"Poetic Justice: Beauty and Morality in the Words of Isaiah the Prophet"

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Digest

"Poetic justice" is a literary device, which often employs an ironic twist to illustrate reward and punishment. It is "poetic justice" that the brilliant poetry of the Book of Isaiah, and the moral message contained therein, comprise a cohesive compilation of revelations that are as relevant today as the day they were received. In Chapter 2, I have addressed the unique phenomenon that is Hebrew Prophecy, and the particular contribution the Hebrew prophets made to the world. An investigation into the terminology, categorization, characteristics, and other variations of prophecy in the ancient near east served to distinguish the נביא as a phenomenon *sui generis*. In Chapter 3, I have narrowed the focus to the Book of Isaiah in particular, breaking it down to its constituent parts. This examination focused upon issues such as the complexity of determining authorship, the threefold division of the Book of Isaiah, distinguishing features of First Isaiah, Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah, along with their historical backgrounds. Chapter 4 is dedicated to the poetry of Isaiah, where I have translated three chapters and provided my own analysis. Applying poetic interpretive techniques to representative poems from First Isaiah, Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah, a coherent and consistent craftsmanship became evident, despite individualistic approaches in each division of the book. Chapter 5 presents my examination of the themes of משפט and צדק throughout the Book of Isaiah. In First Isaiah, משפט and צדק frequently stood for Justice and Righteousness. Second Isaiah often employed the same terms with different connotations even in juxtaposition with the original themes. Finally, Third Isaiah seemed to endeavor to harmonize the different meanings of משפט and צדק so as to give a sense

of consistency to the work as a whole. Ultimately, the beauty and morality revealed in the Book of Isaiah is unparalleled.

Table of Contents:

1 **Poetic Justice, an Introduction**: "Poetic justice" is a literary device, which often employs an ironic twist to illustrate reward and punishment[1]. Accordingly, I can't think of a better byword to articulate the essence of what makes prophecy one of the greatest contributions Judaism has ever offered the world. For one thing, the poetic expression of the Hebrew prophet is unequalled in its eloquence and inimitable in its lyrical beauty. Consider the poetic complexity in a fragment from a single verse: "He hoped for Justice (לְמִשְׁפָּט), but behold, injustice (מִשְׂפָּח): for Righteousness (לִצְדָקָה), but behold, an outcry (צְעָקָה)" (Is. 5:7). We see a parallelism in syntax, amplification between subjects, irony from subjects to objects, and assonance. Meanwhile, the same verse is emblematic of the Hebrew prophets as a whole, for its emphasis upon Justice and Righteousness, the quintessential task of a Hebrew prophet to promote. In addition to the poetic aspect of Hebrew prophecy and the focus on justice, the term "poetic justice" is perfect to describe the poignant expressions of the prophet. The ironic aspect of "poetic justice" is evident in the preaching of the prophets that despite what we see in the world, we are judged by God on grounds of retributive justice. Moreover, there is always a poignancy to the message of the prophets, their reluctance to give it, and the unfavorable reception from their audience. Through my personal experience, I have been drawn to the topic of Hebrew Prophecy, particularly Isaiah, for the equisite poetry and the concern for morality therein.

1.1 **Personal Interest**: In my own experience, I have been inspired and empowered by the considerable insight the Hebrew prophets offer with respect to the nature of God, the meaning of life, and the specific responsibilities we must face in this world. As an English major, and an admirer of great writing, I have often asked myself: where would Western

[1] "Poetic justice." *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition.* Houghton Mifflin Company, 2004. 26 Jan. 2007.

literature be were it not for the vivid imagery, the graceful sophistication, and the rhetorical brilliance of our sacred scripture? Abraham Joshua Heschel said: "The Bible wanders through the ages... two thousand years of reading and research have not succeeded in exploring its full meaning"[2]. Beyond the impenetrable depth of meaning, such as we find in the expressions of the prophets, the poetry of the Bible has left an indelible imprint on the most sublime literature of later generations. In addition to the artistry of prophetic exposition, I have personally been motivated by the moral integrity of the prophetic message. Isaiah's exhortation to be "light unto the nations" (Is. 49:6) seriously charged me to work with Jewish peace organizations such as Jewish Voice for Peace, Brit Tzedek v'Shalom, Btselem, Rabbis for Human Rights, ARZA and Jewish Seminarians for Justice.

1.2 **Hebrew Prophecy**: My original ambition was to study all of the prophets. In my initial review, however, it became readily apparent that each of the prophets is worthy of far more than I could cover in a single rabbinical thesis. After consideration, I decided to narrow the scope to the writings ascribed to Isaiah. In order to situate the Book of Isaiah in context, however, I have written Chapter 2 with an aim to address the unique phenomenon that is Hebrew Prophecy, and the particular contribution the Hebrew prophets made to the world.

1.3 **Isaiah**: I chose to concentrate upon a single prophet so that I could focus upon a closer reading of a single compilation, and a richer understanding of the revelations contained within it. I selected Isaiah in part because I always wanted to explore the theory that the corpus of Isaiah was compiled over numerous generations in Israel as well as in Exile. I have therefore, devoted Chapter 3 to unpacking the Book of Isaiah, breaking it down

[2] Abraham J. Heschel, God in Search of Man (New York: Noonday Press, 1955) 242.

to its constituent parts, and providing historical background to the various times in which it was written.

1.4 **Poetry**: A second reason I chose to focus on Isaiah is the fact that the Book of Isaiah contains some of the most elegant poetry I have ever seen. I thought that the best way to become intimate with the sophistication of the poetry would be to formulate my own translation and analysis of representative samples. In my research, I have been particularly impressed with the use of parallelism, amplification, assonance, syntactical variance, rhetorical flow, and imagery. Chapter 4 is therefore dedicated to the poetry of Isaiah, where I have translated three chapters and provided my own analysis.

1.5 **Morality**: Last but not least, the moral integrity of the revelations in the Book of Isaiah have been an inspiration to me for some time. After all the study I have invested in this endeavor, I find the words of Isaiah all the more compelling and uplifting. In my investigation of the themes of Justice and Righteousness throughout the Book of Isaiah, I was surprised to find that the words מִשְׁפָּט and צֶדֶק were used in strikingly different manners in various passages, as though the meanings evolved in the time it took to complete the book. Consequently, Chapter 5 presents my examination of the themes of Justice and Righteousness throughout the Book of Isaiah.

1.6 **Thesis**: It is "poetic justice" that the brilliant poetry of the Book of Isaiah, and the moral message contained therein, comprise a cohesive compilation of revelations that are as relevant today as the day they were received.

2 **הנביא: A Jewish Phenomenon Sui Generis:** Hebrew Prophecy is not an easy phenomenon to define or classify. In the Bible, there is an extensive vocabulary associated with prophecy. Each of these terms is subject to diverse translations and interpretations. There are various approaches to categorizing the prophets: for example, a chronological investigation of the prophets may produce a different kind of result than a canonical inquiry into the order in which they are arranged in the Bible. Notably, the Hebrew prophet must be viewed *in situ* as a phenomenon remarkably distinguishable from other forms of prophecy in the Ancient Near East.

2.1 **Terminology**: It is difficult to distinguish several words which refer to prophecy in the Hebrew Scriptures ("תנ"ך"). Terms such as נביא, איש האלהים, חוזה and ראה are sometimes used interchangeably. Yet they each appear to bear nuances of their own in certain contexts.

2.1.1 **נביא**: The most frequently utilized Biblical term for prophet is נביא, which occurs three hundred and twenty-five times in the תנ"ך. The Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament ("BDB") describes נביא as a "genuine prophet of God"[3]. BDB notes that in the Torah (תורה), the earliest use of the term נביא is with regard to Abraham, who has traditionally come to be known as the first prophet of the Jewish people. BDB translates נביא as "spokesman, speaker, prophet", with a connotation of being in an "ecstatic state". The root נבא is most likely a cognate of *nabû*, the Akkadian verb "to call" or "one who has

[3] Wilhelm Gesenius et.al. Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament Scriptures (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979) 611.

been called"[4]. In the Septuagent, נביא is translated *prophetes*, from which we get the English word "prophet" today.

2.1.2 **איש האלהים**. Occurring seventy times in the תנ"ך, איש האלהים is literally translated "Man of God". It is not altogether clear how איש האלהים is distinguishable from נביא, and at times the terms appear to be used interchangeably. For instance, Moses is described as an איש האלהים in Deut. 33:1 ("...משה איש האלהים..."), but as a נביא in Deut. 34:10 ("...ולא קם נביא עוד בישראל כמשה...").

2.1.3 **חזה and ראה**. In the bible, there are two terms which can literally be translated "seer": חזה and ראה. ראה appears to be an older term for נביא, based upon 1Sam. 9:9, "כי לנביא היום יקרא לפנים הרואה". Just as the terms נביא and ראה appear to be interchangeable here, נביא and חזה appear to be equivalent in 2Sam 24:11, which refers to "גד הנביא חזה דוד".

2.2 **Categorization**. Organization of the prophets has been an age-old issue. Early disagreements on the categorization of the writings of the prophets are preserved in the Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Bava Batra 14b. There, we find an interesting dialogue which touches upon some of the same issues that perplex scholars to this day. Bava Batra 14b discusses various approaches to canon, genre, and Talmudic principles of classification, such as length, chronology, and theme.

2.2.1 **Canon**. Bava Batra 14b reveals that one of the first obstacles to categorizing the writings of the Hebrew prophets has to do with the fact that there are conflicting traditions on

[4] Shalom M. Paul and S. David Sperling, "Prophets and Prophecy," Encyclopedia Judaica, 2007 ed, 567.

the order of the canon. Today, the variety of contemporary translations of the Bible reflect different traditions and diverse systematizations with respect to the arrangement of the Biblical canon. The authenticity of one tradition does not preclude the legitimacy of another. The various valid traditions extant today are a testament that the order of the canon may never have been "etched in stone".

2.2.2 **Genre**. Most Jewish Bibles today are arranged in three genres: תורה, נביאים and כתובים. Bava Batra 14b preserves this categorization by genre, but the internal arrangements of each genre are different from the traditions one usually sees today. Like the contemporary practice, Bava Batra 14b records a tradition that the תורה (comprising Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) was mostly written by Moses. Likewise, the 21 books in נביאים are mostly ascribed to particular prophets. What is surprising about Bava Batra 14b is the fact that it records a canon in which Isaiah follows Jeremiah and Ezekiel, which is markedly dissimilar from contemporary practice. With respect to כתובים, Bava Batra 15a again speaks of an arrangement seldom seen today.

2.2.3 **Talmudic Principles of Classification**. While keeping the three genre categories of תורה, נביאים and כתובים, Bava Batra 14b has a particular understanding of the arrangements therein. In fact, Emanuel Tov observes that there is substantial manuscript evidence for a history of variant Jewish traditions of arranging the Hebrew canon[5]. Bava Batra 14b records a self-reflecting examination of the foundation for the arrangement it seeks to advocate, and it raises a number of principles upon which a categorization of נביאים might be ordered.

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[5] Tov, Emanuel. Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible (City: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 2001) 3-4.

2.2.3.1 תרי עשר. Bava Batra 14b makes mention of "the Twelve"[6]. This is a technical term to describe a subcategory within נביאים comprising the books of Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. In English, the term "Minor Prophets" is often used to describe these prophets or the books ascribed to them. By contrast, the "Major Prophets" would comprise Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Pointedly, what distinguishes Major from Minor Prophets is not status or chronology, but rather the length of the texts of the words ascribed to them.

2.2.3.2 **Chronology**. Bava Batra 14b goes on to explore the principle of arranging נביאים according to chronology. This is actually a much more complex principle than it would seem, as there are in fact multiple chronological variables to consider. One factor to consider is when the Prophet actually lived. Another significant issue is when the subject matter described by the Prophet is thought to have occurred. A third concern is when the text ascribed to that Prophet was completed.

2.2.3.3 **Scroll**. Operating under a literal interpretation of "תחלת דבר יהוה בהושע" (Hos. 1:2), the rabbis in Bava Batra 14b understand these words to indicate that God began revelation with Hosea. Applying this interpretation to the principle of arranging the canon of נביאים by the chronology of the lives of the prophets, the Talmud first proposes that perhaps Hosea should come first among the prophetic scrolls of נביאים. But then, the rabbis address the need to reinterpret the text more leniently, to allow for the likelihood that many prophets preceded Hosea. Likewise, Bava Batra 14b argues that Hosea rightfully comes first, but only

[6] Technically speaking, Bava Batra 14b uses the Hebrew term שנים עשר. However, I will be using the Aramaic תרי עשר, which is also common in the Talmud, and has become the standard terminology today.

among a subcategory of his contemporaries, Isaiah, Amos, and Micah, even though Hosea does not precede them in the canon. Maintaining the presumption that the prophecy of Hosea preceded the other canonical prophets, Bava Batra 14b posits that the reason Hosea does not precede writings attributed to prophets who followed him is because Hosea is written on a separate scroll, along with the תרי עשר. As the theory goes, Hosea would be too small to part ways with the other Minor Prophets. Therefore, Bava Batra 14b is espousing the principle that it is better to preserve the integrity of the scroll in which a subcategory of the prophets were written, than to canonize נביאים in chronological order.

2.2.3.4 **Theme**. After prioritizing *scroll* over *chronology*, Bava Batra 14b goes on to investigate why Isaiah might not precede the other prophets. Indeed, Isaiah was preserved on its own scroll, and the earliest material in Isaiah would seem to precede Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Likewise, the canonical arrangement advocated in Bava Batra 14b allows for Jeremiah and Ezekiel to preceed Isaiah. Bava Batra 14b goes on to explain that Isaiah should follow Jeremiah and Ezekiel "because the Book of Kings ends with a record of destruction and Jeremiah speaks throughout of destruction, and Ezekiel commences with destruction and ends with consolation and Isaiah is full of consolation; therefore we put destruction next to destruction and consolation next to consolation". Following this methodology of classification, *thematic content* would take precedence over *scroll*, which in turn was valued above *chronology*.

2.2.4 **Additional Methodologies of Classification**. In addition to the principles outlined in Bava Batra 14b for arranging נביאים, there are numerous methodologies for classifying the prophets and the works ascribed to them. There are compelling arguments to arrange the

writings ascribed to the prophets along liturgical lines, in terms of the period in which they preached, or along other academic means of categorization.

2.2.4.1 **Liturgical**. The organization of the Hebrew canon today appears to be arranged along liturgical lines. For instance, the book of Ruth is found not among other books from the period of judges, but rather among the books of Lamentations, Esther, and other writings (כתובים) recited on Jewish holidays and festivals. This liturgical canon is retained today, notwithstanding a tradition recorded in Bava Batra 15a that "Jeremiah wrote the book which bears his name, the book of Kings, and Lamentations". This discussion of liturgical classification indicates that, in the Hebrew canon, there was no need for books believed to be written by the same author to be canonically arranged together, or even bear the author's name.

2.2.4.2 **Former and Latter Prophets**. Another angle is to consider the chronology of the lives of the prophets themselves, in terms of נביאים ראשונים and נביאים אחרונים. נביאים ראשונים is an expression used by Zechariah (1:4, 7:7, and 7:12). These "former prophets" are generally understood to include the prophets whose words and stories are found in the תורה as well as in the books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings. By contrast, נביאים אחרונים would include the Major Prophets and the Minor Prophets (see § 2.2.3.1).

2.2.4.3 **Classical Classification**. Some academic scholars systematize the prophets along the lines of Pre-classical Prophets (sometimes called the "popular prophets") and the Classical Prophets (also known as the "literary prophets"). Generally speaking, the Classical Prophets would include those who have texts ascribed to them by name or associated with them, while the Pre-classical Prophets would include those prophets who preceeded them.

2.2.5 **Issues**. There are numerous issues raised by each of these classification systems. Many of the prophets are mentioned outside of the נביאים genre. The process of determining the chronology of the prophets is complicated and based to some degree upon conjecture. Similarly, authorship can be enigmatic, particularly in the case of Isaiah.

2.2.5.1 **Outside נביאים**. One issue with a canonical approach is the fact that there are many prophets whose writings and stories occur outside the נביאים division of the Bible. For instance, the teachings of Moses are recorded predominantly in the תורה. Meanwhile, the Book of Ezra is classified in כתובים.

2.2.5.2 **Chronological Complexity**. In the case of Isaiah, we see precisely how complicated a task it can be to arrange the canon in chronological order. Scholars often believe that Isaiah lived from roughly 740-700BCE[7]. The *subject matter* of the words ascribed to him depicts an era two centuries after his lifetime[8]. Moreover, the *text* itself has a *terminus ad quem* of the second century BCE[9]. We simply do not have scientific proof of precise dates for the *lives* of the prophets, much of the *subject matter* they describe, or the completion of the *texts* which bear the words ascribed to them.

2.2.5.3 **Authorship**. The Talmud itself raises the likelihood that certain books of the תנ"ך were written, or at least completed, by people other than those to whom they are ascribed. Considering the fact that the methodologies of Biblical Criticism would not emerge for well over a thousand years, the rabbis were well ahead of their time in their open-minded acceptance of the complexity of Biblical authorship. For instance, Bava Batra 15a asserts

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[7] Theodore Friedman, et al. "Isaiah." Encyclopedia Judaica, 2007 ed, 57.
[8] Joseph Blenkinsopp. A History of Prophecy in Israel (Philadelphia: Warminster Press, 1983) 108.
[9] Ibid.

that Isaiah was written by the court of Hezekiah, while the Men of the Great Assembly were responsible for Ezekiel, the תרי עשר, Daniel and Esther. With particular respect to the Book of Isaiah, while I do believe the rabbis were progressive in their determination that it must have been completed long after Isaiah would have died, there is evidence that parts of the book were completed at an even later date, after a collaborative effort and a redaction process (see § 3).

2.3 **Characteristics of Hebrew Prophets**. Bearing in mind the complexity of terminology used to describe the prophets and the ambiguities involved in their classification, any investigation into the characteristics of Hebrew Prophecy must necessarily be painted with a broad brush.

2.3.1 **Life**. The Bible provides a number of insights into aspects of the lives of the Hebrew prophet. For instance, we know that the prophets were permitted to marry from such passages as 2 Kings 4:1, where we learn of a woman "מנשי בני הנביאים". Also, from Elisha's request in 2 Kings 4:38, ("...שפת הסיר הגדולה ובשל נזיד לבני הנביאים:") we see an indication that his disciples ate as a community.

2.3.2 **Quantity**. The number of prophets greatly exceeds the number of books ascribed to prophets in the Bible. One illustration of this point is the fact that Elisha refers to hundreds of disciples ("מאה איש") in 2Kings 4:43. Furthermore, tradition identifies over fifty Hebrew prophets among thousands, namely[10]:

[10] A version of the following table appears on http://www.jewfaq.org/prophet.htm. However, I have modified the table to alphabetize the prophets, integrate the prophetesses, and include Noadiah. For the sake of simplicity, I am only providing one citation, although additional citations may be found on the website.

Named Prophets in the Bible

#	Prophet	Citation	#	Prophet	Citation
1.	Aaron	Ex. 4:14	2.	Jahaziel	2Chr. 20:14
3.	Abigail	1Sam. 25:1	4.	Jehu	1Kings 16:1
5.	Abraham	Gen. 11:26	6.	Jeremiah	Jer.
7.	Ahiyah	1Kings 11:29-30	8.	Joel	Joel
9.	Amos	Amos	10.	Jonah	Jonah
11.	Amoz	2Kings 19:2	12.	Joshua	Ex. 17: 9
13.	Azariah	2Chr. 15	14.	Malachi	Mal.
15.	Baruch	Jer. 32:12	16.	Mehseiah	Jer. 32:12
17.	David	1Sam. 16:13	18.	Micah	Mic.
19.	Deborah	Judg. 4:4	20.	Michaiah	1Kings 22:8
21.	Eli	1Sam. 1:9	22.	Miriam	Ex. 15:20
23.	Eliezer	2Chr. 20:37	24.	Mordecai	Esther
25.	Elijah	1Kings 17:1	26.	Moses	Ex. 2:10
27.	Elisha	1Kings 19:16	28.	Nahum	Nah.
29.	Elkanah	1Sam. 1:1	30.	Nathan	2Sam. 7:2
31.	Esther	Esth.	32.	Neriah	Jer. 32:12
33.	Ezekiel	Ezek.	34.	Noadiah[11]	Neh 6:14
35.	Gad	1Sam. 22:5	36.	Obadiah	Obad.
37.	Habakkuk	Hab.	38.	Oded	2Chr. 15:1
39.	Haggai	Hag.	40.	Pinchas	Ex. 6:25
41.	Hanani	1Kings 16:1	42.	Samuel	1Sam. 1:20
43.	Hannah	1Sam 1:2	44.	Sarah	Gen. 11:29
45.	Hosea	Hos.	46.	Seraiah	Jer. 51:61
47.	Huldah	2Kings 22:14	48.	Shemaiah	1Kings 12:22
49.	Iddo	2Chr. 9:29	50.	Solomon	2Sam. 12:24
51.	Isaac	Gen 21:1	52.	Uriah	Jer. 26:20
53.	Isaiah	Is.	54.	Zechariah	Zech.
55.	Jacob	Gen 25:21	56.	Zephaniah	Zeph.

2.3.3 **Gender**. One can't help but notice that women are included among the prophets. This is as evident in the Biblical text itself. when Miriam is described as מרים הנביאה (Ex. 15:20). It is also manifest in rabbinic tradition. where Megilla 14a lists Esther among seven propheteses.

[11] Neh. 6:14 calls Noadiah a prophetess. but Rashi considers her a false prophet. due to the context of the verse. See § 2.4.

