



## STRUCTURE, BIPARTITE DIVISION, AND REDACTION OF ISAIAH: INVESTIGATING 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, SEPTUAGINT, AND MASORETIC TEXT

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### **Abstract:**

*This study investigates the structural, bipartite, and redactional development of the Book of Isaiah by examining physical codicological evidence from the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>), the Old Greek/Septuagint (LXX), and the Masoretic Text (MT). Modern form-critical scholarship, notably represented by Marvin A. Sweeney, proposed a bipartite structure (Chapters 1–33 and 34–66) based primarily on literary genres and historical-redactional settings in the Persian period. However, these literary theories often lack integration with empirical manuscript evidence. Through a text-critical and redactional analysis, this article demonstrates that the bipartite division of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is substantiated by physical scroll features—such as the three-line gap at Column XXVII and orthographic shifts—while major textual minuses in Chapters 34–66 result from an exemplar with a damaged bottom edge rather than a pre-Masoretic developmental stage as proposed by Eugene Ulrich. Furthermore, comparative analysis of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, LXX, and MT in key passages (Isa. 7:9b, 38:21–22, 40:7–8, and 52:5b) reveals how scribal lapses, secondary corrections, and translational patterns interacted during the transmission history of Isaiah. This research provides a synthesis of textual criticism and redaction criticism, offering a grounded framework for understanding the textual transmission of the Isaiah corpus.*

**Keywords:** *Isaiah; 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>; Septuagint; Masoretic Text; Textual Criticism; Bipartite Structure.*

### **Abstrak:**

*Ditulis secara ringkas dan faktual, penelitian ini menyelidiki perkembangan struktur, pembagian bipartit, dan redaksi Kitab Yesaya dengan menguji bukti empiris-kodikologis dari Gulungan Yesaya Lengkap (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>), Septuaginta (LXX), dan Teks Masoret (TM). Pendekatan kritik bentuk modern, seperti yang diusulkan oleh Marvin A. Sweeney, mengemukakan struktur bipartit (Pasal 1–33 dan 34–66) yang berfokus pada genre sastra dan latar redaksi zaman Persia. Namun, teori redaksi sastra tersebut kerap kali kurang mengintegrasikan bukti fisik manuskrip dan saksi-saksi teks kuno. Melalui analisis kritik teks dan kritik redaksi, artikel ini membuktikan bahwa pembagian bipartit pada 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> didukung oleh fitur fisik naskah—seperti celah tiga baris pada Kolom XXVII serta perubahan pola ortografi—sementara omisi mayor pada Pasal 34–66 dipicu oleh eksemplar yang mengalami kerusakan fisik pada bagian bawah (damaged exemplar), bukan sekadar tahap redaksi awal sebelum Teks Masoret (pre-MT stage) sebagaimana dihipotesiskan oleh Eugene Ulrich. Lebih lanjut, analisis komparatif antara 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, LXX, dan TM pada pasal-pasal kunci (Yes. 7:9b, 38:21–22, 40:7–8, dan 52:5b) memperlihatkan bagaimana kesalahan penyalinan, koreksi sekunder, dan pola penerjemahan saling berinteraksi dalam sejarah transmisi Yesaya. Penelitian ini memberikan sintesis antara kritik teks dan kritik redaksi, serta menyajikan kerangka kerja yang kukuh dalam memahami transmisi tekstual korpus Yesaya.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Yesaya; 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>; Septuaginta; Teks Masoret; Kritik Teks; Pembagian Bipartit.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Discussions regarding the literary formation and structural division of the Book of Isaiah have undergone a major shift in Hebrew Bible scholarship. In his form-critical volume Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to the Prophetic Literature, Marvin A. Sweeney challenged the traditional tripartite consensus (Proto-, Deutero-, and Trito-Isaiah) by

*Nepho Gerson Laoly: Structure, Bipartite Division, And Redaction Of Isaiah* arguing that Isaiah is fundamentally structured as a bipartite composition comprising Chapters 1–33 (focusing on judgment and restoration) and Chapters 34–66 (announcing the arrival of restoration).<sup>1</sup> Sweeney placed the final Sitz im Leben of this bipartite structure in the fifth-century BCE Persian reform era under Ezra and Nehemiah.<sup>2</sup> However, as S. I. Cronje observed in his review, Sweeney’s form-critical model relies primarily on abstract literary genre analysis (prophetic exhortation) rather than physical manuscript evidence.

In contrast, empirical manuscript studies by Johann Cook<sup>3</sup> and John W. Olley<sup>4</sup> demonstrate that the bipartite division is anchored in physical codicological realities. In "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls," Johann Cook highlights the three-line blank space at Column XXVII (between Chapters 33 and 34) in the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) and notes a distinct orthographic dichotomy: defective spelling dominates Chapters 1–33, while plene spelling concentrates in Chapters 34–66.<sup>5</sup> John W. Olley, in "'Hear the Word of YHWH': The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>," confirms through structural analysis that these material features reflect ancient scribal division markers rather than modern chapter divisions.<sup>6</sup>

A major debate exists regarding the textual minuses in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Chapters 34–66. Eugene Ulrich argued that these minuses represent a pre-MT developmental stage where the Masoretic Text (MT) underwent secondary expansion.<sup>7</sup> However, Drew Longacre, in "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>'s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66," refutes Ulrich’s model. Building on initial observations by William H. Brownlee<sup>8</sup>, Longacre proves through material reconstruction that the major omissions, irregular line spacing, and textual distortions in Chapters 34–66 recur at

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<sup>1</sup> Marvin A Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to the Prophetic Literature*, vol. 16, The Forms of the Old Testament Literature (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), p.41; S I Cronje, "Review of Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to the Prophetic Literature, by Marvin A. Sweeney," *Old Testament Essays* 10, no. 1 (1997): 148–150.p.150

<sup>2</sup> Sweeney, *Isaiah 1–39 with an Introduction to the Prophetic Literature*, vol. 16, p. .51

<sup>3</sup> Johann Cook, "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 72, no. 4 (2016): 1–6.

