ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to present a more comprehensive study of newness, as conveyed by the Hebrew term *ḥādāš* (חָדָשׁ; "new") than has previously been offered from an Old Testament perspective. My aim is to better understand the terminology and concept of the adjective in order to offer a fresh analysis of what it means, how it functions, and to what effect as it emerges from the texts and context of ancient Israel in general, and from Isa 40–48 in particular.

The primary motivation for this investigation derives from the profound trajectory generated by the Old Testament terminology of newness (especially that of Second Isaiah) that ultimately finds expression in New Testament texts such as 2 Cor 5:17 and Rev 21:1–5 (cf. Gal 6:15). There is no shortage of scholarship directed to the various New Testament iterations of newness, but there has been much less attention to the Old Testament texts from which such significant theological expressions emerged.

This investigation explores the terminology of חָדָשׁ in two parts. The first offers exegetical analyses of texts outside of Isa 40–48, laying an important foundation for understanding the meaning and function of the relatively rare term not only in Israel's sacred texts but also in the broader environs of the ancient Near East. The second part of the study is concentrated on five texts in Isa 40–48. The comprehensive analyses of these texts are at the core of this investigation because of the unique and repeated use of חָדָשׁ and because of the significant impact of the prophet's message of newness on writers of the New Testament.

The message that emerges from Second Isaiah conveys to Israel, along with the entire creation, that Yahweh is not only the one and only true God, but that he is also the God who

announces and creates new things for the sake of his people—transforming them into a people who respond by giving all praise and glory to him. Although compelling in its own right, the message of newness offered a rich and fertile tradition from which the New Testament writers drew and, indeed, from which the echoes of newness have continued to reverberate down the corridors of history, even to the present day.

ASBURY THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
ADVANCED RESEARCH PROGRAMS

ALL THINGS NEW:
A THEOLOGICAL AND EXEGETICAL STUDY
OF *ḤĀDĀŠ* WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ISAIAH 40–48

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
BIBLICAL STUDIES

BY
DEBORAH L. ENDEAN
APRIL 2021

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The motif of "new things" is striking for its recurrence in Isa 40–48. Three times the prophetic messenger proclaims a word of Yahweh concerning new things: "Behold, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare" (Isa 42:9a, ESV);[1] "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things of old. Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?" (Isa 43:18–19a); "From this time forth I make you hear new things, hidden things which you have not known" (Isa 48:6). The theme of newness in these chapters has long been celebrated for its message of hope to Israel, a people in exile who have borne the burden of their iniquity and long for a word of salvation from Yahweh.

Equally compelling, however, is the enduring and profound after-life of these texts evidenced most notably by their reuse in the New Testament. Surely the apostle Paul heard the echoes of Isaiah when he wrote to the church in Corinth and exclaimed, "If anyone is in Christ—new creation! The old has passed away; behold the new has come" (2 Cor 5:17).[2] Likewise, the words of the ancient prophet resound in the words of John who, obeying the words of One seated on the throne, wrote: "Behold, I am making all things new" (Rev 21:5). Indeed, I think it fair to

[1] All English translations of the Bible will be from the English Standard Version (ESV) unless otherwise noted.

[2] (Trans. my own) Cf. Gal 6:15. There are also allusions to Isaiah's mention of a "new song" (Isa 42:10) in Rev 5:9 and 14:3.

say that from echo to allusion, hope to challenge, history to theology, prose to poetry, the expressions of newness emerging from Israel's ancient texts have not ceased to generate their impact and effect.

Biblical scholars have long noted the terminology of "new things" (חָדָשׁוֹת/חָדָשָׁה), particularly in its collocations with the terms, 'former,' 'latter,' and 'coming' things in Isa 40–48.[3] Some, such as Gerhard von Rad, have employed the terminology to articulate larger themes from Hebrew Scripture like that of a "new Exodus."[4] Others have capitalized on the language of newness in order to accent its rich, theological dimensions in Isaiah and elsewhere. Walter Brueggemann, for example, asserts: "The oracles of promise are originary utterances without antecedent, certainly not rooted in or derived from the data or circumstances at hand, but rooted in Yahweh's circumstance defying capacity to work newness."[5] Despite this interest, there has

---

[3] A number of oft-cited studies explore this cluster of terms and will be discussed below, including: C. R. North, "The 'Former Things' and the 'New Things' in Deutero-Isaiah," *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy Presented to Professor Theodore H. Robinson*, ed. H. H. Rowley (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957), 111–26; A. Schoors, "Les choses anterieures et les choses nouvelles dans les oracles deutéro-isaïens," *ETL* 40 (1964): 19–47; Carroll Stuhlmueller, " 'First and Last' and 'Yahweh-Creator' in Deutero-Isaiah," *CBQ* 29 (1967): 189–205; and, H. G. M. Williamson, "First and Last in Isaiah," in *Of Prophets' Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on His Seventieth Birthday*, ed. H. A. McKay and D. J. A. Clines, JSOTSup 163 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 95–108; Rosario P. Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte: eine Untersuchung von Jes 40–48*, VTSup 31 (Leiden: Brill, 1981); Menahem Haran, *Between Ri'shonot (Former Prophecies) and Ḥadashôt (New Prophecies): A Literary Historical Study in the Group of Prophecies Isaiah XL-XLVIII* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1963): 93–102 (Hebrew). An English review of Haran's book is supplied by H. L. Ginsberg, *JBL* 84 (1965): 88–90; for an English summary of Haran's thesis, see: International Organization of Old Testament Scholars, eds., "Congress Volume: Bonn, 1962" *VTSup* 9 (Leiden: Brill, 1962): 127–55.

[4] Gerhard von Rad discusses not only a "new Exodus," but a "new creation," a "new David," a "new faith," a "new Israel," a "new man," and a "new obedience." Indeed, his emphasis is made evident by his choice to open Part One of his second Old Testament Theology volume with a quotation of Isa 43:18 [*Old Testament Theology: Volume II*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1965)]. Henk Leene rightly observes: "Von Rad heard the expression of Israel's salvation definitively and fundamentally transformed from a past orientation to a future perspective in the word 'new'" [*Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*, *OtSt* 64 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 1.

[5] Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 646. Brueggemann's attention to "newness" is evident in any number of his writings. See for

been virtually no systematic and sustained treatment of newness, in any of its expressions, offered from an Old Testament perspective.[6]

What accounts for this lacuna in Old Testament scholarship? Perhaps one could argue that the terminology of "new" (חָדָשׁ) is relatively limited in the Old Testament,[7] or that the notion of newness only acquires significance because of its role in the New Testament.[8] To be sure, one need only cite the New Testament collocations of "new" and the profound theological

---

example: Ch 5, entitled "The Burst of Newness amid Waiting," in *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012); a section on "Newness that Redefines," in *The Prophetic Imagination* [2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001)]; and Ch 5, "Second Isaiah—Homecoming to a New Home" in *Hopeful Imagination: Prophetic Voices in Exile* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986).

[6] The outstanding exception is Henk Leene's volume, *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*. A much-needed addition to biblical scholarship, Leene's book represents the only major monograph, to my knowledge, that offers a sustained treatment of the topic of newness from an Old Testament perspective. As the title suggests, Leene's main concern is an intertextual exploration of the "newness" texts found in Second Isaiah, Trito-Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the "new song" occurrences in Psalms. Leene's expertise is clearly manifest in the remarkable breadth and density of the volume's contents, and my debt to his work will be apparent in the pages of this investigation. See also: Henk Leene, "History and Eschatology in Deutero-Isaiah," in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*, ed. J. Van Ruiten and M. Vervenne (Leuven: University Press, 1997), 223–49; F. Postma, K. Spronk, and E. Talstra, eds., *The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy, Festschrift for Henk Leene* (Maastricht: Uitgeverij Shaker, 2002).

[7] The Old Testament contains only fifty-three occurrences of the adjective חָדָשׁ.

[8] This seems to be the case in a biblical dictionary entry for "new" that completely bypasses Old Testament usage and commences with "'new' in the New Testament" (Raymond Collins, "New," *ABD*: 4:1086–88). Similar treatment is reflected in the two monographs devoted to "newness" in the Bible (prior to the publication of Leene's volume): Carl B. Hoch, Jr., *All Things New: The Significance of Newness for Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995); and Roy A. Harrisville, *The Concept of Newness in the New Testament* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1960). Harrisville's exclusive New Testament concerns are specified in the volume's title, and Hoch's attention to Old Testament precursors is limited. Despite the reference to "biblical theology" in the book title, Hoch introduces his topic with the statement, "Newness is a central theme for New Testament theology" (11), and the book focuses almost exclusively on New Testament texts. For example, the chapters titled "The New Heaven and the New Earth," (Ch. 10) and "All Things New" (Ch. 11) make no references to Old Testament passages that the New Testament writers have reused. Hoch's chapter on "New Creation" is considerably more complete in detailing textual precursors, seemingly due to Hoch's access to the work of Ulrich Mell, *Neue Schöpfung: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Studie zu einem soteriologischen Grundsatz paulinischer Theologie,* BZNW 56 (New York: de Gruyter, 1989). Similarly, a lesser-known monograph considers newness only from a New Testament perspective (despite the title): Joseph Areeplackal, *Being Human and Holy: Biblical Concept of Newness* (Bangalore: Dharmaram, 1997).

trajectory of its eschatological dimensions—not to mention the title conferred on the second part of the Christian canon! Somewhat ironically, much attention in recent decades has been in the form of New Testament studies focused on the newness texts precisely because they appear initially in the Old Testament and have been reused by the first century writers.[9]

My goal in this study is to contribute to biblical scholarship by presenting a more comprehensive study of newness than has previously been offered from an Old Testament perspective. Using a multi-faceted approach, I will investigate the terminology and concept of חָדָשׁ found in the Old Testament in general, and the recurrent expressions in Isaiah 40–48 in particular, in order to offer a fresh analysis of what it means, how it functions, and to what effect as it emerges from the texts and context of ancient Israel.

Importantly, I take seriously the extraordinary narrative of newness spawned by this rich, Old Testament motif. These latter concerns are generally reserved for a focus on the New Testament's use of the Old Testament, or studies of *Rezeptionsgeschichte* or the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the Old Testament texts, that is to say, the history of a text's reception or its history of use and interpretation. However, I submit that a more appropriate expression of my

---

[9] In regard to the methodology of the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament, see especially Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); and more generally, G. K. Beale and D. A. Carson, eds., *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007). Important monographs that focus on New Testament use of various Old Testament texts related to newness include: Jan Fekkes, *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development*, JSNTSup 93 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994); Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*; Moyer V. Hubbard, *New Creation in Paul's Letters and Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); T. Ryan Jackson, *New Creation in Paul's Letter,* WUNT 2 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010); J. Richard Middleton, *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014); Steve Moyise and Maarten J. J. Menken, eds., *Isaiah in the New Testament* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005); J. Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans* (Leiden: Brill, 2003); Ben Witherington III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017).

concerns belongs to the parlance of rhetorical criticism, which maintains that a text whether written or spoken has *effects*.

Generally, rhetorical effects are considered in the final stage of a rhetorical analysis of a given text (if at all). My approach represents a reversal of that norm. I consider the *effects* of the newness motif, evidenced by its use, reuse, and appropriation over the span of two millennia, to be the starting point and rationale for an investigation of the source that engendered those effects. While I will address rhetorical methodology in more detail later in this chapter, I want to emphasize here the notion of rhetorical effects because of its important implications. First, effectual evidence implies the generative nature of the source; thus envisioned, the biblical text is more than a rhetorical "artifact" to be scientifically dissected or atomized. Second, the text viewed as a generative source suggests it possesses a level of importance in its own right. It is more than background material to be eclipsed by a primary focus on later usage, for example, in the New Testament. Studies of this latter type are invaluable, and indeed contribute to the present effort, but are often limited in their Old Testament scope in order to focus on New Testament concerns. In this investigation, the texts of origin are in the foreground rather than background. That being said, it is my hope that this study will serve the broader interests of scholarship wherever it intersects with the notion of newness.

Making Sense of חָדָשׁ

Before I address the particulars of Isaiah 40–48 and investigative methodology, a word is in order about term חָדָשׁ and its use in the Old Testament. The adjectival form of the Hebrew

root חָדָשׁ occurs only fifty-three times in the Old Testament.[10] The Hebrew term denotes "new," and conveys a difference that is both temporal and qualitative relative to a previous or existing state. The semantic domain of חָדָשׁ represents a range of meaning and is used in the Old Testament to connote young, recent, fresh, unused, and/or formerly unknown. The difference between a previous state or stage and that which is signified as 'new' can be characterized by varying degrees of discontinuity or continuity, the exact nature of which can only be properly determined by context, whether explicitly or implicitly, and/or additional qualifiers.[11] Importantly, use of the adjective חָדָשׁ denotes that which is distinctively "new" and not that which is "*re*newed" or "restored." The latter expressions signify a verbal notion, which is conveyed in Hebrew through the use of a verbal form of the root חדשׁ.[12] While this distinction need not rule out continuity with what existed (or did not exist) previously, it does suggest that

---

[10] Adjectival occurrences of חדשׁ (חָדָשׁ; *ḥādaš*): Exod 1:8; Lev 23:16; 26:10; Num 28:26; Deut 20:5; 22:8; 24:5; 32:17; Josh 9:13; Judg 5:8; 15:13; 16:11, 12; 1 Sam 6:7; 2 Sam 6:3 (2x); 21:16; 1 Kgs 11:29, 30; 2 Kgs 2:20; Isa 41:15; 42:9, 10; 43:19; 48:6; 62:2; 65:17 (2x); 66:22 (2x); Jer 31:22, 31; 36:10; Ezek 11:19; 18:31 (2x); 36:26 (2x); Ps 33:3; 40:4; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1; Job 29:20; 32:19; Song 7:14; Eccl 1:9, 10; Lam 3:23; 1 Chr 13:7; 2 Chr 20:5. In the majority of these occurrences the adjective is in the attributive position—that is, it stands in juxtaposition to the noun it modifies. The adjective appears as a substantive, (i.e., functions as a noun) in Isa 42:9, 43:19, 48:6, and Jer 31:22, and as a predicate adjective in Eccl 1:9, 1:10, and Jer 29:20.

[11] An illustration in English exemplifies the challenges inherent in the term and the necessity of contextual inquiry or assumptions. Given a simple statement, "I need a new house," the phrase "new house" refers to a constructed edifice somehow *different* from the one the speaker currently occupies, but the complexity is apparent in the attempt to parse that 'differentness.' The speaker may mean a house in a 'different' location—meaning 'new' in relationship to ownership or occupancy. Alternatively, he/she may also intend for the house to be 'new' in age—which raises a further question: how new? Must the construction have been recently completed and the structure never-before occupied? Would a house a few years old still qualify as new? Moreover, if the speaker has become tired of living in a crumbling, two-hundred-year-old house on the National Registry of Historic Homes, the scope of what counts as new might be considerably increased. I would add that the potential for ambiguity is precisely the challenge of interpreting theologically dense phrases such as "new covenant" or "new heavens and new earth."

[12] Note that, whereas English can express the verbal notion of "*re*new" adjectivally as "renewed" (e.g., "with renewed vigor"), the Hebrew adjective by itself does not express what is conveyed by the English prefix "re-". The root חדשׁ occurs as a verb ten times in the OT: nine times in the *piel* stem (1 Sam 11:14; 2 Chr 15:8; 24:4, 12; Job 10:17; Ps 51:12; 104:30; Lam 5:21; Isa 61:4), and once in the *hithpael*, meaning, "to renew oneself" (Ps 103:5).

use of the adjective emphasizes the quality of newness and thereby a greater degree of discontinuity with a previous state than is the case when the verbal form is employed.[13]

There is a general consensus that the adjective חָדָשׁ has no real synonyms[14] in the Old Testament.[15] North has suggested that two terms, לַח ("still moist, fresh") and טָרִי ("fresh, moist"), are semantically related to חָדָשׁ in the sense of "fresh."[16] While I would not deny that חָדָשׁ has connotations of "fresh," especially when used to qualify organic products, I would suggest that "fresh" as conveyed by לַח and טָרִי differs from that of חָדָשׁ—the former more associated with moisture and the latter with a temporal nuance associated with being ripe and/or recently harvested.

Words that are semantically related can have either similar or opposite meanings. Thus, while חָדָשׁ has no semantically related terms of similarity, it does have an opposite term. It is hardly surprising that the antonym of the Hebrew adjective for "new" is an adjective which means "old" (יָשָׁן).[17] However, it should be noted that "old" is signified by יָשָׁן, not by the more common Hebrew adjective זָקֵן. The latter term occurs at least 174 times in the Old Testament

---

[13] In order for the notion of “renewed” to be expressed adjectivally, the verb (e.g., “make” or “create”) would be modified adverbially with, for example, the word “again” (Heb. עוֹד).

[14] Synonyms represent a semantic relationship of similarity. According to the definition of "proper synonymy," semantically overlapping terms "can be interchanged in some contexts" [Moisés Silva, *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics*, rev. and enl. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 126].

[15] E.g., C. Westermann, "חָדָשׁ," *TLOT* 1:394–97; 394; R. North, "חָדָשׁ," *TDOT* 4:225–44; 229; *DCH* 3:165.

[16] North, *TDOT* 4:229. The term לַח occurs six times and denotes "still moist" or "still fresh" of a tree branch (Gen 30:37), grapes (Num 6:3), cords made from animal sinew (Judges 16:7, 8), and trees (Ezek 17:24, 21:3[Eng 20:47]). The sense of "moisture" is emphasized in the two Ezekiel occurrences where לַח contrasts to יָבֵשׁ ("dried"). A noun or substantive form, לֵחָה, occurs in Deut 34:7 to describe Moses' unabated "vigor" even at his death [לֵחָה, "vital force, freshness" (*HALOT* 2:525)]. The rare word טָרִי is also rendered as "fresh" to describe the jawbone of a donkey (Judg 15:15) and wounds that are "raw" (Isa 1:6).

[17] The root ישׁן occurs most commonly as a verb meaning "to sleep" or as an adjective meaning "sleeping" or "sleepy" (e.g., 1 Sam 26:7; 1 Kgs 18:27; Ps 78:65), and only rarely as a verb that denotes "to be old" in the sense of present for a long time (*HALOT* 2:447–48; *DCH* 4:335). See following note.

and denotes "old" in reference to humans,[18] whereas the adjective יָשָׁן occurs only seven times and refers primarily to non-human entities.[19] The contrasting terms appear together in Lev 26:10 and Song 7:14, both in connection with organic produce. In Lev 26:10, יָשָׁן describes the grain that has been stored from previous harvests while חָדָשׁ refers to the freshly harvested crop.[20] The "choice [fruits]" spoken of in Song 7:14 include new and old, implying that this particular produce was desirable in either condition.[21]

In some occurrences of יָשָׁן the contrast to 'new' is only implied. For example, the prophet Isaiah confronts the king in regard to his construction of two walls along with a reservoir (מִקְוָה) to contain the waters of "the old pool" (הַבְּרֵכָה הַיְשָׁנָה; Isa 22:11).[22] In the literary context, it would seem that "the old pool" is in contrast to the recently constructed reservoir (מִקְוָה). However, it should be noted that מִקְוָה is never actually qualified by מִקְוָה ("new") and, given the infrequent use of חָדָשׁ in general and the lack of any examples, there is no way to be sure that the Hebrew term חָדָשׁ would have been used in collocation with מִקְוָה.

---

[18] See *HALOT* 1:278 (states 174 occurrences); *DCH* 3:130–33 (cites 186 uses of the adjective).

[19] I would, however, add a slight clarification with respect to the verb's usage. The verb (ישׁן II; see previous note), meaning "to grow old" or "become old, advanced," occurs only three times in the Hebrew Bible (*HALOT* 2:447–48; *DCH* 4:335) and only in the *niphal*. It refers to grain that has grown old and stale (Lev 26:10), to skin disease that has become advanced (Lev 13:11), and to the Israelites when they have "grown old in the land" (Deut 4:25). In regard to the latter, while the Israelites represent human entities, in the context of Deut 4 the Israelites are being addressed as a whole in preparation for their entrance into Canaan. In v. 25, it would seem that the prepositional phrase "in the land" suggests that the verbal sense has to do with, not only Israel collectively, but more specifically to the notion of their presence/living in the land (i.e., "settled in the land;" *HALOT* 2:448), rather than to human age, that is, persons growing old or becoming advanced in years.

[20] In Lev 25:22, יָשָׁן is also used in reference to crops, specifically the crop the Israelites would eat in the seventh year, during which the land was to have rest, and thus also in the eighth year. In the ninth year they would again be able to harvest a crop sown during the eighth year.

[21]The pair of adjectives also occur together in Sir 9:10, contrasting "old" friends and "new" friends. The former are not to be abandoned because the latter will not be their equal; new friends are like new wine, which brings pleasure only after it has aged.

[22] The phrase is adjectival rather than a construct phrase used as a place name. The same construction occurs in Isa 7:3 to describe "the upper pool" (הַבְּרֵכָה הָעֶלְיוֹנָה).

The situation is different with the word "gate" (שַׁעַר), which occurs in collocation with "old" (Neh 3:6 and 12:39) and with "new" (Jer 26:10 and 36:10). The references to "the old gate" (שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה) in Nehemiah are often translated as place names,[23] along with the other gates named in the passage.[24] Whether a proper name or an adjectival description, it would seem the phrase "old gate" implies that there was, at least at some point, another gate (or used collectively, a city section) that was newer, that is, more recently built or constructed. The "new gate" mentioned in Jer 26:10 and 36:10 is part of the temple compound, but there is no clear indication that this new gate corresponds to the 'Old Gate' mentioned in Nehemiah.[25]

One cannot fully make sense of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament without also knowing the term's primary Greek equivalents, καινός and to a lesser extent νέος. Importantly, they represent the primary terms that signify ‘new’ in the Septuagint (LXX) and the New Testament.

The older of the two terms, νέος, is found widely in Greek literature as early as the epics of Homer. Evidence suggests that its meaning evolved over the centuries from a primarily

---

[23] The phrase שַׁעַר הַיְשָׁנָה can be translated variously. It is possible יָשָׁן is functioning as an attributive adjective—the feminine form of the adjective יְשָׁנָה agreeing in gender and number with the noun שַׁעַר ("gate") (*HALOT* 2: 448, יָשָׁן 1b). The combination of an indefinite noun and a definite adjective is especially common with certain kinds of nouns, including those referring to architectural elements such as a gate, entry, court, or way (Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, § 14.3.1 d). However, it is also possible that the two terms are nouns in a construct relationship, in which case יְשָׁנָה refers to the *location* of the gate (i.e., the gate of the "old city" or "Jeshanah") (*HALOT* 2: 448 יְשָׁנָה). The same form (יְשָׁנָה) occurs in 2 Chron 13:19, where immediate context implies it is the name of a city, Jeshanah. *HALOT* includes the gate mentioned in Neh with other "gates of Jerusalem" and renders it, "the Ancient Gate," but indicates it is open to question (4:1615 5Ak).

[24] See for example, in Neh 12:39: Gate of Ephraim, the Fish Gate, the Sheep Gate, and the Gate of the Guard. Each pair of nouns occurs in the same construction, although the exact rendering differs according to English idiom.

[25] According to Jer 26:10 the officials of Judah sat "at the entrance of the new gate of Yahweh" (בְּפֶתַח שַׁעַר־יְהוָה הֶחָדָשׁ). In Jer 36:10, the "new gate" is further described as located in the upper court, which Verhof notes is between the palace-complex and temple court (*NIDOTTE* 2:32). Similarly, there is "the new court" (הֶחָצֵר הַחֲדָשָׁה) in the temple which is mentioned in 2 Chr 20:5. This is presumably the same as "the great precinct" (2 Chron 4:9), also referred to as the "outer court" (Ezek 40:17). According to Verhof, the court was "enlarged and beautified...as part of a cultic reform" (*NIDOTTE* 2:32).

temporal understanding of 'young' or 'recent' to a more qualitative notion of 'recently manufactured.'[26] The term καινός is not unequivocally attested until the first half of the fifth century BCE.[27] In its earliest usage, the semantic domain of καινός appears somewhat differentiated from that of νέος—expressing a qualitative force D'Angour describes as "allied to, and perhaps arising from, the signification of humanly wrought newness."[28] However, as usage of καινός increases, so does the challenge of drawing a rigid distinction between the meanings of καινός and νέος.[29] Only in cases where both terms are used is it possible to discern what may be considered the primary connotations of the two terms and suggest a general distinction such as D'Angour offers:

> Where what is new is essentially a young or recent variant of something, *neos* is generally found to be the appropriate signifier. In that the word primarily represents 'young', whether in terms of natural growth or development in time, it is less apt to suggest a sense of unfamiliarity or unpredictability…By contrast, the notion of a quality of novelty or difference that arises from human intention or creation, for instance in objects that are 'brand-new' and ideas that appear 'newfangled', is more appropriately (though in practice not exclusively) expressed by *kainos*. Novelty of this kind partakes of an aspect of temporality insofar as it implies a deliberate break from the past; but the focus is not on newness in time but on newness in kind.[30]

In the LXX, the adjective καινός is used to translate almost all of the occurrences of חָדָשׁ. The term νέος is used in the four instances in which food items are described [Lev 23:16,

---

[26] Armand D'Angour, *The Greeks and the New: Novelty in Ancient Greek Imagination and Experience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 80.

[27] The earliest unequivocal use of *kainos* is found in the fifth Dithyramb of Bakkhylides dated to the first half of the fifth century, possibly in the decade following the victory of the Athenians over the Persians at Salamis in 480 BCE (D'Angour, *The Greeks and the New*, 71–2). D'Angour cites the *Histories* of Herodotus as the source of the earliest passage of Greek prose in which the adjective *kainos* is found—and the only place in all of the *Histories* (*The Greeks and the New*, 105).

[28] D'Angour, *The Greeks and the New*, 72.

[29] D'Angour states that the Greek lexical data "do not support rigidly determinate distinctions in the meaning or status of expressions of newness" (*The Greeks and the New*, 22).

[30] D'Angour, *The Greeks and the New*, 22–23. D'Angour also observes of the distinction that "*kainos* cannot be readily replaced with *neos*, which would be felt to signify 'of recent occurrence' rather than a salient quality of created novelty" (*The Greeks and the New*, 73; see also, 80–81).

26:10; Num 28:26; Song 7:14 (Eng 7:13)].[31] Since these are the only references to food among the חָדָשׁ occurrences, it would seem logical to suggest that whatever level of synonymous use was occurring by this time, νέος appears to have retained the distinction of denoting "recently harvested" or "fresh" related to food items, or perhaps to organic materials.[32] Most scholars now agree that καινός and νέος function as synonyms in the *Koine* Greek of the New Testament.[33]

Use of Isaiah 40–48

My choice to use Isaiah 40–48 as the rhetorical unit on which to base the core of this investigation is due to a number of factors, some of which have already been alluded to.[34] First is

---

[31] Lev 23:16 and Num 28:26 both refer to a food item in the context of the grain offering.

[32] A handful of the חָדָשׁ occurrences in the MT are translated with terms other than καινός or νέος in the LXX. In Deut 24:5, the MT uses the adjective to modify the noun "wife" (אִשָּׁה חֲדָשָׁה), whereas the LXX conveys the sense of new/recent by using an adverb of time, προσφάτως, to modify the verbal action ("If a man has recently taken a wife . . ."). Likewise, in Eccl 1:9–10 where חָדָשׁ occurs twice, the LXX translates the second use as καινός but employs the adjective, πρόσφατος, for the first.

[33] New Testament occurrences: καινός (42 times); νέος (23 times). The present state of agreement among scholars regarding the use of the two terms in the New Testament was not always the case. R. A. Harrisville, in a 1955 article, purposed to "prove the synonymity of the primary words for 'new,'" asserting that "modern lexicographers" continued to maintain a distinction between a "purely qualitative connotation" for καινός and a "purely temporal one" for νέος. Harrisville noted the exception of Moulton-Milligan who observed that papyrus usage did not support the rigid distinction and argued further that, on the basis of its occurrence in the letter to the Hebrews, νέος was increasingly used synonymously with the more literary term, καινός, in later koine [James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949), 314–15; Harrisville, "The Concept of Newness in the New Testament," *JBL* 74/2 (1955): 69–79, 70]. The synonymous usage of the two adjectives in the New Testament is demonstrated by the interchangeability of the terms; for example, compare Mark 2:21-22 with Matt 9:16-17 and Luke 5:36-39; Heb 8:8, 13; 9:15; 12:24, and Eph 4:22-24 with Col 3:10 (Collins, "New," *ABD* 4:1086–88).

[34] General scholarly consensus maintains that chs. 40–48 function as one of two units within the larger unit of chs. 40–55. Claus Westermann, for example, cites the "deliberate, orderly arrangement" that characterizes Isa 40–55, and notes the prologue (40:1–11) and epilogue (55:6–11) that frame the larger unit, the Cyrus oracle positioned at the center of 40–55, and the two poems (both arising from disputations) that serve to open the two sections (40:12–31 and 49:14–26) [*Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 28]. Commonly observed are particular themes that occur primarily in one of the two units, including: the Jacob/Israel motif in chs. 40–48 but not in 49–55; the Zion/Jerusalem theme prominent in 40–48 but mentioned only twice in 49–55; and references to Cyrus and Babylon, polemic against the idols, and the recurrent lawsuit summons only in 40–48.

the obvious recurrence of the "new thing(s)" (חדשׁה; pl. חדשׁות) in the literary unit. A total of five occurrences of חָדָשׁ in such close textual proximity is unique to these chapters within the Old Testament: 41:15 ("new threshing sledge"); 42:9 ("new things"); 42:10 ("new song"); 43:19 ("new thing"); and 48:6 ("new things"). Focused attention on this terminology of newness is thus warranted by the text's own pronounced and pervasive emphasis. Also unique to the unit is the already mentioned use of חָדָשׁ within a distinctive constellation of terms including "first/former things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת),[35] "latter thing" (אַחֲרִית),[36] and "the coming things" (הַבָּאוֹת).[37] Moreover, the use of חָדָשׁ in this semantic framework is significant in that it shares a temporal notion with the other terms, but it also connotes a qualitative dimension that the others do not. As I will demonstrate in more detail later in this study, one of the results of this term cluster is the highlighting effect it has on the notion of חָדָשׁ—drawing attention to its distinctive qualitative character within the temporal framework.

Furthermore, the use of חָדָשׁ as a substantive adjective in this literary context leaves its explicit referent ambiguous.[38] One is left to question: what is the 'new thing' Yahweh is doing?

Melugin suggests a division at the end of ch. 48, asserting that 49:1–6 "stands out from its context by form and content" [*The Formation of Isaiah 40–55* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976), 143]. H.G.M. Williamson notes differences in the two smaller sections that might suggest the book's provenance: a Babylonian SI characteristic of chs. 40–48, and chs. 49–55 perhaps reflective of the early returnees of a Judean community ["Recent Issues in the Study of Isaiah," in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*, ed. H. G. M. Williamson and D. G. Firth (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009): 21–39; 36–37]. A number of studies isolate chs. 40–48 for treatment: see for example, Yehoshua Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48*, FTL 14 (Bonn: Linguistica Biblica Bonn, 1981); R. P. Merendino, *Der Erste und der Letzte: Eine Untersuchung von Jes 40–48*; and, Ulrich Berges, *Jesaja 40–48*, HThKAT (Freiburg: Herder, 2008).

[35] Isa 41:22; 42:9; 43:9 43:18; 46:9; 48:3 (occurs outside chapters 40–48 once more in 65:17).

[36] Isa 41:22–23 (cf. 41:4). It should be noted that the same combination of terms, רִאשֹׁנוֹת, אַחֲרִית, with חדשׁ, also occurs in Eccl 1:9–10, but conveys an altogether different effect than that of SI. See Eep Talstra, "Second Isaiah and Qohelet: Could One Get Them on Speaking Terms?" in *The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy*, ed. F. Postma, K. Sponk, and E. Talstra (Maastricht: Uigeverij Shaker, 2002), 225–36.

[37] Isa 41:23; 44:7.

[38] Occurs as a substantival adjective in Isa 42:9, 43:19, 48:6, and Jer 31:22.

What are the new things that Yahweh announces? Biblical scholars have long pressed the text for its clues, straining to identify precise historical referents. In the end, the terms resist unequivocal identification. This ambiguity is arguably significant rhetorically, for it is one of the keys to the ready adaptation and reuse of the texts in later contexts. Robert Alter expresses the nature of the poetic language:

> Such speech is directed to the concrete situation of a historical audience, but the form of the speech exhibits the historical indeterminacy of the language of poetry, which helps explain why these discourses have touched the lives of millions of readers far removed in time, space, and political predicament from the small groups of ancient Hebrews.[39]

Previous Research of Isaiah 40–48

As mentioned at the outset, a number of Old Testament studies have focused on the use of חָדָשׁ in Isa 40–48 in light of its relationship to the former, latter, and coming things. In the overview to which I now turn, it is readily apparent that many studies have focused more on identifying the ostensible referents of the terms in their original historical context than on accenting the ambiguity of the language. In an oft-cited essay by C. R. North, for example, this sort of historical inquiry is dubbed the central "problem," and solutions are posited with a confidence that virtually belies any inherent ambiguity.

> The clearest starting-point for a solution of the problem is xliii. 16-19, where רִאשֹׁנוֹת (without the article) can only refer to the passage of the Red Sea. This is obvious from the context, and interpreters are unanimous on the point. From the same context it is equally clear that the "new thing" (חֲדָשָׁה, sing.) which Yahweh is about to accomplish is the triumphal release from Babylon and the journey home across the desert, which is conceived as a new and even more wonderful Exodus. On this interpretation of חֲדָשָׁה/וֹת both here and elsewhere in the prophecy, there is substantial unanimity.[40]

---

[39] Robert Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 141.

[40] North, "The Former Things," 116.

The quest to discover the authentic words of the prophet that characterized North's predecessors is replaced by an equal zeal for historical precision.[41] Sorting through the literary strands, North seeks to determine precisely what historical events belong to the present, the past, or even distant past, and thus should be considered "first" or "former" things (רִאשֹׁנוֹת), and at what historical juncture events corresponding to "new things" (חֲדָשׁוֹת) begin.[42] The exacting nature of his endeavor is especially evident when confronted with the challenge of parsing the various stages of Cyrus' career, known only from extra-biblical sources. North concludes that at least part of the deliverance brought about by Cyrus should be assigned to the "new things" (חֲדָשׁוֹת) but adds that perhaps the early part of it belongs to the "first things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת).[43]

The approach of Menahem Haran, while disagreeing with North on certain points, nevertheless reflects a similar approach in his efforts to pinpoint the event that ostensibly marks

---

[41] North's comments on Isa 48 appear to be a nod to previous concerns: "The question whether the original text of this chapter has been interpolated by a kind of interlinear commentary need not concern us.…In any case, the verses relevant to the present discussion belong to Duhm's original draft of the chapter, and are indubitably Deutero-Isaianic" (North, "The Former Things," 115–16).

[42] Aside from the confidence regarding the referents in Isa 43:16–19, North engages with other scholars in an effort to draw conclusions of the less specific examples of רִאשֹׁנוֹת elsewhere in the unit. North cites: Van Hoonacker ("L'Ébed Jahvé et la composition littéraire des chapitres xl. ss. d'Isaie," *RB*, N.S., vi, 497–528), whose widely held view maintained that רִאשֹׁנוֹת refers to the past in general; Volz (*Jesaja II*, 25, 40), who declined to define the term, maintaining it was 'quite general' and unrelated to Cyrus; and Franz Feldman (*Das Buch Isaias II*, 51), who noted that the timeframe to which רִאשֹׁנוֹת belongs is unspecified and the expression general (North, "The Former Things," 116–17). North's essay continues in similar suit with a catena of scholars who posit possible referents of רִאשֹׁנוֹת, ranging from general, like those mentioned, to earlier and already fulfilled prophecies, to predictions of the rise of Cyrus that were proclaimed by the prophet but not contained in the book.

[43] North, "The Former Things," 117. North draws a number of conclusions regarding the use of רִאשֹׁנוֹת: in Isa 43:18, the term (without the article) refers to the Exodus, whereas in 43:9 it "is quite general," and in 46:9–11 it remains unclear but may have the Exodus in mind; with the article, the term in 41:22, 42:9, and 48:3 refers to "the victories of Cyrus up to the fall of Sardis in 547"—victories which North claims are described in 41:1–5. North's conclusions are somewhat surprising, given a title inclusive of both terms, "former" and "new." Only in the final lines of the essay does he return to "new" and its use in 43:19, correlating it with the "expected new Exodus from Babylon" ("The Former Things," 123, 126).

the transition from רִאשֹׁנוֹת to חֲדָשׁוֹת.[44] Haran grants that "first things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת) refers to the Israelite crossing of the Red Sea in Isa 43:16–19 and to mighty deeds of the LORD in earlier times in 46:9. He argues, however, that these referents are exceptions and only secondary to the main way in which the prophet uses רִאשֹׁנוֹת, which Haran asserts refer "not to events but to *prophecies* which have been fulfilled."[45] My sense is that Haran's real point of contention is not that a great many scholars have missed the significance of these already-fulfilled prophecies (רִאשֹׁנוֹת), but rather that they associate them with earlier stages of Cyrus' career and view the "new things" (חֲדָשׁוֹת) as inclusive of (and spoken before) the impending victory of Cyrus over Babylon in 539 BCE. In contrast, Haran avers that the "former things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת) include the conquest of Babylon and that the prophecies of Isa 40–48 were announced after the event. He insists not only that his assumption is the correct one, but that "it alone makes it possible to explain the group of prophecies we are dealing with, including the whole complex of ideas and motives interwoven with it."[46]

A brief essay by the Scandinavian scholar, Aage Bentzen, published within a few years of North's chapter, exhibits a form critical approach to the nature of 'the old' and 'the new' in Second Isaiah.[47] Bentzen further elaborates that what is meant "is something *new*, not only a

---

[44] Menahem Haran, "The Literary Structure," 127–55.

[45] Haran cites Isa 41:22, 26; 42:9; 43:9, 12; 44:7–8; 45:21; 46:10; 48:3–5, 14–16a. ("The Literary Structure," 137). Haran's argument seems overstated and he concedes as much later in his essay. Many scholars view the רִאשֹׁנוֹת as prophecies already fulfilled. Stuhlmueller maintains, for example, that 'first and last' always occur in a context of prophecy-fulfillment. First things are "those redemptive acts of Yahweh not only predicted but already fulfilled," ("'First and Last' and 'Yahweh–Creator,'" 189).

[46] Haran, "The Literary Structure," 138.

[47] Aage Bentzen, "On the Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New' in Deutero-Isaiah," *ST* 1 (1948): 183–87. See also North's comments on Bentzen's article. He sees much to agree with but concludes that since there is no discernible political background in the final Servant Song, what Bentzen perceives as 'new' in Isa 53 is not to be correlated with that of Isa 43:16–19, and in fact is more likely due to "the Prophet's disillusionment that the חדשה there anticipated had such a meager fulfillment" (North, "The Former Things," 126).

'remembrance' of the old well-known gospel, but a new event of epoch-making importance…The 'new' is here something far greater than that which was experienced in the 'old' festival 'over and over again.'"[48] Although Bentzen does not offer a sustained treatment of the term "new," he does attempt to convey the dynamic nature of newness in a number of ways. Moreover, he draws attention to significant elements besides historical identification; for example, he notes the necessity of engaging the relationship of 'old' and 'new' in Second Isaiah,[49] the importance of understanding the nature of 'remember' in 43:18,[50] the need to compare Second Isaiah with the 'new covenant' in Jeremiah, and finally, the use of the notion in the New Testament (2 Cor 5:17b; Rev 21:5).[51] He cites both the 'historifying' tendency in Israelite practice, that is, great historical events become 'myths' in religious perception, and the eschatological element that is present in Second Isaiah.[52] This background is necessary, Bentzen claims, if we are "to understand Deutero-Isaiah and his eschatological expectations of events which will create a 'New Myth' destined to replace the 'Ancient Myth' of the Exodus festival."[53]

Eschatological concerns are likewise evident in a study by Anton Schoors, who acknowledges the primary importance of identifying historical referents but frames the issue as

---

[48] Bentzen, "Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New,'" 184–85.

[49] He perceives the major importance of comparing the old and the new, as both contrasting and parallel—meaning that the two are both epoch events with shared characteristics and value, but there is also something significantly greater in the new event.

[50] Heb זכר ("to remember"); Bentzen asserts of *zkr*: "as we all know, not only means our usual 'remembrance,' but also denotes the creative 'remembrance' in the cult, which makes the Holy Past live again, bringing its vital forces into the congregation" ("Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New,'" 185).

[51] The New Testament use of the Second Isaiah notion of new is evidence for Bentzen that Second Isaiah presupposes a "definite 'eschatological' view of history"—an idea present in both Jewish literature and the New Testament of 'this world' and 'the world to come'" ("Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New,'" 185–86).

[52] Bentzen defines 'myths' as "'*gospels*' expressions of revelation of the creative, vital forces of God," and Israel's tendency exemplified in their view of the Exodus story, which Bentzen argues is "an 'historification' of the myth of creation" ("Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New,'" 186).

[53] Bentzen, "Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New,'" 187.

one of determining their eschatological significance in Isa 40–48.[54] Schoors is reluctant to extend any of the terms' referents beyond the scope of events associated more or less related immediately with Cyrus, with the exception of רִאשֹׁנוֹת in 43:18, which he concedes undoubtedly refers to the Exodus.[55] He argues the חֲדָשׁוֹת represent the future event that will bring deliverance to the Israelites in exile—emphasized variously by the prophet as the action of Cyrus, the fall of Babylon, and the journey across the desert, but concludes they are decidedly not eschatological in nature.[56] Thus, while Schoors limits the temporal scope of the historical referents to the חֲדָשׁוֹת-רִאשֹׁנוֹת duo, he shows sensitivity to their relatively enigmatic nature and is quick to emphasize the general way in which the prophet has chosen to employ the expressions.[57]

Shalom Paul includes a brief section on the terms רִאשֹׁנוֹת and חֲדָשׁוֹת and their cognates in the introduction to his commentary on Isaiah 40–66.[58] His remarks are representative of the way in which the majority of commentators have come to address the terminology. Speaking of the "first/former things," Paul summarizes:

> [They] refer to God's deeds in the past, both His involvement in history and the changes He effected in the natural order. They serve as proof and precedent that the חדשות, "the new things," shall come to pass as well. These former occurrences span the period from creation through the exodus and up until Cyrus's victories…Thus, many exegetes regard Cyrus's first victories in 550–547 BCE as the latest of things 'once predicted,' whereas Cyrus's predicted victory over Babylon is considered the first of the 'new things.'[59]

Among commentators in general, the historical referents suggested for חֲדָשׁוֹת tend not to be quite as varied or specific as those for רִאשֹׁנוֹת. The majority of interpretations fall along the

---

[54] Schoors, "Les choses anterieures," 19–47.

[55] Schoors, "Les choses anterieures," 44.

[56] Schoors, "Les choses anterieures," 45–6.

[57] Schoors, "Les choses anterieures," 19.

[58] The Hebrew terms are transliterated, *ri'šonôt* and *ḥadašôt*, in Paul's section title. Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012): 17–18.

[59] Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 17.

lines of what, for example, John Goldingay and David Payne identify as "events about to take place in the community's life such as the capture of Babylon by Cyrus and the freeing of foreign peoples to return home."[60] Expressed even more broadly, though limited temporally, Goldingay and Payne describe the חֲדָשׁוֹת as "suggesting the creativity of Yhwh's activity in the present."[61]

In summary, although a number of the scholars surveyed convey what I would deem an overzealous confidence in their assertions, I would not deny the validity of their historical concerns—indeed, I would argue they are vital to a robust engagement with the biblical text. However, the preceding overview reveals some significant gaps. First, a preoccupation with certain historical concerns, namely historical referents, has resulted in a lack of sufficient consideration for the rhetorical nature and content of the text.[62] Furthermore, there are other issues of a historical nature that have been neglected altogether, namely the significance of חָדָשׁ in Second Isaiah comparatively and linguistically.

---

[60] John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 2 vols., ICC (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006/2014), 1:231. As do other commentators, Goldingay and Payne provide a lengthy list in order to draw attention to the wide array of interpretive conclusions that have been proposed as referents to the "first things." They include, for example, creation and everything since, the call of Abraham as a foreshadowing of Cyrus, the call of Moses, the fall of Jerusalem in fulfillment of prophecies by Isaiah of Jerusalem, among others (195). It should be noted that other scholars have been content with the general nature of the terminology and have instead focused on whether their meaning is primarily historical, eschatological, or some combination of the two.

[61] Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1:231.

[62] My own concerns parallel those of Carolyn Sharp. Writing about the Servant Songs in Second Isaiah, Sharp argues in favor of a way to honor the historical particularity of the songs, the importance of tradition, and the theological integrity of the songs, yet without forcing them "into a hermeneutical model that makes the biblical texts more historically explicit than they have chosen to be." ["(Re)Inscribing Power through Torah Teaching: Rhetorical Pedagogy in the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah," in *Thus Says the Lord: Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson*, ed. John J. Ahn and Stephen L. Cook (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 167–78; 173]. Similarly, Robert R. Wilson expresses a necessary balance when he states of Jeremiah: "history and literature must be taken together as dialog partners within the book, and neither can be safely subordinated to the other" ["Historicizing the Prophets: History and Literature in the Book of Jeremiah" in *On the Way to Nineveh: Studies in Honor of George M. Landes*, ed. Stephen L. Cook and S. C. Winter, ASOR Books 4 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 136–54; 152].

There is sufficient comparative literature to suggest that the ancient Near Eastern culture was past-oriented and suspicious of, perhaps even averse to, certain forms of newness. Yet, in light of this perspective, very little consideration has been given to its potential impact on the rhetoric of newness in Second Isaiah and elsewhere in the Old Testament. The promise of 'new things' in Second Isaiah is generally considered an expression evoking hope, but I would argue that historical context requires closer scrutiny and nuancing. How would the rhetoric of newness have affected a people that valued the past and the known over newness, novelty, and innovation? More specifically, how might ancient Israel have perceived a prophetic oracle seeking to persuade them to trust Yahweh because he claimed to be "doing something new"? Finally, how does the rhetoric of SI reflect this past-oriented culture even as it offers an invitation to find security and hope in divine newness?

In the early stages of this investigation, I became increasingly aware of the general lack of attention given to the usage and/or significance of חָדָשׁ in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. With the possible exception of the phrases such as "new covenant" or "new heavens and new earth," "new spirit," and "new heart," other occurrences sprinkled throughout the Old Testament seem to generate only minimal discussion or passing comment. Rarely is it observed how infrequently the word appears in the Old Testament and/or whether that suggests any need for closer attention. It seems striking that חָדָשׁ never occurs in the Old Testament prophetic corpus outside of Isaiah 40–66, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. As Westermann exclaims: "Only the exilic

period—no other period in the whole history of Israel! —discussed an innovation in the history of God's relationship with Israel."[63]

Taking Westermann's observation more broadly, I would add that the absence of such vocabulary (i.e., innovation or חָדָשׁ) is not limited to discussions of God's relationship with Israel. In the book of Psalms, a collection in which it would seem the entire gamut of human emotions finds liturgical expression, there is but one phrase, occurring six times, that explicitly articulates newness: "new song" (שִׁיר חָדָשׁ).[64] Suffice it to say, it is a term that occurs "with extraordinary rarity."[65] The situation is all the more remarkable if one compares biblical Hebrew usage to how frequently the word "new" is used in modern languages, and even more so if one adds to that the plethora of derivatives and related expressions that are commonplace in modern usage (e.g., renewal, renovation, novelty, news, newcomer, newborn, New Year, innovation). The latter observations do not mean that ancient Israel had no categories to speak of such things. While that could be true in certain cases, the data suggests that ancient Israel (like all other ancient Near Eastern cultures) used "new" in a less casual, more circumscribed manner, that is, limited to fewer categories of standard usage than one is accustomed to in modern vernacular. Westermann suggests that "Ancient Israelites apparently perceived relationships between occurrences so strongly that they did not consider 'new' what moderns would, or at least they did not describe them as 'new.'" He concludes by stating, "This question deserves further

---

[63] C. Westermann, "חָדָשׁ *ḥādāš* new" *TLOT* 1:394–97; 395. North similarly observes "how small a role the various kinds of newness play in the OT, especially before the exile, not only as religious values in comparison to the New Testament but as an overall cultural experience" (C. R. North, "חדשׁ," *TDOT* 4:225–44, 244).

[64] "New song" (שִׁיר חָדָשׁ) occurs in Pss 33:3; 40:4; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1. The verb form of חדשׁ occurs in Pss 51:12[Eng51:10]; 103:5; 104:30.

[65] Westermann, *TLOT* 1:395.

investigation."[66] I believe Westermann is correct. In fact, I would like to suggest that not only does the question of how ancient Israel understood newness *deserve* further investigation, it *needs* further investigation if we are to more fully appreciate חָדָשׁ in Israel's ancient culture and sacred texts. Thus, in addition to the primary focus of this investigation on חָדָשׁ as it occurs in Isa 40–48, I will lay a foundation with a comprehensive survey of חָדָשׁ as it appears in the rest of the Old Testament. With that intent in mind, I turn now to explore the methodology that underlies this exegetical and theological study.

Investigative Approaches

The initial appearance of rhetorical methodology in Old Testament studies is generally associated with the work of James Muilenburg who, in his 1968 presidential address to the Society of Biblical Literature, famously issued a call to move "beyond" form criticism.[67] Suggesting that form criticism as a method had "outrun its course," Muilenburg sought to chart out new territory in the biblical text worthy of the scholar's attention. He labeled this enterprise "rhetorical criticism."[68] However, what was dubbed 'rhetorical' was in fact more literary and

[66] Westermann, *TLOT*, 1:395.

[67] James Muilenburg, "Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 (1969): 1–18, 4.

[68] Rhetoric, in the classical sense of the term, witnessed resurgence early in the 20th century in departments of Speech and Rhetoric. In non-biblical fields, rhetorical and literary criticisms were considered separate disciplines. The so-called Neo-Aristotelian school classifies rhetorical discourses into the Aristotelian categories of forensic, deliberative, and epideictic. The logos, ethos, and pathos categories represent the three classifications of 'proofs' or 'means of persuasion.' Rhetorical discourse is then assessed in terms of invention, arrangement, delivery, and style; and finally, evaluated in terms of effects (often understood as upon the immediate audience). See for example, among many such summaries: Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method* (New York: Macmillan, 1965), 31.

stylistic in actual practice.[69] Muilenburg's own commentary on Isaiah 40–66, published over a decade earlier, appears to have been an ideal proving ground for the characteristics he would call "rhetorical."[70]

Over ensuing decades, "rhetorical criticism" as practiced in Old Testament studies evolved from the exclusively poetic and aesthetic emphases of Muilenburg's approach to the classical notion of rhetoric as the art of persuasion.[71] This shift is evident in Michael Fox's assertion that, "a study becomes rhetorical only when it removes a text from its 'autonomy' and inquires into the transaction between rhetor and audience, focusing on suasive intentions, techniques, and effect."[72] The Old Testament prophetic books in particular proved to be especially suitable subjects due to the inherently rhetorical nature of prophetic discourse—that is to say, Israel's prophets declared the words of Yahweh with intent to "persuade" their audiences to change. Describing the persuasive intent of the prophets, Robert Alter observes, "they were using natural language to a purpose not fundamentally different from that, say, of a present-day

---

[69] Literary analysis of the Bible was not new, however. As early as 1895, Richard Moulton published a volume: *The Literary Study of the Bible: An Account of the Leading Forms of Literature Represented in the Sacred Writings* (Boston: Heath and Company, 1895).

[70] James Muilenburg, "Isaiah 40–66," *IB* 5:381–773. Patricia Tull rightly cites Muilenburg's 1956 commentary as "a transition point in form-critical study of Second Isaiah" ("Rhetorical Criticism and Beyond," 329).

[71] In light of the speech and epistolary materials, New Testament scholarship reflects a very different situation than Old Testament studies in its understanding and specific application of Rhetoric. For the introduction of rhetorical methodology into New Testament studies, see especially the works of George Kennedy: *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980); *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984).

[72] Michael V. Fox, "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones" *HUCA* 51 (1980): 1–15; 2–3. Fox rightly acknowledges that such a study may include both rhetorical and stylistic-aesthetic components, but emphasizes the persuasion is the "*sine qua non* of rhetorical criticism" (3). In method, Fox's components reflect those of rhetorical critic Edwin Black, who outlined the three components of a rhetorical transaction as strategies (discourse characteristics), situations (extralinguistic influences on the audience), and effects (responses to the rhetorical strategies). See Black, *Rhetorical Criticism,* 134.

political leader who addresses his constituents in the hope of persuading them to support a particular policy they might otherwise be inclined to oppose."[73]

Perhaps nowhere in the prophets, or in the Old Testament as a whole for that matter, is the rhetorical enterprise so richly rewarded as in the book of Isaiah. Indeed, Second Isaiah has been at the center of the development of rhetorical criticism within Old Testament scholarship. To be sure, many scholars have demonstrated acute rhetorical sensitivity to the text—even if not always identified as such methodologically. Gerhard von Rad, for example, though an exemplar of traditio-historical concerns, observed how "the prophet brings every possible means of persuasion into play. He appeals now to reason, now to emotion. He gives arguments and proofs."[74] Similarly, Claus Westermann, whose work epitomizes form criticism, described Second Isaiah as follows:

> His language is from first to last evocative, arousing, even insistent—witness the way in which he piles imperative on imperative…It was the way he adopted to speak to men whose faith was flagging, and who were at the point of letting themselves drift. At the same time, he used it to address men who kept clinging to the past, even when their observance of traditional usage had no power to lead them to expect any new thing from their God.[75]

Second Isaiah continued to play a central role as rhetorical insights began to take shape as a critical methodology within the ranks of Old Testament scholarship. Among the early exemplars of the decidedly more classical approach to rhetoric was Yehoshua Gitay's *Prophecy*

---

[73] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 141. Michael Fox asserts that the persuasive power of the prophet is based on the prophet's authoritative role as the transmitter of a message, verbatim, received from God. Moreover, Fox sees this authority as employed for rhetorical purpose: "The desired effect of the messenger role is to imbue the speaker's ethos with absolute authority by identifying it with God's…Persuasion through authority is undoubtedly the fundamental rhetorical strategy in prophecy" ("The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision," 8–9).

[74] Von Rad, *Old Testament Theology: Volume II*, 250.

[75] Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 6.

and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48.[76] In contrast to the poetic and aesthetic emphases of Muilenburg, Gitay's focus is on the prophetic utterances as public speech, that is, communicative discourse meant to persuade an audience. Gitay defines the rhetorical approach as an exploration of the mutual relationship that occurs between the writer or speaker, his address, and his audience.[77] Moreover, it necessitates consideration of the historical, sociological, and religious context in a way that earlier form critical method and the stylistic concerns of Muilenburg had not. The prophet of Isa 40–48 faced a radically changing historical-political scene (the decline of the Babylonian empire and rise of Persian power), and his primary task was "to persuade a religiously desperate group of exiles that God dominated the political development and that Israel was His concern."[78] Gitay emphasizes the prophet's intent to appeal to his audience in order to persuade them, and analyzes the means by which the prophet attempts this appeal.[79] Although Gitay rightly acknowledges that the biblical text must be the controlling factor when

---

[76] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48*. Other early studies emphasizing classical rhetoric include, for example: J. R. Lundbom, *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*, SBLDS 18 (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975); T. E. Boomershine, "The Structure of Narrative Rhetoric in Genesis 2–3," *Semeia* 18 (1980): 113–29; Michael V. Fox, "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones," *HUCA* 51 (1980): 1–15; Y. Gitay, "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1–15," *CBQ* 42 (1980): 293–309; M. Sternberg, "The Bible's Art of Persuasion: Ideology, Rhetoric, and Poetics in Saul's Fall," *HUCA* 54 (1983): 45–82; E. D. Lewin, "Arguing for Authority: A Rhetorical Study of Jeremiah 1.4–19 and 20.7–18," *JSOT* 32 (1985): 105–19.

[77] Gitay considers the determination of literary units within chs. 40–48 an important technical issue as well as a key to understanding the book (*Prophecy and Persuasion*, 2). He further maintains that, while the "*framework* of classical rhetoric will be adopted…the critic must allow the biblical text itself to be the controlling factor" (*Prophecy and Persuasion*, 36).

[78] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 1.

[79] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 2. Gitay asserts that the prophet's intent to appeal to his audience for the purpose of persuasion is characteristic of Second Isaiah's prophecy. He organizes his formal analysis of Isa 40–48 by dividing it into 10 rhetorical units and exploring each in terms of rhetorical situation, invention (kinds of appeal used by the prophet, *inventio*), organization of the discourse (*dispositio*), and expression of style (*elecutio*) (*Prophecy and Persuasion,* 36–41, 62).

applying the principles of classical rhetoric,[80] it is not clear to me that he has heeded his own caution in that all ten of the literary units he discusses yield so neatly to an Aristotelian-inspired rhetorical framework.

Richard Clifford's study of Isa 40–55 also views rhetoric as the art of persuasion yet does so without applying the Aristotelian template as rigidly as did Gitay.[81] The prophet is an orator, asserts Clifford, and the task of persuasion requires development of ideas; thus, literary units must be of sufficient length to accomplish that goal. Moreover, those units must be unified by "coherent and compelling argument"[82] befitting oratory. While Clifford articulates the specific persuasive task differently than Gitay,[83] he similarly considers the historical context of the discourse paramount to the rhetorical enterprise. In this respect, both Gitay and Clifford move beyond Muilenburg's tendency "to divorce the text from its context…both the relation of each text to the literary tradition and to historical events."[84] Clifford attends to the literary techniques to which Muilenburg was so exceptionally sensitive but goes beyond to explore how they function to create rhetorical development.[85]

In another expression of rhetorical method, Patricia Tull focuses on the recurring motif of memory in Second Isaiah, and explores "the prophet's appeal to societal memory, and reshaping

---

[80] Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion*, 36.

[81] Richard J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist, 1984).

[82] Clifford, *Fair Spoken*, 39.

[83] Clifford posits the prophet's task as one of "persuading the Judahites to act according to the decrees of both Yahweh and of his agent Cyrus the Persian: to leave Babylon, to cross the desert, and to assemble in Zion as the restored Israel" (Clifford, *Fair Spoken*, 4).

[84] Clifford, *Fair Spoken*, 35.

[85] Clifford, *Fair Spoken*, 35.

of memories in order to persuade."[86] Tull later recalled this earlier investigation, *Remember the Former Things*, and reiterated the rhetorical import of the memory trope: "From start to finish, Isaiah 40–55 remembers, and re-collects, elements of Jerusalem's past, constructing a picture for the audience's present that bids to persuade them of the inherent unity between then and now."[87]

While the studies of Gitay, Clifford, and Tull differ in their emphases, they all reflect a similar view of rhetoric as the art of persuasion. Understood in this classical sense, few if any would question the further claim that the object of rhetoric is to produce effects on an audience. However, within the broader discipline of rhetorical criticism, the notion of 'effects' has had its own particular, and uneven, history.

Authors Amos Kiewe and Davis Houck observe that, "the question of how rhetoric works on different 'souls' has been with us from the very beginning."[88] They appeal to the ancient words of Plato:

> Once he has classified the types of speech and of soul, and the ways in which the various types of soul are acted upon, he will go through all the causes, fitting each type of speech to each type of soul and explaining what it is about the nature of particular kinds of soul which make them inevitably either persuaded or unpersuaded by speeches of a particular kind.[89]

In actual practice, however, rhetorical critics have been far less agreed upon what level of importance is to be associated with effects, what precisely constitutes rhetorical effect, and what counts as evidence of effects. For example, do observed effects have to be in the text (written or

---

[86] Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah,* SBLDS 161 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

[87] Patricia K. Tull, "Rhetorical Criticism and Beyond in Second Isaiah," in *The Changing Face of Form Criticism for the Twenty-First Century,*" ed. Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003: 326–34; 331.

[88] Amos Kiewe and Davis W. Houck, eds., *The Effects of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Effects* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2015), 1.

[89] Plato, *Phaedrus*, 271*b*. Quoted by Kiewe and Houck, *The Effects of Rhetoric*, 1.

oral) itself? Must effects be limited to those occurring immediately? Are probable effects to be considered? What about ongoing effects of a text among an audience far removed from the original utterance?