2.3.4 **Practice**. The day-to-day experience of a Hebrew Prophet was dramatically different from prophet to prophet. The experience of revelation, ecstacy, and miracles varied as much as the individuality of each prophet and the diversity of their audiences.

2.3.4.1 **Revelation**. Revelation could come in the form of direct communication, visions, or dreams. It is recorded that only Moses received revelation directly (Num 12:6-8). Other Hebrew Prophets received revelation in visions and dreams.

2.3.4.2 **Ecstasy**. There are allusions to prophetic group ecstasy in Num. 11:25 ("...ויהי כנוח עליהם הרוח ויתנבאו..."), 1Sam. 10:5 ("...יפגעת חבל נביאים ירדים") and 1Sam. 19:20 ("...מהבמה ולבניהם נבל תף וחליל וכנור והמה מתנבאים:") ("...וירא את להקת הנביאים נבאים ושמואל עמד נצב עליהם ותהי על מלאכי שאול..."). There are enough allusions to group ecstasy here to substantiate that it was common at one time. And yet, the absence of any mention of group ecstasy in the Latter Prophets and the הדי עשר is an indication that the practice may have died out.

2.3.4.3 **Prediction**. Many Hebrew Prophets exhibit the quality of being able to foretell the future. For instance, Elijah predicts a draught in 1Kings 17:1. And, in 2Kings 8:11, Elisha falls into a trance to convey the future harm the King of Aram will cause Israel. The תורה teaches that a false prophet is one whose predictions do not come true, as it says in Deut. 18:22 ("...אשר לא דברו יהוה אשר ידבר הנביא בשם יהוה ולא יהיה הדבר ולא יבוא...") ("...הוא הדבר..."). That said, Anchor Bible commentator Joseph Blenkinsopp cautions that

"predicting future events was not a major concern of canonical prophets"[12]. For more on false prophets, see § 2.4.2.

2.3.4.4 **Miracles**. Some Hebrew Prophets, especially the Former Prophets, are recorded as performing super-natural marvels. Moses, for instance, parts the Red Sea (Ex. 14:21). Elijah brings about God's revivification of a boy who had been deceased (1Kings 17:22). It should be noted that the super-natural quality of these miracles are not attributed to some inherent power of the prophet. Rather, in each case, the power of the prophet is in his appeal to God to perform these miracles.

2.3.4.5 **Audience**. The Hebrew prophets spoke to many different audiences. Much of the prophetic writings are directed to the Israelite Monarchy. However, one of the more unique aspects of Hebrew Prophecy is the fact that the Hebrew Prophets sometimes spoke to nations who did not believe in the Hebrew God. Perhaps no scholar of the Hebrew Prophets understood this better than Abraham Joshua Heschel. In his landmark study of the consciousness of the Hebrew Prophets, Heschel observed that unlike other prophets in the Ancient Near East, the concern of the Hebrew Prophet was not the king, but rather "the very life of a whole people"[13]. From the Hebrew Prophet's perspective, "few are guilty, all are responsible"[14] and therefore his message was for the masses, rather than merely the elite. Heschel draws attention to scriptural evidence that Isaiah not only spoke to Israel, but also "כל ישבי תבל ושכני ארץ" (Is. 18:3)[15]. Isaiah's audience certainly included Babylon, Moab, Damascus, Egypt, and Tyer (Is. 13-23). Similarly, Jeremiah, depicts himself as a

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[12] Joseph Blenkinsopp. A History of Prophecy in Israel (Philadelphia: Warminster Press, 1983) 46.
[13] Abraham J. Heschel. The Prophets (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 7.
[14] Ibid., 17.
[15] Ibid., 208.

"נביא לישראל" (1:5). And, of course, many of the Hebrew Prophets spoke of a messianic age in which all people would worship the one and only God.

2.3.5 **Conscience**. The writings of the Hebrew Prophets are so personal and introspective that they offer us a great deal of insight into their consciousness. Different aspects of the conscience of the Hebrew Prophet are manifest in the roles of the Hebrew Prophets as intercessors between God and Israel, balanced against their humanity as mortal beings. Another facet of the conscience of the Hebrew Prophet is evident in the prophets' acceptance of their arduous obligations. As we explore the complex relationship between the Hebrew Prophet and the priesthood, we gain additional insight into their world view.

2.3.5.1 **Intercessor**. The primary task of the Hebrew Prophet was to be an intercessor between God and the Israelite people. As mentioned in § 2.1.1, the term נביא is thought to derive from *nabu*, which has connotations of being "called". Abraham Joshua Heschel speaks of the Hebrew Prophet "facing man, being faced by God"[16]. Indeed, the Hebrew Prophet is in a very precarious position on the cusp of the physical and metaphysical worlds, practically spinning on an axis, reflecting messages back and forth. The Hebrew Prophet is not a one-way telegraph, but rather a true intercessor, not only heeding the call, and conveying it, but also responding to the message on behalf of the people. As Heschel puts it: "In the presence of God, he takes the part of the people. In the presence of the people he takes the part of God"[17].

2.3.5.2 **Humanity**. It is important to observe that the Prophet is not a mere utility; he is perhaps above all else, a *human* intercessor. Heschel describes the Prophet as "poet,

[16] Ibid., xxi.
[17] Ibid., 26.

preacher, patriot, statesman, social critic, moralist"[18]. The prophet does not merely go into a subliminal trance; rather, he remains conscious throughout the revelation. Likewise, the communication of that message is colored by the unique qualities of the individual "called" to revelation. Although human intercessors may be privileged to experience metaphysical divine communication, and they are charged with the dissemination of vastly important messages, the Hebrew Prophet is nonetheless a mere mortal. Hebrew Prophets are not larger than life, they each suffer from their own weaknesses and frailties, and as worldly beings, they too must suffer the same ultimate fate as the rest of us.

2.3.5.3 **Obligation**. As human intercessors, it is common for Hebrew Prophets to have misgivings about bequeathing divine communications to an unreceptive audience, who might feel threatened by their words, and might even be intent upon causing them harm as a means of deterrence. When Isaiah hears the call, for instance, he cries, "Woe is me: I am lost! For I am a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my own eyes have beheld The King LORD of Hosts" (Is. 6:5). Despite the reluctance of Hebrew Prophets to fulfill their calling, the flip side of the coin is their dedication to fulfill their obligation. As mortals with free will, it is a choice, and the prophet Jonah, for instance, does attempt to abnegate his responsibilities. However, all the Hebrew Prophets feel a profound obligation, which ultimately leads them to heed the divine call.

2.3.5.4 **Priesthood**. The Hebrew Prophet has a complex relationship to the priesthood. On the one hand, the prophets often communicated God's displeasure with sacrifices. For instance, Jeremiah admonishes, "Your burnt offerings are not acceptable and your sacrifices are not pleasing to Me" (Jer. 6:20). And yet, they were not opposed to sacrifice per se; but

[18] Ibid., xxii.

rather the attempted use of sacrifice as a bribe to persuade God to turn a blind eye to transgression. In fact, a number of the Prophets happened to be priests as well. For example, Jeremiah is described as a priest in Jer. 1:1. Moreover, there is a certain priestly imagery that runs through many of the prophetic writings, such as the olive branch referred to in Jer. 1:11, which is reminiscent of Aaron's staff (Num. 17:23). Moreover, in Is. 6:1, the prophet appears to receive revelation at the Temple itself. Some prophets even advocated for the restoration of the Temple cult. Haggai asks, "Is it a time for you to dwell in your paneled houses, while this House is lying in ruins?" (Hag. 1:4). And Zechariah speaks positively about the foundations being laid for the rebuilding of the Temple (Zech. 8:9).

2.4 **Non-Hebrew Prophets**. There are a number of "prophets" which would not properly be classified as Hebrew prophets. The Bible itself refers to some people as prophets, even though they clearly are not part of the Israelite people. There are also numerous references to false prophets excoriated by the Hebrew Prophets. In addition, prophecy was common in various forms in the Ancient Near East, although Hebrew Prophecy is a relatively unique phenomenon.

2.4.1 **Other Prophets**. There are named individuals, such as the prophet Balaam, who actually speak to God and receive word from God (Num. 22:12). Similarly, God speaks with King Avimelech of Gerar (Gen. 20:3), by which we may infer that he was a prophet by definition. While the text does not contest that Avimelech and Balaam receive word from God, they can not be classified as Hebrew Prophets as they were not of Israelite culture, ancestry, or religion.

2.4.2 **False Prophecies**. As attested earlier, the Biblical definition of a false prophet (Deut. 18:22) is one whose predictions of the future do not come true (§ 2.3.4.3). That said, a

prophet whose prophecies do not come true may not necessarily lose his status as a Hebrew Prophet. For instance, although Amos' prediction that Jeroboam shall die by the sword (Amos 7:11) does not come true (2Chr. 13:20), he is nonetheless canonized and traditionally understood to be a Hebrew Prophet. Technically speaking, the Hebrew Bible uses נביא for both genuine Hebrew Prophets as well as false prophets, as opposed to the Septuagint, which utilizes the word *pseudoprophetes*. Likewise, Deut. 13:2 cautions against a נביא whose portents and signs do come true, but who is to be shunned, nevertheless, for his sacrilegious statements. Along these lines, Jeremiah casts several aspersions at prophets who נבאו בשקר (as in Jer. 5:31and Jer. 23).

2.4.3 **ANE Prophets**. There is a dearth of archeological evidence of anything in the Ancient Near East that comes remotely close to Hebrew Prophecy.

2.4.3.1 **Regional Prophecy**. Biblical allusions to other prophets (§ 2.4.1) exhibit a phenomenon diametrically opposed to Biblical models of Hebrew Prophets. For example, Balaam is hired by the king of one nation to curse another, whereas Hebrew Prophets are often impoverished, and frequently speak out against the monarch. Although the Moabite Stone reports that the god Chemosh commanded King Mesha of Moab to attack Israelite cities[19], this too lends little comparison to Hebrew Prophets, who often promoted peaceful relations. In Hamath (Syria), there is an eighth century inscription which purports to assure King Zakir of divine assistance through seers and other inspired individuals, but the inscription lacks the poetic quality of Hebrew Prophecy. There is also a divine conditional promise and threat imparted to King Zimrilim of Mari, and it is not unlike Nathan's prophecy

[19] James Pritchard. Ancient near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974) 320-321.

in 2Sam. 7. Even here, the connection is tangential at best. In Egypt, there is an Old Kingdom record of a priest-scribe Neferti, who offers pharaoh Snefru a prophecy of social and political chaos, but the prediction is utilitarian, not ecstactic or charismatic[20].

2.4.3.2 **Mari**. There are other examples of prophecy within the region[21], but records at Mari[22] are as close as one gets to Hebrew Prophecy. This reveals how broad a distance there is between Hebrew Prophet and Ancient Near East corrolaries. The Letters of Mari report communications from multiple deities to King Zimrilim. The intermediaries include functionaries, ecstatics (*muhhum*) and oracles (*apilum, aplum*) of male and female persuasions[23]. Formulae such as "Dagan sent me" are not unlike Hebrew Prophecy. According to Blenkinsopp, "there are sufficient indications from other sites in Syria and Mesopotamia to suggest that, in this respect, the situation at Mari was fairly typical of the entire area"[24]. What truly distinguishes the Mari prophets from the Hebrew Prophets is the fact that the former were usually affiliated with cultic temples, where they pronounced oracles in connection with sacrifices. More often than not, these prophets were commissioned by a King to give the impression of divine support for his endeavors. Legitimate Hebrew Prophets, on the contrary, were not known to offer their services for money, they were often poverty-stricken, and their messages were frequently repudiated by the king.

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[20] Joseph Blenkinsopp. A History of Prophecy in Israel (Philadelphia: Warminster Press, 1983) 55.
[21] Ibid., 56.
[22] James Pritchard. Ancient near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974) 623-632.
[23] Joseph Blenkinsopp. A History of Prophecy in Israel (Philadelphia: Warminster Press, 1983) 56.
[24] Ibid., 58.

2.5 **Conclusion**. Indeed there never was anything quite like the Hebrew Prophet, neither before the period of time in which the world was graced by their presence, nor in over two millennia since then. Yet, pinning down exactly who the Hebrew Prophets were is no easy task. We observed a diverse vocabulary (נביא, איש האלהים, חזה and ראה), all of which refer to the Hebrew Prophet. We explored various means of categorizing the Hebrew Prophets themselves in various approaches to canon, chronology, scroll, and theme. We noted the numerous issues inherent in these systems, such as how to include Hebrew Prophets who fall outside the נביאים genre, the complexity of chronology, and the unanswered questions about authorship. We then looked into characteristics of the Hebrew Prophets in terms of their lifestyles, the means of their practice, and the conscience of the Hebrew Prophet. Lastly we investigated the non-Hebrew Prophets of the Ancient Near East, and found a striking lack of similarity with the Hebrew Prophets. In sum, the Hebrew Prophets were a distinctly Jewish phenomenon *sui generis*.

3 **The Book of Isaiah**: It may not be an oxymoron, or even a misnomer, but the expression "the Book of Isaiah" leaves a great deal unsaid. Both "Book" and "Isaiah" beggar deconstruction and elaboration. In this chapter, I aim to unpack some of the critical issues involved in an analysis of the Book of Isaiah. I'll begin with a study of who are the many faces of "Isaiah" and the numerous components of the "Book". From there, I'll revisit the notion of authorship, with respect to the scripture ascribed to Isaiah. This will lead to an analysis of the three primary divisions within the final product. Ultimately, it is my hope that this chapter will serve as an effective overview of the life and writings of "Isaiah". Only then, can we embark on an enhanced analysis of poetry and morality in the Book of Isaiah.

3.1 **Authorship**: Title aside, it appears that the "Book of Isaiah" is a compilation of multiple authorship and redaction over a period of generations. Is. 1:1 begins with an ascription to Isaiah ben Amoz "...חֲזוֹן יְשַׁעְיָהוּ בֶן־אָמוֹץ אֲשֶׁר חָזָה עַל־יְהוּדָה וִירוּשָׁלִָם בִּימֵי..." Is. 2:1 and Is. 13:1 also ascribe prophecies to Isaiah ben Amoz. Although there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of these three ascriptions, it is evident that much of the writing in the sixty-six chapters in the Book of Isaiah could not have been completed in a single lifetime. What we call the "Book of Isaiah" today was a scroll long before it ever became a codex, or a printed edition. Even before it was a scroll, it appears to have been an assemblage of various writings, spanning generations. Throughout its entire history, the "Book of Isaiah" has been understood by many to represent multiple authorship.

3.1.1 **Indicators**: The first sign that Isaiah was composed by numerous contributors is the span of time between the rulers referenced in the text. Is. 1:1 clearly proclaims that Isaiah ben Amoz lived during he reigns of of Uzziah through Hezekiah, who ruled from 767-698

BCE. Yet, Is. 44:28 and Is. 45:1 refer to Cyrus the Great , who ruled Babylonia from 539 to 530 BCE. The second sign of multiple authorship is something Blenkinsopp describes as "intertextual overlap" in parallel texts among Isaiah and the תרי עשר[25]. He observes that there may have been some flexibility in attributing prophetic pronouncements to a particular scroll. Blenkinsopp also suggests that the Book of Isaiah, in particular, may have been a repository for various prophecies regarding the destruction of Jerusalem and Judah[26].

3.1.2 **Scholarship**: As mentioned earlier, BB15a asserts that the scroll was completed by the court of Hezekiah (§ 2.2.5.3). Moreover, the aforementioned references to Cyrus are anachronistic to the reigns of Uzziah through Hezekiah. Medieval Biblical Commentator Ibn Ezra (1089-1164 CE) asserted that the book of Isaiah was multigenerational.[27] However, it is the modern German scholar Bernhard Duhm who is generally credited with the division of Isaiah into three strata: chapters 1-39, 40-55, and 56-66. I generally concur with Duhm's divisions, bearing in mind Sweeney's position that the "division is based not on the literary character of these sections but on their identification with historical figures who are postulated as their respective authors".[28]

3.1.3 **Nomenclature**: From here on, I will use "First Isaiah" to refer to chapters 1-39 as a unit, "Second Isaiah" to refer to chapters 40-55 as a unit, and "Third Isaiah" to refer to chapters 56-66 as a unit. I will also be using "the Book of Isaiah" to refer to the corpus of First Isaiah, Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah. These terms refer to the text, not the

[25] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 73.
[26] Ibid., 74.
[27] Marvin A. Sweeney "The Latter Prophets." Ed. Mckenzie, Steven and Matt Graham. The Hebrew Bible Today (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998) 76.
[28] Ibid., 78.

authorship. When I wish to refer to the "author" I will simply write "Isaiah" with the caveat that there are no fewer than three people involved, if not countless contributors.

3.2 **Isaiah ben Amoz**: I am inclined to agree with Blenkinsopp, who saw "no reason to disallow a significant eighth century BCE Isaian substratum"[29]. We have every reason to believe that there truly was a man by the name of Isaiah ben Amoz, who lived in the Eighth Century BCE, whose prophecies were in line with Amos and Hosea before him, and who advocated for a return to the God of Israel. Biblical historian John Bright may very well be correct, when he declares that, under the shadow of Assyria, Isaiah, "more than any other individual, guided the nation through her hour of tragedy and crisis"[30].

3.2.1 **Distinguishing Features**: Before we can distinguish First Isaiah from Second Isaiah or Third Isaiah, we must identify what is unique to First Isaiah. The distinguishing features of First Isaiah are the time frame in which it was written, its particular prophetic tradition, and its distinctive emphasis on covenant.

3.2.1.1 **Time Frame**: Determining a time frame for Isaiah ben Amoz is no easy task. As mentioned earlier, the ascription in Is. 1:1 confines Isaiah ben Amoz to the monarchies from Uzziah to Hezekiah (§ 3.1). Is. 6:1 provides a more specific allusion to the time of the prophet's calling ("בִּשְׁנַת־מוֹת הַמֶּלֶךְ עֻזִּיָּהוּ") in 740 BCE.[31] According to John Bright, "we last hear of Isaiah when (ca. 688) Hezekiah once more rebelled and Sennacherib invaded Judah a second time"[32]. Naturally, First Isaiah is distinguished by the absence of historical allusions outside this timeframe, which are characteristic of Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah.

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[29] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 74.
[30] John Bright. History of Israel. 5th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox P, 2000) 290.
[31] Luis Alonso Schokel. "Isaiah". Ed. Alter, Robert and Frank Kermode. The Literary Guide to the Bible. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1990) 165.
[32] John Bright. History of Israel. 5th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox P, 2000) 293.

3.2.1.2 **Prophetic Tradition**: First Isaiah is typified by prophecies in the same vein as Amos and Hosea, chastising the nation for losing faith in the God of Israel, and promising covenantal protection to those who repent and return to the fold. First Isaiah is composed with an expectation that God's judgment of Israel is at hand, in the form of a "יוֹם יְהוָה" (Is. 13:6-9). By contrast, Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah understand that judgment in light of what has already taken place, namely the fall of Jerusalem, in 586/7 BCE[33].

3.2.1.3 **Covenant**: John Bright appears to be correct in his observation that one of the hallmarks of First Isaiah, consistently carried through Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah, is Isaiah's innovative understanding of Davidic Covenant and National Theology[34]. Whereas the Patriarchal and Mosaic covenants of the יהוה are generally understood to be *conditional* upon exclusive loyalty to the God of Israel, there was a popular conception that the Davidic Covenant was *unconditional* (2Sam. 7:4-16). Isaiah's innovation, according to Bright, was to reinterpret the Davidic Covenant, in light of the tragedy posed by Assyria, as a covenant subject to breach (lack of faith) and restoration (trust in God, alone)[35].

3.2.2 **Historical Background**: As noted in § 3.1, First Isaiah begins with a declaration that Isaiah ben Amoz prophesied during the reigns of the Judean kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah. In his chapter on the History of Judah and Israel from the mid-eighth century through the death of Hezekiah, John Bright describes the era as "The Period of Assyrian Conquest"[36]. The historical context is framed, on one end, by a "great power vacuum" in which Israel and Judah prospered without serious threat from any external enemy for some

[33] Marvin A. Sweeney "The Latter Prophets." Ed. Mckenzie, Steven and Matt Graham. The Hebrew Bible Today (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998) 79.
[34] John Bright. History of Israel. 5th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox P, 2000) 294.
[35] Ibid.
[36] Ibid., 269.

five hundred years, and on the other end, by the loss of autonomy, and subjection to foreign powers and cultural influence. Our understanding of the historical threat posed by Assyria is key to understanding Isaiah's theological ruminations on the relationship of the people Israel and their God.

3.2.2.1 **Uzziah (783-742 BCE):** Uzziah was anointed King of Judah at age sixteen, in the year 783[37] (2Kings 15:2). He is credited with improving Jerusalem's defenses, bolstering the army, and bracing Judah for siege (2Chr. 26:6-8). He reinitiated trade with the south, via a port he fortified in Ezion-Geber (2Kings 14:22). Late in his career, however, Uzziah was stricken with leprosy (2Kings 15:5), at which point his son, Jotham became his co-regent. During these times, the dual monarchies of Israel and Judah cooperated peacefully and the economy was nearly as prosperous as in the days of Solomon. Ivory inlays discovered in Samaria from this period are an indication of the profligate wealth enjoyed by Israel and Judah[38]. Uzziah's endeavors to develop his economic and agricultural resources (2Chr. 26:10) witnessed by archeological evidence that the Negev was more densely populated than any prior time in Judah's history[39]. The end of Uzziah's reign, however, was marked by the ascendancy of Assyria as an imposing threat under Tiglath-pileser III, who reigned in Assyria from 745-727 BCE[40]. Prior to this time, Assyria had desired direct access to Mediterranean trade, but unstable monarchies managing the home front had required Assyrian advances to be followed by retreats[41]. Under Tiglath-pileser III, Assyria experienced a stable monarchy, the pacification of Babylonia, and the subjugation of the West. Assyrian annals note one

[37] Ibid., 258.
[38] Ibid., 259.
[39] Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 270.
[41] Ibid.

campaign, among many, into Syria, where they were met by opposition headed by one "Azriyahu of Yaudi", who appears to be none other than Uzziah of Judah[42]. The opposition failed to put Tiglath-pileser III in check, and all of Northern Palestine and the region paid tribute to Assyria by 738 BCE[43]. Thus marked the dawning of the age of Assyrian dominance, and the downfall of Palestinian independence.

