the horn its pronounced thickness. Bearing in mind that this ornament is done on the first stroke, this again speaks to Scribe B's slow and patient hand.

Scribal Hand A and B: Thus Says the Lord

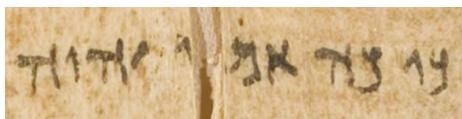


Figure 17: 1QIsa^a 21:16 Scribe A—Thus says the Lord, כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה. Image from The Israel Museum.



Figure 18: 1QIsa^a 45:18 Scribe B—Thus says the Lord, כִּי כֹה אָמַר יְהוָה. Image from The Israel Museum.

Figures 17 and 18 show us another scribal figure separating Scribe A and Scribe B. Scribe B tends to use *aleph* to complete *plene* readings of the text almost every time, while Scribe A does not. This is one harmless feature generating hundreds of textual variants.

Scribe B Consistency

Notice the comparison between these three pairs. The resemblance is evident. Also, in the אָרֶץ-pair, the final *tsere* is not different at this point from a medial *there*. Finally, notice the consistency of using *lamed-yod* ligatures for לִי, which helps the reader distinguish the word from לְוָא.

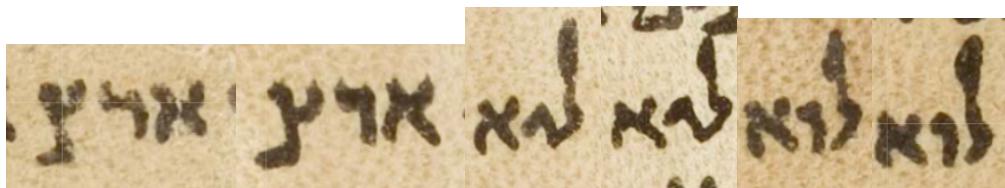


Figure 19: 1QIsa^a Scribe B—Consistency. Images from The Israel Museum. From left to right, Samples 1 (left)—אָרֶץ-pair, 2 (center)—אָרֶץ-pair, and 3—אָרֶץ-pair (right).

Thus far the paleographic exercise. For what's left, I will now share annotated figures on interesting features and occurrences.

Damage, Signs, Marginalia, and Corrections



Figure 20: 1QIsa^a Column I—Damage. Image from The Israel Museum. It is common for the bottom, top, and external parts of a scroll to damage the most, as those were most exposed through time and use.

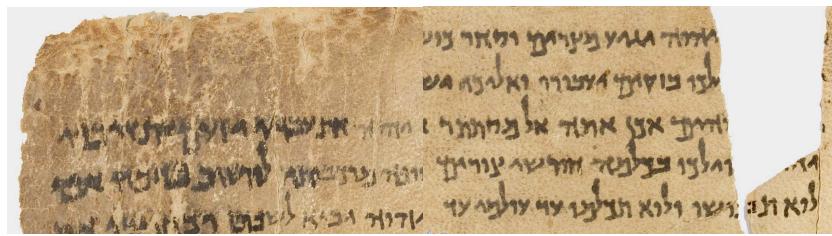


Figure 21: 1QIsa^a—Damage. Images from The Israel Museum.

To the left, the last Column (LIV) also damaged—remaining the inner core of the scroll—after being rolled for years. To the right, a lacuna in Col XXXVIII making us miss portions from lines 16–24, affecting the first verses of our text.

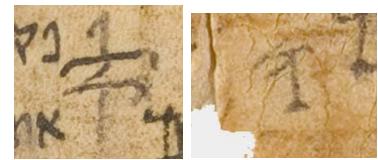


Figure 22: 1QIsa^a—Symbols. Images from The Israel Museum.

Paleo-Hebrew waws to mark new sections.



Figure 23 (left): 1QIsa^a—Corrections and Marginalia. Image from The Israel Museum.

This image is quite interesting. In the second line from top to bottom, at the middle of the line, we see a correction on top of the line with some characteristics worth noting. First, the second word is YHWH, marked by four dots at the top of a word. Then, the Scribe runs out of space and continues the correction vertically. Third, the four dots at the bottom of the word serve a different purpose. The word *davar* has been repeated on the left vertical note and on the continued horizontal line. Hence, the four dots underneath mark a deletion to be made by the reader, or any future copyist.



Figure 25 (Up): 1QIsa^a—Symbols. Images from The Israel Museum. Both called Tetrapuncta. Left, Supra: YHWH. Right, Infra, Deletion.



Figure 24: 1QIsa^a—Corrections. Image from The Israel Museum. The vertical annotation has been turned 90 degrees to the right for the reader.

