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THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

Jay B. Goldburg

Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of requirements for the degree of Master
of Arts in Hebrew letters and ordination.

Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion

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Referee, Professor Sheldon H. Blank.

THESIS DIGEST

Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah comprise the Isaiah Apocalypse. These four chapters may be entitled Apocalyptic because of four apocalyptic motifs in the chapters. (1) There are references to universal judgment painted in dark and ensanguined colors. (2) There is the messianic theme of salvation and God will establish a new reign on Mount Zion following the universal destruction. (3) There is to be a resurrection for God's select people. (4) The style of the four chapters is one of unusual metaphor and misty (private) symbolism.

After determining that Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah are the Isaiah Apocalypse, I discuss certain commentators and their respective views about the Isaiah Apocalypse. Rashi and Kimhi are the two medieval commentators. They believe that the destruction refers to the nations inimical to Israel, whereas Israel will experience redemption and resurrection. The next commentators are scholars of the twentieth century and they represent two biblical schools of thought. (1) One school believes the Isaiah Apocalypse was written by the historical Isaiah (e.g., Yehezkel Kaufman). (2) The second school believes that the Isaiah Apocalypse is an insertion from a later century (e.g., Pfeiffer).

It is my belief that the theme of the Isaiah Apocalypse is the destruction of alien nations and the ultimate salvation and resurrection of Israel. The alien nations are the

Ptolemaic

& Seleucid Empires, namely Syria, symbolized by the Leviathans, the swift and the winding serpent (Tigris and Euphrates) and Egypt symbolized by the dragon (the Nile River.) The Isaiah Apocalypse is probably a product of the late fourth or early third century B.C.E. This is the time when Apocalyptic became a popular literary form.

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INTRODUCTION

Dr. C. McCown presents a clear and logical etymology of the word 'Apocalypse.' "Apocalypse, Anglicized form of the Greek word ἀποκάλυψις which means literally an 'uncovering,' 'making known.' It came to mean a 'revelation,' 'manifestation,' or a book containing such a revelation. The earliest yet discovered occurrence of the Greek noun is in Sirah (11:27; 22:22; 42:1) late in the second century C.E., where it is used in the sense of a disclosure of secrets. As the title of a book the word appears first toward the end of the first century B.C.E. in the New Testament book Revelation, known also as the Apocalypse of John, and in the Jewish Apocryphal work Apocalypse of Baruch (The Syriac Baruch, known also as II Baruch)."¹ Dr. McCown further writes, "An apocalypse is thus a supernatural revelation of eschatology (the doctrine of the 'last things,' or the future)."²

According to this definition an Apocalypse is a revelation concerning the future events which will occur in the Universe.

Joshua Block has expressed his conception of apocalyptic writings as follows:

The apocalyptic writings embody a large portion of the Jewish eschatological teachings dealing with "the doctrines of the last things" 11S i.e., the secrets of the place and the time of the retribution and the future redemption. They also include such subjects as judgement, the messianic kingdom, the resurrection etc.³

Joshua Block further alludes to Burkitt's^{3a} observation in reference to apocalyptic writings, "Burkitt has correctly pointed out that the fundamental idea which underlies the great series of Apocalyptic writings is the idea of the imminent judgment to come."⁴ Block and Burkitt agree on the fact that apocalyptic literature deals with the future events man and the universe expected to occur at the end of days.

Pfeiffer writes, "Isaiah 24-27 marks the transition from the Nationalistic expectation of a revived kingdom of David to the apocalyptic visions of cosmic upheavals and rebirth of the whole world."⁵ Pfeiffer refers to apocalyptic as a universal phenomenon in which there is a tragic conflagration followed by a universal rebirth. Pfeiffer implies that apocalyptic includes shapes of darkness (judgment) and shapes of expectation if I may be at liberty to give titles to his ideas of apocalyptic. Pfeiffer is also careful to point out that the despair (darkness) and expectation are all encompassing and universal in scope.

In his analysis of apocalyptic Rowley also alludes to deliverance and expectation as two forms evident in apocalyptic. "widely held, of course, were ideas of a great day of divine deliverance and of a golden age to come, and these both influenced the message of the prophets and constituted one of the sources of apocalyptic."⁶

The authors already mentioned have included in their survey of apocalyptic the ideas of darkness, expectation and resurrection. In his article in the Journal of Biblical Literature G. R. Berry presents an excellent summary of his conception of apocalyptic and adds the elements of style (extravagant language) as further being essential to that which is termed apocalyptic. He alludes to this new element at the end of the following quotation.

"The content of the apocalyptic message included several elements. Prominent was the prediction of the destruction of individual nations or groups of nations hostile to Israel. This representation culminated in a gathering of all nations of the earth to fight against Jerusalem, where they were to be destroyed by the direct power of God. After the enemies were overthrown the Jews would rule from Jerusalem over all the nations, and would continue indefinitely in an unexampled state of prosperity. The scattered Jewish Exiles were to return to Jerusalem. These events were to be accompanied by many wonders in the world of nature and by great changes in social conditions.

"Of course, not all these apocalyptic ideas were expressed in any one passage. Any passage, however, which has in a marked degree some of the characteristic features here indicated may usually be safely classed as apocalyptic."⁷

Alluding to the style of the apocalyptic literature G.R. Berry further adds, "This literature always predicted

a glorious future for the nation, using language which was often extravagant, sometimes even fantastic." ⁸ He continues "Frequently it was obscure and enigmatic, in order that it might be understood by the Jews who were initiates, and be unintelligible to their oppressors. Symbols were often used with the same purpose, especially animal figures which represented human beings or nations."⁹

According to the foregoing analysis apocalyptic may be defined or characterized by four different elements or characteristics of eschatology (doctrine of last things.)

1. Shapes of darkness
2. Shapes of expectation
3. Resurrection
4. Style

The shape of darkness is a description of a judgment day of God's wrath and fury which is to be visited on man and nature. There will be cosmic destruction and conflagration in the universe. This concept is contrasted to the shape of expectation which refers to the messianic expectation and the establishment of a new world order following the judgment.

The style of apocalyptic writings is characterised by highly extravagant and exaggerated language and metaphors. Apocalyptic is universal and all-encompassing in its nature, and often weird and strange mythological animals are used to portray foreign nations.

I have found that apocalyptic writings embrace either all or at least one of the four. The degree to which any given passage may be considered apocalyptic will depend on the number of the apocalyptic motifs in evidence and the style of the passage which contain the themes of darkness, expectation and resurrection. The more extravagant and unusual the style the more the passage in consideration will be apocalyptic.

The following paragraphs describe each one of the four characteristics, illustrating each characteristic with references from Scripture.

SHAPES OF DARKNESS

"The period of affliction and punishment is called by Amos, along with several other prophets, 'the day of the Lord' or 'that day.' Apparently the Israelite in his time and even considerably earlier -- meant by this name the day of Judgment in general, that is, the great day on which the wicked would be punished and the righteous be given a good reward. So, since those swimming with the stream and following the usual customs are always confident of their own integrity and righteousness, therefore all such people wished to attain 'the day of the Lord,' in order that they might be privileged to eat the fruit of their deeds which were so good in their own eyes. As to this the prophet says:"¹⁰

Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord!
Wherefore would ye have the day of the Lord?
It is darkness, and not light.
As if a man did flee from a lion,
And a bear met him;
And went into the house and leaned his hand
on the wall,
And a serpent bit him.
Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness,
and not light?
Even very dark, and no brightness in it."¹¹

The prophet continues to portray the day of the Lord in darkest colors:

Lamentation shall be in all broad places,
And they shall say in the streets: 'alas, alas!'
And they shall call the husbandmen to mourning,
And proclaim lamentation to such as are skilful
of wailing.
And in all the vineyards shall be lamentation;
For I will pass through the midst of thee,
Saith the Lord. ¹²

Amos introduces a new interpretation for the day of judgment. Unlike the previous notion of prosperity and reward, Amos introduces the concept of doom, destruction and terror which will be the denouement of the day of the Lord. This concept holds true for nature as well as for man, and is therefore a universal concept. We see this universal element in the eighth chapter of Amos.

And it shall come to pass in that day
Saith the Lord, God,
That I will cause the sun to go down at noon
And I will darken the earth in the clear day.¹³

In these passages Amos portrays these tragic days in startling metaphor. The predatory animals, the lion, bear and serpent lie in hiding - and on the day of darkness they will spring forth to consume the man who flees from judgment. God's creation of light which first revealed the beauties of nature to man will utterly vanish, and in its place there will be a deep darkness. This is a picture of judgment with its most dire and cataclysmic consequences for man.

Amos universalized the tragedy by including nature in his portrayal of judgment. The entire universe will suffocate in the deep darkness because the sun will be removed in the light of a clear day and darkness will pervade the universe. Darkness is the literary allusion which heralds the impending drama of judgment and death. Amos is among the first to use this device and we may see its similar utilization by

Shakespeare in the play Macbeth.

In Act I, Scene VII, Lady Macbeth equates darkness with death.

Come thick night, and pall thee in the damnest
smoke of hell,
That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
To cry, "Hold, hold!"¹⁴

The dark color is the literary device used by Shakespeare as by Amos to act as the prelude to death.

In the Inferno Dante uses darkness to represent the rivers of hell and eternal death.- "What souls are these who run through this black haze?"¹⁵ Dante continues to describe his journey through hell, "I come to lead you to the other shore, into eternal dark, into fire and ice."¹⁶

We see the literary use of light and darkness in other parts of the Bible and observe that the authors of these verses equate light with God's salvation and darkness with death and divine judgment. A vivid example is the plague of darkness God brought upon Egypt while light remained in the dwellings of the children of Israel.

"And Moses stretched forth his hand toward heaven; and there was a thick darkness in all the land of Egypt three days; they saw not one another, neither rose any from his place for three days; but all the children of Israel had light in their dwellings."¹⁷ In this passage light represents God's love and protection, while darkness symbolizes destruction and divine displeasure. The same symbolic use of

light and darkness may be seen in Trito-Isaiah.

For, behold, darkness shall cover the earth,
And gross darkness the peoples;
But upon thee the Lord will arise,
And His glory shall be seen upon thee.¹⁸

God, the divine Judge of man and nature will bring perdition to man and darkness to nature. The concept of a day of darkness is first introduced by Amos. He gives a new theme to the once hoped for day of God. It will be a day of sadness and not rejoicing, conflagration not peace, and universal tragedy for man and nature and not euphoria.

In the Book of Isaiah there is a description of God's Judgment in a style of descriptive beauty and overwhelming power:

For the Lord of hosts hath a day
Upon all that is proud and lofty,
And upon all that is lifted up, and it shall
be brought low;
And upon all the cedars of Lebanon
That are high and lifted up,
And upon all the oaks of Bashan;
And upon all the high mountains,
And upon all the hills that are lifted up;
And upon every lofty tower,
And upon every fortified wall;
And upon all the ships of Tarshish,
And upon all delightful imagery.¹⁹

In this dreadful day God will bring terror to all nature. This is highly reminiscent of the judgment of Amos. The tragedy predicted to occur in nature is a metaphor by which the prophet is alluding to the imminent doom which shall befall Israel and all mankind.

Isaiah employs the phrase, 'Upon all the high mountains'²⁰

in order to universalize the day of judgment and to include nature as well as man in the impending judgment. Similarly Amos uses the imagery of "and in all vineyards shall be lamentation,"²¹ in order to give judgment a universal nature.

We have observed the striking manner in which the pre-Exilic prophets dramatized and personified the idea of judgment. In the period of the post-Exilic prophecy, judgment becomes the leitmotif which characterizes this prophecy. It is possible that judgment became a recurrent theme in post-Exilic prophesy, because the desire for a Davidic monarchy was completely frustrated. In this state of hopelessness the prophets envisioned a dire day of judgment. The nations inimical to Israel would be destroyed and there would be drastic changes in nature.

An example of this expression of judgment and of remarkable changes in nature is seen in the vivid description of Joel: "And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." ²²

This is one of the most despairing descriptions of the imminent judgment as envisioned by the post-Exilic prophets. In graphic and extravagant imagery Joel describes the weird and unnatural events predicted to occur in nature. The darkness of the sun is reminiscent of the literary imagery of Amos, and the moon turning into blood reminds us of the

miraculous plagues which Moses brought upon Egypt when he turned the waters into blood.

"And Moses and Aaron did so, as the Lord commanded; and he lifted up the rod, and smote the waters that were in the river, in the sight of Pharaoh, and in the sight of his servants; and all the waters that were in the river turned to blood." 23

These literary schemes of unnatural and exaggerated imagery are common in biblical literature. They appear in the story of Moses and Amos. This device of exaggerated imagery is used brilliantly by Joel and occurs time and again in the New Testament literature and the apocalyptic literature of the following generations.

Like Amos, Isaiah and Joel, Zephaniah pictures a day of desolation where the earth will become a wasteland.

That day is a day of wrath,
A day of trouble and distress,
A day of wasteness and desolation,
A day of darkness and gloominess,
A day of clouds and thick darkness,
A day of horn and alarm,
Against the fortified cities, and against
the high towers. 24

The day will be one of alarm, and darkness will be the predominant characteristic of this tragic day. In Zephaniah the mood is one of despair, gloom, and utter pessimism. At this point it is essential to confront a basic problem. There are many apocalyptic motifs in the Bible. One school of scholarship believes that these references are later

additions and interpolations while the other school believes that the apocalyptic themes originated with the earlier pre-exilic prophets. I recognize that these two different schools exist in biblical scholarship and shall deal with them in the conclusions of my thesis. I am presently interested in apocalyptic motifs as literary themes appearing in many books of the Bible.

In this chapter I am presenting a literary understanding of apocalyptic writings and not problems of criticism (I shall discuss problems of criticism in my conclusions). In this chapter I am following the literary perspective of Dr. H. Jones. "My mandate is to discuss the Bible as a work susceptible of literary evaluation, not as an infallible scripture, a quarry for proof texts, a source for creed, church, or political policy, or guide or occasion for linguistic scholarship and archeology." ²⁵

In summary, the new concept of darkness or "the day of the Lord" was introduced by Amos and this concept appears in embellished forms in other books of the prophets. This day was envisioned as a universal divine visitation on man and nature. This new judgment had the characteristics of destruction, desolation and tragedy, and it is this shape of darkness that became predominant in the apocalyptic mode. This terrifying day of judgment is the hallmark for all the future apocalyptic authors.

SHAPES OF EXPECTATION.