3.2.2.2 **Jotham (742-735BCE)**: Jotham's reign of Judah overlapped with a series of short-lived and unstable monarchs in Israel, concluding with Pekah (737-732). Pekah had joined with King Rezin of Damascus to form a coalition against Assyria, and they sought Jotham's support. When Jotham declined the offer, they planned to take military measures against Judah, to coerce support against Assyria. However, Jotham met an untimely death before the northern forces arrived[44].

3.2.2.3 **Ahaz (735-715 BCE)**: According to Isaiah, "In the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Aram and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel marched upon Jerusalem to attack it; but they were not able to attack it" (Is. 7:1ff). Although, Judah appears to have withstood the attack, and the coalition was unable to replace Ahaz with a ruler more to their liking. Judah was nonetheless weakened considerably by the attack. Consequently, the Edomites, who had been under Judean authority, were able to regain their independence from Judah. This is witnessed by the destruction of Judah's port at Ezion-geber in the latter part of the Eighth Century BCE[45]. Apparently, the Edomites then joined forces with Pekah and Rezin against Judah, while the Philistines eroded Judah's

[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid., 273.
[45] Ibid., 274.

possessions in the Negev and Shephelah[46]. Ahaz sent tribute to Tiglath-pileser, appealing for help, despite Isaiah's protestations against reliance upon outside forces and spurning the Davidic covenant (Is. 7:1-8:18). Consequently, Tiglath-pileser's campaign of 734 BCE crushed the coalition. A second campaign in 733 BCE conquered what remained of the Northern Kingdom, deported portions of the population, and razed many cities, including Megiddo and Hazor[47]. Pekah was murdered and succeeded by Hosheah ben Elah (2Kings 15:30), and Israel functioned as an Assyrian vassal until Tiglath-pileser was succeeded by his son Shalmaneser V. When Hosheah withheld tribute, Shalmaneser attacked, took Hosheah prisoner, and Israel's last independent city Samaria fell in 722. Shalmaneser's successor, Sargon, reports tens of thousands of citizens of Israel deported[48]. Meanwhile, Judah, under Ahaz became a weak vassal state of the Assyrian empire, and Judah's cultural identity fell victim to syncretistic tendencies. Ahaz paid homage to Assyrian gods, and the Temple in Jerusalem incorporated a bronze altar for such purposes[49]. In the words of Isaiah, "...you have forsaken [the ways of] your people, O House of Jacob! For they are full [of practices] from the East, and of soothsaying like the Philistines; they abound in customs of the aliens...And their land is full of idols; they bow down to the work of their hands..." (Is. 2:6-8). Ahaz had his own son sacrificed by fire, and he despoiled the Temple of its treasures to finance tribute to Assyria (2Kings 16:3-17). These were dark times, in which Isaiah witnessed the oppression of the poor, religious decay, and debauchery had penetrated the ranks of priest and prophet (Is. 28:7).

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[46] Ibid.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid., 276.
[49] Ibid., 277.

3.2.2.4 **Hezekiah (715-687 BCE)**: Fortunately for Hezekiah, Assyrian power was on the decline when he ascended to the throne, after his father. Sargon lost control of Babylonia and after 720, Sargon ceased all military endeavors in Palestine[50]. There were regional stirrings of rebellion against Assyria in 714 BCE, and Isaiah ben Amoz vociferously advocated against putting trust in the rebelling parties, rather than in God alone. Judah's escape from harm when these forces were crushed is an indication that Isaiah's message was heeded[51]. In this religious environment, Hezekiah instituted a cultic reformation, involving the removal of pagan objects from the Temple, an attempt to shut down shrines outside the centralized Temple, outreach to Israel, and the reassertion of claims to "David's throne and kingdom, that it may be firmly established in justice and equity now and evermore" (Is. 9:6). Considering Isaiah's close relationship with Hezekiah, it is likely that the latter had a social campaign emphasizing fairness and concern for the needy[52]. When Sargon was succeeded by his son Sennacherib (704-681 BCE), Hezekiah ceased tribute (2Kings 18:7) and asserted his independence[53]. Isaiah strongly advised against banding with rebel states against Assyria, on grounds that it was showing more faith in foreign powers than in God, declaring "Ha! Those who go down to Egypt for help and rely upon horses! They have put their trust in abundance of chariots, in vast numbers of riders, and they have not turned to the Holy One of Israel, they have not sought the Lord" (Is. 31:1). Nevertheless, Hezekiah spurned the advice and became a key player in the revolt[54]. Having pacified Babylon by 701 BCE, Sennacherib stuck the rebel forces to the south. Judah maintained her independence, but with heavy

[50] Ibid., 280.
[51] Ibid., 281.
[52] Ibid., 283.
[53] Ibid., 284.
[54] Ibid., 285.

losses. Sennacherib's annals record the razing of fortified towns and mass deportations, while archeological findings at Lachish witness a mass burial of 1,500 people under pig bones[55]. In capitulation, Judah was forced to relinquish her sovereignty, reduce her borders, and plunder the Temple to pay tribute to Assyria. In 689 BCE, Sennacherib demanded total surrender, but Hezekiah chose to die fighting under the guidance of Isaiah, who assured him that Jerusalem would never be taken:

> "Assuredly, thus said the LORD concerning the king of Assyria: He shall not enter this city: He shall not shoot an arrow at it, Or advance upon it with a shield, Or pile up a siege mound against it. He shall go back By the way he came; He shall not enter this city —declares the LORD. I will protect and save this city for My sake, And for the sake of My servant David." (2Kings 19:32).

Whether Sennacherib's forces were plagued with an epidemic (2 Kings 19:35) or Sennacherib's presence was required at home (v. 7), Jerusalem was not taken at that time, and Isaiah's oracle proved true. In the narrative of the חורה, Hezekiah fell ill immediately thereafter and passed away (2Kings 20:1). It is possible, however, that the Biblical narrative is telescoped to suit the theological perspective that Hezekiah's death was a consequence of his his failure to completely trust in God. Whether his death immediately followed the siege of Sennacherib or whether it occurred decades later, Hezekaiah was replaced by his son Menasseh, who gave up the protest and made peace with Assyria[56].

3.2.3 **Thematic Outline**: Just as the entire Book of Isaiah is generally understood by critical scholars to be "a compilation put together over a long period of time rather than the production of a single individual active in the eighth century BCE", most critical scholars

[55] Ibid., 286.
[56] Ibid., 288.

today aver that First Isaiah is itself "a collection of compilations"[57]. The final product of First Isaiah appears to be diverse in style, content, origin and date. Some passages that do not appear to be the work of Isaiah ben Amoz are the apocalyptic passages in Is. 24-27 and Is. 34-35, along with the imagery of nations flowing to Zion in Is. 2:2-4, the invective against Babylon in Is. 13, the oracle against Tyre in Is. 23, and a number of potential interpolations[58]. First Isaiah nonetheless maintains a certain integrity as a single corpus, especially in contrast with chapters 40-55, which seem to be more consistent and homogenous. Modern scholars often divide First Isaiah among chapters 1-12, 13-27, 28-35, and 36-39.

3.2.3.1 **Isaiah 1-12**: Blenkinsopp speaks of Isaiah 1-12 in terms of "successive restructurings," but he does view the final composition as comprising a "distinct section"[59]. It is framed by a superscription (Is. 1:1) and a personalized psalm (Is. 12:1-6). In addition, there are thematic and linguistic connections between Is. 1-12 and other parts of First Isaiah. One of the most notable thematic connections is the contrast between Isaiah's (unsuccessful) intervention with Ahaz (Is. 6-8) and Isaiah's (successful) intervention with Hezekiah (Is. 36-37). "In this way the often fragmentary poems, discourses and narrative in chs. 1-12 achieve a kind of unity by coalescing into an overview of the triumph and eventual collapse of the Assyrian imperial power...a theme that dominates the entire first section of the book"[60]. The section is marked by a consistent theme of "moral causality," whereby the *internal* religious devotion of Israel and Judah is directly connected to their *international* success and failure versus Assyria and Babylon. Isaiah 1-12 may be appreciated as a cohesive unit, but it

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[57] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 82.
[58] Marvin A. Sweeney "The Latter Prophets." Ed. Mckenzie, Steven and Matt Graham. The Hebrew Bible Today (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998) 77.
[59] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 1-39 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 171.
[60] Ibid.

nonetheless bears the marks of "superimposed structures"[61]. One of these structures is indicated by the repetition of superscriptions, as in Is. 1:1 and Is. 2:1. Another is evident in the framing of diatribes, as in Is. 2-4. Additional structures are manifest in visions of peace, as in Is. 2:1-4 and Is. 4:2-6. The reinterpretation of history would be another structure, as seen in the the juxtaposition, if not conflation, of Assyria and Babylon.

3.2.3.2 **Isaiah 13–27**: Isaiah 13-27 is framed by two critiques of Israelite kings. It begins with a critique of the political and religious leadership of Ahaz (Is. 1-12), and it concludes with a critique of Hezekiah (Is. 28-35). While Is. 12-27 sustains the critique of Jerusalem to some extent (Is. 22:1-25), the hallmark of this section is the oracles (מַשָּׂא) against foreign countries and peoples such as Babylon, Philistia, Moab, Damascus, Ethiopia, Egypt, Edom, the Kedarite Arabs and Phoenecian cities. Although the section begins with the superscription "מַשָּׂא בָּבֶל אֲשֶׁר חָזָה יְשַׁעְיָהוּ בֶּן־אָמוֹץ:" (Is. 13:1), this is the only direct ascription to Isaiah Ben Amoz. Other markers of this section are the astonishing image of the prophet parading through Jerusalem naked to symbolize the humiliation of utter defeat, and the recurring introduction בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא. Although Duhm and his followers considered Is. 24-27 to be a distinct literary unit known as "the Isaian Apocalypse," some modern scholars disagree. Blenkinsopp observes that much of the content is not apocalyptic at all, and the integrity of a literary unit is tempered by the absence of "structural markers" such as an "introductory formula"[62]. Noting that "there is no straightforward chronological sequencing of the material in chapters 1-39", Blenkinsopp interprets an oddly placed allusion to the death of Ahaz (Is. 14:28) as logical, from the perspective that the material in Is. 1-12 "provides

[61] Ibid., 172.
[62] Ibid., 271.

essential clues to interpreting the course of [later] events"[63]. As with Is. 1-12, Is. 13-27 concludes with the harkening of the return of a remnant from dispersion to the homeland (Is. 11:11-16; Is. 27:12-13).

3.2.3.3 **Isaiah 28-35**: This section appears to be divisible into three subsections[64]:

a) the five "הוי "pronouncements of woe" (Is. 28-31).

b) a return to the theme of the "once and future king" (Is. 32-33), and

c) a concluding vision of "eschatological reversal" (Is. 34-35).

Just as the previous section opened with the introduction of a series of משא oracles, Is. 28:1 introduces a series of six "הוי – pronouncements. Although the dating of these prophecies is ambiguous, the focus upon Samaria in the first woe-saying either accounts for the fall of Samaria in 722, or else it invokes the loss of the Northern Kingdom to warn Jerusalem of falling victim to the same end. The "הוי – pronouncements recall the diatribes of Is. 1-12, but the woe-sayings of 28-31 are more self-critical. They are also accompanied by interpolations of prose commentary (indicating "sequential composition") and followed by words of comfort (as were the diatribes of Is. 1-12)[65]. There is also an interesting allusion to the advent of written prophesy (Is. 30:8, cf. Is. 8:16-18). Perhaps this suggests that rejected oral pronouncements were preserved in writing to confirm their authenticity when the prophecy would later be fulfilled[66]. The "הוי – pronouncements conclude with a vision of an "historical or perhaps symbolic" Assyria divinely defeated "...וְנָפַל אַשּׁוּר בְּחֶרֶב לֹא־אִישׁ" (Is. 31:8)[67].

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[63] Ibid., 272.
[64] Ibid., 380-384.
[65] Ibid., 382.
[66] Ibid., 381.
[67] Ibid., 382.

The vision of an ideal king in the second sub-section contrasts with Isaiah's criticism of a government prone to "foolish plotting" (Is. 32:6) and foreign control (Is. 33:19). For Blenkinsopp, this raises the issue of inconsistencies among the prose and poetic versions of the story. This may be evident in Isaiah's (rejected) criticism of the government here in contrast with Is. 36-39, where Isaiah's (solicited) counsel is fairly supportive of Hezekiah[68]. At last, Is. 34-35 complete the section by contrasting the fall of the Northern Kingdom with an eschatological vision of a future Jerusalem.

3.2.3.4 **Isaiah 36–39**: This final section of First Isaiah is a long narrative of three episodes involving Isaiah and Hezekiah. In the first episode (Is. 36-37), Isaiah is involved in first a solicited and then an unsolicited intervention with Hezekiah (Is. 37:2-7 and Is. 21-25, respectively), in which Isaiah predicts Sennacherib's failure to conquer Jerusalem in the campaign of 701 BCE. In the second episode (Is. 38), Isaiah miraculously restores Hezekiah's health, after a critical illness. In the third episode (Is. 39), Isaiah foresees the Babylonian exile. The three episodes are generally understood to parallel the events of chapters 28-33, except that the formerly remorseless depiction of Isaiah is followed by a portrait of an Isaiah characterized by reassurance and comfort. On another level, the narrative of Is. 36-39 offers a contrast between the dire consequences of Ahaz' reluctance to follow the counsel of Isaiah (Is. 7-8) and the survival of Jerusalem under Hezekiah's acceptance of Isaiah's advice. Another important feature of this section is the close parallel to be drawn from 2Kings 18:13-19:37. Blenkinsopp posits that these two accounts were conflated before being transferred from the historical narrative to the prophetic account (and not vice versa), considering the extent to which they draw heavily upon the preceding

[68] Ibid., 381.

chapters of Isaiah[69]. In addition, there are two noteworthy markers which distinguish the historical from the prophetic account:

a) Isaiah omits Hezekiah's surrender (2Kings 18:14-16); and

b) the historical account omits a psalm attributed by Isaiah to Hezekiah (Is. 38:9-20).

Blenkinsopp generally attributes these variances to "legenda" representative of "an early stage in the development of biographical tradition"[70].

3.3 **Second Isaiah**: As noted previously (§ 3.1.1), the first indication that the Book of Isaiah is comprised from multiple authorship is the number of allusions to personages and events which lived and occurred after the period of time in which Isaiah ben Amoz is said to have lived. Commentators over the years have affirmed multiple authorship, but disagreement remains as to where to draw the lines. In this chapter, I will be treating Isaiah 40-55 as a single unit, following Duhm and Blenkinsopp.

3.3.1 **Distinguishing Features**: The primary factor that distinguishes First Isaiah from Second Isaiah is the fact that First Isaiah had been set before the Babylonian Exile and Second Isaiah is written in the aftermath. And yet, some of the features that hold Second Isaiah together as a single unit are the recurring themes of hope for the future, and the promise of return[71]. As Blenkinsopp keenly observes, "the attribution of chs. 40-55 to an eighth-century BCE prophet leads to logical and theological absurdity"[72]. Blenkinsopp explains that Isaiah's allusions to Cyrus can not be interpreted as eighth-century BCE

[69] Ibid., 459.
[70] Ibid., 460.
[71] Luis Alonso Schokel. "Isaiah". Ed. Alter, Robert and Frank Kermode. The Literary Guide to the Bible. (Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1990) 174.
[72] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 40-55 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 54.

predictions of the "future" because they are depicted as the fulfillment of events two centuries later, along with a comforting promise of a better future[73].

3.3.2 **Historical Background**: An investigation into the historical background of Second Isaiah will have to begin with in inquiry into the date and time of its composition, before continuing with an evaluation of what was happening in the world at that time.

3.3.2.1 **Composition**: It remains unclear whether Second Isaiah was composed in Babylon or in Palestine. One argument for Babylonian composition is the fact that the text offers no information about religious practice in Judah, in contrast with bits of information about Jewish practice in Babylon[74]. In addition, there is considerable familiarity with Babylonian cultic practice in Second Isaiah, such as allusions to the Babylonian gods בֵּל and נְבוֹ (Is. 46:1-2), the Babylonian practice of carrying idols on their backs (Is. 46:7), Babylonian בַּדִּים וְקֹסְמִים (Is. 44:25), magical חֲבָרַיִךְ וּבְרֹב כְּשָׁפַיִךְ (Is. 47:12) and astrological חֹזִים בַּכּוֹכָבִים (Is. 47:13). Furthermore, numerous allusions to an exodus from Babylon and a return to Palestine (Is. 40:3-11, Is. 42:15-16, Is. 48:20-22, Is. 49:9012, and Is. 52:11-12) seem to indicate Babylonian authorship. Some scholars cast doubt upon whether Palestine even had the wherewithal to produce such prophetic literary activity as Second Isaiah during this time frame. Those who believe Second Isaiah was composed in Palestine note ten geographical references to אִיִּים, Palestinian ecology (אֶתֵּן בַּמִּדְבָּר אֶרֶז שִׁטָּה... Is. 41:19) (...וַהֲדַס וְעֵץ שָׁמֶן אָשִׂים בָּעֲרָבָה בְּרוֹשׁ תִּדְהָר וּתְאַשּׁוּר יַחְדָּו׃), sufficient contact with Babylon to produce the aforementioned cultural allusions, and the absence of any reference to the

[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid., 102.

Babylonian palm tree[75]. Although it is difficult to discern whether Second Isaiah was composed in Babylon or in Palestine, references to Cyrus the Great indicate that Second Isaiah was written in the last decade of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (which was overthrown by Cyrus in 539 BCE). There are also indications that it was written some time into the rule of Cyrus, which ended with his death in 530 BCE, and had not yet occurred before Second Isaiah was complete.

3.3.2.2 **Between Isaiah I and II**: More than one hundred and fifty years had passed between the time Isaiah Ben Amoz advised Hezekiah not to surrender to Sennacherib (689 BCE), and the last decade of the Neo-Babylonian Empire (530-539 BCE). Following Hezekiah's passing in 688 BCE, he was replaced by his son Manasseh, who conceded to Assyria and paid heavy tribute as a vassal[76]. Chronicles records a humiliating event in which Manasseh was hauled in chains to the Assyrian king Asshurbanipal, repenting before God, and renewing his faith upon his return to Jerusalem (2Chr. 33:11-13)[77]. For the rest of his reign, however, local shrines, pagan practices, and syncretism flourished and threatened Hebrew traditions[78]. Manasseh's policies appear to be continued by his son Amon, who ruled Judah from 642 BCE, before his assassination, and the succession of his eight year old son in 640 BCE[79]. Following Asshurbanipal's death in 627 BCE, Assyria began losing its control over the region. The dearth of records from the 630s to the 620s BCE is an indication that Assyria's infrastructure may have been falling apart. Meanwhile, Neo-Babylonian Nabopolassar asserted his independence against Assyria in 626 BCE, destroyed Nineveh in

[75] Ibid., 103.
[76] John Bright. History of Israel. 5th ed. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox P, 2000) 288.
[77] Oddly, this account is omitted in the parallel history in Kings.
[78] Ibid., 312.
[79] Ibid., 316.

612 BCE, and took Haran in 610 BCE[80]. Under an Assyria in its death throes, Josiah ruled an essentially independent kingdom from 640-609 BCE, launching sweeping religious and political reforms, centralizing the cultic practices out of Jerusalem, and seizing possession of much of northern Israel[81]. Sadly, Josiah was killed in battle in 609 BCE, intercepting the Egyptian Pharaoh Neco II (610-594 BCE) who was on his way to battle Babylon. Josiah was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz, who was deposed by Neco II three months later, and he was presently deported to Egypt (2Kings 23:31-35). Jehoahaz was replaced by his brother Jehoiakim (formerly Eliakim), who served as an Egyptian vassal under heavy tribute. Judah fell under Egyptian domination from 609-605 BCE, and there was a general regression of Josiah's reforms[82]. By 604 BCE, Nebuchadnezzar had succeeded his father, Nabopolassar, to the throne of Babylon, and his forces destroyed Ashkelon, deporting part of the population to Babylon. Within a year Jehoiachim had transferred his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar[83]. While Nebuchadnezzar was reorganizing his forces, after a standoff with Neco II in 601, Jehoiachim realigned with Egypt. In 598 BCE Jehoiachim was assassinated, and succeeded by his son Jehoiachin, who surrendered to Nebuchadnezzar in 597 BCE, along with a deportation of the elite and the installation of Zedekiah on the throne. Within a year, Jerusalem had been sacked, the royal palace demolished, and the Temple destroyed. A significant portion of the population was exiled to Nippur in 597, 587, and 582 BCE[84]. Ultimately, Babylon came under the power of Nabonidus, who ruled from 555-539 BCE.

