Isaiah and Intertextuality

Edited by WILSON DE ANGELO CUNHA and ANDREW T. ABERNETHY

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Wilson de Angelo Cunha and Andrew T. Abernethy

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Preface

Isaiah amid Israel's Scriptures: An Intertextual Approach

Fragmentation characterized the study of Isaiah in the 18th–20th centuries.¹ Late in the 18th century, and following on the heels of developments taking place in the 17th century, Johann C. Döderlein (1775) and Johann G. Eichhorn (1780–1783) postulated the existence of different authors living in disparate historical contexts.² This idea reached full fruition over one hundred years later in the publication of Bernhard Duhm's 1892 commentary, where the three-book hypothesis crystallized. As Duhm sought "... to recover the religious personality of the prophet himself,"³ a study of Isaiah's literary growth became the dominant concern of Isaiah's study for much of the 20th century. Duhm postulated that Isa 40–66 existed as a non-Isaianic composition in the 3rd century Bc⁴ before someone joined it to Isa 1–39 sometime between Chronicles (3rd century) and Sirach (2nd century).⁵

However, scholarship shifted from a less fragmentary to a more holistic view of Isaiah's composition around the second half of the 20th century.⁶ New studies saw a higher level of interconnectedness between Isa 1–39 and 40–66.⁷ Critical

¹ See Hugh G. M. Williamson, *Variations on a Theme: King, Messiah and Servant in the Book of Isaiah* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 1998), 1, who notes that "... for the past century or so the various parts of the book have generally been studied in complete isolation from one another ...".

² See e. g., Brevard S. Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 316.

³ Childs, *Introduction*, 318.

⁴ See Bernhard Duhm, *Das Buch Jesaja: übersetzt und erklärt* (HKAT; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1914), § 2–3.

⁵ See the helpful review of Isaiah scholarship in Hugh G. M. Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 1–18. Hans-Winfried Jüngling, "Das Buch Jesaja," in Erich Zenger, ed., *Einleitung in das Alte Testament: 9., aktualisierte Auflage herausgegeben von Christian Frevel* (Kohlhammer Studienbücher Theologie 1/1; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2016), 544, notes that Hans Wildberger spoke of Duhm's "blooming imagination" (blühende Phantasie).

⁶ See Williamson, *Variations on a Theme*, 1: "... Recently, however, scholars have been impressed more by the number of ways in which the various parts are connected with one another. Attention has focused primarily on phraseology and themes that span the whole or substantial parts of the book ...".

⁷ Jüngling, "Jesaja," 544–546, claims two research models for Isaiah's compositional history exist: one that views Isa 40–66 as an independent section with its own literary history and another that sees the very compositional growth of Isa 40–66 as connected with Isa 1–39.

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to this new approach was the uncovering of *intratextual* links between Isaiah's two major literary sections. A fascinating example is Hugh G. M. Williamson's *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction*. Paying attention to shared vocabulary between Isa 1–39 and 40–66, Williamson argued that Deutero-Isaiah was not only familiar with some form of Isa 1–39 and incorporated "… various of its themes, images, and modes of expression in the course of his own ministry …";⁸ he also claimed that Deutero-Isaiah linked his proclamation of salvation in Isa 40–66 with Isa 1–39 to show continuity with Isaiah's message.⁹ Thus, "intra-textual" links allowed Williamson and others to postulate the existence of a redactional unity between Isa 1–39 and 40–66.¹⁰

Having identified textual data suggesting Isaiah's literary unity, it was not long until scholarship turned its attention to *intertextual* connections between Isaiah and the broader HB/OT. Exploration of textual affinities has focused on Isa 24–27 and [35]40–66, sections many believe originated after the eighthcentury prophet Isaiah. Focus on Isaiah's shared textual links provided the broad contours of Isaiah's use of earlier sources. Thus, Hosea was "... a source of hope and inspiration ..." for Isa 26:13–27:11.¹¹ Further research saw in Isa 24– 27 a universalizing tendency in its reuse of earlier sources though such universalization is not uniform. Whereas Isa 24:1–20 universalized previous local judgment oracles, applying them to the whole earth, Isa 24:21–25:12 universalized salvation promises for Israel in extending them to all nations. Moreover, Isa 26:1–27:1 incorporated previous passages in the Isaiah tradition to suggest

⁸ Williamson, *The Book Called Isaiah*, 94. See also Christopher R. Seitz, *Zion's Final Destiny. The Development of the Book of Isaiah: A Reassessment of Isaiah 36–39* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991), 197, who calls into question the strict independence of First and Second Isaiah.

