

Isaiah 55–66 and the Psalms: Shared Viewpoints, Literary Similarities, and Neighboring Authors

ULRICH BERGES

uberges@uni-bonn.de

Faculty of Catholic Theology, University of Bonn, 53113 Bonn, Germany
Department of Old Testament Studies, University of Pretoria, South Africa

One of the main results of the last thirty years of research on the books of Isaiah and Psalms is that both are not just collections of individual texts but well-organized compositions. This is not unique to Isaiah and Psalms but applies to every book of the Old Testament. What is very special about these two books, however, is the centrality of Zion, the contrast of the righteous and the wicked, the inclusion of non-Israelites, the singing to YHWH, and the reservation regarding the sacrificial cult. A few scholars have already put forward the idea of temple singers as collective authors, who had begun their oratorio of hope in the Babylonian exile and continued it after their return to Jerusalem under Darius, connecting it to the literary heritage of Isaiah ben Amoz and his disciples. In this article, I further test the closeness of Isaiah and Psalms by analyzing some striking similarities between Isa 55–66 and the book of Psalms. The goal of this research is not to prove the identity of the authors of both compositions but to substantiate their intellectual neighborhood in postexilic times.

The last part of the book of Isaiah and the Psalter share quite a number of essential wordings, metaphors, and theological ideas. In this article, I present some of the most striking correspondences together with an inquiry into their literary dependence. The growing awareness of collective authorships leads to the thesis that both compositions are the result of neighboring authors who stood in close contact with each other.

I. THE INTERACTION OF DIACHRONIC AND SYNCHRONIC RESEARCH

The point of departure for this literary inquiry is twofold and combines the diachronic and synchronic methods. First, a diachronic approach aims to clarify

the historical conditions of the text production. The acknowledgment has grown in the last thirty years that both Isaiah and Psalms are not just collections of individual texts but well-organized compositions. Both corpora are at the same time literary works of art, a complex historical testimony, and the result of the history of a text that was approximately five hundred years in the making. A few scholars have put forward or discussed the idea of temple singers as collective authors who had begun their oratorio of hope in the Babylonian exile and continued it after their return to Jerusalem under Darius.¹ These cultic singers affiliated themselves with a preexisting Isaiah tradition in Jerusalem that continued at least up to the first deportation in 597 BCE.² They could rely on the undisputed authority of Isaiah ben Amoz, and thus the preexilic Isaiah tradition was extended into the postexilic time in parallel with prophetic books like Jeremiah and Ezekiel. These cultic singers were part of the guild of skilled authors in ancient Israel. Beat Weber supports this direction of research between Isaiah and Psalms: “The assumption of a common guild or highly interconnected circles of writers as a stronghold of tradition and transmission, of text production and redaction is a valid possibility, which may serve to explain the tangible peculiarities and commonalities in the text compositions.”³ He considers the Asaphites to be the appropriate link between both corpora, because they had already gained experience in the literary processing of the fall of the northern kingdom (see Pss 74, 77–78, 80, 83; new application in Ps 79 after 586).⁴ Further, Bernard Gosse states in a recent essay, “The presentation of the return from exile in the Book of Isaiah depends on the Psalms of Asaph.”⁵

Already Claus Westermann in his commentary on Isaiah 40–55 (1966) began to indicate a relationship between Isaiah and the temple singers. He wrote, “A leading characteristic of Deutero-Isaiah’s prophecy lies in its affinities with the diction of this book. The prophet’s familiarity with the psalms must have been quite exceptional.... Perhaps, then, Deutero-Isaiah was in some way connected with the temple singers, who were the people principally in charge of the Psalter and its

¹Ulrich Berges, *Jesaja 40–48*, 2nd ed., HThKNT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2020), 38–43; Beat Weber, “‘Asaf’ und ‘Jesaja’: Eine komparatistische Studie zur These von Tempelsängern als für Jesaja 40–66 verantwortlichen Trägerkreis,” *OTE* 22 (2009): 456–87; Joseph Blenkinsopp, *The Beauty of Holiness: Re-reading Isaiah in the Light of the Psalms* (London: T&T Clark, 2019), 66–74.

²Thus Rüdiger Feuerstein, “Weshalb gibt es ‘Deuterodesaja’?,” in *Ich bewirke das Heil und erschaffe das Unheil (Jesaja 45,7): Studien zur Botschaft der Propheten; Festschrift für Lothar Ruppert zum 65. Geburtstag*, ed. Friedrich Diederich and Bernd Willmes, FB 88 (Würzburg: Echter, 1998), 93–134.

³Weber, “‘Asaf’ und ‘Jesaja,’” 478.

⁴See Weber, “‘Asaf’ und ‘Jesaja,’” 458.

⁵Bernard Gosse, “L’usage des Psaumes d’Asaph dans la présentation du retour de l’exil en Isaïe 40–52,” *OTE* 23 (2010): 66–81, here 66; see also Gosse, *Isaïe: Le livre de la contestation*, TranseuSup 17 (Leuven: Peeters, 2012), 41–55.

transmission.”⁶ Almost thirty years later, Otto Kaiser underlined the connection of Isaiah 40–66 with the Psalter because both collections are largely indebted to the traditions of the Jerusalem temple singers.⁷

In a recent publication, Joseph Blenkinsopp proposes, as the subtitle indicates, *Re-reading Isaiah in the Light of the Psalms*. Being sympathetic to the hypothesis of the temple singers, he states that not everything in Deutero-Isaiah can be tracked down to this environment of literary production.⁸ This is certainly true, but nobody presumes to explain the Isaiah text exclusively by comparison with the Psalms. The goal of this article is therefore not to prove the identity of the authors but to substantiate the intellectual neighborhood of these circles of tradents.

The issue of “tradents” (German *Trägerkreise*) is of special importance in this regard because it implies that the idea of Bernhard Duhm concerning Deutero- and Trito-Isaiah as *individual* authors in exilic and postexilic times ought to be abandoned.⁹ One should acknowledge that in pre-Hellenistic times, biblical books were not written by single authors; instead, they were written in the tradition of authorities: “Because it is not the author who matters, but the authority in whose name one thinks and rethinks, the great Prophet Books may contain rather few of the words of the historical Isaiah, Jeremiah, or Ezekiel without having thereby been misnamed.”¹⁰ Additionally the number of skilled literary artisans in postexilic Israel was extremely small because of the poor conditions in Judah and Jerusalem in Persian times.¹¹ Ehud Ben Zvi thinks of only a handful of literati responsible for collecting, rewriting, and editing the biblical scrolls. According to him, the impoverished province of Yehud did not have the financial means to feed a larger group

⁶Claus Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66: A Commentary*, trans. David M. G. Stalker, OTL (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969), 8.

⁷See Otto Kaiser, *Die prophetischen Werke*, vol. 2 of *Grundriß der Einleitung in die kanonischen und deuterokanonischen Schriften des Alten Testaments* (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994), 49.

⁸See Blenkinsopp, *Beauty of Holiness*, 67.

⁹Ulrich Berges, “Farewell to Deutero-Isaiah or Prophecy without a Prophet,” in *Congress Volume Ljubljana 2007*, ed. André Lemaire, VTSup 133 (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 575–95; Berges, “Isaiah: Structure, Themes, and Contested Issues,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Prophets*, ed. Carolyn J. Sharp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 153–70.

¹⁰Ernst A. Knauf, “Audiatur et altera pars: Zur Logik der Pentateuch-Redaktion,” *BK* 53 (1998): 118–26, here 121.

¹¹Oded Lipschits, “Persian-Period Judah: A New Perspective,” in *Texts, Contexts and Readings in Postexilic Literature: Explorations into Historiography and Identity Negotiation in Hebrew Bible and Related Texts*, ed. Louis Jonker, FAT 2/53 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 187–211; Lipschits, “Materialkultur, Verwaltung und Wirtschaft in Juda während der Perserzeit und die Rolle des Jerusalemer Tempels,” in *Persische Reichspolitik und lokale Heiligtümer: Beiträge einer Tagung des Exzellenzclusters “Religion und Politik in den Kulturen der Vormoderne und Moderne” vom 24–26 Februar 2016 in Münster*, ed. Reinhard Achenbach, BZABR 25 (Wiesbaden: Harrasowitz, 2019), 185–208; Kenneth A. Ristau, *Reconstructing Jerusalem: Persian-Period Prophetic Perspectives* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2016), 72–75.

of professional scribes.¹² It seems very reasonable that groups of scribes worked in close contact with the Jerusalem temple; they knew each other and sometimes promoted very different and sometimes quite comparable theological viewpoints and social interests. The result is a polyphony that is one of the most distinct features of the Old Testament, which brings Konrad Schmid to the following conclusion: “There is no reason to suppose that there was a homogeneous milieu of Jerusalem scribes. Although the groups responsible for the origins of the Old Testament books were probably very limited and located mainly in Jerusalem, at least from the Persian period onward, they appear to have represented a relatively broad spectrum of theological ideas.”¹³

Schmid assumes that these scribes wrote not primarily for a broader public but for themselves to give voice to their theological convictions in the multifaceted postexilic discourse: “In other words, the audience was essentially identical with the authors themselves. This seems especially likely because of the extreme degree of intertextuality in the Old Testament literature, which was evidently addressed to a particularly well-educated group of recipients.”¹⁴ This statement gives credit to the assumption that the similarities in wording and theological ideas are the result of skilled writers who created a network of cross references on purpose and with intellectual delight.