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[80] Ibid.
[81] Ibid., 317ff.
[82] Ibid., 325.
[83] Ibid., 326.
[84] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 40-55 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 93.

until Cyrus II, the Persian ruler also known as Kurush, conquered Babylon in a bloodless coup[85].

3.3.2.3 **Isaiah under Cyrus**: Although Cyrus is only mentioned directly on two occasions in Second Isaiah (Is. 44:28 and Is. 45:1), he is invoked throughout Second Isaiah, if not by name[86]. By the time Cyrus controlled the region, there were Jewish settlements in Nippur and Egypt, as well as a remnant in Palestine. Although Second Isaiah takes pains to portray Babylon as a place of oppression and deprivation, it appears that deportees had not been enslaved, and they were permitted to maintain ethnic and cultural identities[87].

3.3.3 **Thematic Outline**: Second Isaiah begins with an announcement of the end of servitude (צְבָאָה), clearly setting it apart from chapters 1-39, which are set before the servitude of the exile had occurred. It concludes in Is. 55:12-13, with a prediction of a new exodus (from the Diaspora back to Jerusalem) which parallels Is. 40:3-5. In addition to the recurring theme of a new exodus, the everlasting word of God is described in Is. 40:8 and repeated in Is. 55:10-11. In fact some scholars read Is. 55:1-13 not only as an echo of Is. 40:1-8, but also as a recap of all of Is. 40-54[88]. Many scholars divide Is. 40-55 into Is. 40-48 and Is. 49-55, which ceases to invoke Cyrus or foreign deities[89]. In Blenkinsopp's words, "in 40-48 the focus is on Jacob/Israel, while in 49-55 Jerusalem/Zion is in the foreground"[90]. Benkinsopp also observes that the term עֶבֶד almost always refers to the people Israel in Is. 40-48, but as an individual in Is. 49-55[91].

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[85] Ibid. 94.
[86] Ibid., 92.
[87] Ibid., 100-101.
[88] Ibid., 59.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Ibid.
[91] Ibid., 60.

3.4 **Third Isaiah**: It was Bernhard Duhm who first proposed in 1892 that chapters 56-66 manifested a single unit, distinguishable from chapters 40-55 on grounds of subject matter and dating[92]. Trito-Isaiah's interest in sacrifice and Sabbath likely emerged from a community well establish in Judea, rather than one living in southern Mesopotamia, anticipating a return in the future. And yet, there is continuity among Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah in the themes of return and national reintegration. Those who argue for a Palestinian authorship of Second Isaiah are naturally opposed to Duhm's conclusion. Others have noted that Is. 40-55 speaks to Israelites in the Diaspora, whereas Is. 56-66 speaks more to Israelites on the home front, which may or may not suggest multiple-authorship, as the same individual would be capable of speaking to two different communities. Although neither Second Isaiah nor Third Isaiah has a superscription like First Isaiah, it is plausible that they did exist, prior to a redaction intent on providing a unified corpus[93]. I tend to agree with Blenkinsopp's assessment that "in subject matter, tone, and emphasis, chapter 56-66 are distinct enough to warrant separate treatment, yet they belong on the same textual and exegetical continuum as chs. 40-55"[94]. With respect to First Isaiah, although Third Isaiah is rhetorically distinguishable, it appears to invoke First Isaiah from time to time. For example, the metaphor about a bunch of grapes in Is. 65:8 may have been written with the vineyard song of Is. 5:1-7 in mind. A stronger example would be the transparent parallels between Isaiah Is. 1:27-31 and Is. 66:17-24, which serve to frame the entire corpus as an inclusio. Furthermore, certain terms in Third Isaiah appear to be employed with a consciousness of how they were used differently in First Isaiah and Second Isaiah.

[92] Ibid., 27.
[93] Ibid., 29.
[94] Ibid., 30.

3.4.1 **Distinguishing Features**: Third Isaiah contains various representations of homiletical writing, although Blenkinsopp is cautions to note that they may never have actually been delivered as sermons per se[95]. He describes the oratorical nature of Third Isaiah as "recitative", a form of "polemical writing" somewhere in between poetry and prose[96].

3.4.2 **Historical Background**: There simple is not enough evidence to precisely place the setting or composition of Third Isaiah, unfortunately. As noted earlier, it may very well be from the same time period as Second Isaiah, but most scholars today would place Third Isaiah in Judah, during the first century of Persian rule[97]. Be that the case, Third Isaiah would fall in the Persian period, under the reigns of Darius I (522-486 BCE), Xerxes I (486-465 BCE) and Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE). This would be partially contemporaneous with Ezra-Nehemiah, although their history is subject to skepticism and do not cover the important period between the building of the Second Temple in 515 BCE and the arrival of Ezra in 458 BCE.

3.4.3 **Thematic Outline**: In terms of structure, chapters 60-62 appear to represent the core of Third Isaiah. On both sides of this core, God is depicted as warrior and vindicator of Israel (Is. 59:15b-20; Is. 63:1-6). On the outer perimeter, there are laments and complaints (Is. 59:1-15a; Is. 63:7-64:11). Reaching towards the beginning and ending, inappropriate cult practice is condemned (Is. 57:3-13; 65:1-7). Many scholars argue that Is. 56:1-8 and Is. 66:18-24 form another inclusio, framing this central core. That said, the chiasmus structure can only go so far. Another feature to note would be the fact that there is some debate as to

[95] Ibid., 38.
[96] Ibid., 40.
[97] Ibid., 43.

whether Third Isaiah is primarily poetry or prose. In Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia ("BHS"), it is laid out as poetry.

3.5 **Conclusion**: At last, we see that the Book of Isaiah is a compilation of multiple authorship, assembled over a period of generations. First Isaiah includes the writings ascribed to Isaiah ben Amoz, who lived during the reigns of Uzziah through Hezekiah. It is distinguishable from Second Isaiah and Third Isaiah for its earlier time frame, its particular variety of prophesies which resemble Amos and Hosea to a certain degree, and its emphasis upon Covenant. It appears to be divisible into four sepparate units. Second Isaiah is distinguishable largely for its allusions to later public figures such as Cyrus II, and the absence of the aforementioned characteristics of First Isaiah. It remains uncertain, but plausible, that Second Isaiah was composed in exile. Its themes include a new exodus and the everlasting word of God. Second Isaiah may be divisible into Is. 40-48, which focuses upon Jacob and Israel, and Is. 49-55, which focuses on Jerusalem and Zion. Third Isaiah is certainly distinguishable from Second Isaiah in terms of subject matter, although archeological evidence to determine whether it was composed at a later date remains to be seen. Third Isaiah also appears to be written with an eye to Second Isaiah, and a First Isaiah, even more so. The structure of Third Isaiah is unique in that it appears to be composed with a core of Is. 60-62, framed by successive thematic parallels. In the final analysis, despite the difficulties dating the texts and determining authorship, much credit must be given to the final redactor, who assembled everything in such a way as to give the impression of a coherent corpus.

4 **Poetry**: The poetry of the Book of Isaiah is some of the most equisite and sophisticated expressions of beauty ever to be revealed. It lends itself quite nicely to study from a variety of approaches. The Nineteenth Century Italian scholar S.D. Luzzato applied the rhetorical methodology of Cissero to the entire Book of Isaiah. Although I have not been as ambitious as Luzzato, I have been very gratified to apply poetic interpretive technique to three passages from the Book of Isaiah.

4.1 **Introduction**: In this chapter, I have endeavored to translate, analyze, compare and contrast passages from First Isaiah, Second Isaiah, and Third Isaiah. Before we begin, however, I should clarify the particular terminology I will be utilizing and I should describe my methodology.

4.1.1 **Terminology**: I have employed a number of technical terms in this chapter to describe and analyze the poetry. Within the context of this thesis, I will be using a very particular vocabulary which I have defined as follows.

4.1.1.1 **Strophe**: a grouping of verses in the poem, constructed to form a coherent unit, and divisible by stanzas.

4.1.1.2 **Stanza**: a unit of verses within a strophe, often a couplet or a triplet.

4.1.1.3 **Verse**: a complete sentence, as marked by the masoretic *sof pasuk*.

4.1.1.4 **Line**: a subdivision within a verse, set apart by variables such as number of words, number of syllables, massoretic accentuation, and balance.

4.1.1.5 **Colon (plural, cola)**: a subdivision of a line, often indicating a balance in length and revealing a semantic or metric parallel.

4.1.1.6 **Caesura**: the actual division within the line, indicated here by the symbol "//".

4.1.1.7 **Parallelism**: a repetition of anything such as meaning, syntax, or meter.

4.1.1.8 **Amplification**: a form of parallelism involving an intensification of meaning.

4.1.1.9 **Alliteration**: the repetition of letters or sounds at the beginning of a word.

4.1.1.10 **Assonance**: Resemblance or similarity in sound between vowels followed by different consonants in two or more stressed syllables.

4.1.1.11 **Metathesis**: the transposition of sounds or letters between words.

4.1.1.12 **Scansion**: The analysis of meter in a line of poetry.

4.1.1.13 **Intertextuality**: the resonance of one text within another.

4.1.2 **Methodology**: For each passage, I have presented individual strophes, divided by stanzas. This is followed by a close deliniation of each verse, broken down into lines and cola, and accompanied by a parallel translation. Wherever possible, I tried.to keep my translations as close as possible to the exact meaning, syntax, and word-order of the original. After the translations, I have provided my own analysis.

4.1.3 **Overview**: In applying poetic interpretive technique, I have discered certain commonalities and discrepancies in the passages I selected from First Isaiah (Is. 12), Second Isaiah (Is. 49), and Third Isaiah (Is. 60). All three bear the markings of all of the technical terms defined in § 4.1.1 (e.g. amplification and intertextuality). In addition, they all represent a careful economy of language, and they all interestingly invoke the name of Isaiah (ישעיהו) with the word "salvation" (ישועה). What seems to set Is. 12 apart is particular imagery of drawing water, and a focus upon praise for God. Is. 49 reflects a later time period, with its themes of "return to Jerusalem" and "reversal of fortune" for the people Israel. Is. 49 also makes use of the symbol of the servant (עבד), which is somewhat ambiguous about whether it refers to an individual prophet or the people Israel as a whole. Like Is. 49, Is. 60 is also heavily symbolic. The structure of the verses in Is. 60 seems to be tighter and more carefully

crafted, with short cola of similar meter. The overriding theme of Is. 60 is the rebuilding of Zion, but there are other important themes of light and "reversal of fortune". Overall, I believe these three passages reflect the consistencies and the diversity of the Book of Isaiah.

4.2 **Isaiah 12**:

יב1 וְאָמַרְתָּ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא אוֹדְךָ יְהוָה כִּי אָנַפְתָּ בִּי יָשָׁב אַפְּךָ וְתְנַחֲמֵנִי׃
יב2 הִנֵּה אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי אֶבְטַח וְלֹא אֶפְחָד כִּי־עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ יְהוָה וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה׃
יב3 וּשְׁאַבְתֶּם־מַיִם בְּשָׂשׂוֹן מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה׃

יב4 וַאֲמַרְתֶּם בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹ הוֹדִיעוּ בָעַמִּים עֲלִילֹתָיו
הַזְכִּירוּ כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ׃
יב5 זַמְּרוּ יְהוָה כִּי גְאוּת עָשָׂה מְנֻדַּעַת [מוּדַעַת] זֹאת בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ׃
יב6 צַהֲלִי וְר�ָנִּי יוֹשֶׁבֶת צִיּוֹן כִּי־גָדוֹל בְּקִרְבֵּךְ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ ס

יב1
וְאָמַרְתָּ
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא // אוֹדְךָ יְהוָה
כִּי אָנַפְתָּ בִּי // יָשָׁב אַפְּךָ וְתְנַחֲמֵנִי׃

You will say,
on that day: // I give thanks to you, Adonai,
though you were incensed with me, // your anger has subsided, and you have consoled me.

I interpret this verse as three lines, as illustrated above. וְאָמַרְתָּ is declamatory, and stands alone. בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא and אוֹדְךָ יְהוָה are respectively conjoined by massoretic accentuation, and they are closely related to each other thematically, as introductions. Likewise, the third line is comprised of two cola, which are divided at the *etnachta*. They are related by the theme of God's abating anger. It is also noteworthy that the endings of the last two cola rhyme.

The introduction, וְאָמַרְתָּ בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא, occurs in various forms on four occasions in the תנ"ך. It occurs twice in this chapter (Is. 12:1 and Is. 12:4), three times in First Isaiah

(including Is. 25:9). and once in Deuteronomy (Deut. 31:17). The expression maybe characteristic of Isaiah ben Amoz. and some commentators infer from this that there are Deuteronomic influences upon First Isaiah.

The simpler expression בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא occurs two-hundred and eight times in the תנ"ך. forty-five of which are in Isaiah. forty-four of which occur in First Isaiah (the exception occurring in Is. 52:6). We get the impression. therefore. that although the expression was not likely coined by Isaiah ben Amoz. he employed it frequently. We can therefore use it to distinguish First Isaiah from Second Isaiah or Third Isaiah.

Something like the poetic technique of assonance is evident in the recurrence of אָנַפְתָּ and אַפֶּךָ. which I have translated as "you were incensed" and "your anger" respectively. and the original Hebrew reveals that both words are variants of the same root. The massorah parva notes that the word יָשָׁב is defective. and occurs this way on only six occasions in the תנ"ך. The verb נחם occurs more often in Isaiah than in any other book. and this gave rise to Isaiah's reputation as the prophet of comfort. That said. this is one of only three occurrences of נחם in First Isaiah.

Poetically. the themes of transgressing God. incensing God. returning to God. and being comforted by God are expressed with a certain economy of language that suggests very careful craftsmanship.

יב2
הִנֵּה
אֵל יְשׁוּעָתִי // אֶבְטַח וְלֹא אֶפְחָד
כִּי־עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ יְהוָה // וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה׃

Behold:
God is my salvation // I trust, and do not fear.
For my refuge, and the best fruits of Yah-Adonai // shall be for me, for Salvation.

As in the first verse, there seems to be a three-line structure, beginning with a patterned declamatory introduction followed by two lines of increasing length. Each line is divisible as two cola at a disjunctive massoretic accent.

The appellation יה is not an uncommon variation of יְהוָה. Of its sixty-four occurrences in the תנ"ך, only twenty-one are found outside Psalms, of which only four are located in Isaiah (all in First Isaiah). Of the two examples of which are found in the תורה, one is in the Song of the Sea (Ex. 15:2), which begins "עָזִּי וְזִמְרָת יָהּ וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה". Is. 12:2 and Ex. 15:2 are clearly intertextual. In addition to invoking the Song of the Sea, the coda ("וַיְהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה") recalls Ps. 118:21 ("אוֹדְךָ כִּי עֲנִיתָנִי וַתְּהִי־לִי לִישׁוּעָה"). We may also note a connection between אוֹדְךָ in Ps. 118:21 and the first line of Is. 12:2..

The repetition of the root ישע invokes Isaiah's name: יְשַׁעְיָהוּ. This works as an inclusio to frame the first section of First Isaiah (chapters 1-12), which had begun "חֲזוֹן יְשַׁעְיָהוּ בֶן־אָמוֹץ" (Is. 1:1).

3ב׳
וּשְׁאַבְתֶּם־מַיִם בָּשָׂשׂוֹן //
מִמַּעַיְנֵי הַיְשׁוּעָה׃

You shall draw water joyfully //
from fountains of salvation.

Some scholars distinguish Is. 12:1-2 as a couplet apart from Is. 12:3, presumably on grounds that 12:3 has a different structure. Indeed Is. 12:3 stands without the declamatory introduction of the two lines lines which preceed it, and it is shorter, as well. Although scansion is difficult to reconstruct, by virtue of the fact that we have no way to know

precisely how the Hebrew was pronounced, Is. 12:3 yet appears to contain two cola, each possessing eight syllables.

All the same, I believe Is. 12:3 rightfully belongs with Is. 12:1-2 as a triplet on thematic grounds. The imagery of drawing water sustains the earlier allusion to the Song of the Sea. Moreover, the mention of salvation sustains the earlier play on Isaiah's name.

4ב
וְאָמַרְתָּם
בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא // הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה // קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹ
הוֹדִיעוּ בָעַמִּים עֲלִילֹתָיו // הַזְכִּירוּ כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ׃

And you shall say:
On that day // Give thanks to Adonai // Proclaim his name.
Make his deeds known among the people // Remember that his name is to be exalted.

Structurally, I interpret 12:4 as a verse of three lines, in keeping with Is. 12:1 and Is. 12:2, except for the varying number of cola in Is. 12:4. In the second line, each colon appears to have two words of approximately two syllables each (depending upon how יהוה is pronounced).

The declamatory introduction וְאָמַרְתָּם naturally invokes וְאָמַרְתָּ from Is. 12:1, heralding a new stanza within the strophe. We can tell that the first stanza was directed to an *individual* because it was inflected in the second person singular. However, this second stanza is is inflected in the second person plural, and consequently directed to *multiple people*. The emphasis on plurality may also be indicated in the massoretic accent *gershaim*, which is marked by a symbol of two (*multiple*) horns. As the object shifts from singular to plural, the function of the recipient is amplified from offering one's own praise in Is. 12:1 to causing others to praise God.

Naturally, בַּיּוֹם הַהוּא following וְאָמַרְתָּם parallels Is. 12:1, as does הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה with אוֹדְךָ יְהוָה.

The line-break perceive between the second and third line of Is. 12:4 runs counter to the position of the masoretes, who placed an *etnachta* between עֲלִילוֹתָיו and הַזְכִּירוּ. The way I have it, however, has the structural integrity of a verb in each verse. Moreover, הַזְכִּירוּ would be left without an object, if it were not connected with עֲלִילוֹתָיו. Additional support of my division may be found in the fact that שְׁמוֹ completes the second and third line-break, both times preceded by a ב. In my opinion, it is at בִּשְׁמוֹ that the etnachta properly belongs. There is also undeniable intertextuality with Ps. 105:1 ("הוֹדוּ לַיהוָה קִרְאוּ בִשְׁמוֹ הוֹדִיעוּ...") ("בָּעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו:..."), which does set the etnachta at בִּשְׁמוֹ. כִּי נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ also bears resonances of Ps. 148:13 ("יְהַלְלוּ אֶת־שֵׁם יְהוָה כִּי־נִשְׂגָּב שְׁמוֹ לְבַדּוֹ הוֹדוֹ עַל־אֶרֶץ וְשָׁמָיִם:")

5יב

זַמְּרוּ יְהוָה // כִּי גֵאוּת עָשָׂה
מְיֻדַּעַת [מוּדַעַת] זֹאת // בְּכָל־הָאָרֶץ:

Sing praise to Adonai, // for he has acted majestically.
Let this be made known // in all the earth.

In contrast with, Is. 12:1-3, which bore a structure of one verse of three lines, followed by another verse of three lines, followed by a third verse of two lines, we see here the emerging structure of one verse of three lines, followed by a pair of two-line verses (3:3:2 to 2:3:3). It appears to be written with some awareness of Ps. 9:12, which begins זַמְּרוּ לַיהוָה. Notably, Ps. 9:12 also ends בָּעַמִּים עֲלִילוֹתָיו, which is reminiscent of Is. 12:4.

6ב
צַהֲלִי וְרֹנִי // יוֹשֶׁבֶת צִיּוֹן
כִּי־גָדוֹל בְּקִרְבֵּךְ // קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל: ס

Shout and sing, // you who dwell in Zion.
For great in your midst // is the Holy One of Israel.

The allusion to יוֹשֶׁבֶת צִיּוֹן within the proximity of בָּעַמִּים עֲלִילֹתָיו (Is. 12:4) and זַמְּרוּ יְהוָה (Is. 12:3) reinforces the intertextuality with Ps. 9:12 noted in Is. 12:5.

Interestingly, the use of the third person singular feminine inflection is unique to Is. 12:6. That said, the function is clearly symbolic and there is no reason to separate this verse from the rest of the stanza. The massaretic petucha following Is. 12:6 is an indication that Chapter 12 is not merely an introduction to Is. 13-27. More likely, it seems to serve a transitional function.

4.3 Isaiah 49

First Strophe

מט1 שִׁמְעוּ אִיִּים אֵלַי וְהַקְשִׁיבוּ לְאֻמִּים מֵרָחוֹק יְהוָה מִבֶּטֶן קְרָאָנִי מִמְּעֵי אִמִּי הִזְכִּיר שְׁמִי:
מט2 וַיָּשֶׂם פִּי כְּחֶרֶב חַדָּה בְּצֵל יָדוֹ הֶחְבִּיאָנִי וַיְשִׂימֵנִי לְחֵץ בָּרוּר בְּאַשְׁפָּתוֹ הִסְתִּירָנִי:

מט3 וַיֹּאמֶר לִי עַבְדִּי־אָתָּה יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲשֶׁר־בְּךָ אֶתְפָּאָר:
מט4 וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי לָרִיק יָגַעְתִּי לְתֹהוּ וְהֶבֶל כֹּחִי כִּלֵּיתִי אָכֵן מִשְׁפָּטִי אֵת־יְהוָה וּפָעֳלָתִי אֵת־אֱלֹהָי:

מט5 וְעַתָּה | אָמַר יְהוָה יֹצְרִי מִבֶּטֶן לְעֶבֶד לוֹ לְשׁוֹבֵב יַעֲקֹב אֵלָיו וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא [לוֹ] יֵאָסֵף וְאֶכָּבֵד בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה וֵאלֹהַי הָיָה עֻזִּי:
מט6 וַיֹּאמֶר נָקֵל מִהְיוֹתְךָ לִי עֶבֶד לְהָקִים אֶת־שִׁבְטֵי יַעֲקֹב וּנְצִירֵי [י][נְצוּרֵי] יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב וְנָתַתִּיךָ לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם לִהְיוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ: ס

מט1
שִׁמְעוּ אִיִּים אֵלַי // וְהַקְשִׁיבוּ לְאֻמִּים מֵרָחוֹק
יְהוָה מִבֶּטֶן קְרָאָנִי // מִמְּעֵי אִמִּי הִזְכִּיר שְׁמִי:

Listen, coastlanders, to me // and pay attention, peoples from afar,
Adonai named me from the womb // from the womb of my mother, He noted my name.