⁹ See Williamson, *Isaiah*, 107: "As the period of divine judgment wore on, it may be proposed that Deutero-Isaiah came to appreciate that now was the time of which Isaiah had written when the sealed document was to be opened and a new message of salvation, to which the earlier prophet had alluded, was to be proclaimed."

¹⁰ See Williamson, *Variations on a Theme*, 10: "... As more and more literary connections across the traditional boundaries of the book are recovered it becomes increasingly difficult to hold to the older view that the separate parts grew up in total isolation from one another ...". It is important to note that Isaiah's compositional history remains a matter of debate today and has become more complex since Duhm's 1892 commentary. See Jüngling, "Jesaja," 546: "Die verhältnismäßig einfache Konzeption des Werdens des Jesajabuches bei *B. Duhm* ... ist hundert Jahre später durch einander widerstreitende, komplizierte Hypothesen ersetzt ..." (italics his); and also Jacques Vermeylen, "Esaïe," in Thomas Römer, Jean-Daniel Macchi, and Christophe Nihan, eds., *Introduction à l'ancien testament* (Le Monde de La Bible; Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2004), 334, who speaks of a "... histoire littéraire longue et complexe, dont les étapes restent très discutées."

¹¹ See John Day, "A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation: The Dependence of Isaiah xxvi. 13–xxvii. 11 on Hos xiii. 4–xiv. 10 (Eng. 9) and Its Relevance to Some Theories of the Redaction of the 'Isaiah Apocalypse'," *JTS* 31/2 (1980): 309–319.

that earlier prophecies of a bright future (e. g., Isa 54; 66) remained unfulfilled in its time.¹²

Isaiah's scholarship also explored affinities with earlier textual sources in Isa 35 and 40–66. One scholar concluded that "… Deutero-Isaiah based his prophecies on older texts, recasting their words in order to create new but derivative oracles for his own day …"¹³ and that Isa 40–66 steeped his prophecies in earlier material to strengthen its authority and convince its audience that salvation was imminent.¹⁴ Thus, Isa 40–66 represents an "in-between" stage in the development of Israelite prophecy, which moved from inspiration with the earlier prophets to interpretation with post-exilic prophecy. Though the speaker in Isa 40–66 claims to be an inspired prophet, his frequent allusions to previous sources are the beginning stages of what later became a full-blown prophecy-as-interpretation approach in the Second Temple period.¹⁵

The essays in the present volume follow the more recent tradition of studying Isaiah's textual affinities. However, it differs in two significant ways. First, whereas previous studies paid attention to purported late literary sections, e. g., Isa 24–27; [35]40–66, the present volume ventures outside of those boundaries to include a study of any passage in Isaiah that demonstrates the potential for intertextual explorations with any source in the HB/OT. We have decided to pursue textual affinities with most of the canonical HB/OT to offer a more wide-ranging sample. Moreover, whereas previous research concentrated on Isaiah's use of earlier sources, that is, on Isaiah as the influenced source in an

¹³ See Benjamin D. Sommer, A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66 (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 152.

¹² See J. Todd Hibbard, *Intertextuality in Isaiah 24–27: The Reuse and Evocation of Earlier Texts and Traditions* (FAT 2/16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 210–218. Hibbard's approach could also be grouped under "intratextuality," given his use of texts in Isaiah, but his exploration of several texts outside Isaiah allows for categorizing his contribution under "intertextuality." More recent studies also deal with intratextual links in Isa 24–27. See Stephen L. Cook, "Deliverance as Fertility and Resurrection: Echoes of Second Isaiah in Isaiah 26," in J. Todd Hibbard and Hyun Chul Paul Kim, eds., *Formation and Intertextuality in Isaiah 24–27* (AIL 17; Atlanta: SBL Press, 2013), 165–182; J. Todd Hibbard, "Isaiah 24–27 and Trito-Isaiah: Exploring Some Connections," in Hibbard and Kim, eds., *Formation*, 183–200. Finally, for a more recent discussion of intertextual allusions to Hosea, Amos, and other biblical sources in Isa 24–27; see Christopher B. Hays, *The Origins of Isaiah 24–27: Josiah's Festival Scroll for the Fall of Assyria* (Cambridge University Press, 2019), 213–259. For a review of this work, see Wilson de Angelo Cunha, review of *The Origins of Isaiah 24–27: Josiah's Festival Scroll for the Fall of Assyria* by Christopher B. Hays, *BO* 78/5–6 (2021): 735–740.