Commensurate with the shapes of darkness in the apocalyptic literature were shapes of expectation (hopes for the Messiah or the Messianic Kingdom). It was predicted that God would not only judge the forces of evil and wickedness in the world, but He would further establish his anointed one to rule the earth in peace and justice. "One of the commonest elements in the biblical eschatology was the expectation of the messianic King, that is, God's anointed, who is to reign in the age to come. It runs throughout much of the apocalyptic literature and is found in many of these books though not in all."²⁶

In this new hope God's perfect reign on earth would be realized and His everlasting peace would fill the four corners of the land. What is the difference between the hope for a Messiah and the messianic expectation? Joseph Klausner presents a clear definition of the Messiah and of the messianic expectation.

"The definition of the messianic expectation is: The prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which there will be political freedom, moral perfection, and earthly bliss for the people of Israel in its own land and also for the entire human race. But the definition of belief in the Messiah is: The prophetic hope for the end of this age, in which a strong redeemer, by his power and his spirit, will bring

complete redemption, political and spiritual, to the people Israel, and along with this, earthly bliss and moral perfection to the entire human race." 27

Shapes of expectation are the desires for a personal Messiah or a messianic era. A proper historical perspective is necessary for a discussion about messianic expectations. The messianic hope developed as part of the historical process of the Jewish people. The Jewish people knew oppression and servitude throughout their history and the messianic expectation voiced the hope for a better future, as it were, the golden age about to dawn. "No nation on earth knew such sufferings in its early youth. Israelite history in its earliest time became a history of afflictions. The people did not have a glorious past, hence it was forced to direct its gaze toward a glorious future. It longed for one to ransom and deliver it from its afflictions and troubles." 28

Dr. Klausner points out that the messianic expectation was developed in the historical milieu of suffering and affliction. This clear insight is necessary for a complete understanding of the messianic passages in scriptures. National suffering fathered the yearning for messianic redemption.

In Amos there is a reference to the house of David.

In that day I will raise up
The tabernacle of David that is fallen,
And close up the breaches thereof,
And I will raise up his ruins, and I will
build it as in the days of old. ²⁹

In Amos there is an allusion to the monarchy of David which has fallen. The author of this verse expresses the hope in the rebuilding of the fragments of David's monarchy in order that it will be established as in its former glory. In another reference in Amos there is a description of the messianic era.

Behold the days come, saith the Lord,
That the plowman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him that soweth seed;
And the mountains shall drop sweet wine,
And all the hills shall melt.
And I will turn the captivity of my people
Israel,
And they shall build the waste cities, and
inhabit them;
And they shall plant vineyards, and drink the
wine thereof;
They shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit
of them.
And I will plant them upon their land,
And they shall no more be plucked up
Out of their land which I have given them,
Saith the Lord thy God. ³⁰

In the book of Amos the day of the Messiah and the messianic expectation is pictured with pastoral expressions of one who has an innate appreciation and sensitivity for the loveliness of nature. The sweet wine which drops from the rich clusters ('and the mountains shall drop sweet wine,') and the gardens with their life giving sustenance ('they shall also make gardens, and eat the fruit of them,') are symbols

for the desire of the glorious and noble future to which Israel will be heir.

The passages in Amos are universal and the expectations are written in the style of exaggerated and hyperbolic metaphors. This style of messianic expectation served as a prototype for the later apocalyptic writers.

In the book of Hosea we also find reference to the spiritual and physical euphoria in the messianic age.

I will be as the dew unto Israel;
He shall blossom as the lily, and cast
Forth his roots as Lebanon.
His branches shall spread,
And his beauty shall be as the olive tree,
And his fragrance as Lebanon.
They that dwell under his shadow shall again
make corn to grow,
And shall blossom as the vine;
The scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.³¹

In an enchanting pastoral description the author of these verses expresses his hope for the future glory of Israel. The dew is symbolic of God's graciousness and love for His people. The dew further symbolizes prosperity and life, as in the book of Genesis. "So God give thee of the dew of heaven, and of the fat places of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine." ³² The most explicit statement referring to the everlasting prosperity of dew is in the book of Deuteronomy. "And Israel dwelleth in safety, The fountain of Jacob alone, In a land of corn and wine; yea His heavens drop down dew."³³

The messianic ideal is spiritualized in the Isaianic passages.

For a child is born unto us,
A son is given unto us;
And the government is upon His shoulder;
And his name is called
Wonderful Counsellor, God-like Hero, the ever-
Father, Forever, Prince of Peace,
That the government may be increased
And of peace there be no end,
Upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom,
To establish it, and to uphold it
Through justice and through righteousness
From henceforth and forever.
The zeal of the Lord of hosts doth perform this. 34

A child will be born. He will be a divinely gifted child who will rule with exemplary wisdom. He will establish peace eternal for his kingdom and will establish the throne of David for a perpetual reign. This charismatic leader is to be divinely blessed and will rule with the divine attributes of justice and righteousness. This is the description of an ideal leader who shall rule in peace and justice forever.

The most lofty description of the messianic expectation is found in the second chapter of Isaiah.

And it shall come to pass in the end of days,
That the mountain of the Lord's house shall
be established as the top of the mountains,
And shall be exalted above the hills;
And all nations shall flow unto it.
And many peoples shall go and say,
"Come ye and let us go up to the mountain of
the Lord,
To the house of the God of Jacob
And he will teach us of his ways,
And we will walk in his paths."
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
And he shall judge between the nations,
And shall decide for many peoples;

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more. ³⁵

In the fourth chapter of Micah we read almost the parallel verses of Isaiah 2:2-4:

But it shall come to pass in the end of days,
That the mountain of the Lord's house shall
be established as the top of the mountains,
And it shall be exalted above the hills;
And peoples shall flow unto it.
And many nations shall go and say:
"Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
And to the house of the God of Jacob;
And He will teach us of his ways,
And we will walk in His paths,
For out of Zion shall go forth the law,
And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.
And He shall judge between many peoples,
And shall decide concerning mighty nations
afar off;
And they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
And their spears into pruning-hooks;
Nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
Neither shall they learn war any more.
But they shall sit every man under his vine
and under his figtree;
And none shall make them afraid;
For the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken. ³⁶

In this day God's house will be situated on the highest mountain. All nations shall perceive the glory of the God of Jacob. They shall flow to His holy mountain and listen to the true word of God. And all nations shall come before God to be judged, and they shall express God's unity in heaven by establishing a unity of peaceful nations on Earth. All nations will have recognized the unity of the God of Jacob. Zion will be the spiritual center of the universe, and truth shall be proclaimed from Jerusalem. All nations

shall abide by the truth of the God of Jacob and will live in peace according to the divine will.

The verses from Micah are the same as the verses from Isaiah, except that at the conclusion of Micah, there is an added verse. One reason for this may be that Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah and when he took the verse from Isaiah he embellished it. Another possibility is that Isaiah and Micah took these verses from the same source, but until the time of redaction there was an addition by one of them. A third possibility is that both are later interpolations, and the addition in Micah expresses the matured messianic ideal of freedom from fear and want.

We also see the allusion to a Messiah in Micah -
"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth are from of old, from ancient days."³⁷

This is an allusion to a personal Messiah. From this little tribe of Israel will arise the future ruler of Israel. Bethlehem (or Ephratah) was the birth place of David and from the royal line of the house of David will come the Messiah.

In the early post-Exilic prophets Haggai and Zechariah there are messianic expectations.

For thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once,
It is a little while,
And I will shake the heavens, and the earth,

And the sea, and the dry land;
And I will shake all nations,
And the choicest things of all nations shall
come;
And I will fill this house with glory,
Saith the Lord of Hosts. 38

In the book of Deutero-Zechariah the hope is expressed in a similar vein:

And the Lord shall be king over all the earth:
In that day shall the Lord be One, and His name
One. 39

Haggai refers to the day of judgment followed by a period of unparalleled blessing for Israel. God's choicest gifts will be given to Israel, and glory will dwell in her midst. In Zechariah there is a universal refrain to the eschatological hope. Israel's God will rule all the nations, and on that great day His name shall be truly One.

In Trito-Isaiah there is a reference to a new heaven and a new earth. This will be the state of the universe in the messianic era.

For behold I create new heavens
And a new earth;
And the former things shall not be remembered,
Nor come into mind. 40

The following verses describe the divine favor at the time of the new heaven and new earth.

But be ye glad and rejoice forever
In that which I create;
For, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing
And her people a joy.
And I will rejoice in Jerusalem,
And joy in my people;
And the voice of weeping shall be no more
heard in her,
Nor the voice of crying.

There shall be no more thence an infant of
days, nor an old man,
That hath not filled his days;
For the youngest shall die a hundred years old,
And the sinner being a hundred years old shall
be accursed.
And they shall build houses, and inhabit them.
And they shall plant vineyards, and eat the
fruit of them. 41

There will be rejoicing in the new Jerusalem and great joy is promised. God will rejoice in His people and will banish sorrow from her midst. People will enjoy an unusually long life span in this new day, and there will be unparalleled prosperity and the enjoyment of the fruit of the vineyard.

Shapes of expectation arose at moments in history when Israel was in a state of utter despair and hopelessness. The expectations served to give the people faith in a brighter future. The exuberant hopes proclaim the coming of a personal Messiah or of a messianic era of prosperity and peace. This unparalleled joy in a golden age to come is one of the recurrent themes of apocalyptic writings.

RESURRECTION.

Another aspect of apocalyptic literature is the hope for resurrection. "Nor can we forget that it is to the apocalypstists that we owe our hope of the Hereafter. Granted that there had been preparations for that hope in the earlier writings of the Old Testament, and in foreign thought, it is here that we find it developed in Judaism, to be passed on to the Christian Church. It varies in its form in the different works, as we have seen. Sometimes it is thought of as a resurrection of the righteous only; sometimes as a resurrection of the notably righteous and the notably wicked; and sometimes as a general resurrection of all. Sometimes it is a resurrection to life on earth, and sometimes a resurrection with a transformed body to life on a new Earth, and sometimes a resurrection to a purely spiritual bliss in Heaven, or its counterpart of suffering." 42

The first biblical allusion to life eternal is the incident of Enoch in Genesis,

And Enoch walked with God,
And he was not;
For God took him. 43

This reference points to the concept of life eternal. This mysterious event indicates a notion of a God who gives life eternal to his creation.

There is also the popular story of Elijah ascending to heaven in a burning chariot. This story also points to

a concept of life eternal and not to resurrection.

"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, which parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven." 44

These two references are the first two allusions to life after death. In the first case there is a hint to life eternal, and in the second there is a disruption in the order of nature and a divine vehicle appears with the whirlwind to carry Elijah into the window of heaven.

The whirlwind is used throughout scriptures to introduce a miraculous or divine intervention in the order of nature in order to communicate an unnatural and wondrous drama deviating from the harmony of the universe. Examples of the whirlwind may be found in Job and Ezekiel.

"Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind and said,..." 45

"And I looked, and behold, a stormy wind (whirlwind) came out of the North...." 46

In the first instance God speaks to Job through the intermediary of the whirlwind in order to tell of His majestic power as the Creator and Author of the universe. In the second instance, God reveals His glory and gives a divine call to Ezekiel.

In Ezekiel there is also an allusion to resurrection,

however in context this probably refers to the national resurrection of the Jewish people.

So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great host. 47

This is the miracle of dead bones which have life breathed into them. The bones are joined, one with the other, given new flesh and come to life. This represents a national resurrection of Israel who uttered,

Our bones are dried up,
And our hope is lost;
We are clean cut off. 48

Ezekiel is giving a new hope to a people who have suffered the tragic ramifications of conquest and exile. The date of this chapter is after 587 B. C. E. which was the date of the Babylonian exile. Ezekiel desires to provide the fallen virgin, Israel, with a faith in the future. Israel will not be crushed forever but will live to inherit her land once again.

"And I will put my spirit in you, and ye shall live and I will place you in your own land." 49

In Daniel we find an explicit prediction of resurrection.

"And many of them that sleep in the dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting

life, and some to reproaches and everlasting
abhorrence, And they that are wise shall
shine as the brightness of the firmament;
and they that turn the many to righteousness
as the stars for ever and ever." ⁵⁰ (Daniel 12:2-3)

There will be an everlasting joy for the righteous
and an eternal damnation for the wicked. This is an affir-
mation of life after death for those who sleep in the dust.
Daniel is the first book to speak of reward and punishment.
The righteous will be resurrected, and the evil ones re-
proached with eternal damnation. Prior to Daniel, resurrec-
tion was impersonal, occurring to Israel or mankind without
any such distinction between the righteous and evil.
Daniel selects the righteous for eternal life and the wicked
for damnation. In this refined concept God's ultimate
justice in the universe will be realized.

Resurrection, because of its very nature may be classed
as apocalyptic. Resurrection demonstrates God's direct
intervention in the universe. This idea of immediate
intervention is paramount in apocalyptic writings, whereas
the prophets view history in a different light. For them
historical events are dependent upon the social conditions
of society. God rules the world according to this moral
law. For the prophets judgment occurs in the course of
history. God works in history, not independent of it.

The apocalyptic writings disregard the progressive aspect of history and speak of God's immediate intervention independent of the historical process.

"The final judgment, whether immediate or remote, is for the prophets a fact of history. They describe it with apocalyptic exaggeration, but it will come within, not beyond, the process of history. They interpreted history with the eschatology of apocalyptic, but their apocalyptic did not supercede history. God's purposes for mankind will be fulfilled within it. History will bring the final judgment." 51

Contrary to the prophetic view of history, the apocalyptists disregard the evolutionary process of history and see God's intervention as inter in history. "There, in the prophetic world, the line of longing is horizontal, here - and this is the essence of the apocalyptic orientation - it is vertical." 52

At any given moment God may break into the course of history. This is the apocalyptic irruption of God into history. Resurrection is the apocalyptic view of God's vertical intervention in the universe.

STYLE.

The final characteristic of apocalyptic is the style.

"Apocalyptic is visionary, fantastic, extravagant, unreal."⁵³

Apocalyptic style is characterized by a fascination with words and the use of private symbolism (meaningful only to the author). It is often difficult or impossible for one to interpret the images which are profuse in apocalyptic writings.

"Through dreams, visions, and ecstasies, everything mysterious had become quite real for the authors of the books. Therefore the images always outweigh the sentences, and what has been beheld predominates over what is merely known." ⁵⁴

Ezekiel has been called the father of apocalyptic, (because of his use of symbols) and his writing is profuse with strange and mysterious events. In the very first chapter of Ezekiel we observe the stylistic features of apocalyptic. Ezekiel describes in vivid and imaginary colors the whirlwind from the north and the unreal images which are revealed.