These results of the diachronic studies find further confirmation in the manifold synchronic observations regarding the literary connections of Isaiah 40–66 with the so-called Proto-Isaianic chapters 1–39 and with other books of the Hebrew Bible. The second half of the book of Isaiah (Isa 40–66), especially the last part of it (Isa 56–66), attracted special attention because the correspondences in these two sections are particularly intense in number and depth.¹⁵

¹²See Ehud Ben Zvi, “The Urban Center of Jerusalem and the Development of the Literature of the Hebrew Bible,” in *Urbanism in Antiquity: From Mesopotamia to Crete*, ed. Walter E. Aufrecht, Neil A. Mirau, and Steven W. Gauley, JSOTSup 244 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997), 201–6; Ben Zvi, “Introduction: Writings, Speeches, and the Prophetic Books; Setting an Agenda,” in *Writings and Speech in Israelite and Ancient Near Eastern Prophecy*, ed. Ehud Ben Zvi and Michael H. Floyd, SymbS 10 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), 1–29; see also David M. Carr, *Writing on the Tablet of the Heart: Origins of Scripture and Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 115–16.

¹³Konrad Schmid, *The Old Testament: A Literary History*, trans. Linda M. Maloney (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 35; see also Schmid, *Schriftgelehrte Traditionsliteratur: Fallstudien zur innerbiblischen Schriftauslegung im Alten Testament*, FAT 77 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011).

¹⁴Schmid, *Old Testament*, 38.

¹⁵Hugo Odeberg, *Trito-Isaiah (Isaiah 56–66): A Literary and Linguistic Analysis*, UUA (Uppsala: A.-B. Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1931); Benjamin D. Sommer, *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66*, *Contraversions* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998); Risto Nurmela, *The Mouth of the Lord Has Spoken: Inner-Biblical Allusion in Second and Third Isaiah*, SJ(L) (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2006); see also Richard L. Schultz, *The Search for Quotation: Verbal Parallels in the Prophets*, JSOTSup 180 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999).

Diachronic assumptions about text production in postexilic Israel influence the understanding of the literary connections one finds in the texts themselves. This is the case in Michael Fishbane's *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel*, where he stresses that the circumstances in which prophets, scribes, and priests wrote have to be taken into account, although the evidence from the Hebrew Bible itself remains somewhat poor: "To be sure, this information hardly constitutes a precise social or historical understanding of the scribes and their craft, of legists and their deliberations, or of prophets and their schools. But it is a basis."¹⁶ Benjamin D. Sommer connects diachronic presuppositions with synchronic observations in his monograph *A Prophet Reads Scripture: Allusion in Isaiah 40–66*. For him, these chapters are deeply rooted in history, that is, in the time after the fall of the Babylonian Empire, and he stresses "that Isaiah 40–66 forms a single corpus, probably by one author."¹⁷ If one tries to detect intentional literary reception in biblical books, one cannot avoid working with hypotheses regarding at least the relative chronology.¹⁸ Working hypotheses form part of all academic research, and this applies also to the question of the literary interplay of the last part of Isaiah and Psalms. In a recent study investigating the relationship between Isaiah and Zephaniah, James Nogalski underlines that the proof of intentional borrowings can be made only on a case-by-case basis.¹⁹

In the following pages, I will first analyze common assumptions and shared viewpoints (section II) and then some very specific similarities (section III) between both text corpora. In doing so, I will use the following criteria to determine a relationship between Isaiah and Psalms. The criteriology of literary resemblances in biblical texts remains a debated issue.²⁰ Among the criteria for determining such resemblances, the following three possess some weight.²¹

1. Consonance: The clearer the similarity on the level of syntax, semantics, forms of speech, poetic motifs, and so on, the higher is the probability of a close relation between two texts.
2. Rarity: In cases of similarity that are restricted to just two or a few other texts, the probability of a nonfortuitous relationship is significantly increased.

¹⁶Michael Fishbane, *Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988; repr., 2004), 16–17.

¹⁷Sommer, *Prophet Reads Scripture*, 4.

¹⁸See, e.g., Beat Weber, "Mose-Lied (Dtn 32,1–43) und Asaph-Psalmen (Ps 50; 73–83): Untersuchungen zu ihrem Verhältnis," *ZABR* 27 (2021): 257–309.

¹⁹James Nogalski, "The Role of Lady Zion in the Concluding Section of Zephaniah and Isaiah 40–66," in *Isaiah and the Twelve: Parallels, Similarities and Differences*, ed. Richard Bautch, Joachim Eck, and Burkard M. Zapf, *BZAW* 527 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2020), 55–73, here 57.

²⁰Sommer distinguishes, for example, allusion, influence, echo, and exegesis (*Prophet Reads Scripture*, 10–18).

²¹Weber, "Mose-Lied," 259–60.

3. Explainability: Only by applying this criterion can the direction of dependence between two texts be established. What led the recipients to integrate the pre-text in such a way that the similarity was not to be overlooked? Only if such an explanation can be given can one speak of an intentional allusion. In some cases, however, the most valuable reason for an allusion resides in the allusion itself (cf. Latin *alludere*, “to joke, to play”).²²

II. COMMON ASSUMPTIONS AND SHARED VIEWPOINTS BETWEEN THE BOOK OF ISAIAH AND THE PSALMS

There is a strong opinion in Old Testament scholarship that Isaiah and the Psalms are closely connected to each other.²³ Special elements in these two corpora include the centrality of Zion/Jerusalem, the kingship of God over Israel and the nations, the inclusion of non-Israelites in the veneration of YHWH, an emphasis on liturgical singing, a reluctance regarding the sacrificial cult, and the usage of the term *servants*²⁴ designating the pious ones in contrast to their enemies, the evil-doers. These agreements emanate from a shared theological horizon in which the poets of the Psalms and the prophetic singers of Isaiah were thinking and producing their texts.

Considering the resemblance between the books, it is noteworthy that, in Sommer's monograph, the allusions in Isa 40–66 to the Psalter are not elaborated in depth.²⁵ This hesitancy is mainly due to the difficult dating of the Psalms, which makes a decision about the direction of borrowing and reception complicated. The present inquiry can fill this gap only to a limited extent since a comprehensive monograph would be needed to do justice to the matter.

As is well known, the “new song” is mentioned only in Isaiah (42:10) and the Psalter (33:3, 40:4, 96:1, 98:1, 144:9, 149:1). Of all the prophetic books, it is only the book of Isaiah that is characterized by chants and songs. It is only there (from 54:17 onward) and in the Psalter (especially in books 4 and 5) that the עבדים (“servants”) are explicitly mentioned.²⁶ These two corpora contain the exclusive configuration

²²Sommer, *Prophet Reads Scripture*, 19.

²³Ulrich Berges, “Sing to the LORD a New Song’: The Tradents of the Book of Isaiah and the Psalter,” in *The History of Isaiah: The Formation of the Book and Its Presentation of the Past*, ed. Jacob Stromberg and J. Todd Hibbard, FAT 150 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 213–37.

²⁴Joseph Blenkinsopp, “The ‘Servants of the Lord’ in Third Isaiah: Profile of a Pietistic Group in the Persian Epoch,” *PIBA* 7 (1983): 1–23; Willem A. M. Beuken, “The Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah: The ‘Servants of YHWH,’” *JSOT* 47 (1990): 67–87; Ulrich Berges, “The Servant(s) in Isaiah,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Isaiah*, ed. Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 318–33.

²⁵Sommer, *Prophet Reads Scripture*, 4.

²⁶Isa 54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:8, 9, 13, 14, 15; 66:14; Pss 34:23; 69:37; 79:2, 10; 89:51; 90:13, 16; 102:15, 29; 105:25; 113:1; 123:2; 134:1; 135:14.

of the motifs “Zion,” “poor,” and “servants.”²⁷ It is interesting to note that “YHWH Sabaoth” does not occur in the Psalter after Ps 89, that is, after the end of book 3, and the same is true for the so-called Trito-Isaiah chapters. The fifteen instances of this epithet in the Psalter are distributed over eight psalms (Pss 24, 46, 48, 59, 69, 80, 84, 89), five of which are attributed to the singers’ guilds (Korah 46, 48, 84; Asaph 80 and Ethan 89).²⁸

Another nearly exclusive connection is the title “God of Jacob,” which is found rarely outside Genesis–Joshua (see 2 Sam 23:1, Isa 2:3, Mic 4:2). More often, one encounters this expression in Psalms (20:2, 24:6, 94:7, 114:7) and especially in those of the singers’ guilds (Korah: Pss 46, 84; Asaph: Pss 75, 76, 81). The name “Jacob” appears eighteen times in the Psalter, half of these in the singers’ psalms; it is also very prominent in Isa 40–66.²⁹

The idea that the Torah was given from Mount Zion is found only in these two books (see Isa 2:2–5). In the Psalter, this is not stated explicitly but can be deduced from the sequence of psalms. Thus, Ps 19 stands in the middle of the entrance liturgy of Pss 15–24, and Ps 119 functions as a preface to the pilgrimage psalms 120–133.³⁰

But the question remains: Where is the meeting of minds, the common horizon, and under which concrete circumstances did the respective tradents finalize their compositions? It is once more Blenkinsopp who sets the agenda for future research: “However, in the present state of our knowledge, or rather ignorance, the wiser course may be to think in terms of an ongoing, rich interactivity, the authors of both compilations drawing on the same themes and sharing similar language.”³¹

There are thus enough good reasons to look for more literary connections between Isa 55–66 and the book of Psalms (esp. books 4 and 5). The main reason for starting the last part of the book of Isaiah with chapter 55 is the first mention of the עבדים, in 54:17b. In 55:1–5 YHWH invites the whole world to hear his call in order to find the fullness of life.³² Whoever accepts this invitation by observing

²⁷ Alphonso Groenewald, *Psalm 69: Its Structure, Redaction and Composition*, *Altes Testament und Moderne* 18 (Münster: LIT, 2003), 163.