¹⁴ See Sommer, *Allusion*, 159. There may be a minor incongruence in Sommer's claim that Deutero-Isaiah drew from older prophecies to legitimize his work in relation to his audience. On the one hand, Sommer, *Allusion*, 159, claims that there existed serious doubts regarding the "... credibility of Israel's prophets ..." in Deutero-Isaiah's time. But, on the other hand, he claims that Isa 40–66's use of older prophetic sources allowed for a more likely reception of his work with his audience. However, if his audience doubted the credibility of Israel's older prophets, why would using their words facilitate the reception of Deutero-Isaiah's message?

¹⁵ See Sommer, Allusion, 173–183.

intertextual dialogue, we have also explored Isaiah as the potential influencer and generator of meaning for other HB/OT material. Furthermore, finally, to whatever extent one wishes to define it,¹⁶ our focus is not so much on intertextuality per se; instead, we see it as a valuable interpretive tool in providing a rich understanding of Isaiah in its complex relationship with the larger witness of the HB/OT.

An intertextual approach allows viewing Isaiah as a "prism" that refracts strands of tradition in a way that neither supersedes nor exhausts the riches of the prior tradition, that is neither superseded by nor exhausted by the subsequent uses of Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah employs these traditions for its own rhetorical purposes, offering a witness to God that is both unique in comparison with and interrelated to the wider web of Biblical, textual traditions. In a partial way, *Isaiah and Intertextuality* has sought to offer insights into how Isaiah refracts earlier traditions and how other books too have drawn on Isaiah for their own purposes. Thus, our focus is on Isaiah amid Israel's Scriptures.

Volume Overview

The volume follows a sequential order according to the Hebrew Bible. On the Torah, Richard Schultz surveys the strongest lexical and thematic connections between Isaiah and Genesis, focusing specifically on creation, Noah, Abraham and Sarah, and Sodom and Gomorrah. Seulgi Byun examines how the expression "and they shall know that I am Yahweh" fits into a Second Exodus motif that spans both DI and TI. Mark G. Brett explores intertextual links between Isaiah and the Holiness Code and calls for a consideration of the social imagination that characterizes intertextual links. Two essays on Deuteronomy round out the studies on Torah and Isaiah. Daniel Timmer brings Isaiah 56,

¹⁶ Ever since Julia Kristeva coined the term "intertextuality" in her 1966 essay "Word, Dialogue, and Novel," "intertextuality" as an approach to textual affinities has taken a life of its own both in Biblical Studies and beyond. See calls for greater clarity in David M. Carr, "The Many Uses of Intertextuality in Biblical Studies: Actual and Potential," in *Congress Volume: Helsinki* (VTSup 148; Leiden: Brill, 2012): 505–535, who argues for separating "intertextuality" from "literary influence" and compare his essay with the classicist Joseph Farrell, "Intention and Intertext," *Phoenix* 59 (2005): 98–111, who divides "intertextuality" between the "intentionalists" (= allusion) and the "anti-intentionalists" (= more generic intertext). The lack of clear boundaries in "intertextuality" is not dissimilar to other literary/linguistic approaches. Speaking of similar issues in the study of "pragmatics," for instance, Stephen C. Levinson, *Pragmatics*, Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics (London: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 5, claims: "… This diversity of possible definitions and lack of clear boundaries may be disconcerting, but it is by no means unusual: since academic fields are congeries of preferred methods, implicit assumptions, and focal problems or subject matters, attempts to define them are rarely wholly satisfactory …".

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with its vision of including foreigners and eunuchs in the temple, into conversation with Deuteronomy 23, which prohibits some foreigners and eunuchs from temple entrance. Ntozakhe Simon Cezula explores these same two passages from Isaiah 56 and Deuteronomy 23, yet probes how difference in worldview may reside behind the differences between these passages.

Within the *Nevi'im*, Greg Goswell ponders the significance of placing Kings in proximity to Isaiah, particularly in light of the role of Hezekiah and Isaiah in the synoptic passages 2 Kings 18–20 and Isa 36–39 when read in their respective books. Hugh Williamson discusses the similarities and differences between the Moab oracles in Isa 15–16 and Jer 48, attempting to cast light on direction of influence. Beth Stovell draws together the call narratives of Isa 6 and Ezek 1–3, and shows how conceptual resonance and dissonance casts light on Ezekiel. Moving into The Twelve, Wilson de Angelo Cunha explores the extent to which Hosea's words influenced Isa 1. On Jonah, Hyun Chul Paul Kim catalogues a surprising number of lexical and thematic similarities with the narratives in Isaiah and ponders what such associations suggest canonically. Christopher Hays works through Micah to show the tremendous impact Isaiah had on the author/scribes of Micah. Finally, Mark Boda hones in on Zech 9–10 to show how Isaiah, among other prophets, impacts its vision of the restoration of Israel (north and south) and a Davidic figure in Jerusalem.