<sup>4</sup> John W Olley, "'Hear the Word of YHWH': The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa," *Vetus Testamentum* 43, no. 1 (1993): 19–49.

<sup>5</sup> Cook, "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls."p.2

<sup>6</sup> Olley, "'Hear the Word of YHWH': The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa."p.21-22,29.

<sup>7</sup> Drew Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 20, no. 1 (2013): 17–50.p.18

<sup>8</sup> William H. Brownlee, "No Title," *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 127 (1952): 16–21.



regular 28–30 line intervals, demonstrating that the scribe copied from a damaged exemplar with a defective bottom edge.<sup>9</sup>

This study addresses the gap between abstract redaction theories and physical text-critical data by integrating five specialized studies. First, Kristin De Troyer and David R. Herbison, in "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet: The Septuagint and Qumran Texts of Isa 40:7–8," prove that a secondary scribe in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (identified as the scribe of 1QS, c. 100–75 BCE) inserted the plus at Isa 40:7–8 at the exact historical period when (Kaige)-Theodotion aligned the Old Greek (LXX) with the emerging MT.<sup>10</sup> Second, Jacob Stromberg, in "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> XXXII 14 (38:21–22)," demonstrates that the initial omission of Hezekiah's fig-pad passage in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> resulted from scribal parablepsis (al beit YHWH), whereas the redactional adaptation in Isaiah 39:1 ("he was sick and recovered") presupposes verse 21.<sup>11</sup> Third, Glen W. Menzies, in "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b," establishes that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>'s scribal variant (*ta'aminu*) acted as a textual bridge leading to the LXX/Vetus Latina reading (*ta'aminu / tabinu*).<sup>12</sup> Fourth, Kyle R. Greenwood, in "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?," resolves the morphological anomaly of *wlylyhy wlvn* in MT by demonstrating scribal metathesis from Proto-MT *wlylyh wylvn*.<sup>13</sup> Fifth, John Screnock, in "A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism," provides the methodological framework for retroverting Hebrew Vorlagen from Septuagint renderings based on statistical translation patterns.<sup>14</sup>

This study demonstrates that the bipartite structure and textual variants of Isaiah represent an interaction between damaged physical exemplars, scribal lapses, cross-

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<sup>9</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>'s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66." p.17-21,28.

<sup>10</sup> Kristin De Troyer and David R Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet," *Textus* 29, no. 2 (2020): 156–167.p.166.

<sup>11</sup> Jacob Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> XXXII 14 (38:21–22)," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 16, no. 2 (2009): 155–189.p.178.

<sup>12</sup> Glen W Menzies, "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 23, no. 80 (1998): 111–128.p.126.

<sup>13</sup> Kyle R Greenwood, "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?," *Vetus Testamentum* 56, no. 1 (2006): 138–141.p.138-140.

<sup>14</sup> John Screnock, "A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism," *Textus* 27, no. 1 (2018): 229–257.p.229-231.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilizes a qualitative literature-based methodology combining biblical textual criticism (textual criticism) and redaction criticism (redaction criticism) to examine the structural, bipartite, and redactional development of the Book of Isaiah.<sup>16</sup> Rather than conducting direct physical examination of ancient artifacts, this research relies on a critical synthesis and evaluation of published academic literature that analyzes primary manuscript witnesses, including the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>), the Old Greek/Septuagint (LXX), and the Masoretic Text (MT).<sup>17</sup>

### Data Sources and Academic Corpus

The analytical dataset for this literature-based investigation is drawn from peer-reviewed textual, philological, and redactional studies analyzing three primary textual traditions and their secondary witnesses:

*First*, The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>): Evaluated through codicological, paleographical, and orthographic analyses published by Johann Cook, John W. Olley, Drew Longacre, and Arie van der Kooij.<sup>18</sup> These studies document column layouts, paragraphing marks (paragraphoi), spacing irregularities, and secondary scribal corrections.

*Second*, The Old Greek / Septuagint (LXX): Examined through critical textual scholarship by Kristin De Troyer and David R. Herbison and John Screnock,<sup>19</sup> focusing on Old Greek renderings, Hexaplaric asterisked pluses, and early Jewish revisional traditions such as (Kaike)-Theodotion and Symmachus.

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<sup>15</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls”.p.4-5; Screnock, “A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism.”.p.229-231.

<sup>16</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls”.p.2.; Stromberg, “The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22).”.p.155.

<sup>17</sup> Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66”.p.18.; Screnock, “A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism.”.p.230.

<sup>18</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls”.p.1-2; Olley, ““Hear the Word of YHWH”: The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa”.p.21-22; Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66”.p.17-28; Arie van der Kooij, “Review of Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants, by Donald W. Parry,” *The Journal of Theological Studies* 71, no. 2 (2020): 845–847.p.845-848.

<sup>19</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet”.p.156-158.; Screnock, “A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism.”.p.229-234.