שִׁמְעוּ is a rhetorical device preceding an oracular statement, as in Is. 1:2 ("שִׁמְעוּ שָׁמַיִם וְהַאֲזִינִי אֶרֶץ"). The call to אִיִּים and לְאֻמִּים would suit a Hebrew prophet who preaches a universal message to foreigners. It is also characteristic of Second Isaiah (Is. 40:15; Is. 41:1,5; Is. 42:4,10,12, and Is. 15). The notion of God coming to the aid of babies in the womb is not uncommon, as in Ps. 71:6 ("עָלֶיךָ נִסְמַכְתִּי מִבֶּטֶן מִמְּעֵי אִמִּי אַתָּה..." "... גֹּחִי בָךְ תְּהִלָּתִי תָּמִיד:"). However, the ironic illustration of an *unnamed* prophet being called *by name* in the womb is unique to this passage.

מט2

וַיָּשֶׂם פִּי כְּחֶרֶב חַדָּה // בְּצֵל יָדוֹ הֶחְבִּיאָנִי
וַיְשִׂימֵנִי לְחֵץ בָּרוּר // בְּאַשְׁפָּתוֹ הִסְתִּירָנִי:

He made my mouth a sharp sword // in the shadow of His hand, He concealed me,
And He made me a polished arrow, // in His quiver, He hid me.

The symbolism of a mouth that is a sword is particularly poetic. It is naturally ironic to contrast that which consumes (the mouth) with that which slaughters (the sword). And yet, the two terms are commonly pitted together in the biblical expression לְפִי־חָרֶב, referring to the tip of the sword. In Is 1:20, however, פִּי and חֶרֶב combine to mean something else ("וְאִם־תְּמָאֲנוּ וּמְרִיתֶם חֶרֶב תְּאֻכְּלוּ כִּי פִי יְהוָה דִּבֵּר:"). Job 5:15, also contains a variant meaning for the connotation in an expression about saving the needy "מֵחֶרֶב מִפִּיהֶם". The anthropomorphism of God in Is. 1:20 lends itself to the anthropomorphism of "בְּצֵל יָדוֹ", which must also be interpreted figuratively. The antiquity of the language in Is. 49:2 should be noted in the archaic first person object of הֶחְבִּיאָנִי, וַיְשִׂימֵנִי, and הִסְתִּירָנִי, which produces the added benefit of assonance. However, there is no telling whether the chosen endings are actually arcane, or intentionally invoking that style in an effort to emphasize legitimacy. The

anonymity of the speaker in the first verse is carried through the imagery of being hidden like a polished arrow in a quiver.

מט3

וַיֹּאמֶר לִי // עַבְדִּי־אָתָּה
יִשְׂרָאֵל // אֲשֶׁר־בְּךָ אֶתְפָּאָר׃

He said to me, // "You are My servant,
Israel, // in whom I shall share my glory".

The key question underlying an understanding of what this verse means would be "who is the servant?" If we knew for certain to whom "Israel" refers, that would give us a clue. Blenkinsopp describes this issue as "one of the most celebrated *cruces* in the book"[98].

In Biblical contexts, "Israel" can refer to the patriarch Jacob, the northern Kingdom, the land of Israel, or the people Israel. In contemporary times, it can also refer to the modern State of Israel. In addition, individuals have been given the name Israel throughout history. Imagery elsewhere in Second Isaiah depicts God fashioning Jacob as a metaphor for the people Israel (Is. 43:1, Is. 44:1-2), and this would suggest that the metaphor of the people Israel would be extended in this case. This interpration of Israel as a metaphor for the people is supported by the description of God glorifying Himself in Israel from Is. 44:23 ("בְּיִשְׂרָאֵל יִתְפָּאָר").

An investigation into the עבד is no less complex than our inquiry into Israel. Some of the symbolic terminology here had formerly been applied to Cyrus[99]. It was Cyrus who had been summoned for the sake of Israel in Is. 45:3-4 ("כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה הַקּוֹרֵא בִשְׁמֶךָ...") ("אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל׃ לְמַעַן עַבְדִּי יַעֲקֹב וְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּחִירִי וָאֶקְרָא לְךָ בִשְׁמֶךָ..."). I do not,

[98] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 40-55 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 298.
[99] Ibid., 299.

however, follow Blenkinsopp's contention that the עבד in Is. 42 refers to Cyrus. In any event, an עבד, here appears to be a "servant" in the sense of an agent of divine tasks, and, like Israel, עבד may refer to an individual or a collective entity[100]. It is my position that the polyvalence of Israel and עבד is a case of brilliant poetic license to play with the concept that Israel's role in the world is to function as a prophetic servant of God.

מט4
וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי לָרִיק יָגַעְתִּי // לְתֹהוּ וְהֶבֶל כֹּחִי כִלֵּיתִי
אָכֵן מִשְׁפָּטִי אֶת־יְהוָה // וּפָעֳלָתִי אֶת־אֱלֹהָי׃

And I said, for naught have I toiled // for chaos and vanity has my strength been spent;
Surely justice for me comes from Adonai, // may my actions be for the sake of my God.

וַאֲנִי אָמַרְתִּי is obviously a response to וַיֹּאמֶר לִי, in the previous verse. When God calls his עבד, the response is the revelation that Israel's actions prior to the calling were meaningless, in comparison with the servant's calling. Given the close relationship between verses 3 and 4, I view them as the second of three couplets which make up this first strophe of Is. 49.

There is clear parallelism in both sound and meaning among יָגַעְתִּי and כִלֵּיתִי, אֶת־יְהוָה and אֶת־אֱלֹהָי. The poet appears to play with the ambiguity of אֶת־, directing it both towards the source of justice and the object of one's actions, which in both cases is God (יְהוָה and אֱלֹהָי are one).

[100] Ibid., 299.

מט5

וְעַתָּה | // אָמַר יְהוָה
יֹצְרִי מִבֶּטֶן // לְעֶבֶד לוֹ
לְשׁוֹבֵב יַעֲקֹב אֵלָיו // וְיִשְׂרָאֵל לֹא [לוֹ] יֵאָסֵף
וְאֶכְבַּד בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה // וֵאלֹהַי הָיָה עֻזִּי׃

And now, // Adonai has determined,
the One who formed me from the womb, // to be a servant for him,
to bring Jacob back to Him // that Israel, to Him, may be gathered.
I have been honored in the eyes of Adonai, // and God has been my strength.

וְעַתָּה introduces the final couplet of the first strophe. Intertextuality with the previous verses is plentiful, as in the expressions אָמַר יְהוָה, יֹצְרִי מִבֶּטֶן, and לְעֶבֶד לוֹ. However, this particular verse is peculiar, perhaps for the apparent interpolations of a later redactor. These glosses challenge the poetic integrity of the verse. Furthermore, אָמַר must not be understood in the sense of speaking, but rather in its secondary sense of thinking or determining something. Indeed, the only statement that could be interpreted as having been said by anyone is the last line, which is directed toward, not from, God. The servant metaphor here, certainly refers to an individual speaking to the collective, but the brilliance of the poetry is encapsulated in the fact that the individual servant personifies the collective Israel. When the servant-prophet speaks to the servant-Israel, revelation and self-reflection call for service to God.

מט6

וַיֹּאמֶר // נָקֵל מִהְיוֹתְךָ לִי עֶבֶד
לְהָקִים אֶת־שִׁבְטֵי יַעֲקֹב // וְנִצְרֵי [וְ][נְצוּרֵי] יִשְׂרָאֵל לְהָשִׁיב
וְנָתַתִּיךָ לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם // לִהְיוֹת יְשׁוּעָתִי עַד־קְצֵה הָאָרֶץ׃ ס

He thought, // Is it too trifling, your being, for Me, a servant
for raising up the tribes of Jacob, // and the guarded ones of Israel, for returning,
I will make you as a light to the nations // so My salvation extends to the end of the earth.

The introductory word וַיֹּאמֶר pairs this verse with its predecessor as a couplet. Both verses are less tight and structured than the previous two couplets of the stanza. The play on service being a trifling is truly poetic, however, especially given the heavy task of restoring Jacob (the people Israel) to Israel (the land of Israel).

Variations on the expression לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם may be found in Is. 42:6 and Is. 60:3 as well. It is genuinely one of the most beautiful symbols in all biblical poetry, expressing a theology that the exile served the purpose of revealing the splendor of God throughout every part of the world. Theologically, it puts the tragedy of dispersion on its head, and with just a few words makes meaningful what might otherwise be a mundane existence in exile. The humiliation of destruction and dispersion is turned into an opportunity to *enlighten* the world.

The massoretic *stumah* at the close of verse six is an indication that the stanza is complete.

Second Strophe

מט7 כֹּה אָמַר־יְהוָה גֹּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל קְדוֹשׁוֹ לִבְזֹה־נֶפֶשׁ לְמֻתָעֵב גּוֹי לְעֶבֶד מֹשְׁלִים מְלָכִים
יִרְאוּ וְקָמוּ שָׂרִים וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לְמַעַן יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמָן קְדֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל וַיִּבְחָרֶךָּ׃

מט8 כֹּה | אָמַר יְהוָה בְּעֵת רָצוֹן עֲנִיתִיךָ וּבְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָה עֲזַרְתִּיךָ
וְאֶצָּרְךָ וְאֶתֶּנְךָ לִבְרִית עָם לְהָקִים אֶרֶץ לְהַנְחִיל נְחָלוֹת שֹׁמֵמוֹת׃
מט9 לֵאמֹר לָאֲסוּרִים צְאוּ לָאֲשֶׁר בַּחֹשֶׁךְ הִגָּלוּ עַל־דְּרָכִים יִרְעוּ וּבְכָל־שְׁפָיִים מַרְעִיתָם׃
מט10 לֹא יִרְעָבוּ וְלֹא יִצְמָאוּ וְלֹא־יַכֵּם שָׁרָב וְשָׁמֶשׁ כִּי־מְרַחֲמָם יַנְהֲגֵם וְעַל־מַבּוּעֵי מַיִם יְנַהֲלֵם׃
מט11 וְשַׂמְתִּי כָל־הָרַי לְדָרֶךְ וּמְסִלֹּתַי יְרֻמּוּן׃
מט12 הִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ וְהִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה מִצָּפוֹן וּמִיָּם וְאֵלֶּה מֵאֶרֶץ סִינִים׃

מט13 רָנּוּ שָׁמַיִם וְגִילִי אֶרֶץ וּפִצְחוּ [וּ][פִצְחוּ] הָרִים רִנָּה כִּי־נִחַם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ וַעֲנִיָּו יְרַחֵם׃ ס

מט7 כֹּה אָמַר־יְהוָה // גֹּאֵל יִשְׂרָאֵל // קְדוֹשׁוֹ
לִבְזֹה־נֶפֶשׁ // לִמְתָעֵב גּוֹי // לְעֶבֶד מֹשְׁלִים
מְלָכִים יִרְאוּ וָקָמוּ // שָׂרִים וְיִשְׁתַּחֲווּ
לְמַעַן יְהוָה // אֲשֶׁר נֶאֱמָן
קְדֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל // וַיִּבְחָרֶךָּ׃

Thus spoke Adonai, // the redeemer of Israel, // His Holiness,
to a despised soul, // to the abhorred nations, // to the servant of rulers:
Kings shall see and stand, // and princes shall bow in worship.
For the sake of Adonai, // who is the trusted One,
the Holy One of Israel // has chosen you.

This verse stands alone, without a pair to form a couplet within the stanza. The glosses may be later interpolations that disrupt the integrity of the poetic structure, but they do embellish the key themes in a beautiful way. God, at once, is described as Lord, Redeemer, and Holy one, emphasizing the multifaceted attributes of God. The glosses in the second line, I would argue, are essential to the theological position that this revelation is extended to a servant who is symbolically individual and collective at the same time. Israel is the prophet who is the despised soul, and Israel is also the abhorred nation with a divine imperative. It is that ironic quality that exposes the depth undergirding the economy of language here: those who serve rulers as slaves have been chosen to cause foreign kings and princes to respect and worship the Holy One of Israel. Parallelism abounds, not only in the glosses of the first and second tri-cola lines, but also in the final three bi-cola lines. The verbs יִרְאוּ וָקָמוּ function together as hendiadys, invoking the authenticity of archaic biblical language.

מט8

כֹּה ׀ אָמַר יְהוָה
בְּעֵת רָצוֹן עְנִיתִיךָ // וּבְיוֹם יְשׁוּעָה עֲזַרְתִּיךָ
וְאֶצָּרְךָ וְאֶתֶּנְךָ לִבְרִית עָם // לְהָקִים אֶרֶץ לְהַנְחִיל נְחָלוֹת שֹׁמְמוֹת׃

Thus spoke Adonai,
at a time of favor, I shall answer you, // and on a day of salvation, I shall help you
that I might guard you and make you a covenant people, //
building up the land, possessing the possessions of the dispossessed.

Verse 8 introduces a new section into the stanza, with a return to the cohesive structure of poetry. כֹּה ׀ אָמַר יְהוָה is a traditional introduction preceding an oracle. We can see word for word parallelism and amplification in the second line (from בְּעֵת to וּבְיוֹם, from רָצוֹן to יְשׁוּעָה, and from עְנִיתִיךָ to עֲזַרְתִּיךָ). The second cola of the third line also expands what it means to be a guarded, covenant people by illustrating the restoration of Israel's possessions. Even the choice of וְאֶצָּרְךָ appears to have served stylistic resonance in אֶרֶץ. This emphasis upon careful style is evident as well in the assonance of לְהַנְחִיל and נְחָלוֹת, which are both derived from the same root. Of course the focus on יְשׁוּעָה is a recurring theme, invoking and playing upon the name of Isaiah. More importantly, the choice of second person singular direct objects to unmistakably refer to Israel as a people is consistent with the conflation of the individual servant with the servant people.

מט9

לֵאמֹר
לָאֲסוּרִים צְאוּ // לָאֲשֶׁר בַּחֹשֶׁךְ הִגָּלוּ
עַל־דְּרָכִים יִרְעוּ // וּבְכָל־שְׁפָיִים מַרְעִיתָם׃

Saying:
To the prisoners, "Go out"; // To he who is in darkness, "Be uncovered".
On the road, they shall pasture, // and on each bare-height shall be their pasture.

לֵאמֹר naturally extends כֹּה אָמַר from the preceding verse. The parallelism and amplification, from prisoners to people in darkness, and from going out to being uncovered, is as clear to the eye and ear as it is from the play on יד"ע.

<u>מט10</u>

לֹא יִרְעָבוּ // וְלֹא יִצְמָאוּ
וְלֹא־יַכֵּם // שָׁרָב וְשָׁמֶשׁ
כִּי־מְרַחֲמָם // יְנַהֲגֵם
וְעַל־מַבְּועֵי מָיִם // יְנַהֲלֵם׃

They shall not hunger // nor shall they thirst
They shall not be afflicted // by scorched ground or the sun.
For the one who has compassion for them // shall He guide them,
And to springs of water // shall He lead them.

Verse 10 naturally continues the comforting message of verse 9. There is a certain sophistication to the poetry. We can see parallelism and amplification from לֹא יִרְעָבוּ to וְלֹא יִצְמָאוּ. And yet, there is variance in the parallelism, where the subjects of the second colon of the second line fall on the opposite side of the caesura. The massoretic *mercha* on יַכֵּם is conjunctive with the *tipcha* in שָׁרָב, but there nonetheless is a poetic break between verb and dual subject over which the conjunction transcends. One can hear resonance of מָיִם at the end of מְרַחֲמָם, each of which conclude the first colon of the final lines. There is also an excellent example of rhyming among יְנַהֲגֵם and יְנַהֲלֵם. In addition, the theme of being led to water is a motif we saw in Isaiah 12, above.

<u>מט11</u>

וְשַׂמְתִּי כָל־הָרַי לְדָרֶךְ // וּמְסִלֹּתַי יְרֻמּוּן׃

Then I will make all the mountains a path // and the highways will be erected.

This may simply be a continuation of the previous verse. The imagery, naturally, is of a leveling of the playing ground. Mountains and valleys will no longer be obstacles to

sources of nourishment. The path, presumably from Babylon back to Palestine, shall not be treacherous.

מט12
הִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ
וְהִנֵּה־אֵלֶּה מִצָּפוֹן וְיָמִּים
וְאֵלֶּה מֵאֶרֶץ סִינִים׃

Behold: those from afar shall come,
And, behold: those from the north and west
and those from Sinim.

This verse concludes the stanza which began with verse eight. The imagery is that of Israelites returning to their homeland. The allusion to "סִינִים" has perplexed interpreters for thousands of years. The Septuagint rendered it the "land of the Persians". F. Delitzch translated it as the "land of China," as with modern Hebrew today.

מט13
רָנּוּ שָׁמַיִם // וְגִילִי אֶרֶץ // וּפִצְחוּ [וּ][פָצְחִי] הָרִים רִנָּה
כִּי־נִחַם יְהוָה עַמּוֹ // וַעֲנִיָּו יְרַחֵם׃ ס

Let the heavens sing for joy, // let the earth rejoice // let the mountains break forth in song,
For God has comforted his people, // and upon his afflicted ones, he has had compassion.

Verse 13 stands apart from 8-12 in style, affirming the cohesion of that stanza. And yet, verse 13 works very well with verse 7 as an inclusio framing 8-12. Both verses 8 and 13 stand alone as isolated verses. However, they resemble each other in their theme of compassion for the oppressed, their inclusion of tri-cola lines, and their tight parallelism. The parallelism is especially strong in verse 13, among the words רָנּוּ and רִנָּה, נִחַם and יְרַחֵם, emphasizing singing and compassion, respectively, as though in a hymn. Again, the massoretic *stumah* marks the close of the stanza.

Third Strophe

מט14 וַתֹּאמֶר צִיּוֹן עֲזָבַנִי יְהוָה וַאדֹנָי שְׁכֵחָנִי׃

מט15 הֲתִשְׁכַּח אִשָּׁה עוּלָהּ מֵרַחֵם בֶּן־בִּטְנָהּ גַּם־אֵלֶּה תִּשְׁכַּחְנָה וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ׃
מט16 הֵן עַל־כַּפַּיִם חַקַּקְתִּיךְ חוֹמֹתַיִךְ נֶגְדִּי תָמִיד׃
מט17 מִהֲרוּ בָנַיִךְ מְהָרְסַיִךְ וּמְחָרְבַיִךְ מִמֵּךְ יֵצֵאוּ׃
מט18 שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי כֻּלָּם נִקְבְּצוּ בָאוּ־לָךְ
חַי־אָנִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה כִּי כֻלָּם כָּעֲדִי תִלְבָּשִׁי וְתִקְשְׁרִים כַּכַּלָּה׃
מט19 כִּי חָרְבֹתַיִךְ וְשֹׁמְמֹתַיִךְ וְאֶרֶץ הֲרִסְתֵּךְ כִּי עַתָּה תֵּצְרִי מִיּוֹשֵׁב וְתִרְחַקִי מְבַלְּעָיִךְ׃
מט20 עוֹד יֹאמְרוּ בְאָזְנַיִךְ בָּנַי שָׁכֻלַיִךְ צַר־לִי הַמָּקוֹם גְּשָׁה־לִּי וְאֶשְׁבָּה׃
מט21 וְאָמַרְתְּ בִּלְבָבֵךְ מִי יָלַד־לִי אֶת־אֵלֶּה וַאֲנִי שְׁכוּלָה וְגַלְמוּדָה
גָּלָה | וְסוּרָה וְאֵלֶּה מִי גִדֵּל הֵן אֲנִי נִשְׁאַרְתִּי לְבַדִּי אֵלֶּה אַיֵּפֹה הֵם׃ ס

מט22 כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה הִנֵּה אֶשָּׂא אֶל־גּוֹיִם יָדִי וְאֶל־עַמִּים אָרִים נִסִּי
וְהֵבִיאוּ בָנַיִךְ בְּחֹצֶן וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־כָּתֵף תִּנָּשֶׂאנָה׃
מט23 וְהָיוּ מְלָכִים אֹמְנַיִךְ וְשָׂרוֹתֵיהֶם מֵינִיקֹתָיִךְ אַפַּיִם אֶרֶץ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָךְ וְעֲפַר רַגְלַיִךְ יְלַחֵכוּ
וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ קֹוָי׃ ס

מט14
וַתֹּאמֶר צִיּוֹן
עֲזָבַנִי יְהוָה // וַאדֹנָי שְׁכֵחָנִי׃

Zion says
I have been forsaken by Adonai // and my Lord has forgotten me

Verse 14 stands apart from the others in the strophe as an introduction. It opens with a declamatory statement, which serves the dual purpose of introducing the concept of Zion. Zion here represents the people Israel, as rejected partner of God, whose relationship is ideally to be restored with a return to Palestine (Zion). The parallelism in the second line takes the form of a verb-subject, subject-verb chiasmus from colon to colon across the caesura.