A selection of essays on Isaiah and the *Ketuvim* round out the collection. On Psalms, Torsten Uhlig examines the extent to which Isa 40–55 impacted the composition and compilation of Ps 93–100. Todd Hibbard compares two prayers that recount Israel's history (Ps 106; Isa 63:7–64:11) to similarities and differences that drive these prayers. Next, Cooper Smith employs a synchronic method to compare divine hiddenness in Job and Isaiah. Ulrich Berges identifies the authors behind Lamentations and Isa 40–54 as coming from the same poetic orbit and traces a number of associations between the books. John Goldingay works through Daniel to display cases where Daniel is alluding to the book of Isaiah. Finally, there are two essays on Nehemiah and Isaiah. Aubrey Buster investigates the mention of the Spirit in both recitals of Israel's time in the wilderness in Neh 9 and Isa 63:7–64:11. Kristin Joachimsen explores how Sabbath and Temple figure into post-exilic visions of communal identity by comparing Isa 56:1–8 and Neh 13.

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and indexes while pursuing a Ph.D. in New Testament at Calvin Theological Seminary. Finally, the editors thank each contributor for stimulating essays.

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Part I

Isaiah and the Torah

Building on the Beginnings: Isaiah's Diverse Uses of Genesis

RICHARD SCHULTZ

1. Introduction

In introducing the second volume of his influential *Old Testament Theology*, Gerhard von Rad asserts that "the prophets were never as original, or as individualistic, or in such direct communion with God and no one else, as they were then [i. e., in 19th-century scholarship] believed to be. As we now see, they were in greater or lesser degree conditioned by old traditions which they re-interpreted and applied to their own times."¹ Many of the "old traditions" repeatedly referred to throughout the canonical book of Isaiah are found in the book of Genesis, the narrative of Israel's 'beginnings.' These include striking allusions to several prominent events and individuals introduced in Genesis – the creation of the cosmos and humanity and Eden; Noah and the Flood; Abraham, Sarah, and the ancestral promises, along with Sodom and Gomorrah. The purpose of this essay is to explore some of the diverse ways in which Isaiah reuses various traditions and reinterprets various texts of Genesis.²

Admittedly, nearly intractable methodological challenges could thwart any such effort. In addition to the current terminological tussle over the appropriate use of the word 'intertextuality,' Michael R. Stead has criticized the prioritization of "verbal repetition" in establishing intertextual connections, claiming that "shared 'thematic threads' or 'traditions'" are equally valid indicators of aspects of "a much broader range of textual interplay."³ Stead's methodological reflections open up a viable approach when seeking to trace intertextual relationships between two books in the Hebrew Bible, such as Genesis and Isaiah, whose

¹ Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology. Volume II: The Theology of Israel's Prophetic Traditions*, David M. G. Stalker, trans. (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 4.

² For a discussion of additional references and allusions, see especially Jonathan Teram, *You are Israel: How Isaiah Uses Genesis as a Means of Identity Formation* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2018), who offers an initial list on 9–10.

³ Michael R. Stead, "Intertextuality and Innerbiblical Interpretation," in Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville, eds., *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets* (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 2012), 361. See also Benjamin D. Sommer's discussion of "influence" in *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66* (The Contraversions Series; Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998), 14.

respective compositional histories are arguably prolonged and complex and, in any case, much disputed.⁴

Although only a minority of contemporary scholars would support a methodological claim that the entire canonical book of Genesis was compositionally complete prior to the mid-eighth century, most would grant that the primary *traditions* contained in the book of Genesis – and at least some of its texts – were available during the period of the classic writing prophets.⁵ Accordingly, although I could take a purely synchronic approach in this essay, I instead will use a modified diachronic approach, seeking to determine where and how the book of Isaiah reflects the influence of historical traditions and a few select texts from the book of Genesis. Since this essay can examine only the most prominent examples, I will attend to those that display the most extensive linguistic or thematic correspondence.

2. Creation

The fact that Isaiah contains almost twice as many occurrences of ברא as Genesis $1-6^6$ and more occurrences than in either the Psalms or the rest of the prophetic corpus combined has drawn considerable scholarly attention. Since these Isaianic texts are concentrated in chapters 40-55,⁷ except for Isa 4:5, 57:19, and 65:17, 18(2x), creation frequently has been viewed as a thematic emphasis of 'Deutero-Isaiah', perhaps resulting from Babylonian influence on exilic Israel.⁸ However, this is not the full extent of the terminological connection. The verb **x** also occurs in both Genesis 2:7, 8, 19, describing God's forming of humans and animals, and 17x in Isaiah in portraying divine actions.⁹ The noun **y** vault' (9x in Genesis 1) may be reflected in the use of the corresponding verb in Isaiah

⁴ Adequately engaging the issues and contemporary scholarly viewpoints concerning the compositional histories of Genesis and Isaiah could require the narrowing of the scope of this brief investigation to a single tradition or even to a single text.

