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# The Creation of New Things: A Study of Isaiah's Use of Creation Motifs

Donald Kaufmann

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THE CREATION OF NEW THINGS:  
A STUDY OF ISAIAH'S USE  
OF CREATION MOTIFS

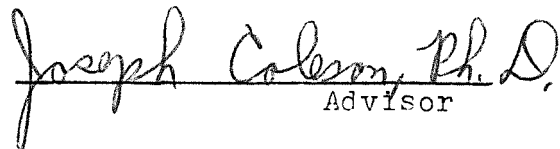
by

Donald Kaufmann

A research paper  
submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts in Theological Studies  
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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THIS RESEARCH PAPER  
PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY  
DONALD KAUFMANN  
ENTITLED  
THE CREATION OF NEW THINGS:  
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BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE  
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
MASTER OF ARTS IN THEOLOGICAL STUDIES

  
Advisor

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

The vision of Isaiah is a prophecy that is divided thematically into sin, judgment and redemption. Throughout the first half of the vision the message is primarily judgment for the sins of the people of Judah intermingled with prophecies of redemption; throughout the last half of the vision the message is redemption intermingled with prophecies of judgment.

The themes of sin, judgment and redemption are sewn together with the threads of creation motifs. Those threads which are primarily connected with judgment are the motifs from the creation stories which deal with sin and judgment--Yahweh as the maker of justice, darkness, shame, evil and death--and the state of man before that sin--peace and rest. The motifs that are woven through the theme of redemption--create, one God, plan declared, word, breath, name, marriage and father--deal with Yahweh's creative ability in the first creation and the exodus which are reinterpreted and applied to the servant of Yahweh, the return from exile and the new creation. Gerhard von Rad attests to the fact that Isaiah used the doctrine of creation in a secondary manner.



At no point in the whole of Second Isaiah does the doctrine of creation appear in its own right; it never forms the main theme of a pronouncement, nor provides the motive of a prophetic utterance. It is there, but as applied by the prophet in the course of his argument it performs only an ancillary function.<sup>1</sup>

Theodore Ludwig writes:

Discussions of Deutero-Isaiah's creation theology have focussed largely on his prolific use of creation terminology and imagery as a way of describing the election of Israel and its imminent deliverance. Many scholars have therefore concluded with von Rad that the creation traditions in Deutero-Isaiah have no individual status but are only ancillary to the election tradition. "Creation symbolism is absorbed into Exodus symbolism," writes Anderson; "the prophet has taken creation completely out of the realm of mythology. For him creation is a historical event in the now."<sup>2</sup>

This study will analyze the creation motifs used by Isaiah. It will attempt to show that Isaiah, first of all, had a theology of creation that actually viewed Yahweh as the original creator; and, secondly, that this view was reinterpreted by Isaiah to illuminate God's message for the practical situations of his present time. This usage, consequently, permits the vision of Isaiah along with the creation themes Isaiah used to be reapplied to our present situations.

The book of Isaiah is a much disputed book. Its authorship has been attributed to two or more prophetic voices from the eighth to the fourth centuries. This has a bearing upon this study because the motifs of creation are splattered throughout Isaiah although

they are concentrated in the last half of the book. This dispute leads to two questions: 1) Who is the author? and 2) What is the nature of Isaiah?

The subject of this thesis, creation, is also greatly disputed. It is considered to be a major motif of myth. If creation is a mythical motif, what is its effect upon the message of Isaiah? In order to answer this question, another question must be asked first: What is myth?

This question also has bearing on another dispute which centers around the meaning of creation. Science and theology have disputed its meaning for many years. The controversy revolves around the question of the method of origins. Did creation occur by means of evolution which is process-oriented with or without a God or by means of special creation which is word-oriented with the power of one God. A brief consideration of this issue will show why this present study is necessary. What does Isaiah have to say about the question of origins?

### The Authorship of Isaiah<sup>3</sup>

In 1789 Doederlein published a commentary in which he denied that Isaiah wrote chapters 40-66. Instead a Second Isaiah wrote these chapters. This view was held because of the prominence of Babylon in several of the prophecies within these chapters--chapters 43, 46 and 47.

Because Cyrus was named as the man who would allow the Jews to return and to rebuild Jerusalem--Cyrus lived two centuries after Isaiah--scholars felt that Isaiah could not have written the prophecies about Cyrus. The mention of the exile in 18:20 and 52:2 caused many scholars to conclude that these chapters were written in Babylon near the end of the exile. Gesenius held such a view because he determined that there were common topics within these chapters.

The message of Deutero-Isaiah was one of comfort. Edward J. Young presents a synopsis of his message to the exiles:

This "Great Unknown" . . . comforted the exiles . . . by telling them that their God, Yahweh, was the Creator of heaven and earth, One who would destroy the idols, who by means of Cyrus would free the captives and who would bring blessing to the entire world, by that servant--Israel--whom he had chosen.<sup>4</sup>

Another view was advocated in 1892. Bernhard Duhm suggested that there were many authors involved in the writing of Isaiah. Deutero-Isaiah only wrote chapters 40-55 and had lived in Phoenicia about 540 B.C. The servant songs were written by a poet in the Jewish community about one hundred years later and inserted into the prophecy. Chapters 56-66 were written by a "third" Isaiah--Trito-Isaiah--before the time of Nehemiah's activity in Jerusalem.<sup>5</sup>

Edward J. Young presents seven reasons why Isaiah, the son of Amoz, wrote the entire vision of Isaiah:

1) a witness from tradition, 2) a stylistic witness, 3) the Babylonian prophecies, 4) the Cyrus prophecy, 5) the prose passage of chapters 36-39, 6) parallel passages and 7) a literary witness. The witness from tradition contains three parts. The first witness comes from the Dead Sea scrolls. In the Isaianic scroll, dated in the first or second century B.C., there was no separation between chapters 39 and 40 which would be expected if chapters 40-66 were written by different authors.<sup>6</sup> The only separation was at the conclusion of chapter 33 which would suggest that Isaiah may have been considered a bifid and thus the product of one author, Isaiah. The second witness from tradition is found in the Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach or Ecclesiasticus. In this second century work ben Sirach said that Isaiah comforted those who mourned in Zion. He revealed what was to occur to the end of time, and the hidden things before they came to pass (Ecclesiasticus 48:24b-25). The word ben Sirach used for comfort is the same as that used in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of Isaiah. Consequently, the authorship of the vision of Isaiah was established by the time of ben Sirach.<sup>7</sup> The third traditional witness to the authorship of Isaiah comes from the New Testament. Twenty-one times in the New Testament Isaiah is mentioned by name in connection with a quotation from the book of Isaiah.<sup>8</sup> Once John, in speaking about Isaiah 6 and 53, said that Isaiah

spoke having seen the glory of Christ. At this point John is declaring that Isaiah wrote both passages and that they were results of Isaiah's vision or visions of Christ. The conclusions from tradition, which includes scripture itself, is that one author wrote the vision of Isaiah and that that one author was Isaiah ben Amoz.

The second witness to the authorship of this vision involves stylistic witnesses. If chapters 40 to 66 were written by another author other than Isaiah ben Amoz, why did the editor not append a heading to this section of the book as editors did to even the smallest of prophecies such as Obadiah? Also, the perspective of the writer is not of a person in Babylon but of someone in Jerusalem.<sup>9</sup> The author writes as though he is not in Babylon. He is spatially distant from Babylon (43:14; 45:22 and 41:9; 46:11; 52:11). The trees mentioned are native to Judea and not Babylon (44:14). The topography mentioned in 40:4 is that of Israel and not Babylon. Throughout chapters 40-66 the prophet presents thoughts about Jerusalem that hint that she still stands. In fact, 62:6 actually mentions the walls as if they were standing. It should not be surprising that the author should write about the exile in the last half of the prophecy because he predicted the exile many times in the first half of the book.

A third witness for a united authorship of Isaiah

is the Babylonian prophecies found in chapters 13, 14, and 21. If the prophecies against Babylon in chapters 43-48 are an indication that Isaiah ben Amoz did not write chapters 40-55, then why were these three chapters placed where they are? Those who deny the authenticity of Isaianic authorship in chapters 40-55 also claim that these chapters were not written by Isaiah ben Amoz but have no explanation for this placement of the burden of Babylon. Young asks why a later editor would even attribute these prophecies to Isaiah ben Amoz since he prophesied a century before Babylon became a threat to Judah.<sup>10</sup> He notes that although chapters 13 and 14 are not considered Isaianic the epilogues are considered to have been written by Isaiah. Adding epilogues to prophecies is a characteristic of prophecies considered to be genuinely Isaianic. Another Isaianic characteristic is the threefold command in 13:2. Young cites the phraseology of verses 2-5 as characteristic of Isaiah. Young also points out that these prophecies are used by such prophets as Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah.

A fourth witness to the genuineness of this section of Isaiah involves the understanding of the Cyrus prophecy. Isaiah was undoubtedly a man filled by the Holy Spirit through whom the Holy Spirit spoke. Under such inspiration Isaiah could have predicted the name of the future deliverer of his people, Cyrus. Such events had happened before and after Isaiah, most notably the prophecy by the

man of Judea of Josiah hundreds of years before it was fulfilled. Quite often throughout this portion of the vision of Isaiah, Yahweh says that he will do a new thing in predicting the future. Therefore, why not believe that Yahweh is doing just that in predicting Cyrus' deliverance? An analysis of this passage (44:24-45:4) reveals three sections. The first strophe referred to the remote past. The second strophe referred to contemporary events in the present. The third strophe, referring to the future, must refer to the remote future because the first strophe referred to the distant past.

A fifth witness is the prose passage in chapters 36-39. The first two chapters are about Hezekiah's experience with Assyria. The last two chapters are about his dealings with Babylon. The oddity is that these two pairs of chapters are out of chronological order. This nuance cannot have originated with the Kings author because they are not in chronological order. Therefore, these chapters are original Isaianic material. Young proposes that they provide a transition between the part of the vision that concentrated on the prophecy to Judah affected by Assyria and the prophecy to Judah affected by Babylon. Chapter 39 ends with the prophecy of the exile and chapter 40 begins with a word of comfort. This interpretation provides good insight for the explanation of authorship of chapters 40-66.

The sixth witness concerns the parallel passages that

appear within Isaiah and between Isaiah and other prophets. There are several parallel passages that occur between the first (1-39) and second parts of Isaiah (40-66).<sup>11</sup> There are several passages in Isaiah that are paralleled in the pre-exilic prophets -- Habakkuk, Jeremiah, Zephaniah and Micah, and the exilic prophet Ezekiel.<sup>12</sup> Of these passages Isaiah 43:1-6 and Jeremiah 30:10-11 have six points of parallelism.<sup>13</sup>

The seventh witness from Isaiah that points to its authorship concerns the name for Yahweh used almost solely by Isaiah, the Holy One of Israel. Twelve times in the first 39 chapters Isaiah used this term, fourteen times in chapters 40-66.

The final witness<sup>14</sup> is in the nature of the book of Isaiah. The heading of the prophecy is the "vision" of Isaiah ben Amoz. In chapters 21 and 22 the prophecies are called visions. In II Chronicles 32:32 the chronicler referred to Isaiah's prophecy as the "vision of Isaiah." If the book of Isaiah's prophecy is classified as vision, then the section including chapters 40-66 could be visionary. Young proposes a time for this prophecy which would fit this view of Isaiah as a vision. At the end of his ministry with Hezekiah, after having foretold of Babylon's supremacy over Judah, Isaiah meditated on those prophecies which puzzled him. The resulting visions resulted in the prophecies of comfort which are found in chapters 40-66.

The word for "vision" is  $\text{רֵאיוֹן}$ .  $\text{רֵאיוֹן}$  is a



noun derivative of  $\text{רָאָה}$ , which means "he saw." It is used in a rather exalted and special way.<sup>15</sup>  $\text{רָאָה}$  is the normal word for "I see," being used almost fourteen hundred times in the Old Testament.<sup>16</sup>  $\text{רָאָה}$  is used quite often in connection with prophecy and experiences with God. This word is used in passages in which God revealed messages to his prophets through vision. This is noticeable in the life of Balaam (Nu. 24:4,16) and Isaiah (1:1). It was used in connection with God's revelation through dreams in the prophecy of Daniel (2:26; 4:5,9). It became so associated with prophecy that in Isaiah it acquired the meaning "prophecy" (Is. 30:10). It possessed an active meaning of seeing a revelation from Yahweh rather than the passive sense of receiving a revelation. It is possible that this is the way that the term was used in Isaiah<sup>17</sup> in the heading to the book "which he saw" as well as some of the prophecies throughout the book.  $\text{רָאָה}$  itself is found in the title of Isaiah as well as the book of prophecy by Nahum which was a vision of the destruction of Nineveh. Therefore, the vision of Isaiah is the message that came from God which Isaiah saw with his spiritual eyes. John the evangelist reflected this interpretation in chapter 12 when he said, "These things Isaiah said, because he saw His glory, and spoke of Him" (Jn. 12:41).

Whereas any of these witnesses by themselves may not be enough to bear testimony to the genuineness of Isaiah's

authorship of the vision, all of them together carry tremendous weight. However, the brunt of evidential weight should rest in a faith in Yahweh who causes new things to happen. Such a God could prophecy a "new" thing before it happened. With this faith it is not difficult to believe that Isaiah ben Amoz wrote the complete 66 chapters called the vision of Isaiah.

### Myth

Throughout the world the literature of nations includes stories about the origin of the world and the objects within it. Creation is one of the major subjects of stories that linguists and anthropologists classify as myth.<sup>18</sup> Myth is literature that functions in ritual, teaching and throughout the generations of society.

As literature myth is considered to have been originally transmitted orally. However, as evidenced by the tablets containing creation myths found in the ancient libraries of the Near East -- the Gilgamesh Epic, Enuma Elish and the Baal myth -- myth has been written.

Richard Chase states that "myth dramatizes in poetic form the hurts and needs of a society."<sup>19</sup> Those poetical characteristics that are found in myth are repetition of phrases, motifs and long passages; symbols, metaphors and archetypes; and theme and motifs. Of these characteristics, Isaiah used the themes and motifs of creation as well as metaphor, symbolism and archetypes. Many of the passages

using creation in the vision of Isaiah are poetic. Although these literary characteristics are a part of myth, they are not as important for the interpretation of Isaiah as the functions in which myth was used. In Theory of Literature Wellek and Warren write that myth is the "spoken part of ritual."<sup>20</sup> This connection with ritual is not found in Isaiah. Carrol Stuhlmueller writes:

Deutero-Isaiah offers little or no assistance for accepting a popular or well-established belief and feast, at the center of Israel's pre-exilic life, honoring Yāhweh as King and cosmic creator.<sup>21</sup>

Therefore, Isaiah did not use creation motifs for ritual.

Myth as pedagogy was used extensively by Isaiah. According to Ian Barbour there are four aspects to this use of myth: 1) myth orders experience,<sup>22</sup> 2) "myths provide patterns for human actions,"<sup>23</sup> 3) "myths inform man about himself,"<sup>24</sup> and 4) "myths express a saving power in human life."<sup>25</sup>

Isaiah used creation motifs to help order the lives of his people by speaking of God's power to bring his people out of exile. These motifs from the creation story provide patterns for the behavior of the Hebrews concerning obedience to and belief in Yahweh as God. They were used to inform the Hebrews about their relationship to Yahweh and about God's plans for their salvation, both nationally and personally.

The last characteristic of myth was its trans-

historical nature. This means that myth applies to more than the generation that originated the myth. Isaiah's reapplication of the creation stories of Genesis to the lives of the Hebrews of his time and those in subsequent generations reaffirmed the trans-historical nature of the creation myth.

Isaiah's use of the creation myth points to another aspect of the trans-historical nature of myth, truth or fact. Wilfred Guerin writes that myth is a

complex of stories--some no doubt fact, and some fantasy--which, for various reasons, human beings regard as demonstrations of the inner meaning of the universe and of human life.<sup>26</sup>

Isaiah applied the motifs of creation maintaining that what Yahweh claims to have done in the myths he actually did; and, therefore, because he actually did those things, he can and will do new things. The saving acts of Yahweh in the present are based upon the truth or historical fact of Yahweh's acts in the past.

In conclusion, myth can be defined as a story that usually is "poetic in nature thus causing it to have rhythmic qualities which includes repetition as well as metre, to have a metaphoric nature, to have a thematic purpose."<sup>27</sup> Myth is used within the community in its ritual experiences involving supplication and praise. It is used to teach the Weltanschauung accepted by the community--the meaning of the problem of life, the order of the world, a justification for the beliefs of the

community, a view of man and the "saving power in human life."<sup>28</sup> Myth is based in some way upon fact and can therefore be used to present a community's Weltanschauung.

### The Meaning of Creation

In 1982 an Arkansas court case brought forth a controversy concerning the meaning of creation. The creation view presented at the trial was called scientific creationism. It presents a view of creation in which God created the heavens and the earth in a relatively short time.

Davis Young objected to the acceptance of this view as the one to be presented in schools as an alternative to evolution. In Eternity magazine he writes that there are many different views of creationism. He defines general biblical creationism as

the belief that the biblical record of creation is true. The biblical creationist believes that the sovereign, triune God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, created the entire universe out of nothing, by the word of his power. He believes that the first chapter of Genesis describes real events. He believes that the world underwent growth and development during its creation. He believes that the human race is unique, the crown of creation. All these beliefs are basic to the biblical doctrine of creation, the one who subscribes to them is a general creationist.<sup>29</sup>

Young continued to argue that one possible creation view could include evolution as God's method of creation.

He argues that creation in a short period of time is not supported by biblical usage of the creation motifs. If, as a general creationist, Young includes evolution in God's methodology of creation, he immediately disqualifies his view as being an alternative to evolution.

Only a complete understanding of creation as used in the Bible, a creation theology, can help alleviate the tension in the evangelical community between those who believe creation is totally a result of God's action by word and those who believe it is a result of God's action by the use of evolution. A study of Isaiah will help move toward the development of a creation theology. The questions that this study will attempt to answer are:

- 1) What does Isaiah's use of the creation motifs say about the original creation?
- 2) How did Isaiah apply these motifs within the context of his message? and
- 3) How does the use of these motifs affect the interpretation of these prophecies for us today as well as the interpretation of creation today?

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Gerhard von Rad, "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation," The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 134.

<sup>2</sup>Theodore M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah," Journal of Biblical Literature, 93:3:345, 1973.

<sup>3</sup>The arguments as presented here are from Edward J. Young, Who Wrote Isaiah? (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1958) chapters 2 through 11.

<sup>4</sup>Young, Isaiah? pp. 18-19.

<sup>5</sup>Young, Isaiah? p. 19. The terms "Deutero-Isaiah" and "Trito-Isaiah" will not be used except as they are used in quotations by other authors.

<sup>6</sup>If a Third Isaiah wrote after the time of the return from exile before the time of Nehemiah's activity in Jerusalem as Duhm suggested, there would only be a period of two or, at the most, three centuries between the writing of Third Isaiah and the Dead Sea scrolls. It is very unlikely that the authorship of chapters 40 to 66 would have disappeared that quickly since the responsibility of the scribes of such a community as Qumran was to preserve the ancient writings, such as Isaiah.

<sup>7</sup>Ecclesiasticus was written in the second century B.C. Consequently, the authorship of a Deutero- or Trito-Isaiah would probably not have been lost by the time of Jesus ben Sirach so that portions of Isaiah's vision were wrongfully attributed to Isaiah ben Amoz (see footnote 6).

<sup>8</sup>See Appendix, Table 1.

<sup>9</sup>See Appendix, Table 2.

<sup>10</sup>Young, Isaiah? p. 41.

<sup>11</sup>See Appendix, Table 3.

<sup>12</sup>See Appendix, Table 4.

<sup>13</sup>See Appendix, Table 5.

<sup>14</sup>This witness is not proposed by Young but is my own view.

<sup>15</sup>Robert D. Culver, "הָאָזָא (haza) I, look, see, behold, prophesy, provide," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, Vol. 1, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 274.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Culver, "הָאָזָא," p. 275.

<sup>18</sup>Bronislaw Malinowsky, Magic, Science and Religion and other Essays (Garden City, NY: Doubleday; Anchor Books, 1954), pp. 110-111. Malinowsky included creation in a list of motifs found in myth.

<sup>19</sup>Richard Chase, The Quest for Myth (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1949), p. 73.

<sup>20</sup>Rene Wellek and Austin Warren, Theory of Literature (New York: Harcourt, Brace, & World; Harvest Book, 1963), p. 180.

<sup>21</sup>Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Yahweh-King and Deutero-Isaiah," Biblical Research, 15 (1970), p. 45.

<sup>22</sup>Ian G. Barbour, Myths, Models, and Paradigms: A Comparative Study in Science and Religion (New York: Harper & Row, 1974), p. 20.

<sup>23</sup>Barbour, Models, p. 21.

<sup>24</sup>Barbour, Models, p. 20.

<sup>25</sup>Barbour, Models, p. 21.

<sup>26</sup>Wilfred Guerin, et al, A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), p. 117.

<sup>27</sup>Donald Kaufmann, "Genesis 1-3 and Origin of Species: Two Views of Origin" (Thesis for departmental honors, Greenville College, 1976), p. 23.

<sup>28</sup>Barbour, Models, p. 21.

<sup>29</sup>Davis Young, "Genesis: Neither More nor Less," Eternity, 33:5:15, 1982.



## CHAPTER TWO

### GOD'S CREATIVE ACTIVITIES

The vision of Isaiah presents a fully-developed theology of creation. Isaiah used twenty-three different words or motifs connected to the myth of creation. Some of these words are "create," (׳לַבַּרָּא), "make," (׳לַעֲשֹׂה), and "form," (׳לַבְּנוֹת). Some of the motifs Isaiah used extensively are darkness and light, shame, peace and trust, good and evil, death destroyed, rest, the exodus, eternity and deity, the curse, the word of Yahweh, the breath of Yahweh and name. Some concepts used only sparingly are marriage, father and the flood.

These motifs of creation are used by Isaiah, not in a philosophical manner, but, rather, in a theological application to the practical, day by day lives of his people. Because Isaiah used these motifs in this manner, they have application for us today. Since Isaiah used these creation motifs so extensively, they will be analyzed according to themes of creation: 1) the creative activities of Yahweh--create, make, form and other less frequently used activities; 2) the creative agents of Yahweh--the word and other motifs related to the word, and the spirit and other motifs related to the spirit;

3) the conflicts of creation--likeness, the monsters of creation, and darkness and light; 4) the creative relationship--father, marriage and rest; 5) the creative relationship broken--good and evil, pride, shame and the curse; and 6) the creative relationship redeemed--the exodus, chosen, servant, death destroyed, peace and new creation. This study will conclude with a codification of Isaiah's theology of creation and an application of its truths to our lives.

The place to start in a study of Isaiah's theology of creation is his terminology for the act of creation. In describing what Yahweh had done in the past, was doing in the present, and would do in the future, Isaiah used three verbs--"create," (אֵלֵּא), "make," (עָשָׂה), and "form," (צָּוָה)--as well as many other less frequent terms. In this chapter these terms will be defined and their use analyzed. In order to understand their meaning three questions will be answered: 1) Who is the creator? 2) What did he create? and 3) What is the significance of these actions to the lives of the Hebrews?

In the vision of Isaiah "create" (אֵלֵּא) is used seventeen times--only once in chapters 1-39 and sixteen times in chapters 40-66. In these passages the one who creates is identified as "the Holy One," "the Everlasting God," "the Holy One of Israel," and "the high and exalted One who lives forever, whose name is Holy." However, in each of these seventeen locations, Yahweh (יְהוָה) is

identified as the name of the creator.

This God, **יְהוָה**, is the most important element in the vision of Isaiah. He is the instigator of history. He is the savior. He is the definer of the character of his servant. He is the creator. Isaiah declared that God is creator: of the world, of his servant and of new things.

### Yahweh

This God declares himself to be **אֲנִי יְהוָה יְהוָה**: **אֲנִי יְהוָה** (42:8). **יְהוָה** was the name that God used in identifying himself to Moses at the burning bush. The meaning of this name given in Exodus is "I am who I am"--**אֲהִי־אֲשֶׁר אֲהִי**. God told Moses, "You are to say to the Israelites: 'I am has sent me to you'" (Ex. 3:14).

**יְהוָה** has been interpreted by most scholars to be the Qal stem and the imperfect tense of **יָה** meaning "he is" or "the one who is."<sup>1</sup> This interpretation would coincide with the interpretation given in Exodus 3:14.

However, some have interpreted **יְהוָה** to be from the Hiphil stem of **יָה** in the imperfect tense meaning "he brings into being" or "giver of existence, creator."<sup>2</sup> This interpretation reflects "old liturgical formulas, found especially in Egypt, in which the deity was recognized as the one who continually brings about all that is--namely, the Creator and Sustainer of all."<sup>3</sup> "This interpretation has the merit of putting the accent on

Yahweh's dynamic lordship: He is the One who causes to be what is--i.e., historical events and natural happenings have their origin in his sovereign will."<sup>4</sup> The context of the story in which  $\text{אלהים}$  revealed himself to Moses sets forth the conviction that Yahweh is the active God, whose lordship is manifest in historical affairs.

Both of these word analyses give a scriptural view of who God is: God is both the God who is and the God who creates and sustains. These two meanings technically exclude each other. However, the context of scripture demonstrates that they enhance each other. The God who is must be the God who causes all things to be and the God who caused all things to be is also the God who has the power to cause new things to be.  $\text{אלהים}$ , then, means "the God who is and who creates."

### Create

Yahweh is the God who creates ( $\text{אֵלֵּם}$ ).  $\text{אֵלֵּם}$  is not the only term used by Isaiah to express the fact that Yahweh creates.  $\text{יָצַק}$ , "forms," and  $\text{עָשָׂה}$ , "makes," are used in passages alongside  $\text{אֵלֵּם}$ . Although they are used in a parallel fashion, each has nuances of meaning that distinguish them from each other.  $\text{אֵלֵּם}$  "emphasizes the initiation of the object."<sup>5</sup> A study of the passages in which  $\text{אֵלֵּם}$  appears reveals that  $\text{אֵלֵּם}$  is concerned with the creation of new things. In 42:9 Yahweh declares that

part of his ability as creator is to declare new things. This ability to proclaim what has not been done is presented by Yahweh as a test of deity. "In Isa 41:20 it is used of the changes that will take place in the Restoration when God effects that which is new and different."<sup>6</sup> In 48:5-7 Yahweh states that he proclaimed events to the Hebrews before they happened so that they could not claim that their idol did them or that they had predicted them; therefore, Yahweh creates events now having proclaimed them before. In 65:17 Yahweh remarks that he creates new heavens and a new earth. The association of the term "new" (שֵׁנִי) with אֶלֶף in these passages reveals a truth in the understanding Isaiah had of the meaning of אֶלֶף. In fact, in 48:6 the word for "something new" (אֶלֶף שֵׁנִי) is a derivative of אֶלֶף and is used in connection with אֶלֶף reflecting the idea that this new thing was created. Hence, אֶלֶף means "to create" or "to make something new."

This interpretation of אֶלֶף would agree with its use found in Genesis chapter one where the Genesis author used the word only three times. Each time אֶלֶף is used something new was made: first, the heavens and the earth were created; second, animal life was created; and third, the image of God in man, or spiritual life, was created.

As the creator, Yahweh performed three types of creative acts--the world, his people and new things.

Yahweh identifies himself as the one who created the heavens and the earth (42:5; 45:12,18). He "created the heavens and stretched them out" (42:5; 45:12,18), "spread out the earth and its offspring" (42:5; 45:12,18), "gives breath to the people on it, and spirit to those who walk in it" (42:5). He created the stars (40:26). He created the smith and the one who destroys (54:16). God not only created the universe but he also created man.

The creative activity of Yahweh is not limited to the original acts of creation. Yahweh continued to create within the history of mankind. Yahweh created the Hebrew nation (43:1). He called them by name (43:1). Because he called them by name, they belong to him. Just as Adam gained dominion over the animals by naming them, so Yahweh has dominion over Israel because he has called them by name.

This aspect of Yahweh's creative work reveals that he is active in history. Isaiah displayed this concept when he said, "I am Yahweh and there is no other, the One forming light and creating darkness, causing well-being and creating calamity" (45:6-7).<sup>7</sup> In this passage Yahweh is emphasizing the fact that he is the Lord of history. He is going to raise up Cyrus for the sake of Israel even though Cyrus does not realize it. Yahweh is going to do this so that the world may know that there is only one God. As the God of history, Yahweh creates

bad events as well as good events.

Yahweh demonstrates his claim as Lord of history through new creative activity as well. This activity is of a transforming nature. He creates a righteous redemption for Israel (45:8). Even though they do not deserve to be healed because of their turning away, he will heal them and create praise upon their lips (57:19).

Isaiah placed the doctrine of creation in juxtaposition with the doctrine of redemption. Gerhard von Rad concludes that although there is "a great deal of evidence for the doctrine that Yahweh created the world," it does not appear by itself "forming the main theme of a passage in its own right;" but always is related in some way to the doctrine of redemption.<sup>8</sup> Isaiah's purpose for using the doctrine of creation in this way was as "a foundation for faith."<sup>9</sup> von Rad comments:

It is as if for Deutero-Isaiah the creation of the world and the redemption of Israel both exemplify the same divine dispensation, as if that which happened in the beginning of things, and those "new things" (Isa. xlii. 9, xlviii. 6) which are now about to happen to Israel, both result from one and the same divine purpose of redemption.<sup>10</sup>

For those who are afflicted and needy Yahweh will create water in the desert so that trees will grow there. He will do this so that Israel will recognize who he is. This contrasts with 27:11 where Isaiah stated

that the one who formed Israel will not have compassion on them because they do not recognize him.

Another creative act will occur in the day of the branch of Yahweh. Yahweh will create over Mount Zion a cloud by day and a flaming fire by night (4:5). This reminds the hearer, or reader, of the exodus when God gave the Hebrews light and guidance by day and by night (Ex. 13:21-22).

Finally, Yahweh will create new<sup>11</sup> heavens and a new earth and Jerusalem for rejoicing (65:17-18). The curse of the original creation will be reversed. The penalty of death will be somewhat neutralized. Labor will be rewarded, trust restored and evil will not occur.

The creative activities of Yahweh have occurred from the original creation of the heavens and the earth to the future creation of a new heavens and a new earth. Between those two creations he has created a nation whom he has called by name and a servant who would perform his purpose. Yahweh is not just a deistic creator but a creator of new things.

All of these acts of creation by Yahweh have no significance unless they are somehow applied to the lives of people. This particular task Isaiah fulfilled very well. The creation of new things was intended by Isaiah to instill hope and faith in the life of the Hebrew. In 4:2-5 Isaiah prophesied that Yahweh would once again protect his people as he had done at the



time of the exodus and the wilderness wanderings. The cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night served as a promise of Yahweh's future protection.

Because Yahweh promised to protect them, they should not fear those who attack them when they are established in righteousness. Yahweh created those who attack them also. Whoever assails them is not from Yahweh. They will fail in their endeavor because Yahweh will protect his people. Therefore, they should not be afraid.

Through a servant whom he would choose Yahweh would reestablish a relationship with Israel and the whole world. This relationship would be characterized by righteousness and justice. Therefore, the promise of such a servant was a source of hope for those who were righteous and a conviction for those who were unjust and unrighteous because they were meant to be Yahweh's servants.

Although Isaiah had prophesied the coming exile, he comforted his people by proclaiming that Yahweh would bring them back from exile by creating a new thing. He would use Cyrus to release his people from exile. He also would create a highway through the desert for the redeemed to use in their return from exile.