²⁸ Gunther Wanke, *Die Zionstheologie der Korachiten in ihrem traditionsgeschichtlichen Zusammenhang*, *BZAW* 97 (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1966), 46.

²⁹ See Meira Polliack, “Deutero-Isaiah’s Typological Use of Jacob in the Portrayal of Israel’s National Renewal,” in *Creation in Jewish and Christian Tradition*, ed. Henning Graf Reventlow and Yair Hoffman, *JSOTSup* 319 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 2002), 72–110.

³⁰ See Susan E. Gillingham, “The Levitical Singers and the Editing of the Hebrew Psalter,” in *The Composition of the Book of Psalms*, ed. Erich Zenger, *BETL* 238 (Leuven: Peeters, 2010), 91–123, here 102.

³¹ Blenkinsopp, *Beauty of Holiness*, 102.

³² Ulrich Berges, “Where Starts Trito-Isaiah?,” 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), 63–76.

the cultic and ethical rules is admitted into the ranks of YHWH's servants (Isa 56:1–8; 65–66).

III. SPECIFIC SIMILARITIES BETWEEN ISAIAH 55–66 AND PSALMS

A. *The Extent of the Veneration of YHWH beyond Israel*

In the worldwide invitation of Isa 55:1–5, one finds in verse 3 a striking reference to David (cf. 2 Sam 7:14–16, Ps 89:20–22, 132:11–12): “Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast mercies for David.”³³ There is no mention of him as מלך because YHWH himself has entered Jerusalem/Zion as king (Isa 52:7). The “sure mercies for David” (חסדי דוד הנאמנים) stand parallel to the “eternal covenant” (ברית עולם). But how is it possible to reaffirm these promises for the house of David in the aftermath of the exile? Interestingly, at the end of the so-called messianic psalter (Pss 2–89) the same issue arises. Here Ps 89:50 plays a decisive role: “YHWH, where are your former mercies that you swore to David?” The expression “the former” (הראשונים) is not taken over by the authors of Isa 55 because they did not focus on the contrast between old and new but on the continuity of God's action. Hence they transformed the expression “by your faithfulness” (באמונתך) into the “steadfast” (הנאמנים) mercies that God had sworn to David.³⁴ Here the criterion of explainability again suggests the dependence of Isaiah on the psalm.

The first mention of the servants of YHWH in Isa 54:17b has to be connected with these divine mercies for David, because they are the new collective David.³⁵ Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, among others, have underlined the closeness of Ps 89 to the Asaphite and Korahite psalms.³⁶ While Ps 89 takes 2 Sam 7 as scriptural base (see Ps 89:4–5, 20–38, 50), Isa 55:3 alludes to this psalm. This becomes perfectly clear in Ps 89:51–52 (Eng. 50–51): “Remember, YHWH, the reproach of thy servants . . . with which your enemies taunt, O YHWH, with which they taunted the footsteps of your anointed.” With the aid of this psalm, the servants see themselves in the role of the anointed. They are the oaks of righteousness anointed for the liberation of the poor and needy (Isa 61:1). At the same time they are convinced that God will vindicate them.³⁷

³³The translations of biblical texts are taken from the NRSV with some slight changes.

³⁴Isaiah 55:3 has to be regarded as a *genitivus objectivus*; so Hugh G. M. Williamson, “The Sure Mercies of David,” *JSS* 23 (1978): 31–49.

³⁵Hugh G. M. Williamson, “Davidic Kingship in Isaiah,” in Tiemeyer, *Oxford Handbook of Isaiah*, 280–92, here 288.

³⁶Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Psalmen*, 3 vols., HThKAT (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2000–2008), 2:585.

³⁷Blenkinsopp, *Beauty of Holiness*, 75.

But it is not only the last psalm of the third book of the Psalter that shows a special link with the servants of Isaiah. In the second collection of the Korahite psalms (Pss 84–89), there is also no trace whatsoever of a Davidic restoration.³⁸ Neither do the sure mercies apply to David anymore, nor are they simply democratized, embracing all Israel—rather, they refer only to the servants. The identity as God’s servant is not restricted to Israel but is open to worshipers from the nations, as stated in Isa 56:6: “the foreigners who join themselves to YHWH, to minister to him, to love the name of YHWH, and to be his servants, all who keep the Sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant.”³⁹ Already the old versions saw the special importance of this verse. Thus 1QIsa^a replaced “to love” (אהב) the name of YHWH with “to bless” (ברך) the name of YHWH in order to make the relationship with Israel’s God less intimate. At this point, the LXX translates שרת (“to serve [in worship]”) with δουλεύω (“to serve”; Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion keep λειτουργέω, “to serve [at the altar]”) and adds after “to be his servants” (τοῦ εἶναι αὐτῷ εἰς δούλους) the words καὶ δούλας (“and women servants”) so as to exclude any idea of a priestly service of foreigners.⁴⁰ In the aftermath of the exile and following the Servant’s mission to Israel and to the nations (Isa 42:1–6, 49:1–7), the servants as a historical entity in postexilic times propagate the opening of the worship of YHWH under the condition that believers from outside Israel accept certain cultic and ethical rules.⁴¹

Later on in the prayer of the servants, the genealogic connection to Abraham/Sarah and Israel (Isa 41:8, 51:2) loses its exclusive character: “For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel does not acknowledge us” (Isa 63:16). It is not the kinship of Abraham/Israel but the creational relation with God that counts.⁴² This astonishing point of view has the closest counterpart in the psalms of the Korahites (see Pss 47:10, 87:5–6). The servants are authorized to broaden the extent of the YHWH-believers because they constitute the collective David, whom YHWH made “a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples” (Isa 55:4). The focus is no longer on the military David who subdued foreign nations but on his role as “witness” (דע) that brings him close to the servant (Isa 43:10, 12; 44:8) who gave testimony for the liberating God: “All the peoples of the

³⁸ Bernard Gosse, “Les lévites au retour de l’exil dans les livres d’Ézéchiel, de Jérémie et d’Isaïe,” *Transeu* 48 (2016): 43–76.

³⁹ Joel Kaminsky and Anne Stewart, “God of All the World: Universalism and Developing Monotheism in Isaiah 40–66,” *HTR* 99 (2006): 139–63, here 159.

⁴⁰ See Dwight W. Van Winkle, “An Inclusive Authoritative Text in Exclusive Communities,” in *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah: Studies of an Interpretive Tradition*, ed. Craig C. Broyles and Craig A. Evans, 2 vols., VTSup 70 (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 1:423–40.

⁴¹ See Christophe Nihan, “Ethnicity and Identity in Isaiah 56–66,” in *Judah and the Judeans in the Achaemenid Period: Negotiating Identity in an International Context*, ed. Oded Lipschits, Gary N. Knoppers, and Manfred Oeming (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 67–104.

⁴² Johannes Goldenstein, *Das Gebet der Gottesknechte: Jesaja 63,7–64,11 im Jesajabuch*, WMANT 92 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2001), 95.

world take the place of the nations incorporated into the reign of David.⁴³ The term *leader* (נגיד) alludes to the David narratives (1 Sam 9:16, 10:1, 13:14, 25:30, 2 Sam 5:2, 6:21, 7:8), while the word *king* is once more avoided. The third characterization, *commanding/commander* (מצוה [piel participle from מצוה]), makes reference to the authority of Moses (cf. Deut 4:2, 40; 6:2, 6; 7:11; 8:1, 11), who transmits the Torah. As Moses is the commander for Israel, the servants communicate God's will for those from the nations who adhere to YHWH. Exactly this communication of the divine will happens with the decision to accept foreigners and eunuchs as his full-fledged worshipers (Isa 56:1–8).

The comparison of God's word with rain and snow, which do not return to him without having produced the fertility of the earth, takes on a special note in this context (Isa 55:10–11). First, the words *snow* (שלג) and *rain* (גשם) do not normally occur together in the Old Testament (only once more in Job 37:6). Second, snow is never used in the description of the fertility of the earth, in contrast to rain and flowing water; instead snow plays a role in the portrayal of God's majesty and theophany. Psalm 68:15 may serve as an illustration: "When the Almighty scattered kings there, snow fell on Zalmon" (cf. Job 38:22–23). The difference is confirmed by Ps 147:8: "He covers the heavens with clouds, prepares rain for the earth, makes grass grow on the hills." In Ps 147:15–16, snow is mentioned but then in connection with the word of God: "He sends out his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly. He gives snow like wool, he scatters frost like ashes." Contrary to Hossfeld and Zenger, who think that the motif of snow has been transferred from Isa 55:10–11 to Ps 147:15–18, the reverse is more plausible.⁴⁴ The reason is obvious: in Ps 147 the snow functions in its normal context, that is, to underline the majesty of God's rule, while in Isa 55 it is atypically linked with fertility. In Ps 148:8, the normal function of snow is affirmed once more: "Fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command." So why did the prophetic authors introduce the unusual element of snow in this context? Because they wanted to stress not only the fruitfulness of God's word (Isa 55:10) but also God's absolute authority (55:11)—especially pointing to those who were opposed to the admission of foreigners and eunuchs.