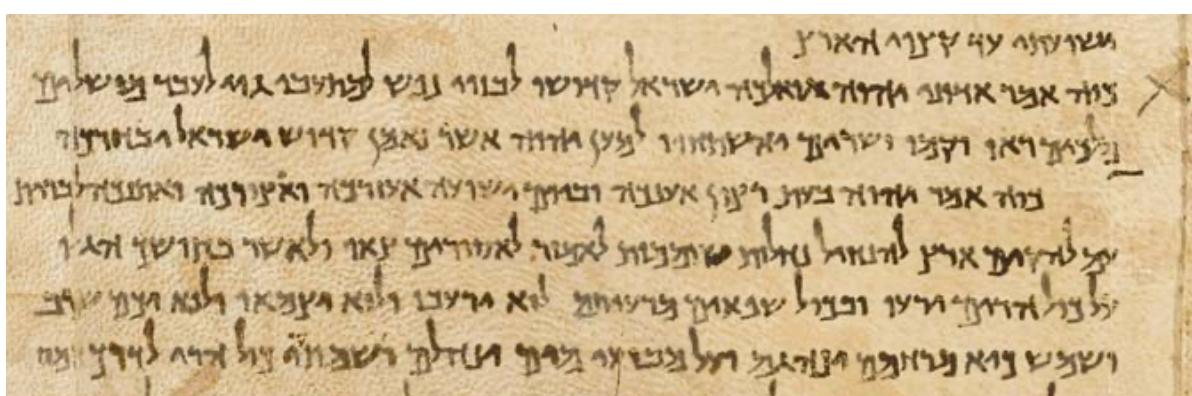


Figure 26 (Up): 1QIsa^a—Symbols. Image from The Israel Museum.

The Cross, lines, and loops, (top left) were used to call attention to certain sections. It has been theorized that these were considered Messianic passages by the author of these symbols. To be sure, some locations are indeed Messianic texts, though not all of them.

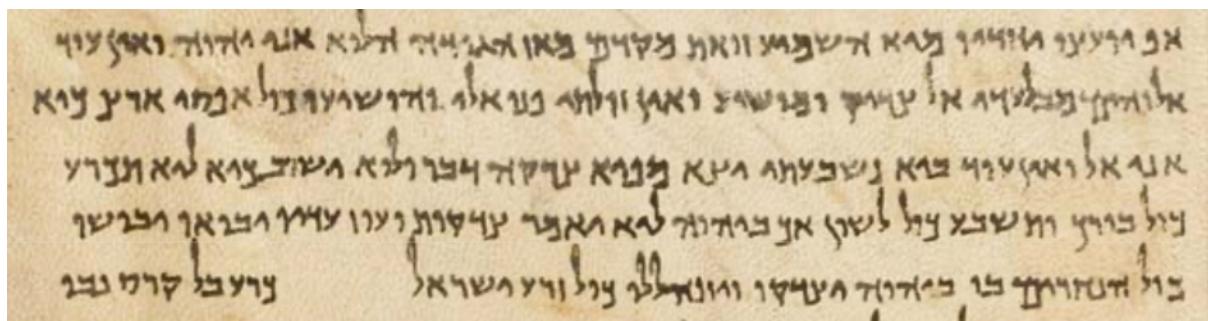


Figure 27: 1QIsa^a Col XXXIX 1–5 (Isa 45:22b–46a)—Consonantal Text. Image from The Israel Museum.

Consonantal Text

אָף יַעֲצֹו יְהָדָיו מֵאָשָׁם וְזֹאת מִקְדָּם מִאָז הַגִּידָה הַלְוָא אָנָי יְהָה וְאַיְן עוֹד
אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלָעְדִי אֶל־צְדִיק וּמוֹשִׁיעַ וְאַיְן זֹלְתִי פָנָוְאֵלִי וְהַשְׁעָוָל אֶפְסִי אֶרְצִי כִּי
אָנָי אֱלֹהִים וְאַיְן עוֹד בֵּיא נְשַׁבְּעָתִי יֵצֵא מִפְּנֵי צְדִיקָה דָבָר וְלֹא יִשְׁוֹבְכִיא לִיא תְּכַרְעַ
כָּוֹל בּוֹרָךְ וְתְשַׁבֵּעַ כָּוֹל לְשׁוֹן אֶכְבִּיהָה לִי אָמַר צְדִיקָות וְעַז עֲדָיו יַבּוֹא וַיְבָשֹׁו
כָּוֹל הַנְּחָרִים בּוֹ בִּיהָה יִצְדָּקוּ וַיְתַהַלֵּלוּ כָּל־זָרְעִיַּרְאֵל כְּרֻעַ בְּלִ קְרָס נְבָוֹ