מט15

הֲתִשְׁכַּח אִשָּׁה עוּלָהּ // מֵרַחֵם בֶּן־בִּטְנָהּ
גַּם־אֵלֶּה תִּשְׁכַּחְנָה // וְאָנֹכִי לֹא אֶשְׁכָּחֵךְ׃

Can a woman forget her nursling, // have no compassion for the son of her womb?
Just as these, she may even forget, // I will not forget you.

We see the tightness of the poetry in the economy of this language. There is assonance in the threefold repetition of the root שׁכח. There is rhyming in the endings of עוּלָהּ, בִּטְנָהּ, and תִּשְׁכַּחְנָה. The cola are short, and no word has more than three syllables. The female imagery, of course, is referring to Zion as the womb of Israel, who will never be forgotten.

מט16 הֵן עַל־כַּפַּיִם חֲקַקְתִּיךְ // חוֹמֹתַיִךְ נֶגְדִּי תָּמִיד׃

Behold: upon palms, have I inscribed you // your walls are beside me always.

Considering the female direct objects of חֲקַקְתִּיךְ and חוֹמֹתַיִךְ, this must be a reply to Zion, whose walls are always in the speaker's mind. The cola are short and the syllabification economical.

מט17

מִהֲרוּ בָנָיִךְ //
מְהָרְסַיִךְ וּמַחֲרִבַיִךְ מִמֵּךְ יֵצֵאוּ׃

Those who would build you hasten //
those who would destroy you and those who would lay you to waste shall depart from you.

בָנָיִךְ could have either of two interpretations. It could either mean "your children" (in keeping with the mother theme) or it more likely means "those who would build you" (in contrast with those who would destroy you). Quite possibly, בָנָיִךְ was meant to by polyvalent. There is a verb-subject, subject-verb chiasmus across the caesura. There is also assonance among מִהֲרוּ, מְהָרְסַיִךְ, and וּמַחֲרִבַיִךְ.

מט18

שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי
כֻּלָּם נִקְבְּצוּ // בָאוּ־לָךְ
חַי־אָנִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה
כִּי כֻלָּם כָּעֶדִי תִלְבָּשִׁי // וְתִקְשְׁרִים כַּכַּלָּה׃

Lift your eyes round and see
everything has been gathered, // they have come for you;
As I live, declares Adonai
all of them, as jewels, shall you wear, // deck yourself in them as a bride.

As God and Zion are to be reunited. Zion is ornamented with those who return. The imagery is that of a wedding between God and Zion. The line breaks are difficult to discern, but I believe the first and third lines have no caesura, while the second and fourth lines are bi-cola. The expression חַי־אָנִי נְאֻם־יְהוָה would be expected to introduce a verse, rather than fall into the second line. Perhaps the entire verse was once a couplet.

מט19

כִּי חָרְבֹתַיִךְ וּשֳׁמֹמֹתַיִךְ וְאֶרֶץ הַרְסָתֵךְ
כִּי עַתָּה תֵּצְרִי מִיּוֹשֵׁב // וְרָחֲקוּ מְבַלְּעָיִךְ׃

Regarding your ruins, your desolations and your wasteland,
Now you shall be bound by dwellers // and your destroyers you shall be far from you.

The structure of verse 19 is unique, in that there is triple parallelism of indirect object in the first line, while both verbs are reserved for the second line. Yet, there is also parallelism in the repetition of כִּי, with the same massoretic accent, at the beginning of both lines. Also, the imagery is consistent with a remnant returning to restore the homeland as despoilers flee.

מט20

עֹוד
יֹאמְרוּ בְאָזְנֶיךָ // בְּנֵי שִׁכְלֶיךָ
צַר־לִי הַמָּקֹום // גְּשָׁה־לִּי וְאֶשְׁבָּה׃

Moreover,
The children of your bereavement // shall say in your ears:
I am restricted in this place, // draw near to me, that I may settle.

עֹוד simply introduces the verse, sustaining the theme of a remnant returning.

"Children of bereavement" is an ambiguous expression. Possibly, it refers to children born after a Zion (personified) has experienced the tragic loss of a child (a metaphor for those who perished during the destruction of Jerusalem). The poetic concept is that even though the family (Israel) had suffered a tragedy that threatened its perpetual existence, a new generation would be born that would be populous and lively.

מט21

וְאָמַרְתְּ בִּלְבָבֵךְ
מִי יָלַד־לִי אֶת־אֵלֶּה // וְאָנֹכִי שַׁכּוּלָה וְגַלְמוּדָה // גֹּלָה ו וְסוּרָה
וְאֵלֶּה מִי גִדֵּל // הֵן אֲנִי נִשְׁאַרְתִּי לְבָדָד
אֵלֶּה אַיֵּפֹה הֵם׃ ס

You shall think, in your heart,
who bore for me these, // when I was bereaved and barren, // exiled and wandering,
and these, who raised them? // Behold, I have remained alone.
these, where have they been?

וְאָמַרְתְּ בִּלְבָבֵךְ rounds off this section of the stanza quite nicely, forming an inclusio with נֶאֱמַר צִיֹּון in verse 14. Given the similarity of the letters in וְגַלְמוּדָה and גֹּלָה ו וְסוּרָה, in addition to the awkward lenghth of the second line, I wonder whether there has been any textual corruption in this verse. However, I have not found any manuscript evidence to support this, and indeed both themes of barrenness and exile are in keeping with the themes of the stanza. There is parallelism in the repetition of אֶת־אֵלֶּה, וְאֵלֶּה, and אֵלֶּה, from the

second, third, and fouth lines of this verse. There is ironic contrast between וְגַלְמוּדָה and מִי יָלַד, which also happen to transpose many of the same letters. Thematically, the notion is that Zion's children have been raised abroad by surrogate mothers, and returned, much to the surprise of their mother. The massoretic *petucha* brings this section of the stanza to a close.

<u>22מט</u>
כֹּה־אָמַר אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה
הִנֵּה אֶשָּׂא אֶל־גּוֹיִם יָדִי // וְאֶל־עַמִּים אָרִים נִסִּי
וְהֵבִיאוּ בָנַיִךְ בְּחֹצֶן // וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־כָּתֵף תִּנָּשֶׂאנָה׃

Thus says the Lord Adonai
Behold, I will raise my hand against the nations, my hand //
and against the people, I will raise my banner
They will bring your sons in their bosoms //
and your daughters, on shoulders, shall be carried

This portion of the stanza concludes with a declamatory statement used several times already in the poem, but here highlighted by the massoretic *gershaim*. The second line contains fairly obvious parallelism from אֶל to וְאֶל, גּוֹיִם to עַמִּים, and יָדִי to נִסִּי. There is more parallelism in the second line from בָנַיִךְ to וּבְנֹתַיִךְ and amplification from בְּחֹצֶן to עַל־כָּתֵף. Thematically, the concept of children returning home is sustained from the previous stanza of the strophe.

23מט
וְהָיוּ מְלָכִים אֹמְנַיִךְ // וְשָׂרוֹתֵיהֶם מֵינִיקֹתַיִךְ אַפַּיִם
אֶרֶץ יִשְׁתַּחֲווּ לָךְ // וַעֲפַר רַגְלַיִךְ יְלַחֵכוּ
וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי־אֲנִי יְהוָה // אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֵבֹשׁוּ קֹוָי׃ ס

Kings will be your babysitters // and their princesses shall be organs of nursing for you,
to the ground, they will bow to you // and the dust of your feet they shall lick.
You shall know that I am Adonai // The One who is never ashamed waits for me.

In this concluding verse of the strophe, the integrity of the structure is noteworthy. Parallelism and amplification is abundant (e.g. מְלָכִים to שָׂרוֹתֵיהֶם, and אֹמְנַיִךְ to מֵינִיקֹתַיִךְ).

The symbolism of former rulers serving and worshiping Zion is quite comforting and optimistic. The final line of the stanza is exclamatory, and it ends on a note of hope.

Fourth Strophe

מט25 כִּי־כֹה | אָמַר יְהוָה גַּם־שְׁבִי גִבּוֹר יֻקָּח וּמַלְקוֹחַ עָרִיץ יִמָּלֵט
וְאֶת־יְרִיבֵךְ אָנֹכִי אָרִיב וְאֶת־בָּנַיִךְ אָנֹכִי אוֹשִׁיעַ׃
מט26 וְהַאֲכַלְתִּי אֶת־מוֹנַיִךְ אֶת־בְּשָׂרָם וְכֶעָסִיס דָּמָם יִשְׁכָּרוּן
וְיָדְעוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ וְגֹאָלֵךְ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב׃ ס

מט25
כִּי־כֹה | אָמַר יְהוָה
גַּם־שְׁבִי גִבּוֹר יֻקָּח // וּמַלְקוֹחַ עָרִיץ יִמָּלֵט
וְאֶת־יְרִיבֵךְ אָנֹכִי אָרִיב // וְאֶת־בָּנַיִךְ אָנֹכִי אוֹשִׁיעַ׃

For, thus says Adonai
Just as captives, from a warrior, are taken // and prisoners from a tyrant, can be rescued,
Against those who fight you, shall I fight // and for your children, I am a Savior

This final couplet begins with a declamatory trope we have already seen a number of times. The second line contains classic parallelism from גַּם־שְׁבִי גִבּוֹר to וּמַלְקוֹחַ עָרִיץ. The third line affirms God's covenant to protect Zion from her adversaries and to save her children. אוֹשִׁיעַ sustains the play on Isaiah's name.

מט26
וְהַאֲכַלְתִּי אֶת־מוֹנַיִךְ אֶת־בְּשָׂרָם // וְכֶעָסִיס דָּמָם יִשְׁכָּרוּן
וְיָדְעוּ כָל־בָּשָׂר כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ
וְגֹאָלֵךְ // אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב׃ ס

I will make your oppressors eat their flesh // like wine, their blood, you shall drink
All flesh shall know that I am Adonai, your Savior
your Redeemer // the Strength of Jacob.

Chapter 49 concludes with such a final reassurance that God shall force those who have oppressed Israel to suffer gravely at Israel's expense. The structure consists of three lines of decreasing length. The first and third lines are bicola, and the middle line is without

a caesura. The poem ends here, on a universal note that all living things shall know the God of Jacob. מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ once again drives home the ascription of this poem to Isaiah.

4.4 Isaiah 60

First Strophe

ס1 קוּמִי אוֹרִי כִּי בָא אוֹרֵךְ וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה עָלַיִךְ זָרָח׃
ס2 כִּי־הִנֵּה הַחֹשֶׁךְ יְכַסֶּה־אֶרֶץ וַעֲרָפֶל לְאֻמִּים וְעָלַיִךְ יִזְרַח יְהוָה וּכְבוֹדוֹ עָלַיִךְ יֵרָאֶה׃
ס3 וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם לְאוֹרֵךְ וּמְלָכִים לְנֹגַהּ זַרְחֵךְ׃

ס1
קוּמִי אוֹרִי // כִּי בָא אוֹרֵךְ // וּכְבוֹד יְהוָה // עָלַיִךְ זָרָח׃

Rise and shine // for your light has dawned; // the glory of Adonai // upon you, has shone.

Chapter 60 begins with a verse that is easily divisible into four short cola, each containing approximately four syllables (depending upon how יְהוָה was pronounced). קוּמִי אוֹרִי is an example of hendiadys. The verbs are inflected in the feminine singular, so as to refer to Zion, the female personification of Israel. Adonai is envisioned as a source of light coming to awaken Zion.

ס2
כִּי־הִנֵּה הַחֹשֶׁךְ יְכַסֶּה־אֶרֶץ // וַעֲרָפֶל לְאֻמִּים
וְעָלַיִךְ יִזְרַח יְהוָה // וּכְבוֹדוֹ עָלַיִךְ יֵרָאֶה׃

For behold, Darkness shall cover the land // and thick darkness, the peoples
But upon you, Adonai shall shine, // and his glory, upon you, shall be seen.

In this second verse of the stanza, the continued theme of light shining upon God's chosen one, is contrasted against the theme of Darkness prevailing upon others. While Zion remains symbolic for the people Israel, the literal connection between Zion and the land of Israel is sustained through the imagery of verse 2. One is left with the impression that dark clouds both literally and metaphorically cover the entire earth, with the singular exception of

sunlight upon Israel. There is a tightness to the poetry in which no word has more than three syllables. Consequently the scansion is methodological. Some of the roots of key words from the first verse have recurred here (e.g. זרח and כבד), but in a creatively variant pattern.

3ס
וְהָלְכוּ גוֹיִם לְאוֹרֵךְ // וּמְלָכִים לְנֹגַהּ זַרְחֵךְ׃

Nations shall walk by your light // and kings shall be guided by your radiance.

Again, roots from the two preceding verses recur in the third (e.g. אור and זרח). The vision is an enlightening one of comfort and pride. It is expressed in clean and clear language, and yet it also shows a careful recasting of the themes and meanings. Here, God's light shall guide not only the Jewish people, but in a universal way, God shall also guide the kings and peoples of other nations. In this third verse of the first stanza, we essentially have the third of three different reflections upon God as a source of light in a world of darkness.

Second Strophe

4ס שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי כֻּלָּם נִקְבְּצוּ בָאוּ־לָךְ בָּנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־צַד תֵּאָמַנָה׃
5ס אָז תִּרְאִי וְנָהַרְתְּ וּפָחַד וְרָחַב לְבָבֵךְ כִּי־יֶהָפַךְ עָלַיִךְ הֲמוֹן יָם חֵיל גּוֹיִם יָבֹאוּ לָךְ׃
6ס גְּמַלִּים תְּכַסֵּךְ בִּכְרֵי מִדְיָן וְעֵיפָה כֻּלָּם מִשְּׁבָא יָבֹאוּ זָהָב וּלְבוֹנָה יִשָּׂאוּ וּתְהִלֹּת יְהוָה יְבַשֵּׂרוּ׃
7ס שֶׂבְעַת
כָּל־צֹאן קֵדָר יִקָּבְצוּ לָךְ אֵילֵי נְבָיוֹת יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךְ יַעֲלוּ עַל־רָצוֹן מִזְבְּחִי וּבֵית תִּפְאַרְתִּי אֲפָאֵר׃
8ס מִי־אֵלֶּה כָּעָב תָּעוּפֶינָה וְכַיּוֹנִים אֶל־אֲרֻבֹּתֵיהֶם׃
9ס כִּי־לִי אִיִּים יְקַוּוּ וְאֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ בָּרִאשֹׁנָה לְהָבִיא בָנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק כַּסְפָּם וְזָהָבָם אִתָּם
לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהָיִךְ וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פֵאֲרֵךְ׃

4ס
שְׂאִי־סָבִיב עֵינַיִךְ וּרְאִי // כֻּלָּם נִקְבְּצוּ בָאוּ־לָךְ
בָּנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק יָבֹאוּ // וּבְנֹתַיִךְ עַל־צַד תֵּאָמַנָה׃

Raise your eyes around and see // All of them have been gathered to come to you
Your sons, from afar, shall come, // and your daughters, on their side, shall be carried.

"Raising one's eyes to see" is a recurring motif in the תנ"ך, particularly as an introduction to an oracle such as this[101]. The imagery of sons and daughters being brought home from exile is also sustained from Second Isaiah here in Third Isaiah. Amplification can easily be seen from בָּנַיִךְ to יִבָּנֹסְנִיךְ. There is also a subject—adjective—verb syntactical parallel across the caesura in the second line. In addition, there is a clear resonance with expressions we saw earlier in Is. 49:12, Is. 49:18 and Is. 49:22. Yet, the words of chapter 49, such as בָּהֵן and הֲנָשֵׂאנָה, have been replaced here with עֵד and הֲאָמְנָה, with the effect of avoiding exact duplication, and perhaps amplifying the themes.

5ב

אָז תִּרְאִי וְנָהַרְתְּ // וְפָחַד וְרָחַב לְבָבֵךְ
כִּי־יֵהָפֵךְ עָלַיִךְ הֲמוֹן יָם // חֵיל גּוֹיִם יָבֹאוּ לָךְ׃

When you see, you shall shine // but your heart shall quiver and throb
Upon you shall turn the mass of the sea, // the strength of nations shall come to you.

In this second verse of the second strophe we may see a consistent pattern emerging of short verses made up of two lines, each divisible as two cola. The imagery of light and enlightenment here turns to a theme of the tides turning, to the favor of Zion (as reflected by the female second person singular direct object endings). Water, as we have seen already, has been a recurring theme throughout the Book of Isaiah, and it serves here to provide cohesive integrity to the work as a whole. The intensity of this single verse is evident in the fact that the themes of light and water come together as aspects of the people Israel returning, from dark exile, as though by sea, strengthened and invigorated by the experience.

[101] Interestingly, this idiom did not enter the English language until after the King James translation of the Bible in 1611.

6ס

שֶׁפַע גְּמַלִּים תְּכַסֶּךָּ // בִּכְרֵי מִדְיָן וְעֵיפָה
כֻּלָּם מִשְּׁבָא יָבֹאוּ // זָהָב וּלְבוֹנָה יִשָּׂאוּ
וּתְהִלֹּת יְהוָה יְבַשֵּׂרוּ׃

An abundance of camels shall cover you, // dromedaries of Midian and Ephah,
Everything from Sheba shall come; // gold and frankincense shall they carry
and praises to Adonai shall they herald.

Verse 6 is a little difficult to parse. Although there is no verb in the second colon of the first line, this may be an example of "gapping", whereby the verb from the first colon (תְּכַסֶּךָּ) would transcend the caesura, as though it were repeated (even though it is not). Although BHS sets the third colon apart from the first line and the third line, I find that it pairs nicely with what I have set as the second cola of that line, since both cola have a subject-verb structure and conclude with a three-syllable verb conjugated in the third person plural imperfect tense. Whereas BHS pairs the final colon with the preceding colon, I have set it apart as a line in and of itself, on account of this distinguishing theme of praising and heralding God. The preceding colon also works much better as an amplification of the colon before it, while the final colon could not logically be an amplification of the colon before it.

7ס

כָּל־צֹאן קֵדָר יִקָּבְצוּ לָךְ // אֵילֵי נְבָיוֹת יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךָ
יַעֲלוּ עַל־רָצוֹן מִזְבְּחִי // וּבֵית תִּפְאַרְתִּי אֶפְאָר׃

Every flock of Kedar shall be gathered for you // rams of Nebaioth shall serve you,
They shall be offered as acceptable on my altar // and the house of my glory shall I glorify.

In this fourth verse of the second stanza, the theme of "return to Zion" is embellished with visions of wealth being restored to the homeland, in the form of livestock from abroad. There is clear parallelism across the first caesura from כָּל־צֹאן to אֵילֵי and קֵדָר to נְבָיוֹת.

along with parallel syntax of subject-verb-feminine-second-person-direct-object in the first line. The second line amplifies the first, intensifying its theme of the wealth of other nations become sacrificial offerings to God. Naturally, there is also assonance in the concluding two words, אֲבָאֵר and הִפְאַרְתִּי, which bear the same Hebrew root.

8כ

מִי־אֵלֶּה
כָּעָב תָּעוּפֶינָה // וְכַיּוֹנִים אֶל־אֲרֻבֹּתֵיהֶם׃

Who are these,
like a cloud, they float, // like doves to their cotes.

Although Blenkinsopp understands this verse to introduce a new stanza of two verses[102], I disagree. Verses four through seven and verse nine all have a theme of "return" which is not inconsistent with verse eight. The imagery here is of natural phenomena (clouds and doves), in their element (floating and flying), returning home (into the atmosphere or to their cotes). Structurally, we have an introductory question, followed by a simple bi-cola line, in which each cola begins with a simile.

9כ

כִּי־לִי | אִיִּים יְקַוּוּ // וְאֳנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ בָּרִאשֹׁנָה
לְהָבִיא בָנַיִךְ מֵרָחוֹק // כַּסְפָּם וְזְהָבָם אִתָּם
לְשֵׁם יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ // וְלִקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי פֵאֲרֶךָ׃

Vessels of the coastlands await, // and ships of Tarshish are at the fore
bringing your sons from afar // their silver and their gold with them
For the name of Adonai, your God // And the Holy One of Israel who has glorified you.

I agree with Blenkinsopp that there must be some sort of a textual corruption[103] with כִּי־לִי, in part because the first person would be inconsistent with the rest of the stanza, but

[102] Joseph Blenkinsopp. Isaiah 40-55 (New York: Doubleday, 2000) 205.
[103] Ibid., 206.

also because כְּלֵי. (c.f. Is. 18:2) is much more fitting. With that matter cleared up, the parallelism and amplification of the two cola in the first line fits a clear ABC:ABC pattern of syntax and semantics. The theme of sons returning from afar naturally secures this verse's rightful place among verses 4-7. The theme of wealth coming from abroad has been heightened from livestock to silver and gold. While the theme of glorification is recurrent throughout the stanza, here it is clear that it is Zion that is to be glorified.