The influence of the Psalter continues in Isa 56:1–8, where the divine imperative in verse 1a "observe justice, do righteousness" (שמרו משפט ועשו צדקה; my translation) is taken from Ps 106:3 (אשרי שמרי משפט עשה צדקה, "Happy are those who observe justice, who do righteousness"). Only in these two instances is the verb שמר followed by the noun משפט in the singular, together with the expression "to do righteousness." That this is a real quotation is confirmed by the fact that the benediction at the beginning of Isa 56:2 stems from Ps 106:3: אשרי, "happy are

⁴³Norbert Lohfink, "Bund und Tora bei der Völkerwallfahrt (Jesajabuch und Psalm 25)," in *Der Gott Israels und die Völker: Untersuchungen zum Jesajabuch und zu den Psalmen*, ed. Norbert Lohfink and Erich Zenger, SBS 154 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1994), 37–83, here 53.

⁴⁴Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen* (HThKAT), 3:835.

those.”⁴⁵ This verse is probably introduced into Isa 56 because the prophetic authors wanted to underline that only the just among the nations are accepted for the veneration of YHWH. This way they prevented the critique that according to Ps 106:35 the people of God “mingled with the nations and learned to do as they did.”⁴⁶

One of the characteristics of these foreigners is that they love the name of God (לְאַהֲבָה אֶת שֵׁם יְהוָה). This is quite revealing since the love of the divine name is mentioned only thrice more in the Old Testament (Pss 5:12, 69:37, 119:132). Psalm 69:37 is of special importance because there the offspring of the servants will possess Zion and the cities of Judah: “the children of his servants shall inherit it, and those who love his name shall live in it.” The upcoming division between the servants and their enemies (cf. Isa 65:8, 9, 13, 15; 66:14) is at first sight not apparent in Isa 56:1–8, but the borrowing from the end of Ps 69 gives a strong hint in this direction. Verse 37 is part of a postexilic *Fortschreibung* that presents the servants and their children as the only beneficiaries of the expected restoration.⁴⁷ The phrasing “to love the name of God” together with “servants” is so unusual in the Old Testament that a mere coincidence seems very unlikely.⁴⁸ Compared with the instances in the last book of the Psalter, the term *servants* in the last part of Isaiah possesses a greater specificity: “it seems from the usage in Book V that the temple musicians could be referred to with this title of honour, which is hardly surprising since David, founder of the guilds of temple musicians, is the prototypical Servant of the Lord throughout the Book of Psalms.”⁴⁹

B. The Contrast of the Righteous and the Wicked

The section Isa 56:9–59:21 can be read altogether as an exhortation to follow the ethical and cultic rules so that YHWH’s light will finally shine over Zion/Jerusalem (Isa 60–62). In 57:13b, the contrast of the just and the wicked is made explicit, for only the first will enjoy living in the land: “But whoever takes refuge in me shall possess the land and inherit my holy mountain.” This bicolon is not an addition of the redaction⁵⁰ but the climax of the entire passage 56:9–57:13.⁵¹ The audience is

⁴⁵ Klaus Koenen, *Ethik und Eschatologie im Tritojesajabuch: Eine literarkritische und redaktionsgeschichtliche Studie*, WMANT 62 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1990), 13.

⁴⁶ Slightly different is Michael P. Maier, who thinks that the righteous foreigners are presented as good worshipers in contrast to the Israelites who mingled with the nations (*Völkerwallfahrt im Jesajabuch*, BZAW 474 [Berlin: de Gruyter 2016], 382–83).

⁴⁷ Groenewald, *Psalm 69*, 239–45.

⁴⁸ Blenkinsopp, *Beauty of Holiness*, 128–29.

⁴⁹ Blenkinsopp, *Beauty of Holiness*, 124; also Odil Hannes Steck, *Gottesknecht und Zion: Gesammelte Aufsätze zu Deuterocesaja*, FAT 4 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992), 171.

⁵⁰ Odeberg, *Trito-Isaiah*, 93; Seizo Sekine, *Die Tritojesajanische Sammlung (Jes 56–66) redaktionsgeschichtlich untersucht*, BZAW 175 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 109–10.

⁵¹ Willem A. M. Beuken, “Isa. 56:9–57:13: An Example of the Isaianic Legacy of Trito-Isaiah”

called “to dissociate themselves from the stance that the city as a whole takes.”⁵² The majority, though, will be blown away by the storm, in contrast to the one who takes refuge in God.

The expression $\text{ב} + \text{חָסָה}$ (“seek refuge in”) is used in Isa 14:32 for the poor who take shelter in Zion and in Isa 30:2 against those who take refuge in the pharaoh. The expression is typical for the depiction of the pious in Psalms (Pss 5:12; 7:2; 11:1; 16:1; 17:7; 18:3, 31; 25:20; 31:2, 20; 34:9, 23; 36:8; 37:40; 57:2; 61:5; 64:11; 71:1; 91:4; 118:8–9; 141:8; 144:2). In the prophetic writings it appears only twice more (Nah 1:7, Zeph 3:12) and a few times elsewhere in the Old Testament (Deut 32:37; 2 Sam 22:3, 31 [cf. Ps 18]; Ruth 2:12; Prov 30:5). A prominent usage is to be found at the end of Ps 37: “YHWH helps them and rescues them; he rescues them from the wicked, and saves them, because they take refuge in him” (37:40). This psalm uniquely centers on land ownership for the just (Ps 37:9, 11, 18, 22, 27, 29, 34).⁵³ That the צַדִּיקִים (“the righteous”) will possess land forever is stated only in Ps 37:29 and in Isa 60:21. In this psalm of the poor from the fifth century BCE,⁵⁴ as in Isa 60:21, the noun אָרֶץ together with the verb יָרַשׁ stands always without the article. It is not *the* land that is promised to the needy and righteous but land, that is, the right to possess a piece of land and to earn a living from it (cf. Isa 65:22–23).⁵⁵ In view of the multiple references to Ps 37, it seems reasonable to conclude that the prophetic authors took much inspiration from the psalm (Isa 51:7 → Ps 37:31; Isa 58:1 → Ps 37:4; Isa 61:8 → Ps 37:28).⁵⁶ A similar promise occurs at the very end of Ps 69: God will save Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah so that his servants will live there “and possess it” (וַיִּרְשׁוּהָ) (v. 36b); the same will be true for the offspring of the servants (v. 37). That YHWH “loves righteousness” (אָהֵב מִשְׁפָּט) is found identically in Isa 61:8 and Ps 37:28—and only in these two places. In Isa 61:8, this is affirmed by God himself (אֲנִי) due to the integration of the promise into a divine oracle.⁵⁷

There are still more connections between Ps 37 and the so-called Trito-Isaianic texts: In Isa 58:13 one reads about the delight (עֲנֵג) in the day of the Sabbath and in verse 14 about the delight in God himself. In Ps 37:4 the righteous are invited to take delight in YHWH (cf. Job 22:26, 27:10). In both texts, justice and just

in *Tradition and Re-interpretation in Jewish and Early Christian Literature: Essays in Honour of Jürgen C. H. Lebram*, ed. J. W. van Henten et al., StPB 36 (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 48–64, here 52.

⁵²John Goldingay, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Isaiah 56–66*, ICC (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 133.

⁵³Cf. Eleuterio R. Ruiz, *Das Land ist für die Armen da: Psalm 37 und seine immer aktuelle Bedeutung*, SBS 232 (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 2015).

⁵⁴Frank-Lothar Hossfeld and Erich Zenger, *Die Psalmen*, 3 vols., NEchtB 29, 40, 41 (Würzburg: Echter, 1993–2012), 1:229.

⁵⁵Andrea Spans, *Die Stadtfrau Zion im Zentrum der Welt: Exegese und Theologie von Jes 60–62*, BBB 175 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2015), 247.

⁵⁶Nurmela, *Mouth of the Lord*, 117.

⁵⁷Nurmela, *Mouth of the Lord*, 116.

behavior are connected to the phenomenon of light (Ps 37:6; Isa 58:8, 10). In Isa 58:11, the guidance of God is emphasized; the verb נחה (“to lead”) has a special place in the traditions of the exodus depicting Israel’s wandering through the wilderness (Exod 13:17, 21; 15:13; 32:34; Deut 32:12; Ps 77:21; 78:14, 53, 72). This tradition stands also in the background of Isa 58:11, but on an individual level: “YHWH will satisfy your soul in drought places” (my translation). That Isa 58 is the receiving part can be deduced from the fact that, in all the prophetic books, נחה occurs only in Isa 57:18 and Isa 58:11, whereas it is prominent in the Psalter (Pss 5:9; 23:3; 27:11; 31:4; 43:3; 60:11; 61:3; 67:5; 73:24; 107:30; 108:11; 139:10, 24; 143:10).