During Isaiah's ministry many of the Hebrews, including some of the rulers, did not worship Yahweh. They likened God to things he was not. Yahweh questions

this practice in 40:26-31: "To whom then will you liken Me that I should be equal?" Perhaps they likened him to the stars because he points out the fact that he had created the stars. Isaiah pointed out the fact that man cannot hide from Yahweh as though he were tired and slept. "Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, Yahweh, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired" (40:28). Yahweh does not go to sleep. Instead, he is the one who gives strength to the weary. Isaiah's people must remember that Yahweh cannot be likened to anything. He is not like man. He is everlasting. He is the one who sustains man. He is the one whose "understanding is inscrutable" (40:28). The person who rests in Yahweh will be rejuvenated. In the face of the Assyrian or the Syro-Ephraimite threats such a promise was a message of comfort for Isaiah's people.

Isaiah not only warned his people of the futility of worshipping other gods, but he also advised them of the benefits of repentance. In 57:14-21 Isaiah presented Yahweh as the everlasting God who dwells with the contrite and lowly of spirit. He revives their heart and spirit. However, for those who do not turn away from their iniquity, Yahweh will heal them and cause them to rest<sup>12</sup> or place them in his will and lead them. He will comfort them and create praise upon their lips. Yahweh's place is in man and man's place is with Yahweh.

Isaiah was reminding the Hebrews that when man responds in contrition, Yahweh responds by placing new life within man as well as peace. Man should therefore strive to keep a humble heart before God and allow God to create praise upon his lips.

The final creation of Yahweh is the creation of new heavens and a new earth and Jerusalem for rejoicing. At this time Yahweh's servants, those who seek Yahweh, will eat, drink, rejoice and receive a new name. The former troubles are forgotten. Those who do not seek Yahweh will be slain. The promise of a new world in which life will be fulfilled and evil will not exist was a source of hope for Isaiah's people at a time when Jerusalem and Judah were not prominent in the world and evil was a constant threat in the world and even in Jerusalem during the reigns of Ahaz, Jotham and Manasseh. Such a promise provided hope that Yahweh would ultimately triumph. He would create a new world in which Jerusalem would be a place for rejoicing rather than threatened by war and evil.

Paul Schilling sums up the meaning of "create" for Isaiah:

All creation and all history point toward the salvation which crowns and consummates the mighty acts of God. The prophet's use of the very word create makes plain this unity. God creates not only physical nature, but Israel (43:1,7,15), and new things in history (48:6-7). He even creates salvation and righteousness (45:8). The same "arm of the Lord" which created the universe and brought Israel, "the

redeemed," through the Red Sea will enable "the ransomed of the Lord" to return "and come with singing to Zion" (51:9-11). Extended through Israel to all peoples, this redemption fulfills both creation and the history which binds together beginning and end.<sup>13</sup>

Isaiah used  $\aleph \eta \zeta$  as a symbol to show Israel that God was at work on their behalf. Because Yahweh had created the world, he could create a new thing among them. Because Yahweh had created their nation, he could create a new nation of people whose heart was contrite. Because Yahweh was the creator, his people do not need to fear. For Yahweh, to create was to redeem now and in the future, not just in the past. The past was only a foundation for faith in the present.

### Make

The verb "to make" ( $\aleph \eta \zeta$ ) is a very common word, appearing eighty-one times in Isaiah. It also has the meaning "to do." Fifty-six times the word is used in connection with Yahweh showing what he has done, is doing or will do. Whereas  $\aleph \eta \zeta$  is used only in connection with Yahweh indicating something only he can make,  $\aleph \eta \zeta$  is used frequently to show what man makes or attempts to make.  $\aleph \eta \zeta$  "connotes primarily the fashioning of the object with little concern for special nuances."<sup>14</sup> Consequently, this word is used to show the creativity of both man and God. When it is used of God,  $\aleph \eta \zeta$  emphasizes the activity of Yahweh within history.<sup>15</sup>

"These contexts stress one of the most basic concepts of OT theology, i.e. that God is not only transcendent, but he is also immanent in history, effecting his sovereign purpose."<sup>16</sup> In the Genesis account of creation the use of  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  "may simply connote the act of fashioning the objects involved in the whole creative process."<sup>17</sup>

Norman Habel believes that Isaiah used a rare title found in Genesis 14:19. Melchizedek blessed Abraham in the name of  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי יְרֵחוֹ וְאֱלֹהֵי יְרֵחוֹ}$ --"El, Elyon, procreator of heaven and earth."<sup>18</sup> This title is used five times in the Psalms in the same manner that Melchizedek used it--a blessing.<sup>19</sup> However, the psalmist used  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  instead of  $\text{לַבְּרִיאָה}$ . The similarity between these two titles is two-fold: 1) in each instance "heavens and earth" remains a constant and 2) the verb is in the participial form.<sup>20</sup> The verb  $\text{לַבְּרִיאָה}$  has the connotation of procreation.<sup>21</sup> Habel believes that  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  was used to replace  $\text{לַבְּרִיאָה}$  because it was a broader term not having a cognate term in the mythologies of the Near East.<sup>22</sup> According to Habel the substitution of  $\text{לַעֲשׂוֹת}$  was designed to suggest "the similarity or continuity between Yahweh's 'making' of heaven and earth and his 'making' of wonders on behalf of his people."<sup>23</sup> Isaiah takes this substitution one step further by inserting  $\text{אֱלֹהֵי}$  into the title showing "the supreme primary creative work of Yahweh."<sup>24</sup> Both of these formulas are found

in Isaiah. "Yahweh, Maker of heaven and earth" takes on a more expanded form as in the following passages:

You have forgotten Yahweh, your Maker,  
Who stretched out the heavens,  
And laid the foundations of the earth (51:13).

and:

I, Yahweh, am the maker of all things,  
Stretching out the heavens by Myself,  
And spreading out the earth all alone (44:24).

"Yahweh, creator of heaven and earth" also follows a more expanded form and with similar words in Isaiah 42:5:

Thus says Yahweh God,  
Who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
Who spread out the earth and its offspring.

D. J. McCarthy comments that this "demythologization" was present in Hebrew literature from the beginning. "Israel was interested in historical, not cosmic origins, and so it could use the mythic themes without hazard."<sup>25</sup>

Habel concludes that although "Israel continued to recognize its God as the maker of heaven and earth" she "repeatedly re-interpreted that title in terms of its history and crises."<sup>26</sup> A survey of the passages in which Isaiah used the verb  $\text{נָסַח}$  reveals that Yahweh is depicted as active in history. He "makes" moral judgments--justice is made his measuring line (28:17), Samaria was judged for her idolatry (10:11), rulers are reduced to nothing (40:23), and diviners are made into fools (44:25). He is a redeemer, as he states in 44:23, "Shout for joy, O heavens, for Yahweh has done it! . . . For Yahweh has redeemed Jacob." Yahweh, again

and again, is shown to have engaged in a relationship with Israel (27:11; 44:2; 45:11; 51:13; 54:5). He uses Israel as a threshing sledge with double edges (41:15). He makes a way for Israel (43:16; 44:27; 49:11).

This previous and present activity of Yahweh was used to create belief in what he will do. He declares "the end from the beginning" and will accomplish his will through Cyrus (46:10-11). He will transform nature (41:18).

In 45:9-13 the phrase "made the earth" (עָרַךְ אֶת־הָאָרֶץ) is used by Isaiah in connection with the creation of man to show that Yahweh is not limited to using those from the Hebrew nation, but that he can also use Cyrus to accomplish his purpose (45:13).<sup>27</sup> Ludwig writes that Isaiah used this phrase ("Made the earth") to support his reasons for predicting the rebuilding of Jerusalem (45:13). Yahweh did not make the earth to be uninhabited (45:18). Therefore, Cyrus will be used by God to bring about the rebuilding of Jerusalem.<sup>28</sup>

Yahweh also engaged in "making" his servant (49:2). He called him from his mother's womb. He named him. He made his mouth like a sharp sword. The servant too is made by Yahweh and once again Yahweh enters into history.

Yahweh is known as the maker of the heaven and the earth. Although the imagery used by Isaiah was of the beginning of the earth, the emphasis was upon the present

historical situation in which Yahweh would make something new.

Yahweh as maker is contrasted with man as maker. Twice Isaiah said that man's making activity concentrated on the making of idols (44:9-20; 46:6-7) whereas Yahweh makes mankind. Yahweh is the one who makes peace (27:5) in contrast to Rabshakeh who challenged Hezekiah to make peace with him (36:16). Judah acknowledged that it cannot bring deliverance (26:18) whereas Yahweh calls himself the redeemer (41:14) and the savior (43:3).

### Form

Another word that is used in a major way by Isaiah is "to form" ( $\text{לָצַק}$ ). He used this verb twenty-seven times. Twenty-one times  $\text{לָצַק}$  is used in connection with Yahweh.  $\text{לָצַק}$  basically means "to fashion" or "to form."<sup>29</sup> It is often used in synonymous parallelism with  $\text{לָבַן}$ , "create," and  $\text{לָעָשׂ}$ , "make." Like  $\text{לָעָשׂ}$ ,  $\text{לָצַק}$  "may be used of human as well as divine agency."<sup>30</sup>

When  $\text{לָצַק}$  is used in reference to human activity, it is used most commonly of the one who forms clay, the potter.<sup>31</sup> Seven times in Isaiah the participial form of  $\text{לָצַק}$  is translated "potter" (29:16; 30:14; 41:25; 45:9; 64:8).  $\text{לָצַק}$  was used most notably in the fashioning of idols in 44:9-10 and 12 where the craftsman used a hammer to fashion the iron. In 43:10 Yahweh



says that no other god was formed before or after him thus showing the futility of this act by man.

When  $\text{נָצַח}$  is used to describe Yahweh's activities, it refers totally to his creative activities. When Yahweh is likened to the potter, it is in reference to his creation of mankind (29:16; 45:9; 64:8). It should be noted that  $\text{נָצַח}$  is the verb used in Genesis 2:7 to describe the method whereby Yahweh created man. He "formed" him from the dust of the ground. Three times  $\text{נָצַח}$  is used to depict Yahweh's creation of nature. In 22:11 he formed the water. In 45:7 Yahweh forms light. In this passage his forming activity is parallel to his creating activity. In 45:18 where Isaiah said that Yahweh formed the earth, it is parallel with both  $\text{נָצַח}$  and  $\text{נָסַח}$ .

The final and more extensive use of  $\text{נָצַח}$  concerns the formation of Israel and Yahweh's servant. Six times Yahweh identifies himself as the one who formed Israel.<sup>32</sup> In five of these passages  $\text{נָסַח}$  is placed in synonymous parallelism with  $\text{נָצַח}$ . Twice  $\text{נָצַח}$  is placed parallel to  $\text{נָצַח}$ . Once, other creation words appear in the same passage. Concerning this parallel structure used by Isaiah, Theodore Ludwig says:

When Deutero-Isaiah mentions the creation of the cosmos, he does not use the phrase "heaven and earth" with a verb of creating; instead, he customarily quotes parallel formulae of the creating of the heavens and the founding of the earth.<sup>33</sup>

In three of these passages the formation takes

place within the womb (44:2,24; 49:5). This usage shows that Yahweh was instrumental in forming Israel and the servant even before they existed. In 49:5 where the words are placed in the mouth of the servant, the concept is of the fashioning of an individual person within the womb of his mother.<sup>34</sup> Concerning Isaiah's usage of  $\text{נָצַח}$  in this manner Gerhard von Rad states:

When the Second Isaiah says, "Thus has Yahweh said, your Redeemer and the One who formed you from the womb" (Isa. xliv. 24), he really is thinking of the miracle of creation, and not of the historical act of election.<sup>35</sup>

Concerning the subtleties in the meaning between  $\text{נָצַח}$  and  $\text{סָדַק}$ , McComiskey concludes:

When applied to the objects of God's creative work, the emphasis of the word is on the forming or structuring of these phenomena. The word speaks to the mode of creation of these phenomena only insofar as the act of shaping or forming an object may also imply the initiation of that object.<sup>36</sup>

#### Other Creation Words

Throughout Isaiah there are several minor motifs found within the creative works of Yahweh. In this section these will be briefly considered-- $\text{נָצַח}$ , "stretch out,"  $\text{שָׂדַק}$ , "spread out,"  $\text{טָבַע}$ , "found," Seven times  $\text{נָצַח}$  or a similar word meaning "stretch out" is used by Isaiah to describe the creation of the heavens.<sup>37</sup> Isaiah 54:2 shows the meaning of the word as used in creation passages, "Stretch out the curtains of your dwelling." Normally, it is used to describe the move-

ment of the hand. In the vision of Isaiah Yahweh stretched out his hand in judgment upon Edom (34:11), against Judah (5:25; 9:12,17,21; 10:4) and against all nations (14:26,27).

Concerning the meaning of יָצַח in creation passages, Norman Habel writes that the title "Yahweh, maker of heaven and earth" is interpreted by Isaiah in terms of two prior traditions: 1) the pitching of a tent, and 2) the establishment of a building.<sup>38</sup> Later, he analyzes the meaning of Yahweh "stretching out" the heavens in terms of his creative power:

Yahweh's "stretching out" of the heavens explicates the nature of his br' activity in terms of a traditional image implying manual operations. . . . this image is more than a literary metaphor in the mind of Deutero-Isaiah. . . . Thus while br' underscores the character of Yahweh as the one almighty creator who wills things into being, his "stretching," "molding," "founding," and "building" roles express viable modes through which he could exercise this almighty power.<sup>39</sup>

and:

These traditions provide vivid living symbols which underscore the primordality, eternal might, and unique efficacy of Yahweh as the living creator currently at work redeeming his people.<sup>40</sup>

Through this imagery Yahweh is presented as the "incomparable primordial Creator and active Lord of the nations."<sup>41</sup> When he is described as stretching out the heavens, he is seen to be preparing the heavens for his reign. In 40:22 Habel sees Yahweh's enthronement expressed in his sitting above the vault of the earth.<sup>42</sup>

Job chapter 26 sheds insight on this passage. According to Job, Yahweh "stretches out the North over chaos (אֲפֶלֶס) and hangs the earth on nothing" (vs. 7).

He fixes the celestial waters in their proper place and constructs a horizon to delimit light and darkness (vss. 8-10). . . . Thus above the horizon where Yahweh reigns there is light; beyond that horizon there is darkness (vs. 10).<sup>43</sup>

נִצָּחַ, "stretches out," is used by Isaiah to point out Yahweh's power over evil and the forces of nature. Although it was placed in the context of the beginning of the world, Yahweh's stretching out the heavens becomes a personal claim by Yahweh of his present might.<sup>44</sup>

Yahweh not only stretches out the heavens but he also spreads out the earth. The word Isaiah used was נִצָּחַ. Isaiah 40:19 shows its normal meaning of a smith beating out metal like the goldsmith plating an idol with gold. Twice Isaiah used it to show how God fashioned the earth (42:5; 44:24). The image is that of Yahweh beating out the earth into its present shape. In both passages Yahweh's spreading out the earth is placed in a parallel position to his stretching out the heavens. In the same manner that "stretching out the heavens" shows Yahweh's power over evil and nature, his "spreading out the earth" reveals his interest in the earth and its history. In 42:5 not only does Yahweh spread out the earth, but he also spreads out its offspring. Thus, his lordship over all that exists is seen. In 44:24 Yahweh accomplishes this task alone.

His power is such that he does not need any god or anyone to help him accomplish his purpose. He does it by himself. Once again God's power is seen as sufficient for the present because of what Yahweh has done in the past.

Another primordial activity of Yahweh which has meaning for the present and future of Israel was Yahweh's founding the earth. יָסַד means "to found, to fix firmly."<sup>45</sup> Isaiah applied this word eight times to Yahweh's activities (14:32; 28:16, twice; 44:28; 48:13; 51:13,16; 54:11).

Isaiah placed the foundation of the earth by Yahweh into juxtaposition with the establishment of Jerusalem or the temple. In 14:32 a messenger reported that Yahweh had founded Zion. In 44:28 Isaiah prophesied that Cyrus would proclaim that the foundation of the temple be laid according to Yahweh's will.

In 28:16 Yahweh says that he is laying a stone in Zion as a foundation. This passage of Isaiah took on a messianic interpretation. Both Peter and Paul used this verse in this manner. The stone is laid by Yahweh. It becomes a symbol of redemption because those who believe in him<sup>46</sup> will not be disturbed. Not being disturbed can be interpreted as salvation because the context of this passage is judgment.

In 48:13 and 51:13 and 16 Yahweh says he "founded the earth." Once again this activity is parallel to

the creative activity involved in making the heavens. As mentioned earlier, the founding of the earth was placed next to the founding of Zion as Yahweh's people: "and say to Zion, 'You are My people.'" The fact that Yahweh founded the earth lends support to his claim that he will once again found Zion. In 54:11 Isaiah wrote that Yahweh would lay the foundations of Jerusalem in jewels. Isaiah once again used the belief in Yahweh's creation of the world to evoke a belief in his present promise of deliverance.

#### Creation of the Baal Type

These phrases describing Yahweh's creative activity are reflective of traditions found in the cultures surrounding Judah. Habel believes that "establishing the earth" is a motif that

belongs to the tradition complex in which a deity overcomes or controls the waters of chaos, establishes the earth within or upon those waters, and rules the world as its king.<sup>47</sup>

Loren Fisher calls this tradition "creation of the Baal type." He says that in Isaiah "creation of the Baal type is used to speak of the creation of cosmos and people."<sup>48</sup> This type of creation is creation with redemption as its goal.<sup>49</sup>

Creation of the Baal type has a definite pattern. In this pattern are five elements: 1) conflict, usually with the chaotic waters, 2) kingship, 3) order, 4) temple building, and 5) a banquet.<sup>50</sup> According to

Fisher, the creation of the Baal type had a definite meaning which was useful to the Hebrews.

This is not a creation out of nothing; it is not a story of absolute origins or the birth of gods. Baal is not the creator of the gods and neither is Marduk. However, both Baal and Marduk want all authority in heaven, on the earth and in the sea.<sup>51</sup> My thesis is that this creation of the Baal type was more useful and meaningful to the Hebrews than some kind of a creation of the El type or a theogony. . . . They can use this for that which matters, namely; their world and their own existence.<sup>52</sup>

In Isaiah 51-55 Fisher sees the elements of this type of creation. In 51:9-11 Yahweh is proclaimed as the one who defeated Rahab, the primordial creature of chaos. From the context of the passage Rahab is symbolic for Egypt whom Yahweh defeated in order to free his people. In 52:7 Yahweh is declared king: "Your God reigns!" The restoration of Zion follows his proclamation as king. In chapters 53 and 54 Fisher sees Yahweh establishing order through his servant--his people. This is restated in his authority over the chaotic waters (54:9). In this new order his creation must serve. In return he will rebuild his city and his temple (54:11-17). Finally, the banquet is held in chapter 55 where an invitation to the thirsty is extended.<sup>53</sup>

Fisher sees one difference between the Canaanite view of creation and the Hebrew view.

Yahweh would never suffer defeat, and he would never forsake even though evil times may be embarrassing and difficult to explain.

The Lord will swallow up Death forever;  
Yahweh lives.<sup>54</sup>

It is true that the elements of this type of creation appear to be present. However, as Isaiah's use of the creation motifs applied to Yahweh's creation of the universe have already shown, the "creation of the El type" is not a meaningless symbol. It is a symbol that draws upon what the Hebrews believed Yahweh had done--he created the heavens and the earth, he stretched them out, he spread them out, he established them--and points to what he is doing and will do--redeem Israel. In not one instance is the creation by Yahweh used as an isolated concept; but, it is always used as either a foundation for further activity by Yahweh or a symbol pointing to his redemption of his people and all men.

Because the elements of the creation of the Baal type appear to be present in Isaiah, it would appear that Isaiah used the creation of the Baal type as a literary device which was intended to emphasize the message that Yahweh would redeem his people and the whole world. However, this literary usage does not mean that Isaiah subscribed to the beliefs surrounding this view of creation. McCarthy espoused the belief that "demythologization" had occurred already because "Israel was interested in historical, not cosmic origins, and so it could use the mythic themes without hazard."<sup>55</sup>

The manner in which Isaiah used these motifs demonstrates Yahweh's Lordship. His conflict with



Rahab was used to show that he had redeemed his people from the powerful nation of Egypt. The proclamation of Yahweh as king was in connection with a new exodus from the exile and the restoration of Zion. Yahweh will establish a new type of order--one that involves forgiveness of sins through the suffering of an innocent servant. In chapter 54 where Yahweh describes the establishment of Jerusalem and the temple, he is the one who accomplishes it. He is Lord! The banquet that is seen in 55:1-2 is more than an invitation to a banquet. It is the beginning of an invitation by Yahweh to feast on him, to establish a relationship with him: "Incline your ear and come to Me. Listen, that you may live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you" (55:3). Yahweh is Lord and Isaiah used the motifs of creation of the Baal type to emphasize that fact.

According to Fisher the Hebrews "identified the god of the exodus with the god of creation."<sup>56</sup> This is true but not because the language of the exodus was from the creation of the Baal type. Isaiah was able to identify the God of creation and the God of the exodus because they were the same God, Yahweh. Therefore, he could tie the creation of the cosmos and the creation of a people together. The creation of the cosmos lent credence to the creation of a people.

### First and Last

One last issue which is linked to the creative activities of Yahweh is that he is the first and the last. Isaiah 48:12-13 says:

Listen to Me, O Jacob, even Israel whom I  
called;  
I am He, I am the first, I am also the last.  
Surely My hand founded the earth,  
And My right hand spread out the heavens;  
When I call to them, they stand together.

Carroll Stuhlmueller believes that this intermingling of Yahweh's firstness and lastness takes place "because Yahweh is personally and always present, always the same, the first and the last."<sup>57</sup> He argues that it would not be a convincing Disputationsrede to claim that Yahweh established the earth a long time ago.

Yahweh would hardly compete with Babylonian creator-gods. The argument gains power only if the God who once created <sup>is</sup> creating now in the moment of redemption.<sup>58</sup>

Interestingly, Isaiah never presented Yahweh as creator only in the past, but always as creator in the present. The past only served to instill faith in the Hebrews. Only a God who could create the heavens and the earth could be creating a new thing, a redemptive thing, now. Concerning this, Stuhlmueller states:

This universalism of "time" (all the past redemptive acts of Yahweh) is matched by Deutero-Isaiah's universalism of "space" (the heavens and the earth).<sup>59</sup>

Concerning the relationship between Yahweh's original creation and his present creation, Stuhlmueller writes:

The basis for discussion is what Yahweh is doing now; elaboration comes from what he has always been doing in Israel's history . . . creating as he redeems.<sup>60</sup>

Habel concludes that "the acts of creation are the primary evidence of Yahweh's ability to perform miraculous feats."<sup>61</sup> Because of this these creative acts become the foundation for faith in Yahweh concerning what he is doing now, redemptively.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, Charles A. Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 218a.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>B. W. Anderson, "Name of God," IDB, II, 410.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Thomas E. McComiskey, "בָּרָא (bārā') I, create, make, Creator," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 127.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>All scriptures that are quoted are from the New American Standard Bible. The only exception will be the translation of יהוה which the NASB translates LORD but which I will translate "Yahweh" as I did in this verse.

<sup>8</sup>Gerhard von Rad, "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation," The Problem of the Hexateuch and other essays, trans., E. W. Trueman Dicken (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 138.

<sup>9</sup>von Rad, "Doctrine of Creation," p. 134.

<sup>10</sup>von Rad, "Doctrine of Creation," p. 135.

<sup>11</sup>BDB, p. 294a. "New" is from the verb which means "to repair, to renew."

<sup>12</sup>This word (יָרַח) could be translated "cause to rest" which would also fit the context of the passage by emending the vowel points so that the word becomes the Hiphil imperfect of יָרַח. If this is done, God would be placing man where he wants him to be (cf. Ge. 2:15). For a fuller explanation of this point see note 40 in chapter 5.

<sup>13</sup>S. Paul Schilling, Isaiah Speaks (New York: Women's Division of Christian Service, Board of Mission

of the Methodist Church, 1958), pp. 115-16.

<sup>14</sup>Thomas E. McComiskey, "נָצַח ('āṣā) do, fashion, accomplish," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 701.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>Norman C. Habel, "Yahweh, Maker of Heaven and Earth": A Study in Tradition Criticism," Journal of Biblical Literature, 91:3:323, 1972.

<sup>19</sup>Ps. 115:15; 121:2; 124:8; 134:3; 146:5-6c.

<sup>20</sup>Habel, "Maker," pp. 323-24.

<sup>21</sup>Habel, "Maker," p. 321.

<sup>22</sup>Habel, "Maker," p. 325.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid.

<sup>24</sup>Habel, "Maker," p. 335.

<sup>25</sup>D. J. McCarthy, "Creation Motifs in Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 29:100, 1967.

<sup>26</sup>Habel, "Maker," p. 334.

<sup>27</sup>Theodore M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah," Journal of Biblical Literature, 92:3:345, 1973.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid.

<sup>29</sup>Thomas E. McComiskey, "נָצַח (yāṣar) fashion, form, frame," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 396.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>cf. Is. 27:11; 43:1,21; 44:2,21,24. This does not include the three passages in which Yahweh is equated with the potter as the one who formed Israel (29:16; 45:9; 64:8).

<sup>33</sup>Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 347. This is found in 42:5; 44:24; 45:12,18; 48:13; 51:13,16.

<sup>34</sup>The manner in which 49:5 was worked out in history is discussed by W. Barnes Tatum in "The Origin of Jesus Messiah" (Matt 1:1,18a): Matthew's Use of the Infancy Traditions," Journal of Biblical Literature, 96:4:523-35, 1977. In this article he writes,

The 'all this' includes not only Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit but also the odd manner in which he was incorporated into the royal-messianic line of descent through the obedience of Joseph" (p. 531).

Matthew used Isaiah 7:14 in order to do this. The name "Immanuel" refers back to Jesus' origin by the creative power of the Holy Spirit within his virgin mother" (p. 531). "Son of David" becomes his name by adoption (p. 531).

<sup>35</sup>von Rad, "Doctrine of Creation," p. 137.

<sup>36</sup>McComiskey, "ܐܝܬܐ," p. 396.

<sup>37</sup>Norman C. Habel, "He who Stretches out the Heavens," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 34:4:417, 1972. In footnote 1, Habel says, "Following the Syriac rendering most scholars read nth (to stretch out) for nt (to plant) in 51:16. The corresponding verb found in 48:13 is tph (pi'el). Note also the parallel verb mth in Isa 40:22."

<sup>38</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," pp. 417-18.

<sup>39</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," pp. 418-19.

<sup>40</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," p. 419.

<sup>41</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," p. 420.

<sup>42</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," p. 421.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Habel, "Stretches Out," p. 419.

<sup>45</sup>Paul R. Gilchrist, "ܐܝܬܐ (yāsād) establish, found, lay foundation," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 384.

<sup>46</sup>"In him" is found in the Septuagint.

<sup>47</sup>Habel, "Maker," pp. 334-35.

<sup>48</sup>Loren Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum, 15:323, 1965.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid. Fisher sees this view of creation in Ex. 15:16 and Is. 51:9-11 where conflict, redemption, cosmos and return to Zion are motifs.

<sup>50</sup>Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 320.

<sup>51</sup>cf. Mt. 28:18. I think it is interesting that Jesus claims to have all authority in heaven and on earth.

<sup>52</sup>Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 321.

<sup>53</sup>Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 324.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid. cf. Is. 25:8.

<sup>55</sup>McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 100.

<sup>56</sup>Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 323.

<sup>57</sup>Carroll StuhlmueLLer, "'First and Last' and 'Yahweh-Creator' in Deutero-Isaiah," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 29:1:203, 1967.

<sup>58</sup>StuhlmueLLer, "First and Last," p. 191.

<sup>59</sup>StuhlmueLLer, "First and Last," p. 202.

<sup>60</sup>StuhlmueLLer, "First and Last," p. 193.

<sup>61</sup>Habel, "Maker," p. 333.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE WORD AND THE SPIRIT

In the Genesis account of creation God created by the power of his word. God pronounced, "Let there be . . ." six times. Each time God spoke his word, it was accomplished. Light was created. The firmament and the waters were separated, as was the water from the land. The lights of the sky were created. The creatures of the sea and the land were created. The psalmist wrote:

By the word of Yahweh the heavens were made,  
And by the breath of His mouth all their host.  
. . . . .  
For He spoke, and it was done;  
He commanded, and it stood fast (Ps. 33:6,9).

Several times God named elements of his creation--day, night, heaven, earth and seas. The ability to name is given to man when man names the animals which God created. The aspect of naming is part of the power of the word.

Within the story of creation a tandem concept of power to the power of the word is the power of the spirit. The Spirit of God moved over the unfilled and the incompleted earth. A concept that is parallel to the spirit is breath. It has significance for under-



standing creation because Yahweh is the one who gives breath.

The spirit and the word are the two methods through which Yahweh acts in history. They reveal the power of God within the activities of God. Edmond Jacob writes:

The goal of divine action is to maintain and to create life; to achieve this aim Yahweh chiefly avails himself of two means which we encounter in varying intensities in all the realms of his manifestation: the Spirit and the Word.<sup>1</sup>

### Word

Oskar Grether noticed that out of 241 times that "the word of Yahweh" is mentioned in the Old Testament 225 times it is connected with prophetic utterance.<sup>2</sup> The meaning of the word will be examined before an analysis of the way in which Isaiah utilized the concept of word and related motifs--declaring, planning, naming or calling, and the voice or mouth of Yahweh.

𐤀𐤁𐤅 is used by Isaiah to mean more than just "word." John McKenzie writes that 𐤀𐤁𐤅

is understood by most philologists to signify radically "to drive, to get behind and push." Thus the personality puts itself behind the word and drives it into the external world; but it comes with that which it drives.<sup>3</sup>

Edmond Jacob says that the word translates into action that which is "first in the heart."<sup>4</sup> As shown by 38:7, 𐤀𐤁𐤅 sometimes has the connotation of an action: "And this shall be the sign to you from Yahweh that Yahweh will do this 𐤀𐤁𐤅 that He has spoken." So, the equation

of the act with the word shows that the power of the word continues from the moment it is spoken until it is fulfilled in the act. Therefore,  $\overline{\text{דבר}}$  is the act as well as the word.

The Hebrew concept of the word has similarities with its use in other Near Eastern cultures. In Mesopotamia

the divine word is conceived as an entity laden with power; both gods and man are moved by it and find it irresistible. It is a principle of life and of fertility, a creative utterance. Once spoken, it partakes of the eternity of the gods themselves.<sup>5</sup>

Marduk created not by word but by work.<sup>6</sup>

The New Year's festival of the Baal cult in Canaan each year enacted in ritual the decree of the gods for the coming year. Through this rite the fertility of the land was believed to be secured.<sup>7</sup>

In Egypt the Memphis theologians moved closer to the Hebrews in their understanding of the word when they taught that when the gods uttered names the reality which that name signified sprang into being.<sup>8</sup> Although this is not the same as creation by word which is described in Genesis one, it still is a move away from creation by "making" to a form of creation by word.