*Third*, The Masoretic Text (MT): Analyzed as represented in published critical editions (Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia) to serve as the comparative baseline for evaluating textual minuses, pluses, and redactional adaptations.<sup>20</sup>

Secondary manuscript evidence—including 1QIsa<sup>b</sup>, 4QIsa fragments, the Syriac Peshitta, the Vulgate, and Targum Jonathan—is integrated as documented in the literature.<sup>21</sup> In addition, macro-structural, historical, and lexical contexts are drawn from Phillip A. Powers on the 8th-century setting and literary cohesion of Isaiah, Tom Underhill on imperial critique, Elisha Qimron on Dead Sea Scrolls lexicography (yetzer as "creature" in Isa 26:3), and Peter J. Gentry on covenantal semantics (*qadosh* in Isaiah 6).<sup>22</sup>

### **Analytical Procedures and Expert Methodologies**

The execution of this literature-based research is organized into four sequential analytical procedures grounded in expert methodologies:

***Codicological Synthesis and Material Evaluation:*** published physical and codicological data regarding 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> are systematically synthesized using Drew Longacre's damaged exemplar methodology. This procedure evaluates physical column line counts, paragraphing divisions<sup>23</sup>, and major structural breaks—specifically the three-line blank space at Column XXVII.<sup>24</sup> Orthographic shifts (defective in Chapters 1–33 versus plene in Chapters 34–66) are correlated with Longacre's documented 28–30 line physical damage intervals to test the damaged exemplar hypothesis against Eugene

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<sup>20</sup> Cook, "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls".p.2.; Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)."p.158.

<sup>21</sup> Menzies, "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b".p.113.; Greenwood, "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?".p.138.; van der Kooij, "Review of Exploring the Isaiah Scrolls and Their Textual Variants, by Donald W. Parry."p.845

<sup>22</sup> Phillip A Powers, "Isaiah's Understanding of the Babylonian Threat," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 181, no. 724 (2024): 435–447.p.435-437; Tom Underhill, "Isaiah 14:3–23 as a Theological Critique of Imperial Ideology," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 181, no. 724 (2024): 448–457.p.448-450.; Elisha Qimron, "The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 2, no. 3 (1995): 295–329.p.295,314-315; Peter J Gentry, "The Lexical Meaning of 'Holy' in Hebrew," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 180, no. 720 (2023): 387–411.p.387-389.

<sup>23</sup> Olley, "'Hear the Word of YHWH': The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa."p.21-22.

<sup>24</sup> Cook, "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls."p.2.

*Nepho Gerson Laoly: Structure, Bipartite Division, And Redaction Of Isaiah* Ulrich's pre-MT developmental model.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, scribal identification methods established by Eric D. Raymond are applied to analyze the secondary corrector of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (the scribe of 1QS), tracking orthographic idiosyncrasies such as the weakening of gutturals and Aramaic -whi pronominal suffixes.<sup>26</sup>

***Evaluation of Vorlage Reconstruction Methods:*** John Srenock's (2018) methodology for retroverting Hebrew parent texts (Vorlagen) from Septuagint renderings is applied. By reviewing isomorphic translation patterns, statistical significance thresholds, and probability criteria established by Srenock (2018, pp. 231–234), this step distinguishes between inner-translational adaptations (translator-induced exegesis) and genuine variant readings present in the ancient Hebrew source text. This is combined with De Troyer and Herbison's (2020, pp. 157–166) comparative framework to analyze the Hexaplaric apparatus and (Kaige)-Theodotion revisional dynamics.

***Integration of Redaction Criticism and Textual Criticism:*** redaction criticism is integrated with textual criticism following Jacob Stromberg's analytical framework. This procedure evaluates whether major textual variants represent early unexpanded literary stages or scribal transmission errors.<sup>27</sup> It is applied specifically to parallel narrative units—such as the Hezekiah account in Isaiah 38–39 compared to 2 Kings 20—to analyze how editorial adaptations, parabolepsis, and secondary harmonizations operated during textual transmission.<sup>28</sup>

***Philological and Lexical Analysis:*** philological and metathetical analyses documented in the literature are evaluated for targeted key passages. This includes applying Glen W. Menzies's<sup>29</sup> textual-bridge analysis to Isa 7:9b (*ta'aminu / te'amenu* vs *tabinu*), Kyle R. Greenwood's<sup>30</sup> scribal metathesis model to Isa 52:5b (*wlylyhy wlvn / alālu*), and Elisha Qimron's<sup>31</sup> Hebrew lexicographical findings across Hebrew, Greek,

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<sup>25</sup> Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66”.p.21-28.; Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”.p.2.

<sup>26</sup> Eric D Raymond, “The Scribe of 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSB, 4Q53 (4QSame), 4Q175 and Three Features of Orthography and Phonology,” *Dead Sea Discoveries* 25, no. 2 (2018): 238–254.p.238-239,250.

<sup>27</sup> Stromberg, “The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22).”p.155-156.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.p.162-167.; Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66.”.p.37.

<sup>29</sup> Menzies, “To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b.”.p.123-126.

<sup>30</sup> Greenwood, “A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?”p.138-140.

<sup>31</sup> Qimron, “The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”p.314-315.



and Syriac witnesses.

Through this literature-based qualitative synthesis, the research establishes a methodologically rigorous framework that accounts for both the physical realities of ancient scribal copying and the editorial history of the Book of Isaiah.<sup>32</sup>

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **Codicological Bipartition of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the Damaged Exemplar Hypothesis**

Physical examination of the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) provides direct codicological evidence for the early structural division and scribal transmission of Isaiah.<sup>33</sup> Although 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the MT both contain 66 chapters in modern editions, material features in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> reveal a clear dichotomy: Part 1 (Chapters 1–33) and Part 2 (Chapters 34–66), most prominently marked by an unusual three-line blank space at the bottom of Column XXVII, precisely at the end of Chapter 33.<sup>34</sup> This break coincides with a marked orthographic shift, with Chapters 1–33 dominated by defective spelling and Chapters 34–66 by plene forms, including systematic plene interrogative particles and pronominal suffixes. These codicological and orthographic variations confirm that Isaiah's bipartite structure is not merely an abstract literary concept but a physical reality predating the copying of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> itself.<sup>35</sup>

While the physical bipartition of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is universally recognized, the interpretation of major textual minuses (omissions) in the second half of the scroll (Chapters 34–66) has generated significant textual debate. Eugene Ulrich proposed that major first-hand minuses in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> relative to the MT—such as in Isaiah 34:17–35:2, 37:4–7, 38:20b–22, 40:7, 40:14b–16, 51:6, and 63:3aβ–ba—attest to an earlier, unexpanded pre-MT developmental stage of the Isaiah text. According to Ulrich's model, the shorter text of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> represents an earlier edition, while the corresponding longer

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<sup>32</sup> Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66”.p.48.; De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet.”.p.166.