"And out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures,
And this was their appearance;
They had the likeness of a man.

And every one had four faces,
And every one of them had four wings.
And their feet were straight feet;
And the sole of their feet was like
The sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled
Like the color of burnished brass." 55

Ezekiel continues to describe the chariot in highly unnatural and abnormal animal metaphors. The vision of the four wheels may be clarified in the light of their apocalyptic style. The vision is the product of a deeply emotional and sensitive mind, and the misty symbolism is the stylistic indication of apocalyptic. The author seems interested in private symbolism, more than he is in imparting a message. In Chapter 37, Ezekiel further describes a phenomenon in a fantastic vision - the resurrection of dry bones. This is composed in the classic style of apocalyptic. It is a weird and unreal fantasy.

"And I beheld, and lo, there were sinews
upon them and flesh came up, and skin
covered them above; but there was no breath
in them....." 56

"So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the
breath came into them, and they lived and
stood up upon their feet,
An exceeding great host." 57

These highly unusual and mystifying occurrences mark the style as apocalyptic.

The classic apocalyptic writing of the Bible is the book of Daniel. In this book there are numerous symbols and metaphors written in the most unusual and bizarre fashion. Daniel is written with a cosmic perspective. The author envisions God as the divine Author of history and as a being who miraculously intervenes in the affairs of man.

Daniel has a vision of four beasts who are adversaries to God's kingdom on earth. Many scholars believe that the four beasts refer to the four kingdoms of Babylon, Media Persia, Greece and Rome. Rowley refers to these empires as bestial empires, the overthrow of which will usher in the messianic era.

"While the earliest great apocalyptic work, the Book of Daniel, does not depict one individual leader of the enduring kingdom, it does depict in vivid terms the great human adversary of that kingdom, the leader of the last bestial empires whose overthrow ~~should~~ inaugurate the new age." 58

"In the first year of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head upon his bed; then he wrote the dream

and told the sum of the matters.

"Daniel spoke and said: 'I saw in my vision by night, and behold the four winds of the heaven broke forth upon the great sea - and four great beasts came up from the sea, diverse one from another.

"The first was like a lion and had eagle's wings; I beheld till the wings thereof were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the earth, and made to stand upon two feet as a man, and a man's heart was given to it.

"And behold another beast, a second, like to a bear, and it raised up itself on one side and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth; and it was said thus unto it: 'Arise, devour much flesh.' After this I beheld, and lo another, like a leopard, which had upon the sides of it four wings of a fowl; the beast had also four heads and dominion was given to it.

"After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth; it devoured and broke in pieces, and stamped the residue with its feet; and it was

diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.'" 59

In this startling description we see the epitome of apocalyptic style. The author is describing world empires in weird animal metaphors and private symbolism. The apocalyptic style is a combination of metaphor, fantasy, and misty symbolism. Motifs of the apocalyptic style permeate prophetic literature and culminate in the classic apocalypse of Daniel.

Is Isaiah 24 - 27 apocalyptic? I have established a definition for 'apocalypse' in order to determine if Chapters 24 through 27 of Isaiah are apocalyptic. The four elements or criteria for apocalypse are:-

1. Shapes of darkness (judgment).
2. Shapes of expectation.
3. Resurrection.
4. Style (unusual imagery and private symbolism).

If I am able to indicate references to these four elements in Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah, then I shall infer that Chapters 24 - 27 are in fact an apocalypse, according to my definition.

SHAPES OF DARKNESS

IN ISAIAH 24-27.

Are there shapes of darkness (judgment) and cosmic destruction in Chapter 24 - 27. A careful examination reveals that these chapters exhibit many such references.

In the first and second verse of Chapter 24 we read of a boundless annihilation and destruction that is predicted to consume the earth.

Behold the Lord will make the earth empty
and will make it waste and will turn it
upside down and will scatter abroad the
inhabitants thereof.
And it shall be as with the people, so
with the priest;
As with the servant, so with his master;
As with the maid, so with her mistress;
As with the buyer, so with the seller;
As with the lender, so with the borrower;
As with the creditor, so with the debtor. 60

The author takes pains to make the cataclysm universal by including in the disaster every category of society. In verses 3 and 4 the author continues to paint the ensanguined picture in fiery colors.

The Earth shall be utterly emptied, and clean
despoiled;
For the Lord has spoken this word.
The Earth will faint and fade away,
The world will fail and will fade away,
The lofty people of the Earth will fail. 61

In this vivid portrayal the author creates an atmosphere of suffocating and debilitating atrophy. It is depicted with such consummate skill that one is able to feel

the earth fading into a wasteland. Later in the chapter we scan the panorama of desperation and helplessness of the people.

Terror and the pit, and the traps, will be upon thee, oh inhabitants of the Earth. And it shall come to pass, that he who fleeth from the noise of the terror, shall fall into the pit. And he that cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the trap, For the windows on high will be opened, and the foundations of the Earth will shake;
The Earth will be broken, broken down,
The Earth will crumble in pieces,
The Earth will tremble and will totter;
The Earth will reel to and fro like a drunken man,
And will sway to and fro as a lodge;
And the transgression thereof will be heavy upon it,
And it shall fall, and not rise again. 62

The people of the earth will be ensnared, unable to escape, when final judgment comes. No escape will be possible and man is to be doomed in the unfolding of death. Later in the chapter we shall see whether the destruction is total and all inclusive. In this portrayal of destruction the earth itself is to experience pain and suffering. It is almost as though the land itself has in some way been profaned by man and will now have to suffer with man. Like man the earth will be shattered and brought to final annihilation like a staggering drunkard who falls groveling in the dust. In the simile of the drunkard, one is easily able to imagine the earth tottering and swaying, poised on the brink of annihilation. The author also compares the approaching tragedy to a swaying structure, which

may bend only so far in a wind and at that point the taut vertebra of the structure are shattered and it collapses lifeless into oblivion.

At the conclusion of this verse the author employs the same idiom as in Amos, "and it shall fall and not rise again." In Amos this idiom refers to the virgin Israel;⁶³ the author of this verse uses it to refer to a universal and world-wide destruction.

These verses remind us of the account of the flood in Genesis 7. In Isaiah 24:18 we read "the windows on high are opened," and from the heavens a cataclysmic annihilation will be visited upon the universe. In Genesis 7:11b we read, "...and the windows of heaven were opened." First the windows of heaven are opened, then the destructive waters inundate the earth. In Isaiah and Genesis the open windows of heaven are antecedents to the universal destruction of life on earth.

There are two versions of the flood story. The J E version is the more primitive and the priestly narrative introduces reasons for the flood (wickedness of man) and gives the source of the rain (windows of heaven). I am using the priestly version of the flood story.⁶⁴

Why will the ineffable tragedy be visited upon the earth? According to Isaiah 24:20, "the transgression thereof is heavy upon it." There is depravity and wickedness

on the face of the earth and man has forsaken God's teachings. This introduces an ethical note into Chapters 24-27. This is the same reason for the destruction in the flood story.

"And God saw the Earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth."⁶⁵ Earth was only evil continually."

The motif of universal iniquity is also a recurrent theme in Psalms.

"They are all corrupt, they are together become impure;

There is none that doeth good, no, not one."⁶⁶

This is similar to the description of the universal sin in the Noah story and in Isaiah 24:20. Man has become wicked, performing acts of violence ("The earth is filled with violence.")⁶⁷ and has disregarded the teachings of God. There is a causal relation between man's actions and man's destiny. It is because of man's iniquity and depravity that the universal destruction will be visited upon the universe. In the story of the flood God saw that Noah was a righteous man, and he and his family were consequently saved. In Chapter 26:20 of Isaiah God's people will enter their chambers until the divine indignation has passed by.

In the flood story God preserved a special group and in the Isaiah 24 - 27 it is also predicted that God will preserve a special people.⁶⁸

In Chapter 24:10-12, the future conditions after the destruction are described. The reference to a specific city is made, however there is speculation as to which city is referred to. I shall discuss the problem of the city later in my thesis. At present I am establishing the thesis that Chapters 24 - 27 either are or are not apocalyptic.

Broken down will be the city of wasteness;
Every house will be shut up that none may
come in.
There will be crying in the streets amidst
the wine;
All joy will be darkened,
The mirth of the land will be gone.
In the city will be left a desolation,
And the gate will be smitten into ruin.⁶⁹

This passage alludes to a destruction which is near total; nonetheless it is not total. This reference (there will be crying in the streets) to a small, suffering remnant is similar to the idea expressed earlier in Isaiah. In the song of the vineyard Isaiah describes the loving care with which God protected the vineyard, Israel, hoping that it would burgeon forth as rich clusters of grapes. However the vineyard brought forth sour grapes. God executes divine judgment upon His vineyard because of the lasciviousness and perversion of Israel and all but the barest iota of life is obliterated.

"For ten acres of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah." 70

He predicted that even though destruction would envelop the land, a few berries would be left on a bough of the tree. There would be a surviving remnant, no matter how small or how ill.

"Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we would have been as Sodom, we should have been like unto Gomorrah." 71

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and they that are escaped from the house of Jacob, shall no more again stay upon him that smote them; But shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, Unto God the Mighty." 72

In other parts of First Isaiah there are allusions to a remnant as well as in Chapters 24 - 27. In the description of Chapter 24 we are able to envision people groping blindly in the streets crying for wine. Apparently, wine was the symbol of a prosperous and happy life. In the crying for wine the author implies that there will be no

wine and joy in the land. The gate to the city will be smitten and the land, once prosperous and flowing with fruit and wine, will become a wasteland. This motif of the disappearance of joy is also found in Jeremiah:

"Then will I cause to cease from the cities of Judah, and from the streets of Jerusalem, the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride; for the land shall be desolate." 73

There is also a similarity between the vivid description of destruction in Chapter 24 and Isaiah 34. We observe the unusually severe divine vengeance and indignation. The predicted destruction is devastating in its wrath against the nations and the host of heaven. The style in which the thirty-fourth chapter is written is parallel to the style of Isaiah 24 - 27.

For the Lord hath indignation against all
the nations,
And fury against all their host;
He will utterly destroy them,
He will deliver them to the slaughter.

And all the host of heaven shall moulder away,
And the heavens shall be rolled together as a
scroll;
And all their host shall descend,
As the leaf falleth off from the vine,
And as the falling fig from the fig-tree. 74

There is a notable difference between Chapter 34 and Isaiah 24 - 27. In Chapter 34 verses 1-4 refer to a univ-

ersal judgment and verses 5-17 refer to the judgment of Edom in particular. In Chapters 24 - 27 there are numerous descriptions of universal judgment and only an allusion to the judgment of particular nations. ⁷⁵

Nature shall suffer shame and remorse in the day of darkness.

Then the moon shall be confounded and the sun ashamed; For the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be glory. ⁷⁶

In part b of Verse 23, there is a glimmer of hope. God will reign in Jerusalem on Mount Zion and a special people shall receive glory and salvation. This sparkle of light in the midst of the darkness is profuse in Isaiah 24 - 27. (I shall discuss the shapes of light in full detail in my next chapter.)

In Chapter 27, the author once again employs cryptic symbols. God's judgment will befall monstrous animals.

"In that day the Lord with His sore, and great, and strong sword will punish the Leviathan, the swift serpent, and Leviathan, the winding serpent, and He will slay the dragon that is in the sea."

The last verse of Chapter 27 states who the monstrous animals are who will suffer this fate.

And it shall come to pass in that day,
That a great horn shall be blown;
And they shall come that were lost in the
land of Assyria,
And they that were dispersed in the land of
Egypt;

And they shall worship the Lord in the
holy mountain at Jerusalem. 77

Assyria and Egypt are here mentioned as the cruel
nations who have imprisoned God's people. I shall later
discuss the date of this section in order to determine to
what century the references to Egypt and Assyria belong.

In Chapter 27:9-11 and 27:13 there is an indication
of why fire will consume the earth. In Verse 9 there is a
hint of idol worship and foreign cult practice. Here is
possibly one of the causes for the effect of destruction.

When he maketh all of the stones of the
altar,
As chalk stones that are beaten in pieces,
So that the asherim and the sun images shall
rise no more,
For the fortified city is solitary,
A habitation abandoned and forsaken, like
the wilderness;
There shall the calf feed, and there shall
he lie down,
And consume the branches thereof.
When the boughs thereof are withered,
They shall be broken off;
The women shall come, and set them on fire;
For it is a people of no understanding,
Therefore He that made them will not have
compassion upon them,
And He that formed them will not be gracious
unto them. 78

This is an allusion to the people destined for the
tragic day of annihilation. The stones of their altars
will be crushed into chalkstone; their idols and images
will be shattered into oblivion. The population will be
utterly cut off from God. They shall be forsaken like the
barren desert. Like dry branches are broken and set on

fire in the desert, so will the population be broken and quickly consumed in its entirety. This fate will befall the evil nation because its people lack understanding and do not follow the teachings of God. Finally God will withdraw His compassion and grace from them and they will suffer interminably.

Throughout the Scriptures we read of the divine displeasure and consequently of divine punishment. However the idea of punishment and apocalyptic punishment are not identical since the apocalyptic motif of darkness contains certain stylistic features not present in other passages of judgment.

Apocalyptic darkness is universal in scope (referring to heaven and earth) and refers to the judgment in cataclysmic and exaggerated metaphors. It is very often expressed in a stream of dreamy fantasy. The apocalyptic darkness is the result of God's invasion of history. God summarily breaks into the order of the universe. This apocalyptic idea is an abrogation of man's moral responsibility as a determinant or causal factor for the destiny of the world. Apocalyptic replaced the perspective view of history with a vertical view of history.

Apocalyptic darkness is peculiar in that it is a precursor to a New World order in which God's people will flower in prosperity and greatness. In other forms of

darkness there is a deluge of destruction, however this is not the millennium or the birth pangs of the Messiah as is the case with apocalyptic judgment. The other forms of darkness refer to the severe divine retribution on man because of his moral depravity.

The previous forms of darkness are caused by man's moral decadence and then the calamity enters into the process of history. Man and society are responsible for the destiny of the world. There is a causal relation between man's behavior and his destiny. In the older forms of judgment and disaster, life will continue in a similar pattern as before the visitation, whereas in the apocalyptic shapes of darkness the oblivion will usher in an entirely new world order. The story of the tower of Babel is an example of the original form of darkness; man is punished and life is altered, however the entire world order is not transformed as in apocalyptic shapes of darkness.