⁵ See, for example, the claim of Ronald E. Clements already in 1965: "We can assume ... that pre-exilic Israel was generally familiar with stories about the patriarchs," *Prophecy and Covenant* (SBT 45; London: SCM, 1965), 6.

⁶ Gen 1:1, 21, 27(3x); 2:3, 4; 5:1, 2(2x); 6:7.

⁷ Isa 40:26, 28; 41:20; 42:5; 43:1, 7, 15; 45:7(2x), 8, 12, 18(2x); 48:7; 54:16(2x).

⁸ Key studies include Carroll Stuhlmueller, *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah* (Analecta Biblica 43; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1970); Richard L. Clifford, "The Hebrew Scriptures and the Theology of Creation," *TS* 46 (1985): 507–523; and Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Cosmological and Protological Language of Deutero-Isaiah," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 493–510. See also the broader study of Terrance R. Wardlaw Jr., "The Significance of Creation in the Book of Isaiah," *JETS* 59 (2016): 449–471.

⁹ Isa 22:11; 27:11; 37:26; 43:1, 7, 21; 44:2, 21, 24; 45:7, 9, 11, 18(2x); 46:11; 49:5; 64:7.

42:5 and 44:24, while the first word of the hendiadys of Genesis 1:2, תהו ובהו, occurs 11x in Isaiah, most significantly in 45:18-19.¹⁰

Of course, statistics involving shared 'creation' words, even relatively rare ones, prove little, given the diverse manner in which the book of Isaiah, primarily in chapters 40–55, employs this language, especially since similar creation terminology also is found in the Psalms and Job.¹¹ It is plausible, however, to suggest that all of these *poetic* applications of creation language are grounded in the foundational *'narrative'* accounts or traditions of creation in Genesis 1 and 2. Accordingly, although the verb "create" (ברא) occurs 21 times in Isaiah,¹² it is unlikely that each use specifically evokes Gen 1:1 (or 2:3–4) rather than the broader description of creation in Genesis 1–2, although the former is likely in Isa 65:17 – "See, I will create new heavens and a new earth."¹³

Isaiah 45:7-19 offers the most extensive use of creation language also found in Genesis, in which God's power as Creator forms the basis for the commission of his anointed, Cyrus. What is striking in this text is the extent of the 'creation' language employed, including the use of the verb יצר six times, the length of the text incorporating this language (13 verses, i. e., nearly half of the 'Cyrus' passage, 44:24–45:25), and the fact that terms from both Gen 1 and 2 occur. Initially (vv 5-6), creation language serves to support YHWH's claim of exclusivity. Verse 7, rather than describing the creation of light and darkness as past divine actions, uses participial verb forms and then parallels this claim with "making" דע "creating" רע (probably 'disaster/calamity,' as in 31:2), suggesting that light and darkness have a metaphorical connotation here in describing divine sovereignty over and intervention in human affairs.¹⁴ In v 8, two verbs associated in Gen 1–2 with the initial springing forth of vegetation from the earth (צמיה, פרה) are applied to God's salvation and righteousness being manifested, presumably through the actions of Cyrus, who is "stirred ... up in righteousness" (v 13, ESV).

¹⁰ Isa 24:10; 29:21; 34:11; 40:17, 23; 41:29; 44:9; 45:18, 19; 49:4; 59:4; the word α occurs only in Isaiah 34:11. Both words occur elsewhere in the prophetic corpus only in Jeremiah 4:23.

¹¹ For example, והא occurs in a creation context in Job 26:7, while רקע occurs in Job 37:18 and Psalm 136:6.

¹² It is instructive to note that 11 of the 21 occurrences of \Box in Isaiah are participles, that is, they are used to describe God's unlimited capacities and relationship to what has been created rather than God's past actions, *per se.* The objects of this verb are also diverse: cloud and fire (4:5), desert renewal (41:20), Jacob/Israel (43:1, 15), salvation and righteousness (45:8), new things (48:7), Jerusalem (65:18).

¹³ See Richard L. Schultz, "Intertextuality, Canon, and 'Undecidability': Understanding Isaiah's 'New Heavens and New Earth' (Isa 65:17–25)," *BBR* 20 (2010): 19–38. Unless otherwise noted, as here, all textual citations are from the NIV 2011.