The difference between the Hebraic and the Memphitic views of creation was that the Hebrews viewed Yahweh as creating by the power of the commanding word

while the Memphis theologians believed that the power of creation was in the act of uttering names. Although Yahweh named elements of his creation, he does not create by naming.<sup>9</sup> Jacob says that "in Genesis one the word is the creative instrument of God."<sup>10</sup>

As the instrument of creation, the word is very powerful. It has a permanence that "reaches from the present into the future."<sup>11</sup> Concerning the power of the future word, McKenzie continues:

Here the word posits the reality which it signifies and endures in the process which it initiates. Once uttered it cannot be recalled. The word so conceived is . . . the externalization of the reality conceived in the heart, the desire. If the will is strong enough, the reality which is posited by the word will infallibly come into being.<sup>12</sup>

In the ancient world the divine word and the magical word both had power to create the thing they symbolized.<sup>13</sup> The use of magic was forbidden by Yahweh as abhorrent in his eyes (Dt. 18:9-13). "Belief in magic is a perversion of the power of the word."<sup>14</sup> The Hebrews, however, believed that the word of Yahweh was different from the word of man.<sup>15</sup> The difference consisted in the degree of fulfillment of the word. Isaiah illustrated the futility of man's word when he said, "Speak a word, but it will not stand" (8:10). Man's word is not true when it fails to accomplish its task. Thus, man's word may not be established.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, the word of Yahweh is said "to be fulfilled" or "estab-

lished." This description of the word of Yahweh illustrates that the thing the word signified is coming into existence.<sup>17</sup>

Scripture illustrates that Yahweh brings events into being through the word. Through the prophetic word the houses of Jeroboam, Baasha and Ahab fell,<sup>18</sup> the rebuilding of Jericho was accomplished through the death of Hiel's sons,<sup>19</sup> and the famine of Samaria was ended.<sup>20</sup> The word of Yahweh acts as "the hinge of biblical history."<sup>21</sup> Through the word of Yahweh the Noahic flood came,<sup>22</sup> Abraham and Moses were called.<sup>23</sup> The Hebrews moved from place to place during their wandering in the wilderness at the word of Yahweh.<sup>24</sup> Yahweh chose Saul and David as king by his word.<sup>25</sup> He rejected Saul as king, punished David for his sins and divided the kingdom by his word.<sup>26</sup> He established David's throne forever by his word.<sup>27</sup> He healed Hezekiah by his word.<sup>28</sup> Finally, John recorded that God reestablished a relationship of love with mankind through the life, death and resurrection of his Word.<sup>29</sup> As the instrument of Yahweh, the word brings into being God's will in the arena of man's world and history.

Sometimes the word of Yahweh is not realized immediately. However, the word of Yahweh never returns to him without having accomplished its task. If it does not fulfill itself immediately, it becomes like a time bomb. Man knows that it will be fulfilled but he does

not know when it will be fulfilled. Therefore, the word of Yahweh becomes more terrifying than Damocles' sword. "Once uttered, it falls upon its object, and no one knows when it will fulfill itself."<sup>30</sup> Jacob likens the word of Yahweh to a "projectile shot into the enemy camp whose explosion must sometimes be awaited but which is always inevitable."<sup>31</sup> Jacob further concludes that "Yahweh is the sole author of history" and that "human beings are the instruments of his word."<sup>32</sup> For example, in Isaiah Sennacherib represented his military attack upon Jerusalem as an order from Yahweh: "Yahweh said to me, 'Go up against this land, and destroy it'" (36:10). Therefore, the word does not return to Yahweh unfulfilled. Instead, it is like the rain and the snow fulfilling its mission. The word of Yahweh does not return to Yahweh, neither does he take it back (31:2).

McKenzie concludes that the word "partakes of the eternity of Yahweh himself."<sup>33</sup> Isaiah expressed this understanding of the word of Yahweh when he wrote: "The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever" (40:8). McKenzie clarifies this when he says:

This does not mean, obviously, that the word-thing posited by the reality of Yahweh is as eternal as Yahweh; the word is here considered as an externalization of the personality of Yahweh as an expression of His will. There is no agent which can destroy it, corrupt, or frustrate it.<sup>34</sup>

It will accomplish its task because of the one who said it, Yahweh.

The power of the word is rooted in the power of the person who speaks the word.<sup>35</sup> When a person speaks, he "externalizes himself and looses the power which he possesses."<sup>36</sup> This is true not only of human words but also of divine words. McKenzie contrasts the effects of the divine word with that of the human word:

The word of Yahweh, like the word of man, is a release of the power of the personality which utters it. He who receives the word is invaded by the personality of the speaker; when the speaker is Yahweh, the transforming influence of the word exceeds the influence of any human speech.<sup>37</sup>

McKenzie later states that the Hebrews believed that the concept of "the word of Yahweh" applied to more than an utterance. It also included the events which occurred as a result of that spoken word. In other words,

history also is "the word of Yahweh," a reality which fulfills the utterance of Yahweh. The word of history is dynamic and dianoetic: dynamic in that it accomplishes what it signifies, dianoetic in that it makes the historical process intelligible. History is then revelation of the purpose of Yahweh, but it is more; as the word is a release of the psychic energy of a personality, so history is a revelation of the character and personality of Him whose word it is. The word affirms not only the thing signified but also the person who utters it.<sup>38</sup>

He further states that other cultures in the ancient Near East held this view of the word which the Hebrews utilized.<sup>39</sup>

Not only is history a word but nature is a word

also. In Psalm 19 the psalmist acknowledged that although nature could not utter a word yet it also declared Yahweh's glory. It was heard because nature also is a word, a word emitted by its creator.<sup>40</sup> What nature speaks is the "personality of Him who utters the word. Man experiences Yahweh in what Yahweh has created."<sup>41</sup> The "word of Yahweh," then, is not just a word but the word of Yahweh. Each time it is spoken Yahweh reveals some part of his personality, either his judging or his saving nature. Therefore, a revelation of the word of God has value not just to the individual who experienced it but also to all people as an example.<sup>42</sup>

Isaiah's use of  $\overline{\text{דבר}}$  within his vision will illustrate this understanding of "word." Again and again Isaiah introduced a prophecy with the phrase "the word of Yahweh" (1:10; 28:13,14; 38:4; 39:5; 66:5). This phrase is found as an introduction to messages of judgment (1:10; 28:13,14; 39:5) as well as messages of comfort (38:4; 66:5). In every case it introduced an action which Yahweh establishes. The word is always connected with Yahweh's activity--past, present and future.

The aspect of Yahweh's past activity is seen in the motif of naming or calling. (This will be considered later.) Isaiah 9:8-10:4 points not only to the power of Yahweh's word but also to its purpose. Yahweh has sent a word upon Israel which includes several coming disasters--defeat by the Syrians and Philistines, the

death of the leaders, famine, civil war and slaughter. Isaiah said that Yahweh's hand was still outstretched against Israel because the people did not repent of their wickedness or seek Yahweh of hosts. In this statement Isaiah revealed that Yahweh desired to save Israel but could not because of Israel's unrepentant attitude. Isaiah 9:8 received its peculiar force from the context which described the coming disasters.<sup>43</sup> In Isaiah 30:1-2 Isaiah warned of the consequences of rejecting the word of Yahweh spoken by the prophet. It is the same as rejecting God himself.<sup>44</sup>

In 45:23 the word of Yahweh is righteousness and it will not return to him. Here the word of Yahweh is seen to be true, to be right. It will not turn back or return for to return would be to lose its reality,<sup>45</sup> to deny the power of Yahweh because it was ineffectual. In 55:10-11 Yahweh again states that just as rain and snow fall from heaven and do not return to heaven without watering the earth enabling it to bear fruit, so his word will not return without accomplishing Yahweh's desire. This verse reveals the close association between the word and the personality of the one who utters the word by declaring the character of Yahweh's desires. Yahweh's purpose can be seen in the accomplishment of his word. In this passage Isaiah "attributes to the word a power in the cosmos as great as in history."<sup>46</sup> Therefore, the section of Isaiah



which begins with chapter 40 and ends with chapter 55 greatly expresses Yahweh's use of the creative word in history: it begins by affirming that even though generations come and go the word of Yahweh endures eternally, and it ends with a declaration of the word's efficacy.<sup>47</sup> For Isaiah the word of God

is the entire action and revelation of God.  
 . . . By his word God makes known the meaning of events; he makes them known in advance, for he who is the first and the last knows what will happen at the end of time (41.4; 43.10; 44.6; 48.12).<sup>48</sup>

This foreknowledge and the ability to declare that which is new is the test which Yahweh presents to the gods as a test of deity. This challenge is intended by Yahweh to show that he and he alone is the living God. It is designed to "contrast Yahweh with pagan gods by the word of the one and the silence of the others."<sup>49</sup> In order to demonstrate his ability to predict something new, Yahweh predicted the exile (39:6-7) and the deliverance from exile through the messiah, Cyrus. Speaking about the gods of Babylon, Yahweh declared, "Though one may cry to it, it cannot answer; it cannot deliver him from his distress" (46:7).

Yahweh's word not only decrees ruin as in chapter 24, but it also declares salvation. This function of the word of Yahweh supports his servant. God's word will be to his people a word of guidance: "This is the way, walk in it" (30:21). Yahweh will confirm the word of

his servant (44:26) and give him the tongue of a disciple so that his words may sustain the weary. He will place his words in the mouth of the servant (51:16). His word also teaches his servant as a disciple (50:4).

Jacob writes that the "function of the word in producing salvation can be compared with that of the servant of Yahweh."<sup>50</sup> It is possible that Isaiah perceived in the servant of Yahweh the same reality that was in the eternal word, for the servant would fulfill his mission right to the end.<sup>51</sup> The salvation which Yahweh works comes through his word in a

single history which begins with the word of God pronounced at the creation and which is completed by the word made flesh (Jn. 1.14).<sup>52</sup> Therefore it is in history that the word is revealed and its action in nature is only a pale reflection of its work in history.<sup>53</sup>

The word of Yahweh functions to bring salvation not only in the present as in the life of Hezekiah when he was first terminally ill and then beseiged by Assyria<sup>54</sup> but also through the promised deliverance from Babylonian captivity<sup>55</sup> and the captivity of sin.<sup>56</sup>

This word of promise is revealed through a word of vision. After Isaiah's temple vision in chapter 6, the voice of Yahweh spoke the word to Isaiah. In chapter 2 Isaiah saw the word which Yahweh proclaimed. This view of vision as word is supported by Jeremiah when he said that men speak a vision from their own minds, and not from the mouth of Yahweh (Je. 23:16-18). The vision is unintelligible to man unless the word of Yahweh accom-

panies it.<sup>57</sup> Because Isaiah's prophecy is a vision, Isaiah put great emphasis upon the word of Yahweh. Consequently, it is made intelligible by the word of Yahweh.

Isaiah revealed his emphasis on the word not only by his use of נִבֵּא but also by the anthropomorphic terms "voice" and "mouth." When לִי, "voice," is used in connection with Yahweh (this occurs six times-- 6:8; 30:30,31; 32:9; 40:6; 66:6), it always is proclaiming a word of judgment. When Isaiah had his vision of Yahweh, he heard Yahweh's voice seeking someone to proclaim a message of judgment: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us" (6:8)? In 30:30 and 31 the voice of Yahweh is a voice of authority. It is so terrible that Assyria will be terrified at the judgment of Yahweh. For the voice of Yahweh to speak is the same as the punishing judgment. When Yahweh speaks to the complacent women in chapter 32, he speaks softly, invitingly; but, the message is one of judgment while he calls them to repentance (32:9-12). In 40:6 the voice that speaks "Cry" is not identified; but because the message is about the fleeting nature of man, a word of warning as well as comfort, the voice is probably Yahweh's voice. The final mention Isaiah made of Yahweh's voice is in the message about the new heavens and the new earth. In 66:6 Isaiah declared that Yahweh's voice is bringing retribution to his enemies--those who self-

righteously fulfill the ritual but ignore the one whom they are to serve.

Eleven times Isaiah mentioned פִּי יְהוָה, "mouth of Yahweh," or the mouth of his servant. Five times Isaiah used a phrase similar to "the mouth of Yahweh has spoken" (1:20; 34:16; 40:5; 58:14; 62:2). This phrase has the implication of the establishment of the message. Yahweh has spoken and it will happen. "He spoke and it was done, He commanded and it stood fast" (Ps. 33:9). In 40:3-8 where Isaiah used this phrase, he applied another motif connected with creation by the word. In creation God commanded light and other parts of the universe to exist when he said, "Let there be." In 40:4 he says:

Let every valley be lifted up,  
And every mountain and hill be made low;  
And let the rough ground become a plain,  
And the rugged terrain a broad valley.

Here the pattern "Let there be . . ." appears twice revealing the creative work of Yahweh issuing from his voice and his word. Also, the surety of the accomplishment of this act appears in this passage when Isaiah said, "The mouth of Yahweh has spoken" (40:5) and "the word of our God stands forever" (40:8).

Every animal will have a mate because Yahweh's mouth has commanded it (34:16). It is the mouth of Yahweh that establishes the heritage of those who keep the sabbath (58:14) and that designates a new name for

Zion (62:2). Another way of saying that Yahweh's word is established is that when the word of Yahweh goes forth from Yahweh's mouth it will not return empty. The former events of history, whether it be the creation or the exodus, were accomplished because they went forth from Yahweh's mouth. Salvation is possible because of the word that goes forth from Yahweh's mouth. It will succeed in the matter for which Yahweh sent it, salvation, because the purpose of Yahweh's word going forth is that every knee will bow to Yahweh and every tongue will swear allegiance to him (45:23; 55:6-11).

Three times וַיִּפֹּה is applied to Yahweh's servant (11:4; 51:16; 59:21). The shoot from the stem of Jesse will use his mouth as a weapon against the earth (11:4). When he speaks righteousness, people are judged because of their wickedness. Twice Isaiah said that the words of Yahweh are placed in the mouth of the servant. These words possess a ubiquitous quality because they will be passed from one generation of the servant to the next. Finally, Yahweh placed his words in the servant's mouth for creative purposes. Yahweh says that the servant received his words for a three-fold purpose: 1) to establish the heavens, 2) to found the earth and 3) to say to Zion, "You are my people." This last message was designed to give hope to the people of Judah. Yahweh's servant was to be Lord of history. He was to be the one who uttered God's words of creation

as well as his words of comfort. Consequently, Isaiah's association of  $\text{לִּי}$  and  $\text{יְהוָה}$  with the word of Yahweh illustrates in anthropomorphic, or concrete, terms the power of the word of Yahweh.

Yahweh used his word in different activities: he planned ( $\text{יָצַח}$ ), he declared ( $\text{אָמַר}$ ), he called ( $\text{קָרָא}$ ) and he gave names ( $\text{שָׁם}$ ). The plans ( $\text{יָצַח}$ ) of Yahweh are not frustrated by anything or anyone (14:27). When Yahweh plans something, it will stand (14:24).

The counsel of the Lord is eternal, "It stands forever." The enduring character of God's counsel and plan is grounded in the unchangeableness of God himself. . . . It is God who guarantees the accomplishment of his eternal decrees.<sup>58</sup>

Twice Isaiah used the phrase "Yahweh of hosts has planned" to show that nothing that Yahweh has planned will be frustrated. It will be accomplished (14:24; 23:9). Yahweh is so wise that no one can give him any counsel or plans. He knows what he is doing (40:4). The passage which most clearly shows Yahweh's declaration of his accomplishment of his plans deals with his appointment of Cyrus as the deliverer of the Hebrews from their exile:

Remember the former things long past,  
For I am God, and there is no other;  
I am God, and there is no one like Me,  
Declaring the end from the beginning  
And from ancient times things which have not  
been done,  
Saying, 'My purpose will be established,  
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';  
Calling a bird of prey from the east,  
The man of My purpose from a far country.

Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it  
to pass.

I have planned it, surely I will do it (46:9-11).

In verse 11, the word translated "planned" is לִצְרֹת,  
"form." Therefore, Yahweh "forms" his purpose. He  
accomplishes it through the life and accomplishments of  
Cyrus.

In the same manner that the servant of Yahweh was  
linked to the motif of "mouth," the servant is linked in  
two passages to the motif of "plan." In 9:6 Isaiah  
wrote that the son would be called "Wonderful Counselor"  
(יִצְחָק חֲלִיפוֹ) as well as three other appellatives. Con-  
cerning the meaning of this name Paul Gilchrist writes:

The child who is to come, on whose shoulders  
the government of the world shall rest, is one  
whose plans, purposes, designs and decrees for  
his people are marvelous.<sup>59</sup>

Another aspect of the word of Yahweh is revealed in  
the use of the verb אֵלַן, "to declare." אֵלַן basically  
means "to place a matter high, conspicuous before a per-  
son."<sup>60</sup> As Isaiah indicated by his use of this verb,  
אֵלַן is used to point out the declaration of something  
"new." In 42:9 Yahweh announces that he is declaring  
new things "before they spring forth." In 48:5 Yahweh  
speaks similarly concerning "former things." "Before  
they took place I proclaimed them to you." In these  
verses Yahweh implies that the matters which he declared  
were utterly unknown to man. They happened "suddenly."  
The word translated "suddenly" is בְּרִיחַ. Stuhlmueller  
believes that בְּרִיחַ

does not so much mean "quickly" as "with surprise" or "in a way far beyond expectation" (cf. Isaiah 29.5; 47.11). Yahweh's predictions, therefore, prepare the way for the future but never take the surprise out of the wondrous fulfillment.<sup>61</sup>

Coppes makes the same observation: "Usually the 'matter' was previously unknown or unknowable to the object."<sup>62</sup>

אָזְכֵּר is used of both man's and Yahweh's declarations.<sup>63</sup> The difference is that Yahweh declares things which have not been known so that he will be acknowledged as the only God (43:12; 44:8; 45:18-24). This issue is the crux of the matter for Yahweh. אָזְכֵּר is used, almost exclusively, in passages in which Yahweh is contending with gods who are not gods. In 41:21-24 Yahweh challenges these other gods to declare what is going to happen:

Let them bring forth and declare to us what  
is going to take place;  
As for the former events, declare what they  
were,  
That we may consider them, and know their  
outcome;  
Or announce to us what is coming.  
Declare the things that are going to come  
afterward,  
That we may know that you are gods;  
Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously  
look about us and fear together.

The ability to declare new things becomes the test of deity. In Yahweh's opinion he is the only one who has ever fulfilled that one criterion.<sup>64</sup> In fact, to demonstrate his claim Yahweh declares the coming of one from the north. After analyzing the possibility of anyone else declaring it from the beginning, he concludes



that no one has an answer because "their works are worthless" (41:29).

Although Yahweh challenged the gods to declare anything whether good or evil, the nature of that which he declares is righteousness. The difference between Yahweh and the idols that mankind worships is that the idols cannot save but Yahweh can save. In 45:11-25 Yahweh deals with the issue of righteousness and salvation. First of all, he speaks righteousness and declares things that are upright (45:19). Second, his work of righteousness has to do with his people: "Ask me about the things to come concerning My sons, and you shall commit to Me the work of My hands" (45:11). When Yahweh deals with his people, he acts righteously and he acts to save them. He is "a righteous God and a Savior" (45:21). There is no other God to save people.

God's greatest work, i.e. the sovereign redemption of his people and the declaration of justification by the instrument of faith alone . . . is to be declared to all nations.<sup>65</sup>

Yahweh commands his people to flee Babylon proclaiming to the ends of the earth "Yahweh has redeemed His servant Jacob" (48:20). In the time of the new heavens and the new earth the servants of Yahweh will take up the task of declaring Yahweh's glory, the redemption of his people, to the world.

The final way Isaiah used the concept of the word of Yahweh is found in his use of קָרָא, "to call," and נָאָם, "name." These words are often used together by

Isaiah.  $\text{קָרָא}$  normally means to speak a message which "is intended to elicit a specific response."<sup>66</sup> In a more specific manner it may designate the conferring of a name. Another interpretation of  $\text{קָרָא}$  is that it connotes the command-like invitation to a task.<sup>67</sup>

$\text{שֵׁם}$  is a noun that means "name." It could derive from "the Arabic root wṣm 'to mark or brand,' hence an external mark to distinguish one thing or person from another."<sup>68</sup> A name was integral to the existence of the thing named. It was the expression of a person's identity or personality.<sup>69</sup> The name has power over its bearer so that the person acquires the personality described by the name.<sup>70</sup> Therefore, when a person changes in character, his name will be changed.<sup>71</sup> When a person speaks in someone's name, they are that person's representative and they participate in his authority.<sup>72</sup> Those who are called by another's name are considered to be owned by that person.<sup>73</sup> On the other hand, to confer a name on something gives the one who names it a type of power over the thing named.<sup>74</sup> When  $\text{שֵׁם}$  is applied to God, it means "his revealed nature and character--the Savior God as he has manifested himself and desires to be known by man."<sup>75</sup>

In the ancient Near East the power of the word as it is reflected in the name was evident in their creation mythology. In this culture "the word is thought of as name."<sup>76</sup> The name is what makes the thing intel-

ligible. If something is not given a name, then its nature or character is uncertain. Not only is its character uncertain but it does "not become a reality until it gets a name, until it becomes intelligible."<sup>77</sup>

In Babylon this philosophy was reflected in the Enuma Elish:

When on high the heaven had not been named,  
Firm ground below had not been called by name.  
.....  
When no gods whatever had been brought into  
being,  
Uncalled by name, their destinies undetermined.<sup>78</sup>

In Egypt, also, a theology was developed that reflected the power of the word in the creative process. The theologians of Memphis attempted to develop a better theology of creation than the theology which used the work of the hands by splitting the cosmic egg or the body of a god (as the Babylonians advocated). They used the "metaphysics of the name."<sup>79</sup> McKenzie writes concerning the meaning of this type of creation:

The name gives reality; that which is nameless is unintelligible and therefore unreal. When the god utters a name, the reality which the name signifies springs into being.<sup>80</sup>

The author of the Genesis account of creation uses a similar view of naming in creation. The naming of the thing does not bring it into being for God names that which is created after it comes into being. For example, he named the light and darkness, after they were created, day and night; he named the sky, the land and the water, heaven, earth and sea. The Genesis author also inserted

another element into the naming of created things.

Concerning the living creatures on the earth, God gave man the power to name them. This act fulfilled God's command that man have power over the living creatures on the earth (cf. Ge. 1:28: 2:19-20).

The aspects of  $\aleph \beth$  in which a message is spoken and a response elicited and in which a command is uttered and a response is invited are very similar. They will be considered first, followed by the analysis of calling as name and the use of  $\aleph \beth$  throughout Isaiah. The least difficult aspect of  $\aleph \beth$  to understand is that of speaking to someone. In 40:6 the messenger hears a voice that instructs him "Call, Cry out." In 58:1 the prophet is to "Cry loudly" the sins of God's people. The servant of Yahweh, according to 61:1-2, is "to proclaim liberty to captives" and "the favorable year of Yahweh." A message needs to be delivered and Yahweh's messengers are instructed to proclaim it.

This type of message is designed to bring a response. In 55:6 this invitation to respond to Yahweh is evident when Isaiah said: "Seek Yahweh while He may be found; call upon Him while He is near." However, Israel did not always respond to Yahweh's invitations to relationship. In 43:22 Yahweh charges Israel with not calling on him even though he had brought them out of Egypt (43:16-17). He proclaims that he will do something new this time when he delivers them from exile. Instead,

they have become weary of him. Three times Yahweh claims that he called to Israel but they did not answer (50:2; 65:12; 66:4). The relationship between Yahweh and Israel had been broken by Israel's choice to do what did not delight Yahweh (65:12). For God to speak and his creation not to respond, even though they have the freedom to do so, is rebellion and requires punishment. Therefore, he "will bring on them what they dread" (66:4). However, Yahweh also called Israel to repentance (22:12).

The contrast to their present behavior is found in the initial calls of God upon people's lives. When Abraham was alone, God called him, and his response brought blessing to both Abraham and Sarah (51:2). Israel is to look to them as examples of what Yahweh will do for Zion.

The Israelites, however, were to be exiled and God had to call them out of exile. In 54:6 Yahweh is speaking to Israel as his wife who has been forsaken. He calls to her to show that he is willing to forgive her and to reestablish a relationship with her. He calls her from the remotest parts of the earth and says, "You are My servant, I have chosen you and not rejected you" (41:9).

Yahweh's power to do this resides, first of all, in his ability to call the world into existence; and, secondly, in his authority over history. The creative power is used to substantiate belief in his authority

over history. To show that he can call Cyrus or "one from the east" in righteousness to deliver Israel from exile, Yahweh points out that he calls each generation into existence (41:4). In 48:12-15 he again illustrates his call of Cyrus with his creativity. In this case he called the heavens and earth into existence and they stand together. Yahweh shows that this call to Cyrus is more than a message (it is a command), because three more times he mentions that he called him to defeat Babylon (46:11; 45:3; 41:2). Twice he says that he called Cyrus by name showing his power over him.

Yahweh also showed his authority over present history by calling Eliakim to be in charge of the royal household instead of Shebna. He will be given the key of the house of David, "when he opens no one will shut, when he shuts no one will open" (22:22).<sup>81</sup>

Another demonstration of Yahweh's authority over history was in his dealings with his servant. First, Yahweh called his servant from his mother's womb (49:1). He was instrumental in the life of his servant from his very birth, even before his birth. He called him in righteousness in the same manner that he called Cyrus (42:6). In both cases God was restoring order to a situation that had gone awry. Cyrus delivered the Hebrews from exile; the servant would become a covenant and a light to the nations so that all men might enter into a relationship of love with Yahweh.

The most basic meaning of calling a name is to call into existence, to create. This ability is reserved for Yahweh alone who declares that he has called the hosts of heaven, the stars, by name. In 40:26 Yahweh challenges his people to consider the stars when they are trying to liken him to something. They were created by him. He called them into being by naming them. He even numbered them and because of his might they remain in their positions.

Several passages use the concept of name in terms of possession. In Isaiah 4:1 Isaiah prophesied a day when seven daughters of Zion would seek to be called by the name of one man so that they would no longer be looked upon with reproach because they were not married.

Two passages in Isaiah deal with this concept in terms of Israel's relationship to Yahweh. In 43:1 Yahweh declares his ownership of Israel when he says, "I have called you by name; you are Mine!" Here Yahweh gives Israel her name; but, in 43:7 Yahweh gives his name to those whom he has created, those who are obedient to him. In this verse Isaiah presented a message that anticipated Paul's application of the new creation where a person assumes the name and character of Christ and consequently is considered to be recreated (cf. II Co. 5:17).

This concept of the name revealing the character of the person appears quite often throughout Isaiah. In

54:5 Yahweh is described by his character: "who is called the God of all the earth." This shows how great he is. He is God not just of the nation Israel but he is God of all nations.

The way of God is to be called "the Highway of Holiness." In chapter 35 Isaiah described this highway. Those who travel on it will not be unclean but holy. They will be filled with joy and gladness.

God's house will be called a house of prayer, not just for his people but for all people. It will be such an house for everyone who desires to join themselves to Yahweh:

To minister to Him, and to love the name of  
Yahweh,  
To be His servants, every one who keeps from  
profaning the sabbath,  
And holds fast My covenant (56:6).

These people will be brought to God's holy mountain. In 61:3-6 Yahweh says that those who mourn in Zion will be called oaks of righteousness. Their stand upon the righteous way is steadfast. Because of their stand they will be called "the priests of Yahweh." Their ministry will be to Yahweh. All of this will take place in a city--the city of righteousness--where Yahweh has purified his people from sin (1:26).

Twice Yahweh's naming of his servant illustrates the character of his servant. In 7:14 Yahweh's sign to Ahaz involves a son who will be named "Immanuel"-- "which means 'God with us'" (Mt. 1:23).<sup>82</sup> In 9:6 a child



will be born upon whose shoulders the government will rest. His name will be called "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." In these names the character and personality of Yahweh's servant is revealed. His purpose is to counsel in such a way that people marvel at his wisdom and teachings. He himself would be the Mighty God in human flesh,<sup>83</sup> the image of the Eternal Father so that when men see him they see the Father,<sup>84</sup> and the one who brought peace from God to all men.<sup>85</sup>

The final way in which  $\aleph \beth$  and  $\aleph \aleph$  are joined is in the meaning of renaming. Yahweh illustrates his power to rename when he says that Egypt will be renamed "Rahab who has been exterminated" (30:7).<sup>86</sup> He is showing his lordship over Egypt as well as revealing the impotent nature of Egypt to those in Judah who wanted to trust in Egypt's might.

Yahweh's ultimate desire for his people is reflected in chapter 62 where Yahweh will not be silent until Zion's righteousness and salvation are seen by all nations. When this happens, Zion will be given a new name. Instead of being called "Forsaken" or "Desolate," it will be called "My delight is in her" and "Married." Her people will be called "the holy people, the redeemed of Yahweh," and Zion will be called "Sought out, a city not forsaken" (62:4,12).

The final consideration of the creative use of the

word (קָרָא) rests in the singular use of name (שֵׁם). Isaiah used שֵׁם in five different ways besides in connection with קָרָא, "to call": 1) the creative activity of Yahweh, 2) the cutting off of a people or a name, 3) the servant of Yahweh, 4) the name of Yahweh and 5) the declaration by Yahweh, "That is my name."

In passages already considered Yahweh showed his creative power by naming the stars (40:26), by naming Israel (43:1), and by creating, forming and making those who are called by his name (43:7). In chapter 25 Isaiah praised Yahweh's name because he has worked wonders and formed his plans long ago with perfect faithfulness. Thus, the creative activity of Yahweh is a source of praise and thanksgiving for Isaiah.

Jacob's children, who have not been very faithful in worshipping Yahweh, will sanctify his name (29:23). They will set it aside, apart from all the other gods of the nations, and worship Yahweh alone. In fact, the new earth which Yahweh will create will be a name or memorial to Yahweh of his character (55:13).

For those who worship and obey Yahweh his name is something to praise, sanctify or keep in remembrance. However, for those who do not serve Yahweh, his name is hidden and brings judgment. In 30:27 Isaiah said that the name of Yahweh "comes from a remote place" in anger to punish Assyria. In the mythology of the Near East the dwelling place of El was very distant from man. It

was "at the source of the rivers, amid the channels of the two oceans."<sup>87</sup> Here Isaiah reinterpreted this concept to show that Yahweh's name is distant and fearsome to those who do not follow him.

Isaiah used the characteristic of being nameless as being cut off out of the land of the living five times (14:22; 48:9,19; 55:13; 56:5). Only in the first instance does Yahweh threaten to cut off someone's name. In 14:22 Isaiah proclaimed Yahweh's intention to cut off Babylon's name and survivors, offspring and posterity because it claimed to be as great as God (14:14).

Yahweh claims to delay his wrath for his name's sake so that Israel will not be cut off (48:9). He laments their disobedience and proclaims that if only they had been obedient they would have been blessed by him. Their descendants would have had a name that would not have been cut off from his presence (48:19).

On the other hand, those who do seek Yahweh in repentance and obedience will receive a name that will not be cut off. In chapter 56 Yahweh says that the eunuchs who obey Yahweh's covenant will receive an "everlasting name which will not be cut off" (56:5). Those who call upon Yahweh and thus fulfill his word so that it does not return empty will be part of a new order of creation in which all of life will join together in joy as a name or memorial to Yahweh that will not be cut off (55:13).

Seven times Isaiah used  $\text{𐤏𐤃}$  in connection with the concept of Yahweh's servant. In two passages already considered (7:14 and 9:6) he was to be called "Immanuel" and "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace." In a third passage  $\text{𐤏𐤃}$  was placed in a parallel position to  $\text{𐤍𐤅𐤔}$  when Isaiah recorded the words of the servant: "Yahweh called Me from the womb; from the body of My mother He named Me" (49:1).