"Come, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city." 79

The essence of life is in no way altered, only the language is transformed. The judgment involves only one

phase of life and in no way transforms the world order as in apocalyptic judgment.

In the drama of the flood God causes a deluge of water to inundate the earth. This cataclysm is not total since God saves Noah, his family and the animals in the Ark from destruction. The natural elements of the earth are severely altered, however life is to continue in a manner similar to the life of Adam and Eve when they lived east of Eden.

"Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee of all flesh, both fowl, and cattle, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may swarm in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth." 80

These two descriptions in no way approach the symbolism and startling imagery in the apocalyptic sense. It is therefore the stylistic features of cryptic symbolism, miraculous and unreal disturbances in nature, and the frightening and fanciful imagery which differentiate apocalyptic judgment from the other forms of divine judgment.

I have clearly shown that Chapters 24 - 27 are profuse with allusions to shapes of darkness, and in this respect meet one of the four criteria for apocalyptic literature.

SHAPES OF LIGHT.
IN ISAIAH 24-27.

The second criterion for apocalyptic writings is the shape of expectation. Interwoven throughout the passages of darkness in Chapters 24 - 27 are also expressed glorious hopes for the future. These optimistic hopes refer to the end of days when God shall rule the universe in justice and righteousness. In these eschatological passages the author expresses the wish for the future redemption of a remnant and the supreme rulership of God. There is a reference for this desire in Isaiah 25:6,

"And in this mountain will the Lord of hosts
make unto all peoples a feast of fat things;
a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things
full of marrow, of wines on the lees well
refined." ref. 25:6.

The passages pertaining to the cosmic annihilation referred to the paucity and withering away of plant life. The hopeful passage above refers to clear wine and a revived nature. Just as in punishment, so too in man's salvation is there a sharp link between man and nature. When God ascends the mountain to assume kingship, man and nature blossom together under the aegis of the divine king. This hopeful metaphor of God's position at the heights of the mountain is similar to the metaphor in Isaiah.

And it shall come to pass in the end of days,
that the mountain of the Lord's house shall
be established as the top of the mountains,
and shall be exalted above the hills; and all
nations shall flow unto it. S1

The same metaphor is used in Chapter 25, however in this passage we notice a more anthropomorphic picture. In Chapter 25 God will give a feast to the peoples of the earth. The refined wine and fat things are symbolic of the euphoria and universal prosperity that man will enjoy in his eschatological dream of a transfigured Universe.

In Chapter 25:8 we observe one of the clearest and most precise themes with regard to the promise of the new world order. God will banish death forever and restore His people to the land.

He will swallow up death forever, and the
Lord God will wipe away tears from off all
faces; and the reproach of His people will
He take away from off all the earth; For
the Lord hath spoken it. S2

There is an intense polarity existing in these chapters. Amid the cataclysmic tragedy there appear phrases alluding to dreams and aspirations for the future. There is the hope in God's salvation for some and the dream of immortality. It is this irrational contrast of themes that further indi-
~~points to an apocalyptic dream fantasy.~~ points to an apocalyptic dream fantasy.

In Chapter 27:2-3 there is a further allusion to the time of peace and prosperity in which God will care for man like a watchman cares for his vineyard.

In that day, sing ye of her:
A vineyard of foaming wine!
I the Lord do guard it,
I water it every moment;
Lest mine anger visit it,
I guard it night and day. 83

God will be the eternal guardian of His people. The vineyard will be in full blossom on that day. Israel will open in full blossom before its Creator.

This is a radical departure from the song of the vineyard in the fifth chapter of Isaiah. In the earlier reference the vineyard Israel is filled with thorns and briers. The wall is shattered and the clusters are trodden down. In the fifth chapter God laid waste the vineyard, whereas in the present verse God will be the guardian of His vineyard night and day, and bring His people to the full fruition of their actualized destiny.

In 27:6 there is a specific reference to Israel and its restoration in the eschatological aspiration.

In days to come shall Jacob take root,
Israel shall blossom and bud;
And the face of the world shall be filled
With fruitage. 84

The renewed Israel is to blossom in the fullness of its radiance and beauty. God will plant the new flower and give it loving care, so that it shall take firm root and spring forth in all its glory. This glory shall fill the inhabited world, and all men will see the offspring of God's vineyard.

There are other references in Chapters 24 - 27 of

Isaiah indicating that the light of glory and salvation refer to Israel. I have already alluded to Israel's future glory and state of unparalleled bliss. "In days to come shall Jacob take root, Israel shall blossom and bud; and the face of the world shall be filled with fruitage." ⁸⁵ When the New Universe is ushered in, there will be an abundance of fruit and Israel (Jacob) will blossom in unfolding glory like the new fruits of the land. Another reference to Israel appears in 25:23b:

For the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his elders shall be glory. ⁸⁶

This refers to the spatial aspect of God's future kingdom. God will reign from Mount Zion in Jerusalem, and His special people will be filled with the glory of God. From the location of God's new reign I infer that Israel will enjoy the glory of God's kingship. On this mountain, Mt. Zion, God will make a victory feast of fat things after He has utterly annihilated the depraved and iniquitous elements of the earth.

"And in this mountain will the Lord of hosts make unto all peoples a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined." ⁸⁷

There are many allusions to God's loving care for the

poor and needy. Viewing Isaiah 24 - 27 as a coherent unity, the poor and needy seem to be equated with Israel.

For Thou hast been a stronghold to the poor;
A stronghold to the needy in his distress,
A refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat;
For the blast of the terrible ones was as a winter
storm (against the wall). ⁸⁸

God has protected the needy in the time of his distress, and has been a shadow for the poor in the heated afflictions of violence. When God's new reign is established on earth it will be the humble and the poor who are exalted and will ultimately bring the nations to submission.

"For" The foot shall tread it down,
Even the feet of the poor, and the steps of
the needy." ⁸⁹

Finally the inhabitants of Judah will sing with exuberance and joyous exultation.

"In that day shall this song be sung in the
land of Judah:

We have a strong city;

Walls and bulwarks doth he appoint for salvation." ⁹⁰

Judah will rejoice because God will have brought salvation to His people. "Therefore by this shall the iniquity of Jacob be expiated, and this is all the fruit of taking away his sin." ⁹¹

The sins of Israel are forgiven and she will securely dwell in the future light of God's blessings.

In that day sing ye of her:
A vineyard of foaming wine!
I the Lord do guard it,
I water it every moment;
Lest mine anger visit it,
I guard it night and day. 92

The references appearing in these chapters conform to the definition of shapes of light. There is a hope for a glorious future of peace and prosperity in which God will be King on His high mountain, and Israel will blossom under the shadow of God's wing.

RESURRECTION IN
ISAIAH 24-27.

The third criterion for apocalyptic is resurrection. It should be indicated that there is a noticeable scarcity of allusions to resurrection throughout the entire Old Testament. Therefore the fact that there are only two references in these chapters should in no way detract from their importance. Quite conversely, the fact that there are any references to resurrection at all in Isaiah 24 - 27, should highlight this particular theme.

In Isaiah 25:8 we see a reference to resurrection.

He will swallow up death forever, and the
Lord God will wipe away tears from off all
faces....And the reproach of His people
will He remove from off all the Earth,
For the Lord hath spoken it. 93

God will banish death and the implication is that God will revivify the deceased. This is not an explicit statement of resurrection, however the implied meaning is there.

On the other hand, we see an internal contradiction to this idea in Isaiah 26:14.

"The dead live not; the shades rise not; to
that end has Thou punished and destroyed them,
and made all their memory to perish." 94

This passage clearly states that the dead remain dead and there is no hope for a future life. How are we able to reconcile this contradiction within these chapters? It must be kept in mind that the apocalyptic writings are expressed in symbolic terms of a most strange and other-worldly manner.

Because of their devotion to fantasy it is reasonable that within these mysterious writings there appear contradictory elements. After all these writings indicate a wild and vivid imagination with a proclivity for the alarming and unusual, rather than a logical or ratiocinative mind with a concern for consistency. This paradox of apocalyptic writings should be kept in mind at all times.

The first reason for the contradiction may be the vagueness and irrationalities of apocalyptic. There are two other possibilities. The author of Isaiah 24 - 27 may be referring to the foreign nations that are to be destroyed (in 26:14), whereas the references to resurrection apply to Israel. A third possible explanation may be that 26:14 (The dead live not) is a popular saying among the people, and the author is trying to dispel this idea and suggest that God offers life eternal to Israel.

The fugue on death reaches its finale in Chapter 26:19. Here is the most precise and definitive reference to a hope in the resurrection of the dead.

Thy dead shall live,
(My dead bodies shall arise -)
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust,-
For thy dew is as the dew of light,
And the earth will bring to life the shades. 95

In no uncertain terms the author assures his people of resurrection and rebirth. The dead spirits of the earth will experience renewed life. The clear statements of resurrection in Isaiah 24-27 conform to my definition of apocalyptic.

STYLE OF 24 - 27.

The style of description in Chapters 24 - 27 conforms to the stylistic characteristics of apocalyptic writings. These chapters abound with strange fantasies and chimeric and cryptic allusions and imagery. The verses are profuse with internal contradictions and the author uses enigmatic, private symbols to refer to the real world. A dream-like and misty quality runs throughout the four chapters of Isaiah and suggests an apocalyptic style in its fullest form. In 24:4 we read in fantastic metaphor, the way in which the earth mourns for the depravity of man. This most unnatural description highlights the apocalyptic style:

The Earth fainteth and fadeth away,
The World faileth and fadeth away,
The lofty people of the Earth do fail. 96

Further on nature is transformed in the mourning process:

The new wine faileth,
The vine fadeth
All the merry hearted do sigh. 97

This is the unnatural style of the apocalyptic writings. The style of apocalyptic darkness is universal, metaphorical and extravagantly pessimistic in its degree of desolation.

The Earth reeleth to and fro like a drunken
man
And swayeth to and fro as a lodge;
And the transgression thereof is heavy upon it,
And it shall fall, and not rise again. 98

In the twenty-third verse of Chapter 24 we read of the interruption in the harmony of nature. God's creation will reel in frantic violence on the day of apocalyptic judgment.

"Then the moon shall be confounded, and the sun
ashamed." 99

I have previously stated that the apocalyptic writings consist of many internal contradictions. It is an irrational dream - a nightmare fantasy of opposites. In these chapters we find this characteristic in reference to resurrection. Chapter 26:14 disaffirms the idea of resurrection while Verse 19 affirms the doctrine.

"The dead live not, the shades rise not, to
that end hast Thou punished and destroyed
them, and made all their memory to perish." 100
Not only is this a denial of resurrection but in frantic pessimism the author obliterates memory. This aura of bleak atrophy further indicates the apocalyptic style. However this doctrine is suddenly contradicted in the nineteenth verse.

"Thy dead shall live,
My dead bodies shall arise;
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust -
For thy dew is as the dew of light,
And the earth shall bring to life the shades." 101

The apocalyptic style is highlighted by esoteric symbolism and concealed allusions. In Chapter 27:1, we observe private symbols with a hidden meaning.

"In that day the Lord with His sore and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the swift serpent, and Leviathan the winding serpent; and He will slay the dragon that is in the sea." 102

In Job 40:25 there is reference to Leviathan. There, Leviathan is a symbol of God's great power.

"Canst thou draw out Leviathan with a fish hook? or press down his tongue with a cord?" 103

Here, (in Isaiah) the author is apparently referring to earthly powers alien to his people, Israel.

In Isaiah 24 - 27 there is ample evidence of unusual biblical style. There are incongruities in the cosmos, the darkness is depicted as a universal dissolution, & the prose is filled with a nihilistic and pessimistic undertone. All of these stylistic features plus the references to shapes of darkness, shapes of light and resurrection lead me to the conclusion that Isaiah 24 - 27 is an Apocalypse.

I have inserted Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah into my definition of Apocalyptic in order to see whether or not it would conform to the elements of the definition. In Isaiah 24 - 27 there were references to darkness, light and

hope, and resurrection. I further discovered that these verses are written in a mysterious and symbolic fashion. Strange and misty metaphors are employed and the pictures are painted in cataclysmic and cosmic colors. The exaggerated metaphor and the vague symbolism are all hallmarks of apocalyptic style and Chapters 24 - 27 are profuse with them.

In these chapters there is no perspective view of history. Instead of the horizontal process of history dependent on man's moral actions, there is a vertical irruption of God into the history of the universe independent of man. God's invasion of history, the vague symbolism, the shapes of darkness and light, and resurrection are indications that Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah are apocalyptic and I shall name these chapters, "The Isaiah Apocalypse."

I have discussed the definition of apocalyptic writings and have placed Chapters 24 - 27 within this definition. I shall now discuss many of the other problems of the Isaiah Apocalypse. My thesis will in no way preclude my presentation of scholarly opinion with which I disagree, recognizing that there are many diverse opinions about Chapters 24 - 27. I shall now proceed to enumerate some of the basic problems of the text and discuss how various scholars view these problems or attempt to resolve them.

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMENTARIES
TO THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

First is the question concerning the dating of these chapters. Because most of the apocalyptic writers wrote with pseudonyms it is difficult to place these apocalyptic writings into their proper historical context. "Unlike the prophets, the apocalyptic writers are often esoteric in character."¹⁰⁴ Referring to these pseudonymous writers Block says,

"Pseudonymity was then, as it is now, not an uncommon literary device and the Jewish apocalyptic writers availed themselves of it."¹⁰⁵

"They sought to give their message weight by putting it in the mouth of some bygone figure whose words would carry authority."¹⁰⁶

Because of the secrecy of the message and the vagueness of the symbolism the question of authorship looms paramount.

Another important question is whether or not the mysterious apocalyptic writings refer to actual historical events. "It must be remembered that in the days of the apocalyptic writers there was no distinction between fiction and history." ¹⁰⁷ Joshua Block ascribes a vivid imagination to the apocalyptic writers and this would give them a proclivity of mixing illusion with reality.