The new application of God’s favor can also be seen in the promise in Isa 58:14b: “I will make you ride upon the heights of the land [הרכבתיך על במותי ארץ] and I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob, your father [האכלתיך נחלת יעקב].” This reminds us of the assertion in the Song of Moses in Deut 32:13: “He made him ride on the heights of the land [ירכבהו על במותי ארץ], that he might eat the product of the field [ויאכל תנובת שדי]” (my translation). The modification from third-person singular to second-person singular makes the promise even more intense, as well as the fact that not Moses but God himself utters the assurance. The addressee of the Song of Moses was the whole nation; the beneficiaries in Isa 58 are only the righteous and pious.⁵⁸

The subsequent metaphors of the adder’s eggs and the spider’s web in Isa 59:5–6 serve to illustrate how the wicked entangle themselves and others in their harmful behavior. According to Blenkinsopp, this kind of “new prophecy,” homiletic in character, stands close to “Deuteronomistic Levites.”⁵⁹ Previously, Westermann had stated that the prophetic preaching of sin has turned into an accusation of those who talk deceit known from the language of the Psalter.⁶⁰ The hatched eggs of lies and deceit are a nightmare for the just, trying to get justice in court but being immobilized by the venom of the wicked (cf. Pss 58:5, 140:4). Another connection to the description of the evildoers can be found in Isa 59:13, since the phrase “to talk oppression” (דבר + עשק) occurs only here and in Ps 73:8. The haughty speech produces oppression, that is, serious offenses against ethical rules (cf. Lev 5:23; Deut 24:14–15; Jer 6:6; 22:27; Ezek 18:18; 22:7, 12; Ps 62:11). To the “oppressed” (עשוקים) belong the hungry, the prisoners, the blind, those who are bowed down, the strangers, the orphans, and the widows (Ps 146:7–9). YHWH takes care of all of them in his function as king from Zion (Ps 146:10).

⁵⁸Ulrich Berges, “The Individualization of Exile in Trito-Isaiah: Some Reflections on Isaiah 55 and 58,” in *Images of Exile in Prophetic Literature: Copenhagen Conference Proceedings, 7–10 May 2017*, ed. Jesper Høgenhaven, Frederik Poulsen, and Cian Power, FAT 2/103 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019), 63–78.

⁵⁹Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 56–66: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, AB 19B (New York: Doubleday, 2003), 187.

⁶⁰See Westermann, *Isaiah 40–66*, 346.

After the abstract nouns *justice*, *righteousness*, *truth*, and *uprightness* in Isa 59:14–15a, the sudden shift to the verbal expression “whoever turns from evil” (סר מרע) in 59:15ab catches the eye. It occurs in no other place in the book of Isaiah or even in the prophetic writings, but one finds it in Pss 34:15 and 37:27, contrasting once again the fate of the just and the wicked. In Job (1:1, 8; 2:3) and Proverbs (3:7; 4:27; 13:19; 14:16; 16:6, 17), this expression summarizes the praiseworthy behavior of the righteous. Once again the infrequent occurrence of the above expression is best explained by the direction of reception from Ps 37 to the Isaianic scribal prophecy.

Since YHWH was astonished that there was no one to intervene for the just, his own arm “helped him,” that is, brought him victory (ישע + לו) (cf. Isa 63:5). In contrast to the LXX (αὐτοῦς [pl.]), the divine arm does not help the needy ones or YHWH’s people (Ps 44:4; cf. Isa 52:10) but YHWH himself. This occurs only once more in the entire Old Testament, in Ps 98:1b: “His right hand and his holy arm have gotten him victory.” Once again the close connection of the authors of Isaiah and those of the psalms is apparent, but in this case the question of who represents the giving part and who the taking part might be kept open.⁶¹

In preparation for his fight, YHWH puts on “righteousness like a breastplate” and “a helmet of salvation on his head” (Isa 59:17a). The parallel usage of צדקה and ישועה is very rare in the Old Testament; it occurs only in Isa 51:6, 8; 56:1; and Ps 98:2. The occurrences in Isa 51 stand at the base of this usage, where God’s righteousness and salvation are compared to the heaven that will vanish like smoke and to the earth that will disappear like a garment. In contrast to this, with his “garments of vengeance” (בגדי נקם) YHWH will bring forth his saving justice (Isa 59:17b). The motif of the “garment” pervades these chapters of Isaiah (Isa 50:9; 51:6, 8; 52:1; 59:6, 17; 61:10; 63:2, 3; 64:5) and is used as a symbol either for power or for powerlessness. That God is clothed in majesty and might is also to be found in Pss 93:1 and 104:1–2.⁶²

Because of the powerful action of YHWH, the nations will “fear the name of YHWH” (Isa 59:19a). The fear of God by the nations is affirmed several times in the prophets and Psalms (cf. Isa 25:3, 41:5, Mic 7:17, Zech 9:5, Mal 1:14, Pss 47:3, 65:6, 67:8, 76:13). But nothing comes closer to Isa 59:19–20 than Ps 102:16, where the nations will also fear the name of YHWH;⁶³ they do so because they see YHWH’s compassion for Zion, that is, his willingness to secure the rebuilding of the city in favor of his servants, who hold dear its stones (Ps 102:15).

⁶¹ Hossfeld and Zenger think of Ps 98 as the taking part (*Psalmen* [HThKAT], 2:689). For the relation of Ps 96/98 and Isa 40–55, see Jorge Blunda, *La proclamación de Yhwh rey y la constitución de la comunidad postexílica: El Deutero-Isaías en relación con Salmos 96 y 98*, AnBib 186 (Rome: Gregorian & Biblical Press, 2010).

⁶² See Bernard Gosse, “Les introductions des Psaumes 93–94 et Isaïe 59,15b–20,” *ZAW* 106 (1994): 303–6.

⁶³ See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen* (HThKAT), 3:46.

The servants in Isaiah also apply mosaic features to themselves since God establishes his covenant with them, conveys his spirit, and guarantees the eternal transmission of his word through their generations (Isa 59:21). The phrasing is similar to the transfer of authority from Moses to Joshua (Josh 1:8: “This book of the law shall not depart out of your mouth”) since the word מוש (“to depart”) occurs only in these two places in the Old Testament in the context of the divine word. In analogy to the mosaic ספר התורה (“the book of the Torah”), the prophetic vision of Isaiah is transmitted from generation to generation by God’s servants. They are the offspring of the servant in Isa 54–66: “They are moral and religious offspring, like those promised to the servant in 53.10.”⁶⁴ The gift of God’s spirit in Isa 59:20 is a strong indication that the anointed in Isa 61:1 is no one other than the community of the just, the oaks of justice.⁶⁵ The temporal determination in Isa 59:21 “from now on and forever” (מעתה ועד עולם) is typical of the language of the Psalter (Pss 113:2, 115:18, 121:8, 125:2, 131:3) and, beyond that, is very rare (Isa 9:7, Mic 4:7).

C. The Presentation of the Renewed Zion/Jerusalem

In their presentation of Zion/Jerusalem, the authors of Isa 60–62 use several images and expressions that are known exclusively from the Psalter. That the famous ships of Tarshish (1 Kgs 10:22, 20:29, 2 Chr 9:21, Isa 2:16) will bring gifts to Jerusalem in honor of YHWH who glorified the city (Isa 60:9) has its closest parallel in Ps 72:10, where the kings of Tarshish and the isles render YHWH tribute. The corresponding elements are manifold (“gold [from Sheba]” [Ps 72:10, Isa 60:6]; “kings/nations” [Ps 72:11; Isa 60:3, 9, 10, 11, 12, 16]; “Lebanon” [Ps 72:16; Isa 60:13]), and here it is quite evident that Isa 60 is the receiving part and Ps 72 the giving part, because the royal motif of the psalm is conspicuously absent from the prophetic reworking.⁶⁶ The prophetic authors reused the poetic imagery of the gifts that once reached King Solomon for their presentation of the glorious future lying ahead for Jerusalem.

The expression “city of YHWH” (עיר יהוה) in Isa 60:14 is found only twice more in the Old Testament, in Pss 48:9 and 101:8. Since Pss 46:5; 48:2, 9 also speak of “the city of God” (עיר אלהים), one can safely suppose that the prophetic writers knew the Zion composition of Pss 46–48 from the hands of the Korahites. The same is true for the idea of Zion as axis mundi, which plays a central role in the psalms of these singers and composers (especially Ps 87).⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Goldingay, *Isaiah 56–66*, 237.

⁶⁵ Wolfgang Lau, *Schriftgelehrte Prophetie in Jes 56–66: Eine Untersuchung zu den literarischen Bezügen in den letzten elf Kapiteln des Jesajabuches*, BZAW 225 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994), 226.

⁶⁶ See Martin Arnoeth, *Sonne der Gerechtigkeit: Studien zur Solarisierung der Jahwe-Religion im Lichte von Psalm 72*, BZABR 1 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000), 180–81.

⁶⁷ Blenkinsopp sees also connections with Isa 2:2–5, 11:11, 19:24–25, 60:1–3, and 66:18–23 (*Beauty of Holiness*, 95–96).