Kiewe and Houck address these questions and a host of related issues in a volume of essays, *The Effects of Rhetoric and Rhetoric of Effects*. Foregoing the well-rehearsed history of rhetoric, the editors instead direct their focus to the specific notion of effects, tracing the contours and junctures of its history within the academic environs of the last hundred or so years. One of the discipline's founders, Herbert A. Wichelns, published a highly influential essay in 1925, in which he posited the aim of rhetorical criticism as "patently single. It is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect. It regards a speech as a communication to a specific audience, and holds its business to be the analysis and appreciation of the orator's method of imparting his ideas to his hearers."[90] The authors proceed to demonstrate how the notion of effect has a history marked by diverse opinions—its importance hailed an essential by some critics, neglected by others, and overtly challenged by still others. Accordingly, Kiewe and Houck aim to show that rhetoric matters—that rhetoric "still does things." Their thesis is that the only way to prove that claim is for critics to engage with and

---

[90] Kiewe and Houck, *The Effects of Rhetoric*, 7; cf. vii. Wichelns' programmatic essay lays out the elements proper to rhetorical study, including: "the speakers' personality as a conditioning factor...also the public character of the man—not what he was, but what he was thought to be," "a description of the speaker's audience, and of the leading ideas with which he plied his hearers—his topics, the motives to which he appealed, the nature of the proofs he offered…" Wichelns noted that attention must also be "paid to the relation of the surviving texts to what was actually uttered," explaining that, "there may be occasion to consider adaptation to two audiences—that which heard and that which read." Regarding effect, Wichelns focus appears to be on immediate audience only, though the record of those effects might come from the testimony of eyewitnesses or a record of the events. See Herbert A. Wichelns, "The Literary Criticism of Oratory," in *The Rhetorical Idiom: Essays in Rhetoric, Oratory, Language, and Drama*, ed. Donald C. Bryant (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1958), 38–39; quote from Edwin Black, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 31–32.

show the available evidence of effects. To that end, they advocate a broader approach among rhetorical critics, urging practitioners not to limit the "focus to interpretive conclusions that are based exclusively on the internal dynamics of a text."[91] With nets cast wide, the critic can and should explore the wide and diverse range of sources that evidence the effects of a rhetorical act.

In a study that has been integral to the contours of this investigation into biblical newness, Davis Houck and Mihaela Nocasian demonstrate the process by which critics *start* with a rhetorical document that has exerted profound effects and then attempt to answer both how and why the "text did its work."[92] The authors noted the many responses that evidenced the public's perception of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's first inaugural address, and then aimed their investigation at how he "was able to effect such a perception in the course of a mere 20 minutes."[93] They argue that, "careful study of a speech's reception can reveal the organic nature of text and context, and…we can gain greater insight and understanding into how a text actually worked within a historical moment to influence an audience."[94] They conclude that all of their "answers strongly suggest a symbiotic relationship between text and context."[95]

Houck and Nocasian offer further reflection on the fact that not only do the contexts of later influences differ markedly from the original historical moment, but also that significant elements of the address have taken on new meaning.[96] Interestingly, Houck and Nocasian entitle

---

[91] Kiewe and Houck, *The Effects of Rhetoric*, 6.

[92] Davis W. Houck and Mihaela Nocasian, "FDR's First Inaugural Address: Text, Context, and Reception," *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 649–78; 674.

[93] Houck and Nocasian, "FDR's First Inaugural Address," 666.

[94] Houck and Nocasian, "FDR's First Inaugural Address," 675.

[95] Houck and Nocasian, "FDR's First Inaugural Address," 674.

[96] The authors cite, in particular, the influence and new meaning taken on by Roosevelt's most memorable aphorism: "the only thing we have to fear is fear itself." Houck and Nocasian, "FDR's First Inaugural Address," 661, 675.

their closing section, "A Living Text," which has long been a favored phrase to express the power of the biblical text to continue to speak into new settings and subsequent audiences. Moreover, their conclusions regarding FDR's address are, in effect, the same as those drawn by Old Testament scholar Patricia Tull concerning Second Isaiah's memory trope in relation to prior discourse, namely that "texts do not bear their meanings in isolation."[97]

Perhaps most significantly, these observations and conclusions about texts, whether political speeches of the twentieth century or prophetic oracles of the sixth century BCE, illustrate the value in taking a more comprehensive view of a rhetorical text. In regard to effects, for example, rhetorical criticism need not be limited to the impact on an immediate audience. Indeed, the greater force of the rhetoric may present itself later rather than immediately. As Michael Fox astutely points out: "the rhetorical force of discourse is not to be identified with its immediate effect. The limp response the Gettysburg address evoked in its auditors, for example, does not prove that it was a rhetorical failure."[98]

James Hester avers that rhetorical criticism needs to move beyond recounting techniques, topics, and tropes, and to offer "an explanation of why a discourse or argument would have been persuasive then or remains persuasive now when the original author, audience, and exigence are no longer relevant."[99] Certainly, one of the tasks of this investigation is to ground the understanding of חָדָשׁ in its original historical and contextual world, but my aim to take seriously

---

[97] Tull, "Rhetorical Criticism and Beyond," 333.

[98] Fox, "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision," 4. Fox cites the Neo-Aristotelian view of rhetorical criticism, which considers only immediate effects of a discourse relevant, and the influential critique of that view by Edwin Black (*Rhetorical Criticism*).

[99] The author laments the fact that rhetorical studies all too often offer little if any explanation "that accounts for the power of the text to reshape the worldview of a hearer or reader who is not a member of its intended audience." James D. Hester, "Rhetorics in and for the New Millennium," in *Rhetorics in the New Millennium: Promise and Fulfillment*, ed. James D. Hester and J. David Hester (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 1–20; 2.

the enduring effects of those initial expressions of newness resonates deeply with Hester's admonition. I hope, moreover, to build on the many fine studies of Isa 40–48, rhetorical and otherwise, and demonstrate the remainder of Hester's conclusion: "rhetorics allows for a hermeneutic of contingency or functionality, a contextual or situational understanding that can keep the power of persuasion alive. Rhetorics has the potential to answer the taunt, 'so what?' in response to a reading."[100]

Finally, and not unrelated to Hester's "so what?" I believe the time is ripe for a sustained and meaningful interaction with the biblical concept of חָדָשׁ. In a contemporary, Western context, the notion of newness has assumed virtual celebrity status in the realm of innovation;[101] it is calculated and commercialized in the economic realm;[102] it fuels the rallying cry for change in the political arena. Buzzwords such as innovation, creativity, novelty, and change are ubiquitous in twenty-first century culture, reflecting a concept whose numerous refractions have permeated the social fabric. It seems only logical that the topic of "newness" begs for an intentional intersection of biblical scholarship and contemporary context.[103]

---

[100] Hester, "Rhetorics," 20.

[101] Perhaps the most notable, recent example is the late Steve Jobs, whose role as a technological innovator in the information age was lauded at his untimely death and subsequently in print and film; see for example, Walter Isaacson, *Steve Jobs* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011).

[102] See, for example: Aimee Dinnin, "The Appeal of Our New Stuff: How Newness Creates Value," *Advances in Consumer Research* 36 (2009): 261–65; Sean Nixon, "The Pursuit of Newness: Advertising, Creativity and the 'Narcissism of Minor Differences,'" *Cultural Studies* 20 (2006): 89–106.

[103] I say "intentional" because I make the assumption that biblical interpreters and readers are themselves products of their historical and social context—thus making the intersection already inherent to the investigation, even if not explicit. Reader-response criticism has convincingly shown this to be the case. Additionally, the intersection I am advocating is an important dimension of the history of interpretation and, as John Sawyer asserts, "must be considered an integral part of Biblical Studies" [John F. A. Sawyer, *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 245]. Sawyer notes that within the broader context of interdisciplinary religious studies, students are now raising "searching ethical, socio-political and economic questions about the meaning of the texts studied…as a matter of course" (245). He continues, "Students of the Bible must be constantly reminded, at all levels, that the texts they are working on are not just ancient documents like the

Outline of the Investigation

The outline of this investigation following this introductory chapter is very straightforward. The study that follows is divided into two parts. In Part One, which consists of chapters two and three and an Excursus, I present an exegetical survey of the uses of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament as a whole. My goal is to move beyond the lexical entries that are currently available to the biblical scholar and offer a more complete study that attends not only to lexical data but to the semantics, the connotations, the associations, and the nuances that can be gleaned from a close reading of the biblical texts. Chapter Two will focus on the adjective while Chapter Three will deal with the verb from the root חדשׁ. An Excursus on the noun will round out Part One. With the groundwork laid, Part Two will consist of five chapters, each addressed to one of the five occurrences of חָדָשׁ in Isa 40–48. In the concluding chapter, I will draw out some of the theological implications of this study, especially those emerging from Isa 40–48, and then, finally, offer my thoughts on areas for further consideration.

---

lawcode of Hammurabi or the Dead Sea Scrolls, but sacred texts which can be, and have been used in many ways and in all manner of contexts to influence, down to the present day, the lives of real people" (245–46).

CHAPTER TWO

OLD TESTAMENT USAGE OF THE ADJECTIVE חָדָשׁ

In the first chapter I introduced the basic meaning and connotations of the adjective, חָדָשׁ, as it occurs in the Old Testament. In this chapter, I offer an in-depth, exegetical survey of the adjective's occurrences in order to lay the foundation for Part Two in which I will investigate the term specifically as it recurs in Isa 40–48.[104] My goal in the present chapter is to move beyond the basic sense of the word to better understand its role in the various contexts in which it appears, how it functions in those contexts, and to what effect (if any). By engaging in a close analysis of the texts I hope to draw out meaningful imagery, nuances, historical data, and theological themes associated with newness as it is conveyed through the use of חָדָשׁ. While this chapter and the next function primarily as preparation for Part Two of this investigation, I also hope that what follows will provide a more comprehensive treatment of חָדָשׁ than is currently available to scholars in lexical and theological dictionaries.

חָדָשׁ in the Pentateuch

The adjective חָדָשׁ occurs fifty-three times in the Old Testament. The term's first occurrence is in Exodus 1:8: וַיָּקָם מֶלֶךְ־חָדָשׁ עַל־מִצְרָיִם אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יָדַע אֶת־יוֹסֵף ("Now there

[104] It perhaps goes without saying that I do not cover the five occurrences of the adjective in Isa 40–48 in this chapter or the next. In addition, I address the six occurrences of חָדָשׁ in the Psalms (i.e., the phrase "new song") in conjunction with Isa 42:10.

arose a new king in Egypt, who did not know Joseph"). This opening chapter of Exodus situates the Israelites in Egypt and sets the scene for the narrative of their dramatic departure. Divided into two sections, vv. 1–7 and vv. 8–22, the chapter presents a "before and after" contrast in which v. 8 functions as the literary hinge. The first seven verses connect the narrative to that of Genesis, though in a strikingly minimalist and selective fashion. The writer/narrator foregoes any details from the Joseph Cycle and focuses instead on identifying Jacob and his twelve sons and the subsequent numerical increase. The narrator brings the introduction to a climax in v. 7, emphasizing the dramatic increase in the Israelite population with an equally dramatic increase in verbs—four in immediate succession and a fifth in the final clause: פרה ("to be fruitful");[105] שׁרץ ("to swarm");[106] רבה ("to multiply/become large");[107] עצם ("to become mighty/powerful");[108] and, describing Israel's presence in the land, מלא (niphal; "to be filled").

---

[105] פרה (Gen 1:22, 28; 8:17; 9:1, 7; 17:6, 20; 26:22; 28:3; 35:11; 41:52; 47:27; 48:4; 49:22). Of these, nine times the verb occurs in combination with רבה: Gen 1:22, 28; 8:17; 9:1, 7; 17:20; 28:3; 35:11; 47:27. Notably, the two verbs both appear in Exod 1:8, not in the more common pairing, "be fruitful and multiply," but separated by the verb שׁרץ.

[106] שׁרץ is used of humans only here and in reference to Noah's family (Gen 9:7). Elsewhere the verb applies to water creatures (Gen 1:20–21; Ezek 47:9); to land creatures (Gen 7:21; 8:17; Lev 11:29, 41–43, 46); and to the plague of frogs in Egypt (Exod 7:28 [Eng 8:3]; Ps 105:30). Noting in particular the verb's association with "creeping things" in the creation account, Robert Alter comments on the dynamic contrast it conveys in Exod 1:7: "instead of the constantly perilous struggle for procreation of the patriarchs, the Hebrews now exhibit the teeming fecundity of the natural world." He adds that "the verbal root for becoming vast…does not figure at the beginning of Genesis, but it is part of God's covenantal promise–For Abraham will surely be a great and mighty nation" (Gen 18:18)' " [Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 308].

[107] רבה occurs 18 times in Gen (1:22, 28; 7:17, 18; 8:17; 9:1, 7; 17:2, 20; 22:17; 26:4, 24; 28:3; 35:11; 38:12; 43:34; 47:27; 48:4). In addition to Exod 1:7, the verb is used again in Exod 1:20 and 7:3 (Yahweh's promise to Moses to "multiply" his signs and wonders before Pharaoh). The term occurs throughout the Old Testament, very often in reference to God's promises/commands to be "fruitful and multiply."

[108] Unlike the other verbs in Exod 1:7, עצם occurs only once in Genesis (26:16), in the context of the might exhibited by Isaac and the resulting request by Abimilech for Isaac to leave. However, it occurs again in Exod 1 along with רבה (v. 20) to describe the growth and might of Israel after the king's failed attempt to use Hebrew midwives to kill male Israelite babies at birth.

The adverbial phrase, בִּמְאֹד מְאֹד ("exceedingly"), occurs only six times in the Old Testament, half of which are in Genesis 17.[109] The echoes of Genesis are unmistakable, especially the promises and blessings associated with creation, Noah, and the Abrahamic covenant; but even more importantly, they implicitly testify to Yahweh's faithfulness to Israel.

Exodus 1:8 marks the beginning of the next section, indicated by the change in subject along with the straightforward syntax in contrast to the climactic profusion of verbs in v. 7. The change in subject matter is indicated by the mention of the "new king" in Egypt (v. 8a), but with a third mention of Joseph in the relative clause (v. 8b), the narrator deftly links the new subject with the earlier content of vv. 1–7 and offers a rationale for the turn of events that follow.[110]

There are a couple of immediate observations we can make from the syntactically straightforward sentence. First and most obvious is that חָדָשׁ describes a king who assumes the throne in Egypt.[111] Context suggests that חָדָשׁ denotes a temporal sense of 'most recent' with respect to the king's predecessors. In addition, the limiting relative clause marked by אֲשֶׁר distinguishes this new king from his predecessors as one "who did not know Joseph." Less clear is whether and/or how the relative clause relates to the king described as חָדָשׁ.

---

[109] Gen 17:2, 6, 20 are all in the context of God's promises to Abram concerning his descendants through Sarah and also through Ishmael. In addition to Exod 1:7, the phrase occurs in Ezek 9:9 and 16:13.

[110] It seems to me that the order of the subjects of the main and relative clause in v. 8 may be intentionally chiastic with respect to the emphases in vv. 1–7 and vv. 8–22. Thus: The new king in Egypt (v. 8a) is representative of the subsequent experience narrated in vv. 9–22; whereas Joseph, mentioned in v. 8b, is the final explicit link to the preceding material in vv. 1–7. Perhaps the "reversed" order of subjects with respect to the adjacent sections is meant to emphasize the reversal of Israel's fortunes between the first and second sections.

[111] When a king is the subject, the verb קוּם ("to arise") most often denotes the physical act of standing up or the rising up with intent or purpose; however, it does occur elsewhere in the sense of ascending the throne, see for example: 2 Kgs 23:25; Dan 7:24, 8:23, 11:2, 3, 7. Alter suggests that the fact that the Pharaoh is referred to as a "king of Egypt" rather than by his Egyptian title "has the effect of casting him as the archetypal evil king (one who kills babies) in a folktale confrontation between the forces of good and of evil" [Robert Alter, *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2004), 300].

A number of interpretations have been proposed to explain the use and meaning of חָדָשׁ in Exod 1:8. One interpretation is that חָדָשׁ conveys "new" in the general sense of "another." The Septuagint, for example, renders the Hebrew term as ἕτερος ("new, another, other")[112] rather than using the most common Greek term for "new," καινός.[113] While the interpretation is reasonable, I would argue that חָדָשׁ, as it occurs in the Old Testament (i.e., in ancient Hebrew), has a more limited semantic range than the Greek word ἕτερος. As I hope the remaining content of this survey will make clear, חָדָשׁ seems to be used a good deal more selectively (and infrequently) than one might expect of a term with a semantic range that included more common words such as "another" or "other." If the latter senses were an option, it seems odd that the writer did not use the common Hebrew term אַחֵר.[114] It is also worth noting that Exod 1:8 is the only place in the LXX that the Greek translators render חָדָשׁ with ἕτερος. Moreover, kings are common subject matter in the Old Testament and yet nowhere else in the biblical corpus is חָדָשׁ used in reference to a king's succession, even where there is a dynastic change. The rather unusual and uncommon occurrence of חָדָשׁ in this context would seem to suggest that the word choice was deliberate and likely in keeping with connotations of חָדָשׁ found elsewhere.

---

[112] BDAG: 399.

[113] Along with the LXX, so also *Bib. Ant.* 9:1. The New Testament recounting of the story likewise uses ἕτερος (Acts 7:18), presumably following the LXX. A number of Old Testament scholars have taken their cue from the LXX. William H. C. Propp, for example, suggests that the LXX rendering may be a paraphrase, possibly derived from Judg 2:10: "*another* (אַחֵר) generation arose" [*Exodus 1–18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1999), 123, 130). I would argue to the contrary that the use of the more common term אַחֵר in Judg 2:10 makes it *more* likely that חָדָשׁ in Exod 1:8 was intentional on the part of the Hebrew writer. See also, Martin Noth, *Exodus,* OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962), 20; Brevard S. Childs, *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974), 5.

[114] אַחֵר denotes "other" or "another" (*HALOT* 1:35).

The Egyptian setting of the passage has led other interpreters to suggest that חָדָשׁ is used to describe this particular king because his ascension to the throne marked the beginning of a new dynasty.[115] If indeed such a change is in view, a "new king" meant the potential of significant change—even in the best scenario. John Durham highlights some of the realities that would have characterized such a shift:

> …the radically changed situation, the drastic rearrangement that comes not when one king succeeds another king of the same family and with similar policies, but with the rise of a new succession of kings bringing an inevitable set of changes…a king who has no obligation to respect, or even to inform himself of, any commitments to a non-native group within the territory of his reign.[116]

While we cannot confirm or deny a new dynasty, we can be assured that any change of political leadership in the ancient world posed a very real threat of unwanted or even dangerous social upheaval. It could have been an occasion fraught with fear and anxiety, especially for non-native people groups living in and around the region. Thus, it seems possible that a skilled storyteller might choose to exploit certain aspects of the situation for dramatic effect. Perhaps the

---

[115] Also, Josephus *Ant. 2.*202; Nahum M. Sarna, *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus* (Philadelphia/New York: Jewish Publication Society, 5751/1991), 4. The biblical text never identifies any of the Pharaohs associated with the Israelites or their ancestors, so it is impossible to say with any certainty whether a new dynasty is in view here. There is, however, archaeological and literary support for an increased presence of foreigners in Egypt and the rule of a non-native group known as the Hyksos during the Second Intermediate period (1786–1550 BC), and some scholars have considered the possibility that the "new king" might be connected with expulsion of the Hyksos by the Egyptian king Ahmose around 1525 BC, marking the start of the New Kingdom (ca. 1550–1220 BC). Based on the evidence of Syro-Canaanite cultural remains, it appears that most of the Semitic-speaking groups remained in Egypt. James Hoffmeier suggests, for example, that there is reasonable probability that the Hebrews were among the so-called "Asiatics" who settled in the Nile Delta and "who prompted the paranoid pharaoh" (Exod 1:8–10) to subject the Israelites to hard labor. Hoffmeier reasons that, over a protracted period time that has been telescoped in the biblical narrative, the forced-labor came to a climax with the construction of Rameses during the time of Rameses the Great [James K. Hoffmeier, "The Exodus and Wilderness Narratives," *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*, eds. Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014), 46–90; 55, 59]. See also, John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 77, 86.

[116] Durham, *Exodus*, 7.

description of the king as חָדָשׁ is a deliberate rhetorical device, drawing attention to the discontinuity and change, in order to heighten the suspense of the narrative.[117]

Even as the description serves to elevate the narrative tension, setting the stage for the impending actions against the Israelites, it also conveys an aspect of newness that we find repeated in the Old Testament—the association of newness with what is unknown. For example, in Deut 32:17 the song recalls the idolatry of Israel, citing sacrifices "to gods they had not known (לֹא יְדָעוּם), new ones (חֲדָשִׁים) that had come recently." Likewise in Isa 48:6, a passage in Second Isaiah to which we will return, Yahweh declares his intentions henceforth to announce "new things (חֲדָשׁוֹת) …which you have not known (לֹא יְדַעְתָּם)."[118] If the use of חָדָשׁ in Exod 1:8 is an intentional literary-rhetorical choice as I am proposing, it also implies the idea that 'newness' (at least in some contexts) has the potential to evoke certain emotional responses or effects—in this case, a heightened literary tension rooted in the social and cultural response to the threat of political change. Whereas newness in the political sphere was apt to generate negative reactions, the opposite was true in the cultic sphere, specifically in the context of Israel's festal celebrations to which I now turn.

The adjective חָדָשׁ is used a number of times to qualify food items as fresh or recently harvested. The three occurrences of חָדָשׁ in Leviticus and Numbers all describe recently harvested grain. In both Lev 23:16 and Num 28:26, חָדָשׁ modifies the noun מִנְחָה ("grain

[117] Robert Alter describes the literary context as "more stylized" (i.e., than the Patriarchal narratives of Genesis), and a "sometimes deliberately schematic, mode of storytelling that in a number of respects…has the feel of a folktale" (Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, 300).

[118] Stated in the positive, Yahweh describes Israel under the "new covenant" he promises to make: "they will all know me" (implying knowledge they did not have previously); cf. Jer 31:34.

offering")[119] and refers to a food offering presented at the Feast of Weeks.[120] Distinguishing it from the grain offering fifty days earlier (Lev 23:10–14), presumably the barley harvest,[121] the "new grain offering" comes from the wheat harvest.[122] Underscoring the temporal dimension of חָדָשׁ the offering represents the "firstfruits" (בִּכּוּרִים) of the harvest (Num 28:26; also, Exod 34:22).[123] The usage of חָדָשׁ here also illustrates another important dimension of newness, both in ancient Israel and elsewhere, which is an association with cultic significance. In this case, the new grain was offered first to Yahweh for it represented the fulfillment of his promised blessings on the land, contingent upon Israel's obedience to the covenant (Lev 26:3, 14).

Lev 26:10 likewise reflects the bountiful harvest Yahweh intended for Israel to enjoy: וַאֲכַלְתֶּם יָשָׁן נוֹשָׁן וְיָשָׁן מִפְּנֵי חָדָשׁ תּוֹצִיאוּ ("You shall eat old store long kept, and you shall clear out the old because of the new"). Appearing here with its antonym, יָשָׁן, חָדָשׁ denotes what is

---

[119] The Hebrew term can denote a general "offering" or "gift" but in cultic contexts always refers specifically to a "grain offering." *HALOT* 2:601 (מִנְחָה B).

[120] While not explicitly named in Lev 23, the counting of fifty days (חֲמִשִּׁים יוֹם; v. 16), or "seven weeks" (v. 15), indicates the "Feast of Weeks" (Exod 34:22; Deut 16:9–10, 16; and 2 Chron 8:13). Also referred to simply as "Weeks" in Num 28:26 and as the "Feast of Harvest" in Exod 23:16, the celebration was one of the three pilgrimage feasts in ancient Israel. Deuteronomy 16:9 specifies counting seven weeks starting at the time when the sickle is first put to the "standing grain" (קָמָה). The alternative expression of counting "fifty days" was the basis for what would later be known as "Pentecost" (Acts 2:1). For an extended treatment of the feasts, particularly as they correspond to the agricultural and cultic calendars of ancient Israel, see esp. ch. 3 in: Oded Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997; repr., Boston: ASOR, 2002). See, among many additional discussions of the Old Testament feasts: Carl E. Armerding, "Festivals and Feasts," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 300–313.

[121] The earlier grain offering accompanied a sheaf from the first of the harvest (עֹמֶר רֵאשִׁית קְצִירְכֶם; Lev 23:10) which was waved by the priest, along with a lamb for a burnt offering, and a drink offering [Gordon J. Wenham, *The Book of Leviticus,* NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1979), 303]; Armerding, "Festivals," 304.

[122] Exod 34:22 explicitly identifies the "Feast of Weeks" as the "firstfruits of the wheat harvest:" (בִּכּוּרֵי קְצִיר חִטִּים).

[123] The Hebrew term בִּכּוּרִים ("firstfruits") represents the "first" of the harvest. Cf. בְּכֹרָה which denotes the "first-born" in human families (e.g., Exod 34:20).

newly harvested, but in this instance the food is Israel's to store and eat.[124] The phrase, נוֹשֶׁן יָשָׁן,[125] denotes what is old and has been long-stored, or as one lexicon describes it: "old and stale."[126] While the latter might conjure up an image of consuming stale and undesirable fare, such a connotation would miss the theological point of the statement entirely. Ancient Israel was an agrarian society, and the success of any annual crop was a matter of life and death. A productive harvest meant the threat of not having enough had been averted for another season. It reflected the provision of food such that Israel *could* eat what had been stored instead of having to hoard it, lest there be no new harvest yield to take its place (cf. Lev 26:14, 20, 26). In other words, the theological message of Lev 26:10 is that Israel will "eat the old to make room for the new," precisely because there *is* something new.[127] The fruit of harvest, whether an offering or a meal, was a positive manifestation of newness in ancient Israel, evoking a joyful response.[128]

---

[124] The only other use of חָדָשׁ to modify what is naturally produced and/or edible is in Song 7:14 [Eng 7:13]. The lover has stored up "choice things" (most likely a reference to fruits; cf. Song 4:14, 16) for her beloved, "new and also old" (חֲדָשִׁים גַּם־יְשָׁנִים). Like Lev 26:10, חָדָשׁ occurs with its antonym יָשָׁן ("old").

[125] The same root, ישׁן, occurs as a substantive adjective ("what is old") and, immediately following, as a niphal participle, most likely with a relative function and the sense, "that is/has been growing old (i.e., "stored")."

[126] *HALOT* 2: 447 ישׁן.

[127] The verb **יצא** (hiphil) denotes the motion of "bringing out/bringing forth" what has been stored. The compound preposition מִפְּנֵי, when used with such verbs of motion can have an ablative function, that is to say, the preposition denotes motion "*away from* a position 'before' or 'in front of' the object of the preposition" [Arnold and Choi, *Hebrew Syntax*, § 4.1.14(a)]. Thus, the old would be brought out to move it "away from" or "out of the way" of the new. Alternatively, the preposition can function causally, in which case, what has been stored would be brought out *because* of the presence of the new. I think the latter is more likely given the opening clause that indicates that what has been long-stored will be eaten (or as mentioned above, *can be eaten*)—not simply moved out of the way as if to convey the issue is one of storage.

[128] The attitude of joyful celebration in regard to the feasts, along with food and sustenance in general, is especially characteristic of the Deuteronomic writer (e.g., Deut 16:11, 14). Indeed, the inherent danger is that Israel will grow accustomed to the abundance and forget the covenant and its promises (Deut 8:6–16). See, Nathan MacDonald, *Not Bread Alone: The Uses of Food in the Old Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 79. On joyful celebration of the festivals, see also, Bill T. Arnold, "Israelite Worship as Envisioned and Prescribed in Deuteronomy 12," *ZABR* 22 (2016):161–75.

Deuteronomy contains four occurrences of חָדָשׁ. Three of the four appear amongst the various laws that comprise Deut 19–25. The first concerns a man who has built a new house (בַּיִת־חָדָשׁ)[129] but has not yet begun to live (חנך)[130] in it (Deut 20:5). Faced with going into battle, he is to be exempted and allowed to return home, lest he die in battle and another man begins to live in it.[131] The second (Deut 22:8) also refers to a "new house." The law stipulates that the builder must make a "parapet" (מַעֲקֶה)[132] so that blood guilt (דָּמִים) does not come upon the house should someone fall from it. According to Deut 24:5, the man who has taken a "new wife" (אִשָּׁה חֲדָשָׁה)[133] is also exempted from military participation and permitted to remain at home for one year with his wife.[134] Thus, חָדָשׁ denotes a basic temporal sense of 'recent,' as both

---

[129] Attested also in Akkadian: *bītu eššu* ("new house"); "I have sent you a present for the new house" (*CAD* E 374b).

[130] Most English translations render the verb חנך as "dedicate." Alternatively, Stefan C. Reif, following the work of Oliver S. Rankin, argues that the basic meaning of the term חנך is "begin" or "initiate," and that the English word "dedicate," as it is normally understood, does not accurately convey the correct sense in the context of Deut 20:5. Quoting Rankin, Reif states the more accurate meaning of חנך is "'initiating the use of' ('not removing from the realm of the profane…to that of the sacred, but the putting to common use')." He notes further that the LXX translation (ἐγκαινίζω) supports this view ["Dedicated to חנך," *VT* 22 (1972): 495–501, 495]; Oliver S. Rankin, *The Origins of the Festival of Hanukkah. The Jewish New-Age Festival* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1930), 27–45. Robert Alter comments that the verb might refer to an actual ceremony of dedication, as it became used in later Hebrew, or simply "to inaugurate," or "to initiate use" (Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, 977).

[131] Deuteronomy contains the only Old Testament laws concerning warfare with ch. 20 the source of the primary ones (see also 21:10–14; 23:9–14; 24:5). J. G. McConville, *Deuteronomy*, ApOTC 5 (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2002), 316.

[132] The roof of a typical ancient Israelite house could function in several ways. Examples from the biblical narratives show that the roof (and the upper story) could serve as a living area, a place to sleep (1 Sam 9:25–25; 2 Sam 11:2), and a place for worship (Jer 19:13; 2 Kings 23:12). See Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 35.

[133] Akk. *ḫadaššu* (and *ḫadaššatu*) may be West Semitic loanwords. An Akkadian synonym list (Malku I:173) equates *ḫadaššu* with *kallatu* (“bride”) (*CAD* Ḫ 6:22); Hayim ben Yosef Tawil, *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Ktav, 2009), 101. Cf. Ug. *trḥ ḫdt* for a newly married man (*HALOT* 1:294).

[134] Whereas the law in Deut 20:5 expresses humanitarian concern for those in military service (i.e., husbands), the law of exemption in Deut 24:5 is similar but concludes with the notion that the man might "gladden

new house and new wife signify entities that were not present previously. Understood in this way, חָדָשׁ modifies its object in relationship to the past. However, there also seems to be a sense in which newness marks a beginning and is oriented to the future.

Notably, these three examples from Deuteronomy all share a connection to the family household—the bedrock of ancient Israel's kinship-based social structure.[135] The importance of the family "enterprise" to any ancient people group can hardly be overestimated. The military exemptions (Deut 20:5, 24:5) underscore this priority, attempting to insure as they did that Israel would survive and continue to be "fruitful and multiply." There is truth in the quip: "…procreation was a more valuable defense than swordsmanship."[136] Building a new house and/or taking a new wife would have marked the beginning of a family unit, the assumption being that children would be born, thus assuring the posterity of the family line. Anthropologist Mary Douglas has suggested that there may have been underlying values of order and wholeness associated with the idea of holiness to which Israel was called to live.[137] Simply put, the value

---

his wife" which, as Alter has pointed out, might suggest humanitarian concern for the bride as well (Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, 997).

[135] King and Stager describe the significance of the household as "the focus of the religious, social, and economic sphere of Israelite life and...at the center of Israel's history, faith, and traditions" (*Life in Biblical Israel*, 39). The traditional ancient household, often referred to as the *bêt 'āb* (lit. "father's house"), included the male head of household (husband/father), his wife or wives, their children, and slaves. As sons married, their wives became members of the household, along with children born to them. Daughters remained in a household until they married, at which point they became members of their husbands' household. The members of this multi-generational household (probably not more than three generations given average life expectancy) generally lived in the same house or in adjoining houses (*Life in Biblical Israel*, 36–39).

[136] King and Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, 37.

[137] According to Douglas, the idea of holiness goes beyond the root meaning of separateness and entails wholeness and completeness. In a social context, the value placed on wholeness is demonstrated by the importance of an enterprise, once begun, being carried out to its completion. Douglas suggests that the situation described in Deut 20:5 in which a man has built a new house but not yet occupied it reflects a state of incompletion. While she does not dwell on much evidence for the notion, she points to the "strong suggestion in other passages that a man should not put his hand to the plough and then turn back" [*Purity and Danger* (New York: Routledge, 1966), 63,

placed on wholeness means that once an enterprise has been started, it needs to reach completion. Thus, for example, the notion of 'building a new house' was not merely the construction of a structure but was representative of a larger whole that only reached completion when put to use for its intended purposes (i.e., living in it).

Schlomo Bunimovitz and Avraham Faust have gone further with some of Douglas's research and have explored the idea that "the house" is a medium of communication within a culture, reinforcing cultural systems on those inside and outside its walls.[138] Using the example of the so-called "four-room, pillared house," ubiquitous among the material remains of ancient Israel,[139] the authors state: "[B]uilding a house according to the traditional code of a society communicates a social message—"we're part of the 'community'"—and enhances the coherence of that community."[140] Surely that message of community would also help explain the importance of including a parapet when building a new house, not only for the physical safety of those outside the house but for the spiritual protection of those inside, lest the house /household suffer the guilt of innocent bloodshed.

Importantly for the present investigation, these particular examples and the socio-historical values that inform them bring up a dimension of newness that I would suggest is more significant than has often been realized. By definition, 'new' relates to the past in some way; it is

---

65]. For a more extensive summary and review of Douglas's work, especially in regard to the dietary laws in Leviticus, see MacDonald, *Not Bread Alone*, 18–28.

[138] Shlomo Bunimovitz and Avraham Faust, "Building Identity: The Four-Room House and the Israelite Mind," *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina Centennial Symposium* (Jerusalem: 2000), ed. W. G. Dever and S. Gitin (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 411–423; esp. 418–19.

[139] Although the same type of four-room dwelling has been discovered outside of Israelite settlement sites, the plan became a hallmark of Israelite architecture during the period of the Monarchy" (Amihai Mazar, *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 B.C.E.* (New York: Doubleday, 1990), 344; 340–44].

[140] Bunimovitz and Faust, "Building Identity," 418.

understood that what is new, whether material or immaterial, differs from that which existed (or did not exist) previously. What is perhaps understood but less emphasized is the extent to which 'new' relates to the future. That is to say, depending on how the word is used, we accept that 'new' can also have connotations of 'beginning' (e.g., a new day). However, the broader cultural implications of building a 'new house' or taking a 'new wife' (as discussed above) suggest the need moving forward to be more attentive to the possibility of a future-oriented emphasis associated with the use of חָדָשׁ.

The fourth occurrence of חָדָשׁ in Deuteronomy appears in ch. 32. Part of the Song of Moses that comprises ch. 32, the term is used to describe "gods" (אֱלֹהִים) in v. 17.[141] The connotations of new in the context of gods other than Yahweh remains is decidedly, and not surprisingly, negative. The immediate unit in which חָדָשׁ occurs (vv. 15–18) gives detailed expression to Israel's coming apostasy. Verse 15 introduces Israel's problem: "Jeshurun" (i.e., Israel) has forsaken "God" (אֱלוֹהַּ) who made him and scoffed at the "Rock" (צוּר) of his salvation. Significantly, the two terms "God" and "Rock" are repeated in v. 18, creating an inclusio while also emphasizing who it is that they have scorned. The inclusio brackets vv. 16–17, in which a litany of expressions reveals the specific nature of their sin—idolatry, through and through. They have roused the jealousy and anger of God with "strange/foreign ones" (זָרִים) and "abominations" (תּוֹעֵבֹת) (v. 16). Further elaborating on the 'gods,' v. 17 refers to them variously: as demons, not god, gods they had never known, *new ones* (חֲדָשִׁים) that had come recently

[141] The song (שִׁירָה) that constitutes Deut 32 is first mentioned in Deut 31, and only in ch. 31 is it explicitly referred to as a "song" (שִׁירָה). In the context of Moses' approaching the time of his death, Yahweh informs him of Israel's future rebellion and commands Moses: "Write this song and teach it to the people of Israel. Put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the people of Israel" (31:19; see also vv. 21, 22, 30). Interestingly, the Hebrew text never uses a verb meaning "to sing" when the song is mentioned. The introduction to the song in Deut 31:30 says: "Moses *spoke* (דָּבַר) the words of this song (שִׁירָה)."

(מִקָּרֹב), and not ones their fathers had dreaded.[142] The referent of the substantive, חֲדָשִׁים ("new ones"), is most obviously "gods"—perhaps only in a general sense based on the previous lines, but possibly more specifically, "gods they did not know."[143] The adverb, מִקָּרֹב, is a compound term which denotes "recently,"[144] thus conveying the temporal sense commonly associated with חָדָשׁ. While there may already be a sense that the חֲדָשִׁים are qualitatively different from the gods/idols of the past, I would suggest that the difference is definitively conveyed (along with an affective dimension) in the final expression, "whom your fathers had never dreaded."

חָדָשׁ in the Historical Books

The historical books each contain references to objects that qualify as 'new' in the temporal sense of having recently come or been made. The qualitative nature of the newness depends on the object, its materials, and its use.

The initial use of חָדָשׁ in the historical books occurs in Joshua 9:13 where wineskins (lit. "skin-bottles of wine; "נאדות חַיָּיִן) are described as new.[145] Wineskins were made of animal skins that when new had a fresh, supple quality, allowing for expansion as wine fermented. As the skins aged, they became increasingly dry and brittle, thus more susceptible to holes, tearing, and bursting. As part of a ruse to persuade Joshua and the Israelites to make a covenant with

---

[142] Alter translates the first line, "They sacrificed to the demons, the ungods," and points out that the repeated negative particles are a distinctive stylistic trait in the poem (e.g., לֵ֣א אֱלֹהַ֔ in v. 17; see also לֹ֣א־עָ֔ם in v. 21, which Alter renders as "unpeople"); Alter, *Five Books of Moses*, 1042.

[143] As noted earlier in this investigation, Deut 32:17 is one example that suggests 'new' (חָדָשׁ) sometimes conveys a sense of "unknown; previously unknown" (אֱלֹהִ֥ים לֹא־יְדָע֖וּם; "gods they did not know"). See also Isa 48:6–7.

[144] *HALOT* 3: 1139, קָרוֹב 5a2.

[145] The ubiquity of wineskins and their widely known characteristics in the ancient world continues to be evident in the New Testament in Jesus' use of the imagery: Matt 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38.

them, avoiding the fate of Jericho and Ai, people of Gibeon appear disguised as travelers from afar. They offer up evidence of their long journey in the form of dried-up crumbs of food, worn out garments and sandals, and wineskins[146] they claim were "new" (חֲדָשִׁים) when they were filled but have burst and are now "worn out, torn, and mended" (Josh 9:4, 13).[147] As this example illustrates, wineskins are inherently subject to the normal breakdown of natural materials over the course of time and lose their original capacity without ongoing repairs. However, the process of deterioration also implies that "newness" has connotations of peak condition and functional capacity for their intended purposes. This appears to be the case not only for wineskins, but for any utensil, tool, or weapon subject to wearing down with use and/or passage of time. For example, the use of חָדָשׁ in 2 Sam 21:16 refers to a weapon. A threshing sledge (Isa 41:15) is also described as "new," "sharp," and with "teeth."[148] Although used in a figurative sense, the latter description seems clearly intended to emphasize the implement's superior condition and readiness to thresh.

The first occurrence in Judges offers an example very much like the one discussed in Deuteronomy with regard to the Song of Moses. This appearance in Judges 5:8 is likewise in a song, the Song of Deborah, and likewise uses the expression, "new gods."[149] The

---

[146] See also Job 32:19. "New wineskins" should not be confused with "new wine" (תִּירוֹשׁ; Isa 65:8, Hos 4:11, 9:2; Hag 1:11; Zech 9:17). The adjective חָדָשׁ is never used in the Old Testament to modify the noun, יַיִן ("wine"). In the New Testament, a single Greek term denoting "new wine" (γλεῦκος) occurs in Acts 2:13. However, four occurrences in the synoptic gospels use the adjectival phrase, οἶνον νέον (Matt 9:17; Mark 2:22; Luke 5:37, 38). The Greek term νέος which denotes "new" or "fresh" is used when the word "wine" is modified, whereas καινός is used to modify "wineskin" (ἀσκός).

[147] The adjectival phrase, "new wineskins" is used figuratively in Job 32:19 to describe Job's belly, filled with words he can barely contain, like wine with no vent, like new wineskins ready to burst (בקע; meaning to "split, burst open," occurring here in the niphal and in the hithpael in Josh 9:13).

[148] See full discussion of this passage below in Ch. 4.

[149] The opening of the Song represents something of a reverse of what we observed in the Song of Moses. In Deut 32 it is said that Moses "spoke" the words of the "song." The Song of Deborah (Judg 5:1) opens with, "Then

Song captures in poetry the story of a military victory that frees Israel from the yoke of foreign oppression under Jabin, the king of Canaan. In this case, God's deliverance comes under the leadership of Deborah with the help of Barak. As one observes repeatedly in the book of Judges, foreign oppression of Israel always comes as a result of their sin and the consequent judgment of Yahweh. It is in this context that we encounter the expression "new gods" (אֱלֹהִים חֲדָשִׁים), a standard adjectival phrase in which חָדָשׁ functions as an attributive adjective modifying אֱלֹהִים. Once again, as was observed in the song of Moses, the expression "new gods" has negative connotations, and indeed, the mention of choosing "new gods" in Judg 5:8 is associated with dire circumstances—war in their midst and no access to the necessary weapons.

The phrase עֲבֹתִים חֲדָשִׁים ("new ropes") occurs three times in Judges, all in connection with efforts to bind Samson (Judg 15:13; 16:11, 12). In the first instance, men of Judah bind Samson with not one but two new ropes in order to hand him over to the Philistines. Ropes were woven from natural fibers, so "new" not only suggests their recent construction but also their

---

Deborah *sang* … on that day." The verb used is שִׁיר ("to sing;" feminine singular) but no word for "song" occurs here (in contrast to the Song of Moses)—the text indicates *when* she sang (i.e., "on that day") but not *what* she sang. The verb recurs in v. 3 ("I will sing"), and only in v. 12 does the sense of a "song" finally occur (i.e., שִׁיר; masculine form of the same term used in Deut 31). However, the verb used for giving expression to the "song" is not the earlier verb שִׁיר, meaning "to sing," but an imperative use of דָּבַר ("to speak"). The close connection between the verb and noun is indicated with the use of the maqqeph, but it seems to raise the question as to why the verb "sing" was not selected for this collocation when it has already occurred twice. While the combination is found elsewhere in the Old Testament, the collocation of a verb and noun that share the same form may account for the choice. However, while I can only speculate, I would suggest that the reason has to do with the opening line of v. 12: עוּרִי עוּרִי דְּבוֹרָה ("Awake! Awake, Deborah!"). The same imperative duo is repeated, thus creating a parallelism between the two lines (i.e., two cola), but, as is typical of poetic parallelism, the second half of the line differs. Thus, instead of דְּבוֹרָה ("Deborah"), the poet uses דַּבְּרִי־שִׁיר ("speak forth in song" or something similar). The use of דַּבְּרִי repeats the same three consonants as in דְּבוֹרָה, and the maqqeph indicates the collocation, דַּבְּרִי־שִׁיר, functions as a single unit.

strength, which has not yet been compromised or weakened by age or use.[150] Since Samson has already demonstrated his superhuman exploits and strength, it seems highly likely that the emphasis on the ropes' newness is a literary ploy used by the narrator to heighten the dramatic suspense: the Judahites promise not to kill Samson, but are two new ropes sufficient to bind him? Alas, they are not! Just as the Philistines arrive to take Samson, the spirit of Yahweh rushes upon him and the "two new ropes" become like burning flax, they melt off of his hands, and the captive hero escapes!

The failure of two new ropes to restrain Samson in this episode is, however, but a literary set-up for their use in the next story. Samson assures Delilah that if she binds him with "new ropes," he will be weak (Judg 16:11).[151] This time the strength of the new ropes is emphasized in the relative clause specifying new ropes "which have not been used" (אֲשֶׁר לֹא־נַעֲשָׂה בָהֶם; v. 11b).[152] Of course, the audience/reader is already privy to the truth about Samson vs. new ropes; but this extra little detail in the description of new ropes no doubt adds to the amusement elicited by the illogic of the unfolding drama.[153]

---

[150] Similarly, Barry G. Webb: "ropes that have suffered no wear and tear from being used" [*The Book of Judges*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 402]; also, Robert Alter, *Ancient Israel The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: A Translation with Commentary* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2013), 186.

[151] Similarly, Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, NAC 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999), 444.

[152] Susan Niditch describes the new ropes (ch. 16) as "unused but not raw," observing a progression in the materials used in Delilah's three attempts. Each one represents a product "closer to 'culture.' " The first are cords made from animal gut, thus a material in virtually raw form. The new ropes are "a somewhat more culture intensive product, having undergone some process whereby fiber is cultivated, harvested, treated, and woven," and the third, the "razor, a manmade tool" [Susan Niditch, *Judges,* OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008), 169–70].

[153] The literary-rhetorical ploys continue with Delilah's repeated pleas, and attempts, and failures to discover the secret to Samson's strength for the expressed purpose of handing him over to the Philistines. However, the rhetorical climax is surely the tragic twist when Samson ultimately gives in and, presumably with full knowledge of Delilah's motives, he discloses the secret to his strength and is taken captive by the Philistines.

The remaining occurrences of חָדָשׁ in the historical books are similar to those in Judges in that new refers to objects recently constructed and not yet used: a new cart (1 Sam 6:7; 2 Sam 6:3; 1 Chr 13:7); a new garment (1 Kgs 11:29, 30);[154] and a new bowl (2 Kgs 2:20). Importantly, in these examples, rather than an emphasis on prime functional condition, there is a cultic, religious value attached to what is new. For example, a "new cart" is specified for the transport of the ark of God. In the first instance, the ark has been captured and is in the hands of the Philistines until severe affliction causes them to prepare for its return to Israelite territory. Aware of divine power at work, they attempt to appease the God of Israel in the process by fashioning golden images and commanding that a "new cart" (עֲגָלָה חֲדָשָׁה;1 Sam 6:7) be "made" (עָשָׂה) to carry the ark.[155] Moreover, the new cart is to be pulled by two milking cows never before yoked (1 Sam 6:7).

As we see in 2 Sam 6, Israel acts in similar fashion. When David decides to have the ark of God brought up to the city of David, the ark is transported on a "new cart" (v.3).[156] The underlying notion in these stipulations is that whatever is to be used for cultic purposes must be clean and undefiled; therefore, it must not have been put to prior use, specifically profane, common usage. Thus, when associated with sacred purposes, the unused condition of an item is a significant aspect of its newness.

---

[154] Akkadian (*eššu* < **edšu*; *HALOT* 1:294) attests examples of similar usage: "2 TÚG *labēru ša nīqiāte* 1 *eššu* 1 *laberu* " ("2 garments for making sacrifices, 1 new, 1 old") (*CAD* E 374b; Tawil, *Akkadian Lexical Companion*, 101).

[155] This example also demonstrates that the association of newness and cultic use was not unique to Israel but extended to the ancient Near East and beyond.

[156] The same episode is recounted in 1 Chr 13 with only a minor variation related to new; the cart is explicitly referred to as "new" (חָדָשׁ) twice in 2 Sam 6:3 but only once in 1 Chr 13:7.

חָדָשׁ in the Wisdom Literature

As in the Historical books, we have but a handful of occurrences of חָדָשׁ in the Wisdom Literature—one in the book of Job and two in the book of Ecclesiastes. The single reference to the adjective in Job comes in the midst of a speech in Job 29 that belongs to Job himself. In it he recounts the goodness of his life prior to the all the trouble that has come upon him, or as he describes that earlier time, "months of old, as in the days when God watched over me" (29:2). The discourse continues with a lengthy recounting of his good deeds, his reputation, and his important stature in the community. Among the attributes Job associates with himself previously is his "glory," expressed in the phrase, "my glory (כָּבוֹד) new (חָדָשׁ) with me" (Job 29:20a) The immediately preceding series of metaphors drawn from nature—roots open to water and branches in the dew overnight—convey a sense of freshness and vitality, perhaps even a sense of youthful vigor and strength. Thus, the newness of Job's glory recalls his earlier days when he was in his prime and his importance, that is, his glory was unmatched.[157]

The uses of חָדָשׁ in Ecclesiastes are only two, but they are somewhat unique among the term's occurrences. First, they convey what is perhaps the most conceptual, abstract sense of

---

[157] Indeed, a number of English translations render חָדָשׁ as "fresh" (e.g., ESV, NIV, ASV, RSV), reserving the term "new" (or "renew") to translate a *hiphil* form of the verb חלף in the subsequent line. The connotation of natural freshness corresponds with Job's descriptions of the earlier part of his life. See, for example, 29:4a: (כַּאֲשֶׁר הָיִיתִי בִּימֵי חָרְפִּי). Although the line translated literally reads, "when I was in my autumn days," the sense is more akin to the English expression, "when I was in my prime." Pope explains that the term for "autumn" (חרף) carries the basic meaning of "to be early, young," as descriptive of green olives (Akk) or spring lamb (Arabic). The meaning "autumn" developed because of the change in the Hebrew calendar from the spring turn of the year to an autumnal new year [Marvin H. Pope, *Job*, *AB* 15, 3rd ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1973), 207–209]. Rashi cited rabbinic use of the term for early clouds in contrast to late clouds (Ta ʿnit 3b, Niddah 65b; Pope, *Job*, 209). See below for discussion of חלף as a related term of the verbal form of חדש. I disagree with Habel's translation of "liver" in place of "glory" primarily because of his explanation: "Job had hoped that his inner being would be perpetually renewed throughout his life" [Norman C. Habel, *The Book of Job*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985), 403, 411]. I am not convinced that the underlying idea is one of lifelong, perpetual renewal. I would argue that "glory" is appropriate, especially in light of Job 19:9.

חָדָשׁ that we encounter in the Old Testament. Second, it is the only time that the adjective is negated (1:9). Finally, Eccl 1:9–11 is the only place outside of Second Isaiah in which חָדָשׁ appears along with the adjectives, רִאשׁוֹן ("former/first") and אַחֲרוֹן ("latter/last") in close literary proximity.

Qohelet ("the preacher"), says:

מַה־שֶּׁהָיָה הוּא שֶׁיִּהְיֶה	9a	What has been is what will be;
וּמַה־שֶּׁנַּעֲשָׂה הוּא שֶׁיֵּעָשֶׂה	9b	What has happened is what will happen;
וְאֵין כָּל־חָדָשׁ תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ׃	9c	There is nothing new under the sun.
יֵשׁ דָּבָר שֶׁיֹּאמַר רְאֵה־זֶה חָדָשׁ הוּא	10a	A thing exists about which one might say, "See this—it is new!"
כְּבָר הָיָה לְעֹלָמִים אֲשֶׁר הָיָה מִלְּפָנֵנוּ׃	10b	It has already existed for the ages that were before us.
אֵין זִכְרוֹן לָרִאשֹׁנִים וְגַם לָאַחֲרֹנִים שֶׁיִּהְיוּ	11a	There is no remembrance of things past, nor of the later things yet to come
לֹא־יִהְיֶה לָהֶם זִכָּרוֹן עִם שֶׁיִּהְיוּ לָאַחֲרֹנָה׃	11b	will there be remembrance among those who come after (still later).

The first two lines of v. 9 are syntactically identical: the opening interrogative pronoun, מַה,[158] is followed by a verb in the perfect, then the independent pronoun הוּא (functioning as a copula), and finally, a repetition of the first verb, but in the imperfect. The amount of repetition, manifested on multiple levels (i.e., syntactical, grammatical, and even lexical), is undoubtedly intentional. It would seem that the writer is imitating in poetic form and structure the unceasing repetition that characterizes the world of his observations. Similarly, the selected verbs, היה ("to be") and עשׂה ("to do, make"), are common and non-specific—perhaps a further nod to the sense of monotony. The profound redundancy conveyed in the first two lines is summed up in the third

[158] The indefinite use of מַה in this collocation with שֶׁ occurs in the Old Testament only in Ecclesiastes (see also 3:15, 22; 6:10; 7:24; 8:7; 10:14). See Waltke and O'Connor § 18.3e.

clause: "There is nothing new under the sun." The existential and inclusive nature of his assertion is emphasized by the combination of the negative particle of existence, אַיִן, and the word כָּל ("all"). This realm in which Qohelet claims there can be nothing new, in which Qoheleth toils, and in which there is nothing to be gained is consistently and repeatedly referred to as "under the sun" (תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ).[159] Only at death does one leave this "under the sun" realm—in fact, one must leave it to someone who comes after—someone who did not "toil" for it (2:18–19, 21).[160]

He has observed the cycles of nature-—those of the sun, of the wind, and of the flowing streams—and they all adhere to patterns of unceasing repetition (e.g., 1:5, 6, 7). One senses in Qoheleth's words a certain frustration, even irritation, with the natural realm, as if it exhibits a will of its own that is purposefully and stubbornly unrelenting: the sun "pants" to its place (v.5); the sea is not full, but that does not matter, because the streams flow again (v. 7). Verse 8 opens with a summary statement to the effect that, "All things/matters are weariness." The term "all" (כֹּל) emphasizes the inclusive nature of the general statement, while the subsequent clauses both particularize and underscore the characterization. The latter is accomplished primarily through the use of threes and repetition. There are three clauses, and three modes of sense or expression are named: speech, sight, and hearing. Moreover, each clause features grammatical and syntactical repetition: a finite verb negated by לֹא and followed by an infinitive.

---

[159] The prepositional phrase, "under the sun" (תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ), is unique to Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament, occurring 29 times: 1:3, 9, 14; 2:11, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22; 3:16; 4:1, 3, 7, 15; 5:12 [Eng 5:13], 17 [Eng 5:18]; 6:1, 12; 8:9, 15 (2x), 17; 9:3, 6, 9 (2x), 11, 13; 10:5. It seems worth noting that the recurring phrase is always associated with the experienced, observable, and temporally limited realm of earthly existence.

[160] While Qoheleth commends enjoyment (e.g., 2:24; 3:13; 5:17; 8:15, etc.), he nevertheless characterizes life "under the sun" as one of "toil" and "toiling" (עמל). The root עמל occurs in both verb and noun forms (sometimes together) 35 times in Ecclesiastes, ten of which contain both עמל and תַּחַת הַשָּׁמֶשׁ ("under the sun"). The toil with which one toils under the sun corresponds to "the few days of his life that God has given him" (5:17 [5:18]; similarly, 8:15, "the days of his life…under the sun").

The cyclical view described in vv. 4–7 is common to the ancient Near East and the ancient world in general. As Eliade has described in his work, underlying this cyclical understanding is the notion of archetypes. Everything that happens is but a *type*, that is, a particular manifestation of an *archetype*. Eliade asserts that it is this imitation of "an archetype—the exemplary event" that gives meaning to the endless repetition.[161]

Thus, the idea that "there is nothing new under the sun" need not be interpreted as a naive denial of the uniqueness of specific events or actions. Rather, the two seemingly opposed notions cohere when understood as type and archetype. Michael Fox offers a contemporary example to illustrate the point: "World War II, the book of Qoheleth, the death of Lincoln—these had not happened before. But in some sense Qoheleth would regard their reality as inhering in their realization of archetypes: war, book, assassination. Only in that way can he deny their newness."[162]

חָדָשׁ in the Prophets

The role of the Israelite prophets as Yahweh's message bearers to his people can hardly be overemphasized. While the office of a prophet was known elsewhere in the ancient Near East, no other nation left a corpus anywhere near that of ancient Israel. What we find in this grand corpus with regard to the vocabulary of newness is a striking contrast. On the one hand, there is not a single reference to חָדָשׁ in the entire Book of the Twelve (i.e., the Minor Prophets). On the other hand, the uses of חָדָשׁ in Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel not only outnumber its occurrences

---

[161] Mircea Eliade, *The Myth of the Eternal Return*: *Cosmos and History*, trans. Willard R. Trask, 2nd ed., (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1954; repr., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), 90; cited also by Michael V. Fox, *A Time to Tear Down & A Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 168.

[162] Fox, *A Time to Tear Down*, 168.

elsewhere, but they are arguably the most significant uses of the term theologically anywhere in the Old Testament. As I mentioned in Ch. One, the fact that all the prophetic texts are also exilic or post-exilic (to the extent that we can determine) led Westermann to exclaim: "only the exilic period—no other period in the whole history of Israel!—discussed an innovation in the history of God's relationship with Israel."[163] Moreover, these words of "innovation in the history of God's relationship with Israel" would resonate with the writers of the New Testament in significant ways like no other uses of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament.

Since the heart of this investigation is the theological and exegetical study of Isaiah 40–48 (Second Isaiah) that is below in Part Two, in addition to occurrences in Jeremiah and Ezekiel, I will address only the uses of חָדָשׁ in Isaiah that are outside of chs. 40–48. We turn first to the book of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 31:21–22

The first mention of חָדָשׁ in Jeremiah comes in the enigmatic verse, Jer 31:22. Verses 21–22 read as follows:

v. 21 "Set up road markers for yourself; make yourself guideposts;
consider well the highway, the road by which you went.
Return, O virgin Israel, return to your cities.
v. 22 How long will you waver,[164] O faithless daughter? (עַד־מָתַי֙ תִּתְחַמָּקִ֔ין הַבַּ֥ת הַשּׁוֹבֵבָ֖ה)
For Yahweh has created a new thing on the earth (כִּי־בָרָ֥א יְהוָ֛ה חֲדָשָׁ֖ה בָּאָ֑רֶץ):
a woman encircles a man." (נְקֵבָ֖ה תְּסוֹבֵ֥ב גָּֽבֶר׃ ס)

---

[163] Westermann, *TLOT* 1:395.

[164] The Hebrew term is חמק, here in the *Hithpael* (imperfect, second person fem sg) is a *hapax legomenon* (cf. the *Qal* in Song 5:6). It seems to denote "turning hither and thither," thus the sense of "waver" (*HALOT* 1:330; *DCH* 3:258). If the latter is indeed the meaning, it seems to be an example of the iterative notion of the *Hithpael* stem, that is, the notion of repeated action [e.g., Arnold and Choi, §3.1.5 (*d*)].

Perhaps the only consensus among scholars regarding the interpretation of Jer 31:22 is that it is the most difficult verse in the book of Jeremiah. A majority of scholars seem to agree that it is meant to be something of a riddle, in which case there is yet to be found a definitive solution. Barbara Bozak summarizes some of the main interpretations as follows:

> The woman will turn into a man; the woman will protect the man since there will be such peace that women will be able to protect the city (metaphor for complete peace); the woman will court the man, the wife will take the initiative with her husband (metaphor for Israel taking the initiative in her relationship with Yhwh); the woman will surround or embrace the man in the sense that there will once again be procreation in the land.[165]

As enigmatic as the interpretation is, the "new thing" is described in Hebrew with a straightforward simplicity of a three-word clause. The subject is נְקֵבָה (a "female, woman"). The verb is a polel form of סָבַב,[166] which can mean "to encompass, surround" in a protective manner or "to surround, overwhelm" in a more threatening sense. It can also denote "to gather around," "to walk around" (as in a ritual procession) or "to wander around."[167] The object of the verb, גֶּבֶר, refers to a "man" as a human being in general, or a "man as distinct from woman," in particular. The term also frequently has connotations of a mighty man, a warrior (e.g., Job 38:3, 40:7).[168]

The vast majority of proposed solutions are based on the poetic units in Jer 30–31 leading up to 31:22. In contrast, Henk Leene makes a compelling (and convincing) case that it is the

---

[165] Barbara A. Bozak, *Life 'Anew': A Literary-Theological Study of Jer. 30–31*, AnBib 122 (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 103–104; quotation cited by Patrick D. Miller, "The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001): 553–926; 811; see similarly, Leene, *Newness,* 200, n. 115. For another convincing solution, based on the units in Jer 30–31 leading up to 31:21–22, see Bernhard W. Anderson's essay entitled " 'The Lord Has Created Something New': A Stylistic Study of Jeremiah 31:15–22," ch. 11 in *From Creation to New Creation*, OBT (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994), 179–94.

[166] Note the variety of words from the same root, שׁוּב ("to turn back, to return").

[167] See, e.g., *DCH* 6:108. Especially in light of the interpretation Leene suggests for Jer 31:22, discussed below, it may be worth noting that סָבַב appears once again in Jer 31 at v. 39 with connotations of a curving of the wall surrounding the city of Jerusalem when it is rebuilt in the "days to come."

[168] *DCH* 2:313–14; *HALOT* 1:175–76.

subsequent unit (vv. 23–26) that offers a plausible explanation of Jer 31:21–22, citing as evidence unique word connections along with a number of syntactic elements that are unique to vv. 23–26,[169] which reads as follows:

v. 23 Thus says Yahweh of hosts, the God of Israel:
"Once more they shall use these words *in the land of Judah* (בְּאֶרֶץ יְהוּדָה) *and in its/his cities* (וּבְעָרָיו), when I restore their fortunes:
'Yahweh bless you, O habitation of righteousness, O holy hill!'
v. 24 And Judah shall dwell *in her* (בָּהּ),
and all its/his cities (וְכָל־עָרָיו) together
and the farmers and those who wander with their flocks."
v. 25 For I will satisfy the weary soul, and every languishing soul I will replenish."
v. 26 At this I awoke and looked, and my sleep was pleasant to me."