<sup>33</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls.”.p.1.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.p.2.; Olley, ““Hear the Word of YHWH”: The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa.”.p.22,29.

<sup>35</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls”.p.2; Olley, ““Hear the Word of YHWH”: The Structure of the Book of Isaiah in 1QIsaa.”.p.29

*Nepho Gerson Laoly: Structure, Bipartite Division, And Redaction Of Isaiah* readings in the MT reflect secondary literary expansions inserted during the late Second Temple period.<sup>36</sup>

However, Drew Longacre—expanding upon early observations by William H. Brownlee—refutes the pre-MT developmental model by demonstrating that these major minuses are best explained by physical manuscript damage rather than literary expansion.<sup>37</sup> Longacre's analysis identifies four recurring, converging features throughout Chapters 34–66 of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>:

*First, Spacing Irregularities:* The original scribe repeatedly left blank lines in the scroll (such as at 34:17–35:2, 37:4–7, 38:20b–22, 40:14b–16, and 41:11–12), a practice that is highly abnormal unless intended to reserve space for missing text to be inserted later.<sup>38</sup> *Second, Literary and Textual Difficulties:* In passages where no blank lines were left, the scribe produced corrupted readings, disrupted poetic parallelism, or attempted contextual rewrites from memory (such as the rewritten text in 36:11–12).<sup>39</sup>

*Third, Secondary Supplementations:* Later correctors (and occasionally the original scribe) subsequently inserted the missing passages from other Isaiah manuscripts into those exact blank spaces, bringing the text into alignment with the MT.<sup>40</sup> *Fourth, Consistent Distribution Pattern:* Most decisively, these textual problems, blank spaces, and secondary corrections recur at regular, mathematical intervals of 28–30 lines across the columns of Chapters 34–66.<sup>41</sup>

This steady 28–30 line pattern shows that the scribe of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> copied Chapters 34–66 from a second exemplar (Vorlage) that had decayed along its bottom edge while rolled up.<sup>42</sup> When the scribe reached the damaged or unreadable bottom edge of each column, he followed a careful method: either leaving blank lines to be filled in later from undamaged manuscripts, or trying to rebuild the text fully or partly from remaining letters, memory, and context.<sup>43</sup> As a result, 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> does not preserve an earlier, unexpanded stage of Isaiah, but instead reflects a text copied from a damaged manuscript that already

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<sup>36</sup> Longacre, “Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa’s Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66.”.p.18.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.p.18-21.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.p.21-22.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.p.23-24.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.p.24.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.p.25-28.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.p.26-28.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.p.48.



contained the full readings found in the MT and Septuagint.<sup>44</sup>

| 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> Column | Textual Reference | Codicological / Manuscript Feature                                    | Scribal Response & Secondary Correction                                                                                                              |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Column XXVIII             | Isaiah 34:17–35:2 | 1-line blank space at the bottom of the column after <b>עד עולם</b> . | Marked with a marginal sign (Cryptic <i>A kaph</i> / Paleo-Hebrew 'ayin); missing text inserted later by a secondary hand (1QIsa <sup>a</sup> corr). |
| Column XXIX               | Isaiah 36:11–12   | Heavily distorted text between <b>אדוניכמה</b> and <b>ויואח</b> .     | Primary scribe attempted a full reconstruction from memory (contextual guess) using 2 Kings 18:26; marked in margin with <b>עמנו</b> .               |
| Column XXX                | Isaiah 37:4–7     | Text interrupted mid-word at <b>הנמצאים / הנמצא</b> .                 | Left a 1.5-line blank space; text supplemented across one line and margin by a secondary corrector.                                                  |
| Column XXXII              | Isaiah 38:19–22   | Blank space of 2.5 lines following the end of verse 20.               | Omitted text (vv. 21–22) written in the left margin by a secondary hand ( <i>parablepsis</i> / <i>homoioteleuton</i> on <b>בית יהנה</b> ).           |
| Column XXXIII             | Isaiah 40:14–16   | Blank space of 2.5 lines after <b>משפט</b> .                          | Omitted verses (40:14–16) inserted into the blank space from another manuscript by a secondary corrector.                                            |
| Column XXXIV              | Isaiah 41:11–12   | Blank space of almost 2 full lines after <b>בקה</b> .                 | Partial reconstruction from memory by the primary scribe, omitting <b>היו כאין</b> and <b>בקשם ולא תמצאם</b> .                                       |

Table 1. Physical Damage Pattern of the 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Exempler and Scribal Responses in Chapters 34–66



The Great Isaiah Scroll, Chapter 33 Verse 24.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.p.30,49.

<sup>45</sup> “The Great Isaiah Scroll,” *The Israel Museum, Jerusalem*, last modified 2026, accessed September 22, 2026, <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/isaiah#33:24>.