The expression in Isa 60:14 “Zion of the Holy One of Israel” (צִיּוֹן קְדוֹשׁ יִשְׂרָאֵל) is unique in the Old Testament. Here the authors combined the epithet “the Holy One of Israel,” which is characteristic of Isaiah (Isa 1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19; 30:11, 12, 15; 31:1; 37:23 [par. 2 Kgs 19:22]; 41:14, 16; 43:3, 14; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7; 54:5; 55:5; 60:9, 14; otherwise only Pss 71:22, 78:41, 89:19), with the name “Zion,” which is also prominent in this prophetic book and in Psalms (47x in Isaiah; 38x in Psalms; cf. Jeremiah [17x]; Ezekiel [0x]). In the MT, the foreign nations bringing their gifts “will call” (וְקָרְאוּ) the city of God by these names. This shows that it is not their material offerings but their acknowledgment of the deep relation between YHWH and the city that is the ultimate goal of the expected future. The translators of the LXX lessened the importance of the nations by changing the active voice to a passive one (αὐτὴν καλεῖσθε, “you will be called [the City of the Lord]”).

According to Isa 60:18b, Zion herself will call her gates “praise” (תְּהִלָּה). Beyond the Psalter, the word is not often used (cf. Exod 15:11, Deut 10:21, 26:19, Hab 3:3, Zeph 3:19–20) but figures quite frequently in Jeremiah (Jer 13:11, 17:14, 33:9), especially in the context of the destruction of foreign nations and capitals (Jer 48:2 [Moab], 49:25 [Damascus], 51:41 [Babylon]). These entities will be annihilated forever, but Zion/Jerusalem will experience a wonderful revival accompanied by joy and praise.⁶⁸ The word *praise* (cf. Isa 61:3, 11; 62:7) underlines once more the close connection to the Psalter (Pss 33:1, 40:4, 65:2, 100:4, 119:171, 145:1, 147:1, 148:14).

The motif of the sun in relation to the establishment of justice has its roots in the world of the ancient Near East. Like the Egyptian Ra, the Mesopotamian Shemesh, and the Persian Ahura Mazda, YHWH is presented as a solar God who fights against the evildoers (cf. Mal 3:20, שֶׁמֶשׁ צְדָקָה, “sun of righteousness”; Ps 84:12, שֶׁמֶשׁ וּמָגֶן, “sun and shield”).⁶⁹ In contrast to Ps 72, where the Davidic king strives for justice and therefore should live as long as the sun and moon last (vv. 1–7, 17), in Isa 60 there is no trace of a human king. Once again the *Vorlage* belongs to Psalms: “Isa 60:19–20 appears as a deliberate reworking of the royal motif of Ps 72:5–7.”⁷⁰ The renewal of Zion/Jerusalem implies that only the “righteous” (צְדִיקִים)

⁶⁸Katrin Liess, “Jerusalem als Stadt des Friedens: Zur Friedenthematik in ausgewählten Psalmen und Texten aus dem Jesajabuch,” in *“Mit meinem Gott überspringe ich eine Mauer”: Interreligiöse Horizonte in den Psalmen und Psalmenstudien / “By My God I Can Leap over a Wall: Interreligious Horizons in Psalms and Psalms Studies*, ed. Christian Frevel, HBS 96 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2020), 83–111, here 105.

⁶⁹See Birgit Langer, *Gott als “Licht” in Israel und Mesopotamien: Eine Studie zu Jes 60,1–3.19f.*, ÖBS 7 (Klosterneuburg: Österreichisches Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1989), 156–75; Othmar Keel and Christoph Uehlinger, “Jahwe und die Sonnengottheit von Jerusalem,” in *Ein Gott allein? JHWH-Verehrung und biblischer Monotheismus im Kontext der israelitischen und altorientalischen Religionsgeschichte*, ed. Walter Dietrich and Martin A. Klopfenstein, OBO 139 (Freiburg, Switzerland: Universitätsverlag; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1994), 269–306.

⁷⁰Ronald E. Clements, “‘Arise, Shine; for Your Light Has Come’: A Basic Theme of the Isaianic

will possess land forever (Isa 60:21; cf. 57:13, 61:3, 65:9). The interplay of the three motifs Zion, the needy/poor/righteous, and the servants occurs only in Isaiah and Psalms: “The elements of this constellation are inextricably linked to one another: the return from the exile, as well as the reconstruction of Zion and Jerusalem, is of special importance to this group which designated themselves as the ‘servants.’”⁷¹

The faithful inhabitants of the city of God will be called “oaks of righteousness” (Isa 61:3); instead of their mourning, they will be given “oil of gladness” (שמן ששון). On the one hand, the latter expression alludes to the anointing of the high priest (cf. שמן הקדש, Num 35:25; שמן המשחה, Exod 29:7, 21; Lev 8:2, 12, 30; 21:10); on the other, the only exact parallel is in Ps 45:8, referring to the Davidic king in the ceremony of his accession to the throne.⁷² While anointing is a natural motif in the context of Ps 45, the metaphorical usage in Isa 61 indicates that this is not the giving but the receiving part.⁷³

The rejoicing of the community of Zion is expressed with the *figura etymologica* “I greatly rejoice in YHWH, my soul shall exult in my God” (Isa 61:10; my translation). The verb שיש/שוש (“to rejoice, to be glad”) occurs in the book of Isaiah only in the last chapters (61:10; 62:5; 64:4; 65:18–19; 66:10, 14; cf. 35:1) and is found rarely in other prophetic writings (Jer 32:41, Ezek 21:15, Zeph 3:17). As expected, one finds the idea quite often in Psalms (Pss 19:6; 40:17; 68:4; 70:5; 119:14, 162), but no reference comes closer to it than Ps 35:9: “Then my soul shall rejoice in YHWH, exulting in his deliverance.” Despite the coined language, the resemblance is striking, since the noun נפש (“soul/personality/whole being”) functions only in these two places as the subject of the verb גיל (“to rejoice”).⁷⁴ It is not by coincidence that the prophetic authors took over an expression from Ps 35, a psalm that was redacted in postexilic times in view of the poor of YHWH. According to Hossfeld and Zenger, this redaction is apparent in Ps 35:7–10, 26–28.⁷⁵ The petitioner’s intimate relation to God and the confidence in his vindication are the distinguishing traits of a servant, in whose shalom YHWH will take his delight (Ps 35:27). Such a faithful person proclaims God’s righteousness and praise all day long (v. 28). This is exactly what the servants in Isaiah stand for as the successors of the literary figure of the faithful Servant in Isa 40–54. They use the language of the psalm to strengthen their own identity in the time of restoration, which progressed slowly if at all.

Tradition,” in Broyles and Evans, *Writing and Reading the Scroll of Isaiah*, 1:441–54, here 450; Ulrich Berges, “‘Steh auf, werde Licht’: Ein Beitrag zur Zionstheologie in Jes 60,” in *Religion zwischen Mystik und Politik: ‘Ich lege mein Gesetz in sie hinein und schreibe es auf ihr Herz’* (Jer 31,33), ed. Ulrich Winkler, JThF 35 (Münster: Aschendorff, 2020), 25–42.

⁷¹ Groenewald, *Psalms* 69, 163.

⁷² See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Die Psalmen* (NEchtB), 1:283.

⁷³ Nurmela, *Mouth of the Lord*, 114–15.

⁷⁴ Koenen, *Ethik und Eschatologie*, 122.

⁷⁵ Hossfeld and Zenger, *Die Psalmen* (NEchtB), 1:216.

The most dangerous thing for the servants is divine inactivity. In Isa 62:1a, YHWH assures, “For Zion’s sake I will not keep silent [חשה], and for Jerusalem’s sake I will not rest [שקט].” That God should not keep silent is often stated in the psalms of lament (see Pss 28:1, 35:22, 39:13, 109:1), and YHWH is the subject of חשה in Isa 42:14, 57:11, 64:11, and 65:6. The closest parallel can be found in Ps 83:2 (Eng. 83:1): “O God, do not keep silence; do not hold your peace or be still, O God!”⁷⁶ In Isa 62:6, the servants are set as watchmen upon the walls of Jerusalem by YHWH, and they will never be silent: “the prophetic community reassures Judah that it will never cease praying for her life before God until her salvation comes.”⁷⁷ In the Old Testament, prophets are never called שמרים (“watchmen/sentinels”) but צפים (“ones who keep watch,” Jer 6:17; 48:19; Ezek 3:17; 33:2, 6, 7; Hos 9:8; cf. Mic 7:7). In contrast to the צפים in Isa 52:8, who announced the return of YHWH as victorious king to Jerusalem, the main point regarding the שמרים is not that they see things earlier than others. The duty of these sentinels is not to give information about what they perceive; instead, they ought to watch over the restoration of Jerusalem. Nothing comes closer to this than the task of the watchmen in Ps 127: “Unless YHWH guards the city, the guard keeps watch in vain” (v. 1b [my translation]; cf. Ps 130:6). The servants in the last part of the book of Isaiah are precisely such attentive guards “upon” (על) the city walls, watching over the restoration and denouncing social and cultic misconduct (Isa 56:9–59:21). The aim of Isa 62:6 is not to install a prophetic early warning system (cf. Ezek 3:17; 33:2, 6, 7), but that the watchmen should constantly remind God and the people.⁷⁸ Their continuous intervention is not fruitless, since YHWH confirms immediately after the prayer (63:7–64:11) that he will not be silent but will be very active (Isa 65:6)—however, not for the whole people but only for his servants (Isa 65–66).