Third Strophe

ס10 וּבָנוּ בְנֵי־נֵכָר חֹמֹתַיִךְ וּמַלְכֵיהֶם יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךְ כִּי בְקִצְפִּי הִכִּיתִיךְ וּבִרְצוֹנִי רִחַמְתִּיךְ׃
ס11 וּפִתְּחוּ שְׁעָרַיִךְ תָּמִיד יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה לֹא יִסָּגֵרוּ לְהָבִיא אֵלַיִךְ חֵיל גּוֹיִם וּמַלְכֵיהֶם נְהוּגִים׃
ס12 כִּי־הַגּוֹי וְהַמַּמְלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעַבְדוּךְ יֹאבֵדוּ וְהַגּוֹיִם חָרֹב יֶחֱרָבוּ׃
ס13 כְּבוֹד הַלְּבָנוֹן אֵלַיִךְ יָבוֹא בְּרוֹשׁ תִּדְהָר וּתְאַשּׁוּר יַחְדָּו
לְפָאֵר מְקוֹם מִקְדָּשִׁי וּמְקוֹם רַגְלַי אֲכַבֵּד׃
ס14 וְהָלְכוּ אֵלַיִךְ שְׁחוֹחַ בְּנֵי מְעַנַּיִךְ וְהִשְׁתַּחֲווּ עַל־כַּפּוֹת רַגְלַיִךְ כָּל־מְנַאֲצָיִךְ
וְקָרְאוּ לָךְ עִיר יְהוָה צִיּוֹן קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל׃
ס15 תַּחַת הֱיוֹתֵךְ עֲזוּבָה וּשְׂנוּאָה וְאֵין עוֹבֵר וְשַׂמְתִּיךְ לִגְאוֹן עוֹלָם מְשׂוֹשׂ דּוֹר וָדוֹר׃
ס16 וְיָנַקְתְּ חֲלֵב גּוֹיִם וְשֹׁד מְלָכִים תִּינָקִי וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ וְגֹאֲלֵךְ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב׃

ס10
וּבָנוּ בְנֵי־נֵכָר חֹמֹתַיִךְ // וּמַלְכֵיהֶם יְשָׁרְתוּנֶךְ
כִּי בְקִצְפִּי הִכִּיתִיךְ // וּבִרְצוֹנִי רִחַמְתִּיךְ׃

The sons of foreigners shall build your walls, // and their kings shall serve you
For with my anger, I struck you, // but with my favor, I shall have compassion for you.

Just as chapter 49 spoke of foreign kings serving Zion, her too we see foreigners and royalty resorting Zion to its former glory. The first line has clear amplification from foreigners to foreign kings, building and serving, and there is also a verb-subject, subject-verb syntactical chiasmus. The parallelism in the second line, however, takes the form of an ironic twist, from anger to favor, and stiking to compassion. The adverb-verb syntax of the second line is the same on both sides of the caesura.

11ב

וּפְתָחוּ שְׁעָרַיִךְ תָּמִיד // יוֹמָם וָלַיְלָה לֹא יִסָּגֵרוּ
לְהָבִיא אֵלַיִךְ חֵיל גּוֹיִם // וּמַלְכֵיהֶם נְהוּגִים׃

Your gates shall always be open, // day and night, the shall not be closed.
To bring you the wealth of nations, // and their kings shall be driven off.

The theme of reversal of fortune is profound here, from a barren Zion being restored, to the fall of foreign rulers. There is natural amplification from open gates to those which never close. "Day and night" surely illustrates "always". The second line further explains the first, showing that the purpose of the open gates is to receive the wealth of nations, whose kings have been driven off.

12ב

כִּי־הַגּוֹי וְהַמַּמְלָכָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יַעַבְדוּךְ יֹאבֵדוּ // וְהַגּוֹיִם חָרֹב יֶחֱרָבוּ׃

For the nation and the kingdom that does not serve you shall perish; //
such nations shall surely waste away.

Something about verse 12 does not fit with the rest of the stanza. Blenkinsopp and others consider it a prose insertion, explaining verse 11[104]. I find that explanation compelling, for a number of my own reasons. For one thing, the first colon is dramatically longer than the second, and this is inconsistent with the rest of the poem. Although there is some parallelism from nation to kingdom, and from perishing to wasting away, it is odd that nation is tactlessly repeated, when a variant could have amplified the point. The verse simply does not seem to have been composed with the same poetical structure as the others.

13ב

כְּבוֹד הַלְּבָנוֹן אֵלַיִךְ יָבוֹא // בְּרוֹשׁ תִּדְהָר וּתְאַשּׁוּר יַחְדָּו
לְפָאֵר מְקוֹם מִקְדָּשִׁי // וּמְקוֹם רַגְלַי אֲכַבֵּד׃

The splendor of Lebanon to you shall come, // cyprus, cedar and fir together
To glorify the place of My sanctuary // and the place for my feet shall I honor.

[104] Ibid.

With verse 13, the poetry is restored. We can see this in the amplification of Lebanon's spendor in the first colon to the particular trees of Lebanon in the second. The reference to glorification in the second line is a recurring theme in the stanza. The amplification from מְקוֹם מִקְדָּשִׁי to מְקוֹם רַגְלָי may be a little counter-intuitive, but I believe the concept is that God will not only glorify the grand Sanctuary, but even the footrest shall be glorified. Although the notion of God's footrest may sound absurd today, it was a common icon in Ancient Near East theology.

14כ

וְהָלְכוּ אֵלַיִךְ שְׁחוּחַ בְּנֵי מְעַנַּיִךְ
וְהִשְׁתַּחֲוּ עַל־כַּפּוֹת רַגְלַיִךְ כָּל־מְנַאֲצָיִךְ
וְקָרְאוּ לָךְ עִיר יְהוָה צִיּוֹן קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל׃

They shall come to you, bowing, the sons of those who afflicted you
And they shall bow down to the souls of your feet, all who despised you
And they shall call you the City of Adonai, Zion, the Holy One of Israel

In verse fourteen, again we see the reversal of fortune for Zion and those who had oppressed her in exile. Although the three cola in verse fourteen are unusually long for this stanza, the poetical craftsmanship remains. For instance, there is parallelism in the syntax, such that all three cola begin with a verb. Furthermore, כָּל־מְנַאֲצָיִךְ is naturally an amplification of בְּנֵי מְעַנַּיִךְ. There are also parallel allusions to bowing low.

15כ

תַּחַת הֱיוֹתֵךְ עֲזוּבָה וּשְׂנוּאָה // וְאֵין עֹבֵר
וְשַׂמְתִּיךְ לִגְאוֹן עוֹלָם // מְשׂוֹשׂ דּוֹר וָדוֹר׃

Instead of being abandoned and hated // without a passerby
I shall make you a pride everlasting, // a joy from generation to generation

The reversal of Zion's fortune is the primary theme of verse fifteen, in keeping with its predecessors. There is some degree of amplification in the first line, in the description of

abandonment, although it is not as strong as other examples of parallelism, above. The second line is a bit stronger in parallelism, in that both elements of "pride everlasting" are reiterated.

16כ
וְיָנַקְתָּ חֲלֶב גּוֹיִם // וְשַׁד מְלָכִים תִּינָקִי
וְיָדַעַתְּ כִּי אֲנִי יְהוָה מוֹשִׁיעֵךְ // וְגֹאֲלֵךְ אֲבִיר יַעֲקֹב׃

You shall suck the milk of nations // royal breasts shall you suckle
And you shall know that I am Adonai your Savior // Your Redeemer, the Might of Jacob

Again, we have the double reversal of fortune, whereby Zion is rejuvenated by means of the service and degradation of its former masters. There is clear amplification between חֲלֶב גּוֹיִם and שַׁד מְלָכִים, in a syntactical verb-object, object-verb chiasmus. In keeping with the previous verses, the final cola asserts God's greatness. If, indeed, verse twelve had been an insertion, then this stanza would be six verses, which is consistent with my deliniation of the previous stanza.

Fourth Strophe

17כ תַּחַת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אָבִיא זָהָב וְתַחַת הַבַּרְזֶל ׀ אָבִיא כָּסֶף וְתַחַת הָעֵצִים נְחֹשֶׁת וְתַחַת הָאֲבָנִים
בַּרְזֶל וְשַׂמְתִּי פְקֻדָּתֵךְ שָׁלוֹם וְנֹגְשַׂיִךְ צְדָקָה׃
18כ לֹא־יִשָּׁמַע עוֹד חָמָס בְּאַרְצֵךְ שֹׁד וָשֶׁבֶר בִּגְבוּלָיִךְ וְקָרָאת יְשׁוּעָה חוֹמֹתַיִךְ וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ תְּהִלָּה׃
19כ לֹא־יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם וּלְנֹגַהּ הַיָּרֵחַ לֹא־יָאִיר לָךְ
וְהָיָה־לָּךְ יְהוָה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם וֵאלֹהַיִךְ לְתִפְאַרְתֵּךְ׃
20כ לֹא־יָבֹא עוֹד שִׁמְשֵׁךְ וְיָרֵחֵךְ לֹא יֵאָסֵף כִּי יְהוָה יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם וְשָׁלְמוּ יְמֵי אֶבְלֵךְ׃
21כ וְעַמֵּךְ כֻּלָּם צַדִּיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ נֵצֶר מַטָּעַי [מַטָּעִי] מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי לְהִתְפָּאֵר׃
22כ הַקָּטֹן יִהְיֶה לְאָלֶף וְהַצָּעִיר לְגוֹי עָצוּם אֲנִי יְהוָה בְּעִתָּהּ אֲחִישֶׁנָּה׃ ס

17כ

תַּחַת הַנְּחֹשֶׁת אָבִיא זָהָב // וְתַחַת הַבַּרְזֶל אָבִיא כָּסֶף
וְתַחַת הָעֵצִים נְחֹשֶׁת // וְתַחַת הָאֲבָנִים בַּרְזֶל
וְשַׂמְתִּי פְקֻדָתֵךְ שָׁלוֹם // וְנֹגְשַׂיִךְ צְדָקָה׃

Instead of copper, I shall bring you gold, // instead of iron, I shall bring you silver
Instead of wood, bronze, // instead of stone, Iron.
And I shall make your overseer peace, // your taskmaster, righteousness

Verse seventeen marks a transition from the previous to the current strophe. On the one hand, the תַּחַת comparisons would seem to connect verse seventeen with verse fifteen. On the other hand, the language of the last colon would seem to be introducing new themes of peace and righteousness. The first two lines function as a quadruple amplification of the theme of lesser elements being replaced with finer materials for the reconstruction of Zion.

The use of verbs is interesting here. In the first verse, both cola are equipped with verbs. These verbs are gapped in the second line. In the third line, the verb of the first colon is gapped for the second. These three syntactical variants are an indication of the sophistication of the poetry.

18כ

לֹא־יִשָּׁמַע עוֹד חָמָס בְּאַרְצֵךְ // שֹׁד וְשֶׁבֶר בִּגְבוּלָיִךְ
וְקָרָאת יְשׁוּעָה חוֹמֹתַיִךְ // וּשְׁעָרַיִךְ תְּהִלָּה׃

Never again shall violence be heard in your land //
devastation or destruction within your borders
And you shall call your walls "Deliverance" // and your gates "Praise"

Along the lines of the metaphorical names at the end of the previous verse, the message of comfort is here illustrated by means of the naming the walls of rebuilt Zion "Deliverance" and "Praise". There is a continuance of the earlier theme of reversal of fortune, but here with particular emphasis upon the restoration of the infrastructure of Jerusalem. The first line has a parallel object-indirect object syntactical structure. The

second line has an indirect object-direct object, direct object-indirect objectAB-BA syntactical chiasmus.

19כ

לֹא־יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ עוֹד הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ לְאוֹר יוֹמָם // וּלְנֹגַהּ הַיָּרֵחַ לֹא־יָאִיר לָךְ
וְהָיָה־לְךָ יְהוָה לְאוֹר עוֹלָם // וֵאלֹהֶיךָ לְתִפְאַרְתֶּךָ׃

The sun shall no longer be for you the light of day //
nor shall the radiance of the moon light for you
Adonai shall be for you an eternal light // and your God shall glorify you

Continuing the theme of reversal of fortune, physical changes are surpassed by metaphysical changes. Light from the sun and moon will no longer be necessary when the Source of Light supersedes light itself. The return to the themes of light and glorification situate this verse well within the broader themes of the poem as a whole. In addition, there is natural parallelism among הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ and הַיָּרֵחַ, יְהוָה and אֱלֹהֶיךָ.

20כ

לֹא־יָבֹא עוֹד שִׁמְשֵׁךְ // וִירֵחֵךְ לֹא יֵאָסֵף
כִּי יְהוָה יִהְיֶה־לָּךְ לְאוֹר עוֹלָם // וְשָׁלְמוּ יְמֵי אֶבְלֵךְ׃

Your sun shall set no more, // and your moon shall not set
for Adonai shall be for you an everlasting light //
and the days of your mourning shall be complete

Verse twenty follows the previous verse quite nicely, amplifying the themes of the sun and the moon being superseded by the light of the Lord. The term לְאוֹר עוֹלָם is repeated, cementing the everlasting light of God as an important theme in the poem. The theme of comfort is also expressed through the imagery of mourning coming to an end.

כא

וְעַמֵּךְ כֻּלָּם צַדִּיקִים לְעוֹלָם יִרְשׁוּ אֶרֶץ
נֵצֶר מַטָּעַי [מַטָּעִי] מַעֲשֵׂה יָדַי לְהִתְפָּאֵר׃

Your people, all of them righteous, // for ever shall inherit the land
The shoot I planted, // my handiwork for glorification

Although Blenkinsopp breaks verse twenty-one apart from twenty to introduce a new stanza[105], I believe the theme of glorification renders it fairly consistent with this stanza. Including twenty-one in this stanza also indicates a consistent six verse stanza structure. Within verse twenty-one, there is a poetic playfulness with the syntax, in which the verb of the first line, יִרְשׁוּ, is gapped in the initial colon from the second line. The final message is a messianic vision in which all of the people Israel follow God and return to their homeland.

כב

הַקָּטֹן יִהְיֶה לָאֶלֶף // וְהַצָּעִיר לְגוֹי עָצוּם
אֲנִי יְהוָה // בְּעִתָּהּ אֲחִישֶׁנָּה׃ ס

The little one shall be the thousandfold // and the least a mighty nation
I am Adonai, // presently, I shall hasten it

In this concluding verse, we have a continuation of the theme of reversal of fortune. There is also an comforting indication that this is no lofty vision, but rather something which may be brought about in the very near future. There is internal amplification within each of the first two cola. The final line emphatically concludes the entire poem, and this is reinforced by the massoretic *sagura*.

4.5 **Conclusion**: In my translations and analysis of Is. 12, Is. 49 and Is. 60, I'm afraid I barely touched the surface of the depth and beauty of the original text. I hope I was able to shed some light on the highly sophisticated poetic techniques such as amplification and

[105] Ibid., 205.

intertextuality. It was evident that Is. 12, Is. 49 and Is. 60 shared much of the same quality craftsmanship, like the economy of the language and the invocation of יְשׁוּעָה in יְשׁוּעָתִי. And yet, Is. 12 was unique for it's focus upon water imagery and praise of God. Meanwhile, Is. 49's emphasis upon the enigmatic עֶבֶד and the equivocal Israel, were unique to Second Isaiah. Is. 49's themes of "return to Jerusalem" and "reversal of fortune" were intensified in Is. 60, which also made use of the heavily symbolic imagery of light. While Is. 12, Is. 49, and Is. 60 clearly reflect recognizable differences in their craftsmanship, there is a consonance in many of the techniques and themes which bring the Book of Isaiah together as a coherent whole.

5 **Justice and Righteousness**: In addition to being a collection of exquisite and sophisticated poetry, the content of Isaiah's subject matter is powerful and compelling. Although there are a number of themes that run through the tapestry of the text, I wanted to focus upon Isaiah's vision of משפט and צדק. It bears noting that both terms have multiple meanings and connotations depending upon the ways in which they are used. In First Isaiah, for instance, משפט and צדק usually refer to Justice and Righteousness. In Second Isaiah, however, משפט is sometimes used to refer to legal claims, and צדק often refers to a triumph or victory. In Third Isaiah, משפט and צדק are used in both manners, providing a sense of coherence for the corpus of Isaiah.

5.1 **First Isaiah**: While משפט and צדק usually refer to Justice and Righteousness in First Isaiah, there are several different contexts in which we find these terms. משפט and צדק often occur within the context of preaching the pursuit of Justice and Righteousness. On other occasions, they are used to describe models of people who are just and righteous. Sometimes, they affirm God's concern for Justice and Righteousness. Elsewhere, we see God's anger in the absence of Justice and Righteousness among the Israelites and the peoples with whom they live. And yet, the very same terms are used in messianic visions of the future. Within each of these five contexts, משפט and צדק are typically found in parallel with each other, often in the same verse. At times, they are also connected with words for faithfulness, peace, prosperity, and security.

5.1.1 **Pursuing משפט and צדק**:

A classic example of the way Isaiah exhorts the Israelites to pursue משפט and צדק is found in Is. 1:16-17: "...Cease to do evil; Learn to do good. Devote yourselves to Justice;

aid the wronged. Defend the orphan; advocate for the widow". We see here a connection between משפט and obligations with respect to orphans and widows. The concept is expanded in verses 27-28: "Zion shall be saved in Justice: her repentant ones, in Righteousness". Here, we see how משפט and צדק are often used in parallel. Although these later verses fit closer with the theme of God's concern for משפט and צדק, the various themes associated with these terms are often interconnected and reminiscent of each other.

5.1.2 **People as models of משפט and צדק**:

One of many instances of people as models of משפט and צדק is Is. 11:4-5, which describes an ideal king in the line of David: "He shall judge in Righteousness (וְשָׁפַט בְּצֶדֶק), the poor, and decide rightly for the lowly of the land...Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness, the girdle of his waist." We also see an affiliation here between, משפט, צדק and אמונה, along with a relationship between just behavior and faith in God. Similarly, Lovingkindness and Truth are associated with משפט and צדק in a regal model in Is. 16:5: "A throne shall be established in Lovingkindness (בְּחֶסֶד), in the tent of David, and on it shall sit in Truth (בֶּאֱמֶת), a ruler devoted to Justice (מִשְׁפָּט), and zealous for Righteousness (צֶדֶק)." משפט and צדק appear to spread beyond the king himself in Is. 32:1: "Behold, in Righteousness (לְצֶדֶק) shall a king reign, and his ministers shall govern in Justice (לְמִשְׁפָּט)".

Ideal human models of משפט and צדק are not limited to royalty, as we see in Is. 26:7-8: "The path for the righteous (לַצַּדִּיק) is level: the straight path of the righteous (צַדִּיק), You clear. For the path of your Justice (מִשְׁפָּטֶיךָ), Adonai, we yearn..." Here, we see the

theme of צדק in a human model, who is not necessarily a king, and yet directly associated with God's quality of משפט.

Perhaps the best illustration of an ideal just and righteous person is found in Is. 33:15-16:

> He who walks in Righteousness and speaks uprightly, spurns profit from fraudulent dealings, waves away a bribe instead of grasping it, stops his ears against listening to infamy, shuts his eyes against looking at evil: such a one shall dwell in lofty security, with inaccessible cliffs for his stronghold, with his food supplied and his drink assured.

Here, we see that the rewards for just and right behavior are bountiful.

5.1.3 **Affirming God's Concern for משפט and צדק**: One of the best examples of God's concern for Justice and Righteousness occurs in Is. 2:4, which barely even uses those words: "Thus He will judge (ושפט) among the nations and arbitrate for the many peoples, and they shall beat their swords in to plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up sword against nation; they shall never again know war". Here, the imagery of משפט and צדק is invoked not through the use of those terms, but rather through the imagery of peace and harmony throughout a world unified in belief of God. The vision is messianic, but it is directly connected with God's judgment, and therefore God's personal concern for משפט and צדק.

Related to God's concern for משפט and צדק is the identification of God with those very qualities. This can be seen in Is. 5:16: "The Lord of Hosts is exalted in Justice; the Holy God is sanctified in Righteousness". Naturally there is some degree of ambiguity as to who is doing the exalting and sanctification, whether it be people or God; however, the

association of God with משפט and צדק is without doubt. It can also be seen in Is. 30:18: "כִּי־אֱלֹהֵי מִשְׁפָּט יְהוָה".

5.1.4 **God's Anger in the Absence of משפט and צדק**: One of the earliest examples of God's anger in the absence of משפט and צדק may be found in Is. 5:7: "He hoped for Justice (למשפט) . but behold, injustice (משפח); for Righteousness (לצדקה), but behold, an outcry (צעקה)". There is also a beautiful parallelism in the verse, along with strong use of irony and assonance.

When used in connection with God's anger, the same terms can take on an entirely different meaning altogether. For instance, in an exhortation against those who do not return to God and Israel, we learn that "Destruction is decreed, retribution (צדקה) comes like a flood" (Is. 10:22). צדקה here has almost the opposite meaning as it would if, say, Righteousness were to come "like a flood". We still have a strong association between God and צדק, but the connotations are clearly negative when in the context of God's anger at the absence of Righteousness. צדקה is the fitting consequence of the absence of צדק.

Again, we see an association of God with the qualities of משפט and צדק at the very time we see God's anger at the absence of these qualities among humans in Is. 28:17: "I will apply judgment (משפט) as a measuring line and retribution (צדקה) as measuring weights; hail shall sweep away the refuge of falsehood, and flood-waters engulf your shelter."

5.1.5 **Messianic Visions of משפט and צדק**:

A classic example of a messianic vision of משפט and צדק in Isaiah is Is. 32: 16-18:

> Then Justice shall abide in the wilderness and righteousness shall dwell on the farmland. For the work of Righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of Righteousness, calm and confidence forever. Then my people shall swell in peaceful homes, in secure dwellings, in untroubled places of rest.

We see here a connection between משפט, צדק, peace, prosperity, and security. On a theological level, the just and righteous behavior of all people is essential to bring about a messianic age. On that day, "Zion is to be filled with Justice and Righteousness (מָלְאָ צִיּוֹן מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה)" (Is. 33:5).