¹⁴ See also Isa 42:5–6, in which the "Creator of the heavens" and *giver* (נתן) of breath (נתן) also Gen 2:7; 7:22) to *people* (נתן) now *gives* (נתן) the servant as a covenant for *people* (עם) and a light to nations (לאור גוים), with light (אור גוים), with light (לאור גוים), so illuminate the earth, as in Gen 1:5, but to illuminate the nations spiritually (cf. Isa 49:6).

Richard Schultz

In verses 9–13, there is a dramatic shift as the God who "forms" light is described as "the Holy One of Israel and its Maker" (יצרי, v 11, but already in v 9). Isaiah's dramatic use of the 'creation' verbs יצרי, and ברא to describe the formation of national Jacob/Israel is introduced initially in Isaiah 43:1 (also occurring in vv 7 and 21 using non-participial verb forms). Isaiah 44:2 and 24 clarify the context of that "forming" as "in the womb" (cf. also 46:3; 48:8).¹⁵ In Isaiah 45, this use of יצר facilitates the metaphorical description in v 9 of the absurdity of a pot asking the potter who formed it (i. e., God): "What are you doing?" (TNK, cf. 29:16; 64:8). This leads to a renewed affirmation of YHWH's initial creational activities in v 12, now described with past tense verb forms rather than participles, including giving commands to the "hosts" of heaven (צבאם). The answer to the question of v 9 is then given in v 13 – the raising up of Cyrus by **x**_conly the second occurrence of this divine title in Isaiah 40–55 after 44:6.

According to Clifford, "creation in the prophet does not … refer to the act that brought the world of the nations into being…. The perspective differs from Genesis, where the creation of the world took place once and for all. Prompted by his concern that Israel has fallen into nonexistence as a people, Isaiah speaks of a new bringing-into-existence of the people, a new Exodus-Conquest, a new creation."¹⁶ In my reading, however, these chapters repeatedly speak of God's initial creation and ongoing sustaining of the earth *in order to* draw an analogy between the act of cosmic creation and the creation of ethnic Jacob/Israel, which has its origin "in the womb" of Rebekah. These chapters do, in fact, speak of "new things" that God is creating (48:5–7) but not of the new creation (or recreation) of Israel.¹⁷

The use of creation language resumes in Isa 45:18 as the basis for the renewed assurance that Israel will be granted "an eternal salvation" without any future danger of shame or disgrace (v 17), unlike the idol makers' fate (v 16). Once again, God's original act of creation is associated with his present promise of salvation for his people. In that initial act of establishing the cosmos, the Creator, Former, and Maker of the heavens and the earth (three participles) did not intend it to remain "empty" (הדו); Gen 1:2) but to be inhabited. The immediate context does not clarify the precise point of this claim. Elsewhere in Isaiah the word occurs again in v 19: "I have not spoken in secret, from somewhere in a land of darkness; I have not said to Jacob's descendants, 'Seek me in ." I, the LORD, speak the truth; I declare what is right." The opening double negation ("I have not

¹⁵ The same Hebrew word for womb (כטן) is used in Gen 25:23–24 to describe the births of Jacob and Esau: "two nations are in your womb."

¹⁶ Clifford, "Theology of Creation," 519.

¹⁷ It is not clear whether Isa 43:7 refers to a current or a future act of creating Israel.

spoken ... in a land of darkness; I have not said ...") would support a locative understanding of the word, i. e., "in a waste place/wasteland" (so NASB/CSB), while the following double affirmation ("I speak the truth ... I declare what is right") would support an adverbial understanding, such as "in vain" (so NIV, ESV), i. e., emptily. The latter is supported by Isa 49:4 in which הבל is parallel to הבל ... It is also supported by 45:20, which contrasts the "idol-carriers" from the nations who pray to a god who cannot save with Jacob's descendants in v 19 who seek a God who responds. Thus their actions in seeking God will be no 'emptier' than God's initial act of establishing the earth.

How should we assess the use of 'creation' language in Isaiah 40–55, especially in ch 45? Firstly, these Isaianic texts typically employ individual Hebrew words found in Genesis 1–2 rather than multi-word phrases. Secondly, although poetic 'creation texts' in Job, the Psalms, and elsewhere in the Prophets employ a variety of Hebrew terms, especially verbs, to describe God's creative activities, these texts in Isaiah primarily (but not exclusively) use key words found in Genesis 1–2. Thirdly, whereas Genesis often utilizes finite verbs to describe God's *past* actions in creation, Isaiah utilizes the same roots as participles to describe God's current ability to act decisively and successfully in bringing salvation to Israel. Finally, language describing cosmic and human origins in Genesis 1–2 recurs in Isaiah in describing the more recent 'creation' of Jacob/Israel as God's chosen people, as well as God's future acts of salvation and deliverance on behalf of Israel and the nations.