The remaining four references deal with the servant's name in relation to the new heavens and the new earth. In 65:13-16 Yahweh compares the fate of his servant with the fate of his servants:

Behold, My servants shall eat,  
but you shall be hungry.  
Behold, My servants shall drink,  
but you shall be thirsty.  
Behold, My servants shall rejoice,  
but you shall be put to shame.  
Behold, My servants shall shout joyfully with  
a glad heart,  
But you shall cry out with a heavy heart,  
and you shall wail with a broken spirit  
(65:13-14).

Because of the suffering of his servant, all those who seek Yahweh (65:10) will be able to enjoy life, eating and drinking and rejoicing. The servant will leave his name as a curse to those who are God's chosen people. His name will convict them of their sin. On the other hand, Yahweh's servants, those who seek him, will be called by another name. In the life of Christ, this prophecy receives an apparent fulfillment because the

name of "Jesus" is reviled by the Jews and is a reminder of their sin against God and Yahweh's servants are called by another name, "Christian."

In chapter 66 those who fear the word of Yahweh are persecuted for his name's sake.<sup>88</sup> Yahweh concludes his discussion of the new heavens and the new earth by declaring that in the same way that the new heavens and the new earth will endure before him so the name of his servant and his offspring will endure before him. Therefore, those who enter into a new relationship with Yahweh through his servant will enjoy an enduring relationship.

Finally, Isaiah applied the concept of  $\square\dot{\text{U}}$  to Yahweh himself. Twenty-six times  $\square\dot{\text{U}}$  is used to describe Yahweh. The name of Yahweh is worthy of praise, glory, love and fear (12:4; 24:15; 25:1; 56:6; 59:19). Yahweh's name is to be obeyed and sanctified, known and made known to the nations (50:10; 56:5; 29:23; 52:6; 64:2); it is not to be sworn by falsely or blasphemed (48:1; 52:5). It is to be the desire of man's soul (26:8). In the past Yahweh divided the waters to make an everlasting name (63:12) and he led his people to make a glorious name (63:14). Because his name is from ancient times, man can believe that he will act now (63:16). One from the north will come at Yahweh's command to deliver Israel from exile and he will call upon Yahweh's name (41:25). Yahweh's name is powerful not only in the past and the present but also in the future for a people who are not

yet a nation in Isaiah's time. Such a people will bring a gift to the place of the name of Yahweh (18:7). The ships of the nations will bring Yahweh's sons to Zion because of the name of Yahweh.

Out of these twenty-six times that the  $\text{YHWH}$  of Yahweh is mentioned, six times Yahweh is declared as God's name. In 42:8 Yahweh says, "I am Yahweh, that is my name" ( $\text{אֲנִי יְהוָה וְאֵין עֹד}$ ). When Yahweh said,  $\text{אֲנִי יְהוָה}$ , "that is my name," he was confirming his relationship with Israel begun in the exodus. "God's name signifies the personal relationship between God and the people."<sup>89</sup> Therefore, when God again declared his name through Isaiah, he was reaffirming his relationship with Israel.

When Isaiah emphasized the name of Yahweh by saying:  $\text{יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ}$ , "Yahweh of hosts is his name,"<sup>90</sup> and, again,  $\text{יְהוָה שְׁמֵוֹ קֹדֶשׁ}$ , "and holy is his name" (57:15), he was signifying the whole self-disclosure of Yahweh to his people in his holiness and truth.<sup>91</sup>

Therefore, Yahweh used the power of the word and the power of the name to create the world and a relationship with a special people. His word was an eternal word that would not be frustrated. When man did not fulfill it, he felt the power of God's word in judgment. Yahweh's word was instrumental in the lives of his people, and it was also to be powerful in the life of Yahweh's servant who would establish a relationship with the whole world.

### Spirit

In the same way that Yahweh used the power of the word to create the world and a relationship with a nation, Yahweh used the concept of spirit (רוּחַ) to show the quickening and mysterious power behind his creativity. In the Genesis account of creation the Spirit (רוּחַ) of God brooded over the face of the waters. The Spirit was present and active in the creation of the world. The extent of his presence and activity is not clear. Nevertheless, he was there.

רוּחַ is a word that basically means "air in motion," whether it is the calm air or a blast of wind.<sup>92</sup> Edmond Jacob says that רוּחַ

means originally and etymologically the air which manifests itself in two forms--that of the wind<sup>93</sup> in nature and of breath in living beings.

רוּחַ also has the meaning of "spirit" or "Spirit of God."

Concerning the understanding of רוּחַ as "breath" Jacob writes: "The term ruach denotes the breath of life which is an effect of the breath of God."<sup>94</sup>

McKenzie brings the interpretation of רוּחַ as "breath" and as "spirit" together when he comments:

For the spirit is the breath of Yahweh, and the word is produced with the breath; he who hears the word of Yahweh, also feels His spirit. . . . The spirit is an inspiring agent to action rather than to speech.<sup>95</sup>

Therefore, the word and the breath or spirit of Yahweh are interconnected with differing functions: the word

is designed to spur men to speak for God and the spirit is designed to prompt men to act on God's behalf.

As has already been indicated רוּחַ has been used to speak of an aspect of Yahweh's divine being as the Spirit of Yahweh. In using a word that primarily means "wind," the writers of the Old Testament, including Isaiah, utilized the powerful and mysterious qualities characteristic of the wind to express the power and mystery that is characteristic of the divine nature.<sup>96</sup>

Although the word of God qualifies the prophet for his ministry and creates a relationship of person with person, it "presupposes the spirit, the creative breath of life."<sup>97</sup> For the prophet to receive the word of Yahweh, he first had to be in communion with Yahweh. Jacob maintains that the Old Testament bears witness to the fact that communion between God and man is not possible without the Spirit.<sup>98</sup> In fact, "unless the word comes with the spirit, there is no revelation and response, no personal encounter."<sup>99</sup> The prophet began to perceive in רוּחַ "all that is contained in the word 'god'."<sup>100</sup> Therefore, "it can be said that the spirit is God himself in creative and saving activity."<sup>101</sup> The arena in which God as spirit acts is the history of man.<sup>102</sup>

Throughout the vision of Isaiah רוּחַ is used six different ways in connection with Yahweh. First, רוּחַ is "wind." In 11:15 Isaiah utilized the motifs of the exodus to show that a remnant of his people will come



out of Assyria. Now, as then, his wind will prepare a dry path for his people. In 59:19 Yahweh's servant, dressed in zeal and bringing justice, will come as though driven by the wind of Yahweh.

The second manner in which Isaiah used נִשְׁמָה was as the "breath" of man. Yahweh gave life to those who live on the earth (42:5). When the breath of Yahweh breathes upon man or other living entities, their life can be taken from them because God has the power to give or to take life (40:7; 57:16). It is for this reason that Yahweh says that he will not contend forever with man nor always be angry.

A consequence of man's behavior, however, is that the Spirit of Yahweh brings judgment. In the case of Jerusalem that judgment cleanses rather than destroys (4:4). The wicked, however, will be destroyed by the breath of the servant (11:4). Yahweh's breath of judgment overwhelms the nations in anger (30:28; 33:11).

The Spirit of Yahweh also reflects the concept of "mind." In 30:1 Isaiah prophesied that the plans Judah had executed were not Yahweh's, nor their alliances directed by his Spirit. They failed to discern the mind of Yahweh. In 40:13 Isaiah presented the question: "Who has directed the Spirit of Yahweh, or as His counselor has informed Him?" Thus, the Spirit has not been taught by anyone. When man deals with Yahweh, his spirit or mind must be contrite and humble (57:15).

A fifth manner in which Isaiah used  $\Pi\text{.}\text{.}\text{.}$  was in reference to the servant. Four times the Spirit is mentioned as being placed upon the servant (11:2; 42:1; 59:21; 61:1). In 11:2 the Spirit of Yahweh is a six-fold spirit--wisdom and understanding, counsel and strength, knowledge and the fear of Yahweh.<sup>103</sup> Not only will the Spirit be placed upon Yahweh's servant, but also upon his descendants (32:15; 59:21). Jacob says:

But it is not only past history which is a manifestation of the spirit; an even more splendid outpouring of the spirit is reserved for the future; the new age will be marked by abundance of vegetation, by prosperity and peace, all of which will be produced by the spirit of Yahweh 'come from on high' (Isaiah 32.15 ff.); the shoot of the stem of Jesse will be clothed with the spirit in a more complete and spiritual way than the leaders of the heroic age (11.2 ff.), the spirit will also rest permanently on the servant of Yahweh (42.1 ff.) but at the same time all the people will receive the benefit of this extraordinary gift: 'I will pour forth my spirit upon thy race, and my blessings upon thy posterity' (Isaiah 44.3).<sup>104</sup>

The final way in which  $\Pi\text{.}\text{.}\text{.}$  was used was as the Spirit of Yahweh. He is "the means par excellence by which God asserts his presence in the midst of his people."<sup>105</sup> Jacob believes that from the first  $\Pi\text{.}\text{.}\text{.}$  was connected as a divine power with Yahweh. He sees this evident in his shunning Egypt as an ally of Judah because they are men and their horses are flesh, not gods or spirit.<sup>106</sup> This passage implies that God is spirit. In the chapter on the cursing of the earth the Spirit of Yahweh gathers the animals together (34:16).

In 48:16 the servant acknowledges that he has been sent by Yahweh's Spirit and by Yahweh himself. The Holy Spirit of Yahweh best expresses his involvement in history in chapter 63 where Isaiah discussed the rebellion of the Hebrews during the wandering in the wilderness. They grieved the Holy Spirit because they would not take the land (63:10). Throughout the exodus and the wanderings, the Holy Spirit was in their midst (63:11). Finally, when they entered the land, the Holy Spirit gave them rest (63:14).

The Holy Spirit or the Spirit of Yahweh is the active creative agent of Yahweh within history. He is not only acting in history but he is also present with Yahweh's people. Both the word and the spirit anthropomorphize Yahweh's activity, presence and relationship with men. However, since they can operate apart from a body, they became regarded as individual realities of their own.<sup>107</sup> Therefore, their use by the servant, in the form of Jesus, and his disciples to explain the reality of the trinity is understandable as an extension of a use of these concepts begun in the Old Testament.<sup>108</sup>

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans., Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup>Oskar Grether, "Name und Wort Gottes im Alten Testament" (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 64; Giessen 1934), pp. 59-80.

<sup>3</sup>John L. McKenzie, S.J., "The Word of God in the Old Testament," Theological Studies, 21:2:191, 1960.

<sup>4</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 128.

<sup>5</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 186.

<sup>6</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 201.

<sup>7</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 186.

<sup>8</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 187.

<sup>9</sup>The creation of the Hebrew nation could be viewed as creation by naming (cf. Is. 43:1). However, more was involved than just naming.

<sup>10</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 132.

<sup>11</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 188.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 187.

<sup>14</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," pp. 187-88.

<sup>15</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 187.

<sup>16</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 196.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid.

<sup>18</sup>cf. I K. 15:29; 16:12; II K. 9:26, 36; 10:17.

<sup>19</sup>cf. I K. 16:34.

- <sup>20</sup>cf. II K. 7:16.
- <sup>21</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 198.
- <sup>22</sup>cf. Ge. 6:7.
- <sup>23</sup>cf. Ge. 12:1-3; Ex. 3.
- <sup>24</sup>cf. Dt. 1:6; 2:2,18,31; 3:1,27-28.
- <sup>25</sup>cf. I S. 9:17; 16:12.
- <sup>26</sup>cf. I S. 15:10; II S. 12; I K. 11:31.
- <sup>27</sup>cf. II S. 7:16.
- <sup>28</sup>cf. II K. 19:20-24.
- <sup>29</sup>cf. Jn. 1:1,14.
- <sup>30</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 198.
- <sup>31</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 131.
- <sup>32</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>33</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 197.
- <sup>34</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>35</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 190.
- <sup>36</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 189.
- <sup>37</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 195.
- <sup>38</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," pp. 199-200.
- <sup>39</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 200.
- <sup>40</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 202.
- <sup>41</sup>Ibid.
- <sup>42</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 130.
- <sup>43</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 197.
- <sup>44</sup>Jacob, Theology, pp. 125-26.
- <sup>45</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 197.
- <sup>46</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 133.

<sup>47</sup>Jacob, Theology, pp. 131-32.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 127.

<sup>50</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 132.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

<sup>52</sup>cf. McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 206, footnote 36:

The designation of Christ as the Logos in John 1:1 is as closely connected with the OT conception as it is in sharp contrast to the Hellenistic logos, in that it knows nothing of either a world-mind in the pantheistic sense nor of a 'saving idea' in the idealistic-mystic sense, but sees embodied in the personal life of a human being the will of a personal God for the world and the kingdom in all its dynamic movement.

<sup>53</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 129.

<sup>54</sup>cf. Is. 38:5; 37:22-29.

<sup>55</sup>cf. Is. 44:24-28.

<sup>56</sup>cf. Is. 49:6; 53:11,12.

<sup>57</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 193.

<sup>58</sup>Paul R. Gilchrist, "יָצַח (yā'aṣ) advise, counsel, purpose, devise, plan," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 390.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Leonard J. Coppes, "נָגַד (nāḡad) tell, make known," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 549. This quote was taken by Coppes from L. Koehler and W. Baumgartner, Lexicon in Veteris Testamenti Libros, 2nd ed., English-German, 1958.

<sup>61</sup>Carroll Stuhlmueller, "'First and Last' and 'Yahweh-Creator' in Deutero-Isaiah," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 29:1:203, 1967.

<sup>62</sup>Coppes, "נָגַד," p. 549.

<sup>63</sup>Ibid.

<sup>64</sup>This issue is dealt with in 40:21-31; 41:21-29; 44:6-45:25; 46:9-11; 48:1-16.

<sup>65</sup>Coppes, "𐤒𐤒𐤓," p. 550.

<sup>66</sup>Leonard J. Coppes, "𐤒𐤒𐤓 (qārā') I, call, call out, recite (read)," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 810.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid.

<sup>68</sup>Walter C. Kaiser, "𐤒𐤒 (shem) name," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 934.

<sup>69</sup>Raymond Abba, "Name," IDB, III (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), p. 501. Abba cites Jacob as an example of a name expressing personality (cf. Ge. 27:36).

<sup>70</sup>Ibid. Nabal is such an example (cf. I S. 25:25).

<sup>71</sup>Abba, "Name," p. 502.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid.

<sup>74</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 190.

<sup>75</sup>Abba, "Name," p. 502.

<sup>76</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 190.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid.

<sup>78</sup>Used by McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 190. It was taken from J. B. Pritchard, Ancient Near Eastern Texts, trans., Speiser, I (Princeton: University Press, 1955), p. 386.

<sup>79</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 187.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>This is reminiscent of Jesus' words to Simon Peter after his confession that Jesus was the "Christ, the Son of the living God": "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose

on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Mt. 16:16,19; cf. Rv. 3:7).

<sup>82</sup>The significance of this passage and its relationship to the servant will be discussed below in chapter 4 under the section on "Darkness and Light."

<sup>83</sup>cf. Jn. 1:14; Mt. 1:23.

<sup>84</sup>cf. Jn. 10:30; 14:9.

<sup>85</sup>cf. Jn. 14:27.

<sup>86</sup>The meaning of this name will be discussed in chapter 4 in the section "Chaos: Power through Conflict."

<sup>87</sup>G. R. Driver, Canaanite Myths and Legends, Old Testament Studies, No. 3 (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1976), p. 77.

<sup>88</sup>cf. Mt. 5:11.

<sup>89</sup>B. W. Anderson, "Names of God," IDB, II (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), p. 407.

<sup>90</sup>cf. Is. 47:4; 48:2; 51:15; 54:5.

<sup>91</sup>Kaiser, "𐤒𐤓," p. 934.

<sup>92</sup>J. Barton Payne, "𐤒𐤓 (rūah) wind, breath, mind," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 836.

<sup>93</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 121.

<sup>94</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 122.

<sup>95</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 195.

<sup>96</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 122.

<sup>97</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 125.

<sup>98</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 127.

<sup>99</sup>McKenzie, "Word of God," p. 195.

<sup>100</sup>Jacob, Theology, p. 124.

<sup>101</sup>Ibid.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.



103The Septuagint adds a seventh--"godliness." John's description of the Holy Spirit in the Revelation as a seven-fold spirit may be derived from the Septuagint version of this verse. cf. Robert H. Mounce, Revelation, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, gen. ed., F. F. Bruce (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), p. 69.

104Jacob, Theology, p. 126.

105Jacob, Theology, p. 127.

106Jacob, Theology, pp. 123-24.

107Jacob, Theology, p. 121.

108Concerning the Word of God see Jn. 1:1-14 and concerning the Spirit see Jn. 14-16 and II Co. 3:17.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE CONFLICTS OF CREATION

In the creation stories of the ancient Near East conflict was a central element. A god gained supremacy by being victorious in a variety of conflicts. The two greatest conflicts were with the great sea dragon, Yamm, and the sterility or death god, Mot. Both of these concepts appear in the Genesis creation story in an allusive manner; for example,  $\text{אֲבִיטָא}$ , "the great deep," appears in Genesis 1:2,  $\text{אֲרָ}$ , "sea," is the name God calls the waters,  $\text{אֲרִי־אֲרִי}$ , "the great sea monsters," were created by God on the fifth day, and  $\text{מוֹת}$ , "death," is the result of disobedience pronounced upon man in Genesis 2:17. Each of these words is an integral part of the Near Eastern mythology of creation.

In order for a god to gain power over the other gods, he had to fulfill one of three methods: 1) a young god could challenge an old occupant of the divine throne and overcome him, 2) a young god could fight against a monster, usually the sea monster, whom none of the gods could master, or 3) the dethroned deity would not accept defeat and would enlist help to overthrow the aspirant to leadership.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the vision of Isaiah, Isaiah presented arguments that paralleled all three methods, except the elements of being a young or a defeated god, to show that Yahweh was indeed Lord of history and the only God. In this chapter the conflicts that shall be considered will follow the order in which the conflicts have been presented by Kapelrud. First, Yahweh challenges the other gods to a duel of creation. This shall be considered under the issue of likeness--"to whom shall you liken me?" Secondly, the conflicts with Yam and other similar beasts and with Mot shall be analyzed concerning the manner in which Isaiah utilized them in describing Yahweh's power. Finally, the search for help by Yahweh to gain victory over evil will be considered as the motivation behind the conflict between light and darkness.

#### Likeness: Power by Challenge

In order to understand how Isaiah applied  $\text{נִדָּבַר}$ , "to liken," or  $\text{נִדְבָר}$ , "likeness," its use as applied to man in the Old Testament must first be understood. In Genesis man was reported to be created in the image and "likeness" of God (Ge. 1:26; 5:1). Also Seth was born in Adam's "likeness" (Ge. 5:3). These are the only times that these two terms are used in parallel fashion. According to Maxwell Miller:

What the priestly writer was attempting to do in the "image of God" passages, therefore, according to Barr, was to call attention to

the God/man similarity without specifying the nature of this similarity any more than was absolutely necessary.<sup>2</sup>

However, the similarity was not the kind of similarity attributed by the Babylonian mythology in which man was formed from divine blood. The word for "blood" is  $\square\ddot{\text{t}}$ , very similar to  $\mathbb{N}\mathbb{D}\ddot{\text{t}}$ , "likeness." Miller believes that this similarity between the two words

would have immediately called to the minds of the first readers of the priestly account, therefore, the Mesopotamian view that the gods had created man from divine blood.<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, the Genesis author was limiting the interpretation of  $\mathbb{N}\mathbb{D}\ddot{\text{t}}$  to prevent such an interpretation. Consequently, "image" ( $\square\ddot{\text{y}}$ )<sup>4</sup> is used to define and delimit  $\mathbb{N}\mathbb{D}\ddot{\text{t}}$ , "likeness." They both specify the man's similarity with God, that is, his corporeal likeness without any reference to the blood that flows from God's veins.<sup>5</sup> Another view is that  $\mathbb{N}\mathbb{D}\ddot{\text{t}}$  enhances the meaning of  $\square\ddot{\text{y}}$  so that for man to be created in the image and likeness of God means that he is "the visible, corporeal representative of the invisible, bodiless God."<sup>6</sup> Phyllis Tribble presents an interesting argument that the "image of God" is placed in a parallel structure with "male and female" in Genesis 1:27. This parallel structure, consequently, equates the two concepts which illuminate the meaning of both phrases.<sup>7</sup>

Isaiah took this concept which was originally applied to man to show his relationship to God and

reversed it so that it now applies to God revealing man's present relationship to God.

The verb  $\Pi\text{Q}\text{T}$  in the Qal stem means "to be like or resemble." This stem is used mostly in reference to man. Man or nature is like something else, man or nature resembles something else. The Fiel, or reflexive, stem means "to compare" and is used by Isaiah as a strong argument for Yahweh's deity. In Isaiah 14:14 man, as represented by the king of Babylon, wrongly used his "likeness" with God when he said, "I will make myself like the Most High." Here he was not trying to fulfill his likeness to God, but he was trying to usurp God's power by becoming equal with God.

This use of  $\Pi\text{Q}\text{T}$  points to the crux of the issue: "To whom then will you liken God?" Isaiah asked this question three times (40:18,25; 46:5). In each passage Yahweh presents a possible "likeness" that man has presented by his deeds. Man fashions idols and overlays them with gold or silver or fashions wood into an idol (40:19-20; 46:6-7), or he looks to the stars for the direction to his life (40:26). Although Isaiah did not specifically say that man worshipped the stars, the fact that the other two passages follow the question with a statement concerning what man worshipped would indicate that this passage would follow the same pattern.

In order to gain the allegiance of his people and the whole world, Yahweh challenges the gods to a duel of

creation. Throughout chapters 40-48 Yahweh contends with his enemies. In 41:23 Yahweh challenges the gods:

Declare the things that are going to come  
afterward,  
That we may know that you are gods;  
Indeed, do good or evil, that we may anxiously  
look about us and fear together.

He concludes:

Behold, you are of no account,  
And your work amounts to nothing;  
He who chooses you is an abomination (41:24).

On the other hand, Yahweh immediately proclaims that he has aroused one from the north to come against the nations. Later he identifies this person as Cyrus. He would come and deliver Zion so that Yahweh's people could return to Zion. Yahweh claims that he declared these things long ago so that his people could not claim that their idol had done them. The things Yahweh creates are new things created now, not heard of before today, so that his people cannot say that they knew them already (48:3-8).

The thrust of this challenge is revealed in 43:10-13:

"You are My witnesses," declares Yahweh,  
"And My servant whom I have chosen,  
In order that you may know and believe Me,  
And understand that I am He.  
Before Me there was no God formed,  
And there will be none after Me.  
I, even I, am Yahweh;  
And there is no savior besides Me.  
It is I who have declared and saved and pro-  
claimed,  
And there was no strange god among you;  
So you are My witnesses," declared Yahweh,  
"And I am God.  
Even from eternity I am He;  
And there is none who can deliver out of My hand;  
I act and who can reverse it?"

God's question--"To whom then will you liken Me?"--is intended to chide his people who have attempted to reduce him to their likeness. Man had attempted to reverse the creative process by making God in their likeness,<sup>8</sup> so Yahweh challenges their gods actually to act like God and create and save. This ability to save is something no one else can do. Therefore,

the point of these verses in Isaiah is not that God says no one is comparable to him in appearance or being, but that no one is comparable to him in ministry and function.<sup>9</sup>

In this analysis of "likeness" Yahweh has shown that he is the only God who can predict what events will happen. Therefore, he alone is Lord of history.

In this challenge Yahweh is the eternal God and not a young god challenging an older god, but he did attempt to gain recognition as the supreme God by a duel of creation. In this challenge he fulfilled the first method of gaining divine power by demonstrating that he could create something new.

#### Chaos: Power through Conflict

The second method of gaining power among the gods was to be victorious over the great serpent of the waters, Yam, Lotan or Tehom or the god of death, Mot. In Mesopotamia the great deep was called Tiamat. She was one of the gods and was killed by Marduk who split her in two in order to create the heaven and the earth.

In Canaan the great sea was called Yam. Kapelrud

describes the conflict in the following manner:

Prince Sea sent his emissaries to the assembly of the gods and demanded supreme Power. The gods bowed low before them and were prepared to surrender. But Baal protested and told the gods to lift up their heads. It appears that Prince Sea had received some support from the supreme god, El. The former had asked that Baal should be handed over to him; and El was prepared to agree to this (137:36ff.). The result was that Baal went to fight against his challenger. Just as Marduk received help from the other gods, and powerful magic weapons, support was also given to Baal. Katir-wa-Hasis, the divine smith and master builder, fashioned a club for him. It was not sufficiently powerful, however; and Prince Sea withstood the blow. Hastily Katir-wa-Hasis had to fashion another club, over which he recited still more potent spells. This one proved to be adequate. After one powerful blow between the eyes, Prince Sea collapsed and was destroyed.<sup>10</sup>

This conflict with Yam was not the only conflict that Baal had. He was confronted by Mot, the god of death, because he had defeated Lotan, the twisting serpent, who "represented the powers of chaos and the underworld."<sup>11</sup> Mot invites Baal to dine with him in the underworld. Baal was powerless to resist the invitation. The myth says that "the underworld had already opened its mouth to swallow him" (67:II:2ff.).<sup>12</sup> Baal had to take everything with him--his daughters, the clouds, the wind, the storm and the rain.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, drought and famine cursed the earth. While he was held by Mot, the gods and the people mourned his death, "Dead is Aliyan Baal; perished is the prince, lord of the earth" (49:I:13-15).<sup>14</sup> Anat besought Mot to release Baal,



but was refused. Therefore, she killed him.

She seizes the god Mot  
with a sword she cleaves him,  
with a sieve she scatters him,  
with a fire she burns him,  
with a millstone she grinds him,  
in the field she sows him,  
so that the birds may eat his remains.  
(49:II:30ff.)<sup>15</sup>

Kapelrud concludes the account of Baal's conflict with Mot by saying that it was short but fierce and because Anat had killed Mot in advance Baal was able to return to his former position as king on Sapan, the mountain of the gods of the north.<sup>16</sup>

These accounts of the conflict between the gods and the chaotic forces represented by the sea or death are often assumed to be a type of creation story. Dennis McCarthy calls it a Chaoskampf. He recognized three basic themes in this story: 1) the fight against the chaotic forces represented by or personified as the monster of the waters; 2) the conquest of this monster and the acclamation of the conquering god as king; and 3) the building of a temple for the divine king.<sup>17</sup>

McCarthy observes that, more than the creation stories themselves, the Hebrew poetry used the creation struggle imagery.<sup>18</sup> The manner in which the Hebrews used the Chaoskampf was literary rather than philosophical or theological parasitism. McCarthy comments concerning this:

Early in its history Israel is so free from seeing any reality in the Chaoskampf

theme that it has become a mere source for figures of speech. Its language can be used now one way, now another as seems useful in a given literary situation, something hardly possible if it were felt to be a description of reality, for then the use of the language would have to be controlled by the reality behind it.<sup>19</sup>

The manner of this analysis of Isaiah's use of the Chaoskampf will follow the basic themes of the story. First, the victory of Yahweh over the various monsters, including Mot, will be discussed along with their interpretation. Secondly, the method of defeat will be considered in an analysis of the verbs used. Thirdly, a perusal of Isaiah's use of the temple will be made.

In the conflict between Baal and the great sea, the great sea was identified as Yam. In Babylon the great deep was called Tiamat. Also, Mot was a monster over which God must assert his mastery.

However, the names used in Isaiah are somewhat different. The descriptions of these dragons and the language used with them reveal them to be the same monsters of ancient Near Eastern mythology. In fact, Kapelrud claims that there is support for believing that Yam is identical with Lotan and Tannin because he was a member of the Ugaritic pantheon and he was to receive sacrificial offerings.<sup>20</sup> Other names for these monsters used in the Old Testament are Leviathan, Tehom, Rahab and Mot.

Leviathan is the Old Testament name for Lotan.

Lotan was the serpent that Mot had accused Baal of killing.<sup>21</sup> He was called "the twisting serpent" (67:I:1ff.). Isaiah used the image of Leviathan in 27:1. He was to be punished and killed with God's mighty sword. It is interesting to note that it is set in the context of Yahweh's defeat of death because twice in the preceding two chapters he asserts his supremacy over death after he had loosed death upon the earth in chapter 24. In chapter 24 everything is laid waste; but, in 25:8 Yahweh "will swallow up death for all time," and in 26:19 Isaiah prophesied, "Your dead will live." In these passages is an apparent use by Isaiah of the pattern of Baal's conflict with Mot.

Leviathan is called a serpent (𐤎𐤍𐤏). The serpent was the creature that tempted Adam and Eve to sin. Isaiah identified him as a "fleeing" (𐤎𐤍𐤏) serpent and as "crooked" (𐤏𐤍𐤏𐤍𐤏). Mitchell Dahood, S.J., believes that 𐤎𐤍𐤏 has a better translation than "fleeing." Among the tablets from Ebla are 114 tablets which equate the Sumerian khul, "evil," with Eblaite ba-ri-um. He remarks:

This new equivalence calls for revising the translation of nahash bariah, commonly rendered "fleeing serpent" in Isaiah 27:1 and Job 26:13, to "the evil serpent," a more fitting description of Leviathan the sea dragon.<sup>22</sup>

As shown already, the context of Isaiah would also support this rendering of 𐤎𐤍𐤏 because of the curse and the

conflict with death.

Yahweh's victory over Leviathan is a prelude to his purpose of freeing a remnant of his people from exile, a national death, and bringing them back to Jerusalem to worship him.

שָׂרָף is found also in 65:25 in the context of creation, the creation of the new heavens and the new earth. Yahweh declares that "dust shall be the serpent's food." Here, Yahweh alludes to the curse he placed upon the serpent for tempting Eve to sin. In the new world the serpent will still undergo the same curse with the exception that he will no longer be able to harm those who dwell in Jerusalem.

Tannin (תַּנִּינִי) the dragon was another name used for the great sea monster. This term was used twice by Isaiah parallel to other names. It is very closely associated with דִּיפְתָּא, "the great deep." דִּיפְתָּא is believed to be a Hebrew rendering of Tiamat, the Mesopotamian goddess of the great deep. It also is mentioned twice (51:10; 63:13). In 27:1 Isaiah prophesied that Yahweh would kill the dragon that lives in the sea in reference to his deliverance from exile. In 63:13 the Spirit of Yahweh is presented as leading the Hebrews through דִּיפְתָּא in the exodus. Also, in 51:9-10 Yahweh is the one who pierced the dragon (תַּנִּינִי) in the exodus.

In 27:1 the dragon is called Leviathan, in 51:9 the dragon is called Rahab. In 51:9-11 תַּנִּינִי, דִּיפְתָּא and רָהָב

are all found together in the context of the exodus. In one other place 𐤀𐤓𐤕 is used by Yahweh. In his oracle against Egypt Yahweh renamed Egypt "Rahab who has been exterminated" (30:7). The manner in which 𐤀𐤓𐤕 is used reveals that it is a symbolical name for Egypt and that Yahweh is declaring through this allusion that he has exerted authority over Egypt victoriously.