Leene points out, first, that the word אֶרֶץ ("earth, land") as well as the names of countries are generally feminine in Hebrew; thus, one would expect a feminine suffix on "cities" in v. 23 since they belong to "the land of Judah;" in fact, however, the suffix on "cities" is masculine. Viewing the unexpected masculine suffix as intentional, Leene foregoes the standard translation of "*its* cities"[170] in preference of "in the land of Judah and in *his* cities." He suggests, moreover, that the masculine suffix is being used because it refers to "the land and the cities of the *man* Judah, or the Judeans represented by this male personage."[171] Notably, the suffix remains masculine in v. 24: וְיָשְׁבוּ בָהּ יְהוּדָה וְכָל־עָרָיו ("Judah and all *his* cities shall remain in her"). Leene acknowledges that this alone might not be convincing since masculine suffixes referring to

[169] The syntactical connections he cites are unique to the two units, Jer 31:21–22 and 31:23–26, within the larger context of Jer 30 and 31. In the context of chs. 30–31, the plural term עָרִים ("towns, cities") occurs only in these two poems; the singular form occurs in 30:18 and 31:38. The word אֶרֶץ ("land, earth") appears nine times in chs. 30–31, but with the prefixed preposition (i.e., בְּאֶרֶץ) only in 31:22 and 23. Moreover, the combined phrase, "the land of Judah and his cities" is unique in the Old Testament. Since the more common phrase, "in the cities of Judah," could have been used in vv. 23–26, it would seem that the writer intentionally chose the unique combination in order to echo "these your *cities"* and "Yahweh has created something new in the *land*" (Leene, *Newness*, 203).

[170] E.g., NIV, NRSV, ESV.

[171] Leene, *Newness*, 202.

feminine nouns are not uncommon, but he goes on to point out that the reverse also occurs in v. 24, that is, a feminine suffix in the prepositional phrase, "בָּהּ." While English translations often render the phrase as "shall dwell *there,* "the feminine suffix on the preposition suggests a more accurate rendering might be "shall dwell *in her*." Leene suggests that "in her" does not refer to "the land of Judah and *his* cities," but rather, the pronominal suffix refers back to v. 23b, and the parallel expressions, "the habitation (settlement/grazing place) of righteousness" (נְוֵה־צֶדֶק) and "the holy mountain" (הַר הַקֹּדֶשׁ). While the nouns in both phrases are masculine and one would typically expect a subsequent reference to be indicated with a masculine suffix rather than the feminine one used in v. 24 ("in her"), Leene argues the two expressions (v. 23b) considered as a whole represent Zion (cf. Jer 31:6, 12), which the writer has intentionally "characterized here as a female personage."[172] Leene describes how these various pieces come together as the word of salvation portrayed in Jer 31:22b:

> The whole of Judah (masculine) will be enclosed by Mount Zion (feminine).[173] Beneficial to this cause is the word כל: 'And Judah and *all* his cities will dwell in her together.' If 'in her' only modifies Judah, as many exegetes claim, it remains to be asked, is it not expected that the land of Judah would include all the Judean cities? The promise, however, says something else: the whole of Judah is incorporated in the holy region—the sole mountain, the sole grazing field of Zion as the blessed *inclusio* of all Judean cities

---

[172] Leene, *Newness,* 202. I find Leene's argument convincing as is, but it could be further underscored by the fact that cities in ancient Israel were often personified as females. See, for example, "Excursus: Cities as Females," in Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "The Book of Ezekiel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abington, 2001), 1073–1607; 1221–22.

[173] The theme of going up to and/or returning to Zion appears in the larger context. See e.g., Jer 31:6b and 12a. The latter is a particularly beautiful portrayal of the rejoicing in Zion that is to come: "They shall come and sing aloud on the height of Zion, and they shall be radiant over the goodness of Yahweh, over the grain, the wine, and the oil, and over the young of the flock and the herd; their life shall be like a watered garden, and they shall languish no more. Then shall the young women rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old shall be merry. I will turn their mourning into joy; I will comfort them, and give them gladness for sorrow. I will feast the soul of the priests with abundance, and my people shall be satisfied with my goodness, declares Yahweh" (Jer 31:12–14).

> together. In this manner the word כל is no longer redundant: it touches the point of what is being anticipated.[174]

In other words, as Leene further explains: "lady Zion embraces the population of Judah—truly this is the new thing…that is created by Yahweh! Even those who move about with their flocks need not find themselves outside the safe boundaries of Zion's grassy 'common': the woman embraces the man."[175]

Jeremiah 31:31–34

Within a few verses, we move from the most enigmatic verse in the book of Jeremiah to what is arguably one of the most well-known verses in the corpus—Yahweh's announcement of a new covenant.

v. 31 "Behold, the days are coming, declares Yahweh, (הִנֵּה יָמִים בָּאִים נְאֻם־יְהוָה)
when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah
(וְכָרַתִּי אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאֶת־בֵּית יְהוּדָה בְּרִית חֲדָשָׁה׃),

v. 32 not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt
(לֹא כַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר כָּרַתִּי אֶת־אֲבוֹתָם בְּיוֹם הֶחֱזִיקִי בְיָדָם לְהוֹצִיאָם מֵאֶרֶץ מִצְרָיִם),
my covenant that they broke
(אֲשֶׁר־הֵמָּה הֵפֵרוּ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי),
though I was their husband declares Yahweh
(וְאָנֹכִי בָּעַלְתִּי בָם נְאֻם־יְהוָה׃)."

v. 33 "For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares Yahweh:
(כִּי זֹאת הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר אִכְרֹת אֶת־בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל אַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים הָהֵם נְאֻם־יְהוָה)
I will put my law within them
(נָתַתִּי אֶת־תּוֹרָתִי בְּקִרְבָּם),
and I will write it on their hearts
(וְעַל־לִבָּם אֶכְתְּבֶנָּה).
And I will be their God, and they shall be my people
(וְהָיִיתִי לָהֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְהֵמָּה יִהְיוּ־לִי לְעָם׃)."

v. 34 "And no longer shall each one teach (וְלֹא יְלַמְּדוּ עוֹד) his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know Yahweh, for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,

---

[174] Leene, *Newness,* 202–203.

[175] Leene, *Newness,* 203.

> declares Yahweh. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

The immediate unit comprised of vv. 31–34 describes the new covenant Yahweh will make with Israel and, specifically, how it relates to the previous covenant he made with Israel's ancestors when he brought them out of the land of Egypt. Embedded in the latter comparison, we can already note the explicit temporal dimension of this expression of newness. The obvious temporal distinction between the new covenant and the previous one is reflected in the two distinct time frames given for the establishment of each covenant. There seems to be no question that two different covenants are in view here. The new covenant is to be made in "the days [that] are coming" (יָמִים בָּאִים; v. 31a), reiterated as "after those days" (אַחֲרֵי הַיָּמִים הָהֵם) in v. 33, while the previous one was made "in/on the day" (בְּיוֹם) when Yahweh brought Israel/Judah out of the land of Egypt (v. 32a).

Scholars vary in the ways they articulate a qualitative difference between the two covenants. At least some of the variations seem to depend on whether one is addressing the terminology of newness in primarily lexical-semantic terms or more broadly, from a conceptual perspective. Both are valid, indeed important, approaches; nevertheless, I would suggest that there is a distinction that requires some clarification. This chapter is primarily devoted to the lexical-semantic usage of חָדָשׁ as it occurs in the Old Testament; thus, I will approach the qualitative difference of the covenants from that perspective first and then offer a final comment on how a more conceptual approach might impact one's understanding (and interpretation) of חָדָשׁ.

Using a lexical-semantic approach, I am suggesting that one can discern a qualitative difference in the two covenants based on the meaning of the adjective חָדָשׁ as it occurs in the

phrase בְּרִית חֲדָשָׁה ("new covenant") as well as in the surrounding text/context. Perhaps most specifically, at issue is whether חָדָשׁ denotes "new" only or whether it can also mean "renewed." As I have sought to demonstrate thus far in this chapter, biblical usage suggests that the adjective חָדָשׁ does not denote "renew" but rather, only "new." The Hebrew idea of "renew" is a verbal notion, denoted by the verbal form of חדשׁ rather than the adjective.[176] I would add however, at least in the sense in which I understand the terms, that the notion of a qualitatively new entity (e.g., a new covenant) does not rule out the possibility that there are aspects of continuity, nor does it preclude dimensions that are common to both new and previous entities. For example, it can hardly be denied that both Jeremiah and Exodus refer to the framework for the particular relationship that Yahweh initiates with Israel as a "covenant," and as such, is comprised of elements of an ancient Near Eastern covenant such as stipulations or certain formulas. Moreover, in this case, one could venture even further and note specific stipulations that are common to both the Sinai covenant and the new covenant announced in Jeremiah. In both covenants, for instance, Yahweh affirms a covenantal relationship: "I will be your God and you shall be my people."[177] Both covenants are concerned with matters of obedience to *torah* and of forgiveness. Nevertheless, by virtue of the variations that *are* present in both content and function, I think it safe to say that the new covenant is not a renewed or revised version of the covenant made at Sinai, but rather, the two covenants are qualitatively different. I suppose one could argue that the lexical sense of חָדָשׁ as it is used in Jer 31:31 is an exception to its sense elsewhere in biblical usage, and I would not deny that such an exception is not impossible. I do not, however, think

[176] The verbal form of חדשׁ appears only in the *piel* and once in the *hithpael* and denotes the sense of "make new, renew." See ch. 3 for full discussion of the verb and its usage in the Old Testament.

[177] Lev 26:12; Jer 31:33.

the latter is the case in Jer 31 and would suggest that perhaps the most convincing argument for a qualitative difference between the two covenants emerges from the grammar and syntax of the passage itself. I would argue that, beyond the standard usage of חָדָשׁ, the description that unfolds in vv. 31–34 clearly reinforces the idea that what is meant by a "new covenant" is a qualitatively, even radically, different covenant (despite its commonalities) than the covenant Yahweh made with Israel at Sinai.

First, the "covenant" spoken of in Jer 31:31 is modified by חָדָשׁ and not an alternative term such as "another" or a "second," neither of which are synonyms of חָדָשׁ.[178] Second, comparing it to the earlier covenant, specifically the covenant at Sinai (i.e., that Yahweh made when he brought them out of Egypt; v. 32), Yahweh himself declares it is "not like" (לֹא כַבְּרִית) that covenant. The comparative preposition כְּ prefixed on the word "covenant" (בְּרִית) "expresses agreement in kind or quality;"[179] however, it is negated by לֹא, thus turning a comparison of agreement between the two covenants into an explicitly contrasting one. A second negation occurs in v. 34 that further reinforces the contrast, this time in content and function: "no longer shall each one teach (וְלֹא יְלַמְּדוּ עוֹד) his neighbor and each his brother." In this case, the adverb עוֹד ("again") is negated by לֹא (i.e., "no longer"), signaling that something which characterized the previous covenant is no longer the case in the new covenant; and indeed, that something is a

[178] It is perhaps suggestive of what a possible alternative might have been if a renewal or remake of the previous covenant was in mind. Following the episode of the golden calf in Exod 32 in which Moses "broke" (שׁבר) the tablets of the covenant, God instructs Moses to cut (פסל; "hew") two tablets "like the first" (כָּרִאשֹׁנִים; Exod 34:1) on which he will write the words "that were on the first tablets" (אֲשֶׁר הָיוּ עַל־הַלֻּחֹת הָרִאשֹׁנִים). The book of Jeremiah itself offers a different, but nevertheless instructive example. In Jer 36, King Jehoiakim burns the scroll on which the scribe Baruch had dictated the words of the prophet Jeremiah. In response, Jeremiah takes "another" (אַחֵר) scroll on which Baruch rewrites (writes again) the words of the scroll that had been burned, along with many words "like them" (כָּהֵמָּה) (Jer 36:32). Once again, the language suggests an alternative when something is being "renewed" and the emphasis is on its likeness/similarity to what existed previously.

[179] It also expresses agreement in "quantity or measure" [Arnold and Choi, §4.1.9 (*a*)].

radical difference in the way that *torah* ("law, instruction") will be communicated and understood by God's people. Third, still referring to the covenant made with his people at Sinai, the relative clause indicates that the previous covenant (referred to as "my covenant" by Yahweh) was the one "which they broke" (אֲשֶׁר־הֵמָּה הֵפֵרוּ אֶת־בְּרִיתִי). In this latter clause (v. 32b), the contrast between covenants is further reinforced by the explicit contrasts made between Yahweh's action and that of his people, that is to say: *Yahweh* made a covenant with their ancestors and *they* broke it. The subject of the verb (i.e., Israel) is emphasized by the use of the independent pronoun (הֵמָּה; v. 32b), thus underscoring the fact that "*they* broke" the covenant—and not just any covenant, but "*my* covenant" (בְּרִיתִי) says Yahweh. But perhaps the greater contrast is indicated by the next clause in which an independent pronoun (אָנֹכִי) once again emphasizes the verbal subject, who is also the speaker—Yahweh. The intensified contrast between "they" (Israel) and "I" (Yahweh) is filled with pathos. Speaking in first person, Yahweh declares: "I—I was a husband to them" (וְאָנֹכִי בָּם בָּעַלְתִּי). There is no denying the reason the previous covenant is broken—the blame lies squarely on Israel.

In addition to the textual context, it is important to note the ancient Near Eastern context. Unlike a city, which can be rebuilt on its mound, or a temple, which can be restored or "renewed" on its previous foundation,[180] a "covenant," once it has been broken, cannot simply be "renewed." If another covenant is to be in place, the only option is to "cut" a new one, which is precisely what Yahweh says he will do "in those days" (Jer 31:31).[181] What follows in vv. 33 and 34 are the details of the new covenant, and while I do not dismiss certain similarities between the

[180] See for example the use of the verbal form of חדשׁ in reference to restoring the temple: 2 Chr 24:4, 12.

[181] Even in the event that it could be shown that the adjective could mean "renewed" in rare cases, the grammar in the case of Jer 31:31–34 would be enough to rule out such an alternative.

new and the previous covenants, they still do not erase the fact that "this" (v. 33) covenant is a "new" covenant and "not like the old covenant."[182] The differences are both explicit and striking.

Not all scholars view the new covenant as characterized by the transformative nature and effects that I am suggesting. Daniel Block, for example, rightly observes the long history of God's covenant commitments to Israel, beginning with their ancestor Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 17:7–8). That initial commitment formed the basis for delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage and the formalizing of a covenant with them at Mount Sinai.[183] Of the "new covenant" in Jeremiah, however, Block asserts that, “it is new in its interiorization of religion in Israel generally (in contrast to its previous interiorization in the hearts of only a small remnant)."[184] It may be a matter of semantics or my misunderstanding of his meaning, but I would disagree with his conclusion that the new covenant "is not new in its essence nor in its effect."[185] Perhaps by "essence," Block refers to the fact that both are "covenants," and specifically, they share the essential nature as covenants in which Yahweh declares, "I will be your God and you will be my people." Nevertheless, it seems to me that the new covenant, written on the heart, enabling all of God's people to finally walk in God's instruction (i.e., his *torah*) without the necessity of mediation is revolutionary in its essence. Moreover, it would seem that the effect(s) of Yahweh's new covenant promise to "forgive their iniquity and remember their sin no more," if taken to heart, would amount to a glorious new hope for a people

---

[182] Patrick Miller observes, for example, that there are certain aspects that remain consistent through both covenants, significantly the dimension of divine forgiveness; nevertheless, "there is a sense in which the promise here represents a radical disjunction, "not like" (v. 32) and "no longer" (v. 34), even as it is consistent with the way of God with this people from of old" ["The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 812.

[183] Daniel I. Block, *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 354.

[184] Block, *Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, 356, n.58; citing C. R. North, *TDOT,* 4:236–37.

[185] Block, *Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, 356, n.58; citing C. R. North, *TDOT,* 4:236–37.

in exile because of their sin as a nation. A people that can now walk faithfully in God's *torah* and know that their sin will be forgiven and forgotten have hope not only as individuals who can choose to walk "humbly with their God" (Mic 6:8), but as a people that need not fear another exile because of their collective sin against this new covenant.[186] I think Leene accurately characterizes the new covenant as not only a personal relationship with God (a possibility that Leene contends was always there), but a personal relationship that "will determine the entire structure of religious life in Israel, so that a breakdown, with such catastrophic consequences as were experienced in 587 BCE, is excluded from the future." He concludes, rightly I believe, by saying: "What is truly new to the new covenant is its indissolubility."[187]

As I mentioned at the outset of this section, it is possible to approach the issue of a new covenant from both a lexical-semantic perspective and a more broadly based, conceptual view. As I hope that I have demonstrated in the foregoing section, the immediate text and context (textual and historical) clearly suggests two distinct covenants, qualitatively different from one another, in light of which, I am suggesting it is incorrect to speak of the new covenant as a "renewed" covenant. From a purely lexical-semantic point of view, "new" and "renewed" (applied to "covenant") are not interchangeable terms. That being said, I would acknowledge that the terminology of "renewal" (as opposed to "new") need not be entirely jettisoned from a discussion of the "new covenant" as it occurs in Jer 31. There is a place for the terminology of "renewal" on a broader, conceptual level, but I would add that some level of qualification is helpful. What I mean is that there is a distinction between the notion of the covenant as a

---

[186] Leene: "Yhwh will no longer hold the whole of Israel accountable for the sins of individual Israelites, but commits himself to pardon everyone, big or small, who hopes for forgiveness. A covenant with the house of Israel and Judah that rests in personal pardon cannot be broken collectively" (Leene, *Newness*, 210).

[187] (Leene, *Newness*, 210).

"treaty," with all of its constituent parts, and a covenant, used in a more conceptual manner, to speak of the *relationship* between two parties—in this case, Yahweh and his people. Indeed, Israel had every reason to rejoice knowing that Yahweh had not abandoned his people when they broke the covenant made at Sinai. Israel suffered the severe consequences of breaking the covenant and had no reason to hope that Yahweh would ever enter in covenant with them again. But Yahweh's compassion and love for his rebellious people were not snuffed out. The new covenant he promises to make with them brings with it the hopeful assurance that they will once again participate in a covenantal relationship with their God, Yahweh. In other words, the covenant is "new," but the *covenantal relationship* is "renewed."

Ezekiel

The majority of scholars view the new covenant of Jeremiah as related to the language and images of the new heart and new spirit found in the restoration promises of Ezekiel (Ezek 11:19–20; 18:31; 36:26).[188] Patrick Miller, for example, observes the significance of the relationship when he says of Jer 31:31–34:

> The similarities of this text to Ezekiel's prophecy are especially important because they indicate that one of the key features of this new covenant—that it is written on the heart (v. 33) and does not have to be taught (v. 34)—was a part of the exilic and post-exilic vision for the future. Ezekiel also has in mind a future when God will effect a new kind of obedience.…In all of these texts, God promises a new kind of obedience to the covenant stipulations. God will affect the human heart so that people can keep the covenant requirements.[189]

---

[188] The relatedness is particularly evident in the way that interpreters of Jeremiah address the Ezekiel passages in connection with the new covenant (e.g., Miller, "Jeremiah," 812) and likewise, commentators of Ezekiel include discussions of Jeremiah's new covenant in tandem with Ezekiel's mentions of the new heart and new spirit (e.g., Block, *Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* 353).

[189] Miller, "Jeremiah," 812.

As Ezekiel's joining of the new heart and new spirit motifs accounts for the relationship to the new covenant, the so-called covenant formula offers an important connection as well. When Yahweh promises to put the new covenant "within them" and "write it on their hearts" (Jer 31:33b), he also says, "And I will be their God, and they shall be my people." In the chapter that follows (Jer 32), Yahweh promises to bring his people back from all the places that he drove them in his anger, cause them to dwell in safety (32:37), and—reiterating the covenant formula—he promises, "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (Jer 32:38), this time adding, "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever…And I will make with them an everlasting covenant (וְכָרַתִּי לָהֶם בְּרִית עוֹלָם), that I will not turn away from doing good to them. And I will put the fear of me in their hearts, that they may not turn from me" (Jer 32:39–40). In Ezekiel we find the same promises to gather the peoples from the places to which they have been scattered (11:17), to give them one heart (11:19), to be in covenant with them—"they shall be my people, and I will be their God" (11:20).

It is worth noting that heart (לֵב) and spirit (רוּחַ) are the same pair of which the psalmist speaks: "Create in me a clean heart (לֵב) O God, and make anew (verbal root חדשׁ) a right spirit (רוּחַ) within me" Ps 51:12 [Eng 51:10].[190] What is described in Ezek 11:19b is the different quality of the heart, but the pairing of the two terms in 19a suggests that the two entities are intertwined and what is said of one is ultimately representative of the pair. Furthermore, the fact that 18:31 and 36:26 use "new" to modify both nouns, heart and spirit, supports the appropriateness of the link in ch. 11.

---

[190] Similarly, Block suggests that the antithesis of the one or single heart is "insincerity, duplicity." He also suggests, "the possession of two hearts," or "a double heart," but my own sense is the latter options are not helpful and perhaps even confusing in light of the subsequent description of two hearts, one of stone and the other, flesh (*Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, 353, n. 45).

Ezekiel 11:19–20

v. 19 "And I will give them *one heart* (וְנָתַתִּי לָהֶם֙ לֵ֣ב אֶחָ֔ד),
and a *new spirit* I will put within them (וְר֥וּחַ חֲדָשָׁ֖ה אֶתֵּ֣ן בְּקִרְבְּכֶ֑ם).
I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh (וְהַסַּרְתִּי֙ לֵ֣ב הָאֶ֔בֶן מִבְּשָׂרָ֖ם)
and I will give them a heart of flesh (וְנָתַתִּ֥י לָהֶ֖ם לֵ֥ב בָּשָֽׂר),
v. 20 that (לְמַ֣עַן) they may walk in my statutes and keep/obey my rules and do/obey them
(בְּחֻקֹּתַ֤י יֵלֵכ֙וּ֙ וְאֶת־מִשְׁפָּטַ֣י יִשְׁמְר֔וּ וְעָשׂ֖וּ אֹתָ֑ם).
And they shall be my people (וְהָי֥וּ־לִ֖י לְעָ֑ם),
and I will be their God (וְאֲנִ֥י אֶהְיֶ֖ה לָהֶ֥ם לֵֽאלֹהִֽים)."

"One heart" would appear to be the opposite of a divided heart.[191] The "heart" as well as the "spirit" in the parallel line are expressions of the "locus of the moral will."[192]

The discontinuity between what is new and what existed previously is made explicit in a couple of ways. Although the language is figurative in v. 19b, the imagery suggests nothing less than a dramatic transformation. The language may indeed represent hyperbole, but surely the difference between hard, lifeless stone and life-infused flesh is meant to convey a change of heart the likes of which could only be the divine work of Yahweh. Another sign of the dramatic change envisaged if the use of the verb סור which denotes "to remove" (*hiphil* causative sense). It suggests rather explicitly that Yahweh replaces the old heart with a new heart. The imagery of such an exchange is not unlike that of a transplant,[193] that which is figuratively lifeless and useless is divinely replaced with that which is altogether different—and better. The purpose

[191] Block, *Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, 353. Block compares this to the use of the same terms in Ezek 18:31, noting that calling on the people "to make for themselves a new heart and a new spirit" is clearly an anthropological issue—that is, "the transformation of the human spirit." He contrasts that with 36:26–27 where "'new spirit' merges with 'my spirit,' that is, Yahweh's own dynamic power" (*Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* 353).

[192] Block, *Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* 353.

[193] Similarly, Block describes the opening as a promise of "a heart/mind transplant," "a fundamental reconstitution of the people" (*Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24*, 352). Similar language is found in Jer 32:39: "I will give them a single heart and a single way to fear me all the days" (see also Jer 24:7 and 31:33).

clause which immediately follows in v. 20 reflects the transformative effect the change will have on the people of Yahweh: "in order that (לְמַעַן) they may walk in my statutes and keep/obey my 'rules' and do/act on them." Block cites the purpose clause as indicative of the similar content of the law (i.e., between the previous and the new covenant).[194] While I do not disagree with Block, I would suggest that the purpose statement is less about the covenant's contents and more about the fact that the people of Yahweh will be able to act in accordance with the stipulations of the covenant in a way that they could not do before, indeed, that was impossible for them to do.[195]

Temporally, the newness of this spirit is implicitly present in the fact that all of Yahweh's action on behalf of his people will take place at a time future to that of the prophet's word. It will be part of the restoration, when God will gather his people from all the countries to which they have been scattered and he will give them the land of Israel (Ezek 11:17).

The covenantal nature of this life-giving and transformative procedure is reflected in the final clause of 11:20: "And they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Again, as observed in Jeremiah, this relationship reflects Yahweh's steadfast love and mercy toward Israel, a willingness to make a new covenant with his people, entering again into a covenantal relationship with Israel.

---

[194] Block notes, correctly I believe, that the "decrees/statutes" (חֻקּוֹת) and the "laws" (מִשְׁפָּטִים) "represent the totality of the divine will laid out in the covenant stipulations" (*Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24,* 353).

[195] It seems worth noting that the restoration process involves both a work of the people and a work that God does (and that presumably only God can do). According to Ezek 11:18, when the people come (back to) the land of Israel they will *remove* (סור) its "detestable things" and "abominations" (and, in fact, those who do not remove these things, but rather, their heart goes after them, "will bring their deeds upon their own heads"—an implication of the individual rather than corporate nature of sin that is announced in Ezekiel). For his part, God will *remove* (סור) their heart of stone (11:19). In contrast, one might say that the "giving" component belongs exclusively to Yahweh. Only Yahweh can and will "give" (נתן) them the land of Israel (v. 17) and only he can and will "give" (נתן) his people a heart of flesh (v. 19).

Ezekiel 18:30–32

v. 30 "therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, declares the Lord Yahweh. Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin."

v. 31 "Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed (הַשְׁלִיכוּ מֵעֲלֵיכֶם אֶת־כָּל־פִּשְׁעֵיכֶם אֲשֶׁר פְּשַׁעְתֶּם בָּם), and make yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! (וַעֲשׂוּ לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה) Why will you die, O house of Israel? (וְלָמָּה תָמֻתוּ בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל)

v. 32 "For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Lord God; so turn, and live." (כִּי לֹא אֶחְפֹּץ בְּמוֹת הַמֵּת נְאֻם אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה וְהָשִׁיבוּ וִחְיוּ׃)

These verses are preceded by a section in which the people have charged Yahweh with being unfair and capricious in his ways. Yahweh's response through the prophet is to turn the tables on his people—countercharging them with their own accusations. In v. 30, God asserts his prerogative to judge: "I will judge you, O house of Israel, all of you according to your ways,' says the Lord Yahweh. "Repent and turn from all your transgressions, lest iniquity be your ruin.'" Adding to the commands to "repent" and to "turn," vv. 31–32 issue further imperatives: "Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed, and make (עשׂה)[196] for yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why will you die, O house of Israel?" And v. 32 concludes, "'For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone,' declares the Lord Yahweh; 'so turn, and live.'"

At first glance it would seem that the "new" heart and "new" spirit, as expressed here, are something the people can "make" for themselves, whereas elsewhere (11:30; 36:26) the "new/one heart" and "new/my spirit" are something Yahweh gives to his people. I think Block is correct when he explains the imperative in 18:30 (i.e., "make for yourselves") as a rhetorical device, both highlighting the nation's responsibility "for their present crisis" and "pointing the

[196] It is worth noting that the verb, while it denotes "to create, make, do," is עשׂה, not בָּרָא, which also means "create" but is used only of creating implicitly or explicitly of Yahweh/God.

way to the future." Block explains: "The prerequisites for positive divine intervention are a wholesale reorientation of life *and* an internal change in disposition. The former will not happen without the latter."[197] While I agree with Block that both divine intervention and human reorientation of life and disposition are necessary, I think that the "process" is more nuanced than his assertion suggests. Ezekiel 18:30–32 emphasizes the human response God desires, indeed commands—the imperatives make it clear that they must repent and turn, and they must "cast away" all their transgressions (cf. 11:18). But the ultimate reason given here in v. 32, and in fact the climactic plea to a fervent expression of divine pathos ("'For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone,' declares the Lord Yahweh"), is not so that Yahweh can in turn act and intervene, but rather, so that his people will be moved to "turn," and in turning, to "live:" וְהָשִׁיבוּ וִחְיוּ ("Turn then, and live"). This does not mean that God's people have any capacity to transform themselves on the inside, but they do have a role to play in bringing about such transformation. Addressing the human role, I believe Darr comments correctly when she observes: "Humans have a choice, but they must choose." Moreover, "God is not apathetic about our choices and so discloses the divine predilection for life."[198] Ezekiel 18:30–32 is, as Darr describes it, "a summons to elect life—a decision that begins with earnest repentance (turning away from our transgressions) and continues with the daily and active pursuit of a new heart and spirit."[199] If the earlier passage from Ezek 11 is in mind, it would suggest that the single heart and new spirit that Yahweh

[197] Block, *Ezekiel 1–24,* 588.

[198] Katheryn Pfisterer Darr, "The Book of Ezekiel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 1266.

[199] Darr, "The Book of Ezekiel," 1266.

promises to give could be viewed as "divine intervention" in the form of enablement that is integrally related to the human responsibility and desire to cast off transgressions.[200]

Ezekiel 36:26–27

v. 26 "And I will give you a new heart (וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ),
and a new spirit I will put within you (וְרוּחַ חֲדָשָׁה אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם).
And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh (וַהֲסִרֹתִי אֶת־לֵב הָאֶבֶן מִבְּשַׂרְכֶם)
and I will give you a heart of flesh (וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב בָּשָׂר).
v. 27 "And I will put my Spirit within you (וְאֶת־רוּחִי אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם),
and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

This passage picks up again on the new heart and new spirit that were introduced in ch. 11 (explicitly indicated of both heart and spirit in ch. 18, though in a slightly varied context). In fact, 36:27 supports the same point made at the outset, that the two entities are intertwined and intimately related. Here, it is emphasized that the new spirit enables the people to walk in obedience. And not only is it a new spirit, but v. 27 goes on to say, "my spirit," denoting the dynamic power of the spirit of the Lord Yahweh himself.

What is also of interest in this passage is the continued description of life lived with this new, God-given spirit. It picks up the Deuteronomic blessings promised to Israel if they remained faithful to the covenant. And as we have seen before, God's good purposes for his

[200] For an insightful summary of the theme of divine enablement that is implied in this passage as well as other passages in Ezekiel and the prophetic corpus as a whole, see Mark J. Boda, *'Return to Me': A Biblical Theology of Repentance,* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), esp. 158–60. Boda traces a theme (and theology of) repentance that runs throughout all the major sections of the Old Testament. He observes that the latter halves of both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, in particular, "focus considerable attention on God's agenda to perform an internal revolution within the community that will emerge from exile, providing a new heart and a new spirit that will enable them to obey the Lord fully and fulfil his commands." Boda further notes that the prophet Ezekiel "continues to promote repentance for the remnant that emerges from the ashes of Jerusalem, but any penitential response will be superseded or fully completed through an internal work of God" (*Return to Me,* 158–59)

people are played out in the blessings of abundant fields and fruit on the trees. It means cities inhabited and waste places rebuilt.

Isaiah 56–66

As I mentioned earlier, in this section I will only draw attention to the use of חָדָשׁ outside of chs. 40–48 since the second part of this investigation is devoted to the term's usage in those chapters. The adjective is never used in Isaiah 1–39, but it occurs in three places in chs. 56–66, first in the phrase "new name," (Isa 62:2) and then twice each in the two expressions of "new heavens and a new earth" (Isa 65:17 and 66:22).[201]

There is widespread scholarly consensus that chs. 56–66, or Third Isaiah as it is commonly referred to, are probably written and/or compiled by a different writer or community than either First or Second Isaiah. There are a number of links such as quotes and allusions between the sections, especially between Second and Third Isaiah, but there are also a number of differences between them. The term "servant" (עֶבֶד) which features prominently in Second Isaiah with reference to an individual (including Israel as an entity), is referred to only in the plural in chs. 56–66.[202] Furthermore, the historical setting differs in the sections. In Second Isaiah, Judah and Jerusalem, along with the temple, lie in ruins. Israel is in exile although Babylon is about to fall, conquered by the Persian king Cyrus, twice mentioned by name in chs. 40–48. The scene is altogether different in Third Isaiah. The literary-historical setting is

---

[201] To clarify, the compound expression uses the definite article (i.e., "the new heavens and the new earth") in Isa 66:22, whereas the phrases are indefinite in Isa 65:17. It would appear that the second usage is referring to the entity that was introduced earlier.

[202] The plural form of "servant" (עֶבֶד) occurs eleven times in chs. 54–66: 54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13 (3x), 14, 15; 66:14.

Jerusalem, where it would seem at least some of the Jewish exiles have returned. The post-exilic community now faces a different set of challenges.

If there was any excitement surrounding the liberation from Babylonian captivity, it has dissipated and in its place are bitter disappointment, dismal conditions and divisive quarrels—the latter especially in regard to Israel's religious practices.[203] Nevertheless, the picture in these chapters is hardly all doom and gloom, for in its midst comes the glorious proclamation of the year of Yahweh's favor—the day of God's vengeance, a time to "comfort all who mourn," and to grant to those who mourn in Zion "a beautiful headdress instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, and the garment of praise instead of a faint spirit" (Isa 61:2–3). The evidence of transformation will extend even to the ancient ruins and devastations of many generations; in their place will be rebuilding and repair—and joy. Significantly, two such acts of transformation are explicitly acts of newness—the assignment of a "new name" (62:2) for Jerusalem/Zion and the making/creating of "new heavens and a new earth" (65:17; 66:22). In both cases, Yahweh is the subject—that is, newness has a divine source, the God of Israel. From his mouth come the words and works of newness.

The mention of a "new name" occurs in Isa 62:2, thus in the second of three sections in which Third Isaiah is commonly divided (chs. 56–59, 60–62, and 63–66).[204] In stark contrast to the assorted warnings, judgments, conditional promises, and calls to repentance that constitute chs. 56–59, chs. 60–62 are primarily characterized by soaring, lyrical poetry announcing a future

---

[203] Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 13. Achtemeier's volume offers an excellent introduction to the content and community represented in Third Isaiah.

[204] I think Achtemeier is correct in suggesting that it would appear that Third Isaiah is "appropriating the message of Second Isaiah, and is reformulating it for its own situation" (*The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66*), 80.

salvation, very much like that of Second Isaiah. In fact, the chapters are full of quotations, allusions, and similar motifs from Second Isaiah.[205] With such an abundance of connections to chs. 40–55, it is perhaps not surprising that the motif of newness would reappear.

The more immediate literary unit in which 62:2 appears consists of vv. 1–9, which can be further divided into two units: vv. 1–5 and vv. 6–9.[206] In words that speak of continued intercession, ch. 62 opens: "For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet until her righteousness goes forth as brightness, and her salvation as a burning torch" (Isa 62:1b). In turn, "The nations shall see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory" (62:2a). It is only fitting that this glorious identity by which Jerusalem/Zion will be known should be accompanied by the promise that, "you shall be called by a new name that the mouth of Yahweh will give" (Isa 62:2b).

The notion of being "called" (קרא), in the sense of being designated by a descriptive term or expression (implying a "name") is a recurring motif in Third Isaiah.[207] However, being "called" a "new name," as it occurs in 62:2, is distinctive in several ways. It is the first time in the motif's recurrence in Third Isaiah that the actual term "name" (שֵׁם) is used as an object of the verb קרא ("to be called").[208] In fact, while a new name might be implied in other examples of

---

[205] Achtemeier lists a host of such connections including, e.g., quotations from 49:18ab in 60:4ab; from 49:12a in 60:4c; from 49:22e in 60:4d; and a variation of 49:23a in 60:14. Isa 62:10–12 is made up almost entirely by quotations and/or paraphrases from Second Isaiah: 62:10 is similar to 40:3; 62:11 is similar to 40:9–11; 62:11ab is also similar to 48:20, while 62:11c quotes 40:10b verbatim; 62:12 d recalls 41:17, 42:16, and 54:6. For more parallels in language and motifs, see *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66*, 80, 101. While time and space do not permit further discussion of these borrowed quotations and motifs, it should be noted that there are also many usages in Third Isaiah that have strong similarities and connections to the first part of the book of Isaiah (chs.1–39).

[206] It is also possible that vv. 10–12 constitute a third part of the unit, but most scholars view these three verses as a conclusion to the larger section, chs. 60–62.

[207] See, e.g., 58:12; 60:14, 18; 61:3, 6, 9.

[208] While there may not be any way to know for sure, I would suggest the possibility that there is a distinction between just being "called" (קרא) something (i.e., a descriptive term or phrase) and being called by a

name changes, this is the only instance in the entire Old Testament in which a given or changed name is explicitly called a "new name."[209] Furthermore, this "new name" is distinctive in that it is given, not by others such as the surrounding nations or Judah herself, but by Yahweh—indeed, it issues forth from the very “mouth of Yahweh" (Isa 62:2).[210] Perhaps most significant of all, a new name from the mouth of Yahweh conveys an assurance that the essence which is reflected by the new name will surely be a reality. The expression "mouth of Yahweh" is reminiscent of the words from Yahweh who declares that "the word that goes forth from my mouth…shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11). Thus, not only is this form of newness associated with divine provenance, it is the product of God's creative, purposeful word. It is an effective word—a word which does something.

In Israel, as in the rest of the ancient world in general, the idea of a name was associated with the essence and identity or character of someone or something. This is demonstrated in the Old Testament in a number of ways, including the importance accorded a person's name (e.g., Gen 3:20; 1 Sam 25:25) and the names of one's children (e.g., Gen 4:1;16:11; 25:25–26, cf. 27:36; Isa 7:3, 14; 8:3; 9:5[Eng 6]), placenames (e.g., Gen 28:19; 31:48–49), and the special significance of name changes (e.g., Gen 17:5, 15; 32:27–28). While seldom mentioned (if at all) by commentators in relationship to the significance of a name change, it seems worth noting that

---

"name" (שֵׁם). At the very least, it may be that the addition of the term שֵׁם indicates an additional emphasis on the name itself and the naming process.

[209] The phrase, "new name" occurs again in the New Testament, in Rev. 2:17 and 3:12. The imagery of John's vision draws heavily from the book of Isaiah, and most scholars would agree that the reference in Rev 3:12, in particular, is an allusion to the opening verses in Isa 62. In both Isaiah and Revelation, the "new name" is applied to Jerusalem/Zion, although only in Revelation are the two terms combined to speak explicitly of a "new Jerusalem" (Rev 3:12 and 21:2).

[210] Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66*, 97.

assigning a name to a person or thing is connected not only to its essence but also to the very meaning of its existence and moreover, to its role and function.

In the cognitive environment of the ancient world, things were considered to come into existence only when they were named and assigned a role and/or function.[211] John Walton writes, "It was believed that the name of a living being or an object was not just a simple or practical designation to facilitate the exchange of ideas between persons but that it was the very essence of what was defined and that the actual pronouncing of a name was to create what was spoken."[212] Thus, I am suggesting that a name change, just like an original name, also indicates a new entity coming into existence along with a change of role and function from what it was previously. In the case of Isa 62:2, this would mean not only a new name for Jerusalem/Zion, but a new role/function for her. Indeed, this is exactly what we see in vv. 1–2: Jerusalem newly named is a completely new entity that will function as a display for righteousness and salvation for all the nations to see; Zion will manifest a glory visible to all the kings of the nations. So important is Jerusalem's role and function that the new name itself is not mentioned until v. 4—*after* indicating Jerusalem's function and what they will *be*.

What Jerusalem/Zion will be is indicated by the exquisite royal imagery of v. 3: "You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of Yahweh, and a royal diadem in the hand of your God." Scholars agree that there is significance in the fact that the crown is in Yahweh's hand rather than on his head, although they differ in exactly what that significance is. Oswalt suggests that perhaps the text is "simply a mixing of metaphors," but that significantly, "The people of God,

---

[211] John H. Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006), 188.

[212] Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament*, 188. Quote from J. M. Plumley, "The Cosmology of Ancient Egypt," in *Ancient Cosmologies,* ed. Blacker and Loewe, 38.

Zion/Jerusalem, are in his hand, i.e., in his care and under his control...there as a priceless possession, a thing of delight, honor, and beauty. God is not restoring them to himself grudgingly or mechanically; he does so as one would a piece of precious jewelry."[213] Achtemeier also observes the figure's roots in ancient Near Eastern iconography, noting that it draws on the portrayal "in which the tutelary deity of a city was represented as a king, crowned by the city walls of his realm." However, as she continues, "the Isaianic tradition shrinks from the pagan representation (cf. 28:5), and here Yahweh holds Jerusalem in his hand—a figure expressive of the most tender care of the king for his city."[214] It is worth noting that Second and Third Isaiah rarely speak explicitly of Yahweh as "king," but imagery such as we have here in 62:2–4 implicitly conveys that Yahweh's kingship is clearly implied.

The notion of kingship is further underscored by the fact that ancient kings are well known for building new cities and/or rebuilding cities that had been previously destroyed as a means of promoting their reputation and power in their region or empire. Ancient Assyrian and Babylonian royal annals are full of examples in which kings take credit for building and/or rebuilding cities in their royal dominion. The Akkadian term *eššūtu,* a substantive form of the adjective (*eššū*), occurs not infrequently in these texts using the expression *ana eššūte,* translated "anew." Thus, for example, a number of Assyrian kings make the claim, "I *rebuilt* these cities" (lit. "built anew"). The same expression is used to speak of reorganizing, and resettling cities. Significantly, such city rebuilding projects often included assigning a new name to the city. In the royal annals of the great Assyrian king Esarhaddon, for example, the king declares of the

---

[213] Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 580.

[214] Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66*, 97.

cities which he had taken over, "I abolished their former names and gave them new names."[215] Thus, Yahweh's kingship is central to his designating a new name for Jerusalem/Zion, and it also then comes as no surprise that the new name suggests its new character as a city rebuilt.

Verse 4b (ch. 62) gives expression to the name—חֶפְצִי־בָהּ, meaning "My Delight is in Her." The land itself will also be known by a new name, תִּבָּעֵל, or "Married." The new names are emphasized literarily in v. 4a by the contrasting names by which they were formerly known: the city known as "Forsaken" (עֲזוּבָה) and the land as "Desolate" (שְׁמָמָה). The temporal and qualitative differences between what existed previously and what Jerusalem/Zion will be with her newly conferred name may have been implied in vv. 1–3, but they become quite explicit in the contrasting language that characterizes v. 4. The adverb עוֹד along with the negation of the opening verbal clause (לֹא) carries the sense of "no longer." Furthermore, the adverbial phrase is repeated in the second clause, emphasizing the temporal discontinuity conveyed by the 'newness' of the new name. Adding to the emphasis is the כִּי which opens v. 4b. Given the negated clauses in v. 4a, I consider the conjunction an adversative כִּי ("but").[216] The latter emphases combine to indicate that the "new name" conveys a distinctive qualitative difference between the Jerusalem that existed with a previous name and the Jerusalem that has a new name.

---

[215] (*CAD* 4:376) Sometimes the city name was new and sometimes the placename literally meant "New City," as is the case with the ancient cities of Carthage and Naples. Carthage comes from the Phoenician-Punic term *qrt-ḥdšt*, literally, "new city" (Westermann, *TLOT* 1:394; *CAD* 4:376). Similarly, Naples comes from the Greek words, *nea* ("new") and *polis* ("city"). The Akkadian adjective for "new," *eššu,* is relatively common in placenames and references to a "New City," (referring to a city quarter) of an already existing city as, for example, the cities of Ashur and Babylon (*TDOT* 4:226). The use of חָדָשׁ in placenames occurs twice in the Old Testament. The Hebrew term occurs in the city name, חֲדָשָׁה (Josh 15:37) while the Aramaic form appears in the place-name חָצוֹר ׀ חֲדַתָּה (Josh 15:25).

[216] See, e.g., Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax,* § 4.3.4 (g).

In light of the many previous examples of the use of חָדָשׁ in this investigation, the evidence of definitive temporal and qualitative discontinuities conveyed by the term may suggest that there is also an associated affective dimension. Indeed, we find just that in these verses. First of all, the prophetic declarations of 62:1–4 must surely be intended to continue the message of hope held out in the transformation indicated in 61:2 (i.e., "the year of Yahweh's favor…to comfort all who mourn") and the subsequent passage. Secondly, and most pertinent because of the explicit mention of חָדָשׁ in 62:1–5, is the emotional climax in the final cola of v. 4: "so shall your God rejoice (שׂוּשׂ) over you." The expression is tied to the new name given in v. 4b and its explanation, "for Yahweh delights in you," along with the marriage imagery implied in the names. Yahweh's word-creating newness is thus not only effective (i.e., it accomplishes his purposes; cf. Isa 55:11–12) but also affective. His rejoicing is surely good news for his wearied, faithful servants who long for Jerusalem to be at the center of a place and time where they can again celebrate as Yahweh's people even as he rejoices over them.

While 62:1–5 is the only unit that speaks of a "new name" for Jerusalem/Zion, there is one other unit in Third Isaiah which explicitly mentions the calling of a name, using both קרא and שֵׁם. In Isa 65:15, it is said that Yahweh will call his faithful servants by "another name" (שֵׁם אַחֵר). At first glance it might appear that "another" could function as a viable option for a synonym of "new." The latter is most certainly the case in modern English. However, I would maintain it is not the case for biblical Hebrew, and I would suggest that the example in Isa 65:15 is instructive on this point. The immediate literary unit, vv. 13–16, sets up a series of contrasting statements, each stating with repeated phrases for emphasis what Yahweh will do for his ("my")

"servants" followed by Yahweh's contrasting actions towards those who have forsaken him.[217] At v. 15 the order is reversed and the opening half of the verse outlines what will finally befall those who have forsaken Yahweh. Once more in direct address, Yahweh says to them: "You shall leave your name (שֵׁם) to my chosen for a curse, and Yahweh God will put you to death." Thus, their name will be left when they die, but left not for ongoing posterity as people of the ancient world would hope for, but as a curse. As for Yahweh's servants, he will call them by "another name." I would suggest that "new" is not the preferred term because the emphasis is not on replacing something that existed previously. Rather, the emphasis is on the *different* name they will have in contrast to that which the evildoers will leave. Nevertheless, as with any name, there is still a sense in which it implies one's character and identity—the servants will bless themselves and swear an oath only by the God of truth (v. 16a). But there's more than "another name" in store for Yahweh's chosen ones. Something significant *has* undergone a transformation: "the former (רִאשֹׁנוֹת) troubles are forgotten and are hidden from my eyes" (v. 16b), declares Yahweh.

In Isa 65:17, the complete transformation that will belong to Yahweh's servants bursts forth into the extraordinary announcement that indeed, "the former things will not be remembered or come into mind" for Yahweh is creating "a new heavens and a new earth." The nature of this "new heavens" and "new earth" comes out in the v. 18: "I create Jerusalem to be a joy, and her people to be a gladness." It would appear that Jerusalem, newly created, constitutes this "new heavens and new earth." Significantly, the overwhelming emphasis of this new creation is the affective dimension of joy that characterizes it. Verse 18 contains two terms that

[217] Those who have forsaken Yahweh are perhaps most explicitly defined in Isa 65:12 as those who did not answer when Yahweh called, did not listen when he spoke, did what was evil in his eyes, and chose what he did not delight in.

refer to joy: the verb שׂוּשׂ ("to exult, rejoice"), and the verb גִּיל, ("to rejoice"). Their repetition in chiastic form emphasizes the importance of the joyous dimension, and indeed, a third repetition of the dual terms in v. 19a not only underscores their significance but conveys its finality and completeness.[218]

In light of Genesis 1:1 (and Rev. 21:1), it is somewhat difficult for the modern reader of the biblical text not to envision an entirely new *cosmos* when the phrase "new heavens and new earth" appears in Isa 65:17 (and 66:22). Yet in context, it has everything to do with the city of Jerusalem.[219] As Brueggemann rightly puts it,

> As cosmic as the newness to come is, it is also as specific as Jerusalem. The Isaiah tradition accepts that the matrix of Yahweh's work in the world concerns Jerusalem above all.…It is Jerusalem where the Torah now resides (2:2–4). It is Jerusalem where Yahweh's presence is assured.…The city known as *Jeru-Shalom* will be a city of *shalom,* given by the God of all peace. Such a *shalom* is for singing and dancing.[220]

The immediately subsequent explication of the new heavens and new earth as representing Jerusalem thus supplies perhaps the most compelling reason for not taking the reference to mean an entirely new cosmos. Goldingay describes the relationship between the two acts of creation (i.e., "new heavens and a new earth" and "Jerusalem to be a joy and its people as an object of rejoicing"): "(Re-)creating Jerusalem apparently explains what (re-)creating the world means; (re-)creating the world is an image for (re-)creating the city."[221] Like

---

[218] The enduring, "forever" nature of this joyous realm is emphasized by the repetition of the preposition עַד ("lasting future time; until, as far as " *HALOT* 2:786–87) in the expression עֲדֵי־עַד. The expression occurs elsewhere in Isaiah at 26:4 as well as in a number of Psalms (83:18, 92:8, 132:12, 14).

[219] Actually, it is not only in this Isaian context that the connection is made. In the apocalyptic vision of John, his vision of a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1) is also immediately explained with reference to Jerusalem: "And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. 21:2).

[220] Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 246.

[221] John Goldingay, *Israel's Faith*, 461.

Brueggemann, Goldingay explains that the "creation of a new cosmos is another way of speaking of the creation of a new Jerusalem," noting the topic as a recurring one throughout these chapters.[222] I think Goldingay is correct in saying that this way of speaking of the new heavens and new earth is similar to the way Paul's talk of a new creation as a metaphor for what happens when a person is 'in Christ' (2 Cor 5:17). As he puts it, "The new Jerusalem will be like a microcosm of a new cosmos. It will be as if Yhwh has determined to undo all that went wrong about the original creation and start again, not with a new paradise garden but with a new garden city, a place that is a joy to Yhwh and a joy to its people."[223]

While certain aspects such as the absence of weeping and mourning resonate with the characteristics of John's vision of the new Jerusalem as we read it in Rev 21:1–4, what the prophet of the Old Testament describes and what John sees are not exactly the same. Perhaps the most striking distinction is that John sees a new Jerusalem in which death is no more (Rev. 21:4), whereas the Old Testament prophet portrays a Jerusalem in which death remains an accepted part of the human experience. What is *un*acceptable in Yahweh's newly created city (in Isaiah) is death and/or illness that robs a person or the community of the fulness of the human experience—in all its dimensions. There seems to be an innate recognition that babies should not die; people should not be cut down in the prime of life by accident or illness or anything that denies them living a full and fruitful life—one that sees lifelong endeavors come to fruition, one that sees the next generation come along and the one after that. Such is the human experience

[222] John Goldingay, *Israel's Faith*, 461.

[223] John Goldingay, *Israel's Faith*, 461–62.

that the prophet conveys. It is a portrayal of *shalom* (שָׁלוֹם)—not just "peace" as in the absence of conflict, but *shalom* in the larger sense of the word as completeness and wholeness.[224]

Differences aside, one can hardly speak of Isaiah's new heavens and new earth without mentioning Paul's "new creation" in 2 Cor 5:17 (cf. Goldingay's comment above) as well as John's vision of a new heavens and new earth as recorded in Rev. 21:1–5. The New Testament references draw attention to the significant trajectory that emerges from these texts in Isaiah. The hope that is offered to the prophet's exilic and post-exilic audiences is likewise central to an eschatological tradition that would develop over the ensuing centuries into the apocalyptic Judaism that would influence Paul's notion of a "new creation" and John's apocalyptic vision. It is in the latter part of Isaiah, along with the other exilic prophets, that we observe "the conceptual foundations of ancestral and Sinaitic covenants combined with the Davidic ideal in a new eschatological hope, in which everything lost will be restored."[225] Arnold summarizes the development during the postexilic period stating that a "powerful convergence of Israel's older ideologies with the disappointment and deprivations of the restoration community, together with the political upheavals surrounding the fall of Babylon and the new world order created by the Persians resulted in a decisively new eschatological tradition."[226]

Summary

Based on the foregoing investigation of the language of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament, there are a number of observations I would summarize regarding its meaning, significance, and function.

---

[224] See *HALOT* 4:1506–10.

[225] Bill T. Arnold, "Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*, ed. Jerry L. Walls (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 23–39; 28

[226] Arnold, "Old Testament Eschatology," 29.

With regard to the usage of חָדָשׁ, it is possible to say that in the Old Testament the term is largely consistent with usage found elsewhere in the ancient Near East and the larger Mediterranean region. In particular, virtually all of the expressions or categories of חָדָשׁ in Hebrew usage are also attested in Akkadian. Second, and somewhat related to the first, is that the meaning and use of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament represents a fairly circumscribed semantic range, especially as compared to modern usage. In the introductory chapter, I specified several categories into which one can divide the uses of חָדָשׁ. In this chapter, it was noted that there are further connotations and associations within those basic categories. The exegetical analyses of many of the texts allowed for a close examination of these lexical connotations, associations, and nuances that might otherwise go unobserved in a general lexical survey. In particular, within the categories and the various connotations it became apparent that several dimensions were present to some degree in almost all examples, namely, temporal, qualitative, and affective dimensions.

The adjective is used to describe edible items that are fresh or newly harvested. When referring to such items that are organic in nature, it only appears to be used of the product as an entity separate from its natural source. The adjective is never used in relationship to anything organic (e.g., vegetation, crops) in its natural state, that is, prior to being harvested, picked, or utilized in some way. Both the temporal and qualitative dimensions are apparent in the sense of being recently harvested but also "fresh." As the examples in Leviticus and Numbers show, these "firstfruits" of the harvest serve a larger cultic function and as such there was an affective dimension of joy.

A larger category are items modified as 'new' to denote a sense of recently made or newly constructed. Additional connotations such as unused or unworn suggest two additional sub-categories. The first includes newly made items associated once again with the cultic realm, in

which 'newness' connotes a condition of being unused, thus unprofaned, pure and 'clean' for sacred use and purposes. A number of examples, including carts, a garment, and a bowl were all stipulated as being new for a variety of cultic purposes.

The second sub-category consists of newly manufactured items such as tools or weapons used for non-cultic, utilitarian purposes. In this category, the characteristic of being unused is again significant, not for its cultic purity but as an indication of the item's prime condition and readiness for its intended purposes. Thus, there can be additional connotations such as strong, sharp, or flexible, depending on the object.

The basic sense of חָדָשׁ implies a relationship of what is new to that which is previous or past (whether recent or distant). However, this survey of the term's usage suggests that what is new can also have connotations of a beginning, functioning as an initial part of a larger whole extending into the future. Social and cultural values also play a role as, for example, the idea that what is new is suggestive of the beginning of a larger enterprise that once begun must reach completion. This was particularly evident in the Deuteronomic laws concerning military exemptions and the values associated with building a house and its role in the larger social context of community life.

Just as important as what a word denotes is what is does not denote. The adjective means "new," and as scholars have agreed it has no synonyms. Even the related word, "renewed" is not a synonym of חָדָשׁ despite the fact that one finds the two terms, "new" and "renewed," used interchangeably not infrequently in biblical scholarship. Rather, the terminology of "renewed" belongs to the verbal form of the root חדשׁ to which I now turn.

CHAPTER THREE

OLD TESTAMENT USAGE OF THE VERB חָדַשׁ

The root חדשׁ occurs as a verb only ten times in the Old Testament: nine times in the *piel* and once in the *hithpael*. The use of the *piel* is not always easily categorized, but as a general principle, the verbal stem has a causative function which centers on the final outcome of the verbal action or the resulting condition or state of the object. This differs from the causative function of the *hiphil* which focuses on the resulting *action*. Described as "an adjectival causation predicate,"[227] the *piel* of חָדַשׁ means "to cause something to be new" or "cause something to be in the state of being new." Because the adjective is a term of comparison (i.e., relates to what has or has not existed previously), one of the challenges of translating is determining how best to express the verbal action so that the resulting outcome is consistent with the context and/or its emphases. In other words, how does the resultant outcome dubbed "new" relate to what existed previously?[228] Does the context suggest the verbal action brings about

[227] Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, § 3.1.3.

[228] A contemporary example helps to illustrate the point. It is not unusual in a Western social context to hear of a couple who decides to "renew" their wedding vows. Given the word "renew," we automatically assume that this couple has exchanged wedding vows with one another at some point in the past. We can make that much of an assumption based on standard usage of the expression. However, without knowledge of the specific context, we cannot assume the nature of that renewal. For example, the renewal could be an expression of love to celebrate many years of marriage, and thus a renewal characterized by, and maybe even emphasizing, continuity. Or perhaps the renewal represents a radical new beginning for a couple after a serious breakdown in their relationship or even a severing of the marriage. In this context, there is a much higher degree of discontinuity in the relationship between the previous and the renewed vows. One thing we would not say is that a couple renewed their vows if there were never any vows spoken between them previously.

something wholly and completely new or does the verb denote that something is *re*newed? Some instances of the verb's usage fall fairly clearly into one category or the other—the object is either "made new" or "renewed." However, I submit that there is a third option. Sometimes there is an implicit sense of renewal and more often than not the English rendering of the verb is "renew." However, the issue I see is that the English word "renew," while not technically inaccurate, nevertheless emphasizes that what is new is new *again*, when in fact, the context puts the accent on a contrast between a present state or condition and the resulting state of newness. In what follows I hope to illustrate these distinctions, although in the end some of my conclusions remain open to other interpretations.

Since the *piel*'s causative sense focuses on the resulting condition of the object, determining the object's identity is an important first step. By exploring the nature of the object's 'newness' we can then better understand and discern how best to define (and translate) the verbal action that brought it about. Objects of the verb חָדַשׁ as found in the Old Testament are varied: the kingdom (1 Sam 11:14); witnesses (Job 10:17) a right spirit (Ps 51:12 [Eng 51:10]); one's youth (Ps 103:5); the ground (Ps 104:30); days (Lam 5:21); ruined cities (Isa 61:4); the temple altar (2 Chr 15:8), and the "house of Yahweh" (2 Chr 24:4, 12).[229]

I begin with several examples in which the notion of "renewal" is most obvious, and context offers fairly clear indications. Three occurrences of חָדַשׁ in 2 Chronicles have to do with

[229] Similar usage is attested in Akkadian (*edēšu*): meaning "be or become new," "renew," occasionally the sense of "rejuvenate," and most often the sense of "restore." One notable example describes the monthly renewal practiced by *Sîn*, the moon-god: *ina iteddušika* ("when you [Sin] renew yourself"). C. R. North, " חדשׁ," *TDOT* 4:225–44, 226; citing A. T. Clay, *Miscellaneous Inscriptions in the Yale Babylonian Collection, 'YOSBT*, 1 (1915), 45 II 42. Examples similar to Hebrew/OT usage: "to restore a temple/shrine/sanctuary" (*CAD* E 31a 2; cf. 2 Chr 24:4, 12); a king's reign: "may his life be long, his reign renewing itself" (*CAD* E 32b 3; cf. 1 Sam 11:14); and "a life that renews itself constantly every month like the moon (*CAD* E 32b 3; cf. Ps 103:5). See also Akk *uddušu,* often used with *ilu* meaning "to restore/repair an image of a god" (Tawil, *Akkadian Lexical Companion*, 101).

work done on the temple in Jerusalem (originally built by King Solomon) under the authority of two of Judah's kings. The first example, 2 Chr 15:8, occurs in the context of Asa's reforms. In response to the prophetic word of Azariah, Asa rid the land of "detestable things" (הַשִּׁקּוּצִים), "and he renewed[230] the altar of Yahweh" (וַיְחַדֵּשׁ אֶת־מִזְבַּח יְהוָה).[231] The second occurrence takes place during the later reforms carried out by Joash[232] (2 Chr 24:4 and 24:12). Joash commanded even more extensive work on the temple than had Asa.[233] Collecting the necessary monies, he hired carpenters and stone masons "to renew" (לְחַדֵּשׁ) the house of Yahweh (2 Chr 24:4 and 24:12) and metal craftsmen "to strengthen" (לְחַזֵּק) it (2 Chr 24:12). Depending on the English translation, it is not uncommon to find words such as "repair" or "restore" used interchangeably with "renew." The parallel purpose phrases in 2 Chr 24:12, both opening with a *lamed* of purpose,[234] suggest that the terms are synonymous in this context. Thus, in these examples it seems fair to say that the context emphasizes the "renewal" or "restoration" of the temple to its proper condition (cf. 2 Chr 24:13), which I believe we can assume represents its former strength and condition, as when it was new. It is also worth noting the excitement that this renewal effort evoked among the people. There was, in fact, such a spirit of rejoicing that the

---

[230] "renewed" (ASB, KJV); "repaired" (RSV, NIV, ESV)

[231] The parallel passage about Asa in 1 Kgs 15: 9–24 makes no mention of work on the temple structure itself, only that he brought "holy things," along with silver, gold, and vessels into the "house of Yahweh" (15:15). For description of the altar as constructed under Solomon, see 2 Chr 4:1 (also 2 Chr 8:12).