How have other scholars assessed the intertextual relationship between Isaiah and Genesis and their shared use of creation traditions? On one end of the spectrum, utilizing three clearly-defined categories, Yair Hoffman denies that the "First Creation Story" (i. e., Gen 1:1–2:3) is ever cited, referred to, or alluded to by 'Second Isaiah' or by the rest of the book of Isaiah.¹⁸ On the other end of the spectrum, Peter Miscall reads Isaiah synchronically "in light of Genesis, …[as] clashing with and attempting to displace Genesis" through the book's "allusive, transumptive style," so that the "letters, words, and themes of Genesis 1 are dispersed throughout Isaiah: this is a new creation, a new book, and not just a translation of Genesis 1."¹⁹

In my view, the abundance and variety of verbal correspondence between Isaiah 45 and Genesis 1–2 certainly warrant the conclusion that there is an intertextual relationship between them. The suggestion that Isaiah 40–55 could

¹⁸ Yair Hoffman, "The First Creation Story: Canonical and Diachronic Aspects," in Henning Graf Reventlow and Yair Hoffman, eds., *Creation in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (JSOTS 319; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 37–45.

¹⁹ Peter Miscall, "Isaiah: New Heavens, New Earth, New Book," in Danna Nolan Fewell, ed., *Reading Between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation; Louisville: WJK, 1992), 47–55.

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be a source of the language of Genesis is a far less plausible option.²⁰ According to Harner, "creation faith is not simply absorbed into the structure of salvation faith. It plays a central role in the prophet's thought by serving as a fulcrum in balancing the Exodus tradition with the expectation of imminent restoration."²¹ In sum, these texts use the traditions and terms of Genesis 1–2 (although primarily Genesis 1) without displaying any obvious dependence on entire verses or making any effort to reinterpret the claims of Genesis 1 or 2 or even to reapply these claims. Rather, the book of Isaiah simply uses this language to highlight the fact that the God who created the cosmos and humanity can carry out further 'creative' acts.

3. Noah and the Flood

In two Isaianic texts, the Noachic flood tradition is evoked, once in an announcement of judgment and once in a promise of restoration. Christopher Seitz has aptly labelled Isaiah 24 "A Return to the Days of Noah."²² The primary verbal link between Isaiah 24–27 and the flood tradition is found in Isa 24:18b, in which the phrase "the windows above are opened" (NASB, ארבות ממרום ארבות ממרום) uses the language of Gen 7:11 (ופתחו); cf. 8:2), substituting the word (literally) "from a height" for "the heavens." Accordingly, it is plausible to understand the following phrase in Isa 24:18, "the foundations of the earth shake," as referring to the preceding phrase in Gen 7:11, "all the springs of the great deep burst forth," despite the lack of any explicit verbal correspondence.

Universal judgment is coming because, as stated in Isa 24:5, "The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant" (NASB). Although the exact language of Genesis 6:11 - "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence" – does not occur in Isaiah 24, the universal scope of the guilt and its consequences are similar. Whether or not this refers to the Genesis flood tradition depends on which covenant is in view here – Sinai, Creational, or Noachic.²³ Since the Sinai Covenant is not presented as eternal and the language of Isaiah 24:4 – "The earth (הארץ) dries up and withers, the world (תבל) languishes and withers, the

²⁰ See the similar assessment by Gerald A. Klingbeil, "Creation in the Prophetic Literature of the Old Testament: An Intertextual Approach," in G. A. Klingbeil, ed., *The Genesis Account and Its Reverberations in the Old Testament* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2015), 264–267, 274–277.

²¹ Philip B. Harner, "Creation Faith in Deutero-Isaiah," VT 17 (1967): 305.

²² Christopher Seitz, Isaiah 1–39 (IBC; Louisville: WJK, 1993), 179.

²³ For Sinai, see Dan G. Johnson, *From Chaos to Restoration: An Integrative Reading of Isaiah 24–27* (JSOTS 61; Sheffield: JSOT, 1988), 27–29; for Creational, see John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 1–39* (NICOT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 446. There is no definite article with "everlasting covenant" in the MT.

heavens languish with the earth" – clearly refers to the entire earth and not just the land of Israel, the first option is unlikely, while the second is never mentioned in Genesis. Daniel Streett and Steven Mason argue persuasively that 'eternal covenant' refers exclusively to the Noachic covenant of Genesis 9:16.²⁴ Since the inhabitants of the earth have violated the stipulation of the Noachic covenant regarding wanton bloodshed (Gen 9:5–6), they have fallen under the divine curse (Isa 26:21). Seitz summarizes, "In the poetic language of ch 24, the author argues that the nations have returned to the violent ways of their forebears in the days of Noah. The world is not destroyed again by a forty-day flood, as God has promised, but rather by the centuries-long assaults of the nations."²⁵