Isaiah has clearly divorced these images from their original sources. Concerning this John Oswalt writes:

The author does not use the myth in its original setting of primordial creation. Such a use would be pointless since Yahweh has created once for all in time and space. Rather, the author seems to say, "Mythmakers, if you want to see where disorder and evil were really conquered, you are going to have to look within time to the redemption of His people." He thus demonstrates that evil and disorder are not inherent in the cosmic stuff, they are rather a result of wrong choices by God's creatures.<sup>23</sup>

Yahweh did not need to fight and overcome the dragon of chaos, by whatever name, because the Hebrew theology as expressed in Genesis one claims that he had created the dragon of chaos himself. Consequently, the dragon of chaos could not have preceded the royal divinities.<sup>24</sup> Instead, as W. F. Albright said, the theme of the original cosmic conflict of God with the powers of chaos was applied to "experience in history in situations which did not recur, but introduced God in confrontation with His people in an ever-fresh situation."<sup>25</sup>

In Isaiah 51:9-10 where the names of the dragon are

used so extensively, the motif of the conflict with the dragon is clearly subordinate to Yahweh's activity in history where by virtue of the deliverance of the Hebrews from bondage in Egypt he won the victory and claimed them as his people.<sup>26</sup> Therefore, the "allusion to the myth is coupled with historical circumstance."<sup>27</sup>

The final conflict is the conflict with Mot, death. In this conflict the underworld or death had opened its mouth to swallow Baal. As already noted, Yahweh overcomes death in 25:8 and 26:19. In the day that Yahweh celebrates his lordship over all peoples he will swallow up death. He will not allow death to be victorious over his people. Instead, he will destroy death. Not only will death be swallowed up, but those who are dead will live. Their bodies will come back to life. In this conflict man has been swallowed by death, but Yahweh destroys death and man returns to life, body and spirit. Consequently, there is a parallel between the actions of Anat and the actions of Yahweh.

The manner in which death affected the servant of Yahweh is noteworthy. In 53:8 and 12 the death of the servant is mentioned. He will be "cut off" from life. He will pour out his soul unto death. In verse 10 Isaiah wrote that Yahweh would prolong his servant's days suggesting that the servant's life would not end at his death. MacRae believes that this phrase contains a strong hint of physical resurrection.<sup>28</sup>

The conflict with the cosmic dragons, reflected in the imagery of Isaiah, does not mean that there was an original Hebrew myth of the Chaoskampf. Instead, the imagery is designed to say three things: 1) Yahweh is the sovereign God and the only God;<sup>29</sup> 2) Yahweh is sovereign but not as a result of a "do or die" cosmic battle,<sup>30</sup> rather he is sovereign because he created all things; and 3) "'the death of Mot' is a way of saying 'order out of chaos'."<sup>31</sup>

The methodology used by Yahweh in these conflicts as in creation speaks of the ordering of the universe. McCarthy claims that in the primeval history attributed to the Yahwist author "there is no real concern for the origin of the world;" but, instead, "the interest is directed toward its good ordering."<sup>32</sup>

Several verbs and phrases are associated with the conflict of the waters or the ordering of the universe. Three of these verbs are  $\text{לָלַח}$ , "to pierce,"  $\text{לָרַץ}$ , "to break," and  $\text{לָרַס}$ , "to smash."  $\text{לָלַח}$  is an adjective that means "slain, fatally wounded." It is a derivative of  $\text{לָלַח}$  which means "to pierce, to wound."<sup>33</sup> In 51:9 it is used in the conflict in which Yahweh defeated Rahab (Egypt). Rahab was pierced and killed. Two other Isaianic passages which illuminate  $\text{לָלַח}$  are 34:3 and 66:16, and a third which illuminates  $\text{לָלַח}$  is 53:5. In both 34:3 and 66:16 those who are slain have been slain as a result of judgment by God. This indicates that the real

conflict Yahweh had was not with some mythical monster who ruled the waters but with men who sinned against him. The answer to this sinfulness of mankind appears in 53:5 where the servant of Yahweh is "pierced" for our iniquities. The servant also would undergo punishment for sins. However, the sins for which he is punished are not his sins but the sins of each person.

𐤀𐤊𐤍 means "to split, to divide."<sup>34</sup> 𐤀𐤊𐤍 described the manner in which Tiamat was destroyed and the earth was formed. She was divided in two by Marduk to form the heaven and the earth. It is used only twice. In Psalm 74:13 it clearly refers to the Chaoskampf because it mentions the division of the sea (𐤀𐤊𐤍) and the destruction of the sea monsters including Leviathan. In chapter 24 where Isaiah pronounced Yahweh's curse upon the earth, he said:

The earth is broken asunder,  
The earth is split through,  
The earth is shaken violently.  
.....  
For its transgression is heavy upon it,  
And it will fall never to rise again (24:19,20).

Perhaps Isaiah used 𐤀𐤊𐤍 because he considered the rebellion of mankind similar to the rebellion of Tiamat. Nevertheless, 𐤀𐤊𐤍 described the total destruction of the earth.

Psalm 89:10 reveals how 𐤀𐤊𐤍, "to crush," reflects the Chaoskampf. Here Yahweh crushed Rahab. This word reveals the power of Yahweh over the chaotic forces of



the world. If this word comes from the Chaoskampf myth, the Hebrew authors reinterpreted it because Psalm 89:10 is the only time  $\text{חָצַף}$  is not applied to people.<sup>35</sup> In Isaiah the leaders of Judah crush their people with their injustice (3:15). In an oracle against Egypt Isaiah prophesied that the pillars of Egypt would be crushed. Perhaps this is a reference to the Chaoskampf because Egypt is elsewhere identified as Rahab. However, once again the most interesting use of  $\text{חָצַף}$  appears in the fourth servant song (52:13-53:12). Within this song  $\text{חָצַף}$  appears twice. The servant was crushed for our iniquities (53:5). This grueling death was the will of Yahweh because it pleased him (53:10). Henri Blocher comments that  $\text{חָצַף}$  really means "to grind."<sup>36</sup> Even though it was a miscarriage of justice, it pleased God. This death is not like Tiamat's death because she was crushed for her own actions while the servant's death will be for the sins of mankind. So Isaiah used a word taken from the mythology of the Near East and divested it of its connotations of judgment so that he could fill it with the meaning of justification. Actually, he is saying that Yahweh is placing man's judgment upon the servant so that each person might be justified.

Of those passages in the vision of Isaiah that deal with the conflict between order and chaos, the motif of the flood seems to be the most obscure. Only once is it mentioned overtly, in 54:9-10. Here Isaiah mentioned

the days of Noah and the flood. His use of simile makes it clear that Isaiah viewed the exile and the return from exile as being the same type of deliverance as the deliverance from the flood. Gunn says that the flood was viewed as "an event of great paradigmatic value for the people in exile."<sup>37</sup> In this passage the emphasis is directed more toward the reestablishment of a covenant relationship with his people than deliverance. Deliverance from exile had already been declared. Now Yahweh says that just as he had sworn not to flood the entire world again so he will not be angry with his people, neither will his covenant of peace be shaken.

Another passage that Gunn believes reflects flood imagery and is connected to 54:9-10 is 55:10-13. First of all, both passages have a similar structure with each passage containing a simile as its essential element and building the passage around an emphatic  $\text{לֹא}$  "which negates expressions of impermanence or ineffectiveness."<sup>38</sup> Secondly, Gunn believes that the stress placed upon the word not returning comes out of a different image than the images of rain or snow or the word because none of these elements are conceived of as returning.<sup>39</sup> He considers the image to refer to the messenger bird which Noah sent from the ark because if it returned with a token of the new world or did not return at all then it had succeeded in the purpose for which it was sent.<sup>40</sup> This interpretation seems appropriate because both images

are concerned with "the theme of promise in a time of disaster."<sup>41</sup> Consequently, Isaiah affirmed that the word of Yahweh will be realized.<sup>42</sup> Thirdly, Gunn perceives in this passage an element of flood imagery in the "everlasting sign which will not be cut off." In the flood story Yahweh gave Noah the sign of the rainbow as a promise that he would not destroy the earth by water again. Therefore, in the light of the previous interpretation, this sign is taken from the flood motif. Gunn claims that the subject of the sign is not the return of the word nor the transformed desert mentioned in verse 13, but the word of Yahweh itself which has been uttered by Isaiah, in effect, all of chapters 40 through 55.<sup>43</sup> When deliverance comes, the word which Isaiah proclaimed will become a "memorial" to Yahweh and a sign to the people that Yahweh has accomplished his word. The sign of the prophetic word becomes a guarantee of Yahweh's promise of redemption to all mankind. When the sign appears, it will be considered proof that Yahweh was responsible for the deliverance and a guarantee of his covenant of peace with them.<sup>44</sup> The response to the prophetic word in the lives of men means that they will go out in joy just as Noah "went out" from the ark.<sup>45</sup>

One word that is connected in Scripture to the flood narrative is  $\text{נִפְתָּח}$  which means "to split, to cleave, to tear open." It appeared in Genesis 7:11 where the fountains of the great deep ( $\text{מַיִם הַבְּרִיָּא}$ ) were split up.<sup>46</sup> However,

it does not appear in the Enuma Elish.<sup>47</sup> In the Ugaritic mythology  $\text{𐎶𐎵𐎲}$  is not used in relation to the conflict with Yam ( $\text{𐎶𐎵}$ ), but it is used to describe the manner in which Anat defeats Mot and reenacts the harvest.<sup>48</sup> Out of the 51 times  $\text{𐎶𐎵𐎲}$  is used in Scripture, it refers to the breaking of a human body eight times and to events connected with water fifteen times. It is used seven times in Isaiah (7:6; 34:15; 35:6; 58:8; 59:5, twice; 63:12). Three times it refers to the hatching of eggs, twice it speaks of the dividing or breaking forth of water, once of light breaking forth and once of military conquest. Of these passages only those that speak of water are important to this study. In 35:6 when the world is recreated and becomes the setting for the Highway of Holiness, waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. In 63:12 Isaiah remembered the time when the Holy Spirit through Moses divided the Red Sea. It is interesting that in both cases the concept of holiness is present. Oswalt observes that the passages where  $\text{𐎶𐎵𐎲}$  is used show no overt mythical allusions.<sup>49</sup> Another observation Oswalt makes is that in none of the passages where Yahweh is acclaimed for being victorious over the chaos monster is there mention of Yam's being split in two.<sup>50</sup>

Another passage which mentions the splitting of the rock so that water could break forth is 48:21. Here Yahweh commanded his people to flee Babylon. In the

same manner that he provided in the wilderness, he would provide for them again.

The comparison between the Enuma Elish, where Marduk brings the chaotic water under control by splitting Tiamat's body, and the biblical usage of  $\text{וַיַּבְרֵךְ}$  reveals an opposite viewpoint. In the Genesis account of the flood chaos is released by breaking open  $\text{וַיִּפְתָּח}$ . Isaiah mentioned in both instances that the waters are controlled by Yahweh or his Holy Spirit to prepare a way of redemption for his people. In one case it yielded the exodus; in the other, the Highway of Holiness.

In these passages which use the imagery of splitting open the waters, the redeemed are the object of the action. Therefore, although  $\text{וַיַּבְרֵךְ}$  is intended to point out that Yahweh is sovereign over the chaotic waters in that he can release them or control them,<sup>51</sup> it more importantly points to the redemptive work which Yahweh purposes for his people and all mankind to enjoy. Oswalt concludes that the use of  $\text{וַיַּבְרֵךְ}$  "does not support the idea of an original Hebrew Yahweh myth"<sup>52</sup> but rather is an "historicizing which sees redemption as an indivisible aspect of creation."<sup>53</sup> Elsewhere, he writes that

the burden of these passages is not simply that God is possessed of such terrible power as to split rocks and waters, etc., but that the possession of such power is able to redeem a lost creation.<sup>54</sup>

Another motif taken by Isaiah from the flood is the image of being dried up. He utilized a pair of synonyms

to portray this concept. Both  $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$ , "to dry up," and  $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$ , "to make dry," are used in the Genesis account of the flood. These words conceivably can be used in the description of the flood tradition and the exodus tradition but not the Chaoskampf.<sup>55</sup> The Genesis author told of the waters which dried up ( $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$ ) after the flood (8:13) and the dryness ( $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$ ) of the earth's surface which God caused after the flood (8:7,14).  $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$  is mainly connected to the waters that dried up, whereas  $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$  refers mainly to the drying up of vegetation. This is reflected in the manner in which they are used in the flood story.

$\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$  is used to reveal four theological truths:

- 1) God dried up the earth's surface after the flood,
- 2) God dried up the ground upon which the Hebrews walked when they crossed the Red Sea,
- 3) God judges mankind,
- and 4) man's life is very fragile compared to God's word.<sup>56</sup>

Most of the passages in which  $\text{לִיָּבֹשׁ}$  is used are concerned with judgment; for example, part of Egypt's punishment was that her rivers would dry up (19:5-6), part of the punishment of the nations consists in the streams being desolate (34:10), and part of Israel's punishment for her idolatry will be the desolate nature of her land (42:15). In the same way that the waters of the flood were Yahweh's weapon against a faithless race,<sup>57</sup> so his withdrawal of water is a weapon.

However, he also controlled the waters to produce a new order.<sup>58</sup> In 51:10, where Isaiah used  $\square^1$  and  $\square^2$ , Gunn sees a reference to the flood in which Yahweh controlled the chaotic waters.<sup>59</sup> Then the image shifts to the exodus in which Yahweh prepared a pathway for the Hebrews to cross the Red Sea.<sup>60</sup> This shift brings the message closer in time to those in exile to whom the promise of return was uttered.<sup>61</sup> Although there is great similarity in the theological content of the flood and the exodus, the imagery in this passage is overwhelmingly from the exodus with minor allusions to the flood.<sup>62</sup> The flood allusion, however, "both rehearses the story of creation (the world is, in effect, re-created) and prefigures . . . the redemption theme that is so characteristic of the Red Sea tradition."<sup>63</sup>

In 50:2 the imagery of drying up the sea with a rebuke and making the rivers a wilderness alludes to the crossing of the Red Sea and the wanderings in the wilderness. Therefore, the connection of these traditions accounts for the juxtaposition of the drying up of the waters with the desert. Gunn sees in the making of the desert a subtle allusion to the drying up of the waters.<sup>64</sup> This passage parallels a passage in Psalm 106:9 where the psalmist wrote: "Then He rebuked the Red Sea and it dried up; and He led them through the deeps, as through the wilderness." Isaiah used the separation or drying up of the Red Sea as a symbol that

the chaos adversary was conquered. The resulting path became the means for an ordered crossing into the new land while the waters themselves became the chaos enveloping the pursuing Egyptians.<sup>65</sup>

The final passage where this imagery is important is 44:24-28. This passage shows that the "creation tradition involved ordering the cosmos against chaotic forces."<sup>66</sup> In this passage there is a long series of participial phrases that describe Yahweh's lordship over the universe and its history including a statement of victory over the powers of chaos: "It is I who says to the depth of the sea, 'Be dried up!' and I will make your rivers dry" (44:27). The command itself is a regular aspect of the creation story and here Yahweh uses that power to dry up the sea and the rivers.<sup>67</sup> The word  $\text{לְיָם}$  which is translated "the deep" is used instead of  $\text{יָם}$  which is used almost exclusively for the Red Sea in the exodus tradition. Its use, since it is a rare term, would indicate that more focal points should be sought.<sup>68</sup> The parallelism between "the depth of the sea" and "your rivers" indicates that the rivers are the "rivers of the deep" which belongs to the cosmological notion of rivers surrounding the world and the "fountains of the deep" in the flood tradition.<sup>69</sup> Also, Gunn notices that verse 27 is parallel with verse 24 which has a clear reference to creation.<sup>70</sup> Either one of these traditions--creation or the flood--would be suitable



for proclaiming that Jerusalem will be rebuilt.<sup>71</sup> Gerhard von Rad writes:

Yahweh the Creator, who raised up the world out of chaos, does not leave Jerusalem in chaos; he who dried up the elemental waters will also raise up Jerusalem anew.<sup>72</sup>

The chaotic waters are always in Yahweh's power. No matter in what context the imagery was used, the message was always of the salvation brought by Yahweh through the restoration of order, whether by using the waters or by saving from the waters which symbolized evil.<sup>73</sup> Many times the prophet would invert the mythical allusion in order to illustrate Yahweh's lordship over history. Once again the purpose was to demonstrate Yahweh's saving purpose.

In the vision of Isaiah three creation formulae<sup>74</sup> are used to reveal Yahweh's power to order the chaotic world: 1)  $\text{יָצַק יְהוָה אֶת הַמַּיִם$  (42:5; 44:24), 2)  $\text{יָצַק יְהוָה אֶת הַמַּיִם$  (48:13; 51:13) and 3)  $\text{יָצַק יְהוָה אֶת הַמַּיִם$  (45:18). Because these formulae appear in parallel structure with the creating of the heavens, they can be understood to be earth-creation traditions<sup>75</sup> and come from early traditions about the ordering of the cosmos out of chaos.<sup>76</sup>

In 44:24-28, which is an introduction to the royal oracle about Cyrus in 45:1-7,  $\text{יָצַק יְהוָה אֶת הַמַּיִם}$  is part of a formula designed to establish a philosophical basis for Yahweh's actions. Because Yahweh stretched out the heavens and spread out the earth, or because he ordered

the cosmos and triumphed over the chaotic powers, he could frustrate the spokesmen for demonic powers, confirm the word of his servant, prepare the way for the rebuilding of Jerusalem, Judah and the temple, call Cyrus to perform his will. Consequently, Isaiah appears to include all of Yahweh's present and future activity in his "creative ordering of the cosmos in the face of chaotic, disruptive forces."<sup>77</sup>

יְהוָה יִסְדֵּן also is a motif taken from the tradition of "a deity overcoming the chaotic waters, establishing the earth upon those waters and ruling the world as king."<sup>78</sup> It becomes the basis in both passages for proclaiming that

in the continuing struggle taking place in the exile, Yahweh is the one who is victorious over chaos and establishes cosmic order--that is, he fulfills his purpose for Israel and for the whole earth.<sup>79</sup>

Concerning יְהוָה יִסְדֵּן which Isaiah appropriated in 45:18 to establish a foundation for Yahweh's present and future activity in ordering the chaotic state of Judah, Ludwig comments that Isaiah went beyond the normal creation traditions and introduced new terminology to "emphasize the establishing of the earth over against a chaotic condition, as an orderly cosmos in which the drama of human existence can take place."<sup>80</sup> The application of יִסְדֵּן to this situation bears out this conclusion. יִסְדֵּן was used by the Genesis writer to describe

the initial state of the earth in Genesis 1:2 as "without form and void." Its use in the Genesis account of creation supplies a structure to the creation of the world. In the first three days the heavens and the earth receive their "form," while in the last three days their "emptiness" is filled.<sup>81</sup> In 45:18 Yahweh assured the people of Judah that their permanent exile was not his purpose. Just as he did not create the earth to be uninhabited, so he has not destined them to seek him in a waste place, a place which he has not prepared for their habitation.

Although these expressions of establishing the earth come from traditions associated with the defeat of chaos and the ordering of the cosmos,<sup>82</sup> Isaiah reinterpreted them to reveal the historical activity of Yahweh in which the earth was seen as the arena of human existence which would be reestablished by Yahweh from its present chaos through "Israel"--Yahweh's people and Yahweh's agent.<sup>83</sup>

The final element of the Chaoskampf used by Isaiah is the temple of Yahweh. Concerning this motif Yahweh used two nouns--בֵּית יְהוָה, "temple," and הֵיכָל יְהוָה, "the house of Yahweh"--and a verb--יָשָׁב, "to sit enthroned." הֵיכָל is used most frequently to mean "palace." Only three times did Isaiah use it to refer to the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem. Eleven times he called it בֵּית יְהוָה, "the house of Yahweh." יָשָׁב is the word commonly

used to describe "a dwelling place." Whether Isaiah used  $\text{בֵּית יְהוָה}$  or  $\text{לְיִשְׁכָּה}$ , he meant the same thing-- this was the place where Yahweh dwelt. The only difference between the two terms comes from the royal inference inherent in  $\text{לְיִשְׁכָּה}$ . When it refers to a king, it is translated "palace"; but, when it refers to a god, it is translated "temple." Consequently, a temple is the earthly palace of a god.

In both Enuma Elish and the Baal myth, the establishment of a temple is the result of victory over the chaos monster. After Marduk had overthrown Tiamat, the Annunaki (the gods of the underworld) built Esagila for him. (Esagila was Marduk's temple at Babylon.)<sup>84</sup>

In the Baal myth after Baal had defeated Yam, he complained to Anat that he had no house. She promised to help him, but failed in her appeal to El. However, Asherah succeeded in gaining permission from El for Baal to build a house. Baal summoned Katir-wa-Hasis to build the temple. He built it with cedar and adorned it with gold, silver and lapis lazuli.<sup>85</sup> Baal did not want windows put in his temple, but after much persuasion he consented. This seemed necessary because he must send forth his voice<sup>86</sup> and rain. The resulting temple of Baal was a microcosm,<sup>87</sup> a symbol of the ordered cosmos and the ability to maintain order.<sup>88</sup> Fisher notes concerning the temple of Baal that that which maintains order is also that which makes a recur-

rence of chaos possible.<sup>89</sup>

When Isaiah used בֵּית יְהוָה, twice he spoke of the voice of Yahweh (6:1; 66:6). In each case the voice spoke of judgment. In 44:28 at Yahweh's instruction Cyrus will say concerning the temple, "Your foundation will be laid." Even though the temple would be destroyed (64:11), it would be rebuilt.

When Isaiah spoke of the house of Yahweh, he mostly spoke of worship. In 2:2 Isaiah spoke of the last days when many peoples would go to the mountain of the house of Yahweh to learn Yahweh's ways. It was to be a place for singing (38:20), for the offering of sacrificial grain offerings (66:20, in this case the offering is comprised of people), prayer (37:1,14, Hezekiah made the house of Yahweh a place of prayer; but in 56:7 it will be called a house of prayer for all peoples), and joy (56:7). Yahweh will glorify his house (60:7) and place within it a memorial for those eunuchs who obey him (56:5).

All of these references appear to consider the house of Yahweh as a building located in Jerusalem. However, there is one passage in which Isaiah places a different meaning to the term בֵּית, "house." In 66:1-2 Yahweh questions whether the Hebrews could adequately build a house for him. The house he desires is within those who are humble and contrite of spirit and who tremble at his word.

A comparison of the building of Baal's temple and

Yahweh's temple illustrates this. Both were constructed in terms of seven--Baal's in seven days and Yahweh's in seven years. Fisher concludes that the framework of the Genesis creation reflects the building of Baal's temple which is a microcosm. The Genesis author spoke of ordering the cosmos in terms of seven days because the construction of the microcosm was in terms of seven days. If this is a proper interpretation, then the ordering of the temple resembles the creation of the cosmos.<sup>90</sup> Once again the Hebrew writers reversed the motifs of the Chaoskampf. The waters were not Yahweh's enemy, but his weapon.<sup>91</sup> He did not need to gain approval to build the earthly temple. However, his real temple was the result of his own creative work. As indicated in 66:2 the temple where Yahweh wants to dwell is within the life of man. He does not reside in buildings made with hands but in the hearts of men.

As has been shown, Isaiah did utilize the motifs of the Chaoskampf in proclaiming Yahweh's message to his people. However, he reinterpreted the motifs so that they became images of salvation.<sup>92</sup> "Yahweh saved by producing or restoring order," whether it was "by means of the waters or by saving from the waters which symbolize evil."<sup>93</sup> They were used to speak of Yahweh's activities on behalf of his people with an emphasis on his love.<sup>94</sup> Isaiah, along with other Hebrew writers, did something new in applying these creation motifs to

describe Israel's unique position among peoples under God's guidance in a newly created social and political order.<sup>95</sup>

Darkness and Light: Power  
through Enlistment

The final method of gaining power involves the enlistment of someone to help overcome the enemy. In Baal's case, Anat killed Mot first so that Baal could later kill him also with a club prepared for him by Katir-wa-Hasis. Although Yahweh is not involved in a struggle for his life, he is in a struggle with man's sinful nature. In order to provide a method of justification for mankind Yahweh will enlist the aid of the servant who would be a light to the nations so that justice may be established in the world. It is through this conflict of light with darkness that Isaiah presented God's plan for salvation.

In the Genesis account of creation, on the first day God created light (אֵל). He then proceeded to call the light "day" and the darkness "night." Prior to this, darkness (חָשֶׁךְ) was upon the face of the waters. Therefore, אֵל and חָשֶׁךְ are motifs of creation; and by virtue of their characteristics they are in conflict with each other. Also the ancient world worshipped the sun and, therefore, God's role as creator of light was stressed.<sup>96</sup>

אֵל normally referred to the light associated with

the sun, moon and stars. However, in both cases where this "normal" meaning is used, it is not used in the "normal" fashion. Isaiah used the light of the sun and moon to refer to the arrival of a new day (30:26; 60:19, 20). In 30:19-26 when the teacher comes who will show mankind the way to walk, then the light of the moon will be like the sun and the sun will shine like seven days. Clearly, this is an image for the increased spiritual knowledge which will bring about national healing. In 60:19-20 Isaiah again used the light of the sun and the moon to point out the surpassing glory of the light in the new Jerusalem. Once again the reference is probably to a spiritual relationship with Yahweh. However, some interpret it literally so that there will actually be a day when the sun and moon will not be necessary because Yahweh is present.<sup>97</sup> Therefore, Isaiah is saying that the sun is unnecessary where Yahweh is. He is God.

Another source of light created by Yahweh was the pillar of fire at the time of the wandering in the wilderness. It was a source of protection for his people in a strange environment. Once again in the time of the branch of Yahweh, Yahweh will create over Jerusalem a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (4:5). He will protect his city and his people.

In 45:7 Yahweh shows that he is Lord of history by claiming that he formed (אֶרֶץ) light and created (אֶלֶף)



darkness, caused (נִצְּחָה) well-being and created (הִלְכָה) evil. This application of הִלְכָה to the creation of darkness and evil is problematic to those who view God as capable of good only. However, in the context in which Yahweh asserts his lordship, his oneness--"I am the one who is and creates and there is no other" (45:5)--he is telling his people that he and he alone sent them into exile. He is the one who brings judgment as well as blessing. For those who mistake evil for good and good for evil, who mistake light for darkness and darkness for light (5:20), Isaiah pronounced "woe" upon them. Judgment will fall upon their land where there will be darkness rather than light (5:30). Those who hope for light only receive darkness and walk in gloom (הִלְכָה) (59:9). Also the light of Israel was to be used by Yahweh as a purifying which the Holy One would use to judge Assyria for its arrogance (10:17).<sup>98</sup> In the day of Yahweh, that great day of judgment when Yahweh will exterminate the sinners from the land, the great lights of the heavens will not shine symbolizing the severity of Yahweh's judgment (13:10).

Whereas the lack of light symbolizes judgment, the presence of light symbolizes salvation. Even though darkness may cover the earth, each person can become a light and shine because their light of salvation has come (60:1). Indeed the light of salvation has come because the servant who was to come to the Gentiles has come in

Jesus bringing light to the nations. Gentiles truly are coming to the light of Christ (60:3).

Perhaps the passage which most clearly depicts the symbolization of light as salvation is 9:1-7. Here salvation applies to the people of Yahweh since Isaiah specifically mentioned the lands of Naphtali and Zebulon and the throne of David. Those who walk in darkness will see a great light and that light will shine on them. God will break the yoke of their slavery and take it from their shoulders and place it on the shoulders of the Messiah. The government will rest on his shoulders and he will establish justice and righteousness in his kingdom. That justice will be light of the peoples (51:4). That light is equated with salvation: "My righteousness is near, My salvation has gone forth" (51:5).

Light is a symbol not only of general salvation but also of individual salvation. This salvation begins for each individual by walking in the light of Yahweh (2:5). Yahweh will extend this light to the blind and will turn their darkness into light. He will guide them. Salvation will come even to those who are handicapped. To those who minister to the needy--the hungry, the homeless, the naked--salvation will break out with such force that people will see it and glorify God. In fact, the glorification of Yahweh will protect them. Those whose light of salvation shines are those who release

those in bondage, refrain from blaming and evil-speaking, and give of themselves to the needy.

One final usage must be considered. Sometimes "light" is parallel in meaning to "the fountain of life." Dahood argues, therefore, that "to see light" is to see God's face in immortality. Hence, in Isaiah 53:11 where Isaiah said concerning the servant: "As a result of the anguish of his soul, He will see it and be satisfied"; the Septuagint and Dead Sea scrolls speak of immortality for the suffering servant.<sup>99</sup>

The manner in which Isaiah used אֵל in connection with חֹשֶׁךְ, "darkness," לַחֹשֶׁךְ, "darkness," and חֹשֶׁךְ, "gloom," shows that darkness is the opposite of light.<sup>100</sup> Whereas light symbolizes salvation, darkness symbolizes judgment; whereas light symbolizes blessing and well-being, darkness symbolizes cursing and calamity; whereas light symbolizes knowledge of salvation, darkness symbolizes ignorance; whereas light symbolizes goodness and sight, darkness symbolizes evil and blindness.

Some passages which mention darkness contain a meaning of hiddenness or of salvation. In 45:3 Yahweh says that he will give Cyrus "treasures of darkness" which are interpreted in the next phrase as "a hidden wealth of secret places." In 47:5 Yahweh instructs Babylon to go into hiding because her nakedness will be uncovered for not showing mercy to Israel. In 45:19 Yahweh used the negative aspect of hiddenness. By saying, "I have

not spoken in secret, in some dark land," he was declaring to his people that when he said "Seek me" he spoke openly, not in a hiding place or some distant land where they could not hear him.

In a day of salvation Yahweh says to his people, "Show yourselves." He then promises to provide for them and lead them (49:9-10). Although darkness abounds, anyone who fears Yahweh and obeys the voice of his servant will enjoy the light of Yahweh (50:10; 60:2). The servant will release those who sit in darkness in prison and will restore sight to those who live in gloom and darkness because of blindness.

The ultimate conflict between the darkness of men's sins and the light of Yahweh's salvation appears in 7:1-9:7. To those who consult mediums and spirits rather than God, to those who look to the earth for salvation, there is only darkness and the gloom of anguish. However, Yahweh provided a sign and a promise; the sign was Immanuel, the promise was a son who would be born.

In the provision of this sign and this promise Yahweh is contending with the darkness of sin through the lives of two children. In the life of the first, a sign of Yahweh's deliverance and a warning of his judgment was provided. Yet in the midst of the darkness of exile for the people of northern Israel, another light will shine in the life of a son who will establish and uphold justice and righteousness. In the prophecy of

Isaiah the promise grew out of the sign because the promise was the answer to exile.

Although the sign and the promise spoke of two distinct children, one present and one future, in the theology of the New Testament the reality of the former sign was fulfilled in the reality of the fulfilled promise. The light that shone through the sign in the time of Ahaz shone again in a different way in Matthew's time.

Darkness and gloom follow in the wake of the fulfillment of the prophecy to which the sign bore witness. The kingdom of Israel was defeated and its people sent into the gloom of exile. It is this darkness which the fulfillment of the promise would dispel. It is this darkness which links the sign and the promise--Immanuel and the prince of peace. Therefore, an analysis of the sign and its fulfillment as well as an analysis of the promise and its fulfillment is necessary in order to determine the manner in which Yahweh overcame the darkness of mankind. Such an analysis is necessary because of the function which the sign and the promise played in Matthew's view of Jesus. The beginning of the sign (Is. 7:14) and the beginning of the promise (Is. 9:1-2) are used by Matthew (Mt. 1:23; 4:15-16) to verify Jesus as the Messiah, the light that dawned upon the people who dwell in darkness.

When Ahaz, king of Judah, who had sacrificed to Baal and the god of Damascus and had made his son pass

through the fire (II Ch. 28), was afraid of a threatening attack by Syria and Israel, Yahweh, through Isaiah, said, "It shall not happen; but because you will not believe, ask a sign." When Ahaz refused, Yahweh gave him a sign to dispel the darkness of his fear:

Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel. He will eat curds and honey at the time He knows enough to refuse evil and choose good. For before the boy will know enough to refuse evil and choose good, the land whose two kings you dread will be forsaken (7:14-16).