[232] "Jehoash" in 1 Kgs 12:1.

[233] 2 Chr 24:6–7 indicate that the need for renewal was due to a lack of carrying out the collection of taxes for temple upkeep along with the fact that consecrated items had been stolen and used for Baal worship.

[234] The two verbs occur in a parallel form using an infinitive construct with a *lamed* prefix indicating purpose. The second verb, חָזַק, is used consistently throughout the parallel passage of 2 Kgs 12:1–16 (vv. 6, 7, 8, 13, 15) to render the action being carried out in the "house of Yahweh," specifically on any בֶּדֶק ("breach;" *HALOT* 1:111; seven times in 2 Kgs 12: 6–13 and always with חָזַק; refers also to a leak in a ship, Ezek 27:9–27).

monies collected from the people exceeded that which was necessary for the renewal/restoration and were used to make utensils for the temple service and burnt offerings (2 Chr 24:14).

In regard to these examples in 2 Chronicles, I would draw attention to two details that may relate to the use of the verb חדשׁ in general, and to its ancient Near Eastern context in particular. First, in both cases the renewal project is at the direction of the king, and second, the verbal action is associated with the temple. It is well known that kings in the ancient world, seeking to establish their throne and power, undertook building projects, especially new temples. In particular, building or restoring temples was viewed as an important means of pleasing the god(s) and ensuring the deity's continued or renewed presence and favor. Significantly, the king would seek the permission of the god(s) to build or rebuild a temple or, in some cases, would claim the approval of the deity in some form. In the case of rebuilding, elaborate measures were often taken to ensure that the building process replicated the original temple, as it was believed that the original manifestation represented the ideal.[235] It is possible that the efforts of Asa and Joash reflect this nuance.[236] At the very least, we can probably assume that the original temple

[235] It is difficult to suggest how far to push the specific use of "new" vocabulary in certain categories such as rebuilding temples. Although it is well-attested in the ancient Near East, it is not clear how long and/or to what extent such vocabulary associations remained in practice. For example, Ezra 1–6 recounts the return of exiles under the command of Cyrus and the rebuilding of the altar and then the temple itself. Consistent with ancient Near Eastern custom, Cyrus, in his first year as king of Persia, proclaims that he has been appointed by "Yahweh, the God of heaven" to "build (בנה) him a house in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:2). He furthermore declares that the exiles may go to Jerusalem and "rebuild the house of Yahweh, the God of Israel," declaring of Yahweh, "He is the God who is in Jerusalem" (Ezra 1:3). There is no reference to "newness" (verb or adjective) in the biblical descriptions of the altar or temple rebuilding. It might be worth noting, however, that an implicit comparison is made between the first and second temples. Those who had seen the "first/former house" (הַבַּיִת הָרִאשׁוֹן) wept "with a loud voice" as they saw "this house" (Ezra 3:12), even as others shouted for joy. For the elder generation, the discontinuity was visible and painful. Though rebuilt, it seems fair to suggest the former temple was not "renewed."

[236] It is perhaps telling that other instances of reform involving the temple emphasize other aspects of the process. For example, it is said that Hezekiah opened the doors of the house of Yahweh (shut by his predecessor, Ahaz; 2 Chr 28:24) and "strengthened/secured" (חָזַק) them, but beyond that his efforts with regard to the temple are not those of rebuilding but of cleansing and consecration (2 Chron 29:5, 15–19).

built under Solomon's direction represented the "ideal" to which all later conditions were compared.

Returning to the verb חָדַשׁ, I want to draw attention to another example in which context indicates that the condition brought about by the verbal action is clearly a sense of "renewal"—a restoration of "newness" that existed previously. In Lam 5:21 we read the pleas of a desperate Israel amidst the crisis of the Babylonian exile. They recognize the enduring reign of Yahweh (Lam 5:19), yet they question his concern for them, asking, "Why do you forsake us forever? Why do you forsake us for so many days?" (5:20). They cry out in v. 21:

> "Restore us to yourself, O Yahweh (הֲשִׁיבֵנוּ יְהוָה ׀ אֵלֶיךָ)
> that we may be restored (וְנָשׁוּבָה [ךָ][נָשׁוּבָה])!
> Renew our days as of old (חַדֵּשׁ יָמֵינוּ כְּקֶדֶם׃)."

In the poetic structure of Lam 5:21, חָדַשׁ occurs in parallel with the verb שׁוּב ("restore"), and both verbs are imperatives initiating the clause. Israel implores Yahweh to act on their behalf in two ways: 1) to restore (שׁוּב) them to himself (in order to be restored) and 2) to make new (חָדַשׁ) their days. The first plea is comprised of two clauses that both use שׁוּב, first in the *hiphil* and then in the *qal*. In the first clause, the causative sense of the *hiphil* highlights Yahweh's agency—he alone can initiate and cause such a restoration to occur. The second clause is entirely contingent upon Yahweh's choice to act. Only as he causes Israel to "return/be restored" to him can Israel have the hope of being "restored "to him, expressed with the *qal*.[237] Israel's second

[237] William L. Holladay, *The Root Šûbh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1958). In Holladay's extensive lexical study, he defines the uses of *šûbh* in Lam 5:21. The first one (*hiphil*), Holladay categorizes in the context of covenantal relationship, with God as both subject and implied object of the verb, defining it as " 'accept back' (in the covenant)" (102). The second one (*qal*) is classified under usages in the context of covenantal relationship and defined as "'return' (to God), often 'repent'" noting that the subject is usually Israel (78). Holloday thus translates the first half of the verse: "bring us back, Yahweh, to thyself, that we may return (Kt)/ and let us return (Qr)." He notes that Jer 31:18 is similar but lacks the prepositional phrase (142). Acknowledging a few exceptions, Holloday adopts the following as a definition for *šûbh* in the *qal*: "having moved in a particular direction, to move thereupon in the

plea is for Yahweh to "make new" (חָדַשׁ) their days (יָמִים). Israel's questions in the immediately preceding verse (v. 20) reveal their current perceived condition as "forgotten" (שָׁכַח) and "forsaken" (עָזַב) for "many days" (לְאֹרֶךְ יָמִים) by Yahweh. Days "made new" by Yahweh would represent a condition in complete contrast to their current one.[238] Thus, there is both a temporal and qualitative difference being conveyed. If v. 21 had stopped after the first two words of the clause, one might need to give consideration to a translation such as "Make new/anew our days." But the clause goes further by adding a final comparison, "as of old" (כְּקֶדֶם). The comparison represents Israel's vision of what "days made new" would look like, at least based on her traditions and collective memory. Israel longs to be restored to Yahweh in the way that they once were—before their sin (Lam 5:16) brought forth Yahweh's rejection and wrath (5:22). In light of the verse (and immediate unit) as a whole, the idea of being restored/returned (שׁוּב) and the comparison to days "of old" suggest that "*re*new" (i.e., "made new *again*") is precisely what is conveyed by חָדַשׁ.

Whereas the use of "renew" seems an appropriate English rendering for the verb חָדַשׁ as it appears in 2 Chronicles and Lamentations, I now turn back to an example from the earliest days of the monarchy in which the context in which חָדַשׁ occurs makes an adequate translation more challenging. It is the first use of the verb in the Old Testament, occurring at 1 Sam 11:14 in the course of establishing Saul's kingship under Samuel's authority:

> "Samuel said to the people, (וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל־הָעָם)
> 'Come, let us go to Gilgal (לְכוּ וְנֵלְכָה הַגִּלְגָּל)

opposite direction, the implication being (unless there is evidence to the contrary) that one will arrive again at the initial point of departure" (53).

[238] Note that the repetition of "days" in both v. 20 and v. 21 underscores the intended contrast: what is new (i.e., their "days" experienced as new) did not exist previously in the immediate context; prior to their days made new are many days during which they are forgotten and forsaken.

and there *inaugurate* the monarchy'"(וְנְחַדֵּשׁ שָׁם הַמְּלוּכָה׃) (NJPS)

Here, I have followed the NJPS translation, but the majority of English translations render חָדַשׁ as "renew."[239] The object of the verbal action is the מְלוּכָה ("monarchy, kingdom, kingship").[240] This marks the term's third occurrence in the narrative of Saul's kingship. In an earlier episode, Samuel had secretly anointed Saul, but Saul did not speak of the "matter of the kingdom (מְלוּכָה) to his uncle" (1 Sam 10:16). Later in ch. 10 we read that Samuel tells the people the "rules" (מִשְׁפַּט) of the "kingdom (מְלוּכָה)" (10:25).[241] What happens at Gilgal certainly relates to the kingship of Saul, but it raises the question: in what sense is the kingdom/monarchy "renewed" or "made new"?

One explanation is that the action at Gilgal represents a formalization of Saul's kingship. McCarter suggests: "Saul, who was already king *de jure*, has now become king *de facto*."[242] Tsumura agrees, calling it a reaffirmation of Saul's political role as king, but also emphasizing

---

[239] So ESV, ASV, RSV, KJV, NET; "reaffirm," NIV. Many commentators likewise render the Hebrew as "renew" with little or no discussion of alternatives. Tsumura cites the basic definition of the verb חדשׁ as found in the Hebrew Lexicon: "to make anew, restore" [*HALOT* 1:294; David Toshio Tsumura, *The First Book of Samuel*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2007), 312]. McCarter states: "the kingship is simply 'renewed' at Gilgal" [P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., *1 Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 8 (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 205]. Interestingly, Brueggemann elaborates very little on the use of חדשׁ in 11:14 other than to observe its importance to scholars as a key to connecting vv. 14–15 with the preceding materials in chs 9–11 (see below). Yet, his theological penchant for newness is evidenced by some thirty uses (by my count) of "new" or "newness" in his broader discussion of 1 Sam 9–11 [Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel*, IBC (Louisville: John Knox, 1990), 69–88].

[240] The location, Gilgal, is emphasized by the four-time repetition of שָׁם ("there"), possibly suggesting that the significance of the event is that it is being carried out in Gilgal. Moreover, Gilgal is also where Samuel will declare an end to Saul's kingdom (1 Sam 13:14) because of Saul's disobedience.

[241] Many scholars explain the occurrence of חדשׁ in 11:14 as an editorial attempt to connect this king-making event with two previous ones. Related is the general agreement that the Saul narrative in 1 Sam appears to be comprised of various sources. For example, it seems that 10:17–27 originally continued the narrative at the point 8:1–22 left off, and thus reflects a different origin than the intervening episode (9:1–10:16).

[242] McCarter, *I Samuel,* 205. McCarter, citing Wellhausen, states: "[Saul] does not become king *de facto* until after he has proved himself" (*I Samuel,*196).

the distinctive religious character of the Gilgal assembly[243] as one of "allegiance to the kingship of Yahweh"[244] The notion of the establishment of the kingdom as a multi-step process is not without merit.[245] Nevertheless, I am not convinced that the word "renewed" adequately conveys the sense of a "reaffirmation" or a final step in the process of Saul's attaining full-fledged kingship.

In light of the text as we now have it, it seems logical to view each kingdom-related episode as a significant element of the narrative's larger emphases (e.g., the character of Saul). The event at Gilgal seems to be the pinnacle of the kingdom's establishment, but it does not appear to represent anything made new *again* as the word "*re*new" implies. Although there are outcries against Saul, there is no hint that the "kingdom" has been removed from Saul, handed over to someone else, or disrupted in any way that would call for a "renewal." Consequently, if the 'newness' of the Gilgal event is viewed as the public and/or ceremonial beginning of the kingdom/Saul's kingship (even as part of the larger process), then the verb חדשׁ seems to make the most sense when it conveys the idea of establishing or initiating, or as the NJPS renders it: "inaugurate."

---

[243] Tsumura observes, as do others, that Saul's kingship had "been formally known though lacking demonstration" and, "It was necessary for *all the people* to acknowledge Saul as the king of Israel before the Lord" (*First Book of Samuel*, 313).

[244] Tsumura, *First Book of Samuel,* 312, citing the work of J. R. Vannoy, *Covenant Renewal at Gilgal: A Study of 1 Samuel 11:14–12:25* (Cherry Hill, NJ: Mack, 1978), 68. Whereas Tsumura treats vv. 14–15 as the climax of the preceding section, Vannoy considers them summary sentences that introduce the following section (11:14–12:25), which is a more detailed account of what he considers a covenant renewal ceremony (*Covenant Renewal*, 185; cited by Tsumura, 313).

[245] For example, based on biblical and extra-biblical texts, D. Edelman has proposed a three-step pattern for the installation of a king that includes anointing, testing, and installation ["Saul ben Kish in History and Tradition," in *The Origins of the Ancient Israelite States*, ed. V. Vritz and P. R. Davies, JSOTSup 228 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1996), 148; cited by Tsumura, *First Book of Samuel*, 313, n. 50].

As I mentioned at the outset of this section, there are several occurrences of חָדַשׁ in which the verb could be, and often is, translated as "renew," thus emphasizing that the resulting condition/state represents a restoration/renewal of an earlier state. In other words, the word "renew" accents the fact that what is new is new *again*, despite whatever condition is currently in place. I would argue that in some cases the choice to render the Hebrew verb with a term of "renewal" is based more on the assumption of a translator than on the emphasis of the terms and the context of the passage. A focus on the outcome of newness is of course consistent with the emphasis of the *piel* form of the verb, but I am arguing further that in some cases the sense of the *piel* is reinforced in additional ways—to the extent that a better translation will also focus on the resulting condition of newness rather than on its renewal. If there is any comparison to be made to what existed previous to the new condition it tends to be a contrast to a current state—the present condition as conveyed by the writer. The best examples of this situation appear in the Psalms: Ps 51:12 [Eng 51:10] and Ps 104:30. Notably, in both cases, חָדַשׁ occurs in parallel fashion with the verb ברא ("to create").

While the verbs are used in parallel cola, it is important to recognize how the two actions differ. On the one hand, the verb חָדַשׁ denotes the sense of bringing about something new, but it does so without reference to the kind of action. On the other hand, the verb ברא specifies the action "to create." While ברא is used in the Old Testament only of divine activity, it regularly occurs alongside the verbs עשׂה ("to create, make, do") and יצר ("to make, form, fashion"), which convey similar meanings but are not limited to a divine subject.[246] Despite the slight

[246] See for example Gen 1:26 and 1:27, where both עשׂה and ברא are used to denote creating humanity (אָדָם) in the image and likeness of God. The widespread use of these terms in Second Isaiah will be discussed in more detail in a later chapter but is worth noting here for comparison: Isa 41:20 (עשׂה and ברא); Isa 43:1 (יצר and ברא); Isa 43:7 (ברא, יצר, and עשׂה); Isa 45:7 (יצר, ברא, and עשׂה); Isa 45:12 (עשׂה and ברא); Isa 45:18 (ברא,

difference in their verbal action it is not difficult to see how the verbs relate to one another. The object of the verb ברא is 'new' in the sense that it did not exist prior to the action of being created.[247] The object of the verb חדשׁ is 'new' by virtue of its basic meaning and the function of the *piel* stem. This semantic overlap is evident in the two examples that follow.

Psalm 51 represents the well-known lament ascribed to David and composed in the aftermath of his sin against Bathsheba and the subsequent visit of the prophet Nathan. In v. 12 [Eng v.10], David pleads:

> Create in me a clean heart, O God, (לֵב טָהוֹר בְּרָא־לִי אֱלֹהִים)
> and make new a steadfast spirit within me. (וְרוּחַ נָכוֹן חַדֵּשׁ בְּקִרְבִּי׃)[248]

יצר, עשׂה, and כון). Importantly, being newly created does not imply that nothing of its type or kind has ever existed before. For example, Israel was "created" by God (Isa 43:1) that is, they now have a new identity--they represent an entity that did not exist previously, but it does not mean that the people themselves did not exist before, or that there was no prior concept of a people group forming and becoming an identifiable entity.

[247] To clarify, just because the object is newly created does not mean it is created *ex nihilo*. Goldingay correctly observes that although ברא occurs where there is no mention of "raw material," "its emphasis lies elsewhere" [John Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology, Volume One: Israel's Gospel* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2003), 77. Indeed, the notion of creation *ex nihilo* was not explicitly expressed until the Second Temple period in 2 Macc 7:28 where it is said that God made everything "*ouk ex ontōn*." Goldingay suggests that the doctrine is not necessarily implied even in 2 Macc, citing the book's main concerns lay elsewhere and the fact that other Greek writings used similar terminology without inferring creation out of nothing. He therefore dates the first "explicit conviction…clearly formulated" to the second century A.D." (*Israel's Gospel*, 78; cites, Gerhard May, *Creatio ex Nihilo* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994). Whether or not the *idea* is present in Gen 1, and particularly as it corresponds with the verb ברא ("create"), remains a matter of discussion. It may very well be present; nevertheless, the text itself "neither precludes nor defends the possibility" [Bill T. Arnold, *Genesis*, NCBC (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 36]. Richard Middleton, likewise, argues that it is erroneous to claim that ברא infers *creatio ex nihilo*, suggesting that a more justifiable claim would be "that it refers to creative acts of radical newness" [J. Richard Middleton, *The Liberating Image: The* Imago Dei *in Genesis 1*, (Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005), 73]. See also, Gordon Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC 1 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987), 14.

[248] My own translation. ESV, NIV, NASB, NLT, among others, render חָדַשׁ as "renew." RSV and NRSV render the second clause similar to my translation: "put a new and right spirit within me."

The syntactical equivalence[249] of the parallelism suggests that the two verbs, ברא in the first line and חדשׁ in the second, also share some degree of semantic overlap. In Ps 51:12, the use of ברא conveys an image of God actively fashioning and making a new heart for the supplicant, one that is "clean," to replace what has become unclean through iniquity and sin (51:4, 11 [Eng 51:2, 9]). The use of חָדֵשׁ in the second line does not, in and of itself, suggest a particular kind of action. However, it does convey that the resulting "steadfast spirit" qualifies as new, in parallel to the "clean heart." While there is perhaps room to discuss the best way to render the verbs in translation, the deliberate fronting of the objects in each line suggests that the psalmist's main interest was not so much the verbal action itself as the quality of newness that characterizes the outcome—the newness of a heart that is clean and of a spirit that is steadfast/established. Furthermore, if the writer had been intent instead on emphasizing the nature of the action, a number of other verbs such as עשׂה and יצר (as mentioned above) would have been more likely options than חדשׁ. As the text is, should God respond to the psalmist's pleas, the clean heart created by God and the steadfast spirit he makes new will exist where they did not exist before. In the context of the writers 'present,' only God can bring about the desired transformation. Perhaps not surprisingly, we find once more an indication of the affective nature of "newness"—having a clean heart and a new spirit will bring with them joy and gladness (vv. 10, 14 [Eng 8, 12]). Brokenness will be turned into rejoicing.

Psalm 104:30 also uses the verbs ברא and חדשׁ in a parallel set of clauses, suggesting at least some level of semantic overlap even if not exact synonymity. Verse 30 comes at the end of

---

[249] Syntactical equivalence is noted by the same word order in each line: noun (direct object) – adjective (modifies direct object) – verb (imperative) – prepositional phrase with first person singular pronominal suffix. The first line ends with the use of the vocative, *Elohim*, which appears to be "balanced" in the second line by the additional syllables in the prepositional phrase בְּקִרְבִּי.

a short unit beginning in v. 27 that expounds on the creatures God has made, described previously in vv. 24–26:

> You send forth your spirit; they are created; (תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּן)
> you make new the face of the ground. (וּתְחַדֵּשׁ פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה׃)

The first two clauses continue a pattern of conditional clauses begun in v. 28.[250] Like v. 28, v. 29 has a third clause added to the opening conditional expressions.[251] It is this third clause in v. 30 that uses the verb חדשׁ to denote the action of Yahweh to "make new" the "face of the ground" (פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה).[252] While grammatically the verb חדשׁ parallels the opening verb שׁלח ("send") with Yahweh as subject (cf. v. 24), semantically the third clause seems to function as an extension of the second (similar to the way v. 28 functions). One must look all the way back to the previous unit for the subject matter of the verb ברא (v. 30b). Verse 24 speaks of the "great works" (מַעֲשֶׂה) of Yahweh, the creatures of which the earth is full, all made in his wisdom. It is all these which depend on Yahweh for their sustenance and their very life: they die when he takes away their "רוּחַ" ("breath, spirit") (v. 29), whereas, when he sends forth his spirit (רוּחַ)

---

[250] The clauses are "conditional" in the sense that "*When* Yahweh does X, then Y happens." The first line of each pair vv. 28–30, the protasis of the conditional clause is introduced asyndetically (i.e., the absence of expected conjunctions). See Waltke-O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 637.

[251] Additionally, vv. 29–30 relate to one another through a chiastic structure employing the roots פָּנָה ("face") and רוּחַ ("breath" or "spirit") in each verse.

[252] The Hebrew phrase פְּנֵי אֲדָמָה ("face of the ground") occurs some 33 times throughout the Old Testament, but is most concentrated in Gen 1–8, where it appears eight times. The phrase functions as the object: of a mist watering (2:6); upon which Cain is driven away (4:14); upon which humans began to multiply (6:1); upon which and all God has made will be/is blotted out (6:7; 7:4, 23); from which flood waters subside (8:8); and finally (and the only time the phrase functions as the subject), the surface that appears dry after the floodwaters recede (8:13). Another use of the phrase, in Ezek 38:20, clearly echoes the language of Gen 1, and refers to the surface upon which humans exist--in the same manner in which fish are "of the sea," birds "of the heavens," beasts "of the field," and creeping things "creep upon the ground (עַל־הָאֲדָמָה)." Notably, the latter creep "*upon* the ground," whereas humans are described as "*upon the face of* the ground." Perhaps also worth noting is that the expression of bowing one's face to the ground always used the noun אֶרֶץ (with a directional ה suffix), never אֲדָמָה.

they are "created" (ברא) (v. 30). The addition of the third clause in v. 30 seems to connect this creational work of Yahweh to the action (חדשׁ) he takes with regard to "the face of the ground." While the difference between "renew" and "make new" may be a moot point depending on one's understanding of the English word "renew," my own sense is that "renew" emphasizes a notion of "again" that is not present in the verb ברא ("to create"). Thus, for the sake of extending and emphasizing the notion of Yahweh's wisdom-filled, great works of creation, I would simply reiterate my preference for rendering the verb חדשׁ as "make new/anew" when there are no indications of repetition.

Related Verb: חלף

The root חלף does not occur as an adjective. The verb in the *piel* means "to change," as for example, to change clothes or a garment (e.g., Gen 24:14, 41:14; 2 Sam 12:20).[253] In the *hiphil*, the verb is used similarly[254] but with an added causative sense, thus חלף denotes: "cause to change" (i.e., to something different), "cause to replace with,"[255] or "cause to exchange."[256]

The two roots, חדשׁ and חלף, occur together in two places, both of which are in in Job: 10:17 and 29:20. In the first, Job says to God:

תְּחַדֵּשׁ עֵדֶיךָ | נֶגְדִּי וְתֶרֶב כַּעַשְׂךָ עִמָּדִי חֲלִיפוֹת וְצָבָא עִמִּי׃

"You 'make new' your witnesses before me and you increase your anger against me; you 'bring fresh troops' against me."

---

[253] The noun denotes "changes of clothes:" Gen 45:22; Judg 14:12, 13, 19; 2 Kgs 5:22, 23.

[254] For example, the verb is again used to express the change of clothing (Gen 35:2), wages (Gen 31:7, 41; 35:2). It also refers to the change represented by fresh sprouting of a tree Job 14:7: "For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down that it will sprout again (וְעוֹד יַחֲלִיף) ..."

[255] Cf. Isa 9:9 [Eng 9:10]: "...the sycamores have been cut down, but cedars *we will put in their place* ()"

[256] Lev 27:10, "He shall not exchange (חלף) it [i.e., the animal chosen for a vow]."

The verb חדשׁ occurs at the beginning of the first clause. The word "renew" is the most common choice among English translations, but as I have previously observed, the prefix re- conveys a sense of "again." Thus, the English word "renew" may or may not always accurately convey the distinction of *not* existing previously that characterizes an object "made new." The most likely meaning of the verb חדשׁ with the object, "your witnesses" (עֵדֶיךָ),[257] is that the plural of "witnesses" means that there are *different* things that function as witnesses against Job, an idea supported by Job 16:8. The use of חדשׁ conveys this qualitative difference between the witnesses. Each one is something/someone new such that Job is expressing the sense that God keeps creating/bringing about new witnesses, or if we might express it in a modern idiom, "it's always something new."

The term חלף occurs as a plural noun in the final expression of Job's accusations in v.17. The noun חֲלִיפוֹת denotes "changes, exchanges, or replacements." Although the conjoined noun צָבָא ("military, army, host") and lack of an additional verb have made the noun pair somewhat difficult to interpret conclusively;[258] nonetheless, read with the MT, there is reason enough to accept the two nouns as a hendiadys and render as "fresh troops."[259]

---

[257] David Clines suggests that the Hebrew reading of "witnesses" (עד) does not fit the immediate context very well and favors the possibility of reading the word as עדי, meaning "hostility, attack." Clines argues that this alternative, (citing its proposal by A. B. Ehrlich), functions better in synonymous parallelism with the object of the second clause, God's anger (כַּעַשׂ). Clines further notes that God's anger is a leitmotif throughout the speech and appears intensified in v. 17. He states: "Job's protestations of innocence serve only to multiply God's outbursts against him" [David J. A. Clines, *Job 1–20*, WBC 17 (Dallas: Word, 1989), 222, 250]. While I would agree that the proposal is plausible, I am not convinced that the synonymity of the parallelism suffers in any significant way when the MT vocalization ("witnesses") is retained.

[258] With regard to the meaning of "changing, relief" as in taking turns in rotating manner. In 1 Kgs 5:28 [Eng 5:14], where the two roots occur together in the phrase בְּחֹדֶשׁ חֲלִיפוֹת, although חדשׁ is vocalized as חֹדֶשׁ, ("new moon, month") so that the sense of the phrase is "in turns for a month" (*HALOT* 1:319).

[259] Watson makes a convincing case for a military metaphor and interprets חֲלִיפוֹת וְצָבָא in 10:17 as a hendiadys referring to "fresh troops," thus: "You renew your combatants opposite me, / -and increase your irritation with me - / with relief-troops against me" [Wilfred G. E. Watson, "The Metaphor in Job 10,17," *Biblica* 63 (1982):

I have already explored the use of the adjective חָדָשׁ in Job 29:20a, but חלף appears in the parallel phrase as a verb describing a bow. The dynamics of poetic parallelism would suggest that the bow held in his hand is newly made or perhaps newly strung, thus, fresh and pliant.[260] Scholars have offered varying interpretations of the precise meaning of תַּחֲלִיף with respect to a bow, but the general sense seems to be that of being renewed (i.e., "new" replacing "old") and therefore in prime condition and a state of readiness corresponding with both the purpose and significance of the ancient bow—a powerful weapon and a symbol of strength and virility.[261]

חלף and "Renew"

The foregoing examples illustrate aspects of semantic overlap between חדשׁ and חָלַף. I want to draw attention to a few more examples where only חָלַף occurs, in light of the fact that the term is commonly translated with some form of "renew." My purpose in examining these particular examples is to take a closer look at the meaning of חָלַף, and in so doing, to also see if the semantic similarities help to clarify differences between חדשׁ and חָלַף, especially aspects of meaning or nuances that are unique to חדשׁ.

255–57, 257]. The LXX translation indicates the Hebrew should be read as: תַּחֲלִיף צְבָאֶיךָ. Notably, the 2 roots (צָבָא and חלף) also appear together in Job 14:14, where "service" (צָבָא) is associated with a "change/replacement" (חֲלִיפָה) that is due to come (i.e., as "relief").

[260] Since חלף can mean 'change' as in a 'change of clothes,' or 'exchange' such as new replacing old, the sense of renewed, especially as it occurs here (29:20) in the hiphil seems logical (cf. Isa 40:31; 41:1). (See Clines, *Job*, 941, n. 20d). I am less convinced by the suggestion of Clines and others that חָדָשׁ and חלף imply the further sense of *perpetually* fresh or *ever*-renewed ("ever-pliant") (Clines, *Job*, 992). Hartley, similarly, translates the verbs as "ever new" and "a continually vigorous life," respectively [John E. Hartley, *The Book of Job*, NICOT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988) 188–190; 188, n. 7].

[261] See for example, Gen 49:24; Pss 7:6, 16:9. Similarly, Robert Alter, *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes* (New York: Norton, 2010), 121.

The verb חָלַף occurs twice in Ps 90:5–6 to denote the condition of grass (חָצִיר) in the morning [when it also "flourishes" (צוּץ)] as compared to evening, when "it fades and withers (יבשׁ)" (90:6b). The immediate context (vv. 4–5a) speaks of Yahweh's enduring nature ("a thousand years in your sight") in contrast to the fleeting segments of human time: "as yesterday when it is past," "a watch in the night," "a sweeping flood," and "a dream." The grass too, withered and dried up in the short span of a day, further emphasizes this brevity of life. Context does not offer any past point of reference by which to compare the grass as it appears in the morning; rather, it cites only its morning condition in contrast to what it becomes by evening. It is possible that the Hebrew term חלף conveys the notion of being "renewed" in this particular context (i.e., חָצִיר).[262] Job 14:7, for example, uses חלף (hiphil) to describe the growth of a tree: "For there is hope for a tree, if it be cut down that it will again (עוד) sprout (חלף)." Although a number of translations render חלף as "sprout,"[263] the idea of renewal is actually more explicit here than in Ps 90 because of the use of the adverb עוד ("again"). Significantly, while the verb חדשׁ can likewise signify "to renew," in its ten biblical occurrences the verb is never used to describe the growth/ regrowth of plants or trees.[264] This highlights the importance of being aware that while what is 'different' might correspond with what we might describe as 'new' or 'renewed, it does not automatically follow that it corresponds to 'new' in the way the חָדָשׁ is used in the biblical texts.

---

[262] Other options might include "fresh" or "freshly sprouted." LXX (Ps 89:5, 6) uses the verb παρέρχομαι, meaning "to go by, pass by" (BDAG: 775), thus no connotation of renewal.

[263] For example, ESV, RSV, NIV.

[264] The adjective חָדָשׁ is used to modify foods items (e.g., freshly harvested grain or fresh "choice [fruits]") but notably, the new or fresh entities are always separated from their original plant source.

A final example is the use of חלף in the oft-quoted verse, Isa 40:31.[265]

"But they who wait for the LORD shall *renew* their strength; (וְקוֵ֤י יְהוָה֙ יַחֲלִ֣יפוּ כֹ֔חַ)
they shall mount up with wings like eagles; (יַעֲל֥וּ אֵבֶ֖ר כַּנְשָׁרִ֑ים)
they shall run and not be weary; (יָרוּצ֥וּ וְלֹ֖א יִיגָ֑עוּ)
they shall walk and not faint." (יֵלְכ֥וּ וְלֹ֖א יִיעָֽפוּ׃)

As in the examples above, the most common translation for חלף is "renew."[266] Indeed, the use of "renew" has a long history in the English translation of the Bible, reaching at least as far back as the 1560 Geneva Bible's rendering of Isa 40:31: "They that waite vpon the Lord, shal renue their strength."[267]

In Isa 40:31, it is the issue of the nature of the verbal action I want to address. Since the object of the verbal action is כֹּחַ ("strength"), the question is whether context suggests, either explicitly or implicitly, that the strength which belongs to those who wait for Yahweh represents a strength that was theirs at some point previously (as implied by the re- prefix of "renewed"), or whether the change results in a strength altogether (i.e., qualitatively) different. I am suggesting that the text offers several indications that the latter is the case. The verses just previous to Isa 40:31 describe those to whom Yahweh gives strength (כֹּחַ) as "faint" (יָעֵף) (v. 29a), and youths (נְעָרִים), whom we might assume have strength, are likewise "faint" (יָעֵף) and "weary" (יגע) (v. 30). In v. 31, the verb חלף used in the first clause signifies the act of change that takes place for those who wait on Yahweh. The next three clauses detail the outcome and, significantly, the same two terms that defined their previous condition (יגע and יָעֵף) are repeated in the final two

---

[265] The same verb, along with the same object, occurs again in Isa 41:1; however, for the sake of the particular issue I will focus only on 40:31.

[266] ESV, KJV, RSV, NRSV, NET, NIV.

[267] *OED* cites this as an example of an intransitive use of "renew" meaning "to recover, regain (one's strength, youth, etc.); to cause this to be recovered. The entry for "renew" defines the transitive sense of 1 as "to make (something) new, or like new, again; to restore to the same condition as when new, young, or fresh." "renew, v.1".

clauses. This time, however, the terms are negated with לֹא, thus indicating a complete contrast: "…they will run and *not* be weary (יגע); they will walk and *not* be faint (יָעֵף)."[268] If there is any question as to the source or means of the dramatic transformation, the answer is already present in v. 28—the very characteristics that now describe them are explicitly those of Yahweh: יִיָּגַע לֹא יִיעַף וְלֹא ("He does not faint and does not grow weary").

Summary

In this chapter, I have surveyed the verbal form of the root חדשׁ. Appearing nine times in the *piel* stem, the basic denotation of the term is "to make something new" or "cause something to be in a state of newness." I noted that unlike the causative function of the *hiphil* which focuses on causing an action, that of the *piel* generally indicates an emphasis on causing a state or outcome.

The verbal objects of חִדַּשׁ are varied. Some, such as the temple, the altar, and cities, are literal objects, subject to the vagaries of wear and tear and normal breakdown over time. Both the contexts and accompanying synonyms that have the sense of strengthening and repairing make clear that the outcome of "newness" is a restoration of a pre-existing state when the object was, in fact, new (newly built or crafted). Making new in this sense conveys a process of renewal. Other objects of the verb are more abstract and/or figurative, such as "one's youth" and "days." Still, however, context suggests that the action of being made new envisions a desire for an experience of the past to be true again in the present, thus, an action with the sense of *re*newal.

In a couple of instances, namely Pss 51:12 [Eng 10] and 104:30, we find the verb חִדַּשׁ in parallel with the verb בָּרָא ("to create"). While the English word "renew" is often used to render

[268] The two terms recur in reversed order in v. 31 from their use in vv. 29 and 30, perhaps an additional means of emphasizing the contrast.

the Hebrew term חָדַשׁ, it seems to me that the word "renew" with its re- prefix (suggesting the sense of "again") may not adequately convey the sense of "making new" that the passage itself seems to suggest—especially in light of the use of בָּרָא. Perhaps one cannot so casually assume that, for example, the "steadfast spirit" (Ps 51:12) is so much a renewal of a previous spirit as it is a wholly new spirit akin to the newly "created" clean heart for which the psalmist asks.

In an attempt to bring more clarity to this issue of renewal, I concluded my discussion of the verb חָדַשׁ by looking its synonym, the verb חָלַף. In particular, I highlighted the use of the latter in the well-known verse, Isa 40:31. Like the examples from the Psalms, the English word "renew" is commonly used to render the Hebrew verb, חָלַף ("to change"). I would not argue that "renew" is incorrect as it is perhaps natural to assume that those who are now weary and faint were not always so—that, at some previous point in time, they were once full of strength, not weary, and not faint. However, in light of the use of literary devices of repetition and chiasm, the text itself seems to be less about a previous strength and to point more importantly to a strength that is to be equated with that of Yahweh (who *gives* strength and does not grow weary or faint) and is to be found by those who "wait" on/for Yahweh. In short, whether חָדַשׁ or חָלַף, the terms can in one sense be rightly translated "renew," but I also want to suggest that careful observation of the text (immediate context) might suggest nuances and/or connotations that convey a change or newness—indeed, even a transformation—that is divinely wrought and wholly new.

EXCURSUS

THE NOUN חֹדֶשׁ

The term חֹדֶשׁ represents the noun form of the root חדשׁ and occurs some 280 times in the Old Testament.[269] The word is not a nominative form of חָדָשׁ that conveys the idea of newness as a broader concept; rather, it is a term that primarily denotes "new moon" or "month."

While חֹדֶשׁ is appropriately rendered in English as "new moon," it is important to keep in mind that the correct referent of חֹדֶשׁ is a lunar phase—not the entity of the moon itself.[270] In fact, the adjective חָדָשׁ ("new") never occurs in collocation with the Hebrew word that denotes "moon" (יָרֵחַ).[271] Like other ancient Near Eastern cultures, ancient Israel observed a lunar calendar, and the appearance of the slim crescent following the dark phase determined the first day of the lunar month (lasting an average of twenty-nine and a half days). The new moon also seems to have derived significance from the fact that it represented the moon's 'renewal,'

---

[269] *HALOT* 1:294–95; similarly, "about 280 times" (Pieter A. Verhoef, *NIDOTTE 2:30–37*); 281 times in *DCH* 3:165–68; C. Westermann counts 283 occurrences but offers no discussion of חֹדֶשׁ beyond its denotations, "new moon, month" ("חָדָשׁ *ḥādāš* new" *TLOT* 1:394–397; 394). Samir B. Massouh likewise cites 283 times [חֹדֶשׁ (*ḥōdeš* 1), nom. month, new moon < חָדַשׁ (*ḥādaš*) *NIDOTTE* 2:38–39]. See also, C. P. Weber, "*ḥōdesh.* Month, monthly, new moon," *TWOT* 1:266.

[270] This point can unfortunately lead to some confusion when using English translations. I assume it accounts for what is no doubt an honest mistake but nevertheless a somewhat misleading statement in at least one Bible dictionary. The entry for 'new' includes the correct Hebrew and the Greek words as well as the statement: "Moon is by far the most common word in the OT to be qualified with new." While technically correct in the context of an English translation; unfortunately, with no further clarification, it seems to leave the reader with the faulty impression that the same applies to the actual Hebrew usage (Ann Jervis, "NEW," *NIDB*, 4:261–62).

[271] Another term that is clearly related to יָרֵחַ, but much less common, is יֶרַח, which denotes "month" rather than "moon." Signifying "month," יֶרַח, sometimes functions synonymously with חֹדֶשׁ when the latter is used in the same sense (e.g., 1 Kgs 6:38; 8:2).

reemerging as it did from a period of darkness (i.e., invisible).[272] In ancient Mesopotamia, the dark phase of the moon was known as the "day of disappearance" (*ūm bubbulim*) or "the day of lying down," corresponding with the notion that the moon was considered dead.[273]

In addition to *new moon* as a lunar phase, חֹדֶשׁ can also refer to the day of the new moon, or even more specifically, signify the first day of the month and/or the religious celebration that took place on the day. The Old Testament contains a number of examples which indicate that ancient Israel observed special religious practices associated with חֹדֶשׁ. In 1 Sam 20, for example, חֹדֶשׁ ("new moon") is repeatedly mentioned in connection with a royal feast in the household of King Saul (vv. 5, 18, 24, 27). That the festival was a regular observance is implied by the fact that David and Jonathan devise a plan based on the practice. Moreover, their assumption that David's absence at the meal would not go unnoticed suggests the cultic importance of the celebration. Likewise, the special observance of חֹדֶשׁ is implied in 2 Kings 4:23. A Shunammite woman is questioned as to why she is going to see the prophet Elijah when it is neither "new moon" (חֹדֶשׁ) or "sabbath" (שַׁבָּת).[274] Additional evidence of special practices comes in a negative form—a lack of sincerity and proper motivation drew stern rebukes and warnings of divine judgment from the prophets (e.g., Amos 8:11; Isa 1:13–14; Hos 2:11).

---

[272] It should be noted that the term 'new moon' differs in modern usage. In ancient terminology, the "new moon" refers to the day when the moon is visible as a slim crescent; whereas, in modern astronomical terms, "new moon" refers to the phase just prior, during which the moon is completely dark (i.e., invisible to the unaided eye), and the sun and the moon are said to be in "conjunction." Thus, in modern calendars that indicate the quarterly phases of the moon, the 'new moon' is represented by a darkened, black circle.

[273] The Mesopotamian belief was that the moon god, Nanna (also Suen, later Sîn) descended into the netherworld to make judgments and decisions among the deities there; it was thus an occasion for special offerings [Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 122–23]. Not surprisingly, the day also had negative associations; see, e.g., Zev I. Farber, "Israelite Festivals: From Cyclical Time Celebrations to Linear Time Commemorations," *Religions* 10 (2019):1–19; 11.

[274]The paired mention of both new moon and sabbath observances also occurs elsewhere. See, e.g., 1 Chr 23:31; 2 Chr 2:4, 8:13, 31:3; Neh 10:33; Isa 1:13, 66:23; Ezek 45:17, 46:1, 3; Hos 2:11; Amos 8:5.

While there is widespread evidence that a new moon festival was observed, specific laws with regard to prescribed sacrifices and offerings are found only in Numbers 28:11–15 (cf. Ezek 46:6).[275] The new moon celebrations were among several specified days on which the priests were commanded to blow their trumpets along with the required sacrifices (Num 10:10; cf. 29:1),[276] and the Psalmist draws from the occasion to express praise: "Blow the trumpet at the *new moon* (חֹדֶשׁ), at the *full moon* (כֶּסֶא), on our feast day" [Ps 81:4 (Eng 81:3)].

The second primary use of חֹדֶשׁ is to denote "month," where month refers to the unit of time. Like "new moon," the use of "month" can be further specified in various ways. For example, the phrase in Num 28:11, "at the beginnings of your months," refers to all the months in a general sense. Often, however, the month is identified by name or number, or sometimes, both. In 1 Chr 27:1–15 for example, we find each of the twelve months of the year designated by number.[277] Where the months are identified by name, four of the names represent Hebrew terms and seven are of Babylonian origin.[278]

---

[275] See also Josephus, *Ant.* 3.238; cited by James C. Vanderkam, "New Moon," *NIDB* 4: 264–65; 265.

[276] Num 10:1–10 concerns the making of two silver trumpets (v. 2) and the various reasons and times specified for their use: calling of assemblies, going to war, and "on the day of your gladness…at your appointed feasts, and the beginnings of your months" they are to be blown over the burnt offerings and over the sacrifices of the peace offerings" as a "reminder [for] you before your God: I am Yahweh your God."

[277] See also, e.g., "the second month" (1 Kgs 6:1), "the eighth month" (1 Kgs 6:38), and "the seventh month" (1 Kgs 8:2).

[278] When the month is identified by name, חֹדֶשׁ sometimes occurs in construct with the name (i.e., "in the month of"), other times in an adjectival relationship to a number, further identifying the named month (e.g., 1 Kgs 6:38, 8:2), and still other times with both name and number (e.g., 1 Kgs 6:1). In the Old Testament, four of the months are designated by number and Hebrew name: the first, "the month of Abib" (חֹדֶשׁ אָבִיב; see, e.g., Exod 13:4, 23:15, 34:18); the second, Ziv (זִו; 1 Kgs 6:1); the seventh, Ethanim (אֵתָנִים) (1 Kgs 8:2); and the eighth, Bul (בּוּל; 1 Kgs 6:38). Months identified by Babylonian names include: Nisan, the first month (Neh 2:1); Sivan, the third month (Est 8:9); Elul, the sixth (Neh 6:15); Kislev, the ninth (Zech 7:1); Tebeth, the tenth (Est 2:16); Shebat, the eleventh (Zech 1:7); and Adar, the twelfth (Est 3:7). C. P. Weber, "*ḥōdesh.* Month, monthly, new moon," *TWOT* 1:266.

Israel's calendar, like those of surrounding cultures, gradually went from being lunar based to one corresponding with a solar year. It is possible that this change was a contributing factor to the increased use of חֹדֶשׁ to denote "month." In addition, the fact that Babylonian names for months appear only in exilic or post-exilic books of the Old Testament seems to suggest that the exile and/or increased Babylonian influence contributed to changes in the Israelite calendar.

Whatever the changes and the influencing factors, the "new moon" and "sabbath" (חֹדֶשׁ and שַׁבָּת) continue to feature in Israel's redeemed and glorious future as proclaimed by the prophet in Isa 66:22–23. The word of Yahweh is that there will be a time when all flesh will come to worship before him, "from new moon to new moon, and from Sabbath to Sabbath" (Isa 66:23).[279]

While I began by making it clear that חֹדֶשׁ is not a noun that denotes "newness," I want to conclude by suggesting that it does, nevertheless, convey various associations consistent with notions of newness discussed previously. The first is the temporal dimension of חֹדֶשׁ and in particular, that of the new moon. Not only did the new moon represent a particular phase of the larger temporal cycle of the moon, but it also marked a beginning—yet another implication of its function as a part of a whole (i.e., a month, whether lunar or solar).

Also related to חֹדֶשׁ as new moon, I would suggest there is an association with light, not in the sense of offering increased visibility, but more in terms of its relationship to darkness. The new moon directly follows the lunar dark phase, which may suggest that a connection between newness and light is especially significant when it involves the *return* of light amidst the

[279] The only use of "new moon" in the New Testament is in Col 2:16 (νεομηνία), where it also occurs in collocation with "sabbath." The apostle Paul refers to certain matters such as food and drink, a festival, new moon, and Sabbath (v. 16) and reminds his readers that such things are but a shadow of things to come and that their real substance is to be found in Christ (v. 17).

darkness.[280] Moreover, just as the new moon marked the beginning of a month, so the new moon signals the beginning of a cycle of light.

[280] To further make my point, it might help to consider that the new moon crescent is identical in size (not orientation) to the crescent visible just before the moon's dark phase, yet that crescent is not a 'new moon,' and nor are there two "new moons"—the new moon *follows* the dark phase.

PART TWO: חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 40–48

CHAPTER FOUR

חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 41:14–16

In the previous chapters, I explored the use of חָדָשׁ in the Old Testament as a whole. The findings indicate that the term's usage is fairly circumscribed and can be compiled into a few general categories, including organic produce freshly harvested, items recently manufactured, and objects that are not only recently constructed but are also specifically related to cultic use and practices. It was also demonstrated that newness often marks a 'beginning' of something with a larger whole in mind. There are, as a result, connotations of prime condition and readiness for the specific task and/or emphasis on completion of the purpose for which something new has been formed or built. Moreover, I attempted to show that the meaning and use of חָדָשׁ are generally consistent with what we find elsewhere in the ancient Near East and adjoining regions.

This chapter focuses on Isa 40–48 and represents the heart of my investigation. In it I offer an exegetical analysis of the five occurrences of חָדָשׁ in chs. 40–48 (41:15, 42:9, 42:10, 43:19, and 48:6). The earlier findings of this investigation form a basis for this close reading, not

in a deterministic fashion that presumes meaning and function, but rather as a source that offers perspective and context.

A word is in order regarding the type of literature we are dealing with in these chapters. First, it is prophecy. What is distinctive about prophetic discourse in general is that "it is not, in formal terms, the prophet who is speaking but God Who is speaking through the prophet's quotation."[281] Like most of the prophetic writings, Isa 40–48 are in poetic form. Robert Alter observes that poetic form is more than a mere rhetorical device to make the public address more emphatic or memorable, it is "devised as a form of direct address to a historically real audience."[282] Furthermore he states, the Hebrew prophets "were preeminently poets with a 'message,' …The prophets had urgent ideas–indictments, warnings, words of consolation–to convey to their audience. The poetic instrument of conveyance, however, generated powers of signification that pressed beyond the immediate occasion."[283] I would add, more specifically, that we can speak of the poetry in Second Isaiah as lyric poetry.[284]

---

[281] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 140.

[282] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 140.

[283] Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 162.

[284] Heffelfinger defines 'lyric poetry' as "that subcategory of poetic literature that is characterized by the absence of plot or discursive argument, and that thus must overcome the fragmentation produced by its commonly paratactic flow so as to achieve a sense of cohesion through other means, most notably the address of voice(s), musicality, and imagistic and/or stylistic use of language" [Katie M. Heffelfinger, *I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes: Lyric Cohesion and Conflict in Second Isaiah* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 37; cf. 17–18, n.51]. See also, Brent A. Strawn, "Lyric Poetry" in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings*, ed. Tremper Longman, III and Peter Enns (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2008), 437–46. Ben Witherington observes that the emotional dimension of lyric poetry is not only "a matter of expressing emotion, but it intends to elicit emotional response by the audience." He continues, "The prophet seems to be trying to speak in a manner that gives the audience the impression of having an unmediated encounter with their God who is directly speaking to them, but in poetic form" [Ben Witherington III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017], 5; following the work of Katie Heffelfinger ["More than Mere Ornamentation: Poetics and Biblical Prophecy," *Irish Biblical Association* 36–37 (2014): 36–54]. Heffelfinger, along with others, resists the notion of drama as an appropriate literary description because drama, as it is largely understood, contains a plot. Leene characterizes Second Isaiah as drama; however, rather than speaking of plot, he argues that the units are arranged

The adjective חָדָשׁ occurs five times in Isa 40–48.[285] It is used three times as a substantive to denote 'new things(s)': twice in the feminine plural form, חֲדָשׁוֹת (42:9 and 48:6) and once in the feminine singular form, חֲדָשָׁה (43:19). Two times the adjective functions attributively, modifying the nouns 'threshing sledge' (41:15) and 'song' (42:10). The root appears once more in chs. 40–48 at 47:13 vocalized as חֹדֶשׁ, the noun denoting 'new moon' or 'month.'[286] While I have not drawn much attention to this use of the root, it bears mentioning in the context of Isa 40–48 as an example of the poet's use of repetition and wordplay.

---

according to a sequence of cycles (i.e., first-last-coming-new pattern) and that in this sequencing there is a continuous action that emerges. He refers to this emerging action in the text as 'dramatic' in the sense that it "is usually not narrated, but presents itself to the reader without the intervention of a narrator, and seems to take place contemporaneously to the reading" (Leene, *Newness*, 46–47). Moreover, he suggests that this dramatic nature has important effects (in Isa 40–55): first, that "it ensures that we follow the military advance of Cyrus in successive stages. The drama takes its readers step by step through a series of 'trial scenes' in a chronology in which Yhwh demonstrates his kingship in increasingly sharper terms...Secondly, the text involves the reader in the new things," by which Leene means that what is announced as future nevertheless become a present reality "through the performative word Yhwh speaks: the promise of salvation to the servant Jacob-Israel" (Leene, *Newness*, 110). Thus, for example, Leene cites the dramatic development of chs. 40–48 that is visible in the series of changes which the servant undergoes (cf. 41:15; 44:22; 48:10) (Leene, *Newness*, 110).

[285] This repetition exemplifies a literary device that is highly characteristic of the poetry in Second Isaiah. It appears in a variety of ways: the same word can be repeated in close proximity, over the span of chapters (as it is with חָדָשׁ), or in different forms or senses. For example, the root חזק occurs in Isa 41:6–7 three times as a verb, but each time with a different connotation: 1) "He says to his neighbor, '*Be strong*';" 2) "The craftsman *encourages/strengthens* the goldsmith;" and 3) "He *fastens/strengthens* it with nails." It appears again in 41: 9 and 13, still as a verb but with a different subject (Yahweh) and different meaning: 1) "*I took* you from the ends of the earth;" 2) "who *takes hold of* your right hand." In this particular example, the repetition functions not only as wordplay but also as a structural device, highlighting the contrast between the grammatical subjects of the verb, the idol-fabricators and Yahweh [Knut Holter, *Second Isaiah's Idol-Fabrication Passages*, BBET 28 (New York: Lang, 1995), 25–27].

[286] See earlier discussion of the noun in the Excursus of ch. 3.

ISAIAH 41:14–16

אַל־תִּירְאִי תּוֹלַעַת יַעֲקֹב	**14** Fear not, worm Jacob,
מְתֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל	men of Israel!
אֲנִי עֲזַרְתִּיךְ נְאֻם־יְהוָה	I, yes, I help you, declares Yahweh;
וְגֹאֲלֵךְ קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל׃	your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.
הִנֵּה שַׂמְתִּיךְ לְמוֹרַג	**15** Behold, I make you into a threshing sledge,
חָרוּץ חָדָשׁ בַּעַל פִּיפִיּוֹת	sharp, new, full of teeth.
תָּדֹושׁ הָרִים וְתָדֵק	You will thresh mountains and crush [them]
וּגְבָעוֹת כַּמֹּץ תָּשִׂים׃	and hills you will make like chaff.
תִּזְרֵם וְרוּחַ תִּשָּׂאֵם	**16** You will winnow them, and the wind will carry them,
וְסַעֲרָה תָּפִיץ אוֹתָם	and the storm[287] will scatter them.
וְאַתָּה תָּגִיל בַּיהוָה	And you–you will rejoice in Yahweh,
בִּקְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל תִּתְהַלָּל׃ פ	in the Holy One of Israel you will praise.

The first use of the adjective חָדָשׁ in Second Isaiah, indeed, in the entire book of Isaiah, occurs in 41:15. The immediate literary unit is comprised of vv. 14–16.[288] The opening verse

[287] See also Isa 40:24 where the same term, סְעָרָה ("storm wind, tempest") likewise "carries" (**נשׂא**) its object away.

[288] Most scholars consider 41:14–16 as an independent unit. It also has a number of commonalities with the previous unit (41:8–13): the same addressee (Jacob/Israel, vv. 8, 14); occurrences of "Fear not" (vv.10, 13, 14); and Yahweh's statement, "I help you" (vv.10, 13, 14). For purposes of this investigation, I have for the most part delimited literary units according to common indicators such as change in speaker, change in addressee (audience),

contains a number of elements that are repeated throughout chs. 40–48. Since the expressions represent significant content and the tone and message of these chapters, I will address them before turning more specifically to the use of חָדָשׁ.

The address in vv. 14–16 opens with the command, אַל־תִּירְאִי ("Fear not"). These are words of assurance spoken repeatedly in these chapters: 40:9; 41:10, 13; 43:1, 5; 44:2, 8.[289] Scholars commonly refer to the expression as a mark of the so-called "Salvation Oracle." The phrase recalls Israel's liturgical tradition, wherein the worshipper has cried out in a lament and is answered with a word of assurance, that is, "fear not."[290] In the present context, the phrase becomes an echo from Israel's worship tradition and an immediate cue that the message is one of help and assurance that leads to rejoicing.[291] Perhaps more importantly, with regard to the notion

---

noticeable shifts in content or form (e.g., the so-called trial scene), and/or textual markings. Structurally, the unit can be divided into three strophes, with the term "strophe" indicating the poetic unit comprised of 'lines,' and lines constituted by 'cola.' In Second Isaiah, lines are typically bi-cola or tri-cola, and the cola are most often distinguished by the use of parallelism. Since the three strophes in this unit (41:14–16) each consist of only one poetic 'line,' which in turn corresponds with the MT versification (i.e., vv. 14, 15, and 16), I will use the simple designation of "verse(s)" for reference purposes.

[289] The use of the fem sg (*qal* imperfect second person) form in 41:14 (אַל־תִּירְאִי) is presumably due to the feminine noun that follows, תּוֹלֵעָה, meaning "worm." Similarly, the fem sg form is used in 40:9 where the command is addressed to the "herald of news" (מְבַשֶּׂרֶת). The more common form of the command is אַל־תִּירָא, using the second person masculine singular (*qal* imperfect), as in 41:10, 13; 43:1, 5; 44:2. In another variation, Isa 44:8 employs two commands in the same negated form (although second person plural) and conveying a similar meaning are joined and used in place of אַל־תִּירָא: אַל־תִּפְחֲדוּ (verb from the root פחד; "to tremble or shake with fear") and אַל־תִּרְהוּ (verb from the root ירה; "to be paralyzed with fear;" *HALOT* 2:437).

[290] More specifically, what was typically characteristic of the lament was a turn toward the end of the prayer to words of thanksgiving and praise to God for his salvation. The theory followed by many scholars, based on the work of J. Begrich, is that in Israel's worship tradition, the transition from lament to praise indicates the point at which the priest offered a word of 'assurance' in the name of God. In turn, the word of assurance that was offered is thought to be the basis for the so-called "Oracle of Salvation/Assurance," (German *Heilsorakel*). Begrich went a step further by proposing that the Salvation Oracle he observed in the Psalms was the pattern for assurance-type utterances found in Second Isaiah—the most prominent being those that open with "Fear Not." See especially the work of Westermann, [e.g., Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), esp. 66–73; following J. Begrich, "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel," *ZAW* 52 (1934): 81–92].

[291] Many scholars align with Claus Westermann's classification of the following as stand-alone oracles of salvation: Isa 41:8–13, 14–16; 43:1–4, 5–7; and 44:1–5 (Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 11–13).

of newness, recollection of the past through the use of such traditional elements offers a means of emphasizing continuity with that past. In other words, whatever newness might entail, the potential sense of discontinuity or disorientation is subtly mitigated. The message of newness is rhetorically ensconced in the comfort of the past. The opening assurance is but the first of a number of clear links to the past in these few verses.

Continuity with the past is perhaps even more explicitly conveyed for Israel in the form by which they are addressed in v. 14 and repeatedly throughout chs. 40–48. They are addressed with the parallel expression of two names, Jacob/Israel, which is accompanied by qualifying terms and expressions that vary with each recurrence. Before Israel was a nation, Israel was an individual—his name changed from Jacob (Gen 32:28). Like Abraham and Isaac before him, God promised Jacob: “a nation and a company of nations will come from you” (Gen 35:11). The two names, Jacob and Israel, are used in parallel often in the Old Testament (e.g., Gen 49:2; Exod 19:3, Num. 23:7; 24:5; etc.) but are especially prevalent in Isaiah 40–48.[292]

[292] The word pair, Jacob/Israel occurs prior to 41:14 at 40:27 and 41:8, and 12 times subsequently: 42:24 (object of looting and plundering); 43:1 (object of Yahweh's creating and forming); 43:22 (object of Yahweh's lament); 43:28 (delivered to destruction and reviling); 44:1 (addressed by Yahweh as "my servant...whom I have chosen"); 44:2b (object of Yahweh's creating/making; exhorted to "Fear not;" and designated by Yahweh as his servant and chosen; "Jeshurun"= "Israel"); 44:5 (represent names which will be called upon; parallel to belonging to Yahweh); 44:21 (commanded to "Remember these things..."); 44:23 (object of Yahweh's redemption); 46:3 (called to "Listen" to Yahweh); 48:1 (object of Yahweh's address: "Hear this..."); 48:12 (commanded to "listen" and identified as "called" by Yahweh). In chs. 49–55, the name pair occurs only a handful of times (e.g., 49:5, 6). As often observed, one of the characteristic differences between the two halves of Isaiah 40–55 is the emphasis on Jacob/Israel in chs. 40–48 which is 'replaced' by a similar use and emphasis on Zion/Jerusalem in chs. 49–55. Blenkinsopp suggests that the frequency in chs. 40–48 is evidence of the community's "sense of detachment from the traditions at that time and later ('Abraham does not know us, Israel does not acknowledge us,' 63:16)" and thus, "the need to reestablish lines of continuity with the past" (Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 112–15). He also observes how the narratives of Jacob found in Gen 25–35 correspond "structurally to the experience and the aspirations of the communities addressed by the author of Isa 40–55." He illustrates, "The story pivots on exile in Mesopotamia and return to the land, and what drives the narrative is the repeated promise of blessing, land, and progeny ([Gen] 28:13–15; 31:3, 13)" (113). To be clear, Blenkinsopp is not suggesting that the Genesis narrative as we now have it was already available to the author(s) of Second Isaiah; to the contrary, he cites the lack of detail about Jacob in Isa 40–

The descriptive terms corresponding with Jacob and Israel in 41:14, תּוֹלַעַת and מְתֵי, respectively, have proved challenging to interpreters. There is widespread agreement that the term, תּוֹלַעַת, denotes a 'worm.'[293] Exactly how the designation applies to Jacob, however, is a less settled matter. It is perhaps telling that the LXX retains the ancestral name but omits 'worm,' while the Tg renders the seemingly unflattering collocation as "tribes of the house of Jacob."[294] Most modern commentators, citing texts such as Ps 22:7[Eng 22:6] and Job 25:6, conclude that 'worm' most likely expresses the prevailing sense of helplessness that the people themselves feel.[295] While I agree with the consensus view, I would also suggest the possibility that the prophet employs some word-play and creates some additional overtones.

The 'worm,' signified by תּוֹלַעַת (or תּוֹלֵעָה)[296] is not always puny and powerless. It can in fact be a destructive source and is associated in several places in the Old Testament with various

---

55. Williamson suggests that the use of "Jacob" to address the audience likely stems from its use in the Jerusalem cult tradition as evidenced in the Psalms, and the related observation that the Psalms appear to have had significant influence on Isa 40–48 [Hugh G. M. Williamson, "Jacob in Isaiah 40–66" in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Chronological and Thematic Development in Isaiah 40–66*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Hans M. Barstad, FRLANT 255 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014): 219–29, 219]. See also, Cat Quine, "Reading 'House of Jacob' in Isaiah 48:1–11 in Light of Benjamin," *JBL* 137 (2018): 339–57.