## Textual Alignment and Secondary Corrections at the Intersection of Qumran and the Septuagint

A major convergence between Dead Sea Scrolls scholarship and Septuagint studies occurs in the textual analysis of Isaiah 40:7–8. In the Masoretic Text (MT), Isaiah 40:7–8 contains a repeated poetic phrase ("the grass withers, the flower fades") alongside the explanatory clause, "for the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people is grass" (*kî rūaḥ YHWH nāšābāh bô 'ākēn ḥāšîr hā'ām*).<sup>46</sup> However, in Joseph Ziegler's critical edition of the Septuagint, the Old Greek (OG) reconstructed lemma presents a significantly shorter reading (minus), omitting the clause "for the breath of the LORD blows upon it; surely the people is grass" altogether.<sup>47</sup> Traditionally, scholars attributed this shorter Greek text to a scribal error of parablepsis or homoioarchton caused by the repetitive phrasing in Hebrew.<sup>48</sup> Nevertheless, empirical evidence from Qumran demonstrates that the shorter text was not an inner-Greek error, but reflected an authentic, earlier Hebrew Vorlage.<sup>49</sup>

The first-hand text of the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a\*</sup>) in Column XXXIII, line 7, originally lacked this exact clause, matching the shorter reading preserved in the Old Greek.<sup>50</sup> However, a secondary corrector (1QIsa<sup>a</sup> corr) inserted the missing Hebrew text into Column XXXIII by writing above the line and down into the left margin.<sup>51</sup> Paleographical and orthographic analyses identify this secondary corrector as the same scribe responsible for copying *Serekh ha-Yahad* (1QS), 1QSa, 1QSB, and 4Q175, placing his active scribal career between 100 and 75 BCE.<sup>52</sup> The scribe used *tetrapuncta* (four dots) to represent the divine name (YHWH) in the marginal insertion, further confirming his Qumran scribal identity and method.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>46</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.156,158.

<sup>47</sup> Screnock, "A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism" p.231.; De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.157-158.

<sup>48</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.158-160.

<sup>49</sup> Screnock, "A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism" p.230-231.; De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.161-162.

<sup>50</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.163-165.

<sup>51</sup> Cook, "The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls"; De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.164.

<sup>52</sup> Eric D Reymond, "The Scribe of 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSB, 4Q53 (4QSamc), 4Q175 and Three Features of Orthography and Phonology," *Dead Sea Discoveries* 25, no. 2 (2018): 238–254.p.238-239.; De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet." p.166.

<sup>53</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, "Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet" p.164.; Reymond, "The Scribe of 1QS, 1QSa, 1QSB, 4Q53 (4QSamc), 4Q175 and Three Features of Orthography and Phonology." p.240



This secondary insertion in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> aligns precisely with developments in the transmission of the Greek text.<sup>54</sup> In Origen's Hexapla, the plus in Isaiah 40:7–8 is marked with an asterisk (\*), indicating that Origen imported the missing clause into his fifth column from the early Jewish revision of (Kaige)-Theodotion.<sup>55</sup> (Kaige)-Theodotion carried out a systematic revision of the Old Greek around the mid-first century BCE, seeking to align the Greek text with the proto-Masoretic Hebrew text that was becoming authoritative in Palestine.<sup>56</sup>

The historical synchronization between 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the Hexaplaric revisional apparatus provides critical insights into the textual history of Isaiah. Between 100 and 75 BCE, two distinct textual traditions of Isaiah coexisted: an earlier, shorter text type preserved in 1QIsa<sup>a\*</sup> and the Old Greek Vorlage, and an expanded text type represented in the proto-Masoretic tradition. During this exact period, Jewish scribes in Qumran (such as the scribe of 1QS) and Greek revisers in Palestine (Kaige-Theodotion) independently acted to standardize their manuscripts by inserting secondary expansions to match the proto-Masoretic text.<sup>57</sup> Consequently, the evidence from 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> and the Septuagint's Hexaplaric revisers mutually validate each other, confirming that textual alignment toward the Masoretic Text was an active, cross-traditional phenomenon in late Second Temple Judaism.<sup>58</sup>

| Textual Witness / Manuscript                           | Reading of Isaiah 40:7–8                                                                                                                                 | Textual Status                 | Historical Period & Scribe         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Old Greek (Early LXX)                                  | <i>ἐξήρανθη ὁ χόρτος, καὶ τὸ ἄνθος ἐξέπεσε</i><br>(Lacks the explanatory clause).                                                                        | Minus<br>(Short Text)          | 2nd Century BCE.                   |
| 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> (First Hand / 1QIsa <sup>a*</sup> ) | Column XXXIII, line 7 jumps from <b>יִצְלַבְנִירִצְחָשְׁבִי</b> directly to 40:8, lacking <b>כִּי רוּחַ יְהוָה נִשְׁבָּה בּוֹ אֶכֶן חֲצִיר הָעֵמֶם</b> . | Minus<br>(Short Text)          | Hasmonean Period (c. 125–100 BCE). |
| 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> (Secondary Corrector /              | Clause <b>אוֹבַהּבְשָׁנָהוּיְחִירִיכ</b> ... inserted above the line and down the left margin using tetrapuncta (...) for YHWH.                          | Plus<br>(Alignment with Proto- | Scribe of 1QS (c. 100–75 BCE).     |

<sup>54</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet.”.p.165-166.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.p.157-158, 162-163.

<sup>56</sup> Screnock, “A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism”.p.231-232; De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet.”.p.163.

<sup>57</sup> De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet”.p.166-167.; Screnock, “A New Approach to Using the Old Greek in Hebrew Bible Textual Criticism.”.p.233-234.

<sup>58</sup> Cook, “The Text-Critical and Exegetical Value of the Dead Sea Scrolls”.p.2-3.; De Troyer and Herbison, “Where Septuagint and Qumran Meet.”.p.167.

| 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> corr)            |                                                                                                                | MT)                                      |                                                                       |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| (Kaige)-<br>Theodotion /<br>Hexapla | Clause ὅτι πνεῦμα κυρίου ἔπνευσεν εἰς αὐτό... inserted into Greek text, marked with an asterisk (*) by Origen. | Plus<br>(Alignment<br>with Proto-<br>MT) | Jewish<br>Revisional<br>Tradition<br>(c. 50 BCE – 1st<br>Century CE). |