H. H. Rowley commenting on the historical perspective of the apocalyptic authors states, "Speaking generally the

prophets foretold the future that should arise out of the present, while the apocalyptists foretold the future that should break into the present." 108

In his analysis, Rowley says that generally the prophets view history as a continuum in which the present is dependent on past experience. For the apocalyptists this is not so. A future will burst into history and a new age will be formed. I am posing the question as to whether or not there is historical reality within the apocalyptic writings

A final problem is symbolism. Apocalyptic symbolism by its very nature is esoteric and mysterious and often difficult to decipher. The apocalyptists were masters of symbolism as we have seen in Isaiah 24 - 27. "They employed the veil of symbol and allegory, as these had been used in vision ages before." 109

The question of symbolism is whether or not the symbolism of these chapters may be pin-pointed to refer to actual nations or incidents, or does the symbolism by its very private nature elude even the most discerning eyes?

In conclusion I am classifying the primary problems of these chapters into three main categories:

1. Authorship and date.
2. Historical validity.
3. Symbolism.

I shall now proceed to relate how different scholars have dealt with these problems. My analysis shall be conducted in a temporal chronological manner, that is, selecting the earliest commentators who analyzed these chapters and then proceeding to the contemporary scholars. In each case I shall present the author's view with regard to authorship and date, historical validity and symbolism; then I shall conclude by giving my critique of the opinion presented.

I shall first discuss the mediaeval commentators. These are the first investigative studies made of the text and it is important to examine their perspectives in order to see if they may shed light on the authorship and date, history or symbolism of the Isaiah Apocalypse. Very often one of the commentators will present a new insight or open new vistas.

I have selected Rashi and Kimhi as the two mediaeval commentators because their commentaries to the Isaiah Apocalypse are more clear and precise than the other mediaeval commentators. These commentators were not exposed to scientific criticism of the nineteenth and twentieth century and consequently do not question the date or authorship of Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah. They approach the text as having been written by Isaiah, inspired by God.

The two important questions that Rashi and Kimhi help to answer are:

1. Who is to experience destruction?

2. Who is to be saved and resurrected?

In answering these questions Rashi and Kimhi solve some of the difficulties of the Isaiah Apocalypse and give new insights into the text.

RASHI AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE

Rashi is well known for the precision and clarity he brings to difficult and metaphorical passages. In reference to his commentaries, Morris Liber states, "Their primary quality is perfect clearness..." 110 Morris Liber continues to enumerate the outstanding qualities of Rashi. "His language is not only clear, but precise taking into consideration the actual context and the probable meaning and reproducing every varying shade of thought and signification." 111 The qualities of skilful analysis and unwavering precision is invaluable for our study of these four chapters. In summary of Rashi's brilliant contributions to biblical study Dr. Liber concludes, "He is one of the master minds of rabbinic literature on which he has left the imprint of his prominent characteristics - terseness and clearness." 112

I shall analyze the ideas and theories of this brilliant mind who lived from 1040 - 1105 and reveal how he applied his ideas to the Apocalypse of Isaiah.

24:10 ח'רבה ופ'תה, ח'רבה ופ'תה
:ח'רבה ופ'תה

"(Broken down) is the city of wasteness:

When it will be shattered it will be called
a city of confusion." 113

In this passage Rashi does not name the city of confusion. He is only concerned with a grammatical point about the word 'confusion.' The city will be a city of confusion after it is destroyed.

24:11 : פ'ע'י' כ'י' . פ'ע'י' ע'י'ע'י'ע'

The mirth of the land (will be darkened).
This is Jerusalem. 114

Rashi recognizes the land of destruction as Israel. Rashi does not comment on "in the city" in Verse 12 of Chapter 24.

25:2 י'ע'י' י'ע'י' י'י' . ח'ע'י' י'
:פ'ע'י'

For you have made a city into a heap.)
Mount Seir (Edom) from a city into a ruin. 115

Rashi states that Edom is the city which is ruined. He does not present a reason for his selection and probably made the selection of Edom as the city of ruin because it was common knowledge that Edom was an adversary of the Jewish people and Isaiah further alluded to the oracle against Edom in Chapter 34.

25:8 י'י' י'י' י'י' . י'י' י'י' י'י'
:פ'ע'י' פ'ע'י'

"He will swallow up death (forever). He will
cover it up and make it disappear forever
from Israel." 116

Rashi is concerned with the location of the disappearance of death. Rashi interprets

this as referring to God's causing death to disappear from the land of Israel, which is a particular redemption for the Jews and not a universal redemption. If we understand Rashi's tendentiousness we may very easily see why he interprets this in a particularistic manner. Rashi, being a mediaeval commentator, believed in the literal interpretation of the chosen people. God will redeem His people Israel.

Rashi believes that Verse 25:12 "The high fortress of Thy walls," refers to Moab. Rashi's historical perspective is limited, therefore he is able to see oracles against Moab and Edom at the same time.

26:1 וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיָמָיו
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיָמָיו
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכְּנוּ בְּיָמָיו

"We have a strong city, He will cause redemption. The city of Jerusalem which was an eternal stronghold for us. Redemption. The redeemer will redeem its walls and its strength." 117

Rashi sees that in the Apocalypse there is to be salvation for a particular people in a special city. Rashi names Jerusalem as this city which is God's eternal stronghold. The Messiah will bring redemption to Jerusalem on that day of redemption.

יח'ו מת' ק. כ'אן יתכ'ל ע'מ'ן
 "ב'ק'ו'ן ב'ק'ו'ן מת' יח'ו מת' 26:19
 ע'מ'ן י'ב' ק'ב'ר מ'כ'ו'ת מ'כ'ו'ת ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר
 י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר
 י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר
 י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר י'ב' ק'ב'ר

"Thy dead shall live. Here he prayed that the righteous should live. Please, God, let those live (for you) who were killed for you. Let a decree go forth from you saying, 'My dead bodies will arise, the dead bodies of my people who themselves were killed for me, for them there shall be a resurrection. 'And this is a reverse of that written above, The shades (evil ones) rise not, but these shall arise.'"¹⁸

In this reference to resurrection Rashi qualifies the verse to have it refer to the righteous of the world who were martyrs for God. These specific dead ones who were living for God's justice and proponents of His law will be revived, whereas the remaining dead shall be permanently dead. Rashi recognizes this verse as selective resurrection. There will be resurrection for certain righteous ones - this is in contrast to Verse 14 which states that shades (evil ones) shall not be resurrected.

על עולות נחם ברית ואלות' על מלכא
 בארבעה בפרסיו מלכא קדמאיה ואל מלכא כאתמל: 27
 כסגור מלכא ונ' נא. עקלתון. קסון כסול על שמוא.
 ש' וואו אנ' על שאלו של אלוות חסובות מנצח ואסר
 עק אור על אלו כחן סאמר בסוף י' ע' ואלו האורקין
 בארבע אסור וינדחין בארבע מבר' עולות' נחם ברית ואל
 מדר' עולות' נחם עקלתון. ווא אסר: וינדח את יתון
 אסר בר' ואל יסביל על מ' וכן כח"ס קר"ק א"י י"ק.

"Concerning Leviathan, the swift serpent,
 (and Leviathan the winding serpent)."

Targum Jonathan says, concerning a former king
 who became haughty like Pharaoh and concerning
 an ancient ruler who became proud
 like Sennacherib, a later king.

Winding: A double meaning is because it is the
 second (example.); and I say that these are three
 important nations - Egypt, Assyria. Therefore he
 said about these (nations) as he said at the
 end of this passage, 'and the lost ones in the land
 of Assyria will come and the scattered ones from
 the land of Egypt.' Leviathan, the swift serpent
 is Egypt, and Leviathan the winding one is Assyria.
And he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.

She dwells in the center of the sea, and also
 Greece (כח"ק) is called the Isles of the sea."¹¹⁹

Rashi at this point engages in historical speculation
 without a proper historical insight. It is his contention

that the three nations referred to are Egypt, Assyria and Greece. The swift serpent is Egypt, the windings one is Assyria, and the sea monster is the Isles of Greece because of its prominent position in the then known Sea, the Mediterranean Ocean. The fact that Rashi perceives in these symbols nations alien to Israel is in itself a testimony to his wise and enquiring mind.

It is quite interesting to view Rashi's perspective with regard to the Apocalypse of Isaiah. In good Rabbinic tradition he does not question the author or dating. He does not comment on these problems because in the eleventh and twelfth centuries authorship and dating were not problems. Rashi, however does not penetrate into the hidden meaning of the symbols and metaphors of the chapters and in this manner provides us with some valuable insights. He refers to the two World Powers alien to Israel, operative in the time of the historical Isaiah (Egypt and Assyria). He implies that the loyal ones who suffered death by the hands of Egypt and Assyria will be resurrected by God.

26:19

יְהוָה יִחְיֶה וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכָּן
וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכָּן וְיִשְׂרָאֵל יִשְׁכָּן

"Your dead will

live. The shades (giants of cruelty and wickedness) will not be resurrected, but these shall be resurrected."120.

Rashi comments on "The joy of the land is exiled" and he recognizes this as a reference to Israel. He recognizes Israel's defeat and desolation in the lifetime of the historical Isaiah and realizes the ultimate triumph in death through resurrection. In this manner Rashi copes with the internal contradictions in the text. The disastrous events refer to the life of Israel on earth, while the victory over death refers to life in the world to come for God's righteous ones. Rashi interprets the resurrection of the Apocalypse as selective resurrection.

Rashi answers the two questions:

1. Who is to experience destruction?
2. Who is to be saved and resurrected?

According to Rashi there are two peoples who experience destruction. Jerusalem experiences destruction at the hand of her enemies ("The mirth of the land will be darkened - this is Jerusalem.")¹²¹. In turn God will destroy the nations inimical to Israel (Egypt, Assyria, and the Islands of Greece.)¹²²

Rashi says that Israel is to be saved and experience redemption and resurrection ("Please God, let those live for you who were killed for you.")¹²³ ("My dead bodies will arise, the dead bodies of my people who themselves were killed for me.")¹²⁴ On the day of redemption a redeemer will bring salvation to Jerusalem. ("Salvation. The redeemer will redeem its walls and its strength.")¹²⁵

Rashi has a traditional perspective conforming to the mediaeval concept of Torah. Israel is the chosen people of God and will ultimately experience redemption, while the alien nations will be destroyed.

Rashi's historical analysis is based upon biblical history without a knowledge of the newer theories. His text criticism is likewise based on the precise investigation of words without a knowledge of the scientific methods of higher and lower criticism. Taking into account the period of time in which he wrote, Rashi gives an erudite and careful analysis of the symbols and metaphors of the Isaiah Apocalypse and in the area of symbol sheds light on some primary problems.

KIMHI AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

The famous commentator of the twelfth century is Radak or David Bar Joseph Kimhi. Kimhi is the prolific commentator who approaches the study of Scripture from a religio-traditional perspective while at the same time utilizing reason and rationality in his approach. Caspar Levias writes,

"In the introduction to his commentary on the prophets he explains the duty of expounding the Bible from a religious standpoint. In a general way, he adheres to the literal meaning of scripture; and his exegesis is based on grammar and rationality." 126

It is said that this great and dedicated commentator of France (1160 - 1235) was given his name from a Talmudic verse:

"Without kemah(flour), no torah."127

His commentary was considered so comprehensive and lucid that it was difficult for the people of his time to undertake a study of the Bible without Kimhi. With Kimhi the biblical verses flower in the clear light of careful and painstaking analysis. Kimhi is able to interpret some of the metaphorical passages in the Isaiah Apocalypse.

גמב"ה קנ"ת ת"ל. אחר ששג"ר
(נ'ל) קנ"ת ת"ל.

"Broken down is the (city) of wasteness. After
it is destroyed it is a city of wasteness." 128

Like Rashi he says the city will be a city of wasteness.
after its destruction. Kimhi says the verse refers to a
future condition.

2
 וְכִירוּם בַּעַר, בְּכֹל עֵץ אֲחֵר
 עֲבָרָם. וְכֹל וְכֹל עֲלֵה וְיֵרֵד וְזֶה
 שֶׁכֵּן יְהִי בְּהָאָרֶץ וּבַמִּשְׁכָּן.

"In the (city) is left (desolation).

'In the city' is in every city of the cities of idol worshippers. And all this great retribution (divine punishment) that he mentioned will be during the messianic days against Gog and Magog." 129

Kimhi perceives the armageddon theme within these chapters. The retribution will be a final, great suicidal conflict among the nations of the earth. The suicidal conflict will precede the coming of redemption for Israel.

Kimhi further suggests that destruction will be visited on the heathen cities and they will be desolate in that there will be an absence of joy in the cities and only destruction will be left.

24:21 וְיָשִׁיב בְּיוֹם הַהוּא יְקִיבָהּ ה' עַל צָבָא וַיִּחַרֵּם
בְּמַרוֹק יֵשׁ מִכּוֹס' עַל קִרְיֹת יִשְׁמִינִיּוֹת כִּי הָיָה
סִמָּן וְהָיָה עֲצֶת וַיִּקְרָא ה' אֶתְּכָל אֶתְּכָל
וַיִּקְרָא ה' אֶתְּכָל כִּי אֲבִירִיז בְּוֶשֶׁת כִּי כִּי כִּי
וַיִּקְרָא ה' אֶתְּכָל שֶׁהָיָה עֲצֶת לְעֹלָם אֶתְּכָל
אֶתְּכָל כִּי אֲבִירִיז בְּוֶשֶׁת כִּי כִּי כִּי אֶתְּכָל
אֶתְּכָל כִּי אֲבִירִיז בְּוֶשֶׁת כִּי כִּי כִּי אֶתְּכָל

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that
the Lord will punish the host of the high
heaven on high." Some explain this as the
eclipse of the sun because it is an omen and
sign for evil for nations. Therefore he said,
"And on the Kings of the land." And the wise
man Rabbi Abraham son of Ezra, of blessed mem-
ory explains that the hosts of heaven are the
angels who stand to help one nation and to
persecute another nation as explained in the
book of Daniel. And therefore he said, 'and on
the Kings of the land,' because the kingdoms
of the nations cleave to the kingdoms of the
angels." (implying wicked angels). 130. 130

Kimhi interprets this verse in the light of a platonic notion that corresponding to the nations of the earth there are divine advocates in heaven. The nations will be punished and the angels of heaven who cling to these nations will also be punished on the day of divine retribution.