[293] Although the noun's lexical form appears as תּוֹלֵעָה (*DCH* 8:605–606; a "byform of תּוֹלָע I" and denotes 'worm' or 'crimson'), it is not entirely clear whether the form used here in Isa 41:14 (תּוֹלַעַת) is an alternative spelling of תּוֹלֵעָה (fem sg) or indicates the construct form, as it could be either. The noun, clearly used as an absolute, occurs as תּוֹלַעַת in Ps 22:7 ("I am a worm and not a man") but as תּוֹלֵעָה in Job 25:6 ["the child of a human (who is) a worm"]. *DCH* (8:606) categorizes its usage as appositional to "Jacob" rather than as a construct. The issue is raised similarly in *HALOT* (4:1702) along with the observation that the masculine and feminine forms are used alternatively. The feminine form תּוֹלַעַת appears also in the cognate languages (e.g., Middle Hebrew).

[294] The noun phrases are characteristic of the Isaiah Tg, but the substitution may also represent a show of respect [Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1:171).

[295] Ps 22:7[Eng 22:6]:"But I am a worm (תּוֹלַעַת) and not a man (אִישׁ)." Job 25:6 reads, "...man (אֱנוֹשׁ) is a maggot (רִמָּה) and the son of man (אָדָם), a worm (תּוֹלֵעָה)." See discussions, e.g., Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 201; Paul, *Isaiah*, 169–70. Oswalt comments appropriately that the terminology need not "be understood as that which is disgusting and worthless," for they are not "valueless in God's sight." To the contrary, "they are of infinite worth to God" (Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 93).

[296] See note above on the alternative forms.

forms of judgment.[297] For example, when God provided manna for his people in the wilderness, those who disobeyed Moses, keeping leftover manna until the following morning, awoke to discover it infested with 'worms' (תּוֹלָעִים) (Exod 16:20). It is a תּוֹלַעַת that God appoints to smite a plant providing shade for the prophet Jonah (Jonah 4:7). Moreover, among the curses God promised would befall Israel if they disobeyed Yahweh and his commands was this warning: "You shall plant vineyards and dress them, but you shall neither drink of the wine nor gather the grapes, for the worm (הַתּוֹלָעַת) shall eat them" (Deut 28:39).[298] I am not implying that these additional connotations represent the primary sense of 'worm' as it is used in Isa 41:15. What I am suggesting is that such associations, perhaps the warnings of Deut 28 in particular (which speaks directly to the reason for their current situation in exile), may be subtle overtones and may offer a rationale for the prophet's collocation of Jacob and worm.

The term corresponding to 'Israel' is מְתֵי, the construct form of the plural, מְתִים, which denotes 'men.' Scholars are divided over the translation of מְתֵי. Some follow the MT and render the word as 'men'[299] or 'few.'[300] Others question the resulting word pair (i.e., 'worm' and 'men')

---

[297] For further discussion of the agricultural impact, see Oded Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987; repr., Boston: ASOR, 2002), 153–156.

[298] Deut 28 identifies the blessings and curses associated with observing or breaking Israel's covenant with Yahweh, often manifested in agricultural plenty or loss. The same correspondence is proclaimed by the prophets (e.g., Isa 30:19–26; Amos 4:9; Joel 2:13). In regard to Deut, I find it intriguing that both terms, תּוֹלַעַת and מְתֵי (see below), appear in ch. 28 (vv. 39 and 62, respectively). I cannot offer any proof of a direct connection, nor does it lie in the scope of this investigation, but scholars have observed numerous commonalities between Deuteronomy (and the Deuteronomistic History) and Second Isaiah (inclusive of chs. 40–66). See, for example, the introductory comments by Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 51–54; Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 47–50; also a detailed comparison in Shalom M. Paul, "Deuteronom(ist)ic Influences on Deutero-Isaiah," in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay*, eds. N. S. Fox et al (Winona Lake, IN: 2009), 219–27.

[299] See for example, Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 87; Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 170; ESV, RSV, JPSV, CEB ('people').

[300] The idea of "few" is based on the use of מְתֵי in two phrases that recur elsewhere and that both express the sense of 'few:' מְתֵי מִסְפָּר (lit. "men of number;" Gen 34:30; Deut 4:27; Ps 105:12; Jer 44:28) and מְתֵי מְעָט (lit.

and emend the MT, replacing מְתֵי with רִמָּה ('maggot') in order to reflect usage elsewhere.[301] Furthermore, several early translations understood the Hebrew term to denote 'dead ones,' presumably interpreting מתי as a participial form from the root מות ("to die").[302] Whatever the differences in translation or the subtleties of wordplay might be, the primary significance of these unique appellations lies in their contrast to what is yet to come.

The opening "Fear not" is substantiated by the promise of "help" (עזר), reiterating an assurance previously offered (vv. 10, 13). The one who helps is Yahweh, who identifies himself in the messenger formula נְאֻם־יְהוָֹה (lit. "utterance of Yahweh") and emphasizes his role with the use of the independent pronoun אֲנִי ("I").

Yahweh's help is revealed as intimately connected to his relationship with Jacob/Israel as "your Redeemer."[303] This is the first occurrence of the word 'Redeemer' (גאל) in Second Isaiah

---

"men of a few"; Deut 26:5; 28:62). The thought is that מְתֵי by itself can also mean 'few.' The LXX translation, ὀλιγοστός ("few in number") supports this option. See also, NJB, NIV.

[301] Job 25:6, cited above for its connotations of 'worm,' uses the term רִמָּה ('maggot') in parallel, as does Isa 14:11, which describes Babylon in Sheol on a bed of 'maggots' with a covering of 'worms.' Among those who emend the text is Blenkinsopp, who argues that 'men of Israel' is an unsuitable parallel to 'worm Jacob,' and that emendation represents "the option least open to objection" (*Isaiah 40–55*, 198–99). Likewise, Brevard Childs emends the MT, stating that מְתֵי ('men of') "strains the context" (*Isaiah*, 315). See also, Marjo C. A. Korpel and Johannes C. de Moor [*The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40–55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 71]; Leene, *Newness*, 48; JPSV (marginal note), NRSV ('insect').

[302] Aquila, Theodotion, and Vulgate [see also, 1QIs^{a} (ומיתי)] translations reflect a different vocalization, that is, מֵתֵי (e.g., Isa 22:2; Ps 143:3) instead of MT's מְתֵי. In general, critical scholarship acknowledges this translation history but few scholars seem to entertain the possibility seriously. In my opinion, the option is not without reason. The term תּוֹלַעַת often occurs in contexts associated with death, hence the oft-cited parallels with 'maggots' (i.e., Job 25:6, Isa 14:11); moreover, the statement inIsa 66:24, "their worm shall not die" refers to corpses. It seems to me that the decision to emend מְתֵי to רִמָּה is more questionable than repointing the vowels.

[303]This represents the first occurrence of the term "Redeemer" not only in Second Isaiah (i.e., chs. 40–66) but in the book as a whole. Its significance in the remaining chapters of Isaiah is evidenced by its reoccurrences: 43:14; 44:6; 44:24; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 49:7; 49: 26; 54:5; 54:8; 59:20; 60:16; 63:16. Other forms of the root (גאל) occur an additional nine times. The term "redeemer" (גֹּאֵל) has its origins in family-law within the context of a kinship-based society such as that of ancient Israel. In practice, the גֹּאֵל (goʾel) might bear the responsibility of buying back or recovering family property that had been sold (e.g., house or land), securing the release of a family member in debt bondage, acting as an "avenger of blood" by pursuing and killing the person guilty of manslaughter

and in the book as a whole.[304] Its implications for a people in exile are only matched by its enduring theological significance.

Moreover, Yahweh is the "Holy One of Israel."[305] This title, in contrast to "Redeemer," appears throughout the entire book of Isaiah. The repetition of Yahweh and 'Holy One of Israel' at the end of v. 16 create an inclusio that brackets the short unit.[306]

Verse 15 opens with the particle הִנֵּה, thus drawing attention to the message that follows in which Yahweh announces his plans: "I make/am making (שׂים) you into a threshing sledge."[307] The verb שׂים followed by the *lamed* prefix on the object generally indicates an alteration from one state to another (e.g., Isa 41:18; 42:15, 16; 60:15).[308] The same verb occurs at the end of v.

---

in the death of a relative (e.g., Num 35:12, 19–27; Deut 19:6, 12; Josh 20:3, 5, 9, etc.), or marrying a childless widow of a deceased male relative in order to redeem her from childlessness (thereby extending the lineage of the deceased; e.g., Ruth 3:13). (*HALOT* 1:169; *DCH* 2:293–94).

[304] It is perhaps notable that in their initial occurrences, the terms "redeemer" and "new" appear in the same oracle.

[305] The expression, "Holy One of Israel," recurs frequently in Second Isaiah (41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14, 15; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5), half of which occur in combination with "Redeemer." In contrast to the term "Redeemer," which first occurs in Isa 41:14, "Holy One of Israel" appears 13 times in chs. 1–39, thus representing an element of unity in the book as a whole. Many scholars see this as evidence that the exilic prophet was familiar with the prophecies of the eighth century Isaiah and intentionally made use of them (e.g., Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 75–76). Others observe that the phrase is used somewhat differently in the two 'halves' — appearing primarily in oracles of promise and salvation in Second Isaiah, but more so in contexts of threat and punishment in chs. 1–39 [see, e.g., Goldingay, *Message of Isaiah 40–66*, 116; following, A. Schoors, *I Am God Your Saviour*, VTSup 24 (Leiden: Brill, 1973), 62].

[306] To these two elements of the inclusio, which have been widely observed by scholars, I would suggest the possibility of a third–the use of an independent pronoun, אֲנִי ("I") in v. 14 and אַתָּה ("you") in v.16. See below for further discussion.

[307] See, e.g.: Isa 21:4 ("...has turned for me into trembling"); Jer 2:7 ("...you made my heritage an abomination."); Ps 85:13.

[308] The *lamed* of "product" is especially common with verbs of making [Arnold and Choi, § 4.1.10 (*e.2*)]. It is worth noting that the verb שׂים is repeated in vv. 18, 19, 20, and 22. In v. 18, the verb governs two objects, both with the *lamed* prefix, and thus, like v. 15 conveys the sense of transforming something from one state into another. In v. 19, however, the verb recurs (without a *lamed* on the object) and denotes a sense of "to place, to put." Repeated yet again in vv. 20 and 22, the verb denotes yet a third meaning, "to consider." The use of repetition as a literary device has already been noted as characteristic of this poetry. Here, it is important to observe that the repetition of שׂים occurs over three different literary units (i.e., vv. 14–16, 17–20, and 21–29) and conveys three different senses.

15 with Israel the subject. The repeated verb creates an inclusio around v. 15, but different prepositional prefixes on the objects suggest there is a contrast between Yahweh's role and Israel's role.[309] Yahweh makes Israel "*into* (לְ) a threshing sledge," whereas Israel will make the hills "*like* chaff" (כַּמֹּץ), the preposition כְּ indicating a correspondence rather than an alteration in state.[310] Importantly, Yahweh is the source and creative power that brings about this transformation of Israel, and in so doing Israel becomes his instrument, empowered to accomplish his purposes.[311]

The threshing sledge, although figurative, is emphasized by the string of terms associated with it in v. 15. The first term (prefixed by the לְ) is מוֹרָג, which denotes "threshing sledge."[312] The next term, חָרוּץ, which also refers to a threshing sledge, is most likely functioning adjectivally in this case, thus conveying the sense of "sharp."[313]

---

[309] The resulting inclusio is aptly described by Goldingay and Payne: "Yhwh's making enables Jacob-Israel's making" (*Isaiah 40–55*, 174). It might be worth further noting that the inclusio brackets the middle colon of the three, creating an inclusio within an inclusio (i.e., repetition of Yahweh, Holy One of Israel, and independent pronouns in vv. 14 and 16). The device might be purely poetic, but it is also possible that it highlights the image of Israel transformed by Yahweh.

[310] It is possible for the 'product' use of לְ to be rendered "as" (e.g., *DCH* 5:188), and I agree it would not be unreasonable where the language is figurative as it is here (i.e., Israel is not literally being turned into a threshing sledge). However, I do not think such clarification is necessary nor that it should outweigh the fact that the Hebrew grammar makes a distinction.

[311] The distinction in roles is further reinforced by the verbal aspects. The action of Yahweh is indicated by the verb in the perfect, while the actions of Israel that follow are imperfects.

[312] מוֹרָג occurs only here (Isa 41:15), 2 Sam 24:22, and 1 Chr 21:23 (*DCH* 5:188; *HALOT* 2:560).

[313] חָרוּץ, also refers to a threshing sledge in Job 41:22 [Eng 41:30], Amos 1:3, and Isa 28:27 (*DCH* 3:315–316; *HALOT* 1:352). The apposition of two like terms has been questioned by various scholars. BHS suggests that חָרוּץ is perhaps a gloss on מוֹרָג or, alternatively, that חָדָשׁ ("new") is a gloss on חָרוּץ. Borowski has, for example, omitted the term חָדָשׁ in translation (Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*, 62–69). Shalom Paul observes the possibility of a "doublet preserved in the text," but concludes with the majority of scholars that חָרוּץ occurs here with the adjectival sense of "sharp" (*Isaiah 40–66,* 170–71).

Ancient Israel was an agriculturally-based society, so it is not surprising that the subject of threshing, metaphorically and otherwise, is found elsewhere in the Old Testament.[314] There are several methods of threshing, including beating with a stick, allowing animals such as oxen to tread the grain with their hooves, and the use of a threshing sledge, which seems to be indicated here.[315] Once the stalks of grain were harvested in the fields, they were bound in sheaves and transported to the threshing floor, at which point the threshing sledge was used to separate the grain from the stalks. The sledge itself was a wooden raft-like implement with sharpened pieces of flint, basalt, or iron embedded on the underside.[316] Pulled across the

---

[314] The threshing sledge with flint blades appeared around the end of the fourth or early third millennium (B.C.E.) and can still be observed in use to the present day. See further: Uzi Avner, "Ancient Agricultural Settlement and Religion in the Uvda Valley in Southern Israel," *BA* 53 (1990):125–41; Patricia C. Anderson, Jacques Chabot, and Annelou van Gijn, "The Functional Riddle of 'Glossy' Canaanean Blades and the Near Eastern Threshing Sledge," *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 17.1 (2004): 87–130; Oded Borowski, *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1987; repr., Boston: ASOR, 2002), 62–69; Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 88–90.

[315] As an aside, the prominence of threshing in ancient Israel is revealed somewhat indirectly by the value placed on the humanitarian treatment of the animals used in the process. Hosea's application of the threshing metaphor to Israel implies the positive nature of the animal allowed to freely thresh, unimpeded by a yoke and plow: "Ephraim was a trained calf that loved to thresh, and I spared her fair neck; but I will put Ephraim to the yoke; Judah must plow" (Hosea 10:11). Deut 25:4 states, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it is treading out/threshing (דּוּשׁ) the grain." Since threshing usually involved oxen either by stamping on the grain stalks with their hooves or by pulling a threshing sledge, the point here (the image implied in Hosea 10:11) is that the ox should be allowed to stop and eat some of the grain as it is treading. Tigay observes, "The farmer might seek to prevent this, either to save the grain or to keep the animal working. Deuteronomy forbids such pettiness" [Jeffrey H. Tigay, *The JPS Commentary: Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1996), 231]. Other views found in the Talmud and Josephus, for example, express the frustration of the animal that sees the grain but is denied eating of it, or the unfair treatment of depriving an animal a share in the produce of its labor. In the New Testament, the apostle Paul cites the law of Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9. Paul uses it to argue it was written for the sake of humans rather than oxen, nevertheless, his rationale reflects the similar hope of partaking of the fruits of one's labor: "the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop" (1 Cor 9:10).

[316] The earliest threshing sledges used blades of flint or basalt, with iron coming later. Amos 1:3 refers to threshing sledges (חֲרֻצוֹת) "of iron" (הַבַּרְזֶל) ("iron"), meaning the blades/teeth on the underside were of iron rather than the more common flint or basalt (also an indication of their superior threshing power).

threshing floor by animals, the sharp blades chopped and crushed the grain stalks. The resulting mixture of grain, straw, and chaff was then separated through the process of winnowing.

The word חָדָשׁ follows, and its basic meaning of 'new' makes good sense in this context as I will discuss below. The final phrase is more difficult to render in English. The noun בַּעַל commonly denotes "lord, ruler, husband, owner," but when combined with another noun in a construct relationship, as here in Isa 41:15, it typically denotes an "owner, possessor" of a particular characteristic.[317] The second word of the phrase, פִּיפִיּוֹת, is an archaic plural form of פֶּה meaning "mouth." The latter often refers to the bodily organ of eating, drinking, and speaking, but can also signify the "mouth" or "edge" of a sword (and always with the phrase לְפִי־חָרֶב; lit. "mouth of a sword").[318] The plural form as it is used elsewhere always conveys the sense of "double-edged" and always in conjunction with an explicit reference to a "sword" (חֶרֶב).[319] As the term appears in v. 15, with no mention of a "sword," we can only assume the likelihood that it has the sense of "double-edged" or more generally, very sharp. It seems almost certain that the phrase refers to the quality of the teeth/blades on the thresher. If "double-edged, very sharp" reflects an accurate sense, the fact that the blades are characterized by a term that otherwise only refers to a double-edged sword suggests that there may be intentional connotations of lethal power.[320]

---

[317] בַּעַל פִּיפִיּוֹת See for example, Gen 37:19, where Joseph is described as בַּעַל הַחֲלֹמוֹת, ("the possessor of dreams") meaning a "dreamer;" (e.g., Eccl 10:11, 20; Exod 21:28, 34; 22:7; Judg 19:22, 23; Prov 1:17; Dan 8:6); *DCH* 2:237–38; J. Kühlewein, בַּעַל, *baʿal* "owner" *TLOT* 1:247–251; 248.

[318] See, e.g., Gen 34:26; Exod 17:13; Num 21:24; Deut 13:16 [Eng 13:15], 20:13, etc.; *DCH* 6:656–57; *HALOT* 3:914–16, 926.

[319] The plural form of פֶּה occurs only four times in the Old Testament, three of which signify a "double-edged" sword (חֶרֶב): Judg 3:16; Prov 5:4; and Ps 149:6 (חֶרֶב פִּיפִיּוֹת; also uses the archaic plural form).

[320]Rashi observed that the word 'new' may imply 'sharp' (similarly, Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 174).

Before moving on in the unit, I want to pause and address the use of חָדָשׁ in this context, and in particular, as it relates to the findings in the earlier parts of this investigation. First, the context in which חָדָשׁ is employed here in v. 15 is consistent with the semantic domain observed elsewhere, albeit employed here with particular poetic flourish. As I observed earlier in the lexical study, for example, items such as ropes and implements such as weapons and tools comprise a category of newness well-known in the ancient world. Second, it was noted that newness conveyed the temporal sense of having been recently manufactured, but along with that were qualitative connotations of the item's prime condition and capacity for the purposes for which it was made. Applied to tools such as a threshing sledge, and similarly hoes and plows, newness implies they are in prime condition, and more specifically, their blades are sharp, as yet unworn by use. Thus, in Isa 41:15 it is not surprising to find 'new' joined by other terms related to sharpness and blades, the components that represented the measure of the implement's capacity to accomplish the threshing task.

Returning to the unit in 41:14–16, we encounter a second metaphor. The mountains and the hills represent the object of threshing—the figurative stalks of grain on the threshing floor. Whereas Israel was specified as the referent of the threshing sledge, the referent of the metaphorical mountains and hills is more difficult to ascertain with certainty.[321] The word pair is a common image throughout the Old Testament as well as in Second Isaiah; moreover, they are

[321] The challenge of discerning the proper referent is another aspect of working with common word pairs, specifically in poetic parallelism. As noted above at v. 14, Hebrew poetry exhibits a flexibility in the sequencing and sometimes even word substitution. Unlike the issue in v. 14 where the existing pair did not correspond with a more common fixed pair, here in v. 15 a particularly common word pair appears, intact, but the frame of reference does not easily correspond to known options (as far as we know that is). As Alter comments, "what is constantly exploited in literary expression is not merely the definable referendum of the word but also the frame of reference to which the word attaches..." (Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, 13). Not unrelated to this notion of flexibility is the option of intentionally creating and/or allowing for ambiguity.

employed figuratively in a variety of ways, both positively and negatively.[322] If we look to the immediately preceding verses (vv. 11–12) for contextual clues, the indication is that Israel's enemies will perish and be as nothing, and the metaphor of threshing enemies is found elsewhere in the Old Testament.[323] Indeed, in Isa 21:1 the prophet addresses Israel as the *object*s of threshing and winnowing.[324] It is not unreasonable to view Israel's enemies as the referent for the mountains and hills, as do a number of scholars.[325]

Conversely, scholars have also proposed that the previous verses imply the opposite view; that is to say, there is no rationale for the notion of Israel threshing her enemies since it has already been declared they are as nothing and any attempt to find them will be in vain.[326] Westermann observes that while the imagery of threshing enemies is found elsewhere, the enemies are never represented as "mountains and hills." He argues furthermore that such an "odd and incongruous object" of threshing suggests the prophet was intentionally emphasizing

---

[322] In addition to 41:15, the word pair, mountain(s) and hill(s) (הַר, גִּבְעָה) occurs in Second Isaiah (chs. 40–55) in the following: 40:4, 12; 42:15; 44:23; 54:10; 55:12 (see also use of 'mountain' only: 40:9; 49:11).

[323] See for example: Amos 1:3b "...they have threshed Gilead with threshing sledges of iron;" Hab 3:12b, "You [i.e., Yahweh] threshed (דּוּשׁ) the nations in anger;" and Mic 4:13, where it is commanded of the "daughter of Zion" to "rise and thresh" and prophesied that she "will beat in pieces many peoples." The "many peoples" refer to "many nations that have assembled against" her (v. 11), but do not understand that Yahweh has "gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor" (v. 12).

[324] Notably, the context of ch. 21 is the prophetic vision of the fall of Babylon (21:9), indicating that Israel as "threshed and winnowed one" applied to their state in Babylonian exile. It would be hard to ignore the possibility that their plight as described in ch. 21 is now being reversed in the imagery of ch. 41. Additionally, ch. 21 as a whole contains a number of terms and themes that are also prominent in chs. 40–48.

[325] For this view, see for e.g., Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 171.

[326] Moreover, in general Israel/Jacob is not portrayed as fighting enemies; more often are the hints of Yahweh as the Divine Warrior (e.g., 42:13). See similarly, Paul Del Brassey, with whom I also agree that while the precise meaning remains obscure, it is notable that the transformation of Israel as a worm into a devastating threshing sledge "stands alongside the hyperbolic transformations of nature which primarily depict the renewal of Israel as a people once again capable of praising her God (cf. 41:16b), as well as alluding to Israel's return through the desert to Jerusalem (cf. especially 40:3–4)" [*Metaphor and the Incomparable God in Isaiah 40–55*, BIBAL Dissertation Series 9 (North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 1997), 95].

something in particular.[327] Leene suggests that the vocabulary used of Israel's human enemies in vv. 8–13 does not cohere with the more "abstract" barriers symbolized by mountains and hills elsewhere. Thus, he views vv. 14–16 as preparation for what follows in vv. 17–20 (i.e., the transformation of the desert).[328] Leene and many other scholars observe a link with Isa 40:3–5 and interpret the mountains and hills (הַר וְגִבְעָה) as more broadly representative of any obstacle that Israel/Jacob would need to overcome.[329]

The resulting ambiguity is characteristic of the poetry throughout these chapters and has the effect of inviting the audience to consider the options, to allow alternatives to play off of one another rather than being forced to choose between them.[330] Whether enemies or obstacles, the answer to the rhetorical question posed in 40:12, "Who has…weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance?" assures that whatever the referent, it is within Yahweh's sovereign domain of power and purposes.[331]

Verse 16 continues the metaphor of the threshing. Israel/Jacob will winnow what has been threshed, and the wind (רוּחַ) and the storm-wind/tempest (סְעָרָה)[332] will carry away and

---

[327] Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 77.

[328] In 41:11–12, "enemies" are in each case (4x) explicitly described in adversarial positions with regard to Israel (the referent of the pronominal suffixes), whereas in vv. 14–16 there is no mention of enemies or of actions against Israel (Leene, *Newness*, 49).

[329] Leene, *Newness*, 49; similarly, Westermann: "There can be no doubt that the phrase alludes to these same words in the prologue (40:4)" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 77). Oswalt suggests the same, concluding, "Nothing can stand in the way of the Lord's promises to his people" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 93).

[330] John Goldingay explains, "ambiguity may point in several directions. It may tease us with an uncertainty to be resolved in a subsequent passage. It may test us with some open possibility that we have to determine for ourselves. It may indicate that the passage's own concern lies somewhere that is not dependent on the resolution of the ambiguity (*The Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 118).

[331] Similarly, Goldingay and Payne, who observe how the imagery of 40:12 "reinforces the message that Yhwh is lord over all impressive earthly powers," and conclude: "It is this reference to the phrase that is the present passage's immediate antecedent in this respect" (Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 175).

[332] סְעָרָה denotes a "high wind" (*HALOT* 2:762); "storm wind, strong wind" (*DCH* 6:176).

scatter the chaff. The intensification from the term רוּחַ for wind to the term סְעָרָה, a much stronger wind, emphasizes the complete removal of the chaff. The use of the independent pronoun "you" (אַתָּה) in v. 16b corresponds to the pronoun, "I" in v. 14."[333] Together, these two pronoun-initial clauses, along with the recurrence of Yahweh and Holy One of Israel, highlight once again both the significance and primacy of Yahweh's identity and also his relationship to and actions on behalf of Israel/Jacob. In other words, the "I am/ I will" declarations of Yahweh (v. 14) correspond to the "and you will" statement in reference to Israel (v. 16). The unit began with Yahweh's word of assurance to Israel, "Fear not," and ends with his declaration of their transformation fully realized: "you will rejoice (גיל)[334] in Yahweh; in the Holy One of Israel you shall glory (הלל)."[335] The effective word becomes an affective word.

As an agricultural image, threshing implies that the previous stages of sowing, reaping, and harvesting have been successful, and thus, there is hope for the future. The imagery drawn from the agricultural domain makes sense of the concluding declaration (perhaps a subtle overtone): "you will rejoice…" Israel's festal calendar had its origins in their agricultural

---

[333] The fact that the independent pronoun is added at the beginning of v. 16 leads Goldingay and Payne to remark on its emphasis, partly due to its position outside the chiasm, but even more so "from the fact that the word 'you' is expressed at all." On this basis, they render the *waw* as a conversive (i.e., 'but you;' Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 176). Goldingay (citing Elliger), does however observe the connection I am suggesting in vv. 14 and 16 elsewhere (without registering a sense of surprise). He makes the additional observation (correctly in my opinion) that the phrase in v. 16 more clearly corresponds with the 'but you' in v. 8, thus creating an inclusio bracketing vv. 8–16 as a whole (Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 118).

[334] גיל denotes "rejoice, shout in exultation" (*HALOT* 1:189–90); *DCH* (2:345) indicates the following terms as synonyms of גיל: שִׂישׂ rejoice, שָׂמַח rejoice, עלז rejoice, רנן shout, הלל boast (hithpael), and פרח sprout.

[335] הלל "(hithpael) to boast; with בְּ of God: Isa 41:16; 45:25" (*HALOT* 1:248); "to boast, glory, gloat;" (*DCH* 2:559–62; hithpael, 262).

calendar. Rejoicing and singing praise were the only fitting response to the harvest provided by Yahweh.[336]

In summary, these verses in which we encounter the first use of חָדָשׁ suggest a number of themes related both directly and indirectly to newness. The primary focus is on Yahweh, his identity and relationship to Israel, and how that would be manifested in his actions for and through Israel. Yahweh is the source and power behind that which is new. What is ultimately new is a transformed Israel whose glory and praise is in Yahweh.

The transformation of Israel in vv. 14–16 is paralleled by another transformation from the hand of Yahweh in the section which immediately follows (41:17–20). Using completely different imagery, it offers further evidence and encouragement to Jacob/Israel of Yahweh's power and purposes. Instead of a powerful, new threshing sledge, there is a dazzling portrayal of creational transformation. Water in abundance transforms the dry places; the barren wilderness landscape becomes a lush grove of trees. Although Jacob/Israel is not explicitly readdressed, they would readily recognize themselves in the traditional language of lament.[337] They are the "poor and needy" (41:17a) that Yahweh now answers (v. 17b). Yahweh responds to the cries of

---

[336] For a summary of the historical development of Israel's pilgrimage festivals, see for example, Bill T. Arnold, "A Singular Israel in a Pluralistic World," in *Distinctions with a Difference: Essays on Myth, History, and Scripture in Honor of John N. Oswalt,* ed. Bill T. Arnold and Lawson G. Stone (Wilmore, KY: First Fruits, 2017), 1–17, esp. 8–10; also, Philip J. King and Lawrence E. Stager, *Life in Biblical Israel*, LAI (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 353–54.

[337] The expression "poor and needy" (עָנִי וְאֶבְיוֹן) is found in a number of places in the Old Testament, but most commonly in the Psalms (e.g., Ps 9:19; 35:10; 40:18; 70:6; 74:21; 86:1; 109:22). Notably, most of the uses appear in psalms of lament, psalms which gave expression to the worshipper's cry for help and their plea for God to intervene. For Psalms of lament, see for example: Pss 35, 54, 55, 56, 58, 63, etc. Among the lament Psalms, a number of them exhibit close affinities with language found in Isa 40–48. Compare, for example, Ps 35 and Isa 41: Ps 35:1 says, "Contend, O LORD, with those who contend with me; fight against those who fight against me" (cf. Isa 41:11–12); Ps 35:2 says, "Let them be put to shame and dishonor who seek after my life ... who devise evil against me" (cf. 41:11–12); compare also Ps 35:5, "Let them be like chaff before the wind, with the angel of the LORD driving them away!" with Isa 41:15.

his people and demonstrates that he will not and does not forsake them, despite their accusations otherwise (40:27). What is common to both units (vv. 14–16 and 17–20) is Yahweh's power and intentions displayed in extravagant acts of transformation. What distinguishes the two units is that in the first, Yahweh's transformative power is applied to Jacob/Israel, whereas in the second, that same creative power transforms the natural realm. In the end, the transformations go beyond a divine response to pleas for help; ultimately, these acts of 'newness' are meant to accomplish greater purposes: "that they may see and know, may consider and understand together, that the hand of Yahweh has done this, the Holy One of Israel has created it" (41:20).[338]

[338] Although the two units employ very different imagery to portray transformations, the closing divine titles, 'Yahweh' and 'Holy One of Israel' (v. 20b) create an inclusio that brackets vv. 14–20, reinforcing their correspondence.

CHAPTER FIVE

חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 42:5–9

כֹּה־אָמַר הָאֵל ׀ יְהוָה	[5]Thus says God, Yahweh,
בּוֹרֵא הַשָּׁמַיִם וְנוֹטֵיהֶם	the One who created the heavens and who stretched them out;
רֹקַע הָאָרֶץ וְצֶאֱצָאֶיהָ	the One who spread out the earth and what comes from it,
נֹתֵן נְשָׁמָה לָעָם עָלֶיהָ	the One who gives breath to the people upon it,
וְרוּחַ לַהֹלְכִים בָּהּ׃	and spirit to those who walk in it.
אֲנִי יְהוָה	[6]I am Yahweh,
קְרָאתִיךָ בְצֶדֶק	I have called you in righteousness,
וְאַחֲזִק בְּיָדֶךָ וְאֶצָּרְךָ	and I will take hold of your hand; and I will protect you,

וְאֶתֶּנְךָ לִבְרִית עָם	and I will give you as a covenant to the people,[339]
לְאוֹר גּוֹיִם׃	as a light to the nations,
לִפְקֹחַ עֵינַיִם עִוְרוֹת	**7**to open the eyes that are blind,
לְהוֹצִיא מִמַּסְגֵּר אַסִּיר	to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
מִבֵּית כֶּלֶא יֹשְׁבֵי חֹשֶׁךְ׃	from the prison, those who sit in darkness.
אֲנִי יְהוָה הוּא שְׁמִי	**8**I am Yhwh, that is my name;
וּכְבוֹדִי לְאַחֵר לֹא־אֶתֵּן	my glory I will not give to another,
וּתְהִלָּתִי לַפְּסִילִים׃	nor my praise to idols.
הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת הִנֵּה־בָאוּ	**9**The former things–behold, they have come,
וַחֲדָשׁוֹת אֲנִי מַגִּיד	and new things I am announcing;
בְּטֶרֶם תִּצְמַחְנָה	before they spring forth,
אַשְׁמִיעַ אֶתְכֶם׃ פ	I make you hear them.

[339] The phrase, לִבְרִית עָם, has long been a challenge to interpreters. The main issue is the relationship between בְּרִית ("covenant") and עָם ("people") and to a certain extent the referent of עָם (i.e., Israel or the nations?). Shalom Paul asserts the phrase is a reversed construct and should be understood as "a people of the covenant" [for full discussion, see Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 189]. Heffelfinger argues that the construct phrase consists of an attributive use of the genitive (i.e., "as a covenant people") [citing E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, 2d English ed, rev by A. E. Cowley (Oxford: Clarendon, 1910), 417; Heffelfinger, *I Contain Multitudes*, 195, n.57]. Goldingay proposes 'becoming a covenant with people' such that 'people' is parallel to 'nations' in the following line. He likens the notion of "becoming a covenant with people" to the idea in Gen 12:2 that Abraham will become a blessing, stating that "in each case the idea is that the person not only mediates but also embodies the thing" (Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 164). I would concur with Goldingay (among others) that 'people' (עָם) functions in parallel to 'nations.' I view the people/nations parallel as further reflective of the use of עָם in v. 5, where God's creative actions are depicted in more expansive terms that accent his power over all humanity--not just Israel. Adding another possible dimension, Mark S. Smith makes the intriguing proposal that there is a play on words: "The obvious phonetic resemblance between *bĕrît ʻôlām* and *bĕrît ʻam* suggests that Second Isaiah is playing on the memory of the Davidic covenant theology;" and interpreted as such, "recreates Israel in the image of a new kingship" ["Bĕrît ʻam / Bĕrît ʻôlām: A New Proposal for the Crux of Isa 42:6," *JBL* 100 (1981):241–43; 242, 243].

The appearance of חָדָשׁ in 42:9 is the first of the three occurrences of the 'new things' in Second Isaiah. The immediate literary unit is 42:5–9. The introductory messenger formula and change to direct speech (v. 6) underscore the beginning of a literary unit at v.5; however, there is no explicit mention of the addressee. While the latter remains an issue of scholarly discussion, if we read the text as it is, it makes sense to assume that the servant addressed in v. 1 remains the subject in vv. 5–9.[340] The identity of the servant is also a matter of considerable scholarly attention, but again, in light of the text as we now have it, it makes sense to look back to Isa 41:9 where it is Israel/Jacob that Yahweh addresses as "my servant."[341]

In 42:5–9, the opening messenger formula is distinctive for its unusual apposition of divine names, הָאֵל יְהוָה (lit. "the God Yahweh;" *El Yahweh*), occurring only here and in Ps 85:9 [Eng 85:8].[342] Most scholars agree that the use of אֵל (*El;* "God") highlights God as Creator,

---

[340] 42:1–4 is Yahweh's description of his servant in the third person, whereas vv. 5–9 is direct speech in the form of a prophetic utterance of Yahweh. The second person, singular pronominal suffix occurs four times in v. 6. However, the pronoun is plural at the end of v. 9, and thus a point of scholarly discussion. While there are any number of possibilities for the shift, especially from a form-critical perspective, I will follow the general consensus that v. 9 belongs with the unit. Brevard Childs, for example, asserts that it "reflects only a rhetorical device, consonant with the plurality of witnesses to the things shortly to come (43:10; 44:8)" [Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 326].

[341] As it is well-known among scholars, 42:1–4 represents the first of the so-called "Servant Songs" (also 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12), initially identified as such in the work of Bernard Duhm. It does not lie within the scope of this investigation to explore the vast topic of the identity of the servant and the role of the "Servant Songs" in any detail. I refer the reader to the lists of associated literature provided in the majority of critical commentaries. As for the servant's identity, the remarks of Feldmeier and Spieckermann are helpful to bear in mind here in ch. 42, but also moving forward: "He can—as in the Servant Songs (Isa 42:1–4; 49:1–6; 50:4–9; 52:13–53:12)—assume more clearly the traits of an individual mediator among YHWH, Israel, and the nations, but can also, as a sort of corporate personality, stand for the (true) Israel (41:8; 42:19; 43:10; 44:1–2, 21; 45:4, 48:21 49:3, 6, 7). The boundaries between the two options are fluid" [Reinhard Feldmeier and Hermann Spieckermann, *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology*, trans. Mark E. Biddle (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2011), 103.

[342] The definite article on אֵל reflects a solitary use of the article which stresses the uniqueness of God (Arnold and Choi, § 2.6.4). Goldingay and Payne note the correspondence between 42:5 and 40:12–26 where God is emphasized as the incomparable creator and suggest that v. 5 is a polemical reminder of Yahweh's creative power

and thus the subsequent emphasis in v. 5.[343] Indeed, the chain of participles[344] describe Yahweh first of all as "creator" (בראּ) of the "heavens" (see also 40:26, 28; 41:20), "one who stretched out (נטה) [the heavens]" .[345] He is the "one who spreads out" (רקע)[346] the earth, and he is "the one who gives (נתן) breath (נְשָׁמָה) to the people on the earth and spirit (רוּחַ) to those walking on it."[347]

The message that follows in vv. 6–9 can be divided into two strophes (vv.6–7 and vv. 8–9), both of which open with the divine self-identification: "I am Yahweh."[348] Whereas the expressions in v. 5 depict Yahweh's creation of the heavens, the earth, and humanity—'in the

---

(*Isaiah 40–55*, 1:224). אֵל occurs in 40:18. אֵל occurs with the definite article (הָאֵל) in Isa 5:16 [Eng 5:17], but in an adjectival phrase, modified by קָדוֹשׁ ("Holy").

[343] E.g., Childs, *Isaiah*, 326; Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*: *A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, Hermeneia, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 131.

[344] See e.g., Isa 40:22–23; 43:1, 14, 15–16; 44:24–28; 45:11, 18; etc. Use of the participle is common throughout chs. 40–48, but particularly frequent in the expanded expressions linked with the messenger formulas, (i.e., "Thus says Yahweh"). Most common among these expansions are those that describe Yahweh as creator of the cosmos, but others apply to Israel/Jacob (especially as Yahweh relates to them). Perhaps even more importantly, the active participle implies the continuous nature of the action in the present (Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §3.4.3), which suggests that Yahweh's identity as the Creator God is not just a characteristic based on his role as creator of cosmos in the distant past—it is a present reality, and the appropriate introduction to a message that promises his help.

[345] See also Isa 40:22 where the parallelism offers additional imagery: הַנּוֹטֶהָ כַדֹּק שָׁמַיִם ("...stretches out like a curtain the heavens") // וַיִּמְתָּחֵם כְּאֹהֶל לָשָׁבֶת ("spreads them out like a tent to dwell in"). See Isa 44:24; 45:12; and, elsewhere: Isa 51:13, 16; Jer 10:12, 51:15; Zech 12:1; Ps 104:2, Job 9:8, 26:7. (*HALOT* 2:692–93; *DCH* 5:672).

[346] Used figuratively here (Isa 42:5), Isa 44:24, and Ps 136:6, רקע denotes "spreading out" with the sense of "stamp, trample, hammer" (*HALOT* 3:1292). In the piel stem, the verb is used to denote hammering out a sheet of gold (Exod 39:3) as well as plating for the altar (Num 17:4) (*DCH* 7:555). See also, Norman C. Habel, "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens," *CBQ* 34 (1972): 417–18].

[347] The giving of 'breath' (נְשָׁמָה) recalls Gen 2:7 where 'Yahweh Elohim' forms 'the human being' (הָאָדָם) and breaths into him the 'breath' of life.

[348] The noun clause is especially prominent in Second Isaiah. Although it occurs once in Isa 1–39 (27:3), it occurs twenty-one times in chs. 40–66, sixteen of which are in chs. 41–48 (41:4, 13, 17; 42:6, 8; 43:3, 15; 45:3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 18, 19, 21; 48:17). It occurs two times in ch. 49 (vv. 23 and 26) and then not again until chs. 60 and 61 (60:16, 22; 61:8). For a classic treatment of the expression, see Walther Zimmerli, "I Am Yahweh," in *I Am Yahweh*, ed. Walter Brueggemann, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Atlanta: John Knox, 1982), 1–28.

beginning,' if you will— the divine predication in vv. 6 and 8 recalls another 'beginning.' God made himself known to Moses and through him also to Israel, saying, "I am Yahweh" (אֲנִי יְהוָה) (Exod 3; 6:2, 6–8). God declared these descendants of Jacob/Israel a "people" (עַם). This was the beginning of "a people" belonging to Yahweh (Exod 6:7). The compounded predications in v.8 reach a climax with Yahweh's statement: "My glory I will not give to another." The final, elliptical phrase, "[not] to פְּסִילִים" ('carved idols')[349] particularizes Yahweh's refusal, while simultaneously resounding with loud echoes of the past at Sinai: "You shall have no *other* gods before me" (Exod 20:3);[350] and, "You shall not make for yourselves a 'carved idol' (פֶּסֶל)" (Exod 20:4a).

The term הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת ('first things') occurs initially in the trial scene of the previous chapter (41:21–29).[351] There, הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת was used in opposition to הַבָּאוֹת (41:22; "the coming things").[352] In Isa 42:9, we have the first occurrence of הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת ('the first things') in opposition to the חֲדָשׁוֹת ('new things').

The 'first things,' functioning as the subject of the first colon/clause is followed by the particle, הִנֵּה ("Behold"). As mentioned in the previous section, the particle is used as a device of

---

[349] The term פֶּסֶל denotes an idol or image that is carved or hewn, originally from wood or stone, but later, also cast in metal (*HALOT* 3: 948–49). The singular form, פֶּסֶל, occurs frequently in chs. 40–48 (40:19–20; 42:8, 17; 44:9–10, 15, 17; 45:20; 48:5), but the plural occurs only here (cf. Jer 50:18, where Babylon is described as a "land of פְּסִילִים"). Shalom Paul cites the term's usage in these chapters as an example (among others) of the Deuteronomic/Deuteronomistic influence on Second Isaiah (e.g., Deut 4:16, 23, 25; 5:8; 7:5, 25; 12:3; 27:15); (Paul, *Isaiah*, 49).

[350] Notably, both Exod 20 and Isa 42 employ the same root, אַחֵר, ("other"): "*other* gods" (Exod 20:3) and "I give my glory to no *other*" (Isa 42:8).

[351] I am referring to הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת in the fem pl substantive form of the adjective רִאשׁוֹן (along with the definite article). This form occurs only in Second Isaiah: 41:22; 42:9; 43:9; 43:18 (indefinite); 46:9 (indefinite); 48:3; and 65:17 (cf. the fem pl functions attributively in 65:16). The adjective appears in other forms in chs 40–48, perhaps most notably in the sg with the sense of "first" (41:4, 27; 43:27; 44:6; 48:12).

[352] Although somewhat more indirect, the term אַחֲרִית ("end, outcome") is in opposition to the outcome of (specifically) the 'first things.'

drawing attention; additionally, הִנֵּה suggests something that is perceived as important, new, or surprising.[353] Many English translations of v. 9 render the particle as "Behold" and place it at the opening of the clause (i.e., "Behold, the first things have come"). In the Hebrew text however, הִנֵּה not only follows הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת, it is also attached with a maqqeph to the next word, the verb בוא ("to come").[354] A maqqeph establishes a close link between two words.[355] While I would not deny that הִנֵּה affects the sense of the entire clause, the particle's attachment to the verb suggests that its function is more specifically that of accenting the verbal action (i.e., "*have come*"). Related to the latter, the perfective aspect of the verb conveys a sense of completion, and it seems possible that הִנֵּה adds an element of surprise, suddenness, or even abruptness, to the completed nature of the action. Moreover, two words linked by a maqqeph form a single phonetic unit that results in a clause of two word-units.[356] The matter of fact, terse syntax would appear to both reflect and reinforce the sense of finality.[357] This tone, however, also sets the stage for the next action—the announcing of 'new things,' and already reveals a certain level of discontinuity between the "former things" that "have come" and the "new things."

---

[353] Joüon-Muraoka, § 105*d*.

[354] Note that the same root, בוא, is used in 41:22 as a substantive to refer to the message they want to hear (i.e., "Cause us to hear 'things to come'"), and again in 42:9 as a Qal perfect, 'they have come.' While there is no elaboration or identification, the repetition implies a connection between what "has come" (42:9) and what was announced at some earlier point in time as "things to come."

[355] Joüon-Muraoka, § 13*a*.

[356] "The main word loses its primary stress and can only have a secondary stress" and becomes a "proclitic" (Joüon-Muraoka, § 13*a*). Alternatively, see e.g., Goldingay and Payne, who suggest a colon of 3–3, acknowledging they "ignore the *maqqeph*" in order to do so (*Isaiah 40–55*, 1:231).

[357] Kugel observes that terseness is a common but striking form of heightening in biblical style. In a manner which seems particularly fitting to Isa 42:9, Kugel describes the effect terseness as reminiscent of "telegraph style" or the "elliptical language of some popular sayings" (e.g., 'Red sky at morning, sailor take warning') "in which some of the signposts of ordinary discourse have been stripped away" [James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 81.

In the second clause, "new things" stands in the same fronted position as did "the first things," creating a subject/object parallelism.[358] The repetition of the independent pronoun אֲנִי ("I")[359] creates a link with Yahweh's divine predications in vv. 6 and 8. In general, it implies the continuity of Yahweh's role in both past and present, and in particular, it establishes a connection between the God Yahweh who called a people to himself and the God who is announcing "new things."

Communication of the message is signified by the word נָגַד which means "to announce, to inform." The active participle form conveys the present aspect of the action as well as its durative, progressive quality, and thus highlights a temporal contrast between the "former things" that "have come" (i.e., thus, in the past) and "new things" now being announced (i.e., the present). Significantly, the verb נָגַד refers specifically to a communicative interaction that takes place between two parties, that is to say, one party conveys a message, usually an important one, to the other.[360] נָגַד frequently occurs in these chapters paired with שָׁמַע, the verb which occurs at the end of this cola.[361] While שָׁמַע is extremely common in the *qal*, meaning "to hear," the term

---

[358] On subject-object parallelism, see, e.g., Adele Berlin, *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*, rev. and enl. ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008), 57–59.

[359] The three-fold use of אֲנִי in vv. 6, 8, and 9 is an element that adds to the unit's coherence; it is also an example of the highly characteristic use of 3's in the poetry of Second Isaiah.

[360] *HALOT* 2:665–66. The verb נָגַד, which occurs only in the *hiphil* and *hophal* stems, appears 335 times in the Old Testament, twenty-nine of which are in the book of Isaiah. Significantly, twenty-one of those usages are in Second Isaiah (i.e., chs. 40–66) and, with the exception of only three, they are all in chs. 40–48: 41:22 (2x); 41:23; 41:26 (2x); 42:9; 42:12; 43:9; 43:12; 44:7 (2x); 44:8; 45:19, 21 (2x); 46:10; 48:3, 5, 6, 14, 20]. It is a denominative from the preposition נֶגֶד, meaning "in front of, in sight of, opposite to" (*HALOT* 2:666; Claus Westermann, "נגד," *TLOT* 2:714–17; 714). Additionally, and yet another example of the poet's characteristic reuse of the same roots in various forms, נגד occurs in the *hophal* (40:21) and as a preposition (47:14).

[361] נָגַד and שָׁמַע occur together fourteen times in Isa 40–48: 40:21; 41:22, 26; 42:9, 12; 43:9, 12; 44:8; 45:21; 48:3, 5, 6, 14, 20.

occurs here and elsewhere in these chapters in the *hiphil*. It thus carries the *hiphil*'s causative nuance and conveys the sense of "cause/make to hear."[362]

The third clause opens with the adverb בְּטֶרֶם ("before"), emphasized by its fronted position in much the same way as the substantives in the first colon. The emphasis seems significant for at least two reasons. The first is its role in the present verse. I will come back to this discussion below, but simply put, the notion of 'before' represents the temporal lynchpin of the challenge put to the no-gods (e.g., 41:21–29), that is to say: announce what is yet to happen *before* it happens. Secondly, the emphasis on בְּטֶרֶם signals an important element of the connection and the progression that takes place between the three occurrences of "new things."

In each of the three units, "new things" has a corresponding temporal term. Here in 42:9, בְּטֶרֶם ("before") temporally situates the announcing of new things relative to the time when the content of new things becomes a perceivable reality. In 43:19, the temporal role is filled by עַתָּה ("now") and corresponds to the "now" perceivable "new things." Finally, in 48:6, מֵעַתָּה, a prefixed form of the previous adverb, denotes "from now on." The progression clearly expresses a forward moving sequence from past to present to future.

As for the role of בְּטֶרֶם in 42:9, I suggested that its temporal sense of "before" encapsulates a key element of Yahweh's challenges to the would-be gods (e.g., 41:21–29). In

---

[362] The root שָׁמַע occurs thirty-one times in chs. 40–48, twelve of which are in the *hiphil*: 41:22, 26; 42:2, 9; 43:12; 44:1, 8; 45:21; 48:3, 5, 6, 20. *HALOT* 4:1570–74. Unfortunately, common English translations of שָׁמַע in the hiphil (e.g., "declare," "announce") do not convey the causative nuance of the *hiphil*, nor do they convey the thematic emphasis that exists in the Hebrew text due to the frequent recurrence of the same root, even in various conjugations. The latter is especially significant in the case of שָׁמַע because the notion of "hearing" (e.g., "to hear," "cause to hear," "ears to hear," "have you not heard?") represents an important theme that runs throughout chs. 40–48 as well as making a connection to the book as a whole. In particular, the theme recalls the temple vision of Isaiah (Isa 6) during which the prophet Isaiah 'hears' (שָׁמַע) the voice of the Lord (6:8). Both שָׁמַע ("to hear") and the noun אֹזֶן ("ears") are repeated several times, along with other terms of perception, in the difficult message the prophet is instructed to deliver to the people of Israel: "Keep on hearing, but do not understand...;" (Isa 6:8–10).

other words, the repeated demand is to demonstrate deity by announcing what is yet to happen *before* it happens. The temporal notion of 'before' (בְּטֶרֶם) is conveyed in the additional phrases, "from the beginning" (מֵרֹאשׁ) and "beforehand" (מִלְּפָנִים) in 41:26. Likewise, the idea of future happenings is articulated using a variety of terms: "what will happen" (קרה; 41:22a);[363] "the coming things" (הַבָּאוֹת; 41:21d);[364] and, "things to come hereafter, latter things" (הָאֹתִיּוֹת לְאָחוֹר; 41: 23a).[365]

Significantly, despite the variety of expressions to speak of future things, there is no use of the vocabulary of חָדָשׁ. In fact, in no confrontation of the would-be gods in these chapters is there ever a challenge to announce, to do, or to make anything related to 'new.'[366] What this suggests is that announcing the future in terms of newness, specifically as denoted by the term חָדָשׁ, is not merely another option equivalent to "things to come" or "latter things." That is not to deny there is some semantic overlap between the expressions. The point I want to emphasize, however, is that there seems to be something distinctive in the use of חָדָשׁ. One could perhaps suggest that the use of חֲדָשׁוֹת in 42:9 was simply a variation for the sake of interest. While that is not impossible, I would argue the poetry in these chapters suggests otherwise. The greater likelihood is that there would be repetition of terms (combined with word play of some sort), in order to highlight connections and similarities or, conversely, to play up contrast and

---

[363] The verb קרה denotes "to meet, encounter, happen to" (*HALOT* 3:1138).

[364] The verbal root בוא appears as a definite *qal* ptc (הַבָּאוֹת).

[365] Like בוא, the root אתה also occurs as a *qal* participle (pl) denoting "things to come," but the latter is further specified by the noun אָחוֹר, (with the prefixed preposition לְ) to express the temporal sense of "future" (*DCH* 1:184) or "later" (*HALOT* 1:31).

[366] This is true not only of 41:22–23, but of all subsequent passages that refer to former, latter, and/or coming things in the context of would-be rival deities (44:7; 46:8–11; 48:12).

distinctions.[367] In other words, repetition of vocabulary in 42:9 related to expressions in 41:21–29 (at least in some form) would not only have been consistent with the characteristics in Second Isaiah, but would have created an explicit link that highlighted what the no-gods *could not* do versus what Yahweh *could* do. Instead, the explicit links between the two units are the terms of announcing (נגד and שָׁמַע) and the reiteration of הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת ("the first things"). I would submit that the term חֲדָשׁוֹת ("new things") in 42:9 conveys a qualitative difference that is not expressed by temporal terms such as the "latter things," or "things to come." I will offer further discussion of my argument below, but before I do, I want to pick up on a related issue: is there any rationale to explain why the no-gods are never challenged to announce חֲדָשׁוֹת?

I would suggest there are at least a couple of possible reasons that might explain the lacuna. First, there is a sense in which the distinction reinforces the supremacy and uniqueness of Yahweh that is central to these chapters — it implies both literarily and theologically that only Yahweh announces new things.

Secondly, the absence of any language of newness is arguably related to the ancient world's view of the cosmos as that of a closed system. Michael Fishbane describes the perception of the cosmos as "a plenum, interlocking and interconnected in substance" in which "man, god, and world share the same substance."[368] A closed system lacked the notion of transcendence, that is, a God/gods/deity not limited by the confines of the singular substance in which all things were believed to exist and function. It was, moreover, a worldview in which the future was

---

[367] A prime example is found in ch. 46 where repetition and wordplay are exploited to humorous proportions (parody) to demonstrate the contrast, or more correctly, show how preposterous a comparison of any sort is when the Babylonian gods are pitted against Yahweh.

[368] Michael Fishbane, "Israel and the 'Mothers,'" in *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 49–63; 50–51.

determined by the past. Thus, as Oswalt asserts concerning new things, "the gods were incapable of doing anything new. They could not predict what the cosmic system would do in the future except insofar as it replicated the general patterns of the past."[369] However, if the latter was the case, and I believe it was at some level in the world of ancient Israel, it begs the question: what does it suggest about the statement, "New things I am announcing"? Does it make any sense given the prevailing notions of the ancient world? And, if Yahweh means to comfort and help his people, how can or does this message accomplish that? How does the poetry navigate these seeming tensions?

In order to address these questions and related issues, I return to the discussion of the 'new things' in 42:9 and explore how the meaning of the term does (or does not) suggest any qualitative difference from a merely temporal expression (e.g., 'what is yet to come'). Specifically, I take up my analysis by focusing on the verb צָמַח ("to sprout; to spring forth"): "Before they spring forth, I make you hear."

Like the adverb בְּטֶרֶם, the verb צָמַח ("to sprout; to spring forth") is a key component in the progression that characterizes the connection between the three references to 'new things.' The verb recurs again in 43:19 along with the second mention of the "new thing." This time the verbal action is depicted as readily perceivable. In the third reference (Isa 48:6), the corresponding verb is no longer צָמַח but ברא ("to create," v. 7).[370] The choice of ברא

[369] John Oswalt, "God," in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*, eds. Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012), pp. 280–93; 286. For a more sustained and in-depth treatment of the concepts of transcendence and continuity, see especially Oswalt's volume, *The Bible Among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Ancient Literature?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009); and more generally, Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66,* 119.

[370] Brown also observes the change and comments that the "preference for the technical verb *bārā'* suggests a certain parallel with *ṣāmaḥ*, thereby confirming the crucial significance of the latter verb" (*Ethos of the Cosmos*, 232, n.12).

emphasizes the creation of the new things, whereas צָמַח highlights the point at which the newly created thing(s) emerge into a perceivable realm. The two verbs are not synonymous, but they both denote a dimension of newness (dependent on context and perception). But why the verb צמח?[371]

First, חָדָשׁ and צָמַח have a semantic connection, one that seems to have gone largely unrecognized by scholars. The Akkadian cognate of חָדָשׁ is the term *eššum*. The basic sense of *eššum* is 'new,' but as a substantive it is attested as a synonym of an Akkadian term which signifies "sprout" (*pi-ir-ḫu*).[372] While the connection may appear somewhat indirect, it seems a reasonable possibility that the poet was aware of various cognate terms and utilized them.

The most common meaning צָמַח (i.e., "to sprout") refers to plant growth, particularly that which "spouts" from the ground (e.g., grass, trees, plants). Additionally, it can refer to the growth of leaves (Ezek 17:9) or the manner in which something grows (Deut 29:22).[373] The verb is often used figuratively as it is in Isa 42:9 and 43:19 and, similarly, in Isa 44:4 where it functions metaphorically to refer to "offspring" (i.e., descendants) that will "*spring up* among the grass, like willows by streams." The latter example also displays the important connection between plant growth and water supply, the nature of which is made explicit in Isa 45:8 as one of cause and effect; the clouds are called upon to "rain down righteousness," and the earth is called to

---

[371] Or as William Brown winsomely notes: "The prophet could have easily employed a colorless parallel to the verbal root *bw'* ("to come")…such as *hāyâ* or *yāṣa* to describe the imminent arrival of the 'new things.' Rather, the author chose to use a distinctively botanical referent" (*Ethos of the Cosmos*, 232). Brown's point is in the context of the horticultural references associated with the creation theme in Second Isaiah.

[372] The two Akkadian terms, *eš-šum* and *pi-ir-ḫu* (i.e., "new = sprout") appear in synonym lists found in Babylonian cuneiform texts: CT 18 3r. i. 3 (CAD 4: 374, "eššu"). Likewise, the noun/substantive, *edēšu*, is also attested as "a poetic word for 'sprout'" (*e-de-šum = pi-ir- ḫu*) based on another Akkadian text: CT 18 2 iii 27 (CAD 4:30 "edēšu").

[373] It can also refer to the growth of human hair (Lev 13:37; Judg 16:22; Ezek 16:7) and specifically that of beards (2 Sam 10:5; 1 Chr 19:5).

cause salvation and righteousness "to sprout." In what is arguably its climactic expression, the imagery of rain and sprouting is used in Isa 55 to depict the enduring efficacy of the word that goes forth from the mouth of Yahweh.[374]

It bears mentioning that the term צמח also occurs in the Old Testament with royal or messianic connotations. However, most scholars agree that the term's usage in Second Isaiah does not have those connotations.[375]

I would suggest that a third possible reason for the particular choice of צָמַח in Isa 42:9 (and 43:19) is its connection to creation. The verb's use in v. 9 underscores the content of v.5, notably God-Yahweh as Creator as well as terms and expressions reminiscent of various creation Psalms and Gen 1 and 2. In particular, צָמַח echoes the creation narrative in Gen 2 where, twice, the verb signifies the sprouting of plants and trees (vv. 5, 9 respectively).[376] Beginning at Gen 2:5, a series of circumstantial clauses in vv. 5–6 describes the conditions of the earth when Yahweh Elohim "formed" (יצר) the "human being" (הָאָדָם). The first of the clauses (v. 5) indicates the setting as "*before* (טֶרֶם) any bush of the field was yet on the earth" and "*before*

---

[374] צמח also occurs in Isa 58:8 and 3 times in Isa 61:11 (1x as a noun, 2x as a verb).

[375] For example, Yahweh promises he will "raise up a 'righteous branch' (צֶמַח צַדִּיק) for David" (Jer 23:5), and similarly in Jer 33:15, "I will cause a 'righteous branch' (צֶמַח צַדִּיק) to 'sprout' (צמח) for David." A renewal of the Davidic dynasty is also expressed as a "horn" (a symbol of strength, especially that of a king) which Yahweh will cause to "spring up" (צמח) for David" (Ps 132:17; "for the house of Israel," Ezek 29:21).The noun/name, צֶמַח does not occur in Second Isaiah or Ezekiel, presumably due to the exile and the interruption in the Davidic dynastic rule. However, in the later prophetic book of Zechariah, the noun (צֶמַח) occurs as a proper title/name (i.e., "Branch") given to Yahweh's servant who will build the temple of Yahweh and reign on his throne (Zech 3:8, 6:12). See e.g., S. Amsler, "צמח," *TLOT* 3:1085–87; *HALOT* 3:1033–34; *DCH* 7:130; M. G. Abegg, Jr., "צֶמַח; צמח," *NIDOTTE* 3:812–814.

[376] Blenkinsopp makes similar observations, suggesting that the language of Isa 40–48 is more reminiscent of the Yahwist (i.e., Gen 2) than the Priestly source (i.e., Gen 1). He cites the terms common to both Isa and Gen, including יצר (Isa 45:7, 9, 18 and Gen 2:7, 8, 19) and נְשָׁמָה (Isa 42:5 and Gen 2:7 and 7:22), but does not mention צמח [Joseph Blenkinsopp, "The Cosmological and Protological Language of Deutero-Isaiah," *CBQ* 73 (2011): 493–510; 498].