Table 2. Textual Alignment of Isaiah 40:7–8 Across Major Manuscript Witnesses

### Integrating Redaction Criticism and Textual Criticism: The Case of Hezekiah's Narrative (Isaiah 38–39)

A central case study at the intersection of higher redaction criticism and lower textual criticism is the manuscript layout of Column XXXII, line 14, in the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>), corresponding to Isaiah 38:21–22.<sup>59</sup> In the Masoretic Text (MT) and Septuagint (LXX), Isaiah 38:21–22 narrates Hezekiah's healing via a fig-pad (*dēbelet tē'ēnīm*) and his request for a sign of temple entry. In 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>, however, these two verses were omitted by the primary scribe, who left a blank space of roughly three-quarters of a line after verse 20 before resuming with Chapter 39:1 on the next line.<sup>60</sup> At a significantly later date, a secondary hand added verses 21–22 into the remaining blank line and down the left margin of Column XXXII.<sup>61</sup> Building on this physical layout, Shemaryahu Talmon and Eugene Ulrich argued that 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> preserves an earlier, unexpanded edition of the Isaiah narrative before the fig-pad episode was incorporated from 2 Kings 20:7–8 into the Isaiah corpus.<sup>62</sup>

However, a combined text-critical and redaction-critical investigation demonstrates that the initial absence of Isaiah 38:21–22 in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> is an accidental scribal omission rather than evidence of an earlier literary stage.<sup>63</sup> From a text-critical perspective, a clear visual trigger for scribal parablepsis (*homoioteleuton*) is present in the Hebrew text: the eye of the primary copyist skipped from the phrase *‘al bêt YHWH* ("at the house of the LORD") at the conclusion of verse 20b to the identical phrase *bêt*

<sup>59</sup> Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)." p.155.

<sup>60</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66" p.37.; Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)." p.158.

<sup>61</sup> Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)" p.158.; Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66." p.37.

<sup>62</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66" p.156,159.; Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)." p.18.

<sup>63</sup> Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)" p.157,172.; Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66." p.38.



YHWH ("the house of the LORD") at the conclusion of verse 22.<sup>64</sup> Furthermore, as Drew Longacre observes, this passage falls precisely along the regular 28–30 line physical damage pattern of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>'s second exemplar, where the copyist struggled with lacunose text, duplicated verses 19–20a, and left insufficient line space for full restoration.<sup>65</sup>

From a redaction-critical perspective, internal literary evidence from Isaiah 38–39 proves that verses 21–22 were already integrated into the Hebrew text of Isaiah prior to the copying of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>.<sup>66</sup> First, a comparison between Isaiah 39:1 and its parallel in 2 Kings 20:12 reveals a crucial editorial adaptation: while 2 Kings 20:12 states that the Babylonian envoys came because "he heard that Hezekiah had been sick," Isaiah 39:1 adds the clause "and had recovered" (*kî hālāh wayyehēzaq*; read as *wayyehî* in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>).<sup>67</sup> This redactional addition in Isaiah 39:1 directly fills in the narrative report of Hezekiah's recovery, explicitly presupposing the preparation of the fig-pad in verse 21 (*wayyehî*, "that he may recover").

Second, a unified redactional pattern links Isaiah 38:5 and Isaiah 38:22 against their source material in 2 Kings 20. In 2 Kings 20:5 and 2 Kings 20:8, the prophet specifies a rigid timeline: Yahweh promises to heal Hezekiah "on the third day" (*bayyôm haššēlîšî*) and Hezekiah asks for a sign that he will ascend "on the third day". In contrast, both Isaiah 38:5 and Isaiah 38:22 systematically delete all references to "healing" (*rāpā*) and "the third day".<sup>68</sup> This double omission represents a single, cohesive layer of Isaianic redaction designed to reframe Hezekiah's individual physical recovery into a broader typological adumbration of communal restoration and perpetual worship at the temple, as articulated in the Psalm of Hezekiah (Isaiah 38:9–20).<sup>69</sup>

Because the initial text of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> already contains both the redactional adaptation in Isaiah 39:1 and the systematic deletion in Isaiah 38:5, the manuscript must have been

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<sup>64</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66"; Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)."

<sup>65</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66." p.37-38.

<sup>66</sup> Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)." p.171,178.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.p.178.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.p.171.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.p.182-183.

*Nepho Gerson Laoly: Structure, Bipartite Division, And Redaction Of Isaiah* copied from an exemplar that already contained the full Isaianic revision, including Isaiah 38:21–22.<sup>70</sup> Consequently, integrating redaction criticism with manuscript analysis resolves the status of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> XXXII 14, establishing that higher literary editing preceded lower scribal omission in the transmission history of Isaiah.<sup>71</sup>

| Narrative Unit             | 2 Kings 20 (Source Text)                                                                                                                | MT Isaiah 38–39                                                                                   | 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> (Qumran Scroll)                                       | Redactional & Text-Critical Implication                                                                                             |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Healing Promise & Timeline | "I will heal you (הֲנִי רִפָּא לָךְ); on the third day (בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי) you shall go up to the house of the LORD" (2 Kgs 20:5). | Verbs רָפָא ("heal") and timeline בַּיּוֹם הַשְּׁלִישִׁי ("on the third day") deleted (Isa 38:5). | Matches MT Isaiah (omits healing and 3rd-day timeline).                  | Deletes immediate physical cure to reframe the episode around temple entry and the psalm of thanksgiving.                           |
| Fig-Pad & Sign Episode     | Placed in the middle of the narrative before the psalm (2 Kgs 20:7–8).                                                                  | Relocated to the end of the chapter after the psalm (Isa 38:21–22).                               | Written in the margin by a secondary hand (parablepsis on בֵּית יְהוָה). | Relocation connects Hezekiah's request for a sign directly to perpetual temple worship (בֵּית יְהוָה).                              |
| Recovery Report            | Babylonian envoys arrived because "he heard that Hezekiah was sick" (כִּי הָלַךְ חֲזַקְיָהוּ) (2 Kgs 20:12).                            | Reformulated to: "he was sick and had recovered" (כִּי חָלָה וַיִּחְזַק) (Isa 39:1).              | Preserves the clause "and had recovered" (וַיִּחְזַק).                   | Redaction in Isa 39:1 explicitly presupposes the execution of the fig-pad healing (Isa 38:21) prior to copying 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> . |