Isaiah 54:9 explicitly recalls that divine "never again" promise: "To me this is like the days of Noah, when I swore that the waters of Noah would never again cover the earth. So now I have sworn not to be angry with you, never to rebuke you again." Despite the mention of Noah, the verbal correspondence with Genesis 6–9 is minimal. The initial phrase, יה את לי, points both forward to the rest of the sentence but also backwards to the preceding verses, in which YHWH acknowledges: "For a brief moment I abandoned [Israel]" (Isa 54:7). Although Genesis 9 does not describe the divine promise as a divine oath (בשכעתי), as in Isa 54:9, that is the connotation of the establishment of a post-Flood covenant (Gen. 9:11, cf. also v 15), and both Genesis (see 8:21(2x), 22; 9:11, 15) and Isaiah 54:4, 9 employ the particle adverb verber to express the emphatic assurance "never again."

²⁴ Daniel R. Streett, "As It Was in the Days of Noah: The Prophets' Typological Interpretation of Noah's Flood," *CTR* 5 (2007): 42–43; Steven Mason, "Another Flood? Genesis 9 and Isaiah's Broken Eternal Covenant," *JSOT* 32 (2007): 177–198. See also J. Todd Hibbard, *Intertextuality in Isaiah* 24–27 (FAT 2/16; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 68. Streett, 45–46, and Hibbard, 161, see another allusion to the Genesis Flood tradition in Isa 26:20, possibly merged with elements of the Exodus Passover tradition (cf. עבר); Exod 12:12, 23).

²⁵ Christopher Seitz, Isaiah 1–39, 182.

²⁶ John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40–55* (ICC; London: T&T Clark, 2006), 2:350–351.

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Claus Westermann explains, "As Deutero-Isaiah looks back into the past in search of a turning-point comparable with the one which confronts Israel, he ... has to go further back to that turning-point in primaeval times which marked the end of catastrophic events involving the whole human race!"²⁷ Several contextual comments are pertinent: (1) As with God's promise with regard to the "waters of Noah," the divine promise here has implications that extend beyond national Israel. (2) The "covenant of peace" announced in Isa 54:10 corresponds to the covenant made with Noah and "all living creatures" in Gen 9:12. (3) Within the context of the extended metaphor of the strained marriage relationship between YHWH and Israel in Isa 54:1–10 (note the 2nd-person feminine singular pronouns), "YHWH, your Redeemer" acknowledges, "In a surge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment," but now promises, "but with everlasting kindness I will have compassion on you" (Isa 54:8). Here, the allusion to the longstanding divine "oath" (*so now I have sworn"; ^(*)).

4. Abraham and Sarah

The book of Isaiah's reuse of ancestral traditions from Genesis is remarkably frequent. The name "Abraham" occurs four times in the book (29:22; 41:8; 51:2; 63:16) and "Sarah" once (51:2),²⁸ while "Jacob" occurs 42 times and "Israel" 92 times, with both names occurring together in the same verse 22 times.²⁹ The number of additional allusions to Abraham in Isaiah is a matter of debate. If the frequent occurrences of "seed" (גריע); noun 26 times) in Isaiah are intended to evoke the divine promise of "offspring" to Abraham and Sarah (24 times in Genesis 12–24), there are quite a few!

However, three texts in Isaiah refer more explicitly to the ancestral promises: Isa 10:22, 48:19, and 51:1–2. The first two texts employ the same 'innumerability' simile: Isaiah 10:22 – "Though your people (כי אם־יהיה עמך)³⁰ be like the sand by the sea, Israel, only a remnant will return"; Isaiah 48:19 – "Your descendants would have been like the sand, your children like its numberless grains; their

²⁷ Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, David M. G. Stalker, trans. (OTL; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 275.

 $^{^{28}}$ Elsewhere in the Prophets, the name Abraham occurs only in Jer 33:26; Ezek 33:24, and Mic 7:20.

²⁹ For the use of Jacob in Isaiah see Meira Polliack, "Deutero-Isaiah's Typological Use of Jacob in the Portrayal of Israel's National Renewal," in Henning Graf Reventlow and Yair Hoffman, eds., *Creation in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (JSOTS 319; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 72–110.

 $^{^{30}}$ The expression C × κα typically is translated "unless," which does not fit here; instead, it should be taken as two separate particles and translated "for though," explaining the claim in v 21.

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