(טֶרֶם) any grass of the field had yet sprung up (צָמַח)."[377] Notably, in addition to the use of צָמַח in both Gen 2:5 and Isa 42:9, the adverb טֶרֶם ("before; not yet") which occurs twice in Gen 2:5 also occurs in Isa 42:9, albeit in a slightly varied form in the latter (i.e., בְּטֶרֶם). The next clause in Gen 2:5, introduced by the causal כִּי, spells out the reason the grass has not yet sprouted — "for Yahweh God had not yet caused it to rain (מָטַר)[378] upon the earth."[379] Here we encounter the familiar link between rain and sprouting/growth that was noted above with reference to the recurring use of צָמַח. However, there are at least two important differences in Gen 2:5. First, the narrative context in which the familiar rain/sprout terms occur is not a metaphorical domain but rather the natural domain from which the metaphor is drawn. Second, the context described is wholly unique in the biblical usage of the rain and growth pair (literally or figuratively) in that it represents a time prior to their functioning existence — *before* anything had sprouted because it had *not yet* rained. In a sense, one might even say that the process so inherent and essential to the flourishing of the natural realm was not yet operational in the young cosmos.[380]

---

[377] After God plants a garden in Eden and places the human in it (Gen 2:8), the verb צָמַח occurs again in v. 9, this time in the *hiphil*, emphasizing God's agency in causing the trees to sprout forth from the ground. The trees that grow are particularized as "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food." A third occurrence of צָמַח, in Gen 3:18, refers to the emergence of thorns and thistles from the ground as a result of God's curse upon the ground (v.17) in response to Adam's disobedience. While it is not uncommon in Old Testament usage to depict the emergence of plant growth as caused by the ground (with an underlying assumption of rain and God's agency prior to growth), it is still perhaps worth noting how צָמַח in the *hiphil* conveys a subtle, nuanced difference between Gen 2:9 and 3:18. In the former, God is emphasized as the causal agent of the tree growth, whereas in the latter–after the ground has been cursed–it is the ground rather than God that represents the causal agent of the thorns and thistles that 'spring forth.'

[378] The causative sense is conveyed by the *hiphil* form of the verb מָטַר ("to rain").

[379] According to Gen 2:5, the lack of rain is not all that accounts for the absence of plant growth in the field; additionally, "there was no human to work (עבד) the ground." While I can only speculate, in light of other links between Gen 2 and Isaiah 42, it may be more than a matter of coincidence that the work of the first human in Gen 2:5 and the identity of Yahweh's addressee in Isa 42:1 share the same root: עבד (verb, "to serve;" noun, "servant").

[380] John Walton, in particular, argues that the ancient Near Eastern view of creation was not focused on modern issues of materials and matter; rather, the focus of creation was God bringing "the cosmos into operation (a

The connection between Isa 42:9 and Gen 2:5 seems to me to be highly significant (and brilliant rhetorically). Whether or not there was borrowing or what the direction of influence might be are not my concerns here. Rather, reading canonically, it is reasonable to state the obvious: the occurrence of the two terms, צֶמַח and the adverb טֶרֶם, together, is unique to Gen 2:5 and Isa 42:9. Interestingly, while the two terms are the same, their usage differs in the two contexts (i.e., growth and rain; announcing and appearing). I would suggest however that the similarity invites one to consider how the differences might relate to one another. If we allow the two texts to interact, the resulting resonance is familiar. Indeed, it is what we find so exquisitely expressed in Isa 55:10–11: "For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout…so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it." As has often been observed, this reiteration of the enduring nature of the word of Yahweh forms an inclusio with Isa 40:8 ("The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever").[381]

condition that defines existence in the ancient worldview) by assigning roles and functions" (Walton, *Ancient Near Eastern Thought,* 183).

[381] Klaus Baltzer, for example, summarizes the framework of Isa 40–55, asserting: "The decisive point is the reliability of the divine Word. Here 40:8 at the beginning corresponds to 55:11 at the end" (*Deutero-Isaiah*, 6).

CHAPTER SIX

חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 42:10–12

שִׁירוּ לַיהוָה שִׁיר חָדָשׁ	**10**Sing to Yahweh a new song,
תְּהִלָּתוֹ מִקְצֵה הָאָרֶץ	his praise from the end of the earth,
יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם	those who go down[382] to the sea,
וּמְלֹאֹו	and all that fills it,
אִיִּים וְיֹשְׁבֵיהֶם׃	coastlands and those who inhabit them.
יִשְׂאוּ מִדְבָּר וְעָרָיו	**11**Let the desert and its cities exalt,
חֲצֵרִים תֵּשֵׁב קֵדָר	the villages that Kedar inhabits;
יָרֹנּוּ יֹשְׁבֵי סֶלַע	let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy,
מֵרֹאשׁ הָרִים יְצָוָחוּ׃	from the tops of the mountains let them shout.

[382]A number of scholars emend v. 10b, replacing the verb יָרַד ("to go down; descend") with the verb רָעַם ("to roar, thunder"). The emendation is based on the similar phrase found in Pss 96:11b and 98:7, יִרְעַם הַיָּם וּמְלֹאֹו, ("Let the sea *roar* and all that fills it"), two of the psalms in which the expression "Sing a new song to Yahweh" also occurs. Similarly, Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 101. Richard J. Clifford argues that " 'those who go down to the sea' makes little sense" [*Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Isaiah* (New York: Paulist, 1984), 94]. The MT reading is, however, supported by 1QIsa[a], LXX, Vulg., and Tg., and as Blenkinsopp maintains, while the emendation might make more sense of the jussives, "it does not make conspicuously better sense" (*Isaiah 40–55*, 213). I have retained the MT reading and would add that the same argument for emendation that is based on the similar phrases in Pss 96 and 98 could be applied to a consideration of Ps 107, in which v. 23 speaks of "those who go down to the sea (יוֹרְדֵי הַיָּם בָּאֳנִיּוֹת) in ships." Psalm 107 does not contain an occurrence of the 'new song,' but it does bear a close resemblance to Isa 40–48 in other distinctive ways. For example, Ps 107:33–41 describes deserts and wastelands becoming pools and springs of water using expressions very similar to those found in chs. 40–48, including subsequent verses in ch. 42 (see e.g., v. 15). Moreover, retaining the verb יָרַד ("to go down") functions in contrast to the upward progression conveyed in v. 11, beginning with the verb נָשָׂא ("to lift up") and reaching a climax in the final clause: "Let them shout aloud from *the top* (רֹאשׁ) *of the mountains*" (emphasis added).

יָשִׂימוּ לַיהוָה כָּבוֹד **12**Let them give to Yahweh glory,

וּתְהִלָּתוֹ בָּאִיִּים יַגִּידוּ׃ and his praise, [let them] declare in the coastlands.

In the previous section I indicated that Isa 42:5–9 corresponds to the work of the servant who was introduced in 42:1–4, namely, Israel. The present unit (vv. 10–12) brings the previous units to a climax by calling the whole earth and its inhabitants to offer praise to Yahweh for what he will accomplish through the servant. Isaiah 42:10 is rather unique among the uses of חָדָשׁ in Isa 40–48. First, unlike the other occurrences spread out over these chapters, here in v. 10 it is the second occurrence of חָדָשׁ in as many verses. Second, חָדָשׁ is part of a recurring expression שִׁיר חָדָשׁ ("new song") that appears not only here in Isaiah but six places in the Psalms: 33:3; 40:4 [Eng 40:3]; 96:1; 98:1; 144:9; 149:1.[383]

[383] A version of the clause also occurs in the Apocrypha in Judith 16:13 (ὑμνήσω τῷ θεῷ μου ὕμνον καινόν). The phrase "new song" also appears in the New Testament in Rev 5:9 and 14:3 (ᾠδὴν καινὴν). Judith's praise follows directly on a summary of the enemy overthrown and a concluding statement: "They perished by the battle of the Lord" (Jud 6:12). Likewise, the two occurrences in Revelation are set in a context in which there is divine victory in a warfare context. While not all the *new song* references in the Psalms include explicit reference to war or Yahweh as divine warrior, there is a sense of divine aid and victory that brings about a transformed situation, be it death to life, oppressed to liberated, or almost destroyed to saved. Thus, a number of scholars have considered the divine warrior motif as a consistent element that suggests war victory as a likely *Sitz im Leben* for the singing of a *new song*. See, e.g., Tremper Longman III, "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif," *WTJ* 44 (1982): 290–307, esp. 300–302. Longman's rationale for the divine warrior motif is helpful, although he sees it as clearly connected to the *new song* in only 5 of the 6 Psalmic references (Ps 33:3 is not included). While I agree with his assessment as it stands, he does not offer any explanation for Ps 33:3 and whether it suggests a different *Sitz im Leben* or perhaps is suggestive of the same *Sitz* but just not as explicitly. On a different note, to my way of thinking Longman's introduction to his discussion of the *new song* in the Old Testament is rather misleading. He states: "New Song occurs frequently in two OT books, the Psalms and Isaiah." Although I disagree, perhaps some would concur with Longman that six occurrences in 150 Psalms counts as "frequently," but surely it is incorrect to use the term "frequent" to include Isaiah, when it occurs only one time in the entire book. It may seem a trivial matter to bring up, but in the course of this investigation it has become increasingly apparent how little awareness there seems to be of the *infrequent* usage of "new," specifically חָדָשׁ, in the Old Testament, including the

Yahweh's announcement of "new things" at the end of Isa 42:5–9 gives way to the hymnic language of vv. 10–12 with its jubilant opening exhortation: "Sing to Yahweh a *new song,* his praise from the end of the earth." The repetition of חָדָשׁ in vv. 9 and 10 represents a literary "catchword" (a poetic linking device characteristic of Second Isaiah). However, it is more than mere lexical repetition— it creates a thematic link between Yahweh's announcement of "new things" and the whole earth's response in a grand tumult of praise. Westermann's statement is typical of the way in which many scholars have described the connection: "The song is 'new' because God has brought about something new and the song is to respond to this new act of God; this new act of God is to resound in the new song."[384]

While the repetition of חָדָשׁ forges an explicit link between vv. 9 and 10 (and thus, the two units as a whole), there are also a number of clear indications that v. 10 marks the beginning of a discrete literary unit. The new unit is primarily signaled by the change from the first-person speech of Yahweh in vv. 5–9 to an imperative and a subsequent string of jussives, all of which exhort praises directed *to* Yahweh in vv. 10–12. Additionally, whereas the audience in vv. 5–9 is understood to be Israel, the audience indicated in vv. 10–12 reflects the whole earth and its inhabited domain. As for the end of the unit, changes in subject matter along with alternation between first and third-person speech have led to varying conclusions among scholars. In light of the imperatives and obvious change of addressee at v. 18, most scholars agree that a larger unit

---

"new song." Although scholars such as Westermann and North both comment on the surprising rarity of the term in their oft-cited dictionary articles, a statement such as Longman's exemplifies the general lack of awareness that I have observed (or at least a lack of acknowledgement to the contrary).

[384] C. Westermann, חָדָשׁ, *TLOT* 1:394–97; 397. Likewise, Leene says of the new song: "It apparently responds to the new things that Yhwh announced in 42:5–9" (Leene, *Newness*, 53).

extends through v.17, but opinions vary as to the delineation of sub-sections within vv. 10–17.[385] While I recognize there is a break (i.e., a Masoretic accent) following v. 13, I would argue that vv. 14–17 continue to expand on the reasons for praise that are expressed in v. 13. For the purposes of this investigation, my focus is primarily on the hymnic vv. 10–12 and the *new song*, so my attention to vv. 13–17 will be limited to places where they are pertinent to my topic.[386]

An emphasis on the *new song* is signaled literarily in the opening imperative by the repetition of the root שִׁיר, shared by both the modified noun ("song") and the initial verb ("sing").[387] With the doubling of שִׁיר along with the adjective חָדָשׁ, the assonance created by the repeated שׁ functions literarily to draw attention to the entire clause, emphasizing its significance and its theme of rejoicing. Grammatically speaking, the opening verb שִׁיר does double-duty in

---

[385] Many scholars view the unit as inclusive of vv. 10–13, based on changes in content and speech and supported by the MT accents (a *setuma* after v. 13). Leene, for example, argues that v. 13 is necessary to the unit because it provides the reason for the exhortations in vv. 10–12 [Henk Leene, *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*, *OtSt* 64 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 53]; similarly, e.g., Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah*: *A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*, Hermeneia, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001); Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001). Others view the unit as vv. 10–12, observing a break after v. 12 that is attested in several lines of tradition. For example, Korpel and deMoor favor this view, arguing that the break after v. 13 was based "on an erroneous tradition" which they attribute to the change that occurs between vv. 13 and 14 from God spoken of in third person to his speech in first person (vv. 14–17). They, along with others, see v. 13 as introducing the direct divine speech in vv. 14–17, pointing out that "such abrupt transitions are by no means unusual in Second Isaiah and v. 14 fits much better to v. 13 than to vv. 10–12" (Marjo C. A. Korpel and Johannes C. de Moor, *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40–55* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 154–55); see also, e.g., Ulrich F. Berges, *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form*, trans. Millard C. Lind (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2012), 306; Frederik Poulsen, *God, His Servant, and the Nations in Isaiah 42:1–9*, FAT 73 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 90.

[386] A number of scholars see vv. 10–12 as the first of a number of hymnic verses that function as a significant structural device in Isa 40–55. Ulrich F. Berges, for example, argues these hymnic verses are "the most obvious structural features within chs. 40–55," citing the following as hymnic verses (brackets indicate those for which there is not agreement as to their hymnic status): 42:10–12; 44:23; [45:8]; 48:20–21; 49:13; [51:3]; 52:9–10; [54:1–3] (*The Book of Isaiah,* 306). Other scholars acknowledge the hymnic quality of certain verses without necessarily attaching to them any major structural function.

[387] In grammatical terms, the noun שִׁיר functions as a cognate effected accusative since it is derived from the same root as the verb and because it signifies a result (i.e., "effected") of the verbal action (as opposed to being acted upon). See, e.g., Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, § 10.2.1f.

the elliptical construction of v. 10, governing both the immediately subsequent phrase, "to Yahweh a new song (שִׁיר חָדָשׁ)," and the parallel phrase that follows, "his praise (תְּהִלָּה) from the end of the earth." In the inverted (chiastic) word order of the parallel phrases, the two objects of singing (i.e., "new song" and "praise") are highlighted by their centered apposition to one another. Importantly, the relationship of the two terms yields an initial clue as to the nature of the *new song*. The poetic parallelism suggests that the two terms share some degree of semantic similarity; however, as James Kugel has demonstrated, more significant (and characteristic of Hebrew semantic parallelism) is the type of movement reflected between the two objects—in this case, a movement from general to specific.[388] The first term, שִׁיר חָדָשׁ ("new song"), thus represents the more general idea, while the parallel term, תְּהִלָּה ("praise")[389] specifies it as an articulation of praise. Furthermore, the new song is not simply a song of praise, but praise to Yahweh. The fact that it is "*his* praise"[390] recalls the earlier emphasis on Yahweh's superiority over the no-gods, summarized in the declaration of 42:8: "I do not give…my praise (תְּהִלָּה) to the carved idols."

---

[388] The movement from general to specific is but one way that parallel lines correspond to one another. Although somewhat simplistic, Kugel offers the following definition: "biblical lines are parallelistic not because B is meant to be a parallel of A, but because B typically *supports* A, carries it further, backs it up, completes it, goes beyond it" [James L. Kugel, *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981), 52]. Robert Alter, building on Kugel's notion of the "*emphatic* character" of parallelism, suggests (as a general rule) that the movement of meaning reflected most typically in semantic parallelism "is one of heightening or intensification …, of focusing, specification, concretization, even what could be called dramatization" [*The Art of Biblical Poetry* (New York: Basic Books, 1985), 19].

[389] The basic meaning of the term תְּהִלָּה denotes "praise, adoration" (*DCH* 8:594–96; 594). As it is used in the Old Testament, תְּהִלָּה always refers either explicitly or implicitly to praise of Yahweh/God (e.g., Pss 34:1, 51:17, 71:6, 8, 106:12, 109:1, 111:10, 145:21, Neh 9:5, 12:46). While here in Isa 42:10 the term is governed by the opening verb of singing (שִׁיר), and it occurs with שִׁיר elsewhere (e.g., Ps 40:4; 149:1), praise as conveyed by the term תְּהִלָּה is not necessarily the object of a *musical* expression.

[390] Yahweh is the antecedent of the pronominal suffix on תְּהִלָּה.

In v. 10b, the two-fold imperative to sing appeals to the "end of the earth, the sea and all that fills it."[391] Even the "coastlands (אִיִּים) and their inhabitants," which were previously commanded to "Listen in silence" (41:1), characterized as "afraid" (41:5), and described as "destined to await the servant's teaching" (42:4),[392] are now called to participate in this offering of praise. In geographic terms, the sea and the adjacent coastlands (v. 10) represent the far western reaches of the *new song*, while the places and peoples cited in v. 11 reflect an eastern boundary from which begins a retrograde progression that passes through regions that lie in between. From the desert and villages of Kedar[393] the geographic procession of praise moves on to the bordering mountainous region,[394] encompassing increasingly broader spatial dimensions and an ever-widening scope of inhabitants.

The sounds of praise continue to reverberate with three more verbs in v. 11 that convey a sense of loud, joyous celebration: נָשָׂא ("to lift up; exalt"); רָנַן ("to rejoice");[395] צָוַח ("to shout loudly").[396] The verbal accumulation reaches a climax in v. 12 where, similar to v. 10, the

---

[391] It is perhaps worth noting that the same movement from general to specific that was observed in the first half of v. 10 is likewise evident in the verse as a whole. The first colon is general in terms of the lack of a specified audience to whom the imperative is addressed and the generally inclusive phrase, "the end of the earth." However, in the second colon both the audience and "the end of the earth" become more specific by mention of the sea, the coastland, and the inhabitants of each.

[392] Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 169.

[393] Kedar refers to a nomadic (i.e., tent-dwelling; see, e.g., Song 1:5; Ps 120:5) Arab tribe descended from Kedar, one of Ishmael's sons (Gen 25:13) and is associated with the desert region of northern Arabia, between Edom and Babylonia. Cf. Jer 49:28–29: "Rise up, advance against Kedar! Destroy the *people of the east*!" (Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40*–66, 193). See also, for e.g., Leene, *Newness*, 53; John H. Walton, Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas, *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000), 628].

[394] Sela, a capital of Edom, was a mountainous area that bordered the desert region. Shalom Paul notes that the term (סֶלַע) is polysemous with respect to the surrounding clauses. Sela is, on the one hand, the proper name of a settlement like that of Kedar in the previous clause (e.g., Judg 1:36; 2 Kgs 14:7). On the other hand, the term denotes a mountainous area (e.g., Amos 6:12; Prov 30:26) like that from which the inhabitants will shout from the mountain tops (Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 193).

[395] *HALOT* 3:1248.

[396] *HALOT* 3:1011–12.

chiastic structure highlights the "glory" and "praise" (כָּבוֹד and תְּהִלָּה) of Yahweh.[397] The repetition of "praise" along with that of "coastlands" in both vv. 10 and 12 creates a literary inclusio, thereby emphasizing the three verses as a cohesive literary unit.

On the basis of this immediate unit (vv. 10–12), it is already possible to begin drawing some conclusions as to the nature of the *new song*. First, and perhaps most obvious, the *new song* is a musical rendering of praise. Second, it is musical praise explicitly directed to Yahweh, Israel's God. Third, although directed to Israel's God, the *new song* (along with the accompanying terms of praise), is to be sung by all the earth and its inhabitants. Fourth and finally, the *new song* is not only *directed* to Yahweh, it is a *response* to Yahweh—indeed, as many scholars have observed, it is a fitting response to the One who announces new things (Isa 42:9). The connection between Yahweh's announcement and the earth's response is made explicit in the repetition of the verb נגד ("to declare") in v. 9 ("new things I *declare*") and v. 12 ("Let them *declare* his praise").[398] Similar to the joyous effect that brought Isa 41:14–16 to a close, I would suggest again that Yahweh's acts of newness issue forth in resounding praise. Thus, what is an effective dimension of newness is also an affective one—one of joyous exaltation.[399] There is, however, a difference in the source of praise in Isa 41:16, which was Jacob/Israel, and that

---

[397] Even more so than was the case in v. 10, v. 12 also picks up on the theme of v. 8, repeating both "glory" and "praise" ("I do not give my glory to another, nor my praise to carved idols"). In a sense, v. 12 portrays the proper manifestation of Yahweh's declaration in v. 8. The repetition of terms is fairly obvious, but it seems particularly significant that "praise" (תְּהִלָּה) occurs three times (vv. 8, 10, 12), underscoring its role as a linking theme of the two units (vv. 5–9 and 10–12).

[398] While this connection does not rule out a thematic connection between vv. 10–12 (13) and what follows, it does emphasize, along with the three-fold recurrence of תְּהִלָּה in vv. 8, 10, and 12, the significance of vv. 10–12 as a climactic response of praise to the role and task of the servant as expressed in 42:1–9.

[399] In his rhetorical study of Second Isaiah, Gitay describes the tone of vv. 10–12 as one of "happiness," one that strengthens the mood already established in vv. 5–9 and adds to it "an atmosphere of *excitement*" [Yehoshua Gitay, *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48*, Forum Theologiae Linguisticae 14 (Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981), 126.

described here in ch. 42, which is inclusive of other nations and the creation. This vastly broadened scope, inclusive of non-Israelites has led many scholars to refer to 42:10–12 as an eschatological hymn.

While scholars largely agree on the subject matter of vv. 10–12, they differ in how or in what way they perceive the hymnic verses to be eschatological. Does the prophetic word urge an audience to offer musical praise for something that has no meaningful reality until it becomes realized in the eschatological age?[400] Or is the act of singing this "psalm" prior to its full eschatological fulfillment an act of "faith and hope in God"?[401] There is yet another alternative: Blenkinsopp argues that vv. 10–12 do not represent an eschatological psalm at all, but rather they are "a literary composition that uses material from psalms extolling Yahveh as king and creator."[402] Christopher Seitz suggests that, "Some commentators speak of the eschatological character of the hymn in order to blur the precise temporal framework. That is, we know that God's activity through servant Israel, on behalf of the wider creation, still awaits fulfillment."[403] Whether or not there are scholars that purposefully "blur the precise temporal framework" I cannot affirm from my own investigation, but what I have observed is that scholars do not

---

[400] Westermann seems to suggest such is the case, inasmuch as he comments that the audience is summoned to "sing a hymn in praise of an act of God of which not the faintest trace is discernible in their present situation" Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 103; see also, 102. Later, in regard to Isa 48:20–21, which Westermann also labels as "an 'eschatological' hymn of praise," his answer seems more nuanced; he explains that "Israel's answering exultation assumes that God's final act has already taken place," although "as things are there is no sign of Yahweh's act of redemption" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 205). The latter comments seem a more accurate (and positive) depiction of the nature of the eschatological hymn than his earlier assessment.

[401] Ben Witherington III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics*" (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 203.

[402] Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 215.

[403] Christopher Seitz, "The Book of Isaiah 40–66: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," vol. 6 *The New Interpreter's Bible.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 309–552; 365.

necessarily define "eschatological" in the same way—if they define it at all. In his continued discussion, I think Seitz gets at a core difference in how the hymn's eschatological nature is understood. He indicates that even as God's activity still awaits fulfillment, "what God has announced deserves response of the only sort appropriate, and so all creation is enjoined to break forth in song."[404] If I have understood Seitz correctly, I would add that what he is suggesting is akin to the idea of the "already" and "not yet" that comes to bear on the New Testament writings, perhaps most notably in those of the apostle Paul. Of the latter, Richard Hays speaks of Paul's view of the present time as "an anomalous interval in which the 'already' and the 'not yet' of redemption exist simultaneously in dialectical tension. The ends of the ages have overlapped."[405] In a similar way, Isa 42:9 and 10 indicate that there is a fitting response to Yahweh's announcement and intentions associated with the "new things"—a "new song." And while the creation-wide scope of resounding praise is "not yet" heard, it does not deny the meaning and point of the imperative and subsequent jussives—the praise is "already" called for.

As indicated above, we begin to get a general sense of what "Sing to Yahweh a new song" means from its context in Second Isaiah. However, the greater significance of the phrase and its meaning can only be fully appreciated by exploring how it is used in its six other occurrences in the Psalms. As I noted at the outset, חָדָשׁ occurs as an attributive adjective, but it is functioning as one half of a fixed expression: שִׁיר חָדָשׁ ("new song"). In some way, to some degree, and presumably over time, the two parts have combined to signify a single idea and

---

[404] Seitz, *Isaiah*, 365.

[405] Hays further describes the notion: "On the one hand, the power of the old age persists…On the other hand, the new creation is not just a future hope rather, the redemptive power of God has already broken into the present time, and the form of this world is already passing away" [Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), 21].

perhaps associated with a particular context. Whether one can suggest a *Sitz im Leben* or even a context prior to that, it seems worth exploring not just the phrase as a whole but also its constituent parts. I do not want to lose sight of the phrase functioning as a whole, but I also do not think that the singular notion—often referred to as a "technical term"— is wholly divested of the meaning of its constituent parts. In other words, I am suggesting that *new song* is not less than the sum of its parts. Thus, before treating the phrase as a whole by looking at all of its occurrences, I turn first to examine each of the two terms and how they relate to one another.

The Hebrew noun שִׁיר, translated as "song," occurs some seventy-seven times in the Old Testament[406] and yet, apart from the phrase שִׁיר חָדָשׁ, the noun שִׁיר is never otherwise modified by an attributive adjective. Not only is חָדָשׁ the only adjective that ever modifies שִׁיר, the opposite is also true— חָדָשׁ never qualifies any other nouns related to or synonymous with שִׁיר ("song"). With the exception of Isa 26:1 where שִׁיר is specified by the demonstrative pronoun זֶה ("this"), the noun always occurs by itself or as either the noun or genitive in a construct chain.[407]

The noun שִׁיר appears in all the major sections of the Old Testament and as suggested by

---

[406] Of the term's 77 occurrences, שִׁיר appears 5 times in Isaiah and 42 times in the Psalms, 30 of which occur in the psalm's superscription, very often together with מִזְמוֹר ("psalm").

[407] As a noun in a construct state, שִׁיר refers to a song: of songs (Song 1:1); of love (Ezek 33:32, possibly emended; Ps 45:1); of [the] ascents (Pss 120–134, v. 1 in each ch.); of fools (Eccl 7:5); of the dedication of the temple (Ps 30:1); of praise (Neh 12:46); of thanksgiving (Neh 12:46); of Yahweh (Ps 137:4, 2 Chr 7:6, 29:27); of God (1 Chr 16:42); of the temple of Yahweh (1 Chr 6:16, 25:6); of Zion (Ps 137:3); of David (Neh 12:36). שִׁיר also occurs as the genitive in a construct phrase (i.e., "… of a song"), modifying the following: words (Ps 137:3); those instructed in songs (1 Chr 25:7); instruments, i.e. to accompany, songs [Amos 6:5, 1 Chr 15:16, 2 Chr 5:13, 23:13 (both "the song"), 43:12]; instruments, i.e., to accompany (Neh 12:36, 1 Chr 16:42, 2 Chr 7:6); daughters of ["the songs"], i.e., songbirds (rather than singing or songs) (Eccl 12:4); noise of your [songs] (Ezek 26:13); noise of your [songs] (Amos 5:23); all of your [songs] (Amos 8:10). See *DCH* 8:338–39. As the latter expressions indicate, a שִׁיר is often associated with instrumental accompaniment, although not always. Various instruments that are specifically mentioned in relation to שִׁיר include, for example, the כִּנּוֹר ("lyre, zither") and the תֹּף ("tambourine;" e.g., Gen 31:27), נֵבֶל "harp" (Amos 5:23) (*TLOT* 3:1321). While I am distinguishing between the use of an attributive adjective and a construct state, I recognize that the genitive in a construct chain can function adjectivally.

its occurrence in Isa 42:10–12, it has positive connotations in both cultic and non-cultic contexts, often explicitly identified with joyous occasions and celebration. For example, in the narrative of Gen 31, Jacob takes his wives, along with his entire family and all his possessions and leaves the home of his father-in-law Laban, but he does so without telling Laban. In the encounter that follows, Laban confronts Jacob for his trickery. In v. 27, he claims that he had no opportunity to send his daughters (Jacob's wives) away with שִׁרִים ("songs") and שִׂמְחָה ("joy, jubilation").[408] Along with the mention of tambourine and lyre accompaniment, the term שִׁרִים explicitly conveys positive connotations, consistent with a festive, joyous occasion. Psalm 137 envisions a vastly different scene in which the positive connotations of "song" are conveyed from a negative perspective. The people of Israel recall their Babylonian captivity when they found themselves unable to sing songs; instead, they wept and hung up their lyres on the nearby branches. The somber tone of their despair highlights the stark contrast of the celebratory connotations of שִׁיר. Far from Zion, the demands of their captors for "song" and joyous singing (שִׂמְחָה)[409] were more than they could bear (v. 3). They asked themselves: "How shall we sing the song of Yahweh in a foreign land?" (v. 4). A similar negative contrast is expressed in Israel's wisdom literature: "Whoever sings 'songs' to a heavy heart is like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, and like vinegar on soda" (Prov 25:20).[410] Whether expressed negatively or positively, in biblical Hebrew a שִׁיר (a "song") is always indicative of joy and celebration. It is worth noting that the

[408] *HALOT* indicates that "joy" conveys not only a feeling but also its display (3:1336–37).

[409] Notably, the same two words, שִׁיר and שִׂמְחָה ("joy, jubilation"), occur here that are used in Gen 31:27.

[410] See also, Eccl 7:5. Judgment intoned through the prophets is associated with the absence of the music of song and/or its replacement with lamentation (Ezek 26:13; Amos 5:23, 8:10).

term's exclusively positive connotations make it unlike its modern English equivalent which can be used in a general sense to convey various emotional connotations (e.g., happy or sad).[411]

The noun שִׁיר also occurs in the feminine form, שִׁירָה. Both forms denote the basic meaning of "song," but שִׁיר is the more common of the two and can be used to refer to a specific song (e.g., Isa 26:1) or, as is most often the case, to convey a more general sense of "song" or "singing" (still with positive connotations, however).[412] The term שִׁירָה, on the other hand, occurs only thirteen times and always refers to an individual or particular song. In Exod 15 for example, the so-called Song of the Sea, שִׁירָה is used in the phrase "*this* song" which specifies what Moses and the people of Israel sang to Yahweh, "saying, 'I will sing to Yahweh'" (v. 1). The term שִׁירָה is used likewise in reference to several other specific songs, including the Song of Moses (Deut 31:16–22; 31:30),[413] the Song of the Well (Num 21:17), and the Song of the Vineyard (Isa 5:1).[414] Notably, it is a שִׁיר (not שִׁירָה) that is the greatest of all songs according to the Hebrew Bible— שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים ("Song of Songs"). It is also worth noting that the *Song of Songs* gave rise to a later tradition known as the "Ten Songs" which is of particular interest to this investigation

---

[411] Psalm 137 offers an illustration of the distinction. As noted above, Ps 137 includes the Hebrew term שִׁיר, along with the parallel term שִׂמְחָה, signifying the joyous nature of a שִׁיר (i.e., a "song"). But the psalm itself is anything but a praise psalm—it represents the agony of remembering Jerusalem in the midst of exile. And yet the psalm, which has for millennia been used to evoke the plight of dispossessed, enslaved, and marginalized communities, is referred to in English most commonly as the "*Song* of Exile." For a fascinating and thorough treatment of the Psalm's 2500-year history, see the work of David W. Stowe, *Song of Exile: The Enduring Mystery of Psalm 137* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[412] While it often conveys a general sense, the noun (substantive) שִׁיר can also indicate a specific song. Isaiah 26, for example, is referred to as a שִׁיר and is introduced in specific terms: "In that day *this song* will be sung in the land of Judah" (26:1). Ficker seems to distinguish שִׁיר and שִׁירָה by the former's general sense and the latter's reference to an "individual, particular" song without clarifying that שִׁיר can refer to a particular song (R. Ficker, "שִׁיר," *TLOT* 3:1320–22; 1320).

[413] See especially, Deut 31:19 [2x], 21, 22, 30, and 32:44.

[414] Other uses of שִׁירָה include: 2 Sam 22:1//Ps 18:1, Isa 23:15. Of the thirteen occurrences, the songs are primarily in cultic contexts, but שִׁירָה also refers to the more secular songs: for example, Song of the Vineyard (Isa 5:1); a "prostitute song" (Isa 23:15); a "didactic song" (Deut 31). See Ficker, *TLOT* 3:1322.

because of its connection to the notion of exile and thus specifically the liberation from the Babylonian exile of which Second Isaiah speaks. The list includes ten "songs" from the Old Testament scriptures,[415] each one marking a decisive point in Israel's history. The Ten Songs are enumerated in the Targum Song of Songs, beginning with creation and Adam's song for the Sabbath day and ending with the song identified in Isa 30:29.[416] Significantly, the Targum says: "The tenth song will be recited by the children of the exile when they depart from their exiles, as is clearly written by Isaiah the prophet."[417] This quote is particularly telling in that it indicates the return from Babylon did not take place in such a way that later Judaism observed it as a true end to their exile(s). Rather, the theme reiterated in Tg. Song is the final exodus from exile that will take place at the beginning of the Messianic redemption.[418]

Having considered the first word, שִׁיר, and its unique collocation with חָדָשׁ, is it possible to be any more precise about the meaning of חָדָשׁ? That is, in what ways, if any, is the "song" qualified as new? Is it possible, moreover, to be more specific regarding to what exactly a 'new song' refers? While time and space do not permit the detailed answers to these questions that a fuller investigation might yield, nevertheless, I hope in what follows to offer some indications as to how one might better understand the "newness" of the *new song* and to outline some issues for

---

[415] The slight exception is the first song which is attributed to Adam, based on a tradition according to which Adam rejoiced at the forgiveness of his sins and, when the Sabbath came, put a covering over his lips and sang a psalm for the Sabbath day. Thus, the first of the ten songs is associated with Ps 92, a Song for the Sabbath Day (92:1) [Herbert Lockyer Jr., *All the Music of the Bible: An Exploration of Musical Expression in Scripture and Church Hymnody* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004), 10–11].

[416] The Ten Songs include those referred to in: from Ps 92:1; Exod 15:1; Num 21:17; Deut 32:1; Josh 10:12; Judg 5:1; 1 Sam 2:1; 2 Sam 22:1; Isa 30:29.

[417] Translation from Philip S. Alexander, *The Targum of Canticles*, ArBib 17A (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003), 75–78; quote from James M. Scott, "N. T. Wright's Hypothesis of an 'Ongoing Exile': Issues and Answers," in *Exile: A Conversation with N. T. Wright*, ed. James M. Scott (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017): 3–16; 15, n. 27.

[418] Alexander, *The Targum of Canticles*, 19–20, 77; cited by Scott, "N. T. Wright's Hypothesis," 15.

further consideration. In order to do justice to the phrase, it is necessary to include the full scope of the phrase's occurrences and so I return to examining the *new song* in light of its six additional uses in the Psalms.

I would offer at least two primary reasons for exploring the phrase (and clause) as it occurs in the Psalms. The first is the obvious fact that the additional uses shed light on the meaning and function of the term. Is the sense of the phrase consistent in all instances? Are the contexts similar or different? Are there variations of meaning depending on the context? There are any number of questions we might answer by exploring each of the texts where *new song* occurs. The second reason for examining the psalmic texts is what they represent to the audience who is being addressed in Second Isaiah. Invoking the psalms is a primary means of connecting the prophet's audience with their past, and specifically their liturgical tradition.

As previously noted, the occurrences of *new song* represent the only explicit expressions that employ the adjective חָדָשׁ in the entire book of Psalms.[419] In other words, "new song" is not simply another adjectival phrase in which חָדָשׁ finds expression—it is relatively rare and limited to a single phrase. On the one hand, a modern reader who has never had occasion to consider the Hebrew term's lexical data might find this detail quite surprising.[420] On the other hand, it is perhaps not at all surprising when the Psalms are considered in relationship to the Old Testament

---

[419] The reader will recall the use of the verb, though likewise rare, in two places: Ps 51 and Ps 104.

[420] I would suggest that there are at least two factors that could account for or contribute to this perspective. First, in our modern culture where newness permeates the common vocabulary, it is understandable that without reason to think otherwise one might naturally assume the scriptures of the Old Testament are likewise replete with the language of newness. Second, a select few of the Old Testament references to newness have been the objects of greater attention due to their poetic memorability (e.g., "sing a new song"), meaningful content (e.g., Lam 3:23), or generally widespread recognition (e.g., Eccl 1:9, 10). The "new song" is a prime example of the latter—if centuries of song lyrics and myriad book titles are any indication. The unintended consequence is simply an incorrect assumption regarding the term as a whole due to a lack of awareness.

corpus as a whole. As Benjamin Sommer asserts, the "psalmists were among the most traditional of Hebrew writers,"[421] the evidence of which is to be found in the highly formulaic language that constitutes the psalmists' expressions of praise, lament, supplication, and wisdom.

The recall of Israel's liturgical traditions by way of the Psalms has long been observed, more recently becoming the topic of various intertextual studies. The similarities between the "new song" language in both Second Isaiah and the Psalms have been viewed variously by scholars. Some scholars attribute the likenesses to a shared stock of formulaic terms and phrases.[422] Others have argued and sought to demonstrate that the resemblances are the result of intentional borrowing.[423] What is significant about intertextual borrowing is not simply a matter of creating textual allusions here and there in order to connect a people to a familiar previous text[424]—although in some instances of reuse that might be a factor— but how and why a later writer employs a familiar text.

---

[421] Benjamin Sommer's statement expresses what is widely accepted among biblical scholars regarding the language of the Psalms. He explains that it is these "clusters of related vocabulary," "stock ideas," and "stereotyped lines from a common tradition of hymnody" that imbue the Psalms (and examples outside the Psalms, including Isaiah 42:10) with their formulaic character [Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 44–66* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 109].

[422] Sommer, for example, maintains that the psalmic parallels in Isa 42:10–12 are not "borrowings" or "genuine allusions," but rather that stock vocabulary and psalm-forms account for the resemblances (*A Prophet Reads* Scripture, 110). On the larger subject of intertextuality, Sommer rightly acknowledges that any perceived allusions also face the challenge of dating some of the psalms as well as the question as to which text is the borrowing text.

[423] In particular, Patricia Willey and Henk Leene have offered detailed and convincing analyses of the reuse of the Psalms in specific passages in Second Isaiah, including that of the *new song*. Earlier scholarship viewed the direction of influence to be from the prophet to the Psalms (e.g., Mowinckel, Westermann). However, that view has largely been replaced by one that favors the psalm's priority (Willey, *Remember the Former Things*, 123; see esp. Willey's discussions in chs. 1 and 2).

[424] Leene makes a helpful distinction between his use of the intertextual terms of 'borrowing,' which refers to what an author does, and 'allusion,' which refers to what a text does (Leene, *Newness,* 5).

A number of scholars have looked in particular at Pss 96 and 98 because of their close affinities with Isa 42:10–12.[425] These psalms are part of the series (chs. 93–100)[426] often referred to as the YHWH-malak psalms because of their theme of Yahweh as king. What is significant for Isa 42:10–12 is that, implicitly, Yahweh is being praised for his rule, for his kingship— a kingship that extends beyond the borders of Israel to a universal recognition.

Although a "new song" appears to be a standard expression that refers to a hymn of praise directed to Yahweh in response to his actions, specifically those actions that result in salvation and transformed circumstances, it occurs to me that there might be two ways of reading the phrase, perhaps even intentional wordplay. On the one hand, by alluding to a "new song," the notion of newness is ensconced in the comfort of the past, in continuity with a long-established and accepted line of worship tradition. What greater comfort could there be for those who languish in exile, who find it unbearable to sing a "song" (cf. Ps 137:1–4)? On the other hand, is it not possible that the poet-prophet (with a penchant for wordplay) intended a double-meaning, such that this "song" is "new" in a way that cannot be said of its more standardized, technical

---

[425] Scholars have long observed the affinities between Psalms (e.g., Childs, *Isaiah*, 327).

[426] Technically, Ps 94 is not of the same kingship theme as the rest of the chapters. Additionally, scholars vary as to whether they include the climactic praise song of Ps 100 as part of the series. The group of psalms is also sometimes referred to as "Enthronement Psalms," along with which earlier scholars such as Mowinckel and his followers postulated a yearly enthronement ceremonial ritual in Israel akin to that of the *Akitu* festival in Mesopotamia. More recently, scholars have come to more or less of a consensus that such a festival is not in view and that according to Israel's theology, Yahweh has always been enthroned. Nevertheless, his kingship is celebrated—both in and by Israel, but as the trajectory of the theme runs in Pss. 93–100, that kingship is and will be celebrated by the whole world and even the creation itself. For further treatment of these and related themes, see e.g., Leene, *Newness*, especially ch. 2 (pp. 11–43), "'Newness' in the Psalms on Yhwh's Kingship, Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah," which offers an in-depth investigation of the Psalms (especially Pss 96 and 98) and in particular their relationship to Second (and Third) Isaiah. For other studies, less detailed and comprehensive but highly informative and inclusive of pertinent bibliography, see among others: Marc Zvi Brettler, *God is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor*, JSOTSup 76 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989); and Patricia Tull Willey, *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah*, SBLDS 161 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997).

usage? Could the mention of a new song after the announcement of new things evoke any memories of other renowned songs in Israel's history? Could it inspire a "real" song the way God's mighty acts of deliverance issued forth in the Song of Deborah (Judges 5) or the Song of the Sea (Exod 15)? While I can only conjecture, it does not seem unreasonable to question whether it could be that the term which had become part of a fixed expression (i.e., a technical term or a synonym for a song of praise) and meaningful for its ties to Israel's liturgical tradition, is now being employed with a revivified sense of newness. One might deem it the ultimate musical response to Yahweh's new things!

Recalling the tradition of the psalms was surely one means of establishing a formal link to the past and softening the challenge of perceived discontinuity. Indeed, such a rhetorical tactic was not unknown in the ancient world where the past, not newness, was prized. Moreover, appealing to the psalter by way of a *song* had the added persuasive advantage of its musical association. Music was an area of cultural discourse in which newness had a natural and acceptable role—at least, to a degree.[427]

A few scholars attempt to offer some sense of the quality of newness that is being conveyed. Westermann argues that the song "is not 'new' because a new text is to replace the old, or a new melody the old," explaining that such a "notion is thoroughly foreign to these

---

[427] Music, in general, was an acceptable realm for newness in the ancient world. For the most part, the absence of an aversion to newness (i.e., as change) can be attributed to the fact that music, like other artistic expressions, was viewed as a divine gift, and thus the fact that humans did not take personal credit for their expressions. However, as in other spheres of life, newness in the form of change in music was not entirely without critique. Joachim Braun observes as "typical" examples of "conflict between technical progress and aesthetic ideals" [(*Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written, and Comparative Sources*, trans. Douglas W. Stott (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 223].

psalms."[428] Leene, similarly, asserts that " 'new' says nothing about the originality of the text, but characterizes the song as an answer to God's amazing intervention."[429] Blenkinsopp describes the song as "qualitatively new, in keeping with the prospect of the new situation held out time and again in Isa 40–48,"[430] but does not elaborate on what he means by "qualitatively new."

Rather than a call for a new composition to mark the momentous occasion, the exhortation to "sing a new song" in Second Isaiah is more suggestive of a certain formulaic character and a liturgical function.[431] As Brueggemann suggests, correctly in my opinion, it "probably originated when a new anthem was commissioned for a special liturgical occasion," but that it had become "a cliché for any great exuberant anthem."[432] One might say that the *new song* is a musical celebration of newness, but in all probability not a celebration with musical newness. The terminology does not rule out the possibility that any celebration that is reason for singing a *new song* might indeed generate an original song or a fresh improvisatory rendering. More likely, the phrase in Isa 42:10 functions as a means of getting the audience's attention, not to encourage an expression of their musical ingenuity, but to invoke their worship tradition and create for them a connection—a lifeline—to the past, and perhaps also, thereby mitigating any perceived sense of discontinuity aroused by the announcement of *new things* (v. 9).[433]

---

[428] Westermann, *TLOT* 1:397. It should be noted that Westermann's comment includes the 'new song' in Isaiah 42:10, which he terms a psalm of praise as those that occur in the book of Psalms.

[429] Leene, *Newness*, 13.

[430] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 214.

[431] Similar to the observations of other scholars, Brueggemann observes that the *new song* "functions liturgically so that a new song matches a new action of Yahweh" [*Isaiah 40–66*, WBC (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 45].

[432] Brueggemann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 45.

[433] The formulaic nature of the clause also derives from the fact that Isa 42:10 and all six of the *new song* occurrences in the Psalter (33:3, 96:1, 98:1, 144:9, and 149:1, along with a variant form in Ps 137:4), employ the same root for both verb and direct object (thus exemplifying a cognate accusative). The feminine noun form, שִׁירָה,

In concluding the two units, Isa 42:5–9 and 10–12, I want to draw attention to vv.10–12 within the surrounding context. As a few scholars have acknowledged, it is possible that this doxological unit is intended to function in two directions literarily. It is not uncommon to find interpretations based on the notion that v. 13 and what follows offer the motivation for the rejoicing that echoes across the earth, that is to say, Yahweh, the divine warrior is on the move and his victory is sure, and I do not disagree.[434] Nevertheless, I would also argue that the emphasis in vv. 10–12 on the whole earth and its inhabitants seems very clearly to draw its theme and imagery from the previous unit (vv. 5–9), expanding on the realm of "God, Yahweh," the creator God, the one "who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it" (Isa 42:5). This latter expresses the created (and creative) fulness that infuses the topography featured in vv. 10–12. It is the created world as it was meant to be—filled and inhabited (cf. 45:12, 18). What vv. 10–12 add to this fully inhabited created space is the dimension of sound, specifically the sound of praise directed to Yahweh. The accumulation of expressions, of which the new song is but one musical articulation, reflect a creation that is as filled with divine praise and glory as the sea includes "all that fills it" (v. 10), the coastlands and Sela have their inhabitants (vv. 10 and 11), and the desert contains its cities and Kedar its villages (v. 11).

---

also appears as the object of the verb שִׁיר in three places, creating the same repetitive effect: Exod 15:1, Num 21:17, Isa 5:1. *DCH* 8:336–38; שִׁיר, verb; *DCH* 8:338–39; שִׁיר, noun.

[434] To be sure, the accompanying image of the divine warrior is an important dimension, as indicated by the fact that the occurrence of the "new song" in the New Testament book of Revelation is clearly connected to the divine victory of the Lamb.

CHAPTER SEVEN

חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 43:16–21

כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה	**16**Thus says Yahweh,
הַנּוֹתֵן בַּיָּם דֶּרֶךְ	the one who makes in the sea, a way,
וּבְמַיִם עַזִּים נְתִיבָה׃	and in the mighty waters, a path;
הַמּוֹצִיא רֶכֶב־וָסוּס	**17**the one who brings forth chariot and horse,
חַיִל וְעִזּוּז יַחְדָּו[435]	army and mighty one;
יִשְׁכְּבוּ בַּל־יָקוּמוּ	they lie down, they cannot rise;
דָּעֲכוּ כַּפִּשְׁתָּה כָבוּ׃	they are extinguished, like a wick they are quenched.

[435] The line in Hebrew ends with the term יַחְדָּו, which is generally not included in the translation. The term occurs 14 times in Isa 40–55 (along with the less common form, יַחַד, 5 times) often following a series of nouns or verbs (see e.g., 41:1, 19, 20, etc.) [Shalom M. Paul, *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 132]. The word is "the key adverbial expression of mutuality" (Waltke and O'Connor, §15.2.1g) that denotes "together, as one, altogether." Categorized as a "manner adverb" (i.e., adverbs that describe the manner of an action in various ways), יַחְדָּו describes the action with regard to the "actors" (Waltke and O'Connor, §39.3.1j). Here in 43:17, the term seems to emphasize the totality of the military forces—all brought forth under the complete power and command of Yahweh. Goldingay suggests the nuance of "simultaneously" [John Goldingay, *The Message of Isaiah 40–55: A Literary-Theological Commentary* (New York: T&T Clark, 2005), 22; following Christopher R. North, *The Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation and Commentary to Chapters XL–LV* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964)]. Gerald Janzen suggests that the basic meaning, "together," conveys a sense of solidarity. He cites a number of examples in Isaiah along with other "fraught occurrences" of the term (e.g., Gen 22:6, 8, 18; Exod 19:18). For an additional and insightful discussion of the term along different lines, see Janzen's treatment of the term as it is translated in the LXX and the implications of its "resonance" in the New Testament, particularly in Acts [J. Gerald Janzen, *When Prayer Takes Place: Forays into a Biblical World*, ed. Brent A. Strawn and Patrick D. Miller (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012), 293–94 n.137, 296–97].

אַל־תִּזְכְּרוּ רִאשֹׁנוֹת	[18]Do not remember the former things,
וְקַדְמֹנִיּוֹת אַל־תִּתְבֹּנָנוּ׃	and the things of old, do not consider.
הִנְנִי עֹשֶׂה חֲדָשָׁה	[19]Behold, I am doing a new thing;
עַתָּה תִצְמָח הֲלוֹא תֵדָעוּהָ	now it springs forth; do you not perceive it?
אַף אָשִׂים בַּמִּדְבָּר דֶּרֶךְ	Indeed, I will make in the wilderness, a way,
בִּישִׁמּוֹן נְהָרוֹת׃	in the desert, rivers.
תְּכַבְּדַנִי חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה	[20]The beasts of the field will honor me,
תַּנִּים וּבְנוֹת יַעֲנָה	the jackals and the ostriches;
כִּי־נָתַתִּי בַמִּדְבָּר מַיִם	for I give in the wilderness, water,
נְהָרוֹת בִּישִׁימֹן	rivers in the desert,
לְהַשְׁקוֹת עַמִּי בְחִירִי׃	to give drink to my people, my chosen,[436]
עַם־זוּ יָצַרְתִּי לִי	[21]people whom I formed for myself
תְּהִלָּתִי יְסַפֵּרוּ׃ ס	[that] they might recount my praise.

The second mention of חֲדָשָׁה ('new thing') occurs in Isa 43:19 in what is arguably the most well-known of the three expressions in Isaiah 40–48: "Behold, I am doing a new thing." The adjectival substantive is used here in a singular form, but once again in collocation with רִאשֹׁנוֹת ('former/first things'; v. 16). The immediate literary unit consists of vv.16–21, its beginning signaled by the use of the messenger formula (כֹּה אָמַר יְהוָה) in v. 16. The previous

[436] The Hebrew (עַמִּי בְחִירִי) is comprised of two nouns in apposition. The phrase is often translated as "my chosen people," with the second noun functioning as an attributive adjective (Arnold and Choi, § 2.4.2; *DCH* 2: 135–36). Alternatively, the apposition can also be rendered, "my people, my chosen." The noun בָּחִיר also occurs in 42:1 (parallel with "my servant") and again in 45:4 (in apposition to "Israel"), both times with the first person suffix.

two verses (vv. 14–15) also constitute a short but discrete unit that begins with the messenger formula, which has led to various opinions among scholars as to whether they should be read as the culmination of vv. 8–13 or as the beginning of the subsequent unit, vv. 16–21.[437] Indeed, the content of ch. 43 reaches a climax in vv. 14–15, even as it simultaneously prepares for what follows in vv. 16–21. Verse 14 contains the first explicit reference to Babylon in Second Isaiah (see ch. 39). The message is that Yahweh, "Redeemer" and the "Holy One of Israel," is acting to bring down Babylon; moreover, he is doing it for the sake of Israel. The momentous announcement is further emphasized by the grand roster of divine self-predications that follows: "I am Yahweh, your Holy One, Creator of Israel, your King" (v. 15).

In light of this declaration that it is Yahweh who will enact judgment on Babylon, the power to carry out such a feat is the subject of the oracle that follows. A pair of participial descriptions in vv. 16–17 depict Yahweh in terms that clearly recall the exodus event, specifically the parting of the Red Sea.[438] In the first, Yahweh is described as the "one who makes in the sea, a way (דֶּרֶךְ)," and "in the mighty waters, a path (נְתִיבָה)." The active participle of נתן ("makes")[439] governs the two subsequent phrases, which parallel one another both

---

[437] See, e.g., Westermann links vv. 14–15 with vv. 8–13 [Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 127]; similarly, Christopher Seitz, "The Book of Isaiah 40–66," *NIB* 6 (Nashville: Abingdon, 2001), 376. Among those who group vv. 14–21 into a single unit, see, e.g., John Goldingay and David Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, vol. 1, ICC (New York: Bloomsbury, 2006), 293; Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah*, OTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 336; and, John Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 151.

[438] See, e.g., Exodus where the story is narrated in prose (ch. 14) and poetry (ch. 15; the "Song of Moses"). Importantly, Israel's liberation from slavery in Egypt is a theme echoed and recounted throughout Israel's history in various forms (e.g., Josh 2:10; Pss 78, 89, 106; Neh 9:9–11). As Brevard S. Childs rightly notes, the event's celebration in song and worship was true even "from its inception" (*Isaiah*, 336).

[439] The sense of נתן is more explicitly "set, place, put" (*HALOT* 2:733–35). The frequent English rendering, "make," while adequate, conveys a more general sense of "making" than other "creating/making" verbs frequent in chs. 40–48, such as ברא ("create") or יצר ("to form, shape").

semantically and syntactically. While there is no doubt that the exodus event is in view, it is worth observing how the occasion is recalled. The connection is not one of clear lexical links. The closest connections to the expressions in v. 16 (e.g., 'way') are found in Ps 77:20 [Eng 19]. Depicted in terms of a theophany, Ps 77 describes lightning, thunder, trembling of the waters, and quaking of the earth. The psalmist says of Yahweh: "Your way (דַּרְכְּךָ) was through the sea; through the great waters, your path."[440] Notably, the expressions "your way" and "your path" are connected with Yahweh (i.e., using the second person pronominal suffix) and could be understood either literally or figuratively (or perhaps both). The people of Israel are mentioned only subsequently: "You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron" (Ps 77:21).

Verse 17 opens with a second active participle, describing Yahweh as one who brings forth/out (*hiphil* of יצא) the "chariot and horse," "army and mighty one." As I have noted previously,[441] the active participle emphasizes the durative nature of an action, whereas time and aspect must be determined by context. Not surprisingly, the allusion to an event long past leads some scholars to render the participles in the past tense (i.e., "who put a way," "who brought forth").[442] My sense is in line with that of others who assume a broader view of the expressions in vv. 16–17 and render the participles in the present, thus suggesting the continuous nature of Yahweh's identity and power—what it was in the past is what it is in the present.[443]

---

[440] The link between Isa 43:16 and Ps 77:19 is stronger semantically than lexically since the passages employ different terms for "path" (and "mighty"). Even without any explicit connection to Ps 77, it seems worth noting that words for "way" and/or "path" are not the biblical terms most commonly associated with Israelites passage through the Red Sea.

[441] See discussion above at Isa 42:5; Arnold and Choi, *Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, §3.4.3.

[442] See, e.g., Shalom Paul, who renders the participles in past tense (*Isaiah 40–66*, 215–16).

[443] Similarly, Goldingay states: "The use of participles makes implicit in the grammar that acts such as these may not belong merely to the past. The Lordship of Yhwh once more covers both the realm we call nature and

In contrast to v. 16, three of the terms in v. 17 have clear lexical links to the exodus as it is described elsewhere in the Old Testament. The terms, "chariot," "horse," and "army,"[444] occur repeatedly in Exod 14–15 (e.g., Exod 14:4, 6, 7, 9, 17, 18, 23, 26, 28; 15:1, 4, 19, 21). And yet, despite the explicit echoes, the expressions in v. 17a appear decidedly selective. There is no mention of Pharaoh, or of Moses, or of Egypt; furthermore, there is no reference to the people of Israel or to the way/path (v. 16) as a means of their safe passage through the sea. The absence of these associations is certainly not to be attributed to ignorance or to any devaluing of their significance; rather, the selectivity is an intentional means of focusing on Yahweh's complete control and power.

In v. 17b, this power is demonstrated by recalling the fate of the entire Egyptian military enterprise. Each clause of the four-verb sequence vividly depicts their utter helplessness and their demise in terms that underscore its finality.[445] The language of the first pair of clauses, "they lie down (שָׁכַב); they cannot rise (+ בַּל קוּם)," occurs elsewhere to denote death and its finality (cf.

---

that we call history, and interweaves its exercise in a way that deconstructs the distinction and operates without constriction of time" (*Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 208). Similarly, Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40-55*, 1:296. Blenkinsopp comments that "the deed done long ago is superimposed on the drama of redemption" [Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 227–28].

[444] The fourth term, עִזּוּז ("mighty") is an adjective that can function either as a substantive or a collective (i.e., representative of the mighty warriors of the Egyptian army); cf. Ps 24:8; *HALOT* 2:808. The term is no doubt an intentional link with "mighty" (עַזִּים) in the previous colon—the plural of a shorter form of the same root. Whereas Yahweh exercises complete power over the "mighty" waters, the "mighty" are rendered powerless.

[445] Goldingay and Payne note that "the hastening change within v. 17b suggests the process of calamity and then its irreversible actuality. It graphically reflects the accelerating demise of the forces and contrasts with the impressiveness of the sequence of nouns in v. 17a" (*Isaiah 40–55*, 1:298). Muilenburg similarly comments on the "unusually graphic description of the utter annihilation of the pursuing Egyptians (cf. Exod 15:4–5)" [James Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66: Introduction and Exegesis," in *Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, IB* 5 (Nashville: Abingdon, 1956): 381–773; 494].

Ps 41:9 [Eng 41:8]; Job 14:12; Isa 26:14).[446] The figurative language of the final two clauses depicts the completeness of the annihilation: "they are extinguished" (דָּעַךְ) — "like a wick, they are snuffed out (כָּבָה)."[447]

Isaiah 43:18 opens with what is, arguably, one of the most striking rhetorical features in these chapters. In abrupt contrast to the reassurance of Yahweh's power, the prophetic word seemingly turns their tradition on its head as the message continues: "Do not remember (אַל־תִּזְכְּרוּ) the former things (רִאשֹׁנוֹת); the things of old (קַדְמֹנִיּוֹת),[448] do not consider (אַל־תִּתְבֹּנָנוּ)."

The chiastic form of the line's structure draws attention to the commands,[449] but it is the content of the commands that would surely have sent shockwaves through the ancient audience. The immediate sense seems completely antithetical to the prevailing worldview in which the past was prized and tradition revered in every sphere of life.[450] Spoken to Israel, the commands

---

[446] See, e.g., Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40–66,* 216. The phrase בַּל־יָקוּמוּ meaning "rise no more" and negated by the particle, בַּל, occurs only in Isaiah (14:21; 26:14).

[447] See also Isa 42:3 where Yahweh describes his servant as one who will *not* quench (כָּבָה) a faintly burning wick. The sense of כָּבָה ("to snuff out" or "to quench") is that of a lamp light going out, for example, in the temple (e.g., 1 Sam 3:3). The verb דָּעַךְ ("to extinguish") is used figuratively elsewhere to express the demise of "the wicked" (רְשָׁעִים): Prov 13:9 ("The lamp of the wicked is extinguished"); and Job 18:5 ("Indeed, the light of the wicked goes out").

[448] Plural form of קַדְמֹנִי which denotes "earlier" or "former," referring to either the recent or distant past. Isa 43:18 is the only occurrence in Isaiah of the adjective in this form (for similar usage, see Ezek 38:17; Mal 3:4). The related term, קֶדֶם, recurs frequently in chs. 40–48 (*HALOT* 3:1069–70).

[449] See similarly, Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1:298. Chiasm is a device frequently used for emphasis. In this case, the syntax of the first half ('verbal command' — 'direct object') is reversed in the second half ('direct object' — 'verbal command'). The resulting emphasis is formed by the two commands bracketing the objects, and the two objects, parallel temporal terms referring to the past, now juxtaposed to one another suggesting a comprehensive sense of the past that is impacted by the commands.

[450] Benjamin Wold observes that the Jewish people, in particular, have long been distinctive for their emphasis on remembering, adding that the "Hebrew Bible itself is remarkable among world cultures as a collection that remembers the past, emphasizing the meaning and intent of history" ["Memory in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Exodus, Creation and Cosmos," in *Memory in the Bible*, ed. Stephen C. Barton, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Benjamin G. Wold, WUNT 212 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 47–74; 47].

register as a contradiction to the Torah. The book of Deuteronomy, in particular, is replete with commands to "remember,"[451] and perhaps never more so than when the object is Yahweh's deliverance of his people from Egypt.[452] Israelites likely knew this command in its positive form: "Remember (זכר) the days of old (יְמוֹת עוֹלָם); consider (בין) the years of many generations" (Deut 32:7a).