Vocalized Text

אָף יַעֲצֹו יְהָדָיו מֵי הַשְׁמִיעַ זֹאת מִקְדָּם מִאָז הַגִּידָה הַלְוָא אָנָי יְהָה וְאַיְן־עוֹד
אֱלֹהִים מִבְּלָעְדִי אֶל־צְדִיק וּמוֹשִׁיעַ אַיְן זֹלְתִי פָנָוְאֵלִי וְהַשְׁעָוָל כָּל־אֶפְסִי־אֶרְצִי כִּי
אָנָי־אֵל וְאַיְן עוֹד בֵּיא נְשַׁבְּעָתִי יֵצֵא מִפְּנֵי צְדִיקָה דָבָר וְלֹא יִשְׁוֹב כִּי־לִי תְּכַרְעַ
כָּל־בְּרַךְ תְּשַׁבֵּעַ כָּל־לְשׁוֹן אֶד בִּיהָה לִי אָמַר צְדִיקָות וְעַז עֲדָיו יַבּוֹא וַיְבָשֹׁו
כָּל הַנְּחָרִים בּוֹ בִּיהָה יִצְדָּקוּ וַיְתַהַלֵּלוּ כָּל־זָרְעִיַּרְאֵל כְּרֻעַ בְּלִ קְרָס נְבָוֹ

Final Remarks on Archaeology and Paleography

Considering the many approaches to archaeology, only a biblical approach can provide a *thelos*. Why where these sites, scrolls, and texts preserved? How does Khirbet Qumran and the DSS illumine, confirm, and bring earthiness to Scripture?

Consider the preservation of Scripture. Ponder all the ways in which 1QIsa^a could have worked in favor of Isaiah's critics. A change of hand in Chapters 39 to 40 would have been used as an argument for two texts. A lacuna, a correction, or a variant in the texts mentioning

Cyrus would have been used to support the idea that prophecy is not original. Jesus said that *heaven and earth would pass, but that his words would never pass away* (Matt 24:35), and that *until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished* (Matt 5:18). As we have seen, the analysis of 1QIsa^a and the DSS bear testimony of God providentially working to preserve his word.

The apocalyptic theme of Pseudepigraphic documents at Qumran caves testify to the commonality of apocalyptic preaching at the time of John the Baptist.²³² The way in which the Qumran community lived in the dessert expecting to prepare the way for the coming Messiah underscores the singularity of John the Baptist leaving a different life in the wilderness as the one designed by God to prepare the way of the coming Christ—the voice crying in the wilderness (Isa 40:3; Mark. 1:2-8; John 1:6-8, 19-34).

The materialistic reality of the pottery vessels in which the DSS were found help us to bring earthiness to the words of the apostle Paul when he compared us to this pottery by saying that we have the treasure of the Gospel in earthen vessels (2 Co 4:7).²³³ But it also calls to mind him who called God the potter, and us the clay (Isa 64:8),

Finally, we must not disregard the *Messianic* theme that is highlighted in both DSS and NT literature.²³⁴ I believe and defend that from all the nine hundred plus manuscripts found at Qumran, it is *not* by chance that the book of the prophet Isaiah—the one with the most prophecies of the coming *Messiah*—indeed, the most explicitly Christological book in the OT, was the only one to be found complete—as a united whole, even when two scribes produced it.

²³² Mark Keown has a great discussion about how these themes are crucial for our understanding of the New Testament, and, especially, for the gospels. See, Mark J. Keown, *Discovering the New Testament: An Introduction to Its Background, Theology, and Themes*. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018), 47–49.

²³³ Blaiklock links this very text to the Qumran Scrolls as an illustration of what Paul had in mind. See, Blaiklock, *Archeology of the New Testament*, 58.

²³⁴ Richelle comments about the relationship of the author of Hebrews using the figure of Melchizedek and the discovery of the Qumran Scrolls. See, Richelle, *The Bible & Archaeology*, 38.

The science of archeology and the words of God through Isaiah join in the sites of Qumran—like John the Baptist—a new voice crying in the wilderness; bearing witness not for the purpose of preparing the way to a coming *Messiah*, but as a reminder that Christ has already come.

Thus, we remember that archaeology is not made in a historical vacuum, but neither is it made in a theological vacuum. Khirbet Qumran and the DSS, regardless of their relationship (which I think is strong) provide the illumination, confirmation, and earthiness that archaeology is supposed to bring in its service of Scripture.

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