The problem of this passage arises in the question: "When was this sign fulfilled?" The problem was further complicated by Matthew when he applied verse fourteen to the birth of Jesus. Herbert Wolf finds the answer in chapter eight. He first notes that "Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son" is a "stock formula" uttered at a marriage to predict that the bride would bear offspring.<sup>101</sup> In the ancient texts it appears in the story of Nikkal and the Kathirat.<sup>102</sup>

The word translated "virgin" is  $\text{p}^{\text{r}}\text{d}^{\text{r}}\text{y}$ . Wolf notes that it appears in stories where marriage is also imminent. Rebekah is one such example. If  $\text{p}^{\text{r}}\text{d}^{\text{r}}\text{y}$  refers to a young woman, a virgin, soon to be married and the announcement of 7:14 was spoken before the marriage, where is the marriage?<sup>103</sup>

Wolf identifies the solution in chapter eight. When a legal act, such as a marriage, takes place, three legal elements are necessary: 1) the writing of the

deed in two copies, one sealed ( $\text{סִינָה}$ ) and one open ( $\text{פִּתּוּחָא}$ ), 2) the sealing of the one copy, and 3) the acquisition of witnesses.<sup>104</sup> In 8:1 Isaiah was commanded to take a  $\text{פִּתּוּחָא}$  and write a warning of judgment on it. In this act Wolf sees the fulfillment of the first step.<sup>105</sup> The second step is fulfilled in verse sixteen where Yahweh instructed him to bind the testimony and seal ( $\text{סִינָה}$ ) the teaching among his disciples.<sup>106</sup> The third step is found in verse two where Yahweh said that he would take "faithful witnesses"--Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.<sup>107</sup>

This theory is enhanced by Isaiah's remark in verse eighteen that his life and the lives of his children are for "signs and wonders" in Israel from Yahweh. The word for "signs" is  $\text{תִּשְׁמוֹת}$  which is also the word used in 7:14 where Yahweh gave Ahaz a sign ( $\text{תִּשְׁמוֹת}$ ). Their lives being the fulfillment of this "sign" would make them signs. This statement in verse eighteen would also indicate that the teaching that was to be sealed was that of Maher-shalal-hash-baz, the judgment of Syria and Israel, which was the same as the remainder of the sign in 7:15-16. It is the threat of this name that would result in the anguish and darkness in Israel mentioned in 8:21-22.<sup>108</sup>

It is at this point that this sign is connected with the motifs of darkness and light. In fact, 8:19-21 serves as a fulcrum between the sign and the promise.

The sign brings the darkness and the gloom upon the land of Israel because the people consulted mediums and spiritists rather than God. However, on the other side of the darkness and gloom is the light of the promise.

Another interesting element in 8:16 is the presence of **הָעֵדוּת**. This word is translated "testimony" and refers to the legal transaction illustrated in Ruth 4 in which one sandal is removed to confirm the transaction of Boaz's purchase of Ruth in the presence of witnesses. Isaiah 8:16 and 20 are the only other places it is found in the Old Testament.<sup>109</sup>

Consequently, if 8:1-2 are viewed as a marriage, the transition to 8:3 is expected, since the consummation of the marriage is usually described soon after the wedding. Such examples would be found in Hosea 1:3 and Ruth 4:13. The statement of Isaiah's "approaching" the prophetess parallels the statement that Boaz "went in to" Ruth who became pregnant and bore a son. It should be noted that Akkadian law stated that a marriage contract was validated when the wife had sexual relations with her husband.<sup>110</sup> Concerning the conflict of being a virgin and giving birth to a son, the verb **בָּרַח**, "to approach, to draw near," when used in the sexual sense, usually refers to the initial marital act of intercourse.<sup>111</sup>

Concerning the problem of the two names, Wolf cites other situations where more than one name was given to



a child.<sup>112</sup> Wolf sees a limited identification of the two names in 8:8, at the end of the Maher-shalal-hash-baz passage, when the land of Judah is mentioned as "your land, O Immanuel." Here Immanuel seems to be present whereas in 7:14 he had not yet been born. The appearance of the words לְיָהוָה אִמָּנוּעַל in 8:10 is not as a name but as an assurance that "God is with us." Therefore, as the sign indicated, the mother named the child Immanuel, whereas Isaiah named him Maher-shalal-hash-baz,<sup>113</sup> for the people of Israel would be "driven away into darkness."

However, the darkness will not remain. Israel will see a great light again because a son will be born who will take upon his shoulders the government of Israel. He will establish righteousness and justice. He will bring peace. In the light of the above interpretation of 7:1-8:22, here is the promise of another son who will be born. He will have the character of God, because his name (the description of his name) will be "Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." The most glorious part of the promise is that the zeal of Yahweh, who is and who creates, will do this.

It is not unusual, then, that Matthew used the sign of 7:14 in application to Jesus because Yahweh had promised another son. The meaning of אִמָּנוּעַל in 7:14 must include both "young woman" and "virgin." In 7:14 she was an unmarried young woman as the "stock formula" would

indicate. Therefore, she was a virgin at the time of the giving of the sign. At the time of the birth of the son, however, she was not a virgin because Isaiah had already "approached" her. Therefore, Cyrus Gordon concludes that

the virginity of Mary in Matthew does not depend upon Isa 7:14 but is explicitly stated in Matt 1:18-25. Those who heard the prophet would not have anticipated a miracle. Those who read Matthew cannot escape a miraculous birth.<sup>114</sup>

Later in Isaiah this son becomes the servant of Yahweh who will become a "light of the nations" (42:6) and a "light to the nations" (49:6). In analyzing chapters 42-45 Goldingay concludes that the role of the servant cannot be fulfilled by Israel because Israel is full of darkness--injustice--whereas the servant will establish justice.<sup>115</sup> Because the ministry of the servant--to establish justice and righteousness--is the same as the task of the prince of peace, the two can be equated. Also, both the servant and the prince were the instruments of light to the world. In them Yahweh was conquering the darkness of the world. The more detailed description of the servant's work in chapter 53 reveals that Yahweh will justify many through his servant. Consequently, the servant aided Yahweh in his conflict with darkness by dying for the sins of many.

Although Yahweh could not be viewed as dethroned according to the vision of Isaiah, Yahweh does enlist the servant to aid in the overthrow of darkness. By

taking upon himself the griefs and sorrows of mankind and by dying for the sins of mankind, the servant endured the darkness of suffering in order to bring the light of justification to mankind. Yahweh, in return for the servant's bearing the darkness of mankind, will vindicate him and prolong his days so that he may see the results of his death.

Although Isaiah did not equate the sign and the promise, Matthew brought the sign, the promise and the servant together in the same person, Jesus. This is evident in the reapplication of the Immanuel prophecy, the prince of peace prophecy, and the first servant song. In doing this, Matthew identified Jesus as the surrogate through whom Yahweh meant to win the victory over the darkness of mankind.

Although the world is filled with darkness because of sin and ignorance, Isaiah proclaimed that Yahweh is working to bring light into the world so that people may be saved. This motif of salvation prepares the way for considering the theme of the next three chapters--relationship, relationship broken and relationship redeemed.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Arvid Schou Kapelrud, The Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Old Testament, trans., G. W. Anderson, 1st U.S. ed. (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), pp. 40-41.

<sup>2</sup>J. Maxwell Miller, "In the 'Image' and 'likeness' of God," Journal of Biblical Literature, 91:3:297, 1972.

<sup>3</sup>Miller, "Likeness," p. 302.

<sup>4</sup>𐤓𐤕𐤕 is not used by Isaiah.

<sup>5</sup>Victor P. Hamilton, "𐤓𐤕𐤕 (dēmût) likeness," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 192.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Phyllis Tribble, God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality, Overtures to Biblical Theology, eds., Walter Brueggemann and John H. Donahue, S.J. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), pp. 15-21.

<sup>8</sup>Victor P. Hamilton, "𐤓𐤕𐤕 (dāmâ) I, be like, resemble," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 191.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 42.

<sup>11</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 46. This statement contradicts an earlier statement (p. 41) in which he claims that Mot boasted of killing Lotan.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 48.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 50.

<sup>17</sup>Dennis J. McCarthy, "Creation Motifs in Ancient Hebrew Poetry," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 29:3:87, 1967.

<sup>18</sup>McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 91.

<sup>19</sup>McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 95.

<sup>20</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 41.

<sup>21</sup>See note 11.

<sup>22</sup>Mitchell Dahood, S.J., "Ebla, Genesis and John," The Christian Century, 98:13:419, 1981.

<sup>23</sup>John N. Oswalt, "The Myth of the Dragon and Old Testament Faith," The Evangelical Quarterly, 49:3:164, 1977.

<sup>24</sup>John Gray, Near Eastern Mythology (London: Hamlyn Publishing Group, Ltd., 1969), p. 72.

<sup>25</sup>W. F. Albright, Archeology and the Religion of Israel (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1942), p. 80.

<sup>26</sup>Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 43.

<sup>27</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 165.

<sup>28</sup>Alan A. MacRae, The Gospel of Isaiah (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), p. 145.

<sup>29</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 166.

<sup>30</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 165.

<sup>31</sup>Loren Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum, 15:320, 1965.

<sup>32</sup>McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 90.

<sup>33</sup>Donald J. Wiseman, "לָלַל (hālāl) I, wound (fatally), bore through, pierce," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 288.

<sup>34</sup>Victor F. Hamilton, "פָּרַר (pārār) II, split, divide," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 738.

<sup>35</sup>Herbert Wolf, "דָּכָא (dākā') be crushed, contrite,

broken," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 188.

<sup>36</sup>Henri Blocher, The Songs of the Servant, Isaiah's Good News (London: InterVarsity Press, 1975), p. 65.

<sup>37</sup>David M. Gunn, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Flood," Journal of Biblical Literature, 94:4:493, 1975.

<sup>38</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 504.

<sup>39</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 504-05.

<sup>40</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 505-06.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 504. Other passages where Isaiah expressed the idea of Yahweh's words not returning to him without accomplishing their task are 31:2 and 45:23.

<sup>43</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 507.

<sup>44</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 508.

<sup>45</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 507.

<sup>46</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 169.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 170.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 171.

<sup>52</sup>Oswalt, "Myth of the Dragon," p. 172.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid.

<sup>54</sup>John N. Oswalt, "בָּאָהַד (bāqah) to cleave, divide, break through, break up, rip up, tear," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 124.

<sup>55</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 497-98.

<sup>56</sup>Ralph H. Alexander, "יָבֵשׁ (yābēsh) be or become dry, be dried up, make dry, wither," Theological Word-

book of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 360.

<sup>57</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 496.

<sup>58</sup>Ibid.

<sup>59</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 501-02. He sees this because of the term תַּהוֹם רַקָּה which is found elsewhere only in the flood story.

<sup>60</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 502. The use of the terms דָּרַךְ, "way," אֶחָד, "redeemed," and עָבַר, "pass over," are all part of the exodus motif with no connection with the flood or creation.

<sup>61</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 503.

<sup>62</sup>Another element that adds to the imagery of this passage is found in 51:15 where Yahweh says that he "stirs up the sea and its waves roar." Theodore M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah," Journal of Biblical Literature, 92: 3:352, 1973, states that Yahweh's victory over the chaotic forces in creation is expressed in this phrase as its use in Job 26:12-13 demonstrates:

He quieted the sea with His power,  
And by His understanding He shattered Rahab.  
By His breath the heavens are cleared;  
His hand has pierced the fleeing serpent.

<sup>63</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 502-03.

<sup>64</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 501.

<sup>65</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 496.

<sup>66</sup>Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 348.

<sup>67</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 497.

<sup>68</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 498.

<sup>69</sup>Gunn, "Flood," pp. 498-99.

<sup>70</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 499.

<sup>71</sup>Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Gerhard von Rad, "The Theological Problem of the Old Testament Doctrine of Creation," The Problem of the

Hexateuch and other essays, trans., E. W. Trueman Dicken  
(New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 136.

73Gunn, "Flood," p. 496.

74See above pp. 37-39.

75Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 350.

76Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 348.

77Ludwig, "Establishing," pp. 348-49.

78Norman C. Habel, "Yahweh, Maker of Heaven and Earth": A Study in Tradition Criticism," Journal of Biblical Literature, 91:3:334-35, 1972.

79Ludwig, "Establishing," pp. 356-57.

80Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 346.

81Ronald F. Youngblood, "𐤕𐤕𐤕 (tōhū) confusion," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II  
(Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 965.

82Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 356.

83Ludwig, "Establishing," p. 357.

84Kapelrud, Ras Shamra, p. 44.

85Ibid.

86Fisher, "Ugarit," pp. 318-19.

87Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 318.

88Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 320.

89Ibid.

90Fisher, "Ugarit," p. 319.

91McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 94.

92McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 95.

93Ibid.

94McCarthy, "Creation Motifs," p. 94.

95Ibid.



<sup>96</sup>Herbert Wolf, "אִר (ʾîr) to be or become light, shine," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 25.

<sup>97</sup>cf. Revelation 22:5.

<sup>98</sup>Wolf, "אִר," p. 26, mentions that "the ultimate development is to compare God himself with light." This Isaiah did by calling the Holy One a flame. John also reported that Jesus called himself "the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12; 9:5).

<sup>99</sup>Wolf, "אִר," p. 25. Wolf cites Dahood.

<sup>100</sup>Robert L. Alden, "אֲשַׁח (hāshak) be dark, darkened, black, dim, hidden," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 331.

<sup>101</sup>Herbert E. Wolf, "A Solution to the Immanuel Prophecy in Isaiah 7:14-8:22," Journal of Biblical Literature, 91:4:450, 1972. He attributed this thought to John Gray, The Krt Text in the Literature of Ras Shamra, 2nd ed. (Leiden: Brill, 1964), p. 57.

<sup>102</sup>Ibid.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid.

<sup>104</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," p. 451. For a clear scriptural reference to these steps see Jeremiah 32:10,25,44.

<sup>105</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," pp. 451-52. In אִרְמֵיָא Wolf recognizes the same root as is used in Je. 32:11, אִרְמֵיָא, and in the two decrees mentioned in Es. 3:14 and 8:13, אִרְמֵיָא.

<sup>106</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," p. 452.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid. Although the presence of witnesses is not at a marriage as at a covenant ceremony, this did occur in Malachi and Ezekiel 16:8.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," p. 454.

<sup>111</sup>Ibid. Wolf cites support from Ge. 20:4 with Abimelech and Sarah and Dt. 22:14 in which a bridegroom discovered that his bride was not a virgin.

<sup>112</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," p. 455. Such examples are found in the naming of Benjamin, Jeremiah's renaming of Pashhur and Nathan's naming of Solomon.

<sup>113</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," pp. 454-55.

<sup>114</sup>Wolf, "Immanuel," pp. 455-56.

<sup>115</sup>John Goldingay, "The Arrangement of Isaiah XLI-XLV," Vetus Testamentum, 29:3:292,295, 1979. See Appendix, Table 7.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### THE CREATIVE RELATIONSHIP

So far Yahweh's creative work has been analyzed. He creates new things, he forms, he makes, he establishes. He creates by the power of his word and through the agency of his Spirit. In creating Yahweh was not involved in an eternal conflict with chaotic forces; but, he was involved in a redemptive relationship with a people which he chose to declare his name to the world.

This ulterior purpose of creation, the relationship between Yahweh and man, is the topic for consideration in this chapter. In speaking of Yahweh's creative activities in the beginning of time, Isaiah spoke of his transcendence; however, in the same breath he immediately translated Yahweh's awe-filling transcendence into his tender concern.<sup>1</sup> As noted earlier, the creative activity of Yahweh is always expressed in connection with his redemptive concern for mankind.

This theme of relationship is expressed quite clearly in several ways in the Genesis account of creation. The first indication of this relationship was the concept of God's image. God desired to create someone in his own image, after his own likeness. Therefore,

he created the human creature, male and female.<sup>2</sup> Later, in chapter two the human creature exhibits a relationship with the animals which he names. God observed that it was not good for the human creature to be alone and so he created a helpmate with whom to enter into relationship. God brought the two human creatures together to institute the relationship of marriage. In chapter three God participated in a relationship with man in that he communed with him each day.

This theme of relationship is the whole emphasis of the vision of Isaiah, that is, Yahweh's relationship with his people Israel and the whole world. In order to demonstrate this theme Isaiah used the motifs of relationship in varying degrees. For example, Isaiah did not use "the image of God" motif at all, although he applied "likeness" to Yahweh in several passages connected with idolatry (see chapter 4). Also he used the motif of naming quite heavily (see chapter 3), as well as the functioning of his "breath" or "spirit" (see chapter 3).

Three motifs which reflect the theme of relationship will be discussed in this chapter on the creative relationship: 1) father, 2) marriage and 3) rest.

### Father

In order to understand Yahweh as "father" (אב), Yahweh's application of this term to others must be

analyzed. Yahweh applied 18 to three people in Israel's past: 1) David, 2) Abraham and 3) Jacob. In speaking to Hezekiah concerning his illness, Yahweh identified David as Hezekiah's father. Because Yahweh heard Hezekiah's prayer and because he called David his father, he was acknowledging Hezekiah's righteousness in the same way that he had acknowledged David's righteousness. Elsewhere, Yahweh says that although the people call upon him he will not answer because they are sinful (1:10-15; 58:1-5). In 58:9 Yahweh declares to those who act righteously in service and love to others that when they called he would answer. Therefore, righteousness is a characteristic of being a father.

Righteousness is also a characteristic of fatherhood drawn from the life of Abraham. Yahweh commands those who pursue righteousness to take Abraham as their example. Abraham coupled his righteousness with obedience. When Yahweh called him, he obeyed and was therefore blessed and multiplied. Yahweh will comfort Zion but challenges Judah to pay attention to the coming of his righteousness and salvation (51:5). Concerning earthly fatherhood, a second characteristic is obedience. This obedience is in response to God's righteousness and salvation.

Yahweh's response to the obedience of his people is reflective of his response to Jacob their father. If they desist from going their own way just like Jacob,

then he will give them the same inheritance that he gave to Jacob, a land and a family.

Each of these three men was illustrative of another quality of fatherhood exhibited by Yahweh, transcendence. They were fathers by example but they were far removed in time from their descendants, the Hebrews of Isaiah's time. Yahweh also exhibits transcendence to his people since he is not to be questioned because he is their maker (45:9-10). In the same way that a child does not say to his father "What are you begetting?" so man should not quarrel with his maker. It should be noted, however, that in the very next verses Yahweh used his transcendence to substantiate his control of history and lay a basis for hope in the imminence of his salvation for his people.<sup>3</sup>

The conclusion of the discussion of fatherhood in the vision of Isaiah comes in the closing chapters when the people acknowledge to Yahweh, "You are our father" (63:16; 64:8). It is the apparent contradiction between Yahweh's transcendence and his immanence which prompted them to acknowledge Yahweh as their father. Abraham and Israel (Jacob) do not know them. Even though they are fathers by example, they cannot enter into their present difficulties. On the other hand, Yahweh has shown that he can and will become involved in their problems because he is their redeemer from of old. Because he has redeemed them in the past, Israel proclaimed

that Yahweh is the one who made them and molds them-- they are the clay and he is the potter (64:8).

This image of making Israel draws the image of motherhood into focus at two points in the vision of Isaiah (46:3-4 and 66:12-13). In 46:3-4 Yahweh depicts himself as the pregnant woman who bore the child Israel and gave birth to him. He carried Israel from the womb. Because of this he will bear them and deliver them until they die. In 66:12-13 Yahweh's caring for Israel is illustrated by the comfort a mother gives her child when she nurses him, carries him and plays with him (cf. 49:14-15).

Not only is Yahweh the father of his people but the son who would be born, according to 9:6, would bear a name which would include the title "Everlasting Father." The first possible interpretation is that this child would in some way be God, the one who is eternal and who is the father of mankind. Perhaps this is what Jesus realized when he said, "I and the father are one" (Jn. 10:30). The second part of the name, "Mighty God," tends to support this view. The second interpretation is that this person would consistently exhibit the qualities of fatherhood--righteousness, salvation and blessing--which Yahweh himself had demonstrated to his people. This Jesus did. He not only exhibited the heavenly traits--righteousness, salvation and blessing--but he also exhibited the earthly traits of fatherhood--

obedience to God and self-sacrifice. Both of these interpretations could be correct.

### Husband

Yahweh is not only described as a father, but he is also called a husband which brings into the discussion the motif of marriage. Isaiah 4:1 illuminates the meaning of 26:13. In 4:1 seven women desire to marry one man so that they can be called by his name. In 26:13 Israel confessed that although they had been ruled by other masters they confess Yahweh's name. They are acknowledging that they are joined together with Yahweh in a covenant relationship, with Yahweh acting as the husband who provides the name for the relationship.

In chapter 54 where Yahweh is called אֱמִן, "husband," of Israel, Isaiah made a comparison between the barren woman and the married woman. The barren woman represents the Gentile nations who, because of their spiritual darkness, had no children who worshipped Yahweh.<sup>4</sup> The married woman represents Israel who had been forsaken "like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected" (54:6) but has now received compassion from her husband, Yahweh.<sup>5</sup>

The promise of numerous sons in 54:1 is a result of the atoning work of the servant expressed in chapter 53. The spiritual sons of the Gentile nations who would worship Yahweh would be far greater than the sons



of the married woman, Israel.<sup>6</sup> The result of this great spiritual revival would be that the tent of the barren woman would have to be enlarged because of all of her children.

Although Yahweh had been angry with Israel his wife in the past, he swears an oath as powerful as the oath he swore in the days of Noah not to be angry with her again. Instead, he will establish her like a building and adorn her with beautiful stones. MacRae sees this as a figurative picture of the followers of the servant of Yahweh joined together in one body as described in Ephesians 2:11-22 where Christ is the chief cornerstone.<sup>7</sup> This building, or body of followers of Yahweh, will be a place where their sons will be taught. Therefore, in this passage of scripture Isaiah envisioned the work of the servant culminating in a great structure of believers whose foundation would be firm and whose appearance would be dazzling. Isaiah envisioned the Church.

In chapter 62 Yahweh names his people with a new name that he will designate. Their land will no longer be known as "Forsaken" or "Desolate." Instead, their land will be called נְשֻׁאֵי, "Married." נְשֻׁאֵי comes from נָשָׂא which means "to possess, to own or to marry."<sup>8</sup> This name signifies "the future delights which God will have with his redeemed people."<sup>9</sup> It reveals that once again Israel will be married to Yahweh. It also "signi-

fies both the intimacy and the joy of YHWH in conjunction with the land."<sup>10</sup> It suggests a close covenant tie between Israel and Yahweh both in love and loyalty.<sup>11</sup> Waltke suggests that it serves as the background for the New Testament concept of Christ as the bridegroom or husband of his people, the Church.<sup>12</sup>

This observation could also be made of the passage in 61:10-11 where the servant of Yahweh calls himself a bridegroom. The servant will rejoice in Yahweh because Yahweh has clothed him with garments of salvation and a robe of righteousness. (These are two of the qualities of being a father.) He likens it to a bridegroom who decks (יִדְבֹּק) himself with a garland. יִדְבֹּק is in the Piel stem of דָּבַק which means "to minister as a priest." It is only found in the Piel or intensive stem. This stem usually reflects an intensification of the normal Qal stem. Therefore, the responsibility of ministering before Yahweh is a very responsible task. This instance is the only time that יִדְבֹּק is translated "decked" or "adorned." In every other case it is translated "minister as a priest." Therefore, it appears that hidden in this simile is a reference to the priestly activity of the servant of Yahweh even as he functions as a bridegroom. This might be reflected in Ephesians 5:25-27 where Christ, the husband of the Church, offered himself as a sacrifice so that she might be sanctified and cleansed and adorned without spot or wrinkle.<sup>13</sup>

Consequently, the motif of marriage or the husband, as it was applied by Isaiah to Yahweh, showed Yahweh with great compassion by comforting Israel and taking her as his wife once again. As Isaiah applied the motif to the work of the servant of Yahweh, it revealed a work of redemption that extended to all nations and culminated in the New Testament concept of the Church.

### Rest

The motif of rest found in Genesis is two-fold: 1) שָׁבַט, sabbath rest and 2) מָנוּחַ, positional rest. שָׁבַט refers to the cessation of work or labor and as a noun is a specific day when such cessation occurs.<sup>14</sup> Although מָנוּחַ or a noun derivative appears fifteen times in the vision of Isaiah, it is of little importance in consideration of the motif of rest. In 56:2,4,6 and 58:13 those who observe מָנוּחַ will be blessed by Yahweh. In 66:23 in the time of the new heavens and the new earth Yahweh will be worshipped continually, from sabbath to sabbath.

In Genesis the motif of rest (מָנוּחַ) appears in the story where Yahweh "put" man in the garden of Eden. Genesis 2:15 reads: "Then Yahweh God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." In this verse the word translated "put" is מָנַח. It is a form of the Hiphil, or causative, stem of מָנוּחַ which means "rest." Therefore, מָנַח

means "and he caused him to rest." In most cases where God does the causing  $\square\text{.}\text{.}\text{.}\square$  is translated "he caused to rest" rather than "he placed," as  $\square\text{.}\text{.}\text{.}\square$  is in this instance. This verse reads, then: "Then Yahweh God took the man and caused him to rest in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it." It should be noted that when Yahweh caused man to rest he gave him a task--to cultivate and keep the garden--and he gave him a place to live--the garden of Eden. Therefore, when man is at rest in his relationship with God, he is where God wants him to be and doing what God wants him to do.

The motif of rest in ancient Near Eastern mythology appeared in connection with the rest of the gods. Until man was created, the gods had daily tasks; however, man was created to free the gods from their labors. Consequently, the gods were able to rest.<sup>15</sup> Man's purpose in existence was solely for the service of the gods. This rest included man's service of two meals to the gods each day. Miller remarks that the creation of man so that the gods might rest is the climax of the myth.<sup>16</sup> W. G. Lambert considers this motif of rest to be one of the clearest points of parallel between the Genesis and the Mesopotamian viewpoints of creation.<sup>17</sup> Concerning the rest of God described in Genesis 2:4, von Rad believes that the Genesis writer "asserts that the world is no longer being created, but that it has already been given rest by God, and that this rest is

perceptible to the eyes of faith."<sup>18</sup> Not only is the world at rest but God is at rest from the work of creation.<sup>19</sup>

This concept of rest had several stages throughout Old Testament history. First, "rest" was not individual peace of mind but, rather, a peace granted to the nation of Israel plagued by enemies and weary of wandering. It was a gift from God.<sup>20</sup> This rest meant rest from war. It was also connected with the gift of an inheritance,<sup>21</sup> for the land was given to the Hebrews as the place of their rest and as their inheritance. The task Yahweh gave the Hebrews was to subdue the land--destroy everyone who did not worship him--and worship him.<sup>22</sup> von Rad says that the worshiper was simply to acknowledge that he was a member of the nation to whom God gave the promised land through his redemptive acts and therefore an heir to the blessings of the land.<sup>23</sup> At this point in history, "rest" is "thought of as a rest found by a weary nation through the grace of God in the land he has promised them."<sup>24</sup>

Although God gave Joshua rest, Joshua only partially completed the task of conquering the land because he did not destroy all the nations of the land. This task was not completed until the time of David when Yahweh promised David that he would give him rest from all of his enemies.<sup>25</sup> The lack of rest from all of their enemies had been caused by disobedience; whereupon, the neigh-

boring countries warred against them. Roth observes:

If a new generation forgets the LORD and finds itself oppressed by enemies and cries to the LORD for help, this turn to God brings a liberator who sets them free during his lifetime.<sup>26</sup>

During the time of the kings, God granted "rest" to the kings, for example, David, Solomon, Abijah, Asa and Jehoshaphat.<sup>27</sup> It was a father-son relationship qualified by the son's obedience.<sup>28</sup> As illustrated by the number of times that God granted "rest," "rest" is no longer something which happened once and for all as was intended by God.<sup>29</sup>

Von Rad presents the deuteronomist view as believing in the possibility of rest from adversaries, even spiritual adversaries, in the present time. People could find rest with God in the same way that a woman found rest with her husband (Ru. 1:9). He sees this as the same rest that God offers in the New Testament.<sup>30</sup>

During Solomon's reign with the building of the temple, the concept of "rest" included both a rest for the nation from war and a rest for God among his people.<sup>31</sup> The subject of the transition from disturbance to rest is still the nation, but it became God's rest and was a gift to Israel which could be found only by entering a personal relationship with God.<sup>32</sup>

Roth concludes that the divine gift of rest is not just "rest from" but more importantly "rest for."<sup>33</sup> The concept of "rest from" is applied to the occupation of

one's place and the conquest of one's enemies. The concept of "rest for" relates to the response to God's gift of rest. God gives rest so that we can respond in worship to him at the place of his choice which in Davidic Israel was symbolized by the temple.<sup>34</sup> Roth believes that the dispensations of rest are temple centered. Whenever Israel turned to Yahweh, it was granted rest.<sup>35</sup> The temple was consequently viewed as the place where Yahweh rested (Is. 11:10).<sup>36</sup>

This Old Testament concept of "rest" contained three elements: 1) the rest of God's people in the land, 2) the rest of God's people from war and 3) the rest which God enjoyed in his temple. Each of these three elements appears in the vision of Isaiah. The concept of "rest" as Isaiah used it utilized numerous words, all meaning "rest."

Two of these words,  $\text{נָחַל}$  and  $\text{יָנַח}$ , both mean "resting place" and are used in reference to animals finding a place of rest (34:14; 35:7; 65:10).

The remainder of the terms are derivatives of  $\text{נָחַ$ .  $\text{נָחַ$  is a verb which has four basic theological meanings besides the normal meaning of being settled in a particular place: 1) rest in death, 2) psychological or spiritual rest, 3) rest from war and 4) salvation rest.<sup>37</sup> Besides  $\text{נָחַ$ , Isaiah also used  $\text{נָחַם}$  and  $\text{נִחָם$ .  $\text{נָחַם}$  means "inner peace"<sup>38</sup> and is used by Isaiah only in 30:15. In this instance, God is chiding Judah for its

decision to trust in the power of Egypt rather than in himself. When Yahweh said to Judah: "In repentance and  $\text{נָחַם}$ , inner peace, you shall be saved. In quietness and trust is your strength," he was contrasting true salvation and strength with their plan of salvation through Egyptian strength. Salvation that comes from God is brought by repentance and characterized by "inner peace," and true strength comes from quiet trust in Yahweh and not in the powerful military strength of Egypt. However, Judah refused to follow Yahweh's plan for salvation and strength.

$\text{נָחַם}$  represents the place of rest which God provided for his people<sup>39</sup> or which his people provide for him. This term appears four times. Once Isaiah used  $\text{נָחַם}$  to mean the rest Yahweh would provide his people in the land. In 28:10  $\text{נָחַם}$  and  $\text{נָחַם}$  are used in tandem. Again the offer of rest is rejected by Israel. They rejected Yahweh's offer of rest from war and spiritual rest. Therefore, Yahweh subjects them to the frustration of repetitious instruction.

Possibly 28:12 belongs to the same historical situation alluded to in 63:10-14. When Yahweh offered them rest in Canaan at Kadesh-barnea, they refused and he said, "They shall not enter into My rest" (Ps. 95:11). Isaiah 63:14 refers to the actual entering and occupying of Canaan. The Holy Spirit led them into Canaan and gave them rest in the land.