25:2

כ' עמך מע'כ, מאיתו מקום ע' ויה' ע'ר עמ'ת
 אל, כלומר עמך אל אבנ'ך כי רב'ך נצח' ויה' ע'
 'ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך
 ע'מך ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך
 ארמ'ך, ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך
 ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך
 ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך, ויה' ע'מך

"For thou hast made of a city (a ruin). From this place that was a city you made a ruin. That is to say that you made a heap of stones because many of the cities of the nations will be trampled in those days. And the doubling of the matter in different words is to substantiate the matter, and he said 'Of a fortified city a ruin. A castle of strangers to be no city. The city will cease to exist forever, because it will never be rebuilt; and the castle of strangers he said concerning Babylon that it was like a palace to all the cities of idol worshippers and they were called strangers and foreigners." 131

Kimhi comments on the word 'ruin' and states that a city previously existed where the ruin presently remains. He names the city in this comment to be the part of the verse on ('a castle of strangers'). He says that this refers to the Babylonian Empire and he apparently had in mind the conquest of the Empire by Persia. He mentions Babylon as the palace of strangers because it was a leading city among the cities of idol-worshippers and therefore destined to be destroyed. Like Rashi, Kimhi recognizes that destruction will befall the idolatrous powers alien to Israel.

כ' וי"ח אדר אדרס. מקדשו קדשיו
 יצאנו וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו
 וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו
 וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו וזמנו

"For thou hast been a stronghold to the poor -
protecting the poor and weak ones - they are
Israel, and the dispersion and exile is simi-
lar to a stream of water and the heat of the sun
and God was protecting them in order that they
should not altogether perish in exile." 132

In this verse it is clear that Kimhi understands the poor to mean Israel. The poor and needy are synonyms for Israel, and God will protect them with loving care. The faith and trust of Israel will be her shield. In the

last day when destruction will be visited upon the idolatrous cities, Israel will be protected by God's loving care.

25:8 בלעז נמות וימות ר"ל נמות וימות ר"ל נמות וימות
לא מלתה שבת, ר"ל נמות וימות וימות וימות וימות
בלעז נמות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות
ר"ל נמות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות
מורדות שבו עומק עומק וימות וימות וימות וימות וימות
מחל כנ' וימות כ' לא תהי' עומק עומק וימות וימות וימות
ימות מחל כ' לא תהי' עומק עומק וימות וימות וימות וימות
ור"ל עומק חסד כ' לא תהי' עומק עומק וימות וימות וימות

"He will swallow up death (forever). He will abolish and annul death. It means to say, not in a natural (normal) way but by a special event. That is to say the killing which the nations used to kill them in exile; then will that death be annulled and the tear on every face (be annulled)- that is to say a tear on the faces of the people Israel because they were always crying in exile from the evil that the nations did to them; then God will erase that tear from on their faces and there will not be trouble for them any more, and the shame of his nation He will remove from on every land since they were scattered in every land and there was shame for them in every place; God will remove that shame." 133

Kimhi sees in this verse salvation for Israel; not only will the nation of Israel be saved but God will redeem

"Thy dead shall live. He said then at the time of salvation your dead will live because the Holy One blessed be He is destined to resurrect the dead at the time of salvation and thus he said in the prophecy of Daniel, 'And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake.' And we already wrote at the beginning of this chapter, 'In that day shall this song be sung in Judah ' And this song is the subject of this chapter until this verse. And the prophet then said, 'Your dead shall live,' and this expression is an attribute of God; he means that the righteous who are for God, as our Rabbis of blessed memory said there is resurrection for the righteous and not for the wicked, and this is how it appears in this verse; he said 'Your dead,' and thus the prophet Daniel said 'many.' And he said, 'My dead bodies shall arise;' Although the word 'with (פ ו) is missing, or (like the letter) kaf (כ). It means then, 'like my dead body' or 'with my dead body;' and I say just as you will resurrect my dead body from the dust, also will the rest of the righteous arise, and he who trusts in truth will arise since he himself knows he is righteous." 135

Kimhi brings new insights to his comments on this verse. Like Rashi he too believes that the verse refers to selective resurrection for Israel. He concentrates on the idea of Your in 'your dead' and believes that this refers to the nation Israel. Kimhi further compares this verse to Daniel. In Daniel we read the word 'many' in 'many who sleep...' Kimhi compares the 'many' to 'your' and says that many refer only to the righteous ones of Israel. Kimhi sees verse nineteen as a joyous refrain to be sung by the people of Judah on the day of their resurrection.

27:19 וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת
 "וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת וְהָיָה בְּהַמָּוֶת"

"The Leviathan that he mentions is compared to the kingdoms of idol-worshippers which are powerful.... He hints at the kingdoms of Edom and Yishmael and India..." 136

In his analysis of this verse Kimhi correctly assumes that the symbols of the Leviathan and dragon refer to alien nations. However when he names the three kingdoms we see his faulty historical perspective. Nonetheless, he does interpret the symbols and for the knowledge available to him does an outstanding performance of commenting on the verses.

Like Rashi, Kimhi is a devotee of the devotional - traditional school. He answers the two questions in the

same way as Rashi did. Who is to experience destruction? The cities of idol worshippers are to be destroyed, ("and there remains in it only destruction and ruin, and the meaning of 'in the city,' is in every city from the cities of idol worshippers")." ¹³⁷ Destruction will be visited on the heathen nations.

Who is to be resurrected? Like Rashi, Kimhi says that resurrection refers to the righteous of Israel ("there is resurrection for the righteous, and not for the wicked."). ¹³⁸

Kimhi's comments clarify much of the symbolism of the text. Because he accepts the text as a God-given document he does not comment on the author or date. However, he does bring enlightening insights to other problems of the text. I found Kimhi to be particularly perspicacious when he compared the verse about resurrection to the similar verse in Daniel. By relating the two he ably proved his thesis of selective resurrection. I believe that both Rashi and Kimhi have performed a brilliant analysis of the Isaiah Apocalypse considering the limitations of the times in which they wrote.

DUMMELOW AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE

Dummelow's position seems to be one of uncertainty about these chapters. In his introduction to these four chapters he states, "The subject is the overthrow of a power hostile to God's people, with a description of the deliverance of the Jews and their future glory. The hostile power is not named, and the tone of the whole prophecy is so general that it is impossible to assign it to any occasion." 139

In these two sentences Dummelow clearly states his position with respect to authorship and historical validity. For him the occasion, and consequently the author of the Isaiah Apocalypse is unknown.

However, Dummelow does go on to offer some speculations about the symbolism of these chapters. I shall list the various symbolisms of prime importance in understanding these chapters, and then present Dummelow's evaluation of them.

Isaiah 24:5 "Everlasting covenant - The phrase seems to allude to Genesis 9:16, the covenant with Noah and his sons. The bloodshed, upon which the great world-empires were founded, was a violation of this primitive covenant." 140

He suggests that it is the violation of the Noah covenant

which will cause the apocalyptic holocaust.

Isaiah 25:2 "A city viz. the one that oppressed God's people. 24:10." 141

Dummelow suggests that the city is a foreign power hostile to the power of Israel.

Isaiah 25:6 "This mountain i.e. Zion." 142 The feast of fat things shall be held on Mount Zion."

Isaiah 26:5 "Lofty city. The power hostile to God's people. 24:10." 143

Once again Dummelow suggests that the destroyed city is a hostile power as is the city in 24:10 and 25:2.

Isaiah 26:19 "Thy dead...arise. 'Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise.'
The pronouns 'thy' and 'my' both refer to Israel. The passage seems to imply that for God's people, as opposed to the heathen, (V. 14.) the prophet expected a literal resurrection. Some think, however, that a national restoration, surpassing all expectation, is set forth under the figure of resurrection from the dead, as in Hosea 6:2 and Ezekiel 37:1-10." 144

Dummelow attempts to account for the internal contradiction in regard to the resurrection. He states that the phrase of 26:19, "Your dead shall live," refers to Israel while

the statement in Verse 14 "Dead men do not live," refers to the heathen nations.

Isaiah 27:1 "The powers hostile to God's people are here symbolically represented as monsters. Leviathan the swift serpent perhaps stands for Assyria, watered by the rapid Tigris and Leviathan the winding serpent for Babylon, whose river was the winding Euphrates. The dragon, crocodile i.e. Egypt as in 51:9." 145

Dummelow provides interesting speculation for the symbols of Chapter twenty-seven. He proposes the idea that Leviathan the swift serpent refers to Assyria, Leviathan the winding serpent refers to Babylonia, and the dragon (crocodile) refers to Egypt. ~~He also offers no reason for I would assume that these nations were selected~~ by Dummelow ~~because they were historically the~~ leading adversaries of Israel. Dummelow does not comment on Chapter 27:12-13 which give the names of two powers hostile to Israel, Assyria and Egypt.

Isaiah 27:10 "Defended city i.e. of the enemies (as in 25:2). Some, however, understand Jerusalem which must for a season be desolate." 146

Like his other comments on cities, he equates this too with a foreign power alien to Israel.

All of these ideas with regard to the symbolism are

extremely interesting conjectures. However his position with regard to the symbolism of the Isaiah Apocalypse is one of uncertainty.

RUDOLPH AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

Rudolph views Chapters 24 - 27 as a number of diverse fragments written at different times. "Our results are that Isaiah 24 - 27 are compositions of ten sections." ¹⁴⁷ Rudolph further hesitates to give the appellation of Apocalypse to these units even though motifs of apocalyptic style are evident. "One is only able to refer to Isaiah 24 - 27 as the 'Isaiah Apocalypse' with reserve though sundry apocalyptic motifs may be found here." ¹⁴⁸ Even though Rudolph presumes that Isaiah 24 - 27 is a composition comprised of many units he believes that most of the units were written at the time between 330 and 300. "It seems to me that Chapters 24 - 27 are between 330 and 300." ¹⁴⁹

The book of Isaiah is not one literary unit written by the historical Isaiah. Rudolph views chapters 24 - 27 as later additions. Within these later additions of the fourth century (330-300) there are apocalyptic motifs. Rudolph ascribes a date different from the date setting of the historical Isaiah.

LINDBLOM AND FROST
AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE

I shall presently examine the observations of J. Lindblom of Sweden. Lindblom applies the name of 'Cantata' to the chapters 24 - 27 instead of Apocalypse. "This close connection between the language of the Isaiah cantata and the language of the book of Isaiah in its other parts are only to be explained by the fact that the author of the Cantata had so lived himself into the style and idiom of the Book of Isaiah that we can safely describe the cantata as an imitation." ¹⁵⁰ The tenor of his argument for referring to Chapters 24 - 27 as a "Cantata" is that he finds the chapters containing eschatological references but do not fully comprise all of the apocalyptic requirements. According to Lindblom the passage was written by a later hand which styled the chapters "Imitatio Isaiah." Although Stanley B. Frost disagrees with Lindblom who states that Chapters 24 - 27 are not apocalyptic, Dr. Frost does agree to the premise that these chapters are an accurate imitation of the rest of Isaiah. "Nevertheless, I am of the opinion that it was not altogether by chance that these chapters were bound up with Isaiah's work and given their place in the great anthology which goes by his name. The outstanding characteristics of Isaiah's work is his statesmanship. That is not to say that other characteristics of

his thought and activity are not equally important; nor is it to say that other prophets such as Jeremiah or Amos are not also characterized by an interest in the events of history; but it is to emphasize that when we have regard to the total impression that Isaiah makes upon our minds, it is the characteristic of statesmanship, that is, a profound group of historico-theological principles, and an understanding of the events which testify to those principles, which remains with us as that for which he is distinctive. And it is broadly true to say that the Isaiah anthology as a whole represents, or perhaps we ought to say, reinforces, that characteristic. The attribution to Isaiah of the messianic passages and of the Deutero-Isaiah oracles are but two cases in point. In this Isaiah Apocalypse we have a work which claims not merely to interpret the current events of a prophet's own day, but also to peer forward into the coming events and to foresee the cosmic events and to foresee the cosmic eschaton itself. To which prophet would it be more appropriate to attribute it than to Isaiah, the statesman among the prophets?" 151

Stanley Frost believes that the outstanding quality of Isaiah is his statesmanship. Because of their themes of Israel's mission in history, the messianic passages and Deutero-Isaiah were placed in Isaiah. The Isaiah Apocalypse was placed in the Book of Isaiah because of the presentation

of the future events of history.

Frost and Lindblom agree that the Isaiah Apocalypse is an imitation of the Book of Isaiah. The reason why Lindblom believes Chapters 24-27 to be a cantata is because "there is no such thing as a typical apocalypse: apocalyptic is a mood or tendency which we often recognize even where the formal characteristics are lacking." 152

Lindblom believes that the destroyed city is Babylon which was conquered by Xerxes I in 485. He says that the feast of fat things refers to God's coronation feast, whereas Frost believes it is the eschatological feast following the overthrow of the powers inimical to Yahweh. Frost states that the feast will be held on Mount Zion in Jerusalem (as stated in Isaiah 24:23). God will vindicate His people not through immortality, but through resurrection. "The apocalyptic scheme - cataclysm, judgment, New Age, resurrection - is now complete, and anything more that is added can only be by way of amplification." 153

Stanley Frost suggests that the symbolism of 27:1 may refer to the Greek Conquest of Syria and Egypt, however Lindblom leaves the question open.

I have discussed Lindblom and Frost in the same chapter because their conclusions are similar. Both view the four chapters as a composite work. They believe that the author of Chapters 24 - 27 imitated the historical Isaiah

and then inserted the four chapters into Isaiah. The author of Isaiah was selected because of his historical interest and these four chapters refer to God's invasion of history.

Frost and Lindblom have perspectives based on a careful analytic study of the text. They do not claim a certain knowledge of the meaning of the four chapters, however their probable knowledge is based upon incisive analysis combined with an understanding of history.

PFEIFFER AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

Pfeiffer is an exponent of the evolutionary theory of the writing of the Old Testament and it is his belief that Chapters 24 - 27 were written much later than the historical Isaiah. "Apocalyptic vision of the final judgment and God's kingdom on earth (24 - 27, much later than Isaiah)."¹⁵⁴ Pfeiffer further believes that Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah represent an apocalyptic vision. He feels that the style and vivid imagery warrant its being designated the Apocalyptic Vision. "The book of oracles against foreign nations (13-23) was supplemented by a complete brief apocalypse, containing threats and promises (24-27)."¹⁵⁵

Pfeiffer does not name the author of these chapters, however he does date the Apocalypse at the third century. "Theology and historical background, as well as the general characteristics of language and style, point to the third century as the period in which Isaiah 24 - 27 was written."¹⁵⁶

Pfeiffer continues to enumerate the reasons why he believes Chapters 24 - 27 are a later insertion. In his evaluation it is interesting to note how he interprets the symbols.