Despite the jarring and shocking effect, there are a number of ways in which it seems evident that the unusual commands in v. 18 are functioning as an intentional rhetorical device. Significantly, they serve to get the audience's attention in preparation for the subsequent announcement of the 'new thing.'

Another indicator of the commands' rhetorical character is the grammatical form in which they occur, consisting of an imperfect negated with אַל, denoting a command of "immediate prohibition."[453] Thus, the imperatival force of the form is not that of a "permanent command" such as, for example, that of the Ten Commandments (Exod 20; Deut 5). Rather, it indicates that specific and immediate purposes are in view. While we can only speculate, the need for such a rhetorical punch might suggest that the healthy obedience to the intent of the Law has instead become a stifling attachment to the past. Perhaps the prophetic word is a radical but necessary intervention, with an urgency and a tone that convey "Stop this!"[454]

---

[451] This is especially true of the book of Deuteronomy (in whatever form they had it). See, e.g., Deut 5:15; 7:18; 8:2; 9:7; 15:15; 16:3, 12; 24:18, 22; 32:7 (cf. 8:18; 24:9; 25:17).

[452] An initial call to 'remember' is linked with the institution of the Passover (prior to the crossing of the Red Sea). Moses instructed the people to "remember this day in which you came out from Egypt, out of the house of slavery, for by a strong hand Yahweh brought you out from this place" (Exod 13:3).

[453] Negative commands expressed by the imperfect negated with לֹא (i.e., not with אַל) denote a general or permanent prohibition. See Arnold and Choi, § 4.2.3 and § 4.2.11. Similarly, Goldingay and Payne, *Isaiah 40–55*, 1:298.

[454] The unexpected content of the commands is matched by the surprising element in the usual form of a oracle. Following the extended messenger formula of vv. 16–17, one might have expected the message to open with

I would also suggest that the broader literary context offers further evidence that the jarring commands in v. 18 are functioning as a rhetorical device. The second command of v.18 appears in 46:9—restored to its more familiar positive force: "Remember the former things of old" (מֵעוֹלָם זִכְרוּ רִאשֹׁנוֹת). Additionally, the idea of remember/remembrance is a recurring topos in Second Isaiah, and it is highly characteristic of this poetry to use the same root (i.e., זכר; "remember") in varied forms and connotations. An example occurs in the subsequent verses (vv. 22–28) where the term זכר is used twice. In v. 25, the verb (also negated) effects a very different tone from that of v. 18. Yahweh says, "I, I am he who blots out your transgressions…and your sins *I will not remember*" (v. 25). Another form of זכר appears in v. 26, where in a trial scene, Yahweh confronts Israel. "Remind me," he says, challenging them to make their case in the trial setting (v. 26).[455]

Lastly, I would suggest that the commands not to remember "former things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת) or to consider "things of old" (קַדְמֹנִיּוֹת) are intentionally dramatic as a rhetorical means of heightening the contrast between the 'former things' and the 'new thing' of which Yahweh speaks in v. 19.

Before delving into the specifics of v. 19, I want to reiterate my earlier observations regarding the connections between Isa 42:9 and Isa 43:19 by summarizing the most obvious repetitions linking the two passages. They include: the occurrence of the particle הִנֵּה in the first clause; the use of adjective חָדָשׁ as a substantive and a present participle to convey the

---

the standard address of the salvation oracle, "Do not fear!" (אַל־תִּירָא). The same grammatical form occurs (i.e., an imperfect negated with לֹא), but the expected verb is replaced by זכר ("to remember") and suddenly the entire tone and message of the oracle are turned upside down.

[455] זכר occurs here v. 26 in the *hiphil* (second masculine singular) with the first person suffix; thus, "Remind me" is literally "Cause me to remember."

corresponding verbal idea; the occurrence of the verb צמח ("to sprout") in the subsequent clause; and the figurative use of צמח to signify the action of the 'new thing(s).' In both passages צמח is preceded by a temporal term (i.e., "before" they spring forth; "now" they spring forth), and the concluding clauses contain a verb of cognition/perception. Although perhaps less obvious, the links also convey a sense of progression that is taking place in the broader context of the intervening text. Whereas in 42:9, new things are announced "before" they "sprout" (42:9), in 43:19, the "new thing" is "now" sprouting/emerging. Likewise, a comparison of the final clauses indicates a progression from Yahweh's announcement regarding the new things, "I make you hear them," to a question that assumes his people have now heard: "Do you not perceive it?"

Returning then to 43:19, adverbial particles (הִנֵּה, עַתָּה, and אַף) introduce each of three consecutive cola. The result is a three-fold structure in which each line appears to build on the previous one by means of emphasis, progression, and/or elaboration.[456]

Verse 19 opens with the particle הִנֵּה. As noted earlier, the particle functions as a means of drawing immediate attention to the subject and/or subject matter at hand.[457] The particle in v.

---

[456] Scholars differ on whether to group the third cola (19c) with the previous two or with the lines that follow (vv. 20–21). The former is supported by the presence of the particle אַף, which functions to carry on and underscore the force of a previous clause. Alternatively, the introduction of wilderness/desert/water imagery supports connecting v. 19c to v. 20 where the theme is continued, including virtually exact repetition of parallelism in v. 20b. My own inclination is that v. 19c functions in both ways and that the overlap of groups of twos and threes is characteristic of this poetry.

[457] In this form, הִנְנִי is usually translated as "Behold, I." In Old Testament usage, this particular suffixed form is usually followed by a participle rather than a finite verb (see full listing in *DCH* 2:574–79, 577). While Isa 43:19 exhibits that common sequence, interestingly, the combination occurs elsewhere in Isaiah only rarely as compared to other books. Thus, it is perhaps notable that the exact same combination (הִנְנִי עֹשֶׂה) occurs in only one other place, Zeph 3:19. The latter context shares similar language and restoration themes with Second Isaiah; however, in Zeph 3:19, the future tense of the participle is explicitly indicated by the phrase, "at that time" (בָּעֵת הַהִיא), perhaps suggestive of Second Isaiah's use of earlier prophetic material (admittedly, a much larger issue addressed more appropriately and systematically in intertextual studies). Within the book of Isaiah, when the same suffixed particle + ptc sequence occurs again in Isa 65:17 and 18, the participle is from the root ברא ("to create"): "For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth" (v. 17a); "for behold I create Jerusalem to be a joy" (v. 18b).

19 (הִנְנִי) differs from what was observed in 41:14 and 42:9 by the addition of the first person pronominal suffix, which refers to Yahweh. The resulting combination suggests that the particle is now employed to draw all attention to Yahweh himself. The latter may be suggestive of what lies behind the previous startling rhetoric. Perhaps they are in danger of failing to recognize that their own God is right in their midst, acting on their behalf, and speaking to them in the here-and-now. The proper focus of their attention needs to be on Yahweh but apparently, it is not. And so into that void Yahweh declares, "Behold *me...I am right here*!"[458]

The emphases of the particle underscore the present aspect of Yahweh's action, denoted by the participle of עָשָׂה ("to do, make"). The 'new thing' is no longer the contents of an announcement; it is identified here as the object of action, specifically what Yahweh is doing/making. Although the verb עָשָׂה has a wider semantic range, it, nevertheless, functions along with ברא ("to create") and יצר ("to form, shape") as a key verb of creating/making in Second Isaiah. It can hardly be insignificant that the God who is "doing a new thing" is the God who likewise created the entire cosmos (40:28; 42:5) and Israel herself (43:1, 7, 15).

In the subsequent clause, the temporal adverb, עַתָּה ("now"), reinforces the present nature of Yahweh's action but also indicates the immediacy with which "doing" a new thing also means a "perceivable" new thing. The verb צָמַח ("to sprout"), like its usage in 42:9, is used figuratively. Why would a 'new thing' be depicted figuratively as "sprouting" or "emerging"? In order to answer that question, I would suggest that one has to assume the audience has a knowledge of

---

[458] Goldingay renders הִנְנִי in Isa 43:19 as a clause, followed by the participle as an appositional phrase, thus: "Here I am, doing something new" (Goldingay, *Message of Isaiah*, 210). Normally, הִנְנִי is only translated as "Here I am" when it stands alone (i.e., no verbal unit) and, very often, as a response in the context of direct speech—most notably, e.g., in Gen 22:1 and Isa 6:8. In the case of Isa 43:19 I find that Goldingay's "dynamic equivalent" rightly conveys the immediacy and present-focused function the particle lends to the announcement.

how the term is used literally as well as its most likely referents when employed figuratively. Recalling the discussion of 42:9, it was noted that צֶמַח is used in Isa 44:4 to describe Israel's "offspring" (i.e., descendants) who will "*spring up* among the grass, like willows by streams." In 45:8, the figurative sprouting of salvation and righteousness can occur because of the 'rain' of righteousness. Similar figurative uses appear in 55:10, 58:8, and 61:11. In sum, all the occurrences in Second Isaiah, excepting 58:8, figuratively refer to or imply the natural (and necessary) connection between rain (or water, more generally) and that which sprouts. I also suggested that the echoes of Gen 2 could be heard in the use of צֶמַח in Second Isaiah. Importantly, I would also suggest that these same occurrences and/or echoes are key to understanding the final clause of v. 19 along with v. 20, which together offer a window into the nature of the 'new thing.'

The immediacy and significance of the emerging 'new thing' is not to be lost on the audience—they are directly engaged by means of a rhetorical question, הֲלֹוא תֵדָעוּהָ ("Do you not perceive it?").[459] The verb ידע ("to know, understand") suggests that the 'new thing' is, at least in some form, a perceivable reality.[460] The form of this rhetorical question assumes an answer in the affirmative; and yet, in its unstated assumption it also leaves room for the possibility that while Israel *should* perceive the new thing, they do not.

---

[459] C. J. Labuschagne observes that rhetorical questions are "one of the most forceful and effectual ways employed in speech for driving home some idea or conviction" [*The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1966*)*, 23]; cited by J. Kenneth Kuntz, "Rhetorical Questions in Deutero-Isaiah," in *Writing & Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, vol. 1, ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans, VTSup 71 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 121–42.

[460] The verb ידע has a wide semantic range and numerous connotations, but its usage here seems to convey a sense of "to know, have understanding," "to hear of, to learn (by notification) or experience," or "to know (by observation and reflection" (*HALOT* 2:390–92; *DCH* 4:99–110).

To what degree are the "former things" and the "new thing" continuous or discontinuous? Most scholars would agree that there is a certain relationship between רִאשֹׁנוֹת and the חדשׁה; less agreed upon is the nature of that relationship. Some view the relationship as that between historical referents. Others tend to accent the comparative nature of the relationship, the 'new thing' as superior to the first things. Brevard Childs states, "the latter act [the new thing] completely transcends the former deliverance."[461] Muilenburg observes the poetic rhetoric and explains: "The new event that is about to occur is so much greater than the old, so much more wonderful and glorious, that by comparison the old is as nothing at all, and therefore to be forgotten."[462]

With v. 19c we come to an elaboration of the nature of the new thing. The clause opens with the particle אַף,[463] which is often rendered as "Indeed" in order to convey the close connection with the previous clause. Thus, the new thing Yahweh is doing, emerging even now, acquires some description: "I will make (שִׂים)[464] in the wilderness (מִדְבָּר) a way (דֶּרֶךְ); in the desert (יְשִׁימוֹן), rivers (נְהָרוֹת)."

Some scholars amend the MT by replacing the final term, "rivers" (נְהָרוֹת), with the word "path" (נְתִיבָה), preserving the way-path parallelism used in v. 16.[465] I would argue, however,

---

[461] Childs, *Isaiah*, 336.

[462] Muilenburg, "Isaiah, Chapters 40–66," 495.

[463] The adverbial particle אַף connects the third line to the previous thought; the asseverative use of the particle lends an additional element of conviction to what has already been stated (Arnold and Choi, § 4.2.4).

[464] The verb, שׂים ("to make"), here in the imperfect, is the same verb used in Isa 41:15 (perfect tense) to describe Yahweh making Israel into a threshing sledge.

[465] The emendation (i.e., "paths" instead of "rivers") is supported by 1QIs[a]. Among those who emend the MT, see e.g., Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 226; Shalom Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 217. Typical is William Propp, who argues that "rivers" "makes poor parallelism with 'way,' and is hence suspect" [W. H. Propp, *Water in the Wilderness: A Biblical Motif and Its Mythological Background* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 102, 117 n.109].

that the emendation is not only unnecessary but perhaps results in the loss of an important clue to understanding what follows in v. 20. First, the same combination of terms denoting "way," "water," and "wilderness/desert," occurs elsewhere. Isaiah 35:5–7 describes the transformed condition of those once blind, deaf, lame, and mute, and gives the reason (indicated by a causal כִּי) as follows: "for waters break forth[466] in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water." The same passage (35:8) also employs various terms related to "way" including דֶּרֶךְ (used in 43:19), מַסְלוּל ("a highway"), and דֶּרֶךְ הַקֹּדֶשׁ ("the Way of Holiness"), without mention of "paths."

Even as the example just cited in Isa 35:5–7 shows, wilderness and desert are frequently mentioned in connection with water, and the reasons are obvious enough. However, it needs to be recognized that the terms frequently used do not necessarily refer to a burning terrain the likes of the African Sahara. The terms used in 43:19 are מִדְבָּר and יְשִׁימוֹן.[467] The "wilderness" as denoted by מִדְבָּר typically denotes pastureland, land suitable for grazing. Such areas were usually situated between land that could sustain crops and land considered genuine desert. In a more general sense, it refers to the more sparsely populated open areas outside of settled areas. The term can also signify a true desert or barren wilderness, but usually in a specific rather than

[466] The verb is בקע, occurring here in the *niphal*, meaning "to be cleft, rent open." The same verb, in the *qal*, is the one most often used to describe dividing the waters of the Red Sea: Exod 14:16 (Moses as subject); Ps 78:13 (Yahweh "*divided* the sea and let them pass through it, and made the waters stand like a heap"); Neh 9:11 (Yahweh "*divided* the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on dry land"); Isa 63:12b (*qal* ptc; Yahweh, "*who divided* the waters before them"). It is worth noting that בקע is not the verb used when the event is alluded to in Isa 43:16.

[467] The term יְשִׁימוֹן ("desert") always occurs in combination or parallel with ("wilderness"). In addition to Isa 43:19, see, e.g., Deut 32:10; Pss 68:8; 78:40; 106:14; 107:4 (*HALOT* 2:447).

general sense.[468] For example, where a contrast is intended, מִדְבָּר denotes barren, desolate land, little or no water, and consequently no vegetation, in contrast to land that is well-watered, thus fruitful and productive, and importantly, suitable to human habitation.[469] This and related terminology are often employed to depict the contrast between the aftermath of divine judgment on a place and its people versus a land associated with divine blessing and thus inhabited with people, flourishing and sustained by water and fertile fields. These associations become especially important to understanding what follows in Isa 43:20.

Verse 20 opens with a somewhat abrupt change in subject matter: "The wild beasts will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches." Scholars generally attempt to explain the role of the animals in light of the subsequent desert transformation, but nonetheless, it is somewhat surprising how few give any attention to the possible significance of this particular animal pair. Shalom Paul, for example, merely comments that jackals and ostriches are two examples of "desert denizens (animal and bird) who will honor God for providing them with water."[470] Clifford views the worship of these animals as evidence of "how thoroughly its sterile horrors have been brought under the power of Yahweh."[471] For Westermann, the fact that "God gives

---

[468] Robert Barry Leal, *Wilderness in the Bible: Toward a Theology of Wilderness,* SBL 72 (New York: Lang, 2004), 37, 39–41.

[469] See, e.g., Jer 22:6; Joel 2:3

[470] Paul, *Isaiah 40–66*, 218. Notably, he cites several references where the same pair appear, but does not assign any significance to them beyond being desert dwellers. Klaus Baltzer describes the jackals and ostriches as "the timid inhabitants of the desert, whom human beings hardly ever catch sight of" and concludes, "Even they will honor Yahweh. Nature is completely incorporated into Yahweh's future activity on behalf of the homecomers" [Klaus Baltzer, *Deutero-Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55,* Hermeneia, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001),174].

[471] Richard J. Clifford, *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah* (New York: Paulist, 1984), 105.

water in the wilderness so abundantly that even the wild creatures living there share in it" is but a further demonstration that "God's activity in creation and in redemption are one."[472]

The parallel relationship is standard enough—the mention of "beasts of the field" (חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה) followed by "jackals and ostriches" (תַּנִּים and בְּנוֹת יַעֲנָה)[473] represents a common pattern of progression in semantic parallelism. But it still seems to beg the question, why jackals and ostriches? Why not, for example, fiery serpents (הַנְּחָשִׁים הַשְּׂרָפִים), something with allusions to Israel's wilderness journey or understood as a threat to human safety?[474] While it is true, as many scholars have observed, that jackals and ostriches are clearly identified as inhabitants of the desert/wilderness, they are never mentioned in association with Israel's time in the desert, nor are they referred to as animals that pose a threat to human safety.[475]

What appears to be lacking in many interpretations is adequate consideration of the mention and function of the pair elsewhere. In addition to Isaiah 43, jackals and ostriches are mentioned together in four places: Mic 1:8; Job 30:29; Isa 13:21–22; and Isa 34:13. Blenkinsopp recognizes that they seem to be an "Isaian topos associated with ecological degradation and the collapse of urban life," but he offers no further comments on possible implications for interpreting 43:19–21.[476] In regard to the animals, he concludes: "the journey will be expedited by removing or rendering wild animals innocuous."[477] My own interpretation runs more along

---

[472] Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 129.

[473] The same phrase, חַיַּת הַשָּׂדֶה, also appears in Gen 2:19; 3:1; Exod 23:11; Hos 2:14; Job 40:20.

[474] See Num 21:4–9. The serpents were sent as punishment against the people for their sin of speaking out against Moses and Yahweh.

[475] To be clear, I am not suggesting that these particular animals are never dangerous, but rather that they are not referred to as such in the biblical text.

[476] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 228.

[477] Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 228. Oswalt cites the animals as evidence of figurative language, observing "the desert-dwelling animals would have little cause to praise God if he turned the deserts into meadows, effectively destroying their homes. But in figure the animals are reacting just as thirsty humans would" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 155).

the lines of the work of Øystein Lund, who notes that where jackals and ostriches are mentioned together there is a corresponding characterization of the desert as "a place of punishment," as "threatening, cursed and unclean."[478] I find that Lund's observations are more to the point, but I would also emphasize that every time the two wild animals are mentioned, their presence is associated with a place that suffers divine judgment (or perceived judgment in the case of Job). A survey of the pertinent references reveals a very consistent set of characteristics: jackals and ostriches are always characterized as inhabitants of a place, and the place itself is always characterized using similar terms of utter desolation, ruined wasteland, and devoid of human habitation.[479] With respect to the latter, one might argue that Job 30:29 is an exception because Job himself is a human inhabitant. But his lament, "I am a brother of jackals and a companion of ostriches" (Job 30:29), reflects an anguished existence in which he no longer sees himself as human, for he is outside the human social network and structure of community, cut off from what it means to be human in his worldview.[480]

For Isa 43:20, the references in Isa 13 and 34 are especially significant, not only because jackals and ostriches are mentioned, but because their presence is explicitly linked to the divine

---

While I agree with his conclusion regarding figurative interpretation, I am not as convinced that the animals' thirst is a key factor, mainly because the final purpose clause of v. 20 seems to indicate that the animals' honor was not a response to thirst.

[478] Ostriches are considered "unclean" animals according to Lev 11:16 and Deut 14:15 [Øystein Lund, *Way Metaphors and Way Topics in Isaiah 40–55*, FAT 28 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007) 196, n. 62].

[479] In Mic 1:8, the prophet compares his wailing and mourning to that of jackals and ostriches, symbolizing the desolation and destruction as described in the larger context of the passage, and corresponding to God's judgment on Samaria and Jerusalem. There will be complete destruction of the cities (e.g., "a heap in the field;"1:6), utter disaster, and prophecy of exile (1:16). Isaiah 13 is an oracle describing the fall of Babylon, of which it is said, "It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations" (v. 20); instead, the city will be filled with various desert creatures, and "ostriches will dwell there" (v. 21) as will "jackals in the pleasant palaces" (v. 22). Similarly, in Isa 34 the prophet announces future judgment on the nations, depicting their cities in the aftermath as overgrown with thorns and thistles and "the haunt of jackals, an abode for ostriches" (v. 13).

[480] For contrast, see Job 29 in which Job describes his previous status when "God watched over him" (vv. 1–6) and his existence is expressed in terms of human connection and social categories.

judgment that is to befall Babylon. The full scope of associations is particularly clear in Isaiah 13:19–22:

> And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the splendor and pomp of the Chaldeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when God overthrew them. [20]It will never be inhabited or lived in for all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there; no shepherds will make their flocks lie down there. [21]But wild animals will lie down there, and their houses will be full of howling creatures; there ostriches will dwell, and there wild goats will dance. [22]Hyenas will cry in its towers, and jackals in the pleasant palaces; its time is close at hand and its days will not be prolonged.[481]

To summarize, I am suggesting that the mention of jackals and ostriches is an intentional reference intended to signify a place of divine judgment.[482] Furthermore, in Isa 43:20, I believe it is safe to say that the intended referent of such a place is Babylon, given the immediate indications of v. 14 but also other references and oracles such as Isa 13.

The second colon of v. 20 ("for I give…") begins with a causal כִּי, thus indicating the reason the animals honor Yahweh. The clause can be read as an independent statement, suggesting that the animals honor Yahweh because (כִּי) he gives (נָתַן) water in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. However, what appears to offer a sensible rationale is, in fact, somewhat (perhaps intentionally?) deceiving because it is only syntactically (and thus semantically) complete when it includes the expression of purpose that immediately follows: "in order to give

[481] Isa 34 uses very similar language to depict God's judgment on Edom. Not only will it be a "haunt of jackals" and "abode for ostriches" (v. 13), but streams, soil, and land are utterly destroyed; "from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it ever again" (v. 10b).

[482] I would compare the consistent associations attached to jackals and ostriches to the more common reference to Sodom and Gomorrah, symbolizing God's judgment on cities filled with wickedness.

drink (שׁקה) to my people." The form of שׁקה ("to give drink") that is used here expresses purpose; thus, it explains the reason or goal of the previous verb (נָתַן).[483]

Observing this expression of purpose in v. 20 (i.e., the form of שׁקה) is important for at least two reasons. First, in the context of v. 20, it means that the wild animals honor Yahweh, not because they are thirsty and he provides them with water (though the thought need not be considered false), but because Yahweh puts water/rivers in the wilderness/desert in order to offer drink *for his people*.[484] The second matter relates to the verb שָׁקָה and its form as it occurs elsewhere. In the five additional occurrences of the term in the same prefixed infinitive construct form (denoting purpose), it refers to having secured water (e.g., by pouring, drawing, containing) "in order to give drink" to a person (Gen 24:19), for the purpose of watering flocks (Exod 2:16), and in order to water a garden (Gen 2:10; Ezek 17:7; Eccl 2:16). Particularly notable is the term's usage in Gen 2:10 where the context is the garden of Eden planted by Yahweh-God. Specifically, it is a garden: in which he places the human he *formed* (יָצַר); from which every tree *sprouts* (צָמַח);[485] out of which goes forth (יָצָא) a river (נָהָר), whose purpose it is "to water" (שָׁקָה) the garden. If one were to apply the latter English idiom to human objects, a literal rendering of Isa 43:20c would convey the idea that Yahweh puts water in the desert in order to "water his people." Strange as the English sounds idiomatically, it may well illustrate the figurative sense of the Hebrew. The same idea is evident in Isa 44:4, where Israel's offspring (v. 3) are said to

---

[483] שָׁקָה (*hiphil*) occurs here as an infinitive construct with a *lamed* prefix, which commonly denotes purpose (Arnold and Choi, § 3.4.1c and 4.1.10d). The verb denotes "to give drink, to water, to irrigate." It occurs 60 times in the *hiphil* and functions as the causative form of שָׁתָה ("to drink"). *DCH* 8:547–49; *HALOT* 4:1639–40.

[484] Similarly, Goldingay and Payne argue that the animals join in the praise of Yahweh, "not because they are enjoying the water but because they see what Yhwh has done in bringing down Babylon and restoring Israel" (*Isaiah 40–55*, 1:299).

[485] The image of watering trees so they "sprout" (צָמַח) is also found in Eccl 2:16.

increase and *spring forth* (צָמַח) from the grass because Yahweh has watered the ground.[486] These examples, along with others, echo various elements found in Gen 2—echoes strong enough to suggest, in my opinion, that whatever the identity of the *new thing* Yahweh is doing, there is an Edenic quality to it.[487] It is an environment fresh with growth, sustained for all of its future potential, perfectly suited to all natural and human flourishing. Significantly, the characteristics of Eden are for the benefit of Israel, whom Yahweh calls עַמִּי בְחִירִי ("my people, my chosen"). The special relationship between Yahweh and his people is emphasized by the first person suffix on the two nouns in apposition and further articulated in v. 21 as "this people who I formed for myself." Together the descriptives are all reminiscent of Israel's beginnings as a nation.

The final clause, "They will recount my praise," summarizes the ultimate purpose for which Yahweh—their Creator, their King, and their Redeemer (v.15)—formed this people to be his own. The word "praise" (תְּהִלָּה) describes the nature of response that is appropriate for Yahweh. It also appears to represent an appropriate response to the newness that is emerging; the three passages in which תְּהִלָּה is used directly correlate with the three occurrences of *new things*: 42: 8, 10, 12 ("new things" in v. 9); 43:21 ("new thing" here in v. 19); and 48:9 ("new things" in v. 6). This may lend further support to understanding the 'way/waters in the wilderness' as ultimately a metaphor for the 'way' Yahweh has purposed for his people—a transformed people who will recount his praise.

---

[486] The language of watering is somewhat different in 44:3–4, but nevertheless conveys a similar image.

[487] The presence of these echoes gains textual support in Isa 51:3 with the explicit mention of Eden, the garden of Yahweh.

CHAPTER EIGHT

חָדָשׁ IN ISAIAH 48:1–11

שִׁמְעוּ־זֹאת בֵּית־יַעֲקֹב	[1]Hear this, O house of Jacob,
הַנִּקְרָאִים בְּשֵׁם יִשְׂרָאֵל	who are called by the name of Israel
וּמִמֵּי יְהוּדָה יָצָאוּ	who came forth from the waters of Judah,
הַנִּשְׁבָּעִים	בְּשֵׁם יְהוָה	who swear by the name of Yahweh,
וּבֵאלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל יַזְכִּירוּ	yet/but in the God of Israel they [confess]
לֹא בֶאֱמֶת וְלֹא בִצְדָקָה׃	not in truth nor in righteousness.
כִּי־מֵעִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ נִקְרָאוּ	[2]For they call themselves after the holy city,
וְעַל־אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל נִסְמָכוּ	and lean on the God of Israel;
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת שְׁמוֹ׃ ס	Yahweh of hosts is his name.

הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת מֵאָז הִגַּדְתִּי	[3]The former things I declared from long ago,
וּמִפִּי יָצְאוּ וַאַשְׁמִיעֵם	and from my mouth they went forth, and I made them heard;
פִּתְאֹם עָשִׂיתִי וַתָּבֹאנָה׃	suddenly I did [them] and they came to pass.
מִדַּעְתִּי כִּי קָשֶׁה אָתָּה	[4]Because I know that you are obstinate,
וְגִיד בַּרְזֶל עָרְפֶּךָ	and your neck is an iron sinew
וּמִצְחְךָ נְחוּשָׁה׃	and your forehead brass,

וְאַגִּיד לְךָ מֵאָז [5]I declared [them] to you from long ago,

בְּטֶרֶם תָּבוֹא הִשְׁמַעְתִּיךָ before they came to pass I made you hear,

פֶּן־תֹּאמַר עָצָבִי עָשָׂם lest you should say, "My idol did them,

וּפִסְלִי וְנִסְכִּי צִוָּם׃ my carved image and my metal image commanded them."

שָׁמַעְתָּ חֲזֵה כֻלָּהּ [6]You have heard. See all of it!

וְאַתֶּם הֲלוֹא תַגִּידוּ Will you not declare it?

הִשְׁמַעְתִּיךָ חֲדָשׁוֹת מֵעַתָּה I cause you to hear new things from now on,

וּנְצֻרוֹת וְלֹא יְדַעְתָּם׃ hidden things that you have not known.

עַתָּה נִבְרְאוּ וְלֹא מֵאָז [7]Now are they created, not long ago.

וְלִפְנֵי־יוֹם וְלֹא שְׁמַעְתָּם Before today you have not heard them,

פֶּן־תֹּאמַר הִנֵּה יְדַעְתִּין׃ lest you should say, 'Behold, I knew them.'

גַּם לֹא־שָׁמַעְתָּ [8]Indeed, you have not heard,

גַּם לֹא יָדַעְתָּ you have not known,

גַּם מֵאָז לֹא־פִתְחָה אָזְנֶךָ from of old your ear has not been open.

כִּי יָדַעְתִּי בָּגוֹד תִּבְגֹּוד For I have known that you would surely deal treacherously,

וּפֹשֵׁעַ מִבֶּטֶן קֹרָא לָךְ׃ and that from birth you were called a rebel.

לְמַעַן שְׁמִי אַאֲרִיךְ אַפִּי [9]For my name's sake I defer my anger

וּתְהִלָּתִי אֶחֱטָם־לָךְ לְבִלְתִּי הַכְרִיתֶךָ׃ [for the sake of] my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off.

הִנֵּה צְרַפְתִּיךָ וְלֹא בְכָסֶף	**10**Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver,
בְּחַרְתִּיךָ בְּכוּר עֹנִי׃	I have tried you in the furnace of affliction.[488]
לְמַעֲנִי לְמַעֲנִי אֶעֱשֶׂה	**11**For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it,
כִּי אֵיךְ יֵחָל	for why/how should my name be profaned?
וּכְבוֹדִי לְאַחֵר לֹא־אֶתֵּן׃ ס	My glory I will not give to another.

Thus far, I have examined the four occurrences of חָדָשׁ ("new") in chs. 41, 42, and 43 of Isaiah, including the two substantival uses, "new thing(s)" appearing in opposition to "former things" (42:9 and 43:18–19). The final occurrence of חָדָשׁ and third of the substantive uses, חֲדָשׁוֹת appears in Isa 48:6. Before turning to ch. 48, however, I want to address a couple of things that appear in the intervening chapters (i.e., chs. 44–47) and ultimately relate to the "new things" in ch. 48.

The first matter is that of the larger semantic domain related to the חֲדָשׁוֹת in Second Isaiah—namely, the language of former-latter-coming. Thus, while חָדָשׁ does not occur, the first/former-last/latter opposition appears twice in chs. 44–47, initially as the adjectives "first" and "last" (רִאשׁוֹן and אַחֲרוֹן) in 44:6–7,[489] and later in nominal forms, "beginning" and "end" (רֵאשִׁית and אַחֲרִית), in 46:10.[490]

---

[488] Cf. Deut 4:20.

[489] Note that Yahweh's declaration of himself as "first and last" here in ch. 44 also occurs, as previously observed, in 41:4 (in a slightly varied form; i.e., "with the last"), and appears again in 48:12.

[490] In v. 10 the nominal forms in opposition are followed by a parallelism in v. 10b that conveys the same sense of opposition but with different terms: "and from ancient times things not yet done"). Isa 44:9 uses the familiar adjectival substantive, "former things" (רִאשֹׁנוֹת) but not in opposition to a corresponding substantive: "Remember the former things of old." The latter offers a reminder that the terms that constitute the semantic domain under consideration do not necessarily occur in one of the three primary oppositions. Nevertheless, even when used

A second matter is the person of Cyrus, the Persian general who conquered the city of Babylon, bringing an official end to the Babylonian Empire. Most scholars agree that, while he is unnamed, Cyrus is in mind in ch. 41 at vv. 2–4 and again in vv. 25 and later at 46:10–11. Moreover, Cyrus *is* referred to by name in 44:28 and 45:1—and significantly at that. Ben Witherington is correct in his assessment that these oracle(s) related to Cyrus (Isa 44:24–45:13) are in some ways "the most important of all the oracles in Isaiah."[491] The particulars offer the good news of an end to the Babylonian exile and, moreover, a message of liberation for which the exiles may not have even dared to hope. Speaking more generally, the value of the message lies in the fact that, "The mention of Cyrus ties this oracle to a specific historical period, person, and event in a way that none of the rest of Isaiah 40–66 does."[492] For the prophet's earliest hearers, Yahweh declares he alone is sovereign over all of creation, over Israel, over the nations, and thus, over history—that is, what happens on the world stage—and the historical character and role of Cyrus is an essential component of the divine demonstration.

The extent of Yahweh's domain is impressive enough, but the particulars regarding Cyrus invoke another dimension altogether when it comes to Yahweh's relationship with Israel. Yahweh addresses Cyrus as "my shepherd" (רֹעִי), announcing that he is the one who "will

---

individually in chs. 44–47, the terms continue to keep the theme alive, underscoring various dimensions until the third and climactic former things-new things pair takes center stage in ch. 48 (vv. 1–11). As discussed in previous sections, the most predominant idea underscored by the reiterated terms is that of proof from prophecy, that is, Yahweh's ability to announce "things to come" before they happen, and/or the "former things" that he announces beforehand indeed come to pass. Thus, for example, the term אֹתִיּוֹת ("things to come;" fem ptc of אתה) occurs in Isa 44:7 // אֲשֶׁר תָּבֹאנָה ("what will come;" verbal root בוא) and again in 45:11 (i.e., "Ask me of the *things to come*").

[491] Ben Witherington, III, *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017), 206.

[492] Witherington, *Isaiah Old and* New, 206–7.

complete all of my desire/purpose" (וְכָל־חֶפְצִי יַשְׁלֵּם) (44:28).[493] Specifically, he will say of Jerusalem, "She shall be built (בנה)," and of the temple, "It shall be established (יסד)."[494] The latter two verbs both occur in the *niphal* passive, perhaps reflecting that as important as Cyrus is to the future of Jacob/Israel and Jerusalem, he is but Yahweh's *instrument* to effect restoration (see also 45:1–5). That being said, he is indeed significant as the singular non-Israelite in the whole of the Old Testament to be referred to as Yahweh's מְשִׁיחַ—that is, his "messiah," his "anointed"[495] (Isa 45:1). As a description normally reserved for and/or associated with kings, prophets, and priests, of Israel, the designation of Cyrus deserves special note. When the oracle was first spoken, it is likely that the term מָשִׁיחַ ("anointed; messiah") had not yet assumed the status of a title that it would later carry when messianic hopes burgeoned during the era of Second Temple Judaism. Nevertheless, the oracle's description would no doubt have raised some

---

[493] The verb from the root שׁלם, which conveys a sense of "completing" or "accomplishing" all of Yahweh's purposes, is no doubt an intentional wordplay on the city's name, יְרוּשָׁלַם (Jerusalem), in the subsequent clause.

[494] It is interesting to note that the only other place in the MT that יסד occurs in the *niphal* is in Exod 9:8 where it refers to the foundation/beginnings of Egypt (*DCH* 4:231–33; יסד I). In light of the ongoing Exodus motif throughout Isa 40–48, an intentional echo, perhaps a subtle contrast of Egypt and Jerusalem, is not impossible. It would, however, be a difficult relationship to assess with certainty and lies well beyond the scope of this investigation.

[495] The MT uses the third person singular suffix on מָשִׁיחַ ("*his* anointed one"), whereas LXX uses the first-person singular suffix ("*my* anointed one"). In both texts, Cyrus is explicitly named in the phrase that follows. As Witherington correctly observes, there can be no doubt that this "anointed one" refers to Cyrus the Persian king (Witherington, *Isaiah Old and New*, 209–10). The significance of Witherington's observation, and of other scholars who comment similarly, is simply that in the Old Testament, those persons who were considered "anointed" (conveyed by direct reference or indirectly by association with the act of anointing) included kings, priests, and prophets—of Israel. For example, David, in particular, acknowledged King Saul's position as Yahweh's anointed one, on account of which he refused to allow himself or others to bring harm to King Saul (e.g., 1 Sam 24:7, 11[Eng 24:6, 10]; 1 Sam 26:11, 16, 23; 2 Sam 1:14, 16, etc.). The term מָשִׁיחַ appears with the third person pronominal suffix, as it does in Isa 45:1, elsewhere at 1 Sam 2:10 ("the horn of his anointed one") and Ps 28:8 ("the salvation of his anointed one"). If my understanding is correct, it is inaccurate to state that Cyrus "is the only person called God's *mašiaḥ* in the whole OT," as Witherington does following the citation above (Witherington, *Isaiah Old and New*, 210). Nevertheless (and perhaps this is what he intended), what is true is that Cyrus is the only non-Israelite individual in the Old Testament to be referred to as Yahweh's "anointed."

"red flags" to the earliest listeners and readers. First of all, to an Israelite, exilic audience who had no king, thus, no "anointed one," the message of release from exile and the rebuilding of Jerusalem and the temple was good news, but the credit going to a non-Israelite was a message that had the potential to be understood variously. Negatively, the oracle may have been perceived as a word that disregarded or even opposed the hopes of a Davidic king (Yahweh's faithfulness to the enduring covenant made with David). Alternatively, one could understand that "kingship" belonged to Yahweh alone, and as Sovereign he had the power to anoint ones of his own choosing to accomplish his purposes. My own sense, in light of the rare usage of the word "king" and/or references to David in Isa 40–55, is that the second argument is more representative of what we read in Second Isaiah. While there is much more that could be said regarding the issue of kingship in these chapters, suffice it to say that Cyrus is Yahweh's chosen instrument to carry out his purposes for his people. Those intentions are brought to a climactic summary in Isa 45:11–13. It is presumably Cyrus who is being referred to in v.11 as one "formed" (יצר) by Yahweh, the Holy One of Israel. Moreover, he is the subject of "the things to come" (הָאֹתִיּוֹת) about which Yahweh further questions: "will you command me concerning my children and the work of my hands?" Verse 12 builds on v.11 by making use of related terms of creating (עשׂה and ברא) and repeating the phrase "my hands," but employing them in an expanded creative scope that includes the earth and humanity, the heavens and their host. Thus, the effect is one of moving from the lesser to the greater, implying that any challenge to Yahweh's ability to form Cyrus and use him to accomplish his purposes is answered decisively by the 'greater' power displayed in his creation of cosmos. Finally, having defended his all-inclusive, sovereign authority, Yahweh announces his ways and purposes with Cyrus: "'I have stirred him up in

righteousness, and I will make all his ways level; he shall build my city and send away my exiles (גָּלוּתִי),[496] not for price or reward,' says Yahweh of Hosts."

Most scholars agree on the broad division of Isa 48 into two larger sections comprised of vv. 1–11 and vv. 12–22. There are several textual indications of the beginning of a new literary unit at 48:1. First, there is a complete change of subject matter between the previous chapter and ch. 48, underscored by a change of address, the opening imperative, "Hear this!" (שִׁמְעוּ־זֹאת),[497] and the new addressee—"house of Jacob."[498] Additionally, the subsequent series of participial clauses giving description to the addressee (vv. 1–2) are typical of introductory and/or extended messenger formulas as observed in previous oracles. The end of the unit at v. 11 is indicated perhaps most obviously by another imperatival address and addressee in v. 12, signaling the start of another literary unit.[499] However, the mention of the term שֵׁם ("name") in vv. 1–2 and its repetition again in vv. 9–11, effectively creates an inclusio.[500] In a manner consistent with most

---

[496] This is the first and only use of the word meaning "exiles" in reference to Israel that occurs in Isaiah. The term is more frequent in Jeremiah, where it applied explicitly to Judah (e.g., 24:5; 28:4; 29:22; 40:1). See *DCH* 2:353.

[497] The imperative is notable because the verbal root שָׁמַע offers a direct link to its repeated use in *hiphil* (causative) form as a means of expressing Yahweh's announcements (e.g., 42:9, and repeated in 48:3). The *hiphil* form occurs at:41:22 (object is "things to come"), 41:26 (making heard "from the beginning" or "beforehand), 42:2 (negated), 42:9 (object: "new things...before they sprout forth"); 43:12; 44:1, 8; 45:21; 48:3 (object: the former things), 5 (implied), 6 (object: "new things"), 20. The emphasis on hearing occurs frequently in combination with other terms of perception such as seeing, knowing, and understanding (e.g., Isa 40:21, 28; 41:22, 26; 42:18, 23; 43:9) The imperative occurs elsewhere in chs. 40–48 directed to: the deaf (42:18); Jacob/Israel, explicitly or implied (44:1; 46:12; 48:1, 12, 14, 16); Babylon (47:8).

[498] See, e.g., an informative article by Cat Quine, "Reading 'House of Jacob' in Isaiah 48:1–11 in Light of Benjamin," *JBL* 137 (2018): 339–57; 353. She notes that the phrase (whether translated as 'waters of' or 'loins of') emphasizes the close relationship of the group with Judah.

[499] Of note is the indication of a break between vv. 11 and 12, indicated in the MT by the *setuma* following v. 11 and even more so by a half-line gap between the two verses in the *Isaiah Scroll* from Qumran (1QIsa[a]).

[500] A number of English translations include the word "name" in v. 11 (i.e., "for how should *my name* be profaned?"). Although the word is not present in the Hebrew, the sense conveyed at the beginning of v. 9 ("For my name's sake") carries through v. 11, making the addition appropriate for the sake of clarity. The importance of the term (i.e., שֵׁם; "name") is suggested by its five-time repetition ch. 48 (vv. 1a, 1b, 2, 9, and 19).

commentators, I have further divided vv. 1–11 into four sub-sections: vv. 1–2; 3–6a; 6b–8; 9–11.[501]

The opening two verses of the unit include a number of issues that have proved challenging to scholars; nevertheless, there is general consensus that a dramatic shift in tone occurs in ch. 48, specifically as it relates to Israel. Frequently described as harsh and accusing, the first indication of it comes in the opening two verses, setting the tone for the chapter as a whole.[502] Verses 1–2 comprise a series of expressions that describe the people with respect to their identity and their origin, their professed allegiances and religious affiliations, and their reliance on and relationship to the God of Israel, Yahweh.[503] Amidst the extended litany of claims, however, comes an abrupt qualification at the end of v. 1: "not in truth (אֱמֶת) and not in righteousness (צְדָקָה)."[504] The כִּי that opens v. 2 appears to be functioning as an asseverative, thus emphasizing the certitude of the negative evaluation.[505] Moreover, it is perhaps notable that

---

[501] The most common variation of this outline, and a reasonable alternative, is dividing the second and third sub-sections between v. 5 and v. 6. Blenkinsopp, who considers vv. 1–6a as the first sub-section, suggests that the opening clause of v. 6a, "You have heard," belongs with the previous verses because it is a fitting conclusion to the sub-unit that began with "Hear this!" [Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, *AB* 19A (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 287]. I concur with Blenkinsopp's assertion regarding v. 6a, but I can also agree, as others have suggested, that v. 6a could be considered something of a transition (e.g., Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 266, n. 37). By summing up what should be an appropriate response to what is said in vv. 3–5, v. 6a sets the stage for the new agenda announced in v. 6b and what follows.

[502] See, e.g., Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 195; Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 259; Childs, *Isaiah*, 370.

[503] See, e.g., J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 376; cited also by Goldingay, *Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 342. Oswalt likewise draws attention to the "piling up of descriptions," suggesting correctly that they "surely set the stage for what follows" (*Isaiah 40–66*, 260).

[504] The abrupt nature of the line seems to be indicated in several ways: the asyndetic phrases, the straightforward, even rigid, repetition of verbless syntax, of negation with לֹא, and of the בְּ preposition.

[505] See, e.g., Arnold and Choi, § 4.3.4 (*i*). I would suggest that it is also possible the כִּי is functioning evidentially [Arnold and Choi, § 4.3.4 (*b*)] in which case, what is said in v. 2 offers (further) evidence of the previous qualification, "not in truth and not in righteousness." As scholars readily admit, the exact meaning of the latter is hard to determine with certainty, but if the כִּי is evidential, the most likely indicator would be the use of the *niphal* reflexive of קרא in the opening clause, "*they call themselves* after the holy city." It would seem to suggest

of the verbs in vv. 1–2, four are in the *niphal*. While it is difficult to determine with certainty, the latter two of the four verbs—קרא and סמך in v. 2—may reflect the reflexive nature of the *niphal* stem, offering further evidence that the House of Jacob is being described according to how they portray themselves and outwardly wish to appear. In any case, I would argue this is a pivotal literary moment—suddenly casting a shadow on the integrity of this people, putting in question the very nature of their motivations.

Also worth noting is the mention of "the holy city" (עִיר הַקֹּדֶשׁ) in the first line of v. 2. While the idea of the "holy city" is present in various forms throughout the Old Testament, particularly in the parallelism of poetic literature, the actual apposition of the terms is fairly rare, occurring only here and at 52:1 in Isaiah, and elsewhere only at Dan 9:24 and Neh 11:1 [cf. Isa 64:9 (Eng 64:10)]. The parallelism in Isa 52:1 offers clarity on two fronts: first, the Holy City is identified as Jerusalem; second, it explains why the city qualifies as holy: "for (כִּי) no more shall there come into you the uncircumcised or the unclean." Goldingay rightly emphasizes, "To describe the city as 'holy' is not merely to use a conventional epithet. It is to draw attention to an awesome significance that attaches to Jerusalem as a city associated with the awesomely holy Yhwh," (e.g., Isa 6:3; 40:25; 43:15; 47:4). He adds: "This even requires a holy road to lead to it, also forbidden to the polluted/polluting (35:8)."[506] Thus, it seems only logical to surmise that a

---

that there is even a hint of sarcasm conveying the sense, "that's what they call themselves, but the reality is otherwise."

[506] One could also include the more common phrase, 'holy mountain' (e.g., Isa 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20). Goldingay, *Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 343–44. Goldingay makes the additional observation that, "It is also to claim a status for Jerusalem such as the Babylonians would claim for a temple city as a 'holy city.' For the Babylonians this status would imply an expectation of justice and respect for people's rights there" [*Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 344; citing, Moshe Weinfeld, *Social Justice in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 97–101]

holy God and a holy city, on a holy mountain,[507] entered via a holy road—a road prohibited to that which is unholy and/or unclean—must surely have implications for a people who are to return to and/or inhabit this holy space. I want to suggest that the accusatory tone already reflected in vv. 1–2 along with the implications of a "holy city" for Israel/Jacob is significant to a fuller understanding of the "new things" in the context of vv. 1–11. The introductory verses suggest that things may not be as they appear. There is a crack in the facade, and in the context of the third occurrence of the first-new opposition we get a sense of how deep that crack goes.

The confrontational tone of ch. 48, while not new to these chapters, is extended and sustained in a way that it has not been in previous chapters, particularly as it relates to Jacob/Israel. Similarly, while a number of themes in ch. 48 are common to the preceding chapters, including the first/former-latter-new motif, here we find the discourse is not only sustained but features the distinctive addition of Yahweh's justifications and rationale for his actions.

The opening word of v. 3, הָרִאשֹׁנוֹת ("former things"), marks the return to the familiar semantic domain of the former-new terminology. Also recurring are the two verbs of announcing and declaring, the *hiphil* forms of נָגַד and שָׁמַע,[508] the temporal phrase "from of old" (מֵאָז), a verb of making/creating (עשׂה; "to make, create, do"), and the frequently used verb meaning "to

[507] The phrase "holy mountain" occurs in Isa 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:11, 25; 66:20. Thus it is more common than "holy city" and, as Goldingay observes, suggests that "the city is holy because the mountain is so, because the temple is so (63:15; 64:11)" (*Message of Isaiah 40–55*, 343).

[508] See, for example: 41:22 (object is "things to come"), 41:26 (making heard "from the beginning" or "beforehand), 42:2 (negated), 42:9 (object: "new things…before they sprout forth"); 43:12; 44:1, 8; 45:21; 48:3 (object: the former things), 48:5 (implied), 48:6 (object: "new things"), 20. The emphasis on hearing occurs frequently in combination with other terms of perception such as seeing, knowing, and understanding (e.g., Isa 40:21, 28; 41:22, 26; 42:18, 23; 43:9). As to the imperatival form in 48:1, it too occurs elsewhere in chs. 40–48, addressed to various audiences: the deaf (42:18); Jacob/Israel, explicitly or implied (44:1; 46:12; 48:1, 12, 14, 16); Babylon (47:8).

come" (בוא). The latter verb is used variously—sometimes to convey what is yet to come and sometimes, as it is here in 48:3, to mean what has "come to pass." Considered together, these recurrences appear to indicate an intentional link to the previous usages of "former things" in general, and in particular, where former things appear in opposition to new thing(s) (42:9; 43:19).

As I have discussed in previous sections, there are a number of elements common to the former-new passages that create a discernable progression taking place between the three occurrences. For example, temporal adverbs are common to each of the three passages. To recall, in Isa 42:9 Yahweh says "the former things have come to pass (בוא), and new things I now declare; *before* (בְּטֶרֶם) they spring forth I cause you to hear them." In 43:18–19 there is an increased contrast between the former and the new things, Yahweh commanding, "Remember not the former things, nor consider the things old (קַדְמֹנִיּוֹת)." Then, in what immediately follows, the new thing is no longer the object of announcing what is yet to come, but the object of what Yahweh is doing—action that is present and recognizable: "Behold, I am doing (עשׂה) a new thing; now (עַתָּה) it springs forth, do you not perceive it (הֲלֹוא תֵדָעֻהָ)?" Here in ch. 48, the adverb "before" (בְּטֶרֶם) recurs twice (vv. 5 and 7), but a different adverb, "suddenly" (פִּתְאֹם), now qualifies the nature of Yahweh's action as it comes to fruition (v. 3). Nevertheless, while there are any number of recurrences, links, and elements of progression, ch. 48 is significant for its distinctive characteristics in relationship to the earlier former-new passages. One of the most obvious distinctions is the extended treatment in vv. 3–8. The terms of opposition are not back to back in the same verse or even in successive verses; instead, they are separated by several verses (i.e., v. 3 and v. 6b). Additionally, the repeated emphasis on Yahweh's ability to announce things

before they happen, while not absent, is subsumed with another purpose. The so-called proof-from-prophecy argument is no less true, but what now takes center stage is Yahweh's rationale for speaking and acting as he has. His justifications give rise to the extended form observed in vv. 3–6a and 6b–8. One additional distinctive of ch. 48 is that in previous speeches, it has always been other nations who bore the brunt of the prophet's invective against the gods they made, worshipped, and looked to for knowledge of what was to come. And while Israel was intended to "overhear" the prophetic word (and hopefully take heed), only now do they stand as those directly accused.

What was earlier only hinted at now becomes substantive in v. 4: there is a clear contrast between what the people say and do (vv. 1–2 outward manifestations/speech) and the truth about them— which Yahweh "knows" (ידע).[509] Yahweh's language is direct and pointed: "You (אַתָּה) are קָשֶׁה ("obstinate, stubborn, hard"). The opening nominal clause is followed by two more, elaborating on Israel's hardened condition: "your neck is an iron sinew; and your forehead is brass."[510]

There follows a reiteration of announcing things (i.e., "former things") "from of old" and "before they came to pass" and Yahweh's justification for doing so. The conjunction פֶּן, meaning "lest" ("lest you should say;" v. 5) introduces another trio of qualifiers in which, like the repetition of "you/your" in v. 4, there is a three-fold repetition of the first person pronominal suffix: "My idol did them, my carved image and my molten image commanded them." This is

---

[509] The root ידע occurs here (i.e., 48:4) in an unusual form as a *qal* infinitive construct with the first person singular suffix, מִדַּעְתִּי, literally translated, "from/of my knowledge."

[510] Blenkinsopp notes that the disparaging terms are familiar from passages in Deuteronomy where Israel is described as stubborn or "stiff-necked" (e.g., Deut 9:6, 13; 31:27). Similar language is also found in Ezekiel (e.g., Ezek 3:7–8) (Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 40–55*, 289).

perhaps an example of the prophet's characteristic wordplay—Yahweh, whose announcements went forth "from my mouth," (v.3) now reverses the source of speech, using the first person pronoun "my" to put the self-condemning words implicitly in Israel's mouth. Henk Leene observes: "The coming of the former things has resulted in Israel's *own* unmasking as idolater."[511]

Scholars are somewhat divided as whether the first half of v. 6 belongs more appropriately to what comes before or what comes after. My own sense is that while the verse is transitional between the two sections, it seems more likely that it represents a climax to the preceding vv. 3–5. The three verbs in v. 6a cover the three temporal dimensions of past, present, and future. Beginning with the perfect aspect, the theme of hearing is reiterated once again: "you have heard." The second term is an imperative, "See all of it," indicating that what has been heard is now in the realm of recognition. Oswalt observes correctly that the verb is not the more common term for seeing (i.e., רָאָה) but rather, the verb חָזָה, which conveys more the sense of "to gaze, look at intently." It is the same term used to describe what the prophet Isaiah "saw" concerning Judah and Jerusalem (Isa 1:1; 2:1).[512] It suggests that seeing is more than simply having eyesight; it is seeing in a way that there is a deeper level of perception or vision. The third verb is the recurring word, נָגַד, denoting "to declare" and posed as a question to Jacob/Israel: "And will *you* not declare (it)?" The rhetorical nature of the question allows for multiple answers. On the one hand, it suggests that having heard and now seen, declaring is the next obvious step, in which case the expected response should be an affirmative (e.g., "of course we will"). On the other hand, with a knowledge of Israel's lack of truth and faithfulness (or lack

[511] Leene, *Newness*, 58.

[509] Oswalt, 266–67.

thereof), we might expect the real answer should be a negative one. Or, perhaps it is the lack of either answer that most effectively exposes Israel's failure to become the witnesses Yahweh has called them to be.[513] The latter possibility seems all the more likely in light of what follows in regard to the new things.

The content of vv. 6b–8 follows a pattern not unlike that of vv. 3–5. As previously mentioned, Isa 48 contains the most expanded unit associated with the term חֲדָשׁוֹת ("new things"). In particular, the parallelism in vv. 6b–7b offers a number of expressions that convey various dimensions of newness. First, the חֲדָשׁוֹת are "hidden things (נְצֻרוֹת) of which you (i.e., Israel) have not known (לֹא יְדַעְתָּם)". The term נְצֻרוֹת, from the verbal root נצר, refers to "hidden, guarded things."[514] That Israel does not know the new things lies in the fact that Yahweh has not revealed them. The latter cognitive dimension of newness is followed up with a familiar temporal dimension. The "new things" are described as being created "now" (עַתָּה), the temporal emphasis indicated by the fronted adverb as well as by the parallel contrasting phrase, "not long ago" (לֹא מֵאָז).

Significantly, the verb for Yahweh's activity now is בָּרָא ("to create"). As I have discussed previously, several verbs of creating are prevalent in chs. 40–48. The three primary

---

[513] See, e.g., Isa 43:12, where Jacob/Israel is explicitly called to be witnesses to the fact that Yahweh, and Yahweh alone, is God.

[514] Occurring here as a *qal* passive ptc (fem pl), the verb נצר occurs a total of 62 times in the Old Testament and always in the *qal.* The word means "to guard, protect, preserve." In a literal sense, the verb is used in the context of guarding fields or vineyards as, for example, from a hut (Job 27:18) or a watchtower (e.g., 2 Kgs 17:9; 18:8; cf. Jer 31:6). Similarly, fruit trees are protected by "one who guards/watches over" (*qal* ptc; msc sg). The term's usage in Isa 48:6 is more figurative, conveying a sense of "guarded information [that] is not yet apparent and thus hidden" (G. Sauer, נצר, to guard; *TLOT* 2:762–63). Elsewhere in a figurative sense, the word is especially common in the wisdom literature. Understanding and insight, for example, 'guard' against evil (Prov 2:11; 4:6; 13:3, 6; 16:17; 20:28). Daniel 'guards' matters that have been divinely revealed to him, that is to say, he keeps them to himself as opposed to conveying them to others (Aramaic נְטַר; Dan 7:28; cf. Mary in Luke 2:19).

verbs are בָּרָא, עשׂה ("to create, make, do") and יצר ("to form, shape"), all three of which can be used somewhat interchangeably in certain contexts, with the important exception that only Yahweh is ever the subject of בָּרָא. The significance of the latter is brought to bear on its usage in 48:7 in order to highlight one of the distinctive differences between idols and Yahweh. The more general term, עשׂה, occurs in both vv. 3 and 5, the first time with Yahweh as subject, the second with an idol as subject. However, by employing the verb בָּרָא in v. 7 the emphasis is clearly on the creative activity of God, leaving no room for other options, and functioning as a means of heightening the contrast not only between former things and new things, but also between what Israel could potentially credit to their idols and what could only be attributed to Yahweh.

The distinctive and repeated contrasts result in an emphasis on the discontinuity between the new things and the former things, the intentionality of which renders it significant. While the purposes of the highlighting discontinuity are surely related to Yahweh's intense confrontation of Israel's idolatry-driven guilt; nevertheless, it seems to me that looking only to the historical events surrounding the military advances of Cyrus and the downfall of the Babylonian empire as that which corresponds to the new things misses the point made by the heightened level of discontinuity. Moreover, the very subject matter of confronting Israel's idolatry suggests the unlikelihood that 'new things' correspond entirely with Israel's liberation from Babylonian exile because of the coming of Cyrus. They are not unrelated, but it also seems somewhat incongruous that if former things had to be announced in particular ways—ways that did not allow Israel to convey their trust in or give credit their idols—it only makes sense that announcing 'new things' would also somehow involve something to address the problem. In other words, it seems

unlikely that Yahweh's new things would correspond to redeeming Israel from exile while ignoring the "elephant in the room"—their idolatry, their lack of true understanding, and their fundamentally rebellious nature. What I am suggesting is that the use of "new" connotes a distinctive nature of what it is that Yahweh announces and will carry out in a way that historical correspondences alone do not match/accomplish.

One might argue that "newness" lies in the fact that never before in the history of the world (to our knowledge) had captives in exile been offered the freedom and the resources to return to their places of origin and the opportunity to build places to worship their own deities. I would argue that while such circumstances are consistent with newness when the term is understood according to its wider range of meaning in contemporary usage, they are less so when the Old Testament or ancient Near Eastern usage offers the matrix for its most likely sense. Moreover, the consistent imagery of transformation is another important factor. Once again, the difference repeatedly portrayed in chs. 40–43 was a transformed wilderness, but not merely a desert becoming an oasis such that travel is made possible. Rather, the transformation is consistently that of a desolated wasteland representative of divine judgment that is turned into an abundance of water and trees and a place of thriving human habitation that signifies divine blessing. For Israel, however, divine blessing manifested in terms of human habitation and flourishing only takes place in the context of obedience to the divine covenant which means, as Isa 40–48 reiterates again and again, worshipping and serving Yahweh alone—Creator of the universe and Sovereign over all the earth. In light of these factors, I would argue that the announcement of 'new things,' along with its consistent portrayal of overflowing abundance

elsewhere in these chapters, must have in mind a newness that is more than political and historical, though it is those.

Yahweh discloses his rationale for announcing the new things "from now," (in contrast to the former things announced "from long ago")[515] in two ways. First, as with the former things there is a פֶּן clause. Justifying why it is that "before today you have never heard of them," Yahweh says, "*Lest* you should say, 'Behold, I knew them.'" Repetition of the verbs "heard" and "knew" continues to accumulate, playing off one another as they recur. The former things they "have heard" (48:6a), whereas the new things are hidden things that they "have not known" (v. 6b). The same hear-know order appears in v. 7, this time in a three-fold series of clauses with a recurring combination, גַּם לֹא ("indeed not; never"), that accents the negation with a force of "never." The third clause adds a characteristic "what's more" sense to the first two cola, underscoring what has been true all along—"from of old (מֵאָז) your ear has never been open." Significantly, the causal כִּי which opens v. 8b pushes the rationale even further, offering the definitive reason for Israel's lack of perception. Similar to the logic observed in vv. 4–5, it can be summarized in what Yahweh "knows" (ידע) about Jacob/Israel. Just as he knew their hardened condition and what they would have said had he not announced former things ahead of time or suddenly brought them to pass, he knows they are a people prone to act treacherously; indeed, "from the womb" they have been called (קָרָא)[516] a "rebel" (פָּשַׁע).

---

[515] The link appears to be intentional given the repetition of the *min* prefix on both terms (מֵאָז and מֵעַתָּה). The repetition of עַתָּה in v. 7 further emphasizes the temporal dimension of "now," but without the *min* prefix. The emphasis has shifted away the temporal aspect of the announcement of new things (i.e., "from now" vs. "from long ago") to that of their creation. And yet, the link returns, this time emphasizing the "now" by means of contrast using the particle, לֹא: "*not* long ago." The subsequent clause adds another layer to the significance of the temporal dimension, "*before today* (לִפְנֵי־יוֹם) you have never heard of them."