In the same way that Yahweh gave his people rest when he led them into Canaan after their exodus from Egypt, Yahweh will give his people rest from pain, turmoil and hard service after he resettles them in the land following their exile in Babylon (14:1-3).<sup>40</sup>

Three times the meaning of נָחַם and נִחְמָה is related to rest from war. Isaiah prophesied in 14:7 that Babylon (which was not a world power at the time of Isaiah) would be subdued after it had gained world supremacy. After its defeat the world would be at rest (נָחַם) from war. In his oracle against Tyre in chapter 23 Isaiah prophesied the future demise of Tyre. Even though the people of Tyre go to Cyprus, they will find no rest from the destruction of their city. Both of these prophecies are warnings of the coming judgment that Yahweh will bring for he has planned it (23:9). There is no rest when God judges mankind.

When the Spirit of Yahweh is "poured out upon us from on high" (32:18), a resting place (נִחְמָה) will be established from war. The land will be characterized by justice, righteousness, peace, quietness and confidence. Such a place reflects the image of the kingdom of the promised son (9:6-7) or of the root of Jesse (11:1-9). It is most similar to the kingdom of the root of Jesse because the Spirit of Yahweh will rest (נָחַם) upon him. This kingdom was the kingdom of the Messiah and was to be a place of rest from war and

injustice.

Four times Isaiah mentioned the place of God's rest. Twice it was in a geographical place and twice it was in the lives of people. Two of these instances refer to the kingdom of the root of Jesse. As already mentioned, the Spirit of Yahweh would find its place of rest in the life of the Messiah for the Spirit would rest on him (11:2). When his kingdom of peace is established, the nations will go to the root of Jesse, who is a sign himself to the nations. When the nations have come to him, his מנוחה, "resting place," will be glorious. Possibly this was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost when the nations came to the place of Jesus' rest and hearing the gospel believed. The differences that existed in the world no longer mattered in the lives of these people as their lives became the Messiah's resting place. In the ensuing years the earth was filled with the knowledge of Yahweh, as the waters cover the sea. In this verse (11:10) it is not clear whether מנוחה refers to Jerusalem or to the lives of people; and, perhaps, this lack of clarity justifies such a double interpretation as the one presented.

In another passage which utilizes the banquet motif of the Baal-type creation model (25:10), the hand of Yahweh will rest on Mount Zion. Here, it is clear that Yahweh will rest on Mount Zion. It is similar to 11:2, where the Spirit of Yahweh will rest on the root of

Jesse, in two ways: 1) in each case an aspect of Yahweh's character does the resting and 2) in each case it rests on an object.

Although 25:10 would indicate that Mount Zion will be where Yahweh rests, the emphasis at this point is not placed upon the temple as his place of rest. Such an inference would not be justified in the light of 66:1-2. In Isaiah's time the temple had great importance in the religious life of the people. Hezekiah's use of and pride in the temple in chapters 36-39 would indicate its importance to the culture of Judah. However, Yahweh says to the people in 66:1:

Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My  
footstool.  
Where then is a house you could build for Me?  
And where is a place that I may rest?

In effect, he is saying, "There is no building or temple that you can build that would be an adequate place of rest for me." The reason is quite clear: Yahweh made everything. Perhaps Yahweh is concluding his harangue against idolatrous worship of handcrafted idols made of wood, stone or metal. In any case, Yahweh makes the point that anything that man has made to be a place of worship is an inadequate resting place for him because he made the materials used.

Where is the place that he may rest? The answer comes in 66:2: "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit and who trembles at My word." Mankind is the resting place for Yahweh,

that is, any person who is humble (remembering that he has been created), repentant (remembering that he is sinful and responding to God's grace), and fearful of God's word (remembering that he must be obedient to God or pay the consequences). We are God's building, we are his temple.<sup>41</sup> In this passage the concepts of God's rest and man's rest are joined.

If God was described in the Genesis account as having rested never to create again, as von Rad believes, then two questions must be answered: 1) Why did Isaiah present Yahweh as creating "new things"? and 2) Why did Isaiah, along with other Old Testament authors, present God as needing a place of rest? It is clear, from the initial creation account, that God rested (נָח) only after his creation was complete or perfect. However, when man sinned, things were no longer perfect. Therefore, God began to create "new things" so that he could once again rest. Isaiah, therefore, is saying in 66:1-2 that Yahweh will find rest in man, his most prized creation, when he is in a right relationship with Yahweh. Such a man is the reverse of Adam in three ways: 1) Adam was proud in that he tried to become equal with God, while the new man is humble; 2) Adam tried to shift the blame for his disobedience, while the new man is contrite in spirit; and 3) Adam ignored God's word, while the new man trembles at his word. Man will find rest when he exhibits these three traits in his

relationship with Yahweh.

The final place of rest for Yahweh will occur when he has established his kingdom through his anointed one (the Messiah), when the new heavens and the new earth have been created and all is once again complete or perfect, and when the worship of Yahweh is continuous from sabbath to sabbath (שַׁבָּת) and the corpses of those disobedient ones serve as a reminder of the consequences of disobedience.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Carroll Stuhlmueller, "Yahweh-King and Deutero-Isaiah," Biblical Research, 15:40, 1970.

<sup>2</sup>Phyllis Tribble, Rhetoric, pp. 15-69, presents a case for understanding "the image of God" and "male and female" as two different images which describe the same reality. God has both male characteristics, such as father (Is. 63:16) and husband (Is. 54:5), and female characteristics, such as pregnant woman (Is. 42:14), mother (Is. 66:13) and compassion (Is. 54:10). In her opinion, "male and female" signifies the uniqueness of humankind in creation.

<sup>3</sup>Bruce D. Naidoff, "The Two-fold Structure of Isaiah XLV 9-13," Vetus Testamentum, 31:2:185, 1981.

<sup>4</sup>Alan A. MacRae, The Gospel of Isaiah (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), p. 153.

<sup>5</sup>MacRae, Gospel, pp. 156-57.

<sup>6</sup>MacRae, Gospel, p. 155.

<sup>7</sup>MacRae, Gospel, p. 157.

<sup>8</sup>Bruce K. Waltke, "לָצַד (bā'al) possess, own, rule over, marry," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 119.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>I am not saying that Paul had 61:10-11 in mind when he wrote Ephesians 5:25-27.

<sup>14</sup>לָצַד appears in Isaiah as a verb in 13:11; 14:4; 16:10; 17:3; 21:2; 24:8; 30:11; 33:8; and as a noun in 1:13; 30:7; 56:2,4,6; 58:13; 66:23.

<sup>15</sup>Miller, "Likeness," p. 301.

<sup>16</sup>Miller, "Likeness," pp. 301-02.

<sup>17</sup>Miller, "Likeness," p. 301. See w. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," Journal of Theological Studies, 16:287-300, especially p. 298, 1965.

<sup>18</sup>Gerhard von Rad, "There Remains Still a Rest for the People of God: An Investigation of a Biblical Conception," The Problem of the Hexateuch and other Essays (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 101.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid. I believe that Isaiah will show that this viewpoint, held by von Rad, is too radical and falls short of understanding the meaning of rest for God.

<sup>20</sup>von Rad, "Rest," p. 95.

<sup>21</sup>Wolfgang Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest Theology: A Redaction-Critical Study," Biblical Research, 21:11, 1976.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. Notice the elements of rest identified in the creation narrative. God placed the Hebrews where he wanted them and gave them a task.

<sup>23</sup>von Rad, "Doctrine of Creation," p. 132.

<sup>24</sup>von Rad, "Rest," p. 96.

<sup>25</sup>Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," p. 8. (cf. II S. 7:1, 11.)

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>cf. II S. 7:1,11; I K. 5:4; II Ch. 14:7; 15:15; 20:30.

<sup>28</sup>Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," p. 9.

<sup>29</sup>von Rad, "Rest," p. 97. Von Rad believes that the Chronicler is a long way from the original Deuteronomic intent of the meaning of "rest." I believe that the reason the Chronicler is a long way from the view in Deuteronomic literature is that man has been so disobedient and forced a reinterpretation.

<sup>30</sup>von Rad, "Rest," p. 100.

<sup>31</sup>von Rad, "Rest," pp. 97-98.

<sup>32</sup>von Rad, "Rest," p. 99; Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," pp. 11-12.

<sup>33</sup>Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," p. 10.

<sup>34</sup>Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," pp. 10-11, 14.

<sup>35</sup>Roth, "Deuteronomic Rest," p. 14.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Leonard J. Coppes, "[וָיָשׁוּ] (nûah) rest, settle down," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 562.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Coppes, "[וָיָשׁוּ]," p. 563.

<sup>40</sup>In 57:18 Yahweh, in talking about the severity of the exile, says, "I have seen his ways, but I will heal him; וְאֶנְחֵהוּ וְאַשְׁלֵם נַחֲכָיִים לוֹ. In this phrase וְאֶנְחֵהוּ as it is vowel-pointed means "and I will lead him" from נָחַךְ, "to lead." However, if the vowel points were changed (They were inserted into the text in the 8th to 10th centuries A.D.), so that it read וְאֶנְחֵהוּ, it would read "and I will cause him to rest." This passage would then parallel 14:3. When he healed them, he would cause them to rest just as he says in 14:3: "And it will be in that day when Yahweh gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved."

For rules applied in repointing see E. Kautzsch, ed., Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, (2nd English ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), p. 157, note 2; p. 214gg; p. 326a-330x; and 524.

John S. Kselman, "A Note on w'nhhw in Isa 57:18," Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 43:4:539-42, 1981, presents a good argument for translating וְאֶנְחֵהוּ "I will lead him." He says:

The correspondence between striking as divine punishment for sin followed by divine forgiveness in healing suggests that there might be a similar correspondence between Israel's sinful wandering and the concept expressed by w'nhhw; the consistency of metaphor would seem to require, as God's remedy for wylk swbb, not rest, but divine guidance (e.g., Pss. 5:9; 23:3), (p. 541).



However, because of the similarity between this passage and 14:3 and the similarity of meaning between  $\text{נָחַם}$  and  $\text{נָחַם}$ , "to comfort," (cf. Coppes, " $\text{נָחַם}$ ," p. 562), I believe that there is reason to translate  $\text{וְנָחַמְתִּי}$  "and I will cause him to rest." In the same way that Yahweh's compassion brings rest and healing in 14:3, the vav-consecutive, which is part of this verb and also  $\text{וְנָחַמְתִּי}$  and  $\text{וְנָחַמְתִּי}$ , would indicate that Yahweh's compassion will lead to healing, rest and comfort (cf. Gesenius, p. 326a).

<sup>41</sup>cf. I C. 3:9,16; 6:19.

## CHAPTER SIX

### THE CREATIVE RELATIONSHIP BROKEN

Isaiah indicated in 44:23 that Yahweh's intention for his relationship with mankind was for his glory: "In Israel He shows forth His glory." However, the message of Isaiah is not one about Israel's fulfillment of that purpose, but about their failure to fulfill it and Yahweh's intended remedy for the situation.

Israel had failed to glorify Yahweh because they had broken their relationship with him by worshipping other gods and trusting in other nations for deliverance. In short, Israel sinned against God. In order to portray this concept, Isaiah utilized several motifs of the broken relationship taken from the creation story as well as one motif taken from the Gilgamesh epic. These motifs include good and evil, pride, shame and nakedness, and the curse of sin.

#### Good and Evil

According to the Genesis author the knowledge of good and evil originated in the garden of Eden when man ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. God had permitted man to eat of every tree in the

garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Some people think that because of Hebrew idiom-  
 atic use of two opposites to express totality, such  
 as, "heaven and earth" and "downsitting and uprising,"  
 the Genesis writer was saying that eating from this  
 tree would give the creature omniscience.<sup>1</sup> Another  
 prevalent interpretation views the tree as giving  
 knowledge of moral judgment by which man discriminates  
 between right and wrong.<sup>2</sup> Yahweh had given man a command  
 to obey. Man already knew the difference between good  
 and evil because God had told him that obedience would  
 bring continued fellowship whereas disobedience would  
 bring death. Good behavior brought something beneficial  
 while evil behavior brought some kind of punishment.  
 Until man ate he knew nothing of shame or guilt, but  
 after he disobeyed he attained such knowledge.

Four times in the vision of Isaiah the terms for  
 "good" (טו) and "evil" (ר) are juxtaposed. The first  
 time is in 5:20 where Isaiah pronounces "Woe!" (והי) upon  
 those who invert good and evil, light and darkness, sweet  
 and bitter:

Woe to those who call evil good, and  
                   good evil:  
 who substitute darkness for light and  
                   light for darkness:  
 Who substitute bitter for sweet, and  
                   sweet for bitter!

To call good evil and evil good brings a warning of God's  
 chastisement.<sup>3</sup>

The connection of טו and ר was also used by Isaiah

in Yahweh's sign to Ahaz. The lands of Syria and Israel would be destroyed before the son who would be born could know to refuse evil and choose good. Before Immanuel had grown enough psychologically to know the difference between good and evil, Ahaz's enemies would be defeated. Herbert Wolf recognized that the reference to Immanuel's knowing the difference between good and evil in 7:15-16, and Maher-shalal-hash-baz knowing how to say "my father" and "my mother" in 8:4 refer to the same period of time in a child's life.<sup>4</sup> Both of these take place before the child is three years of age. Here also the connection of good and evil refers to moral knowledge.

The third usage of this phrase appears in Yahweh's challenge to other gods to create something new in 41:23. Yahweh does not care if it is good or evil. He just wants these so-called gods to prove their existence. When they do not perform, he scoffs at them and declares that they are of no account.

However, Yahweh proclaimed that he did both good and evil. According to 45:7, he is the one who forms light and creates darkness, causes well-being and creates calamity. This ability to do both good and bad demonstrates that he is the only God.

The great disparity within the vision of Isaiah between the use of טו and רע illustrates that Isaiah was writing to a people who were not good but were evil. Not very many people are identified as being good. Hezekiah

reminded Yahweh that he had done what is good in his sight (38:3). The eunuchs who keep the sabbath will be given a good name, better than the name of sons and daughters, because they have kept the sabbath, done what pleased Yahweh and held to the covenant relationship with Yahweh.<sup>5</sup>

In 41:7 Isaiah reported that when man has made an idol, he announces, "It is good." After he pronounces it good, he nails it down so that it will not totter. Isaiah, at this point, is humorously ridiculing mankind who considers his own creation, which needs additional aid to stand, and which he worships as the one who controls his life, and pronounces it good. Man's actions parody God's creative power, who, when he created, said, "It is good." The irony is that mankind worships that which he pronounces "good" rather than the one who pronounced him "good."

Yahweh's case against the people of Israel began with their first forefather who sinned (43:27).<sup>6</sup> The second point is that their leaders have sinned. Even though he called to his people, they did not answer, but did that which was evil in his sight (65:12; 66:4). They walked in a way that was not good (65:2), and their feet run to evil (59:7). They do not speak the truth (59:15). They are offspring of evildoers (1:4; 14:20). They feel secure in their wickedness (47:8, 10). They use evil as a weapon (32:7). Wickedness pervaded the whole Judean

society.

The contrast with this which Yahweh presents is the righteousness of his own new world. There will be no evil in God's holy mountain (65:25). No one will hurt or destroy there (11:9). The righteous are to cease to do evil (1:16), to shut their eye from seeing evil (33:15) and keep their hands from doing evil (56:2). If they do, they will be blessed (56:2). For the righteous man death is a time of peace and rest because he is taken away from evil (57:1-2).

On the other hand the evil receive no pity from Yahweh (9:17). Instead, he rises up against them (31:2) and evil comes upon them (47:11). The earth also is involved in the punishment of wickedness because it will be utterly broken down (24:19).

### Pride

According to the Genesis author the cause of sin in the garden was the sin of pride. Adam and Eve wanted to be equal with God. According to the vision of Isaiah the downfall of Babylon was its pride. This was one sin which Yahweh fought more than any other, besides idolatry. Even idolatry is a form of pride.

Twice in the vision of Isaiah the pride of Babylon is mentioned as its downfall -- 14:4-23 and 47:1-15. In chapter fourteen, the king of Babylon says in his heart:

I will ascend to heaven;

I will raise my throne above the stars  
                   of God,  
 And I will sit on the mount of assembly  
 In the recesses of the north.  
 I will ascend above the heights of the  
                   clouds:  
 I will make myself like the Most High  
 (14:13-14).

Because of his pride, he will be humbled, brought low.

Raymond C. Van Leeuwen identifies several motifs in this passage which have parallels with the epic of Gilgamesh. In 14:8 the trees rejoice because no tree cutters have bothered them since the demise of Babylon. In the Gilgamesh epic, Gilgamesh himself boasted of his exploits in the Lebanon forest.<sup>7</sup>

When Gilgamesh finally arrived at the dwelling place of Utnapishtim, he sensed that all is not as it should be. Gilgamesh said to Utnapishtim, the Babylonian Noah:

As I look upon thee, Utnapishtim,  
 Thy features are not strange; even as I  
                   art thou.  
 Thou art not strange at all; even as I  
                   art thou.  
 My heart has regarded thee as resolved  
                   to do battle,  
 [Yet] thou liest indolent upon thy back!  
 [Tell me,] how joinest thou the assembly  
                   of the gods,  
 In thy quest for life? (XI,1-7)<sup>8</sup>

Here Gilgamesh is astounded to discover one who was a former warrior so weak and ineffectual.<sup>9</sup> Likewise, in Isaiah 14:10, the forest marvels: "Even you have been made weak as we! You have become like us!" As Gilgamesh looked with amazement at Utnapishtim, so the nations will stare at the king of Babylon (14:16).<sup>10</sup>

It is clear that Isaiah used the epic of Gilgamesh as a source of allusion in his harangue against the pride of Babylon. However, he utilized it by applying the special literary device of inversion. C. Levi Strauss taught that inversion occurs when an author appropriates a foreign motif for his own use in a manner that is unmistakably distinguished from its original use by appearing in the narrative in an inverted form.<sup>11</sup> In chapter fourteen besides the inversions already mentioned, the ultimate inversion and taunt is Isaiah's ridicule of the king of Babylon by using a Mesopotamian myth.<sup>12</sup>

In chapter 47, Babylon was given the task of defeating Israel. However, they did not show mercy. They felt that as the "queen" of the nations they did not need to be merciful. Her attitude was, "I am and there is no one besides me." However, this is the very claim that Yahweh made for himself and would let no other god or nation make. In 42:8, Yahweh declared: "I am Yahweh, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another, nor my praise to graven images." At least seven times Yahweh makes a similar declaration (44:8; 45:6, 8, 18, 21; 46:9; 48:11).

Just as Yahweh promised Babylon that she would be punished -- "But these two things shall come on you suddenly in one day: loss of children and widowhood" (Is. 47:9). -- so there will be a day of reckoning for everyone who is proud and lofty. God will abase the



proud, the haughty, the arrogant and those of "importance." Israel was condemned by Yahweh for "asserting in pride and arrogance of heart" that they would rebuild their land with more beauty than before. As a result, she would be destroyed by the Syrians and the Philistines (9:9-11). Likewise, Moab, who was renowned for her excessive pride, would be degraded within three years (16:6-14). Tyre, who gloried in her beauty and economic empire, would exalt no more (23:9-12). Jerusalem also would be brought low and defeated by her enemies (29:1-8; 32:19).

Whether the proud and haughty are nations or individuals, Yahweh will humble them. Once Isaiah pronounced "Woe!" upon those who are wise in their own eyes (5:21). Thirteen times he prophesied that Yahweh will abase the high, the proud, the haughty.<sup>13</sup> Yahweh gives the impression that he has a personal vendetta against pride.

Instead of being proud, man is to rejoice in Yahweh's highness (13:3) and sing of his majesty (24:14). Yahweh is the high and exalted one who dwells in a high and holy place. This concept of Yahweh living apart from mankind in a distant and holy place is similar to the dwelling place of El, the high god in Ugaritic mythology. There is one great difference, Yahweh also dwells with men for he dwells with "the contrite and lowly of spirit" (57:15) and with the man who is humble, contrite of spirit and trembles at his word (66:2). Man must be humble or Yahweh will humble (לַעֲבֹר) him. When he is humble, Yahweh revives

him; but, when he is proud, Yahweh brings him low, he abases him. This truth that Yahweh will humble the proud and will exalt those who follow him is an important part of Isaiah's eschatology<sup>14</sup> because he places the exaltation of Jerusalem (2:1-4) and the humbling of the proud (2:5-22) in the context of "the last days" and the "day of reckoning."

### Shame and Nakedness

Because man is proud, he sins; and his sin brings shame upon him. In the Genesis account of creation when Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they became aware of their nakedness and they became ashamed. When they realized that they were naked, they hid from God.

In contrast to this incident in their lives, before Adam and Eve sinned, they were "both naked and were not ashamed" (Ge. 2:25). In this story of the first marriage the Genesis author clearly showed that nakedness and shame mean the same thing. Therefore, nakedness is a symbol for shame.

The vision of Isaiah begins with a contrast of the people of Judah with the ox and the donkey. The creation acts as a witness to the truth of Yahweh's accusation that

An ox knows its owner,  
And a donkey his master's manger,  
But Israel does not know,  
My people do not understand (1:3).

In this scenario dominion is reversed. Instead of man responding to his maker like the animals, he has rebelled. Man has become lower than the animals and therefore should be ashamed and repent.

There are several synonyms that mean "to be ashamed" and several that denote "nakedness." The main word for "to be ashamed" is וִיג. It speaks of the shame or confusion that comes because of trust in something that fails. Judah's trust in Egypt's military might would end in failure. Consequently, the safety of Pharaoh would be their shame and the shelter Egypt could provide them would be their humiliation. Judah would be ashamed because they trusted in a nation that could not help them (30:3-5). Isaiah also used וִיג in this manner when he spoke of those who made idols, those who associated with idolmakers and those who worshipped idols.<sup>15</sup> However, more than confusion will result from their idolatry. וִיג also refers to the result of guilt or shame which accompanies a sinful act. Just as Adam and Eve experienced shame after their sin, so those who hate God's servants, Israel or Yahweh will be put to shame, humiliated.<sup>16</sup>

When Isaiah prophesied that a nation would be shamed, he spoke of their military defeat. Isaiah walked naked for three years to show that Egypt and Cush would be shamed by the Assyrian army and carried away captive in nakedness. In a parallel passage in 45:14-17

Isaiah again prophesied that Egypt and Cush would be put to shame. During the same Assyrian campaign, Assyria shamed the inhabitants of Judah by capturing their cities. Sidon was commanded to be ashamed in 23:4. In verse one the report is made that Tyre has been destroyed. Thus, וְיָ referred to the shame of military defeat.

On the other hand, those who are obedient to Yahweh or his servant will not be put to shame. The obedience and zeal of Yahweh's people will put the wicked to shame (26:11). The redemption of Yahweh will eliminate shame from the lives of the redeemed.<sup>17</sup> Instead of remembering the shame of their past history in which they rebelled against Yahweh, Israel is admonished to forget their past because they will not be shamed (54:4). Those who are called "the priests of Yahweh" will have a double portion instead of shame<sup>18</sup> and will shout for joy rather than be humiliated (61:7).<sup>19</sup> Those who wait on Yahweh will not be put to shame. They will not be disappointed (49:23).

In Isaiah 50:4-7 the servant of Yahweh is confronted by the issue of shame and humiliation. He will not hide his face from humiliation and spitting; instead, he faces abuse. Because Yahweh helped him, he is not disgraced or ashamed. He also resolves to face the humiliation because he knows that Yahweh will vindicate him. In 65:13 Yahweh says that the servant will be

shamed while those who become servants of Yahweh because of him will rejoice. While 65:13 emphasizes that the servant would suffer the humiliation of death, chapter 50 emphasizes that the servant would not be shamed by failure but that Yahweh would vindicate him.

שׁוֹבֹץ is usually accompanied in a synonymous manner by כָּלַץ, which means "to confound, to humiliate," and, less frequently, רָפַץ, which means "to embarrass." A noun which means "shame, reproach" is רָפָץ. It appears six times in the vision of Isaiah. It referred to the shame of being without a husband (4:1). Egypt will be a reproach to Judah because they were not able to aid them militarily (30:5). When Babylon is destroyed, her shame will be seen (47:3). Those who know God's righteousness and fear his law are not to fear the attempts by people to shame them (51:7). Yahweh comforted Judah, the married woman, with the thought that she would not remember the reproach of her widowhood (54:4). In fact, the time will come, when Yahweh destroys death, that he will remove the reproach of his people (25:8).

Finally, שׁוֹבֹץ or רָפַץ are used in connection with the sun and moon. According to 24:23-24 when Yahweh reigns on his mountain, the sun will be ashamed (שׁוֹבֹץ) and the moon will be embarrassed (רָפַץ). Their ability to shine forth light will fail. There will be no need for their light because Yahweh will be an everlasting light (60:19-20).

In the Genesis account the concept of shame is symbolized by nakedness. In an enacted prophecy, the most vivid illustration of the correlation of shame and nakedness, Yahweh commanded Isaiah to walk about naked (עֶרְוָה) and barefoot for three years. For three years he probably wore only his tunic to signify that Egypt and Cush would be led away into captivity (20:1-6).

Nakedness (עֶרְוָה) is a symbol of mankind's shame at his behavior, of his sinful nature. Outside of a proper sexual relationship (cf. Ge. 2:25), nakedness cannot be tolerated.<sup>20</sup> Not only would Egypt's shame be uncovered but also the nakedness of Babylon would be revealed (47:3). This means that their sinful natures were to be recognized for what they actually were.

In order for nakedness to be revealed the person must strip (עָרָה) or be uncovered. In 32:11 stripping is a sign of repentance because it is connected to the wearing of sackcloth. Elsewhere, it is a sign of shame and sinfulness.<sup>21</sup> In 47:2-3 Yahweh commanded Babylon to strip off her clothes so that her shame, her sinfulness, may be exposed because Yahweh will take vengeance upon her.

The curse of nakedness is reversed by Yahweh who makes himself bare by pouring out his Spirit upon man (32:15). So, the uncovering of Yahweh leads to the reclothing of nature and man. Man is no longer ashamed but performs righteousness. The servant of Yahweh also

bare himself by pouring out his life unto death (53:12). This act enables him to bear the sin of many and intercede for them. Therefore, the curse of nakedness and shame was reversed by Yahweh and his servant who, in effect, made themselves naked and poured out their life upon mankind in the form of the Spirit and the sacrifice of death.

### Curse

The final act in the scene in which the relationship between Yahweh and mankind was broken was the pronouncement of the curse by Yahweh. Mankind had made a moral choice between good and evil, they had attempted to become equal with God, they had recognized their nakedness and shame. Now Yahweh cursed their world because of their sin.

The word for "curse" used in Genesis is  $\text{קלל}$ . It means "to place in a state of curse."<sup>22</sup> Whether it is used in the declaration, a threat or a law, "the curse-sayings are a reflex of one violating his relationship to God."<sup>23</sup> Concerning the difference between curse formulae in the ancient Near East and those from the Old Testament, F. C. Fensham comments:

The mechanical magical execution of the treaty-curse . . . stands in glaring contrast to the ego-theological approach of prophetic writings . . . the ego of the Lord is the focal point of the threat, the execution and punishment of a curse . . . Curses of the ancient Near East, those outside the Old

Testament, are directed against a transgression on private property . . . but the moral and ethical obligation in connection with his duty to one God and love to his neighbor is not touched on.<sup>24</sup>

כִּלְכִּל is not used by Isaiah. Instead, he used several other words which mean "to curse" or "curse." The first of these words is כִּלְכִּל. It has the connotation of being "removed from the blessing of election."<sup>25</sup> It involves the pronouncement of a curse formula as opposed to being in an actual state of curse.<sup>26</sup> The enunciation of such a formula either intends or accomplishes the violation of the created order and real harm.<sup>27</sup>

When man utters the curse, as in 8:21, where man curses his God and his king because he is hungry, it is usually a formulaic oath. When God utters a curse, as in the creation account of man's original sin, it alters the state of man's relationship with God and the creation. Therefore, the land of Naphtali and Zebulon were considered to be cursed because their relationship with God had been severed. Yahweh promised to restore the relationship (9:1). Those who think of themselves more highly than they ought will be cursed by Yahweh resulting in a broken spiritual relationship (23:9). In the age of the new heavens and the new earth, when a person who is not yet one hundred years old dies, he will be considered accursed by God in that their relationship has been disrupted or God has punished him for his sins.

The remaining two words which are translated "curse"



are  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$  and  $\text{נִזְכַּר}$ . Both of these words have the connotation of oath. Out of thirty times  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$  is found in the Old Testament, it is translated "curse" only once, in Isaiah 65:15. Every other time it is translated "oath."  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$  is a noun derivative of  $\text{שָׁבַע}$  which means "to swear an oath."  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$  is "a solemn verbal statement or pledge that is affirmed, while the covenant is the substance of an agreement itself."<sup>28</sup> The oath was

a teaching method of God, a gracious instrument to help the weak faith of every generation to believe that God will someday absolutely accomplish his promises to his people, despite discouraging external circumstances.<sup>29</sup>

In 65:15, where  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$  is translated "curse," a name will be left for a  $\text{נִשְׁבַּע}$ . This verse is placed in the context of punishment for those who do acts of worship to other gods and who are an abomination to Yahweh, who have a self-righteous, holier-than-thou attitude. Those who do evil in Yahweh's sight will be punished. Yahweh contrasts this punishment with the reward of his servants. It is unclear who will receive the punishment, whether the apostates or someone else.<sup>30</sup> Coffin and Muilenburg view the passage as saying that all that will be left of the apostates will be their name used in a curse or oath.<sup>31</sup> However, the crying out with a heavy heart and wailing with a broken spirit would suggest repentance, which is unlikely for an apostate, or anguish because of tremendous judgment for sin.

The heavy heart would suggest either conviction because of sin or sorrow because of the burden being born. Since it is unlikely that the apostate would experience such feelings, someone else must be indicated. The only other choice is the servant who was "cut off out of the land of the living, for the transgression of my people to whom the stroke was due" (53:8). Also, the statement in 65:15 that Yahweh will slay him agrees with the death of the servant in chapter 53. If this identification is correct, then the servant will leave his name as a  $\text{נִזְכָּר}$  for Yahweh's chosen people.  $\text{נִזְכָּר}$  could be translated "curse," as it normally is in this verse, with the connotation being that of a state of separation between the chosen people and Yahweh; or, it could be translated "oath," which it usually is, with the connotation being that of teaching his people so that they may have faith in him. Possibly both interpretations are correct with the primary emphasis being upon the curse and the separation of the chosen people from Yahweh.

If this verse applies to the apostate people, which the passage might indicate with its parallel structure in verses 8-12 and 13-15 and with its synonymous use of "My servants" and "My chosen ones," then their name would become an oath on the lips of Yahweh's servants. Their name would leave a tainted memory. In fact, it would be all that was left of their memory because they

would be slain.

A parallel comparison of these two passages reveals that first the servants of Yahweh are mentioned and then the apostates. In verses 8-12 this involves two large sections with the servants being mentioned in verses 8-10 and then the apostates being described in verses 11-12. In verses 13-14a the comparison involves alternating phrases about the servants and the apostate people. Then 14b-15b incorporates four phrases about the apostate people before concluding in 15c with a promise to Yahweh's servants. Another point supporting this view is the similar use of אַתָּה, "you," in both passages.