"The apocalyptic character is more pronounced here than in any other parts of Isaiah: the blowing of the great trumpet to gather God's elect from the four winds (27:13; cf. Matt: 24:31; I Cor. 15:52; I Thess. 4:16.), the

resurrection from the dead, (26:19; cf. Dan. 12:1), and the divine judgment of angels (24:21a, 22f.) either fallen or (as in Dan. 10:20f) patrons of heathen nations, are clear signs of late composition. Moreover, when Chapter 27 was written, the Jewish Dispersion was extensive and widely scattered (27:12f) and the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms, enigmatically named Leviathan and the Dragon, respectively (27:1, cf. 27:13) were the chief obstacles to Jewish independence." 157

According to Pfeiffer the Apocalypse consists of two diametrically opposed themes. One is the theme of destruction and the other is the theme of rebirth. "Isaiah 24-27 marks the transition from the nationalistic expectation of a revived kingdom of David to the Apocalyptic visions of the upheavals and rebirth of the whole world. The hymns of joy and hatred (25:1-5, 9-12, 26:1-6, 7-19; 27:2-6, 7-11) still stress the nationalistic aspirations. In the destructive phase the Lord annihilates the enemies of Israel (25:1-5, 9-12, 26:2f, cf. 27:4, 7f, 10f.) the wicked in its midst (26:10-12), and its heathen rulers (26:13f.). In the constructive phase the Lord is a mighty fortress for the pious Jews (26:1-4), whose path he has smoothed (24:7-9); he has widened the borders of Israel in time of distress (26:15-18) and will raise from the dust the pious dead (26:19); the Lord cares for His vineyard, Israel, and destroys the

weeds (27:2-6), for He will allow Israel again to take root and blossom, while its foes will be consumed like the boughs of a withered tree set on fire by the women (27:7-11)." 158

Pfeiffer sees within the Apocalypse of Isaiah the opposing themes of destruction and the rebirth of God's chosen people. "Israel shall hide itself in its chambers the while the Lord goes forth in His indignation to punish the inhabitants of the earth." 159 arrayed in its full glory and nobility." 160

Although Pfeiffer does not name the author of the Isaiah Apocalypse, he nonetheless questions the idea of composite authorship. "A characteristic of most of the later apocalypses is chaotic arrangement, and the lack of logical structure in Isaiah 24 - 27 is not necessarily a sign of composite authorship." 160

Since Pfeiffer views the Isaiah Apocalypse as having been written in the third century he interprets the symbolism in the light of the historical climate of this time. We have already seen that he believes the Leviathan symbolizes the Seleucid kingdom, and the dragon the Ptolemaic kingdom. Pfeiffer further analyzes the Leviathans, the swift and tortuous serpents as referring to Syria, and the dragon of 27:1 as a symbol for Egypt.

"Israel should go into hiding during the final judgment, when the Lord will slay with His sword Leviathan,

that swift and tortuous serpent (Syria), and the dragon (Egypt) (26:20; 27:1)." 161

After the evil world powers have been utterly shattered the Jews will be redeemed and will worship God on Mount Zion.

"Thus it will be possible for the Jews, scattered widely throughout Egypt and Syria, to come and worship the Lord on Zion when the great trumpet is blown (27:12f)." 162

With certain hesitation Pfeiffer attempts to identify the fortified city and lofty citadel as Samaria. "The Lord is praised for destroying a pagan fortified city (Samaria? 24:10,12) and protecting the humble (25:1-5). He has crushed Moab (25:9-12). The Lord is a mighty fortress for the 'righteous nation,' but destroys a lofty citadel (Samaria?) (24:1-6)." 163

Pfeiffer's literary interpretation of the text is performed with consummate skill. He analyzes the Isaiah Apocalypse in light of the historical context.

More so, Pfeiffer's historical analysis is interesting. He assumes that Chapters 24 - 27 are later insertions because of the added chaos in these chapters and because of the theological ideas. But he fails to demonstrate that the theology of the Isaiah Apocalypse necessarily came at a later time and that Isaiah could not make use of linguistic

KESSLER AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

Kessler is of the opinion that the Isaiah Apocalypse is a post exilic composition. "The examination of the passage yields the conclusion that it is from the time of the appearance of Nehemiah." 164 Nehemiah was the Hebrew governor of Judah from 444 to 432 B.C.E. and appears later around the year 424. In this passage (26:11-21) there is a specific reference to physical resurrection and it is possibly this rationale which leads the author to the dating of these passages as post exilic. In another passage he refers to the work as appearing "during the time of Xerxes 485 before Christ." 165 The late dating by Kessler means that the writing was composed by a hand other than the historical Isaiah.

There is a similarity between Kessler and Pfeiffer in their methodology. Both agree to an evolutionary view of the Old Testament. Kessler assigns the redaction of the Isaiah Apocalypse to the fifth century whereas Pfeiffer prefers the fourth and third centuries.

Kessler presents an ingenious and imaginative analysis of the metaphors and symbols of the Apocalypse of Isaiah. With regard to the "city of confusion (tohu)," he states, "The name tohu does not mean as one might think that the name refers to the destiny of the city - that it will become tohu vavohu but it means its character. The city was given to serve nothingness (tohu) and with this one

should associate the honoring of the gods of nothingness." 166

This is a rather unique and anomalous interpretation. It appears as a monotype in comparison to the other comments which state that this is an allusion to the destruction of a city. Kessler asserts that the tohu refers to a moral poverty. Although Kessler refrains from naming the city in this passage I infer that it is Jerusalem when I continue to read his comments about 24:13 ("the midst of the earth" - *הִלָּךְ אֶרֶץ*). "The midst of the earth seems to refer to Judea and Jerusalem. Here where God is, is the center of the earth." 167

Kessler reconciles the contradictions of resurrection in Chapter 26 in an ingenious way. He pictures this chapter as a dialogue. "Verses 20, 14a, and 19 should be read as a dialogue between the prophet and the people. Verse 20 is the prophet to the people. Their answer to him is 14a. And Verse 19 is thus the prophecy of the resurrection." 168 In Kessler's version the dialogue would read as follows:

"Come, my people
Enter thou into thy chambers and shut
Thy doors about thee;
Hide thyself for a little moment
Until the indignation be overpast." 169

"The dead live not;
The shades rise not!" 170

"Thy dead shall live,
My dead bodies shall arise
Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust,
For thy dew is as the dew of light,
And the Earth shall bring to life the shades." 171

After his rearrangement of these verses Kessler considers the type of resurrection referred to. He compares this passage with the other allusions to resurrection in the Old Testament. He believes that Ezekiel 37 refers to national resurrection while the allusion in Job 19:25-26 is a wishful idea of a meeting with God. "But as for me I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He will witness at the last upon the dust; and when after my body is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God." 172 It is his contention that the allusion in Hosea 14:5 is a mythological conception in which the light of God is equated with dew in the Bible. "The creation of the light is the first step in the process of creation and the presupposed assumption for life. It was like this in the beginning and will be like this in the end of the world. The power of the light will become the power of life for those who dwell in

death and live in dust." 173

The light at the end of days will give life as it did in the beginning.

In his analysis of resurrection Kessler compares this passage (26:19) with the one in Daniel 12:2-3. It is his belief that both passages clearly refer to a bodily resurrection of the dead. In reference to Isaiah 26:19 he affirms, "This is one of the few clear passages of resurrection of the dead in the Bible."¹⁷⁴ He continues to draw the parallel between this and Daniel by observing in reference to Daniel 12:2-3 that it is "The oldest and finest testimony of resurrection of the dead in the Old Testament." ¹⁷⁵ Kessler interprets these two verses (Isaiah 26:19 and Daniel 12:2-3) as clear expressions of resurrection.

Kessler proceeds to comment on the symbolism of 27:1. "The symbols of the Leviathan, serpent and dragon refer to the powers of the world - to which powers is debatable."¹⁷⁶ Kessler observes that these animal figures represent world powers, but like the uncertain opinions of Dummelow he is unable to identify the powers.

In summary Kessler's view of this passage are similar to the evolutionary approach of Pfeiffer. Although the methodology is similar the conclusions are not the same. Kessler assigns the Apocalypse of Isaiah to the fifth century B.C.E. whereas Pfeiffer assigns it to the third

century B. C. E. Kessler interprets the imagery in an ingenious manner which reveals his literary appreciation of the Isaiah Apocalypse. Since I do not know German I received assistance in translating the German.^{176a} Because of this I am unable to give a more detailed critique.

YEHEZKEL KAUFMAN AND THE ISAIAH APOCALYPSE.

Yehezkel Kaufman, the noted scholar from Israel, has made a brilliant contribution in the area of biblical scholarship in his book "The Religion of Israel," translated by Moshe Greenberg.

Dr. Kaufman presents the theory that Isaiah 1 - 39 represent one unit written by one hand around the year 701. His reasons for this conclusion are:

- a. None of the great historical changes of the seventh and sixth centuries are included within Chapters 1-39.
- b. Chapters 1 - 39 contain internal contradictions, and a later interpolator would have attempted to remove internal contradictions in order to enhance the value of the prophetic message.
- c. The First Isaiah does not contain the motif of national revenge which is the hallmark of later post exilic prophecy.
- d. Isaiah avails himself of ancient oracles whose names appear time and time again in the historical climate of the ancient Near East. For example he uses Babylon to designate Assyria.

With regard to the first reason (a) of the absence of

seventh and sixth century crisis, Dr. Kaufman says, "None of the great historical changes that the near East underwent during the seventh and sixth centuries are reflected in the prophecies of Isaiah 1 - 39." 177

With regard to the internal contradictions he states, "Such discrepancies might have been removed with but minor textual alterations. The fact that they were not indicates that the prophecies were published close upon their composition; from the outset they possessed such a fixity that not even the prophet himself changed them." 178 This supports Yehezkel Kaufman's argument that Isaiah 1-39 is one complete composition written by the hand of one prophet.

The absence of the motif of national revenge is further proof that chapters 1 - 39 were written by one hand. "The current view rests to a large extent on the fact that the book contains whole units (e.g., Chapters 15-16, 24-27) which differ ^{literarily} from the admitted creations of Isaiah; yet it must be stressed that these chapters, like the rest of the book, lack the motif of national revenge." 179

Yehezkel Kaufman believes that the word Babylon in Isaiah 1 - 39 actually refers to Assyria. "Moreover the description of the King in Chapter 14 ill suits the Babylonian rulers." 180 On the other hand the characterization in Chapter 14 suits well the kings of Assyria..." 181

How does Dr. Kaufman deal with the striking imagery

and symbolism of Chapters 24 - 27? It is Dr. Kaufman's conviction that Chapters 24 - 27 of Isaiah, the Isaiah Apocalypse, was written by ~~the historical~~ ^{the historical} Isaiah. ~~First Isaiah.~~ He feels that the mystical and symbolic language is part of a vast legacy of Canaanite literature to which the prophet was heir. According to Dr. Kaufman, the sea serpents and other animals do not refer to nations but are strange symbolic utterances coming from earlier Canaanite literature. "Chapters 24 - 27, usually entitled 'The Isaiah Apocalypse' are assigned to late times, though there is no agreement as to how late. However, nothing of the essence of apocalyptic - the perspective vision of historical ages - can be found in them. The vague, non-historical character of these chapters contrasts sharply with the wealth of allusion to historical persons and events that characterize Apocalypse. The judgment of 'the host of heaven in heaven' (e.g., Amos 4:13; 5:8; Hosea 4:3; Isaiah (13:10, 13) is that which the later apocalypses borrowed. If, as it seems, the monsters of Isaiah 27:1 represent heathen kingdoms (besides being real sea monsters; cf. Amos 9:3), the symbol is unparalleled both in biblical and apocalyptic literature. For precisely Leviathan, the sea serpent, and the dragon never are utilized as symbols for nations in Apocalypse. The image and the language have a Canaanite background that had entirely disappeared by the age of

Apocalypse. Now that we know the Canaanite basis of such eschatological imagery there is no reason whatever to date it to late times." 182

Dr. Kaufman dismisses these symbols by saying that they are from the Canaanite influence. In this way Dr. Kaufman evades the issue and does not come to grips with the problems involved. It is true that the origin may be from the Canaanite period, however in the Isaiah Apocalypse the author is using the Leviathan and dragon as symbols for nations. The present use has nothing to do with the possible Canaanite origin of Leviathan and dragon. The author of Isaiah refers to the monsters in 27:12 and 13 as Egypt and Assyria, and contrary to Dr. Kaufman's opinion Leviathan and Dragon are used as symbols in the Isaiah Apocalypse. ~~Isaiah Dr. Kaufman proceeds to deal with the~~ the problem of resurrection. He believes that these passages are from the historical Isaiah and are to be viewed in a particular light. He feels that these references in Isaiah are a part of the ancient doxologies recited in time of dire distress and disaster and should be viewed in the same light as Ezekiel 37; that is, the hope for the restoration and sovereignty of the national homeland.

"In 25:8 and 26:19 reflexes of the later doctrine of resurrection have wrongly been seen. That God makes the dead live again is a theme of ancient doxologies (Deut. 32:39;

I Samuel 2:6; Psalms 30:4). The contiguity of this theme is vouched for by its occurrence in Babylonian literature (cf. I will praise the Lord of Wisdom, end). Sick, suffering and persecuted persons are said to 'have descended into the pit' (Psalms 88:4ff, 143:3; Lam.3:6, 54f.); the nation too may be covered with 'deep darkness' (Psalms 44:20), walk in 'darkness' and live in the land 'of deep darkness' (Isaiah 9:1). Ezekiel depicts the exile and restoration of the nation in terms of death and revival (Chapter 37). The Isaiah passages are to be viewed in the same light. The 'death' that God will put an end to in 25:8 is the carnage of war (and perhaps plague, famine, and other visitations on sinners); at the end of days, when heathendom will vanish, God will do away with this manner of death - and thus 'will remove the disgrace of His nation from the whole earth.' The revival of the dead and the shades of 26:19 is but a figure for the deliverance of those who are in dire distress, who have come down to dust. Upon these 'the dew of light' will descend and redeem them from darkness' (cf. 9:1)." 183

Dr. Kaufman interprets the idea of resurrection in correlation with the symbols. The symbols represent those powers that are preventing national rebirth, however when the evil nations are destroyed, death in turn will be destroyed forever. In this context Yehezkel Kaufman links

the monsters of the Isaiah Apocalypse with the hope for the eventual disappearance of death and as a hope for national resurrection.