Table 3. Redactional and Textual Comparison of Hezekiah’s Narrative (2 Kings 20 vs. MT Isaiah 38–39 vs. 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>)

### Lexical Variants, Metathesis, and Ideological Shift in Textual Transmission

A critical dimension of textual transmission in the Book of Isaiah involves how small orthographic changes, scribal metathesis, and lexical shifts influenced theological interpretation and the critique of imperial ideology across textual traditions.<sup>72</sup> In his investigation "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b," Glen W. Menzies analyzes the divergent textual traditions of Isaiah 7:9b, where the Masoretic Text (MT) presents a famous Hebrew wordplay between *ta'aminu* (hiphil) and *te'amenu* (niphil), reading "If you will not believe, you will not be established".<sup>73</sup> In contrast, the Septuagint (LXX), the Syriac Peshitta, and the Vetus Latina preserve a

<sup>70</sup> Longacre, "Developmental Stage, Scribal Lapse, or Physical Defect? 1QIsaa's Damaged Exemplar for Isaiah Chapters 34–66".p.178-179.; Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)".p.38.

<sup>71</sup> Stromberg, "The Role of Redaction Criticism in the Evaluation of a Textual Variant: Another Look at 1QIsaa XXXII 14 (38:21–22)".p.188-189.

<sup>72</sup> Menzies, "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b".p.111-113.; Greenwood, "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?".p.138-140.

<sup>73</sup> Menzies, "To What Does Faith Lead? The Two-Stranded Textual Tradition of Isaiah 7.9b.".p.112.



second textual tradition reading "If you will not believe, neither will you understand" (*pisteusete ... sunete*), retroverting to a Hebrew Vorlage containing the root *byn* (*tabinu*) in the second clause.<sup>74</sup> Menzies demonstrates that the Great Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa<sup>a</sup>) presents a unique intermediate reading (*ta'aminu ... ta'aminu*, "If you will not believe, then you will not believe"), which represents a scribal error caused by the careless addition of a yod (*sere-yod*) by an ancestor copyist.<sup>75</sup> This mechanical scribal lapse rendered the Hebrew line semantically unstable, creating a textual bridge that prompted an ancient conjectural emendation to *tabinu* ("understand") in the proto-LXX stream, which ultimately shaped Saint Anselm's influential theological paradigm *fides quaerens intellectum* ("faith seeking understanding").<sup>76</sup>

In addition to orthographic errors, scribal metathesis frequently obscured the original meaning of prophetic oracles in the Masoretic tradition. In "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?", Kyle R. Greenwood addresses the longstanding textual difficulty of the Masoretic phrase *wylylw wmslw*, traditionally vocalized as *yêlîlû* ("its rulers howl"). Greenwood points out that *wlylyhy* is morphologically anomalous because the hiphil imperfect stem-identifying *he* is unsyncopated, and the verb *lly* in Biblical Hebrew carries an exclusively negative connotation of mourning that contradicts the joyful restoration context of Isaiah 52.<sup>77</sup> By evaluating the Septuagint, Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion, the Peshitta, and 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (*wllwhw*), Greenwood proves that scribal metathesis occurred in Proto-MT from an original reading *wylylw wmslw* (*hêlîlû*, hiphil 3cp perfect).<sup>78</sup> Furthermore, by appealing to the Akkadian cognate *alālu* ("to boast, rejoice, utter cries of jubilation"), Greenwood resolves the contextual difficulty, translating the phrase as "its Babylonian rulers have rejoiced," referring to the exultation of Israel's oppressors over Judah's downfall during the Babylonian exile.<sup>79</sup>

Beyond mechanical transmission errors, Dead Sea Scrolls lexicography provides

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.p.113.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.p.123-125.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.p.111-112, 126-127.

<sup>77</sup> Greenwood, "A Case of Metathesis in Isaiah LII 5b?".p.138.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.p.139-141.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.p.194-196.

*Nepho Gerson Laoly: Structure, Bipartite Division, And Redaction Of Isaiah* vital evidence for how ancient readers understood key Isaianic terms.<sup>80</sup> In "The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls," Elisha Qimron examines the phrase *yetzer samuk* in Isaiah 26:3, which traditional lexicons translate as "steadfast mind" or "mind".<sup>81</sup> Qimron demonstrates that non-biblical Qumran literature (such as 1QH 18:13 and 1QS 4:20) consistently uses *yetzer* as a technical term derived from the root *y-tz-r* ("to create") meaning "creature" or "human being".<sup>82</sup> Consequently, the ancient Qumran understanding of Isaiah 26:3 is "the confident creature/human being you guard in safety," reflecting a living Hebrew semantic tradition from the Second Temple period. Similarly, Peter J. Gentry, in "The Lexical Meaning of 'Holy' in Hebrew," re-evaluates the semantics of *qadosh* ("holy") in Isaiah 6, arguing against traditional systematic theology definitions that reduce holiness to "separation" or "transcendence".<sup>83</sup> Gentry establishes through exegesis of Exodus 3, Exodus 19, and Isaiah 6 that *qadosh* fundamentally means "consecrated" or "devoted," and when applied to Yahweh, it denotes His complete devotion to His covenant, His justice, and social righteousness, confronting the corrupt societal practices of Judah.<sup>84</sup>

Finally, these textual and lexical insights converge in shaping Isaiah's theological critique of imperial ideology.<sup>85</sup> In "Isaiah 14:3–23 as a Theological Critique of Imperial Ideology," Tom Underhill argues that the mocking dirge (*māšāl*) against the "king of Babylon" in Isaiah 14:4 uses deliberate anonymity to target imperial ideology as a whole rather than a single historical monarch.<sup>86</sup> The poem parodies Mesopotamian royal ideology by contrasting the tyrant's astronomical self-deification (*Hēlēl ben-Šaḥar*, "Day Star, son of Dawn") with his ignominious descent into Sheol, asserting Yahweh's absolute universal sovereignty over all human empires.<sup>87</sup> Phillip A. Powers, in "Isaiah's Understanding of the Babylonian Threat," complements this by showing that Isaiah's oracles against Babylon (Isaiah 13:1–14:23) fit plausibly within the geopolitical realities of the mid-to-late eighth century BCE during the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian

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<sup>80</sup> Qimron, "The Biblical Lexicon in Light of the Dead Sea Scrolls."p.295.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.p.314.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.p.314-315.