IV. THE PRAYER OF THE SERVANTS IN ISAIAH 63:7–64:11 AND PSALMS

The closeness of the writers of the third part of Isaiah to their colleagues among the Psalter poets reaches its climax in the prayer of the servants in Isa 63:7–64:11 (Eng. 63:7–64:12). It is no coincidence that this collective prayer starts with the verb from Isa 62:6, the *hiphil* of זכר: (63:7a: “I will recount the gracious deeds of YHWH, the praiseworthy acts of YHWH”), but a sign that the מזכרים (“those who remind,” 62:6) stand behind this psalm of lament, petition, and con-

⁷⁶See Bernard Gosse, who thinks that the prophetic text is dependent on the psalm (“Le Psaume 83, Isaïe 62, 6–7 et la tradition des Oracles contre les Nations des livres d’Isaïe et d’Ezéchiel,” *BN* 70 [1993]: 9–12).

⁷⁷Elizabeth Achtemeier, *The Community and Message of Isaiah 56–66: A Theological Commentary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1982), 96; cf. Marvin A. Sweeney, *Isaiah 40–66, FOTL* 19 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 321.

⁷⁸See Paul K. Hooker, “Isaiah 62:6–12,” *Int* 60 (2006): 438–41, here 439.

fession of sin.⁷⁹ Equally important is the fact that this prayer ends with the anxious question תחשה (“Will you keep silent?”) since the verb is taken from Isa 62:1, 6. Thus, the prayer that YHWH answers without delay in Isa 65–66 is closely connected to its literary context. By remembering YHWH’s glorious deeds, the servants as watchmen and reminders do exactly what was declared in 62:1, 6; that is, they give rest neither to God nor to themselves. This poem is by no means an intrusive element in the last chapters of Isaiah but is the unmistakable footprint of its authors and composers. As skilled literati, they are acquainted with the lament tradition of Israel,⁸⁰ and therefore their prayer echoes especially the communal laments of Pss 44, 74, 78, 79, and 80.⁸¹ It has to be emphasized that the prayer takes over only some elements of these and other psalms,⁸² but it is precisely this selective usage that makes the prayer a masterpiece of *schriftgelehrte Poesie* (“scribal poetry”). The fact that Ps 74 “includes several points of contact with Isa 63,7–64,11, such as a historical retrospect including references to the destruction of the temple (cf. v. 3 and 7), but no confession, while Ps 79, which presupposes the same situation, lacks any historical retrospect,”⁸³ does not disqualify these psalms from being a scriptural reservoir for the prayer. Not only the communal laments but the whole composition of the Asaph psalms (Pss 50, 73–83) stood at its origin.⁸⁴

When the watchmen are urged not to give “rest” (דמי) to YHWH (Isa 62:7), the noun and the whole context recall the beginning of the last Asaph psalm, Ps 83:2 (Eng. 83:1): “O God, do not keep silence [אל דמי לך], do not be quiet [אל תחרש] or be silent [אל תשקט].” The connection is evident since the Hebrew here for “rest” (דמי) occurs only in these two places in the Old Testament. Additionally, there is a resonance of Ps 50:3, the opening of the Asaph psalms: “Our God comes and does not keep silence [אל יחרש].” The authors of Isa 63:7–64:11 knew the main point of the Asaph collection, that is, the urgent call to YHWH to intervene in favor of his people and his city.⁸⁵

⁷⁹Ulrich Berges, *The Book of Isaiah: Its Composition and Final Form*, trans. Millard C. Lind, HBM 46 (Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2012), 431.

⁸⁰See, e.g., the reference to the destruction of city, land, and temple in Isa 64:9–10 and in the laments in Pss 74:3–8, 78:59–64, 79:1–4, 89:39–46, Lam 1:10–18, 2:1–12.

⁸¹Richard J. Bautch, *Developments in Genre between Post-Exilic Penitential Prayers and the Psalms of Communal Lament*, AcBib 7 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 36.

⁸²H. G. M. Williamson argues, for example, that the protestation of innocence in Ps 44 does not fit at all the prayer in Isa 63:7–64:11 (“Isaiah 63,7–64,11: Exilic Lament or Post-Exilic Protest?,” *ZAW* 102 (1990) 48–58, here 55.

⁸³Williamson, “Isaiah 63,7–64,11,” 55–56.

⁸⁴Beat Weber, “Asaf—ein Name, seine Träger und ihre Bedeutung in biblischen Zeiten,” in *Orakel und Gebete: Interdisziplinäre Studien zur Sprache der Religion in Ägypten, Vorderasien und Griechenland in hellenistischer Zeit*, ed. Markus Witte and Johannes F. Diehl, FAT 2/38 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 235–59.

⁸⁵Hossfeld and Zenger opt instead for a dependence of the Asaphite psalms on Isaiah (*Psalmen* [HThKAT], 3:498). Nurmela favors the reverse relationship (*Mouth of the Lord*, 117–18).

The Asaph psalms and the prayer in Isa 63:7–64:11 share not only specific words and phrases but also a common theological thinking.⁸⁶ Weber states in this regard that the knowledge of tradition; the representation of the people, including the role of mediation; the poetics of temple singers; and the prophetic style are common to the psalms of Asaph and Isa 63–64.⁸⁷ Thus, the servants fulfilled their duty as *mazkirim* by producing a psalm of lament with a confession of sin; for that purpose they used and actualized the existing poetic tradition. By doing so they perhaps even reinterpreted the old office of the *mazkir*, the secretary of the king (cf. 2 Sam 8:16; 20:24; 1 Kgs 4:3; 2 Kgs 18:18, 37; Isa 36:3, 22; 1 Chr 18:15; 2 Chr 34:8).⁸⁸ In addition to the Asaph psalms, the Isaian prayer is influenced by the historical résumés in Pss 105, 106, 135, 136, and Neh 9. Now, however, the focus is not so much on the sequence of the divine deeds as on the principle of God's faithfulness.⁸⁹

Certainly the prayer of the servants not only takes up expressions and ideas of the Psalms but also shows connections to the book of Isaiah.⁹⁰ This is the case with its last words “will you restrain yourself, YHWH? Will you keep silent, and punish us so much?” (Isa 64:11 [Eng. 64:12]). The expression “so much/so severely” (עַד מְאֹד) recalls the anxious question of the prophet in Isa 6:11, “how long?” (עַד מַתִּי). The parallel “to restrain oneself” (אָפַק) and “to be silent” (חָשָׂה) is found only once more in the Old Testament, in Isa 42:14: “For a long time I have been silent [חָשָׂה], I have kept still and restrained myself [אָפַק].” The fact that the two verbs אָפַק and חָשָׂה are used in reverse order is a clear sign of an intended reference.⁹¹ Apart from Isa 63:7, the expression “praises of YHWH” (תְּהִלּוֹת יְהוָה) occurs only in Isa 60:6 and Ps 78:4 (and in the singular in Ps 145:21); and apart from Isa 63:7, the phrase “gracious deeds of YHWH” (חַסְדֵי יְהוָה) occurs in Lam 3:22 and Ps 107:43. But nothing comes closer to this expression than Ps 89:2 (Eng. 89:1): “I will sing the gracious deeds of YHWH forever” [חַסְדֵי יְהוָה עוֹלָם אֲשִׁירָה], even more so since the key expression returns at the end of the psalm in verse 50 (Eng. v. 49): “where are your former gracious deeds?” (אֵיךְ חַסְדֵיךְ הָרִאשׁוֹנִים). The servants present themselves after the exilic failure as the new David with whom God makes an everlasting covenant (cf. Isa 54:17b, 55:3). They relate the petition in the last verses of Ps 89 to their own situation: “Remember, Lord, the reproaches of your servants”

⁸⁶ Richard J. Bautch, “Lament regained in Trito-Isaiah’s penitential prayer,” in *The Origins of Penitential Prayer in Second Temple Judaism*, vol. 1 of *Seeking the Favor of God*, ed. Mark J. Boda, Daniel K. Falk, and Rodney A. Werline, EJL 21 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006) 83–99.

⁸⁷ Weber, “Asaf—ein Name, seine Träger,” 467.

⁸⁸ Lau, *Schriftgelehrte Prophetie*, 104 n. 379.

⁸⁹ Goldenstein, *Das Gebet der Gottesknechte*, 83.

⁹⁰ Alexa F. Wilke, *Die Gebete der Propheten: Anrufungen Gottes im ‘corpus propheticum’ der Hebräischen Bibel*, BZAW 451 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014), 122.

⁹¹ Willem A. M. Beuken, *Jesaja: Deel III B (63:7–66:24)*, POuT (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1989), 48; Lau, *Schriftgelehrte Prophetie*, 308.

(זכר אדני חרפת עבדיך). Their hope is that God turns back “for the sake of your servants” (למען עבדיך) (Isa 63:17),⁹² and the expression returns in the divine promise that YHWH will not destroy all the wine “for my servants’ sake” (למען עבדי) (Isa 65:8). The servants can hold on to YHWH only when he retracts from his anger: “Their servitude is more a goal in view than an existing reason.”⁹³ They adopt the honorary title servants of God and present themselves as the offspring of the true servant Jacob/Israel. They endure harm and rejection (Isa 66:6) and make the situation of Ps 102 their own (Ps 102:9, Isa 65:15). They are the ones who love Zion’s stones (Ps 102:14), and they claim the right to live there for themselves and for their generations to come (Ps 102:29, Isa 65:8–9).⁹⁴

At various places in the Psalms, the people are compared to a צאן (“flock,” Pss 74:1, 79:13, 80:2); the closest parallel to Isa 63:11 is Ps 77:21 (Eng. 77:20): “You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.” The urgent plea to YHWH in Isa 63:15, “look down from heaven, and see” (הבט משמים וראה) can also be found in Ps 80:15 (Eng. 80:14).⁹⁵ Both texts share the combination of lament and the request of divine guidance (Ps 80:2, Isa 63:14), the memory of the exodus and the conquest of the land (Ps 80:9–12, Isa 63:11–14), the plea that YHWH may turn back (Ps 80:15, Isa 63:17), and the hope that “we shall be saved” (ונושעה) in Ps 80:4, 8, 20; Isa 64:4).