"The vision of the trial of nations (19:23-25) not only heralds the end of idolatry, it also points to the concord that will prevail between the great empires. A 'highway' will connect Assyria and Egypt, by which their peoples will have peaceful intercourse. The destruction of 'the veil that is spread over all the nations' (25:7), and the slaying of the Leviathan - tanim (27:1), are to be interpreted in this light. Destruction of the veil enables the nations to see the glory of YHWH; then 'he shall destroy death forever' (25:8) i.e., an end will be made to the carnage of war. The slaying of Leviathan tanim presages the disappearance of the ruthless domination of monster empires. The national prophecy about the stock of Jesse (11:1-9) shares the spirit of this vision," 1S4

Dr. Kaufman believes that Chapters 1 - 39 was written by the historical Isaiah. "The first collection of prophecies (Chapters 1-12) sets forth the foundations of Isaiah's World View. composed during the twenty or twenty-five years from the end of Uzziah's reign to the beginning of Hezekiah's, these chapters were presumably selected and ordered by the prophet himself. The ideas of Chapters 13-33 build on this foundation." 1S5

Yehezkel Kaufman believes that the mysterious allusions of Isaiah 24 - 27 refer to the world empires during the life span of the historical Isaiah. This was a time in which the mighty Assyrian empire conquered the Near East destroying the land and bringing utter prostration to its inhabitants. Conquest and devastation were rampant in the ancient Near East during the life time of Isaiah. According to Dr. Kaufman the universal disaster of Isaiah 24 - 27 refers to the hope for the downfall of the heathen nations while the hope for resurrection refers to the hope for national rebirth following the cataclysm.

Dr. Kaufman's approach is performed from an historic thematic perspective. He searches for the basic themes in the passages and attempts to relate these themes to the proper historical milieu. In his analysis of Isaiah 24 - 27 he perceives the central themes of world destruction, messianic expectation, the hope for Israel's national rebirth, and the divine plan for the future of mankind.

"For the first time the idea of divine plan for mankind's future is perceived." 186

Dr. Kaufman states that the historical Isaiah prophesied from the end of Uzziah's reign to the beginning of Hezekiah's, and his themes (including Chapter 24 - 27) dealt with his commentary to the political history of his time. This was a time of crisis and upheaval in the ancient Near

East. Assyria began its westward conquest in 745 when Tiglath Pileser III ascended the throne of Assyria. In 734 Rezin was overthrown by Assyria, in 732 Damascus was captured, and in 722 Sargon conquered Samaria. "After a prolonged seige Samaria fell to Sargon in 722, and 'Israel was exiled from its land.'" ¹⁸⁷ In 701 Jerusalem came under seige by Sennacherib. Isaiah, prophesying at this time, was witness to the tragic consequences of political alliances, Assyrian conquests, and a moral and ethical decay. "This stormy and fateful period is mirrored in the prophecies of the First Isaiah (Chapters 1-39)." ¹⁸⁸ It is Dr. Kaufman's opinion that Isaiah wrote not only about alliances, morals and ethics of the time, but projected his hope for the messianic future in such chapters as 2 and 24-27.

In a careful analysis of Dr. Kaufman's theory it is important to be aware of the fact that it is theory and not fact. His statement that later interpolators would correct contradictions in the text makes good sense to our twentieth century striving for consistency. However it is possible that these prophetic books were preserved with special care and reverence by the final compilers and editors. If such is true this would be a major shortcoming of Dr. Kaufman's theory.

Dr. Kaufman's historical analysis is thorough and

exhaustive. He sees Chapters 24 - 27 as fitting into an historical framework during the last half of the eighth century. It must once again be kept in mind that it is theory and not necessarily fact.

The value of reading Dr. Kaufman was the discovery of an entirely new point of view. Dr. Kaufman does not accept the theories of biblical scholarship but interprets Isaiah in light of the developments during the lifetime of the historical Isaiah.

CONCLUSIONS.

The Isaiah Apocalypse has several prominent themes.

- a. The theme of Universal destruction.
- b. The theme of redemption of the children of Israel.
- c. Resurrection
- d. The theme of a new world order.

These themes of the Isaiah Apocalypse reveal a historical milieu. The author apparently witnessed destruction and defeat. Conquest was on the doorstep of his city and the people suffered pain and degradation. In their dire suffering the people must have longed for God's promised redemption for Israel. However, the Messiah had not appeared and redemption must have seemed far distant. In the tragedy of defeat, the prostrate Israel nation sublimated the hope for redemption. God would break into the history, destroy the powers inimical to Israel, bring resurrection to the suffering children of Israel, and God would establish a new reign from Mount Zion.

The essence of the apocalyptic perspective is the prediction of God's intervention in history. The apocalyptic authors viewed history in this light in order to give hope and purpose to a depressed people. "The apocalyptic writers unfold a great panorama of the future as they had come to know it through study, meditation and vision." 1S9

It is my thesis that a climate of war and national defeat plus the failure of the predicted messianic era produced the Isaiah Apocalypse. The themes of the Isaiah Apocalypse reveal a recent tragedy, the hope for revenge, vindication for the children of Israel and the establishment of a new world order.

Realizing that the Isaiah Apocalypse arose at a time of tragedy and disappointment there are three possible tragic periods in the history of Israel which may have given rise to the Isaiah Apocalypse.

In the time of the historical Isaiah, Sennacherib carried on wars of conquest and expansion. In the noted war against Hezekiah, king of Judah, Sennacherib laid siege to Jerusalem and sent his emissary to Hezekiah.¹⁹⁰ Isaiah predicted the imminent destruction of Judah and appealed to Hezekiah to pursue a policy of non-alliance. However in the year 701 B.C.E. all appeals were useless. The Assyrian forces were at the gates of Jerusalem. Sennacherib's hordes killed and exiled thousands. It is possible that the historical Isaiah interpreted the siege as his predicted and final annihilation of the children of Israel. This might have inspired the historical Isaiah to predict a universal destruction, followed by a resurrection for the children of Israel.

This point of view is not in character with the

historical Isaiah. The historical Isaiah did not make use of the themes of personal resurrection and salvation. The historical Isaiah was a prophet of doom, not of hope. "The first Isaiah talked of death, later Isaiahs of life renewed and everlasting."^{190a} Because the themes of resurrection and salvation were foreign to the historical Isaiah I am rejecting the first possibility that the Isaiah Apocalypse was written by the historical Isaiah.

The second possibility is that the Isaiah Apocalypse was written in the fifth century. In the Book of Nehemiah there is an allusion to a recent tragedy in Jerusalem.¹⁹¹ The walls are shattered and the gate is burned. It is possible that Edom and other nations surrounding Israel seized and pillaged Jerusalem in the middle of the fifth century. This could very well have given rise to the themes of the Isaiah Apocalypse.

I am rejecting this possibility because of the symbolism of Chapter 27. Edom is not referred to in Chapter 27 and I believe the symbolism of this chapter is the key to the dating of the Isaiah Apocalypse.

The third possibility is the historical milieu of the fourth century. Lods names this as a possibility, "Isaiah 24-27, perhaps reflecting the conquests of Alexander (after 336)."¹⁹² Using this interpretation, Leviathan, the swift and winding serpent of 27:1 would refer to Syria (the Seleucid Empire) which bordered the swift Tigris and winding Euphrates and the dragon in the sea may represent Egypt (the Ptolemaic Empire) on the

Nile.

This interpretation of the symbols coupled with the new themes of resurrection make this possibility seem the most likely. In the Hellenistic period resurrection became a prominent theme. "The doctrine of the resurrection was developed toward the close of the fourth century, or at least in the third." 193

I am presenting the following reasons for my thesis that the Isaiah Apocalypse originated in the late fourth or early third century.

- a. The symbols of Chapter 27 may refer to the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires (the Seleucid empire on the Tigris-Euphrates and the Ptolemaic empire on the Nile.)
- b. The concept of resurrection was not an important or recurrent Old Testament idea. The Zoroastrian religion developed the idea of resurrection and this theme became popular in the Hellenistic period (i. e. the Book of Daniel). "The Eschatology of Judaism has an unmistakable affinity to that of the Zoroastrian religion in the separation of the souls of the righteous and wicked at death and the resurrection, and in the doctrine of general resurrection and the last judgment with its issues." 193a

failure to restore the Davidic monarchy, the Jewish authors spiritualized the messianic concept and there arose the sublimated desire for life after death.

- c. The Isaiah Apocalypse corresponds in mood and themes with a complex of post-Exilic literature. The mood is similar to the dark and violent mood of Joel (around 400 B. C. E.) The theme of selective resurrection parallels the theme in Daniel (165 B. C. E.).
- d. The Isaiah Apocalypse theme of a new Jerusalem with God's reign at Mount Zion was not a theme germane to the historical Isaiah. The historical Isaiah challenged the people and questioned God's eternal care for His vineyard. "Isaiah saw no magic ring around Jerusalem and had no reason to assume that its inhabitants led charmed lives. Among the prophet's many heresies this was probably the worst: that God could abandon Jerusalem." 194

For the Israelites who suffered under the yoke of oppression there will be selective resurrection.

"Thy dead shall live (my dead bodies shall

arise)

Awake and sing ye that dwell in the dust,

For thy dew is as the dew of light,

And the earth shall bring to life the shades." 195

After Israel is vindicated, God will establish His throne on Mount Zion and rule from Jerusalem. "For the Lord of hosts will reign in Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before His elders shall be glory." 196

In way of resume my thesis is that the Isaiah Apocalypse arose from a historical milieu of national tragedy, and unfulfilled messianic promises. The author of the Apocalypse is giving hope and reassurance to the suffering children of Israel. The time of the tragedy is probably in the Hellenistic period of the late fourth or early third century. The nations hostile to Israel will experience destruction; nature will wither away with man on the day of judgment, and the chosen people of Israel will be protected in their chambers until the visitation is past. After the day of Judgment there will be resurrection for the children of Israel; then will God's sure purpose be fulfilled and God's universal reign on Mount Zion in Jerusalem will be established forever.

FOOTNOTES

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²Ibid., 416

³Joshua Block, "On the Apocalyptic in Judaism," The Jewish Quarterly Review, II (Philadelphia: 1932), 57-58.

^{3a}Burkitt, F. C., Jewish and Christian Apocalypses, London, 1914, p. 13.

⁴Ibid., 46.

⁵Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1941), 442.

⁶H. H. Rowley, The Relevance of Apocalyptic (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1945), 21.

⁷George R. Berry, "The Apocalyptic Literature of the Old Testament," Journal of Biblical Literature, LXII (Philadelphia: 1945), 10

⁸Ibid., 10

⁹Ibid., 10

¹⁰Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel (New York: Macmillan Company, 1955), 38.

¹¹Amos 5:18-20. Translations in this thesis are from the J.P.S.

¹²Amos 5:16-17.

¹³Amos 5:9

¹⁴The Complete Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare, ed. William Neilson and Charles Hill (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1942), 1190.

¹⁵Alighieri Dante, The Inferno, ed. John Ciardi (New York: The New American Library, 1961), 42.

¹⁶Ibid., 44

¹⁷Exodus 10:22-23

¹⁸Isaiah 60:2

¹⁹Isaiah 2:12-16

²⁰Isaiah 2-14a

- 21 Amos 5:17a.
- 22 Joel 3:3-4.
- 23 Exodus 7:20.
- 24 Zephaniah 1:15-16.
- 25 Five Essays of the Bible (New York: Plimpton Press, 1960), 45.
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- 27 Klausner, op.cit., 9.
- 28 Ibid., 15
- 29 Amos 9:11.
- 30 Amos 9:13-15.
- 31 Hosea 14:6-8.
- 32 Genesis 27:28.
- 33 Deuteronomy 33:28
- 34 Isaiah 9:5-6.
- 35 Isaiah 2:2-4.
- 36 Micah 4:1-4.
- 37 Micah 5:1.
- 38 Haggai 2:6-7.
- 39 Zechariah 14:9.
- 40 Isaiah 65:17.
- 41 Isaiah 65:18-21.
- 42 Rowley, op. cit., 173-174
- 43 Genesis 5:24.
- 44 II Kings 2:11.
- 45 Job 38:1

46 Ezekiel 1:4a.

47 Ezekiel 37:10.

48 Ezekiel 37:11b.

49 Ezekiel 37:14a.

50 Daniel 12:2-3.

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52 Leo Baeck, Judaism and Christianity (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960), 31.

53 Berry, op. cit., 16.

54 Baeck, op. cit., 58-59.

55 Ezekiel 1:5-7.

56 Ezekiel 37:8.

57 Ezekiel 37:10.

58 Rowley, op. cit., 31.

59 Daniel 7:1-8.

60 Isaiah 24:1-2.

61 Isaiah 24:3-4.

62 Isaiah 24:17-20.

63 Isaiah 5:2.

64 The One Volume Bible Commentary. ed. J. R. Drumelow (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1911), 14.

65 Genesis 6:12

66 Psalm 14:3.

67 Genesis 6:13.

68 Genesis 7:1.

69 Isaiah 24:10-12.

70 Isaiah 5:10.

- 71 Isaiah 1:9.
- 72 Isaiah 10:20-21.
- 73 Jeremiah 7:34.
- 74 Isaiah 34:2 and 4.
- 75 Isaiah 27:12-13 and 25:10.
- 76 Isaiah 24:23.
- 77 Isaiah 27:13.
- 78 Isaiah 27:9b-11.
- 79 Genesis 11:7-5.
- 80 Genesis 8:17.
- 81 Isaiah 2:2.
- 82 Isaiah 25:8.
- 83 Isaiah 27:2-3.
- 84 Isaiah 27:6.
- 85 Isaiah 27:6.
- 86 Isaiah 24:23b.
- 87 Isaiah 25:6.
- 88 Isaiah 25:4.
- 89 Isaiah 26:6.
- 90 Isaiah 26:1.
- 91 Isaiah 27:9a.
- 92 Isaiah 27:2-3.
- 93 Isaiah 25:8.
- 94 Isaiah 26:14.
- 95 Isaiah 26:19.

- 96 Isaiah 24:4.
- 97 Isaiah 24:7.
- 98 Isaiah 24:20.
- 99 Isaiah 24:23a.
- 100 Isaiah 26:14.
- 101 Isaiah 26:19.
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- 103 Job 40:25.
- 104 Block, op. cit., 5.
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- 108 Rowley, op. cit., 35.
- 109 Bloch, op. cit., 49.
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- 112 Ibid., 328.
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- 114 Ibid., 24:11.
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