The relationship between משפט, צדק, and peace can also be seen in Is. 9:6: "For abundant government and for peace without limit (וּלְשָׁלוֹם אֵין־קֵץ), upon the throne of David and his kingdom, it shall be firmly established in Justice and in Righteousness now and forever. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts shall bring this to pass."

5.2 **Second Isaiah**:

While the terms משפט and צדק occur no less frequently in Second Isaiah as they do in First Isaiah, the terms seem to be used in a very different way here. For one thing, the context of the terms is quite different, in that they seldom fall into the particular categories I perceived in First Isaiah. In addition, the parallelism of משפט and צדק occurs on a much less frequent basis than in First Isaiah. Also, the imagery associated with the terms is more heavily symbolic, and less realistic than in First Isaiah. Terms like peace and faithfulness, which had been associated with משפט and צדק in First Isaiah and often replaced with other words like Truth. Furthermore, משפט and צדק seldom bear the same connotations of Justice and Righteousness that were common in First Isaiah. In Second Isaiah, משפט usually refers to a legal claim or a case, and צדק is often replaced by its cognate צדקה, which is typically

translated "victory". Despite the differences in meaning for משפט and צדק from First Isaiah to Second Isaiah, this second collection of material appears to be written with an awareness of the terms as they were used in First Isaiah. One can see a cause and effect relationship to the different meanings associated with the terms. I perceive a trajectory in Second Isaiah of a slow transition from the connotations of Justice and Righteousness in First Isaiah to something closer to proper government and victory in Second Isaiah. By the end of Second Isaiah, however, an attempt seems to be made to associate the connotations of משפט and צדק in First Isaiah with those of Second Isaiah. In the theology of Second Isaiah, a legal claim must be pursued in Justice, and victory shall come to those who are righteous.

5.2.1 **Context**: Consider the use of משפט in Is. 42:3-4: "...for (the purpose of) Truth, he (the servant) shall bring about משפט. He shall not grow dim or be bruised till he has established on earth משפט; and the coastlands shall await his teaching." While משפט retains some of the connotations of Justice that were common to First Isaiah, the context is quite different, and this colors the meaning. משפט remains associated with right behavior, but the role of God's servant in bringing it about is different from God expressing a concern for משפט or people modeling the quality, as we saw in First Isaiah. We see an exclusive connection with the servant in verse 21: "Adonai delights in his (servant's) צדק (צִדְקוֹ), that he may magnify his teaching and glorify it". God still desires משפט and צדק, and it comes from God to the people by way of the messenger, but the emphasis in Second Isaiah is clearly much more focused upon the messenger, than it had been in First Isaiah, where the emphasis was more upon the message. Here, it is more descriptive, where in First Isaiah it had been more proscriptive. We can also see this in Is. 53:11: "With his knowledge, My righteous

servant shall make the masses righteous (בְּדַעְתּוֹ יַצְדִּיק צַדִּיק עַבְדִּי לָרַבִּים)." It is the righteous servant that brings about God's righteousness among the masses. To be sure, the difference from First Isaiah to Second Isaiah in these examples is one of context, rather than a direct change in meaning. However, words create different images in different contexts and we shall soon find examples where the meanings of the words themselves are quite different.

5.2.2 **Different Connotations**: In Is. 45, the emphasis returns to God as the source of צדק, but the connotations of "victory" and "vindication", as opposed to "Righteousness", begin to emerge: "Pour down, O skies, from above; let the heavens rain down צדק. Let the earth open up and triumph sprout; yes, let צדקה spring up: I, Adonai, have created it" (Is. 45:8). Here we don't have the parallelism of צדק with משפט, as we frequently observed in First Isaiah, and we can see the terms taking on a meaning that is more symbolic and metaphorical of God's triumph than we had seen in First Isaiah. The victory may be God's as we see here, or what a righteous people could anticipate, as in Is. 48:18: "If only you would heed My commands! Then your prosperity (שְׁלוֹמֶךָ) would be like a river, your צדק (וְצִדְקָתְךָ) like the waves of the sea." Here, God remains the source of צדק, which is a reward associated with prosperity, and yet the imagery is heavily symbolic, and the connotations of victory are unique to Second Isaiah.

5.2.3 **Alternating Connotations**: While the terms are not explicitly employed, the concept of Justice and Righteousness is clearly invoked in God's exhortation that "I will also make you a light to the nations, that My salvation may reach the ends of the earth" (Is. 49:6). Therefore, we see that some of the themes of First Isaiah are carried on in Second Isaiah,

even when the words משפט and צדק are not actually used to convey the message. On other occasions, the same imagery is augmented with the use of these words: "Listen to Me, My people, and give ear to Me, My nation, for תורה shall go forth from Me, My משפט (וּמִשְׁפָּטִי) shall be a light to the peoples. In a moment I will bring it: Near, is My צדקה (צִדְקִי). My success has gone forth..." (Is. 51:4-5). This last verse is similar to First Isaiah, in that it carries the imagery of Justice and Righteousness and it also employs the words משפט and צדק in parallel. In fact, the term משפט seems to carry the connotation of Justice from First Isaiah. However, the term צִדְקִי clearly bears the Second Isaiah connotation of success, bolstered by the fact that it is followed by a synonym for success to emphasize the point. We can see this vacillation between the connotations common to First Isaiah and the connotations unique to Second Isaiah a few verses later, where צדק carries the First Isaiah connotations in "those familiar with Righteousness (יוֹדְעֵי צֶדֶק)" and the resonance of the Second Isaiah connotations can be heard in "My triumph (וְצִדְקָתִי)" (Is. 51:7-8).

In Is. 54, there is a similar juxtapostion and reconciliation of the two different usages of צדק in First Isaiah and Second Isaiah. The connotations of First Isaiah are evident in the expression "You shall be established through Righteousness (בְּצֶדֶק תִּכּוֹנָנִי)" (Is. 54:14), which is followed by comforting images of safety, security and prosperity. And yet, the connotation of triumph, which is much more common in Second Isaiah, concludes Is. 54:17 "...Such is the lot of the servants of the Lord, Such their צדקה (וְצִדְקָתָם) through Me..." Even while the connotation at the conclusion of chapter 54 reflects Second Isaiah more than

First Isaiah, the emphasis is taken away from the servant, or servants, and restored to God, which is more consistent with First Isaiah.

5.3 **Third Isaiah**: משפט and צדק are key words of Third Isaiah, as one would imagine. More often than not, they carry the resonances of First Isaiah in terms of Justice and Righteousness, and they tend to appear in parallel as they did in First Isaiah. Nonetheless, משפט and צדק sometimes bear the tone of Second Isaiah with respect to government and triumph. The dual uses of משפט and צדק in Third Isaiah reinforce the theory that Third Isaiah was written with an eye to both First Isaiah and Second Isaiah, drawing upon both as a final frame for the entire scroll of Isaiah. I find the use of צדק and משפט in Third Isaiah to reflect aspects of First Isaiah and Second Isaiah through the use of ambiguity, conflation, and juxtaposition.

5.3.1 **Ambiguity**: The prevalence of משפט and צדק is evident in the very first verse of Third Isaiah: "Thus said Adonai: preserve Justice and do Righteousness for soon My salvation shall come, and My צדקה (וְצִדְקָתִי) shall be revealed" (Is. 56:1). Here we see משפט and צדק in parallel as they were likely to be found in First Isaiah, but there is some ambiguity as to whether the final use of צדקה is along the First Isaiah or the Second Isaiah meanings of the term. Whether צדק here refers to Righteousness or victory, the message in Third Isaiah is consistently one of comfort.

5.3.2 **Conflation**: Just as we saw a connection between Righteousness and light in chapters 49 and 51 of Second Isaiah, chapter 58 employs much of the same messianic imagery, especially in verses 6-10. The message of Justice and Righteousness is conveyed in a description of freeing the oppressed, giving bread to the hungry, sheltering the poor, and

new situation and are proactive in terms of the needs of the children, recognizing that they need to talk about the deceased and their feelings that are new. These parents are well aware that they need to learn and change their ways of raising their children in light of the new crisis that is challenging their family.[205]

Whether the death was expected or not, bereaved families experience chaos in the face of death. Children struggle with their lack of cognitive development and magical thinking to make sense of what seems to make no sense whatsoever. Family members have difficulty supporting each other in their own personal grief while trying to establish the equilibrium needed to function on a daily basis. The child who is bereaved gets caught up in the upside down catastrophe that has caused his life to change dramatically. Parents have the overwhelming challenge of grieving themselves, caring for their bereaved children, and bringing their family through the stormy sea of bereavement.

McClowry et. al. conducted a study with forty-nine families that experienced a death following childhood cancer 7-9 years later. They describe a phenomenon called the "empty space" that occurs for surviving family members. They observed three patterns of grieving around this experience: getting over it – some families chose to put it in the past and move on; filling the emptiness – these families concentrated on keeping busy so as not to think about the death; and keeping the connection – these families got involved in activities to fill the emptiness such as group involvement or working for the cause that caused the death. All of these families still experienced pain and felt the re-emergence of the empty space at times such as birthdays and holidays. Those who focused on keeping the connection found that their emptiness evolved more than the families that exhibited other grieving patterns but reported more of a continuing sense of the empty space than

[205] Silverman, 223-224

those who chose to put the loss behind them and move forward.[206] Bereaved children must be included in the grief of the family as the unit it is with all its complexities and pain. Families need the opportunities to share their emotions and feel freedom to be heard. Children grieve as much as adults but do so in their own way; it is incumbent upon the adults in their world to recognize when the family may be in need of allowing bereaved children the chances to grieve in as healthy a way as possible. Doka warns that coping and adapting are dynamic processes and families need help.[207] Families can obtain much needed help from the community, clergy, school, and mental health professionals but children need care, continuity, and connection as they struggle through the difficult experience of grief.

The Bereaved Child and the School

The school is an important institution that along with the family inculcates learning, socialization, and identity within one's social milieu. Children learn social mores and values of the majority culture and surmise where they fit within the values of the culture they acquire at home. The ultimate goal in this respect is to adapt to a system that ideally facilitates the process for both cultures to dovetail in order to provide a meaning, value, and safety to their lives. Children spend a great deal of time in school and develop relationships with other children and adults alike that can have a profound influence on how they view life. When children who attend school experience the loss of a significant person, they eventually must return to their classroom, usually following a series of mourning rituals. Although the physical classroom and the people in the class are familiar, the child has changed and something catastrophic has occurred in his life.

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[206] McClowry, S.G., Davies E.B., May, K.A., Kulenkamp, E.J., and I.M. Martinson in Doka, Kenneth, Ed. *Children Mourning, Mourning Children.* Washington: Hospice Foundation of America, 1995, pp. 149-157

[207] Silverman, 225

The death-denying attitude of our western society transfers to the school. The school plays an extremely significant role not only in reintegrating the bereaved child back into the "community" but also in teaching other children and adults how to support someone who is grieving. Yet schools are often at a loss for what to do and how to help bereaved children. Indeed there are incidents at schools such as massacres and mass shootings in which students not only lose close peers and beloved teachers, but also are sometimes witnesses to trauma. The tragedies such as Columbine and Virginia Tech shootings are testaments to such horrors and raise the concern that schools need programs to help children deal with death and public catastrophe.

The teacher-student relationship is, for a child, an important one in which the student bonds with an important adult over an extended period of time. However, relationships for children in schools are not limited to teachers, principals, and guidance counselors alone. In religious schools, the rabbi, cantor, and Jewish education have relationships with students and their families as many belong to the religious congregation. We often underestimate the significance of the care taking staff, the office staff, the school nurse, and bus drivers who see the students on a regular basis. Schools also rely a great deal on volunteers from the community. The children they service often develop meaningful relationships with them that touch all these people. They have a role to play in caring for the bereaved student that begins with being aware of some behavior characteristics that should not be sloughed off and referred to simply as "behavior problems".

In his book *A Student Dies, A School Mourns*, Klicker reports on the findings of Holland who observed in 1993 that 70% of the primary schools studied reported having

bereaved children many of whom present physical or psychological problems many of which were disruptive behaviors. Some of these included: violence, crying, anger, depression, lack of concentration, poor schoolwork, withdrawal, overattachment, and obsessive behavior. Some children try to be stoic or deny their grief. Holland and Ludford's study on secondary schools reported that 87% of the schools included in their research had bereaved students with similar behaviors. They observed that although students of this age group have a more sophisticated understanding of death, much like adults, they nevertheless often lack sympathetic support in schools that have a large student body.[208] Goldman reports additional behaviors at school in bereaved children such as: the need to retell events of the death and funeral; dreams of the dead person; the child looks for new friends who have had a similar loss rejecting old ones; requests to call home during the school day; inability to concentrate; spontaneous crying episodes; overly concern with caretaking needs at school; becoming the "class clown" to get attention; silence; absenteeism; daydreaming; difficulty adjusting to changes; and health concerns.[209] Given the concerns that the bereaved child has and the trauma of the loss, it is not surprising that these behaviors are exhibited. Bereaved children are confronted with their own mortality and that of their remaining family members. If their needs are overlooked at home, attention-seeking behaviors will allow other adults to focus on them. If their loved one died of an illness, it is a natural reaction to be concerned about health and sickness in others or themselves, and certainly, inability to concentrate on the lesson at hand will be a challenge when the child's world has become catastrophic.

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[208] Klicker, Ralph L. *A Student Dies, A School Mourns.* New York: Brunner-Routledge. 2000, p. 5
[209] Ibid, 6

Bereaved children experience what Fogarty terms "commotion". Commotion is behavior based on the combination of excessive energy, attention difficulties, tension, and fear, often resembling ADHD. He warns that sometimes posttraumatic stress disorder is mislabeled as ADHD and schools must be careful not to do so[210]. Commotion serves several purposes and these may be very apparent at school. Commotion calls attention to others that the bereaved child is mourning; because children often lack the cognitive equipment to verbalize their grief and fears as well as to express their vulnerability, their behaviors awaken the attention of adults as a means to gain assistance from them; and commotion serves as a means of empowerment for bereaved children to get the attention they require.[211] Such behaviors, however, are not always easy for schools to cope with. Acting out in class can be extremely disruptive and frustrating for the teacher who must handle multiple children and lessons at the same time that the bereaved child is crying for attention.

Sometimes a death occurs while the student is in school during the day. The question undoubtedly arises as to who should tell the child of the death. Stevenson writes that this requires extreme sensitivity. An announcement should not be made publicly over the PA system, but rather, a person in authority and in a private place should tell the child privately. A family member should ideally be present and the child should be told the truth in simple language. In the case of a community disaster, he advises against telling the student body in an assembly of what has happened; rather, the principal and

[210] Fogarty, 9-11
[211] Ibid, 13

counselors should go to individual classes.[212] Students need their routine to be kept as much as possible and a room should be set up in a community disaster that can serve as a forum for the expression of feelings and emotional support. Upon returning to school following a death, bereaved students do best with adults with whom they are familiar such as their teacher, principal, and class peers. Even prior to returning to school, having his teacher and/or classmates attend the funeral of his loved one can be a great source of comfort to the bereaved child. Doka offers guidelines for teachers in their desire to support bereaved children. She advises teachers to be simple and straightforward by telling the student "I'm sorry ____ died"; be patient and offer repetition; listen and respect the child's feelings and fears; be sensitive to the child's feeling of being different; give the student a sense of control – offering options will help; be open to the reality that grief can profoundly affect a child's schoolwork; and watch for manifestations of problems and refer if necessary.[213] Bringing in the school psychologist or nurse can offer support to both the student and the teacher alike. Good communication between the school and the family is crucial to the adjustment of the bereaved child to returning to school following a death in the family.

Children may be profoundly affected by the death of a teacher. Although not a "blood relative" or member of their immediate family, children are dramatically bereaved by the loss of someone with whom they spend so much time and usually admire and love. Several factors are important in the impact the death of a teacher can have on the school community such as: the age of the teacher; circumstances of the death; length of service

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[212] Stevenson, Robert G. "The Role of Death Education in Helping Students to Cope With Loss" in Doka, Kenneth. Ed. *Living with Grief. Children, Adolescents, and Loss*. Washington DC: Hospice Foundation. 2000, pp. 198-199

[213] Doka, *Living with Grief*, 193-194

in the school; perception of teaching duties; degree of authority the teacher had; the quality of the relationship between the teacher and student(s); involvement in the community outside the school; and the role of the teacher as a parent of school-aged children.[214] Behaviors seen in children who have lost their teacher may be similar to those in children who have lost a family member. In such cases, the other teachers and staff in the school will be bereaved themselves and challenged to support their students while they are struggling with their own emotions. Anger, guilt, sadness, and confusion will cast a pall on the school in an intense way affecting the entire community.

Community disasters require school wide programs to defuse panic and offset rumors. Likewise, suicidal deaths can create frenzy in the school community. Students need to be told honest answers to questions they have. They need to hear words such as "death", and "dead" rather than euphemisms. Students need to know that it is normal to have a variety of feelings that are important in their grieving process. Moreover, they must be given permission to grieve. Adults must be careful not to impose a timeline for students' grief, deciding when it is time to "be over it", nor should they say "I know how you feel"; each person grieves the deceased with whom they had a unique relationship. Teachers need to be flexible for a few days following a crisis, allowing students to verbalize and share together in their grief, write letters, real or symbolic, attend the funeral or memorial service if desired, and offer support. A major concern in a classroom that now has a desk that had been occupied by a student who died is what should happen to that desk. Students need to be involved in the decision concerning this.[215]

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[214] Boyd-Webb, 216-217
[215] Klicker, 60-61

Suicidal death especially among adolescents is a difficult situation that challenges schools and families alike. Students and staff may experience guilt as they take in the shock and disbelief and then review in their minds what they might have done to recognize the situation and prevent the death from happening. Peers may be devastated by the news of the loss of a classmate and have physiological, emotional, and spiritual responses. A serious concern in schools following a suicidal death of a student is the fear of "copycat" behavior in which other adolescents may consider suicide themselves after recognizing the attention the deceased now receives. Schools require a plan in the event of the suicidal death of a student in order to support the other students and staff. This is a complicated situation and welcomes the support of professionals well equipped to handle the repercussions of such as situation.

Death education is an aspect of school curricula that has often been overlooked or neglected. Grollman writes that the question is not whether children and adolescents should receive death education but rather whether the education they receive is timely, helpful, and reliable.[216] Schools, as businesses, often expect grieving students to return to school with the expectation that it is "business as usual" but students and staff may not be aware of how their grief is affecting them. Holland writes that based on his research of schools in England, schools tended to have a reactive approach to bereavement dealing with death on an "ad-hoc basis" rather than having a systematic planned response.[217] Teachers often take it for granted that children will rebound and be resilient before they actually are ready. In addition to the necessity of a formal school-wide death education

[216] Grollman, Rabbi Earl A. "To Everything There is a Season" in Doka, Kenneth. Ed. *Living with Grief. Children, Adolescents, and Loss*. Washington DC: Hospice Foundation. 2000, p. 101
[217] Holland, John. *Understanding Children's Experiences of Parental Bereavement*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers. 2001, p. 16

curriculum, teachers play a vital role in teaching their students about grief. Some teachers are very young and may not have experienced a loss themselves. As a result, teachers require intensive death education themselves in order to comfortably and confidently teach their students how to help a bereaved classmate adjust to being in school again. This can be done by discussing beforehand what to say and how to offer comfort, how to help their peer get caught up by sharing notes or calling to see how they are, offering to do homework together, and including the bereaved student in activities. Teachers may feel that they will be unable to control their own tears yet this would be an excellent opportunity for students to see the humanness of their teacher and offer their support. This is an invaluable lesson for everyone about the frailty and randomness of life.

In his study Project Iceberg (named to represent the large amount of unrecognized grief of bereaved children after the death of a parent) of 70 adult study volunteers who had been bereaved as children due to parental loss, Holland reports that one-fifth felt isolated upon returning to school. When asked how their schools helped them when they returned, 66% said their schools did nothing on their return after the death of their parent; 10% said that just one teacher spoke to them; and 10% said that teachers had talked with classmates and instructed them on how to behave and what to say. Four percent had no recollection. Ten percent of these respondents said that one teacher had spoken to them about the death and they considered this to be helpful to them. Special attention by the teacher at recess was important for some but others reported being criticized by the teacher for substandard work and even ridiculed in front of the class. The Iceberg volunteers were asked to rate their schools concerning the help they had received during their bereavement on a scale from 0 to 10 with 0 representing no help and 10 the highest

possible score. The results show that 57% rated their school at 0, indicating very little support for them from the school as bereaved children.

When asked how their school could have helped, over half said just listening would have helped immensely as would counseling. Other responses included: simply acknowledging the loss; teachers expressing regret; liaison with family; the class teacher telling peers as well as other teachers of the death of their parent; encouragement by the school to help them work through their feelings; death education; and training for teachers to become more confident in the area of death and loss.[218]

Isolation is a common experience among bereaved children and feeds into the notion of feeling different. Iceberg participants were asked to rate how isolated they felt during the first year after the death of their parent. Results indicate that 47% felt the most isolated with only 3% reporting the least isolated. Furthermore, 75% of them reported that their teachers were unapproachable during this time.[219] When reading these findings, it is important to bear in mind that this study was conducted with adults who had been bereaved as children, therefore, their experiences are representative of earlier times when awareness of the impact of childhood bereavement was not studied in the depth that it is today. Although schools still are faced with the challenge of providing death education and support for children who are grieving, these results must be considered within the context of their time. Moreover, the adult participants responded to the researcher's questions based on memory from many years earlier. Loss of a parent brings many complex issues that may have influenced their responses many years later.

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[218] Holland, 99-112
[219] Ibid, 118