<sup>83</sup> Gentry, "The Lexical Meaning of 'Holy' in Hebrew."p.387-389.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.p. 393, 400–405

<sup>85</sup> Underhill, "Isaiah 14:3–23 as a Theological Critique of Imperial Ideology"p.448.; Powers, "Isaiah's Understanding of the Babylonian Threat."p.435.

<sup>86</sup> Underhill, "Isaiah 14:3–23 as a Theological Critique of Imperial Ideology."p.448-451.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.p.449,454-456.



incursions.<sup>88</sup> Together, these studies demonstrate that the transmission of Isaiah's text preserved both physical manuscript peculiarities and a profound theological critique of imperial power grounded in Yahweh's covenantal devotion.<sup>89</sup>

| Passage         | Masoretic Text (MT)                                                                                                                              | 1QIsa <sup>a</sup> / Qumran Readings                                                                              | Septuagint (LXX) & Ancient Versions                                                                                                                                                             |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Isaiah 7:9b     | אִם לֹא תֵאֱמִינוּ כִּי לֹא תֵאֱמִנּוּ<br>(ta'aminu ... te'amenu —<br>Root: אָמַן) "If you will not<br>believe, you will not be<br>established". | אִם לֹא תֵאֱמִינוּ כִּי לֹא תֵאֱמִנּוּ<br>(ta'aminu ... ta'aminu —<br>scribal error adding yod).                  | ἐὰν μὴ πιστεύσητε,<br>οὐδὲ μὴ συνήτε<br>(pisteusete ... sunete —<br>Root: בִּיַן / tabinu; Pesh:<br>w'l thymnw'n 'p l' tsklwn)<br>"If you will not believe,<br>neither will you<br>understand". |
| Isaiah<br>52:5b | וּמִשְׁלֹו וְהִלְלֹו<br>(wylylw wmslw —<br>Kethib-Qere anomaly with<br>infix he in Hiphil<br>imperfect).                                         | וּמִשְׁלֹו וְהִלְלֹו<br>(wylylw wmslw).                                                                           | ὁλολύετε / ὁλολύουσιν<br>(Cognate of יָלַל; Pesh:<br>myllyn).                                                                                                                                   |
| Isaiah 26:3     | יֵצֶר סָמוּךְ<br>(yetzer samuk —<br>traditionally translated<br>"steadfast mind").                                                               | Yetzer understood as<br>"creature / human being"<br>(derived from y-tz-r; cf.<br>1QH 18:13 יֵצֶר אֲשֶׁר סָמְכָה). | πλάσμα<br>(plasma — "creature /<br>thing formed").                                                                                                                                              |

Table 4. Synthesis of Lexical Variants, Metathesis, and Theological Implications

#### IV. KESIMPULAN/PENUTUP

This study demonstrates that the structural, bipartite, and redactional development of the Book of Isaiah cannot be reduced to abstract literary models alone, but is directly grounded in empirical manuscript evidence from Qumran, the Septuagint, and the Masoretic Text. The codicological bipartition of 1QIsa<sup>a</sup>—evidenced by the three-line space at Column XXVII and distinct orthographic shifts—confirms an ancient physical division of the corpus. However, contrary to developmental theories proposing that textual minuses in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> represent an unexpanded pre-Masoretic stage, material analysis reveals a recurring 28–30 line damage pattern indicating that Chapters 34–66 were copied from an exemplar with a defective bottom edge. Furthermore, secondary corrections in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> (such as Isa 40:7–8 executed by the scribe of 1QS) run parallel to the Greek revisional work of (Kaike)-Theodotion, proving that cross-traditional alignment toward the proto-Masoretic standard was an active historical phenomenon during the late Second

<sup>88</sup> Powers, "Isaiah's Understanding of the Babylonian Threat." p.435-437.

<sup>89</sup> Underhill, "Isaiah 14:3–23 as a Theological Critique of Imperial Ideology" p.456.; Powers, "Isaiah's Understanding of the Babylonian Threat." p.443.

Temple period.

By integrating redaction criticism with textual criticism, this research resolves longstanding textual anomalies and illuminates the transmission history of Isaiah. In the narrative of Hezekiah (Isa 38–39), the initial absence of verses 21–22 in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> resulted from scribal parablepsis, whereas the editorial adaptation in Isaiah 39:1 ("and had recovered") already presupposed the presence of verse 21 prior to the scroll's copying. Similarly, philological and lexical analyses reveal that scribal errors—such as the orthographic variant in 1QIsa<sup>a</sup> Isa 7:9b (*ta'aminu* / *ta'aminu*)—acted as a textual bridge provoking the Septuagint's reading (*tabinu* / *sunete*), while scribal metathesis in Isa 52:5b (*wlylyh wylvm*) resolves morphological ambiguities by revealing an Akkadian cognate (*alālu*) reflecting imperial exultation. Ultimately, this literature-based synthesis provides a methodologically rigorous framework that harmonizes physical manuscript dynamics with editorial history, offering fresh clarity for biblical textual criticism.



## V. DAFTAR PUSTAKA

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