The Hebrew for “chosen” (בְּחִירָה), which earlier applies to the servant (Isa 42:1; cf. Ps 89:4) as the representative of the people of God (Isa 43:20, 45:4), designates in Isa 63:7–64:11 the servants (Isa 65:9, 15, 22). This has no parallel in the Psalter since there the term relates to the entire people (cf. Ps 105:6, 43; 106:5, 23).⁹⁶ At the end of the book of Isaiah, however, the servants, the chosen ones, are seemingly a special group within postexilic Israel since “the emphasis is not on national privilege but on individual election and personal servanthood.”⁹⁷

V. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER PERSPECTIVE

The inquiry of the close relationship between Isa 55–66 and the Psalter has been a fruitful enterprise. On the reasonable assumption that the last part of the book of Isaiah—like the book as a whole—is not the product of a single author but

⁹² Cf. Williamson, “Isaiah 63,7–64,11,” 52: “a common-place.”

⁹³ Beuken, “Main Theme of Trito-Isaiah,” 75.

⁹⁴ See Hossfeld and Zenger, *Psalmen* (HThKAT), 3:49.

⁹⁵ Michael Emmendorffer, *Der ferne Gott: Eine Untersuchung der alttestamentlichen Volksklagelieder vor dem Hintergrund der mesopotamischen Literatur*, FAT 21 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1998), 280.

⁹⁶ Judith Gärtner, *Die Geschichtspsalmen: Eine Studie zu den Psalmen 78, 105, 106, 135 und 136 als hermeneutische Schlüsseltexte im Psalter*, FAT 84 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2012) 253.

⁹⁷ Jan L. Koole, *Isaiah*, vol. 3, trans. Anthony P. Runia, HCOT (Leuven: Peeters, 2001) 431.

the result of a guild of skilled writers, I have analyzed the different kinds of similarities in evidence. Beginning with common assumptions and shared viewpoints (Zion; YHWH as king over Israel and the nations; openness to YHWH-believers from the nations; the pious as servants of God), I examined specific expressions that, by their scarcity, must attract the attention of the exegete. Applying the three basic rules of literary interdependence (consonance; rarity; explainability), in the overwhelming number of cases Isa 55–66 is the receiving entity and the Psalter the giving entity. Finally, the similarities of the servants' prayer in Isa 63:7–64:11 hinted especially at the collection of the Asaph psalms.

Because of the creative usage of Psalms, the connections to the older prophetic tradition in Isaiah and other biblical texts, one should think of skilled literati as the authors of Isa 55–66.

Could one say a bit more about these prophetic writers? Given the restricted possibility of gaining scribal knowledge in Jerusalem and Judah, the most feasible candidates for the formation and transmission of the scroll of Isaiah are Levites, specifically Levitical singers. In view of their fierce critique of the sacrificial cult in Jerusalem (Isa 65:3–5, 66:3), it seems likely that these educated writers lived in close contact with the temple but without being part of the priestly class.⁹⁸ In addition, their focus on Zion/Jerusalem⁹⁹ and their opening to YHWH-believers from the nations bring them into the proximity of the Korahites (cf. Pss 47, 84, 87). It looks as if these singers lost out in the postexilic struggle among the temple staff. While in the Psalter they are still an important singers guild (Pss 42–49, 84–85, 87–88; cf. 2 Chr 20:19), in 1 Chr 9:19 and 26:1, 19 they are downgraded to doorkeepers, and according to 1 Chr 9:31 they end up as bakers. Finally, the polemic in Num 16 shows how violently the Korahites were excluded from the leading ranks of the temple hierarchy.

The disputes among priests, Levites, singers, and other temple personnel during the fifth–fourth centuries BCE cannot be traced here, but one essential point should be recalled.¹⁰⁰ The fight between Zadokites and Aaronides seems to have

⁹⁸ See Lena-Sofia Tiemeyer, *Priestly Rites and Prophetic Rage: PostExilic Prophetic Critique of the Priesthood*, FAT 2/19 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 288.

⁹⁹ These ideas are present also in some Asaph psalms; see Pss 50:2, 74:2, 76:3–4, 78:68–69.

¹⁰⁰ Hartmut Gese, "Zur Geschichte der Kultsänger am zweiten Tempel," in *Abraham unser Vater: Juden und Christen im Gespräch über die Bibel; Festschrift für Otto Michel zum 60. Geburtstag*, ed. Otto Betz, Martin Hengel, and Peter Schmidt, AGSU 5 (Leiden: Brill, 1963) 222–34; Joachim Schaper, *Priester und Leviten im achämenidischen Juda: Studien zur Kult- und Sozialgeschichte Israels in persischer Zeit*, FAT 31 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000); E. Ben Zvi, "Observations on Prophetic Characters, Prophetic Texts, Priests of Old, Persian Period Priests and Literati," in *The Priests in the Prophets: The Portrayal of Priests, Prophets and Other Religious Specialists in the Latter Prophets*, ed. Lester L. Grabbe and Alice Ogden Bellis, JSOTSup 408 (London: T&T Clark, 2004), 19–30; Mark A. Leuchter and Jeremy M. Hutton, eds., *Levites and Priests in Biblical History and Tradition*, AIL 9 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011); Harald Samuel, *Von Priestern zum Patriarchen: Levi und die Leviten im Alten Testament*, BZAW 448

resulted in a compromise, with the Zadokites serving at the altar and the Aaronides in subordinate functions.¹⁰¹ The Levites, for their part, were pushed into the lower ranks of the clergy. By the time of Chronicles, the once heated discussions (cf. Ezek 44) were no longer a live issue, and the Levites had been able to find their respected place among the temple personnel. At the end, they ranked close to the singers, with special duties in the transmission and explanation of the Torah.¹⁰² They belonged to the “most literate members of the populace,” and their closeness to cultic music is of no surprise in the context of the ancient Near East, “perhaps indicating a join—on the priestly level—between song and text that was evident in other cultures as well.”¹⁰³ The amalgamation of Levites and singers meant a social decline for the first group and most probably a social rise for the second. The position among the temple personnel provided the prophetic authors with the intellectual and financial means to preserve the literary heritage of the Isaiah scroll, which otherwise would have been impossible because of the high costs and the scarce resources in Jerusalem and Judah in Persian times. The conclusion of Susan Gillingham regarding the Psalter that “the once marginalized Levitical singers, by supporting prophetic song above priestly ritual, were able to maintain their own position in the Temple courts”¹⁰⁴ seems, *mutatis mutandis*, also applicable to the composers and editors of the book of Isaiah, at least for its final part in chapters 55–66. By engaging in the scribal prophecy with deep knowledge of the psalm tradition of the people of God, they brought the Isaiah scroll to a famous end.¹⁰⁵

(Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014); Mark A. Leuchter, “Cultic Traditions in the Writings: Priests and Levites in the Postexilic Period,” in *The Oxford Handbook of the Writings of the Hebrew Bible*, ed. D. F. Morgan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019) 67–83.

¹⁰¹ See, e.g., the genealogical chart of the high priests in 1 Chr 5:27–41 (cf. 1 Chr 6:37), where Zadok is put in the very center of the list.

¹⁰² Samuel, *Von Priestern zum Patriarchen*, 389.

¹⁰³ Carr, *Writing on the Tablet*, 152.

¹⁰⁴ Gillingham, *Levitical Singers*, 123.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Mark G. Brett, who thinks that the driving force in the last part of Isaiah consists in the mimicry of Persian imperial politics by the prophetic authors (*Locations of God: Political Theology in the Hebrew Bible* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019], 87–89, 94–95).

License and Permissible Use Notice

These materials are provided to you by the American Theological Library Association, operating as Atla, in accordance with the terms of Atla's agreements with the copyright holder or authorized distributor of the materials, as applicable. In some cases, Atla may be the copyright holder of these materials.

You may download, print, and share these materials for your individual use as may be permitted by the applicable agreements among the copyright holder, distributors, licensors, licensees, and users of these materials (including, for example, any agreements entered into by the institution or other organization from which you obtained these materials) and in accordance with the fair use principles of United States and international copyright and other applicable laws. You may not, for example, copy or email these materials to multiple web sites or publicly post, distribute for commercial purposes, modify, or create derivative works of these materials without the copyright holder's express prior written permission.

Please contact the copyright holder if you would like to request permission to use these materials, or any part of these materials, in any manner or for any use not permitted by the agreements described above or the fair use provisions of United States and international copyright and other applicable laws. For information regarding the identity of the copyright holder, refer to the copyright information in these materials, if available, or contact Atla using the Contact Us link at www.atla.com.

Except as otherwise specified, Copyright © 2022 Atla.