[516] The form of the verb is usually considered a *pual* perfect (e.g., *HALOT* 3:1130–31), although some scholars designate it as a *qal* passive [e.g., Shalom M. Paul refers to it as a *qal* "archaic" passive; *Isaiah 40–66:*

The gravity of Israel's ongoing, deep-seated rebellious nature, along with the intensity of Yahweh's justified anger would all but assure their doom were it not for an even greater reason to defer and restrain it— for the sake of Yahweh's "name" (שֵׁם; vv. 9, 11) his "praise" (תְּהִלָּה; v. 9), and his "glory" (כָּבוֹד; v. 11). It is worth noting that the same three characteristics appear in connection with former things that have come to pass and new things being announced in 42:8–9. Since his very nature is determinative of his ultimate treatment of Israel, it cannot be separated from the new things he now announces and creates. The discontinuity between Israel's nature and Yahweh's is far too great a chasm to be bridged by announcing new things of which newness is limited to a mere temporal sense. It would seem that, for Yahweh's sake, the new things must be constitutive of something more than an updated set of content announced in the present time. I would argue that the implications of the refining/testing process described in v. 10 support this view, in which case, newness conveys a qualitative difference in which Jacob/Israel becomes a refined, tested and chosen people that can adequately reflect and give witness to Yahweh's name, praise, and glory. Moreover, we must bear in mind that Jacob/Israel in their present state cannot possibly return to the holy city on a holy mountain via a holy road unless the Holy One of Israel who calls them makes it possible. Furthermore, there is nothing about their condition as treacherous-dealing, born-a-rebel, idolators to imply that what they need is a freshly paved road in order to return to Jerusalem. What they need is a way to be the holy nation they were called to be, and indeed Yahweh announces the way: "Behold, I refine you, but not as silver; I have tried/chosen you in the furnace of affliction" (48:10). That, I would argue, is the nature of the

---

Translation and Commentary, ECC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 310; similarly, Goldingay, *Isaiah 40–55*, 349, 351].

new things—the "now" of a new beginning, a purpose that corresponds to witnessing to the only name worthy of praise and glory.

As for Cyrus, I would argue that his role is part of the larger scope of new things, but that his role is more a demonstration of Yahweh's unique deity and control over history as well as over Israel and the entire cosmos. Cyrus is Yahweh's anointed one to carry out the historical task of liberating Israel from their Babylonian exile, but it is Yahweh who "redeems" his people. Cyrus the Persian general can bring an end to the Babylonian empire by marching into the capital city and taking control, and he can proclaim "freedom" to various people groups by means of an official edict. Referring to the actions of Cyrus as prophecies fulfilled, Leene correctly summarizes an important distinction: "Nothing less but also nothing more is achieved through this fulfilment by Yhwh, due to the religious attitude of the historical Israel. In their convergence, tradition and experience do not have the ability to effect real change in people."[517]

[517] Leene, *Newness*, 58.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

In this closing chapter, rather than rehearse the summary materials of the earlier chapters, my intention is to draw out the primary theological implications of this investigation and then, finally, to address what I see as areas of research for further consideration.

My overarching goal for this investigative endeavor has been to contribute to scholarship by offering a more comprehensive study of newness from an Old Testament perspective than has previously been available. I surveyed the terminology of חָדָשׁ as it occurred in a more general sense outside of Second Isaiah. While Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Third Isaiah all include major themes of newness and merit further investigation, the scope of this dissertation did not in the end allow for the extended analyses of them that I applied to Second Isaiah. Indeed, it is to Second Isaiah (especially chs. 40–48) that I directed my most comprehensive, nuanced, and theological investigation of newness as conveyed by the uniquely recurring terminology of חָדָשׁ.

Implications

In light of the core concentration, I want to draw particular attention to what I consider to be the primary implications that emerge from Second Isaiah's attention to newness, especially the trio of "new thing(s)" passages.

All of the references to חָדָשׁ occur in the declarations of Yahweh, spoken through the prophet. Moreover, one of the overriding concerns of these utterances is to convince his people that Yahweh, and only Yahweh, can not only speak of things before they happen, but he can

make his word heard, and he can fulfill his word, thus bringing to pass all of his plans and purposes. The notable progression that connects the three "new things" announcements together points to an inextricable link between Yahweh's word and "new things."[518] I would suggest that it is this link in particular that is significant for its implications.

Perhaps first and foremost, it implies (and affirms) Yahweh's unmatched power and control as Creator and King. As Creator of and King over all of creation, he is also Lord over history. Secondly, Yahweh's word is an enduring word, so likewise, the announcement of new things is an enduring word. Because the things formerly announced have come to pass, so too the new things will come to pass. This implies, thirdly, that the promise of new things can be trusted. Yahweh assures that the word that goes forth from his mouth will not return void, but rather, will accomplish all his purposes.

Furthermore, Yahweh's word—the same word that announces new things—is a creating word. Indeed, he can declare of new things, "They are created now" (Isa 48:6). This implies that his power as Creator is not limited to a one-time event exercised in primeval history, nor is his power confined to cyclic system of reproduction; rather, newness implies that Yahweh can and does continue to create. Closely related to this word that can create new things is that it also has the power to transform what already exists. The pervasive (and memorable) imagery of Second Isaiah is that of the desolate wilderness transformed into an oasis, a place where water is in abundance and all kinds of trees flourish. The recurring imagery implies that current status is not

---

[518] The reader will recall that the three "new things" passages exhibited a progression that highlighted three adverbs (adverbial phrases) and changes in verbal aspect (tense). The movement progressed from "*before* [the new things I declare] spring forth, I make you hear them" (Isa 42:9) to "Behold, I am doing a new thing, *now* it springs forth; do you not perceive it?" (Isa 43:19), and finally to: " *From this time forth*, I announce to you new things…*now* they are created, not long ago" (Isa 42:6).

the last word. It conveys that a poor and needy people, languishing in exile, can and will be transformed into a glorious instrument of God's purposes and plans (e.g., Isa 41:14–16). It is this same power to transform that characterizes the newness heralded by Jeremiah and Ezekiel. In the former, where there is rebellion and a broken covenant, Yahweh promises a new covenant, transforming a broken relationship into a covenantal relationship. Similarly, in Ezekiel, the imagery conveys a cold, lifeless heart transformed into a new heart, obedient to Yahweh and his ways. Yahweh's word of newness creates a way out of despair, brokenness, and rebellion.

Perhaps it is simply another dimension of the foregoing implications, but I also want to reiterate, as I have at various points throughout this investigation, that the divinely wrought newness proclaimed in Second Isaiah (and Jeremiah and Ezekiel) implies an effective word. As I alluded to above, when the word of God goes forth, it cannot and will not return empty. In the words of Yahweh himself, they "will accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it" (Isa 55:11). Significantly, this effective word is also a subtle reminder that one of the characteristics of newly made items in the ancient world (e.g., threshing sledge, cart, weapon), perhaps more so than is characteristic of contemporary society, is that the item is made with a very particular purpose and/or task in mind. The reader will recall that one of the characteristics of newness is the state of prime readiness and condition of an object to fulfill the task for which it is made. It is worth noting, however, that while Yahweh uses human instruments and means to accomplish his tasks, he can also override human purposes in order to accomplish his greater purposes.[519]

[519] Among other references, this sense of purpose inherent to manufactured objects is obvious in the following (as is the superior power of Yahweh's purposes): "Behold, I have created the smith who blows the fire of coals and produces a weapon for its purpose. I have also created the ravager to destroy; no weapon that is fashioned against you shall succeed" (Isa 54:16–17a). In more abstract terms, one might think of the "newly wrought" raising

As much as Yahweh's word of newness is always an *e*ffective word, so also it appears that biblical newness is an *a*ffective word. Despite any wariness of the new in the ancient world, especially in social, political, and religious realms, the divine word of newness from the mouth of Yahweh is consistently a word that generates a full measure of abundance and transformation that issues forth in joyous praise—rejoicing that no doubt results in human-felt gladness, but is always and ultimately directed to the glory, honor, and praise of God.

Considerations for Further Study

Perhaps the most obvious place to begin further research is where the current investigation leaves off—that is, with a need for a study that follows the trajectory of newness terminology into the New Testament. Such an exploration could take multiple forms. It could be as broad as investigating all the major occurrences of the Greek words for "new" in the New Testament. Alternatively, it could take the form of an investigation into the New Testament uses of the Old Testament's explicit expressions of newness. For example, if looking at the New Testament's echoes of second Isaiah's expression(s) of the "new things," the study would be concentrated on at least two places in particular: 2 Cor 5:17 and Rev 21:5a.[520] Neither reference represents a direct quotation from the Old Testament, but the phrases and conceptual resemblances are enough that most scholars agree they are allusions to Second Isaiah, namely Isa 43:18–19. While there are a number of works that address these particular references in

---

up of Cyrus to defeat and bring down the Babylonian empire. Yahweh claims to have raised him up and equipped him for this task, but in his greater, divine purpose, Cyrus is even more—he is Yahweh's מְשִׁיחֹ ("anointed one, *messiah*;" Isa 45:1) for the sake of his people, Israel (Isa 45:4).

[520] It should be mentioned that following such a trajectory could include other pertinent literature such as that of Second Temple Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls.

relationship to their Old Testament origins, I am not aware that any of them highlight the lexical and/or conceptual dimensions of "newness," specifically as related to the single term for "new" in the Old Testament, חָדָשׁ.

A similar process of investigation could be applied to tracing additional uses of Old Testament expressions that we find echoed in the New Testament. The most important options are those phrases that are explicitly used by New Testament writers: "new song," "new heavens and new earth," and the "new covenant." I would note that the latter, in particular, receives significant treatment (and extended direct quotation) by the New Testament author of Hebrews, and I believe that the level of lexical interaction in this investigation could inform the discussion of continuity and discontinuity that is vitally important to a proper understanding of the new covenant.

Not unrelated to the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament is the continuing scholarly discussion of the relationship of the Testaments themselves. One indication of the ongoing conversation is the fairly recent spate of books dealing with the topic, a number of which are titled in such a way as to make a play on the vocabulary of "new" and "old." I am thinking in particular of volumes such as that of Donald Hagner's entitled *How New is the New Testament*[521] and, from the Old Testament perspective, that of John Goldingay, *Do We Need the New Testament? Letting the Old Testament Speak for Itself.*[522] While both of these authors would

[521] Donald A. Hagner, *How New Is the New Testament? First-Century Judaism and the Emergence of Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018). See also, by Hagner: "The Newness of the Gospel in Mark and Matthew: Continuity and Discontinuity," in *Matthew and Mark across Perspectives: Essays in Honour of Stephen C. Barton and William R. Telford*, ed. Kristian A. Bendoraitis and Nijay K. Gupta, LNTS 538 (New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2016); "New Things from the Scribe's Treasure Box (Mt 13:52)," *ExpTim* 109 (1998): 329–34.

[522] John Goldingay, *Do We Need the New Testament? Letting the Old Testament Speak for Itself* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015).

agree to the absolute necessity and importance of both testaments, nonetheless, their studies (along with others) offer evidence that the relationship of "old" and "new" continues to be a relevant and significant topic of discussion and research.

The play on words "old" and "new" (especially "new") is surely evidence that the issue rests to some degree on how one defines "new" and "old."[523] In particular, as I have attempted to show in the foregoing investigation, the qualitative difference between what is "new" and what existed previously (whether or not it is explicitly dubbed "old") is not always a distinction given over to easy parsing. I believe the authors mentioned above would readily attest that the matter often comes down to whether one wishes to emphasize continuity or discontinuity. Alas, sometimes (if not often) the qualitative difference between old and new lies in the eye of the beholder. With that in mind, it seems likely that the conversation can and will continue, and I would like to suggest that the results of this investigation could contribute, perhaps in some small way, to that discussion.

Another matter related to this investigation that I believe merits further consideration is the whole notion of a "new exodus." The expression is fairly pervasive in both Old and New Testament scholarship. Indeed, the moniker seems to have become standard jargon to the point that most scholars use it with reference to the theme of Second Isaiah without any accompanying

---

[523] It is somewhat remarkable how many studies partake of the same basic question, "How new was/is X?" A few examples will suffice: Matthew Barrett, "What Is So New about the New Covenant? Exploring the Contours of Paul's New Covenant Theology in 2 Corinthians 3," *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology,* 19/3 (2015): 61–96; J. D. G. Dunn, "How New Was Paul's Gospel? The Problem of Continuity and Discontinuity," in *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker*, ed. L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson, JSNTSup 108 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 367–88; Gale Z. Heide, "What Is New about the New Heaven and the New Earth? A Theology of Creation from Revelation 21 and 2 Peter 3," *JETS* 40 (1997): 37–56. Along the same lines, see e.g., William J. Dumbrell, "The Newness of the New Covenant: The Logic of the Argument in 2 Corinthians 3," *RTR* 61 (2002): 61–84.

explanation or specification. While I would agree that the phrase represents a creative way of drawing on both the prevalence of Exodus imagery and the unique repetition of חָדָשׁ found in Second Isaiah, I would also suggest that the notion of a new exodus requires more nuancing than it is usually afforded. It is worth noting that the idea does not meet with complete agreement among scholars. At the very least, I would suggest that the phrase represents an anachronistic use of the word "new." Admittedly there is nothing wrong with modern commentators using equally modern phrases (e.g., abstract ideas) to communicate; nevertheless, the downside in this instance is that a "new exodus" gives the impression of having to do with the uses of "new" in Second Isaiah when in reality the connections are not all that clear. While there is an abundance of exodus imagery in Second Isaiah, not all scholars agree that it is functioning typologically or analogically. Moreover, Second Isaiah is comprised of a dazzling array of imagery as well as subject matter (e.g., the polemics against idols). Does the standard use of "new exodus" adequately convey the variety of material that constitutes Second Isaiah?

Another major issue raised by some scholars, and legitimately so in my opinion, is whether a "new exodus" might not function as a more appropriate designation for what becomes a reality in the New Testament—that is, the Christ event and the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. This is not the place to enter into the scope of the discussion, but suffice it to say, I believe the idea of the "new exodus" would be a fruitful avenue for further inquiry and, furthermore, that the current analyses of חָדָשׁ could prove helpful and informative.

The current investigation has focused its exegetical analyses on the terminology of new as it occurs in the Old Testament. The options for further consideration outlined above would all serve the purpose of advancing the current study to include dimensions of newness as they occur

in the New Testament. While a handful of studies deal with newness as a major theme in the New Testament, no study to my knowledge has compiled anything that resembles a study, or even an overview of newness as it occurs (lexically and/or conceptually) in both Old and New Testaments. With that sort of study in mind, I believe the ultimate outcome could offer a truly biblical theology of newness. It is my hope that the work presented in this investigation offers a step forward in achieving such a goal.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Achtemeier, Elizabeth. *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66.* Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982.

Adam, Margaret B. *Our Only Hope: More than We Can Ask or Imagine*. Distinguished Dissertations in Christian Theology 12. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013.

Adams, Jim W. *The Performative Nature and Function of Isaiah 40–55*. LHBOTS 448. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.

Adeyemi, Femi. "What is the New Covenant 'Law' in Jeremiah 31:33?" *BSac* 163 (2006): 312–21.

Albright, William Foxwell. *Archaeology and the Religion of Israel*. OTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006.

Alexander, Joseph A. *The Later Prophecies of Isaiah*. New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1847.

Alexander, Philip S. *The Targum of Canticles.* ArBib 17A. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003.

Alter, Robert. *Ancient Israel The Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, and Kings: A Translation with Commentary.* New York: W. W. Norton, 2013.

———. *The Art of Biblical Poetry*. New York: Basic Books, 1985.

———. *The Five Books of Moses: A Translation with Commentary*. New York: Norton, 2004.

———. *The Wisdom Books: Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes*. New York: Norton, 2010.

Anderson, Bernhard W. *From Creation to New Creation*. OBT. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1994.

Anderson, Patricia C., Jacques Chabot, and Annelou van Gijn. "The Functional Riddle of 'Glossy' Canaanean Blades and the Near Eastern Threshing Sledge." *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 17.1 (2004): 87–130.

Areeplackal, Joseph. *Being Human and Holy: Biblical Concept of Newness*. Bangalore: Dharmaram, 1997.

Armerding, Carl E. "Festivals and Feasts." Pages 300–313 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Pentateuch*. Edited by T. Desmond Alexander and David W. Baker. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Arnold, Bill T. *Genesis*. NCBC. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

———. "Israelite Worship as Envisioned and Prescribed in Deuteronomy 12." *ZABR* 22 (2016):161–75.

———. "Old Testament Eschatology and the Rise of Apocalypticism." Pages 23–39 in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*. Edited by Jerry L. Walls. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———. "A Singular Israel in a Pluralistic World." Pages 1–17 in *Distinctions with a Difference: Essays on Myth, History, and Scripture in Honor of John N. Oswalt.* Edited by Bill T. Arnold and Lawson G. Stone. Wilmore, KY: First Fruits, 2017.

Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018.

Assmann, Jan. *Of God and Gods: Egypt, Israel, and the Rise of Monotheism*. Madison, WI: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2008.

———. *The Search for God in Ancient Egypt*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2006.

Avner, Uzi. "Ancient Agricultural Settlement and Religion in the Uvda Valley in Southern Israel." *BA* 53 (1990): 125–41.

Balz, Horst, and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Balzer, Klaus. *Deutero-Isaiah*: *A Commentary on Isaiah 40–55*. Hermeneia. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.

Barker, Joel D. "Rhetorical Criticism." Pages 676–84 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2012.

Barr, James. *The Semantics of Biblical Language*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961.

Barstad, Hans M. *The Babylonian Captivity of the Book of Isaiah: "Exilic" Judah and the Provenance of Isaiah 40–55*. Oslo: Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture, 1997.

———. *A Way in the Wilderness: The 'Second Exodus' in the Message of Second Isaiah. JSS* 12. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989.

Barton, Stephen C., Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Benjamin G. Wold, eds. *Memory in the Bible and Antiquity.* WUNT 212. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.

Bauckham, Richard. "Conclusion: Emerging Issues in Eschatology in the Twenty-First Century." Pages 671–89 in *The Oxford Handbook of Eschatology*. Edited by Jerry L. Walls. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

———. *The Theology of the Book of Revelation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Beale, G. K., and D. A. Carson, eds. *Commentary on the New Testament Use of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

Beaulieu, Stéphane A. *"Behold! My Servant": An Exegetical and Theological Study of the Identity and Role of the Servant in Isaiah 42:1–9*. Gorgias Biblical Studies 63. Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias, 2015.

Begrich, J. "Das priesterliche Heilsorakel." *ZAW* 52 (1934): 81–92.

Ben Zvi, Ehud, and Christoph Levin, eds. *Remembering and Forgetting in Early Second Temple Judah*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Bentzen, A. "On the Ideas of 'the Old' and 'the New' in Deutero-Isaiah." *ST* 1 (1948):183–87.

Berges, Ulrich F. *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form*. Translated by Millard C. Lind. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2012. Translation of *Das Buch Jesaja: Komposition und Endgestalt*. Freiburg: Herder, 1998.

———. "Farewell to Deutero-Isaiah or Prophecy Without a Prophet." Pages 575–95 in *Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007*. Edited by André Lemaire. Leiden: Brill, 2010.

———. *Jesaja 40–48*. HThKAT. Freiburg: Herder, 2008.

Berlin, Adele. *The Dynamics of Biblical Parallelism*. Rev. and enl. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Birch, Bruce C. *Singing the Lord's Song: Isaiah 40–55*. Cincinnati, OH: General Board of Global Ministries; The United Methodist Church, 1981.

Black, Edwin. *Rhetorical Criticism: A Study in Method*. New York: Macmillan, 1965.

Blenkinsopp, Joseph. "The Cosmological and Protological Language of Deutero-Isaiah." *CBQ* 73 (2011): 493–510.

———. *Isaiah 40–55: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. Anchor Yale Bible 19A. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

Block, Daniel I. *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 1–24.* NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

———. *The Book of Ezekiel: Chapters 25–48.* NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

———. *Judges, Ruth*. NAC 6. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999.

Boda, Mark J. *'Return to Me': A Biblical Theology of Repentance*. NSBT 35. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015.

Boomershine, T. E. "The Structure of Narrative Rhetoric in Genesis 2–3." *Semeia* 18 (1980): 113–29.

Borowski, Oded. *Agriculture in Iron Age Israel*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1997. Repr., Boston: American Schools of Oriental Research, 2002.

———. *Daily Life in Biblical Times*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003.

Botterweck, G. Johannes, Helmer Ringgren, and Heinz-Josef Fabry, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*. Translated by John T. Willis et al. 8 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974–2006.

Bozak, Barbara A. *Life 'Anew': A Literary-Theological Study of Jer. 30–31*. AnBib 122. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991.

Brassey, Paul Del. *Metaphor and the Incomparable God in Isaiah 40–55*. BIBAL Dissertation Series 9. North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 1997.

Braun, Joachim. *Music in Ancient Israel/Palestine: Archaeological, Written, and Comparative Sources.* Translated by Douglas W. Stott. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Brettler, Marc Zvi. *God is King: Understanding an Israelite Metaphor*. JSOTSup 76. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989.

Brown, William P. *The Ethos of the Cosmos*: *The Genesis of Moral Imagination in the Bible.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

———. *The Seven Pillars of Creation: The Bible, Science, and the Ecology of Wonder.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Broyles, Craig C., and Craig A. Evans, eds. *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*. VTSup 70. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Brueggemann, Walter. *First and Second Samuel*. IBC. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2012.

———. *Genesis*. IBC. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010.

———. *Hopeful Imagination: Prophetic Voices in Exile*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

———. *Isaiah 1–39.* WBC. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

———. *Isaiah 40-66*. WBC. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

———. *Old Testament Theology: An Introduction*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2008.

———. *The Practice of Prophetic Imagination: Preaching an Emancipating Word*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012.

———. *The Prophetic Imagination*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001.

———. "That the World May Be Redescribed." *Int* 56 (2002): 359–67.

———. *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997.

———. "Wondrous, Inexplicable, Demanding Newness." *Sojourners* 39 (2010): 48–49.

Buchanan, Michael T., and Brendan Hyde. "Learning Beyond the Surface: Engaging the Cognitive, Affective and Spiritual Dimensions within the Curriculum." *International Journal of Children's Spirituality* 13 (2008): 309–20.

Bunimovitz, Shlomo, and Avraham Faust. "Building Identity: The Four-Room House and the Israelite Mind." Pages 411–23 in *Symbiosis, Symbolism, and the Power of the Past: Canaan, Ancient Israel, and Their Neighbors from the Late Bronze Age through Roman Palaestina Centennial Symposium* (Jerusalem: 2000). Edited by W. G. Dever and S. Gitin. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003.

Carey, Greg, and L. Gregory Bloomquist, eds. *Vision and Persuasion: Rhetorical Dimensions of Apocalyptic Discourse*. St. Louis: Chalice, 1999.

Carr, David M. “The Many Uses of Intertextuality in Biblical Studies: Actual and Potential.” Pages 505–35 in *Congress Volume Helsinki 2010*. Edited by Martti Nissinen. VTSup 148. Leiden: Brill, 2012.

———. *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005.

Childs, Brevard S. *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992/1993.

———. *The Book of Exodus: A Critical, Theological Commentary*. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1974.

———. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

———. *Isaiah*. OTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

———. *Memory and Tradition in Israel*. Naperville, IL: Allenson, 1962.

———. *Old Testament Theology in a Canonical Context*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985.

———. *The Struggle to Understand Isaiah as Christian Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Clements, Ronald E. *Jerusalem and the Nations: Studies in the Book of Isaiah.* Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2011.

Clifford, Richard J. *Fair Spoken and Persuading: An Interpretation of Second Isaiah*. New York: Paulist, 1984.

Clines, David J. A. *Job 1–20*. WBC 17. Dallas: Word, 1989.

———, ed. *Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.* 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 1993–2014.

Clines, David J. A., David M. Gunn, and Alan J. Hauser, eds. *Art and Meaning: Rhetoric in Biblical Literature*. JSOTSup 19. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1982.

Collins, Raymond. “New.” *ABD* 4:1086–88.

Conrad, Edgar W. *Reading Isaiah*. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 1991.

———. *Reading the Latter Prophets: Toward a New Canonical Criticism*. New York: T&T Clark, 2003.

Cross, Frank Moore. *Canaanite Myth and Hebrew Epic: Essays in the History of the Religion of Israel*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1973.

———. *From Epic to Canon: History and Literature in Ancient Israel*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1998.

Currid, John D. *Ancient Egypt and the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.

D'Angour, Armand. *The Greeks and the New: Novelty in Ancient Greek Imagination and Experience*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Danker, Frederick W., Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilbur Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Darr, Katheryn Pfisterer. "The Book of Ezekiel: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 1073–1607 in vol. 6 of *The New Interpreter's Bible.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Davis, Ellen F., and Richard B. Hays, eds. *The Art of Reading Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

Dempsey, Carol J. *Isaiah: God's Poet of Light*. St. Louis: Chalice, 2010.

DeVries, Simon J. *From Old Revelation to New: A Tradition-Historical & Redaction-Critical Study of Temporal Transitions in Prophetic Prediction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Dick, Michael Brennan. "Prophetic *Poiēsis* and the Verbal Icon." *CBQ* 46 (1984): 226–46.

Dinnin, Aimee. "The Appeal of Our New Stuff: How Newness Creates Value." *Advances in Consumer Research* 36 (2009): 261–65.

Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger*. New York: Routledge, 1966.

Dozeman, Thomas B. *Exodus*. ECC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.

Duke, Rodney Kent. *The Persuasive Appeal of the Chronicler: A Rhetorical Analysis*. BLS 25. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1990.

Dumbrell, William J. "The Newness of the New Covenant: The Logic of the Argument in 2 Corinthians 3." *RTR* 61 (2002): 61–84.

Duperreault, Danielle. "The Poetics of History and the Prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah." Pages 255–74 in *Prophet, Prophecy, and Ancient Israelite Historiography*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and Lissa M. Wray Beal. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2013.

Durham, John I. *Exodus*. WBC 3. Waco, TX: Word, 1987.

Eliade, Mircea. *A History of Religious Ideas, Vol. 1: From the Stone Age to the Eleusinian Mysteries*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.

———. *The Myth of the Eternal Return*: *Cosmos and History*. Translated by Willard R. Trask. 2nd ed. New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1954. Repr., Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005.

Elliger, Karl, and Wilhelm Rudolph, eds. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1983.

Elliott, Matthew A. *Faithful Feelings: Rethinking Emotion in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

Farber, Zev I. "Israelite Festivals: From Cyclical Time Celebrations to Linear Time Commemorations." *Religions* 10 (2019): 1–19.

Fekkes, Jan. *Isaiah and Prophetic Traditions in the Book of Revelation: Visionary Antecedents and their Development.* JSNTSup 93. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994.

Feldmeier, Reinhard, and Hermann Spieckermann. *God of the Living: A Biblical Theology.* Translated by Mark E. Biddle. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2011.

Firth, David G., and H. G. M. Williamson, eds. *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Fishbane, Michael. *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel.* Oxford: Clarendon, 1985.

———. "Israel and the 'Mothers.'" Pages 49–63 in *The Garments of Torah: Essays in Biblical Hermeneutics.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989.

Foster, Benjamin R. *Before the Muses: An Anthology of Akkadian Literature*. 3rd ed. 2 vols. Bethesda, MD: CDL, 2005.

Foster, Robert L., and David M. Howard, Jr., eds. *"My Words are Lovely:" Studies in the Rhetoric of the Psalms*. LHBOTS 467. New York: T&T Clark, 2008.

Fox, Michael V. "The Rhetoric of Ezekiel's Vision of the Valley of the Bones." *HUCA* 51 (1980): 1–15.

———. *A Time to Tear Down & A Time to Build Up: A Rereading of Ecclesiastes*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Franke, Chris. *Isaiah 46, 47, and 48: A New Literary-Critical Reading*. BJSUCSD 3. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1994.

Freedman, David Noel, ed. *Anchor Bible Dictionary*. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992.

Gaiser, Frederick J. "'Remember the Former Things of Old': A New Look at Isaiah 46:3–13." Pages 53–63 in *All Things New: Essays in Honor of Roy A. Harrisville*. Edited by Arland J. Hultgren, Donald H. Juel, and Jack D. Kingsbury. *WWSup* 1. St. Paul, MN: Word and World, 1992.

Garfinkel, Josef. *Dancing at the Dawn of Agriculture.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003.

Gelb, Ignace J., Thorkild Jacobsen, Benno Landsberger, and A. Leo Oppenheim, eds. *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*. Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1956–2006.

Gerstenberger, Erhard S. "Singing a New Song: On Old Testament and Latin American Psalmody." *WW* 5 (1985): 155–67.

Gibson, J. C. L. "The Kingship of Yahweh against its Canaanite Background." Pages 101–112 in *Ugarit and the Bible: Proceedings of the International Symposium on Ugarit and the Bible, Manchester, September 1992*. Edited by George J. Brooke, Adrian H. W. Curtis, and John F. Healey. UBL 11. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1994.

Ginsberg, Harold Louis. Review of *Between Ri'shonot (Former Prophecies) and Ḥadashôt (New Prophecies): A Literary-Historical Study in the Group of Prophecies Isaiah XL-XLVIII*, by Menahem Haran. *JBL* 84 (1965): 88–90.

Gitay, Yehoshua. *Prophecy and Persuasion: A Study of Isaiah 40–48*. Forum Theologiae Linguisticae 14. Bonn: Linguistica Biblica, 1981.

———. "A Study of Amos's Art of Speech: A Rhetorical Analysis of Amos 3:1–15." *CBQ* 42 (1980): 293–309.

Gladd, Benjamin L., and Matthew S. Harmon. *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology* for the *Life of the Church.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016.

Glassner, Jean-Jacques. *Mesopotamian Chronicles*. Edited by Benjamin R. Foster. Atlanta: SBL, 2004.

Goldingay, John. *Do We Need the New Testament? Letting the Old Testament Speak for Itself.* Downers Grove, IL, 2015.

———. *The Message of Isaiah 40–55: A Literary-Theological Commentary*. New York: T&T Clark, 2005.

———. *Old Testament Theology*. Vol. 1: *Israel's Gospel*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

———. *Old Testament Theology*. Vol. 2: *Israel's Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

———. *The Theology of the Book of Isaiah*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Goldingay, John, and David Payne. *Isaiah 40–55*. 2 vols. ICC. New York: Bloomsbury, 2006/2014.

Gonen, Jay Y. *The Roots of Nazi Psychology: Hitler's Utopian Barbarism*. Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2000.

Gowan, Donald E. *Eschatology in the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.

———. *Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death & Resurrection of Israel*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1998.

Gordon, Robert P., ed. *The Place Is Too Small for Us*: *The Israelite Prophets in Recent Scholarship*. Sources for Biblical and Theological Study 5. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1995.

Gray, Mark. *Rhetoric and Social Justice in Isaiah*. LHBOTS 432. New York: T&T Clark, 2006.

Habel, Norman C. *The Book of Job*. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1985.

———. "He Who Stretches Out the Heavens." *CBQ* 34 (1972): 417–18.

Hagner, Donald A. *How New is the New Testament? First-Century Judaism and the Emergence of Christianity.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.

Halcomb, T. Michael W. *Paul the Change Agent: The Context, Aims, and Implications of an Apostolic Innovator*. Wilmore, KY: GlossaHouse, 2015.

Hamilton, Victor P. *The Book of Genesis: Chapters 1–17*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Hanson, Howard E. "Num XVI 30 and the Meaning of *Bārā*." *VT* 22 (1972): 353–59.

Hanson, Paul D. *The Dawn of Apocalyptic: The Historical and sociological Roots of Jewish Apocalyptic Eschatology*. Rev. ed. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979.

———. *Isaiah 40–66*. IBC. Louisville: John Knox, 1995.

———. “The Theological Legacy of a Struggling Community.” Pages 91–103 in *Reading and Preaching the Book of Isaiah*. Edited by Christopher R. Seitz. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988.

Haran, Menahem. *Between Ri’shonot (Former Prophecies) and Ḥadashôt (New Prophecies): A Literary-Historical Study in the Group of Prophecies Isaiah XL-XLVIII*. Jerusalem: Magnes, 1963.

Harris, R. Laird, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, eds. *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament.* 2 vols. Chicago: Moody Press, 1980.

Harrisville, R. A. “The Concept of Newness in the New Testament.” *JBL* 74/2 (1955): 69–79.

———. *The Concept of Newness in the New Testament*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1960.

Harrod, James B. "The Bow: A Techno-Mythic Hermeneutic – Ancient Greece and the Mesolithic." *JAAR* 49 (1981): 425–46.

Hartley, John E. *The Book of Job*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.

Hasel, Gerhard. *Old Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate*. 4th ed. Rev. and enl. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.

Hausman, Carl R. *A Discourse on Novelty and Creation*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984.

Hays, Richard B. *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel’s Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

———. *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

———. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: Community, Cross, New Creation: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics.* New York: HarperCollins, 1996.

———. *Reading Backwards: Figural Christology and the Fourfold Gospel Witness*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2014.

———. “Reading the Bible with Eyes of Faith: The Practice of Theological Exegesis.” *JTI* 1 (2007): 5–21.

Heffelfinger, Katie M. *I Am Large, I Contain Multitudes: Lyric Cohesion and Conflict in Second Isaiah*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. "More than Mere Ornamentation: Poetics and Biblical Prophecy." *Irish Biblical Association* 36–37 (2014): 36–54.

Hester, James D. “Rhetorics in and for the New Millennium.” Pages 1–20 in *Rhetorics in the New Millennium: Promise and Fulfillment*. Edited by James D. Hester and J. David Hester. New York: T&T Clark, 2010.

Hester, James D., and J. David Hester, eds. *Rhetorics in the New Millennium: Promise and Fulfillment*. New York: T&T Clark, 2010.

Hoch, Carl B., Jr. *All Things New: The Significance of Newness for Biblical Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995.

Hoffmeier, James K. "The Exodus and Wilderness Narratives." Pages 46–90 in *Ancient Israel's History: An Introduction to Issues and Sources*. Edited by Bill T. Arnold and Richard S. Hess. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.

Holladay, William L. *The Root Šûbh in the Old Testament*. Leiden: Brill, 1958.

Holter, Knut. *Second Isaiah's Idol-Fabrication Passages*. BBET 28. Berlin: Lang, 1995.

Houck, Davis W., and Mihaela Nocasian. "FDR's First Inaugural Address: Text, Context, and Reception." *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 5 (2002): 649–78.

Howard, David M., Jr. “Rhetorical Criticism in Old Testament Studies.” *BBR* 4 (1994): 87–104.

Howard, Richard E. *Newness of Life: A Study in the Thought of Paul.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1975.

Hubbard, Moyer V. *New Creation in Paul’s Letters and Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Hundley, Michael. "The Way Forward is Back to the Beginning: Reflections on the Priestly Texts." Pages 209–24 in *Remembering and Forgetting in Early Second Temple Judah*. Edited by Ehud Ben Zvi and Christoph Levin. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012.

Hurowitz, Victor A. *I Have Built You an Exalted House: Temple Building in the Bible in Light of Mesopotamian and Northwest Semitic Writings*. JSOTSup 115. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992.

International Organization of Old Testament Scholars. *Congress Volume: Bonn, 1962*. VTSup 9. Leiden: Brill, 1963.

Isaacson, Walter. *Steve Jobs*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011.

Jackson, Jared J., and Martin Kessler, eds. *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenburg*. PTMS 1. Pittsburgh: Pickwick, 1974.

Jackson, T. Ryan. *New Creation in Paul's Letters*. WUNT 2/272. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010.

Jacobsen, Thorkild. *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976.

Janzen, J. Gerald. *When Prayer Takes Place: Forays into a Biblical World*. Edited by Brent A. Strawn and Patrick D. Miller. Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2012.

Jenni, Ernst, with assistance from Claus Westermann, eds. *Theological Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Translated by Mark E. Biddle. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997.

Joüon, Paul, and Takamitsu Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*. 2nd ed. StudBib 27. Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2009.

Kautzsch, E. *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar.* 2nd English ed. Revised by A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.

Kaylor, Brian T. "Accounting for the Divine: Examining Rhetorical Claims of God's Inspiration." *Journal of Communication and Religion* 34 (2011): 75–88.

Keel, Othmar, and Christoph Uehlinger. *Gods, Goddesses, and Images of God in Ancient Israel*. Translated by Thomas H. Trapp. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

Kennedy, George A. *Classical Rhetoric and Its Christian and Secular Tradition from Ancient to Modern Times*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1980.

———. *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984.

Kiewe, Amos, and Davis W. Houck, eds. *The Effects of Rhetoric and the Rhetoric of Effects.* Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 2015.

King, Philip J., and Lawrence E. Stager. *Life in Biblical Israel*. LAI. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001.

Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament.* 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–1976.

Klein, Ernest. *A Comprehensive Etymological Dictionary of the Hebrew Language for Readers of English*. New York: Macmillan, 1987.

Kleinig, John W. *The Lord's Song: The Basis, Function, and Significance of Choral Music in Chronicles.* Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993.

Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann J. Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and edited under the supervision of Mervyn E. J. Richardson. 4 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–1999.

Kooij, Arie van der. "'Coming' Things and 'Last' Things: Isaianic Terminology as Understood in the Wisdom of Ben Sira and in the Septuagint of Isaiah." Pages 135–40 in *The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy*. Edited by F. Postma et al. Maastricht: Uigeverij Shaker, 2002.

Koole, Jan L. *Isaiah III: Isaiah 40–66*. Translated by Anthony P. Runia. 3 vols. HCOT. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1997.

Korpel, Marjo C. A., and Johannes C. de Moor. *The Structure of Classical Hebrew Poetry: Isaiah 40–55*. Leiden: Brill, 1998.

Kortenaar, Neil ten. "Fearful Symmetry: Salman Rushdie and Prophetic Newness." *Twentieth-Century Literature* 54 (2008): 339–61.

Kugel, James L. *The Idea of Biblical Poetry: Parallelism and Its History.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981.

Kuntz, J. Kenneth. "Rhetorical Questions in Deutero-Isaiah." Pages 121–42 in *Writing & Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition.* Vol. 1. Edited by Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans. VTSupp 71. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Laato, Antti. "The Composition of Isaiah 40–55." *JBL* 109 (1990): 207–28.

Labuschagne, C. J. *The Incomparability of Yahweh in the Old Testament.* Leiden: Brill, 1966.

Leal, Robert Barry. *Wilderness in the Bible: Toward a Theology of Wilderness.* SBL 72. New York: Lang, 2004.

Leene, Henk. "History and Eschatology in Deutero-Isaiah." Pages 223–49 in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*. Edited by J. Van Ruiten and M. Vervenne. Leuven: University Press, 1997.

———. *Newness in Old Testament Prophecy: An Intertextual Study*. *OtSt* 64. Leiden: Brill, 2014.

Lessing, Reed. "Preaching Like the Prophets: Using Rhetorical Criticism in the Appropriation of Old Testament Prophetic Literature." *Concordia Journal* 28 (2002): 391–408.

Lewin, E. D. "Arguing for Authority: A Rhetorical Study of Jeremiah 1.4–19 and 20.7–18." *JSOT* 32 (1985): 105–19.

Liesch, Barry W., and Thomas J. Finley. “The Biblical Concept of Creativity: Scope, Definition, Criteria.” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 12 (1984): 188–97.

Lipson, Carol, and Roberta A. Binkley, eds. *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004.

Lockyer, Herbert, Jr. *All the Music of the Bible: An Exploration of Musical Expression in Scripture and Church Hymnody.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2004.

Longman, Tremper, III. "The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif." *WTJ* 44 (1982): 290–307.

Low, Maggie. *Mother Zion in Deutero-Isaiah: A Metaphor for Zion Theology.* StBibLit 155. New York: Lang, 2013.

Lund, Øystein. *Way Metaphors and Way Topics in Isaiah 40–55.* FAT 28. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.

Lundbom, Jack R. *Biblical Rhetoric and Rhetorical Criticism*. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2013.

———. *The Hebrew Prophets: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010.

———. *Jeremiah: A Study in Ancient Hebrew Rhetoric*. SBLDS 18. Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1975.

MacDonald, Malcolm Mac. "Redeeming the Earth: Imagining the Folk Songs." Pages 182–97 in *Isaiah and Imperial Context: The Book of Isaiah in the Times of Empire*. Edited by Andrew T. Abernathy, Mark G. Brett, Tim Bulkeley, and Tim Meadowcroft. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013.

MacDonald, Nathan. *Not Bread Alone: The Uses of Food in the Old Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Matheus, Frank. *Singt dem Herrn ein neues Lied: Die Hymnen Deuterojesajas*. Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990.

Maul, Stefan M. "Walking Backwards into the Future: The Conception of Time in the Ancient Near East." Pages 15–24 in *Given World and Time: Temporalities in Context.* Edited by Tyrus Miller. Budapest: Central European University Press, 2008.

May, Gerhard. *Creatio ex Nihilo*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994.

Mazar, Amihai. *Archaeology of the Land of the Bible: 10,000–586 B.C.E.* New York: Doubleday, 1990.

McCarter, P. Kyle, Jr. *1 Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 8. New York: Doubleday, 1980.

McConville, J. G. *Deuteronomy*. ApOTC 5. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002.

McGinnis, Claire Mathews, and Patricia K. Tull, eds. *"As Those Who are Taught:" The Interpretation of Isaiah from the LXX to the SBL*. Atlanta: SBL Press, 2006.

Mell, Ulrich. *Neue Schöpfung: eine traditionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Studie zu einem soteriologischen Grundsatz paulinischer Theologie*. BZNW 56. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989.

Melugin, Roy F. *The Formation of Isaiah 40–55.* Berlin: de Gruyter, 1976.

Melugin, Roy F., and Marvin A. Sweeney, eds. *New Visions of Isaiah*. JSOTSup 214. Sheffield: Sheffield Press, 1996.

Merendino, Rosario P. *Der Erste und der Letzte: eine Untersuchung von Jes 40–48*. VTSup 31. Leiden: Brill, 1981.

Mettinger, Tryggve N. D. "In Search of the Hidden Structure: YHWH as King in Isaiah 40–55." Pages 143–54 in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*. Vol. 1. Edited by Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans. VTSup 70, 1. FIOTL 1, 1. Leiden: Brill, 1997.

Middleton, J. Richard. *The Liberating Image: The* Imago Dei *in Genesis 1*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2005.

———. *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014.

Miller, Patrick D. "The Book of Jeremiah: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." Pages 553–926 in vol. 6 of *The New Interpreter's Bible.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

Moberly, R. W. L. "Preaching Christ from the Old Testament." Pages 233–50 in *Reclaiming the Old Testament for Christian Preaching*. Edited by Grenville J. R. Kent, Paul J. Kissling, and Laurence A. Turner. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010.

Moltmann, Jürgen. *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*. Translated by Margaret Kohl. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996. Translation of *Das Kommen Gottes: Christliche Eschatologie*. Gütersloh: Kaiser, 1995.

———. *Theology of Hope*. Translated by James W. Leitch. New York: Harper & Row, 1967. Translation of *Theologie der Hoffnung*. 5th ed. Munich: Kaiser, 1965.

Moo, Douglas J. “Creation and New Creation.” *BBR* 20 (2010): 39–60.

Morrison, Jeremy S. "Renovating a Deity: The Formation of Biblical Craftsmanship Metaphors and the Artisanal God-Talk of Deutero-Isaiah." PhD diss., Brandeis University, 2017.

Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1993.

Moulton, J. H., and G. Milligan. *The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament: Illustrated from the Papyri and Other Non-Literary Sources*. London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1949.

Moulton, Richard. *The Literary Study of the Bible: An Account of the Leading Forms of Literature Represented in the Sacred Writings*. Boston: heath and Company, 1895.

Mouw, Richard J. *When the Kings Come Marching In: Isaiah and the New Jerusalem*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.

Moyise, Steve, and Maarten J. J. Menken, eds. *Isaiah in the New Testament*. New York: T&T Clark, 2005.

Muilenburg, James. "The Book of Isaiah, Chapters 40–66: Introduction and Exegesis." Pages 381–773 in *Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, and Jeremiah*. *IB* 5. Nashville: Abingdon, 1956.

———. "Form Criticism and Beyond." *JBL* 88 (1969): 1–18.

Niditch, Susan. *Judges.* OTL. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2008.

Nixon, Sean. “The Pursuit of Newness: Advertising, Creativity and the ‘Narcissism of Minor Differences.’” *Cultural Studies* 20 (2006): 89–106.

North, C. R. "The Cain Music." *JBL* 83 (1964): 373–89.

———. “The ‘Former Things’ and the ‘New Things’ in Deutero-Isaiah.” Pages 111–26 in *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy Presented to Professor Theodore H. Robinson*. Edited by H. H. Rowley. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1957.

———. *The Second Isaiah: Introduction, Translation and Commentary to Chapters XL–LV*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964.

Noth, Martin. *Exodus.* OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1962.

Nurmela, Risto. *The Mouth of the Lord has Spoken: Inner-Biblical Allusions in Second and Third Isaiah*. Studies in Judaism. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006.

O'Connell, Robert H. *Concentricity and Continuity: The Literary Structure of Isaiah*. JSOTSup 188. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994.

Ollenburger, Ben C. "Isaiah's Creation Theology." *ExAud* 3 (1987): 54–71.

Oosting, Reinoud. *The Role of Zion/Jerusalem in Isaiah 40–55*. SSN 59. Leiden: Brill, 2013.

Oswalt, John N. *The Bible Among the Myths: Unique Revelation or Just Ancient Literature?* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009.

———. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1–39*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986.

———. *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 40–66*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

———. "God." Pages 280–93 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012.

———. "The God of Newness: A Sermon on Isaiah 43:14-21." *CTJ* 39 (2004): 386–90.

Overland, Paul B. "Rhetorical Criticism." Pages 655–63 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry & Writings*." Edited by Tremper Longman, III and Peter Enns. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Pao, David W. *Acts and the Isaianic New Exodus*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000. Repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000.

Patterson, Richard D. "Singing the New Song: An Examination of Psalms 33, 96, 98, and 149." *BSac* 164 (2007): 416–34.

Paul, Shalom M. "Deuteronom(ist)ic Influences on Deutero-Isaiah." Pages 219–27 in *Mishneh Todah: Studies in Deuteronomy and Its Cultural Environment in Honor of Jeffrey H. Tigay.* Edited by N. S. Fox et al. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2009.

———. *Isaiah 40–66: Translation and Commentary*. ECC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

Pope, Marvin H. *Job*. *AB* 15. 3rd ed. New York: Doubleday, 1973.

Porter, Stanley E., and Dennis L. Stamps, eds. *Rhetorical Criticism and the Bible*. JSNTSup 195. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002.

Postma, F., K. Spronk, and E. Talstra, eds. *The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy, Festschrift for Henk Leene*. Maastricht: Uitgeverij Shaker, 2002.

Poulsen, Frederik. *God, His Servant, and the Nations in Isaiah 42:1–9*. FAT 73. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014.

Prinsloo, W. S. “Isaiah 42,10–12: ‘Sing to the Lord a New Song...’” Pages 289–301 in *Studies in the Book of Isaiah, Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*. Edited by J. Van Ruiten and M. Vervenne. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997.

Propp, William H. C. *Exodus 1–18: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB 2. New York: Doubleday, 1999.

———. *Water in the Wilderness: A Biblical Motif and Its Mythological Background*. HSM 40. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987.

Quine, Cat. "Reading 'House of Jacob' in Isaiah 48:1–11 in Light of Benjamin." *JBL* 137 (2018): 339–57.

Rad, Gerhard von. *Old Testament Theology: Volume II.* Translated by D. M. G. Stalker. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1965.

Rankin, Oliver S. *The Origins of the Festival of Hanukkah. The Jewish New-Age Festival.* Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1930.

Reif, Stefan C. "Dedicated to חנך." *VT* 22 (1972): 495–501.

Renz, Thomas. *The Rhetorical Function of the Book of Ezekiel*. Leiden: Brill, 2002.

Rosenbaum, Michael. *Word-Order Variation in Isaiah 40–55: A Functional Perspective*. SSN. Assen: Van Gorcum, 1997.

Rowley, H. H., ed. *Studies in Old Testament Prophecy*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1946. Repr., 1957.

Rubenstein, Richard E. *Thus Saith the Lord: The Revolutionary Moral Vision of Isaiah and Jeremiah*. New York: Harcourt, 2006.

Ruiten, J. van, and M. Vervenne, eds. *Studies in the Book of Isaiah: Festschrift Willem A. M. Beuken*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1997.

Saggs, H. W. F. *The Encounter with the Divine in Mesopotamia and Israel*. London: Athlone Press, 1978.

Sakenfeld, Katharine Doob, ed. *New Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible.* 5 vols. Nashville: Abingdon, 2006–2009.

Sarna, Nahum M. *The JPS Torah Commentary: Exodus*. Philadelphia/New York: Jewish Publication Society, 5751/1991.

Sawyer, John F. A. *The Fifth Gospel: Isaiah in the History of Christianity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Schofield, J. N. *Introducing Old Testament Theology*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964.

Schoors, A. *I Am God Your Saviour*. VTSup 24. Leiden: Brill, 1973.

———. “Les choses anterieures et les choses nouvelles dans les oracles deutéro-isaïens.” *ETL* 40 (1964):19–47.

Schultz, Richard. “Isaiah.” Pages 194–210 in *Theological Interpretation of the Old Testament: A Book-by-Book Survey*. Edited by Kevin J. Vanhoozer. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005/2008.

———. "Isaiah, Book of." Pages 336–344 in *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Edited by Kevin J. Vanhoozer. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Scott, James M. "N. T. Wright's Hypothesis of an 'Ongoing Exile': Issues and Answers." Pages 3–16 in *Exiles: A Conversation with N. T. Wright.* Edited by James M. Scott. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2017.

Seitz, Christopher. “The Book of Isaiah 40–66: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections.” Pages 309–552 in vol. 6 of *The New Interpreter’s Bible.* Nashville: Abingdon, 2001.

———. *The Character of Christian Scripture: The Significance of a Two-Testament Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.

———. “The Divine Council: Temporal Transition and New Prophecy in the Book of Isaiah.” *JBL* 109 (1990): 229–47.

———. “Of Mortal Appearance: The Earthly Jesus and Isaiah as a Type of Christian Scripture.” *ExAud* 14 (1998): 31–41.

———. *Prophecy and Hermeneutics: Toward a New Introduction to the Prophets*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

———. *Word Without End: The Old Testament as Abiding Theological Witness.* Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2004.

———. *Zion's Final Destiny: The Development of the Book of Isaiah*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991.

Sharp, Carolyn. "(Re)Inscribing Power through Torah Teaching: Rhetorical Pedagogy in the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah." Pages 167–78 in *Thus Says the Lord: Essays on the Former and Latter Prophets in Honor of Robert R. Wilson.* Edited by John J. Ahn and Stephen L. Cook. New York: T&T Clark, 2009.

Silva, Moisés. *Biblical Words and Their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics.* Rev. and enl. ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Smart, James D. *History and Theology in Second Isaiah: A Commentary on Isaiah 35, 40–66*. London: Epworth, 1967.

Smith, Daniel Lynwood. "The Uses of 'New Exodus' in New Testament Scholarship: Preparing a Way through the Wilderness." *CurBR* 14 (2016): 207–43.

Smith, Jonathan Z. *Relating Religion: Essays in the Study of Religion*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004.

Smith, Mark S. "Bĕrît 'am / Bĕrît 'ôlām: A New Proposal for the Crux of Isa 42:6." *JBL* 100 (1981): 241–43.

Snell, Daniel. *Life in the Ancient Near East: 3100–332 B.C.E.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997.

Sommer, Benjamin D. *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 44–66.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998.

Sparks, Kenton L. *Ancient Texts for the Study of the Hebrew Bible: A Guide to the Background Literature.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005.

Spykerboer, Hendrik Carel. *The Structure and Composition of Deutero-Isaiah*. Groningen: Rijksuniversiteit te Groningen, 1976.

Stamper, Meda A. A. "Preaching the Advent Texts: 'new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home.'" *Journal for Preachers* 35 (2011): 2–9.

Sternberg, Meir. "The Bible's Art of Persuasion: Ideology, Rhetoric, and Poetics in Saul's Fall." *HUCA* 54 (1983): 45–82.

Stowe, David W. *Song of Exile: The Enduring Mystery of Psalm 137.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Strawn, Brent. "Lyric Poetry." Pages 437–46 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament: Wisdom, Poetry, and Writings*. Edited by Tremper Longman, III, and Peter Enns. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2008.

Strawn, B. A., and B. D. Strawn. “Prophecy and Psychology.” Pages 610–23 in *Dictionary of the Old Testament Prophets*. Edited by Mark J. Boda and J. Gordon McConville. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2012.

Stromberg, Jacob. *Isaiah After Exile: The Author of Third Isaiah as Reader and Redactor of the Book*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Stuhlmueller, Carroll. *Creative Redemption in Deutero-Isaiah*. AnBib 43. Rome: Biblical Institute, 1970.

———. “‘First and Last’ and ‘Yahweh-Creator’ in Deutero-Isaiah.” *CBQ* 29 (1967): 189–205.

———. “The Theology of Creation in Second Isaias.” *CBQ* 21 (1959): 429–67.

Swearingen, C. Jan. "Song to Speech: The Origins of Early Epitaphia in Ancient Near Eastern Women's Lamentations." Pages 213–25 in *Rhetoric Before and Beyond the Greeks.* Edited by Carol S. Lipson and Roberta A. Binkley. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004.

Talstra, Eep. “Second Isaiah and Qohelet: Could One Get Them on Speaking Terms?” Pages 225–36 in *The New Things: Eschatology in Old Testament Prophecy*. Edited by F. Postma, K. Sponk, and E. Talstra. Maastricht: Uigeverij Shaker, 2002.

Tawil, Hayim ben Yosef. *An Akkadian Lexical Companion for Biblical Hebrew.* New York: Ktav, 2009.

Tharekadavil, Antony. *Structure and Theology of Second Isaiah (Is 40–53)*. Kunnoth, India: Good Shepherd Books, 2008.

Tiemeyer, Lena-Sofia. *For the Comfort of Zion: The Geographical and Theological Location of Isaiah 40–55*. VTSup 139. Leiden: Brill, 2011.

———. "Imperial Influence on the Language and Content of Isaiah 40–55." Pages 122–36 in *Isaiah and Imperial Context: The Book of Isaiah in the Times of Empire*. Edited by Andrew T. Abernathy, Mark G. Brett, Tim Bulkeley, and Tim Meadowcroft. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013.

Tigay, Jeffrey H. *The JPS Commentary: Deuteronomy.* Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1996.

Toorn, Karel van der. *Scribal Culture and the Making of the Hebrew Bible*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007.

———. "The Iconic Book: Analogies Between the Babylonian Cult of Images and the Veneration of the Torah." Pages 229–48 in *The Image and the Book: Iconic Cults, Aniconism, and the Rise of Book Religion in Israel and the Ancient Near East*. Edited by Karel van der Toorn. CBET 21. Leuven: Uitgeverij Peeters, 1997.

Trompf, G. W. "Notions of Historical Recurrence in Classical Hebrew Historiography." Pages 213–29 in *Studies in the Historical Books of the Old Testament*. Edited by J. A. Emerton. VTSup 30. Leiden: Brill, 1979.

Tsumura, David Toshio. *The First Book of Samuel*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.

Tull, Patricia K. "Rhetorical Criticism and Beyond in Second Isaiah." Pages 326–34 in *The Changing Face of From Criticism for the Twenty-First Century.* Edited by Marvin A. Sweeney and Ehud Ben Zvi. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.

———. “Rhetorical Criticism and Intertextuality.” Pages 156–79 in *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*. Edited by Steven L. McKenzie and Stephen R. Haynes. Rev. and enl. ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1999.

Van Leeuwen, Raymond C. "Cosmos, Temple, House: Building and Wisdom in Mesopotamia and Israel." Pages 67–90 in *Wisdom Literature in Mesopotamia and Israel*. Edited by Richard J. Clifford. SBLSS 36. Leiden: Brill, 2007.

———. "Why Do the Trees of the Forest Sing a New Song? (Psalms 96 and 98)." *The Covenant Quarterly* 62.3 (2004): 22–34.

VanGemeren, Willem A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J., ed. *Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Vannoy, J. R. *Covenant Renewal at Gilgal: A Study of 1 Samuel 11:14–12:25*. Cherry Hill, NJ: Mack, 1978.

Wagner, J. Ross. *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul in Concert in the Letter to the Romans*. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Waltke, Bruce K., and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*. Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.

Walton, John H. *Ancient Near Eastern Thought and the Old Testament: Introducing the Conceptual World of the Hebrew Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.

Walton, John H., Victor H. Matthews, and Mark W. Chavalas. *The IVP Bible Background Commentary: Old Testament*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000.

Watson, Duane F., ed. *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy*. JSNTSup 50. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1991.

Watson, Wilfred G. E. "The Metaphor in Job 10,17." *Biblica* 63 (1982): 255–57.

Watts, John D. W. *Isaiah 34–66.* WBC 25. Rev. ed. Waco, TX: Word, 1987.

Watts, Rikki E. *Isaiah's New Exodus in Mark*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1997. Repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2000.

Webb, Barry G. *The Book of Judges*. NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

Weinfeld, Moshe. *Social Justice in Ancient Israel and in the Ancient Near East*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995.

Wenham, Gordon J. *The Book of Leviticus.* NICOT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979.

———. *Genesis 1–15*. WBC 1. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1987.

———. *Psalms as Torah: Reading Biblical Song Ethically*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012.

Westermann, Claus. *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*. OTL. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969.

White, A. Blake. *The Newness of the New Covenant*. Frederick, MD: New Covenant Media, 2008.

Whybray, R. N. *Isaiah 40–66*. NCB. London: Oliphants, 1975.

Wichelns, Herbert A. "The Literary Criticism of Oratory." Pages 38–39 in *The Rhetorical Idiom: Essays in Rhetoric, Oratory, Language, and Drama.* Edited by Donald C. Bryant. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1958.

Willey, Patricia Tull. *Remember the Former Things: The Recollection of Previous Texts in Second Isaiah*. SBLDS 161. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997.

Williamson, Hugh G. M. *The Book Called Isaiah: Deutero-Isaiah's Role in Composition and Redaction*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1994.

———. “First and Last in Isaiah.” Pages 95–108 in *Of Prophets’ Visions and the Wisdom of Sages: Essays in Honour of R. Norman Whybray on His Seventieth Birthday*. Edited by H. A. McKay and D. J. A. Clines. JSOTSup 163. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993.

———. "Jacob in Isaiah 40–66." Pages 219–29 in *Continuity and Discontinuity: Chronological and Thematic Development in Isaiah 40–66*. Edited by Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer and Hans M. Barstad. FRLANT 255. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2014.

———. "Recent Issues in the Study of Isaiah." Pages 21–39 in *Interpreting Isaiah: Issues and Approaches*. Edited by H. G. M. Williamson and D. G. Firth. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Wilson, Robert R. "Historicizing the Prophets: History and Literature in the Book of Jeremiah." Pages 136–54 in *On the Way to Nineveh: Studies in Honor of George M. Landes*. Edited by Stephen L. Cook and S. C. Winter. ASOR Books 4. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999.

Witherington, Ben, III. *Biblical Theology: The Convergence of the Canon.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019.

———. *Isaiah Old and New: Exegesis, Intertextuality, and Hermeneutics*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2017.

———. *Reading and Understanding the Bible.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Wold, Benjamin G. "Memory in the Dead Sea Scrolls: Exodus, Creation and Cosmos. Pages 47–74 in *Memory in the Bible*. Edited by Stephen C. Barton, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, and Benjamin G. Wold. WUNT 212. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007.

Wolff, Hans Walter. *Anthropology of the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1974.

Wyatt, Nicolas. *Space and Time in the Religious Life of the Near East*. BibSem 85. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2001.

———. "The Vocabulary and Neurology of Orientation: The Ugaritic and Hebrew Evidence." Pages 351–80 in *Ugarit, Religion and Culture: Proceedings of the International Colloquium on Ugarit, Religion and Culture, Edinburgh, July 1994: Essays in Honour of Professor J. C. L. Gibson*. Edited by Nicolas Wyatt, Wilfred G. E. Watson, and J. B. Lloyd. UBL 12. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1996.

Wu, Peter Jung-chu. "Worthy is the Lamb: The New Song in Revelation 5:9–10 in Relation to its Background." PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2005.

Youngblood, Ronald. *The Book of Isaiah: An Introductory Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993.

Zenger, Erich. "The God of Exodus in the Message of the Prophets as Seen in Isaiah." Pages 22–33 in *Exodus: A Lasting Paradigm*. Edited by Bas Van Iersel and Anton Weiler. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1987.

Zimmerli, Walther. "I Am Yahweh." Pages 1–28 in *I Am Yahweh.* Edited by Walter Brueggemann. Translated by Douglas W. Stott. Atlanta: John Knox, 1982.

Zulick, M. D. “Prophecy and Providence: The Anxiety over Prophetic Authority.” *Journal of Communication and Religion* 26 (2003): 195–207.