Both interpretations may be correct because of the assumption by the servant of the sins of the people of Israel. Chapter 53 also mentions that the servant also endures "anguish of soul." Therefore, the servant would endure the punishment of the apostate in order to restore him to a relationship with Yahweh apart from a curse. To those who do not desire a relationship with Yahweh his name is a curse. However, to those who do desire such a relationship he reverses the curse and gives them a new name; but those who remain apostate will be slain and their name will be a symbol of their curse in the minds of those who serve Yahweh.

אִתְּךָ means "oath" also. Its meaning involves the solemn covenant between Yahweh and Israel and the warn-

ing of judgment which was a part of that covenant.<sup>32</sup> In chapter 24 Isaiah described the effect of man's sin upon the natural order in that God placed a curse upon it. Because mankind "broke the everlasting covenant," a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty. The earth will eventually be destroyed because Yahweh has spoken the word of curse. This curse upon the earth involves judgment and punishment. However, there is also a promise that Yahweh will reign on Mount Zion and that his glory will be before his elders.<sup>33</sup>

Not only did Isaiah use words that meant "curse" but he also used a metaphor for curse, the thorn. He used five different terms which mean "thorn"--שִׁית, קִיץ, סִירִים, נִטְעָיוֹץ, and שִׁית which means "briers" and שִׁית which means "thorns" are used together nine times. Whenever Israel sins against Yahweh, the symbol of their curse or punishment is that their land will bring forth thorns and briers.<sup>34</sup> Several times they are used in images of wickedness, judgment or protection in connection with burning.<sup>35</sup> סִירִים is used in the sense of a curse on the land in 34:13 as is קִיץ in 32:13. However, both קִיץ and נִטְעָיוֹץ are used with images of judgment in 33:12 and 7:19.

Isaiah, however, used the imagery of the thorn (as he did with many negative motifs) to create a picture of redemption, for in 55:13 he wrote:

Instead of the thorn bush the cypress will  
    come up;  
And instead of the nettle the myrtle will  
    come up;  
And it will be a memorial to Yahweh,  
For an everlasting sign which will not be  
    cut off.

Through the salvation that Yahweh provides every person, the curse of creation will be reversed. Not only will the curse of nature be removed, as is indicated here; but, also the curse of death will be broken, because, as Isaiah prophesied in the two chapters on the breaking of the curse, chapters 25 and 26, Yahweh will swallow up death for all time (25:8) and the corpses will rise from the grave (26:19). Yahweh will reverse the curse by redeeming his people and mankind through a new creation.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>B. S. Childs, "Tree of knowledge, Tree of life," IDB, IV (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), p. 696.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Carl Philip Weber, "הָיָה (hōy) ah! alas! ho! O! Woe!" Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 212.

<sup>4</sup>Herbert M. Wolf, "A Solution to the Immanuel Prophecy in Isaiah 7:14-8:22," Journal of Biblical Literature, 91:4:455, 1972.

<sup>5</sup>It is possible that this passage prompted John's description of the 144,000 in Revelation 14:1-5. As in Revelation, perhaps here the eunuchs should represent those who have been spiritually faithful to Yahweh without worshipping Baal.

<sup>6</sup>cf. Ro. 5:12.

<sup>7</sup>Raymond C. van Leeuwen, "Isa 14:12, HÔLES 'AL GWYM and Gilgamesh LXI, 6," Journal of Biblical Literature, 99:2:181 and 184, 1980.

<sup>8</sup>van Leeuwen, "Gilgamesh," p. 182.

<sup>9</sup>van Leeuwen, "Gilgamesh," pp. 182-83.

<sup>10</sup>van Leeuwen, "Gilgamesh," p. 183.

<sup>11</sup>van Leeuwen, "Gilgamesh," pp. 183-84.

<sup>12</sup>van Leeuwen, "Gilgamesh," p. 184.

<sup>13</sup>Is. 2:5-22; 5:15; 10:33; 13:11; 25:11-12; 40:4. The words that are used are הָיָה, "proud," הָיָה, "haughtiness," הָיָה, "pride," הָיָה, "haughtiness," and הָיָה, "arrogance."

<sup>14</sup>Hermann J. Anstel, "הָיָה (shapel) be low, sink, be humbled," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 951.

<sup>15</sup>John N. Oswalt, "בֹּשׁ (bôsh) be ashamed, put to shame, disconcerted, disappointed," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 98. cf. Is. 1:29; 42:17; 44:9,11; 45:16.

<sup>16</sup>cf. Is. 66:5; 41:11; 45:24.

<sup>17</sup>cf. Is. 29:22; 45:17; 54:4.

<sup>18</sup>The word for "shame" is a noun derivative of בֹּשׁ, נִבְשָׁה. This word is found also in 30:3,5; 42:17; 54:4.

<sup>19</sup>The word translated "humiliation" is הִלָּצָה. It also appears in 30:3; 45:16 and 50:6.

<sup>20</sup>Ronald B. Allen, "עָרָה ('ārâ) uncover, leave destitute, discover, empty, raze, pour out," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 695.

<sup>21</sup>cf. Is. 20:4; 47:2; 57:8.

<sup>22</sup>Leonard J. Coppes, "קָלָלָה (q<sup>e</sup>lālâ) curse," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 800.

<sup>23</sup>Victor P. Hamilton, "רָרָה ('ārār) to curse," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 75.

<sup>24</sup>Hamilton, "רָרָה," p. 76.

<sup>25</sup>Coppes, "קָלָלָה," p. 800.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Victor P. Hamilton, "שָׁבַע (sh<sup>e</sup>bû'â) oath," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 900.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid.

<sup>30</sup>Henry Sloane Coffin, "The Book of Isaiah: Exposition," The Interpreter's Bible, ed., George Arthur Buttrick, III (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 753; James Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah: Exegesis," The Inter-

preter's Bible, ed., George Arthur Buttrick, III (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 753. cf. pp. 77-78 for a different view of this passage.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Jack B. Scott, "פָּאֵלָה (pālā) an oath, solemn statement, promise, curse," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 45.

<sup>33</sup>cf. Revelation 4:9-11; 11:15-18; 20:11-15; and 21:1-22:5 for images of God's glory in the time of the new heavens and the new earth.

<sup>34</sup>cf. Is. 5:6; 7:23-25; 32:13.

<sup>35</sup>cf. Is. 9:18; 10:17; 27:4.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE CREATIVE RELATIONSHIP REDEEMED

The motifs of good and evil, pride, shame and the curse were used by Isaiah to show that the creative relationship between Yahweh and mankind had been broken. However, the thrust of much of Isaiah's message is not only of judgment but also of Yahweh's redemption of Israel first and then the whole world.

The creation motifs that Isaiah used to illustrate this redemption involve the following: clothing, the covenant, the concept of being chosen and called, the Exodus, the servant of Yahweh and the creation of the new heavens and the new earth.

Several of these motifs do not have any connection with the original creation stories. Their connection is partially supplied by Isaiah through the use of  $\text{סָדַד}$ ,  $\text{נָסַד}$ , or  $\text{יָצַד}$  in that Yahweh "created," made," or "formed" the element involved. Another aspect of their connection with "creation" revolves around the pattern of Yahweh's activity in history. The clue to this pattern is found in the primeval history of Genesis. In this succession of narratives the Genesis author presented the nature of mankind's relationship with God as a "continually

widening chasm."<sup>1</sup> That element of the stories which reveal this chasm is the sin of man: Adam and Eve, Cain, Lamech, the angel marriages,<sup>2</sup> and the Tower of Babel. God's initial response to the sin of mankind was severe judgment: the curse of the earth and banishment from the garden, the curse of Cain, the Flood and the Dispersion which brought the dissolution of mankind's unity. The pattern of God's interaction with sinful mankind did not end with judgment. The Genesis author revealed that he also conferred grace upon mankind as well: the clothing of Adam and Eve and the sparing of their lives, the mark of protection upon Cain, and the sign of the rainbow which symbolized God's covenant with mankind not to destroy it by water again. Von Rad concludes, "We see, therefore (already in primeval history!), that each time, in and after judgment, God's preserving, forgiving will to save is revealed."<sup>3</sup>

The final story of this primeval history is different because in the story of the tower of Babel, although sin and judgment are present, there is seemingly no grace offered by God to mankind. The question arises: Is this catastrophe final? Is there no grace offered?<sup>4</sup>

The story of the tower of Babel is used by the Genesis author as a precipitator. It is used to link the primeval history to the story of the patriarchs; and, in this linkage, the question which is raised about God's

grace finds an answer. The grace that God offers the world is through the blessing that comes from the life of one man. God calls one man, Abraham, to be the father of a new people who will worship only him. Through this one man a great nation arises. They are chosen to be his people. This connection between the tower of Babel and Abraham places Hebrew history in the context of all history and shows that God's working through one nation is to benefit all mankind. Therefore, the "creation" of that nation and any other bestowal of grace that comes to man as a result of this primeval pattern -- sin, judgment, and grace -- in the continuing history of God's efforts to save mankind can be considered a part of God's creative activity. Consequently, the exodus and the servant of Yahweh can be considered elements of creations.

It should be noted that this pattern of creation, primeval time, Flood, and a new beginning to human history can be found in a parallel fashion in Sumerian texts.<sup>5</sup> However, the Genesis author placed the theological accents in a different way because the Sumerian text knew nothing of the Fall, the sin of Cain, or the building of the tower of Babel. Although the Genesis author was concerned with the beginning of the history of mankind as described by the flood, the history that interested him began with an event that took place within human history that involved the call of one man, Abraham.<sup>6</sup>

### Clothing

As already mentioned, the clothing of Adam and Eve was an act of grace by Yahweh. When Adam and Eve realized that they were naked after their sin, they attempted to clothe themselves by sewing fig leaves together and making an apron (Genesis 3:7). However, later in the day when Yahweh God came to walk with them in the cool of the evening, he made garments of skin and clothed them (Genesis 3:21). This act of clothing Adam and Eve "was a gesture which gave security, a symbol of the divine protection which still accompanied man along the dolorous road on which he had set his feet."<sup>7</sup> Some people have interpreted God's clothing of Adam and Eve as a demonstration of "the need for sacrifice through the need to kill the animals to provide the skins."<sup>8</sup> Another consideration is that in the Gilgamesh epic the conversation between Gilgamesh and Utnapishtir might suggest that "the wearing of skin clothing might also symbolize all the frailties of fallen human life."<sup>9</sup> It could also be that the clothing with which God clothed man was to serve as a reminder of man's sin and guilt or shame because of that sin as well as to serve as a symbol of God's gracious protection of mankind and his desire to save man from his sin.

Isaiah used four roots to describe the act of clothing: לָבַשׁ, כָּסָה, לָבַשׁ, and לָבַשׁ. לָבַשׁ is the normal word for any kind of clothing. When people tear their clothes or

wear sackcloth, their apparel serves as a symbol that they are in mourning or that they are repentant of their sins.<sup>10</sup> Sometimes the image of the destructability of clothing is used to symbolize the perishability of the servant's accusers (50:9), of the earth's (51:6), and of evil men (51:8) as opposed to the help of Yahweh and the enduring nature of Yahweh's salvation. In Isaiah the use of  $\text{גִּלְגָּל}$  or  $\text{הִלְגָּל}$  is exclusively in connection with putting on sackcloth.<sup>11</sup>

Clothing also symbolizes man's sin as well as the judgment that will befall him. In Isaiah 60:2, in the section on the light of Yahweh, the contrast of darkness covering the earth is used to show that even though the earth is covered ( $\text{הִסְתַּר}$ ) or "overwhelmed"<sup>12</sup> with the darkness of sin, Yahweh's light will come and bring salvation to mankind. Sin so pervades each person that even their works of righteousness cannot cover their guilt and sin. They are "like a filthy garment" (64:6).

On the other hand, the servant of Yahweh is clothed with the garments of judgment and salvation. In 59:15-17 when Yahweh saw that there was no justice in the earth and that there was no one to intercede, he clothed his servant with the clothes of judgment and salvation. God will show vengeance on the sins of the world but he will also offer salvation. Instead of wearing sinful garments, the servant will wear righteousness. This motif of being clothed with righteousness and salvation also appears in

the words of the servant in 61:10.

A parallel passage to 59:15-17 is 63:1-6. In this passage Edom represented "the very embodiment of the nations' hostility to God."<sup>13</sup> In a day of vengeance Yahweh had judged the nations for their sins. He was not aided by his people, he completed the task alone. He trod them as though he trod grapes in a winepress; and their blood was sprinkled on his garments so that they were red. In the bringing of vengeance upon the nations, Yahweh prepared the way for salvation because the year of redemption follows the day of vengeance. His own arm brought salvation to him. The word for "help" (עֲזָרָה) is a military term<sup>14</sup> and indicates that this "salvation" is military victory. Consequently, Yahweh won the battle by himself without the aid of Israel. Not only was there no one to aid in the battle, but there was also no one to uphold, no one who was concerned about the moral wrongs and cruelties prevalent in the world.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, the wearing of garments stained with blood represents the vengeance and the salvation of Yahweh.<sup>16</sup>

Concerning the salvation of Zion, Zion is commanded to clothe herself with strength and her beautiful garments (52:1). No one who is unclean will come into her again.<sup>17</sup> Because uncleanness has been wiped out of Zion, it is clear that the beautiful garments are garments of salvation.

As indicated earlier, clothing symbolizes protection. Isaiah used this interpretation when he wrote concerning the servant the words of Yahweh, "I have put My words in your mouth, and have covered you with the shadow of My hand" (51:16). Yahweh will protect his servant and use him for his purpose of establishing the heavens, founding the earth and saying to Zion, "You are my people." Those who are obedient to Yahweh will also engage in this protective ministry because they will cover the naked (58:7).

The final view of clothing involves qualities such as honor and authority. In 51:9 Yahweh is challenged to clothe (עִלָּה) himself with strength once again as he had in the past. As he had crushed Egypt and brought his people out of slavery, so he should do a new thing by bringing his people out of exile. Concerning Zion, Isaiah prophesied that she would clothe herself with jewels like a bride.<sup>18</sup> Babylon, on the other hand, would be disgraced; for, instead of having her own tomb, she will be buried in a common grave, so that her raiment would be the bodies of her slain (14:19). The act of clothing also implies the empowering with authority as in the case of Eliakim who was to be clothed with the robe of authority which Shebna wore as secretary of the royal household. He was also to be given the key of the house of David as another symbol of his authority over David's house (22:21-22).<sup>19</sup>

### Covenant

The concept of covenant (בְּרִית) begins with the flood when Yahweh established two covenants with Noah. The first covenant was to spare Noah, his family and representatives of the animals from the destruction of the flood (Ge. 6:18-21). The second covenant promised that Yahweh would never destroy the earth by flood again (Ge. 9:9-11). Yahweh continued this pattern of establishing covenants throughout the history of the Hebrew people starting with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

בְּרִית as it is applied to the relationship between Yahweh and mankind means a covenant which is an agreement between two parties whether equal or unequal.<sup>20</sup> It is "accompanied by signs, sacrifices, and a solemn oath that sealed the relationship with promises of blessing for keeping the covenant and curses for breaking it."<sup>21</sup> No matter when or with whom Yahweh established a covenant--with mankind, a nation or an individual--each individual covenant is an "administrative aspect" of the same covenant, "God's Covenant of Grace."<sup>22</sup>

The problem in the relationship between mankind and Yahweh is that all men "broke the everlasting covenant" (24:5). In fact, the Judeans had made a "covenant with death" rather than with Yahweh. They had resorted to lies and deception. Yahweh maintained that their "covenant with death" would be cancelled (28:15,18).



The Assyrians also had broken the covenant by making light of Yahweh's relationship with Judah (33:8).<sup>23</sup>

The covenant relationship between Yahweh and mankind was, first of all, with his own people, the Hebrew nation. According to chapter 54 even though Yahweh had subjected his own people to the punishment of exile, his lovingkindness and covenant of peace would not be shaken (54:10). In other words, Yahweh will always love his people.

However, the covenant relationship once again was to be extended to all mankind. Yahweh would accomplish this by appointing his servant as a covenant to the people (42:6; 49:8).<sup>24</sup> His purpose would be to bring justice to the nations and healing and liberty to the people. He was to "establish justice in the earth" and to disperse his law to the inhabitable lands (42:4).

Concerning Isaiah's use of "covenant," "justice," and "torah," Blocher sees an allusion to Moses with whom all of these concepts were identified. Therefore, the servant of Yahweh would fulfill Moses' prophecy of another prophet like himself (Dt. 18:15).<sup>25</sup> He would not be bruised. His light would not be extinguished until he had established justice on the earth. Although the servant will be like Moses in that he will be a covenant to the people, his mission would be to the world and not just to Israel. Blocher concludes, "The Servant is to be 'a light to the nations'. The Servant

'will bring forth justice to the nations' (the Gentiles), and his tôrâ will reach to the uttermost parts of the earth."<sup>26</sup>

Isaiah's prophecy indicates that the covenant relationship which Yahweh offers mankind is open to everyone. The everlasting covenant which Yahweh will make is offered to the "everyone" of 55:1 who was invited to eat and to drink without money and without cost.<sup>27</sup> In chapter 56 the blessings of a relationship with Yahweh are clearly for all men since the foreigner, the eunuch and the people of Yahweh who keep the covenant relationship will be given an everlasting name or will be made glad in Yahweh's house of prayer. Isaiah concluded:

The Lord Yahweh, who gathers the dispersed of Israel, declares,  
"Yet others I will gather to them, to those already gathered" (56:8).

When Yahweh said in 55:3 that he would establish an everlasting covenant with them "according to the faithful mercies shown to David," he was not so much associating this new covenant with the one given to David as he was reminding them of his steadfast love.<sup>28</sup> In the conclusion of the chapter, Isaiah used imagery which Gunn views as reflective of the flood of Noah. In comparing 54:9-10 with 55:10-13, he discovers a similar language and structure. Each passage considers Yahweh's word, his peace and his steadfast love.<sup>29</sup> The

essence of each passage is the simile with the linguistic construction  $\text{לֹא־יִשָּׁחַד} (\text{לֹא־יִשָּׁחַד}) . . . \text{וְלֹא־יִשָּׁחַד}$ . Each passage also is built around an emphatic  $\text{לֹא־יִשָּׁחַד}$  "which negates expressions of impermanence or ineffectiveness ("depart," "remove," "return empty")."<sup>30</sup> The emphasis upon the enduring quality of Yahweh's word "strongly affirms that Yahweh's 'covenant' is certain and enduring."<sup>31</sup> There are two motifs in 55:13 which are reminiscent of the flood story: 1) the "everlasting sign" and 2) "it shall not be cut off." Both of these motifs were used in the flood account of the covenant and its sign, the rainbow. The rainbow was "a sign of covenant . . . an everlasting covenant" (Ge. 9:13,16). The rainbow was a guarantee that never again would all flesh be "cut off" (Ge. 9:11).<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the emphasis in Isaiah 55 is not so much on the covenant of David as it is on the establishment of a new covenant with all mankind. To illustrate the nature and the quality of this new covenant Isaiah compared it to the Davidic and the Noahic covenants.

This new covenant which Yahweh will establish with those who fear his name and turn from their transgressions is that his Spirit and his word will not depart from them or from their offspring (59:21). With these servants and those who are called priests of Yahweh, Yahweh will establish an everlasting covenant (61:6-8). It will constantly be a reminder and a guarantee of Yahweh's establishment of a relationship with all men.

### Chosen

As mentioned in the previous section, the servant of Yahweh was to be given as a "covenant" (בְּרִית) to the nations. As such he was to bear witness to the nations of Yahweh including the proclamation of his name, יהוה. He was to perform the work of righteousness, which included bringing justice to the nations (42:1,3,4) and deliverance to people in need--sight to the blind and liberty for those in prison. By calling his servant a "covenant" Yahweh was declaring that his servant would be the guarantee of his relationship with mankind. In בְּרִית Isaiah depicted the ultimate responsibility of being בְּרִית, chosen by God. Yahweh created his chosen one because he called (קָרָא) him in righteousness. קָרָא, "to call," is connected with בְּרִית in that when Yahweh chose someone he called them.<sup>33</sup>

בָּחַר, "to choose," involves "a careful, well thought-out choice."<sup>34</sup> The word is used to express a choosing which has ultimate and eternal significance.<sup>35</sup> When Yahweh chooses, it is always for a purpose. Those who are chosen have a task to fulfill.<sup>36</sup> בָּחַר is connected with creation in that "Yahweh chose Israel to be holy and thereby to serve as his witness among the nations."<sup>37</sup> Through the exile and restoration Israel bears witness to the nations of Yahweh's greatness.<sup>38</sup>

The event of the exodus from Egypt was the moment

in which Yahweh created Israel because he chose her and called her by name.<sup>39</sup> Israel was first chosen by Yahweh in the bondage of Egypt. Once again Yahweh promises to choose them in their affliction in exile and to restore them to their inheritance.<sup>40</sup>

The remaining passages which deal with being chosen involve the servant. Isaiah used three experiences to convey the idea of the servant's choice: 1) Yahweh will uphold him, 2) Yahweh will love him, and 3) Yahweh will pour out his Spirit upon him. Concerning the servant's being upheld by Yahweh, Blocher believes that this means that "God will have the firmest grip on his Servant. He will be entirely on the Servant's side, and close to him."<sup>41</sup> He is Yahweh's chosen in whom his soul delights (42:1). By this, Blocher understands Isaiah to mean that "the Servant will be the man who fulfills and satisfies all the Lord's desires for humanity."<sup>42</sup> Blocher also detects a link between choice and love. "The Servant is not chosen simply to carry out a specific task, but is set apart as his Lord's beloved one."<sup>43</sup> The final act of God's choosing his servant is that he pours out his Spirit upon him. This gift "shows the Servant's utter dependence upon God in all that he will have to do, and it shows the closeness of their relationship."<sup>44</sup>

So far the concept of "chosen" has been discussed as it applied to Yahweh's activities in the choosing. However, the servant also had a responsibility to be

obedient.<sup>45</sup> In 50:5 the servant claims to be obedient. This obedience leads the way for his offspring to receive Yahweh's covenant (59:21). Those who fulfill the role of Yahweh's servant are also Yahweh's servants. They too will receive Yahweh's Spirit (59:21). They will inherit Yahweh's land (65:9) for they will dwell in the recreated Jerusalem. Since both Israel and the servant are described as being "created," "formed" or "made;" to be chosen or called by Yahweh involves a creation of the inner person.<sup>46</sup>

#### Exodus and New Exodus

The event in which Israel as a nation was chosen by Yahweh to be his people to declare his name and his acts to the world was the exodus from the land of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. Isaiah used this motif of the exodus to demonstrate Yahweh's resolve to create a new thing now as he had in the time of Moses. Out of this experience Isaiah drew upon several elements to show how Yahweh is working now: 1) the angel of deliverance, 2) the rod or hand of Yahweh, 3) the drying up of the waters, 4) the way, 5) passing through, 6) the wilderness experience and 7) the servant of Yahweh.

The image of the angel of death is alluded to three times in the vision of Isaiah. In chapter 28 Yahweh ridiculed the Hebrews for making a covenant with death so that the scourge would not affect them when it passed

by (𐤀𐤓𐤕) them (28:15). This is a reflection of the night when the angel of death passed over Egypt killing all the firstborn of those who had not fulfilled the requirements of the Passover covenant. Yahweh declared that even though they had made a pact with death the scourge would seize them because he would make justice and righteousness the instruments for examining the behavior of mankind (28:17-19). The second passage, 63:9, is part of a lengthy passage describing the exodus experience where Isaiah mentioned that the angel of Yahweh's presence saved them. The third time occurred when the angel of death killed 185,000 Assyrians with a plague (37:36).

The rod or hand of God is also a motif of Yahweh's deliverance as evidenced in the exodus because the rod of God in Moses' hand brought the plagues and was stretched out over the Red Sea, dividing it. Three times Isaiah mentioned the stretching out of Yahweh's rod or hand. In 10:26 Yahweh related the lifting of his rod against Egypt in the time of the exodus to bring the ten plagues to the lifting of his rod against Assyria presumably to bring a plague upon them. Perhaps this was fulfilled in 37:36 where 185,000 soldiers were slain by a plague in the night.

In 11:15-16 Yahweh promised to stretch out his hand over the Euphrates River<sup>47</sup> and dry it up so that once again his people can walk over the waters on dry ground.

This prophecy utilized the imagery of the first exodus to symbolize the new exodus for the remnant of Israel exiled by Assyria and Babylon. In 23:11 Yahweh drew upon the effect that the first exodus had had upon the nations who heard of Yahweh's miraculous acts. They were terrified. Once again, when Yahweh stretches out his hand over the sea against Tyre and Sidon, the nations will tremble because of what he will do.

Isaiah used the motifs of the drying up of the waters and the way to demonstrate that Yahweh would provide a new exodus out of exile in the same way that he had brought the Hebrews out of Egypt. That Yahweh will recover a second time the remnant of his people with the power of his hand refers to the first time that he did so in the exodus (11:11-12; 14:1-3). At Yahweh's rebuke the sea dried up (50:2-3). Isaiah intended to show that Yahweh had the power to deliver. As in the days of old when Yahweh dried up the sea for the redeemed to cross over, so now the ransomed of Yahweh will return (51:9-11).<sup>48</sup> In chapter 43 Isaiah alluded to the exodus twice. When Israel passed through the waters or the rivers, Yahweh would be with them because, as he said, "I am Yahweh your God" (43:2). As Yahweh made a way for his people to exit from Egypt and also destroyed the Egyptians, so he would do the same with the Babylonians (43:14-17). In this passage the exodus and the creation of Israel function in the same manner



as the enumeration of Yahweh's creative acts. The acts of Yahweh in the exodus were intended to instill faith in Yahweh's power to overthrow the enemy and provide deliverance. In 63:12, in praise for what Yahweh had done in the past, Isaiah mentioned that Yahweh had divided the sea. This remembrance was intended to remind Judah of her relationship with Yahweh.

In many of these passages already considered, Yahweh made a way for his people to walk on (11:15; 43:16; 51:10). However, even though he will do a similar thing in the new exodus, Yahweh will do something new. He will make a way through the wilderness just as he made a way through the sea in the first exodus (43:19-21). The wilderness will blossom and come to life and a road-way, the Highway of Holiness, will pass through this new life (35:8). Only those who are righteous will walk in it. So, the first exodus became an archetype of what God would do for his nation in the return from exile and for all men in their spiritual lives.

In the same manner that Yahweh took care of his people in the wilderness, he continues to care for those who obey him. In 48:17 Yahweh lamented the fact that even though he had shown his people the way that they should go, yet they had not obeyed his commandments. This attitude is reminiscent of the wanderings in the wilderness in which Yahweh led his people but they continually disobeyed his commandments. In 49:10 Yahweh

said, "He who has compassion on them will lead them, and will guide them to springs of water." During the wilderness wanderings, when the people needed water, Yahweh guided them to springs of water. So, he will continue to do the same thing for his people.

Isaiah extensively utilized the motifs of the exodus in 63:7-14. As already mentioned, he mentioned the Passover angel and the dividing of the sea. He also mentioned Yahweh's steadfast love. Moses led them out of the sea like one of his own flocks (63:11). He placed his Holy Spirit in their midst (63:11) which recalls the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the seventy elders. Yahweh cared for his people in the wilderness so that they did not stumble (63:13). Finally, Isaiah recalled that the Holy Spirit gave the people rest in the land after they had entered Canaan (63:14).

One last motif of the wilderness wanderings occurs in 64:1-3 where Isaiah, remembering how Yahweh had come down and the mountains had quaked at Mount Sinai, requested that Yahweh come down again that the mountains might quake, that his name might be known to the nations, and that the nations also might tremble. Isaiah concluded:

For from of old they have not heard nor  
perceived by ear,  
Neither has the eye seen a God besides Thee,  
Who acts in behalf of the one who waits for  
Him (64:4).

Isaiah's use of the motif of the exodus always

points to the new work of redemption that Yahweh will accomplish. The exodus was a symbol of God's deliverance from servitude and a call to obey him in a covenant community. Like the motifs of the original creation, the motifs of the exodus also appear in juxtaposition with the message of Yahweh's present act of deliverance, such as the use of Cyrus to bring about a return from exile.<sup>49</sup>

The servant of Yahweh has a connection with the exodus because Moses himself was called  $\text{אֲנִי עַבְדְּיָהוָה}$ , "the servant of Yahweh."  $\text{עַבְד}$  is applied to a person who performs a task for a person who is stronger. In return the master would extend protection to the servant as well as steadfast love.<sup>50</sup> Many people in the Old Testament were called Yahweh's servants. However, only two, besides Isaiah's servant, were identified with regularity as the servant of Yahweh, Moses and David.<sup>51</sup>

To be called  $\text{אֲנִי עַבְדְּיָהוָה}$  was to be called by

the loftiest title attainable in a community which acknowledged the sovereignty of God alone. It implied faithful obedience to God in all things with specific reference to leadership of the people of Israel in matters pertaining to the covenant.<sup>52</sup>

$\text{עַבְד}$ , as applied to Moses, "signifies God's prime minister, the person by whom he issued his orders, and by whom he accomplished all his purposes and designs."<sup>53</sup>

Clarke also commented that "no person ever bore this title in the like sense but the Redeemer of mankind, of whom Moses and Joshua were types."<sup>54</sup>

In Isaiah three people were identified as ~~Yahweh~~<sup>Yahweh</sup>--  
 Isaiah (20:3), Eliakim (22:22) and David (37:35). The  
 term was also applied quite often to the nation of Is-  
 rael. Twelve times in chapters 39-53<sup>55</sup> and eleven  
 times (in the plural) in chapters 54-66 the servant is  
 Israel.<sup>56</sup> The identification of Israel the nation as  
 the servant and the servant as Israel<sup>57</sup> in the songs of  
 the servant is fraught with problems. Blocher sums up  
 the problem quite clearly:

The nation had received as its mission the  
 charge to glorify the Lord, to be his obed-  
 ient servant, but it had failed. The nation  
 had been a blind messenger, a deaf servant  
 of the Lord (42:18ff.). The one in whom the  
 Lord will be glorified is one who deserves  
 the name of Israel. When God says to the  
 Servant, 'You are Isrgel,' he is indirectly  
 rebuking the nation.<sup>58</sup>

In the same song in which the servant is identified  
 as Israel, Yahweh gives the servant the task of bringing  
 the nation back to him. His further task will be to  
 bring salvation to the peoples of the world. The reality  
 of Israel's sin, her failure to declare Yahweh's name  
 to the nations, and the description of the servant's  
 task to both Israel and the nations seems to indicate  
 that the servant is an individual.

He is a servant that is similar to Moses and dis-  
 similar to Cyrus. The servant's similarity to Moses  
 revolves around his ministry of justice and grace. Just  
 as Moses had brought forth justice and the law, so the  
 servant would bring justice to the nations and the

coastlands would wait for his law (42:1,4). The emphasis is "not on man's obligations but on God's decision, God's judgment. What God has decided, that the Servant will interpret to God's people."<sup>59</sup> His ministry will be one of instruction or teaching.<sup>60</sup> Moses had been the mediator of God's law to Israel, but now the servant will fulfill that task.<sup>61</sup> Not only will the servant be like Moses through his bringing justice and law to the peoples, but he will also offer grace. Moses was known as the meekest of all men in his time (Nu. 12:3). However, the servant will be even more compassionate because he will not quench man's spirit, but he will heal and revive the life of men. Blocher identifies this quality as grace.<sup>62</sup>

Although the similarity with Moses reveals that the servant "will teach truth with a quiet unobtrusiveness," the primary comparison is with Cyrus.<sup>63</sup> Cyrus will come with military might to deliver Israel by the sword, but the servant will deliver from blindness and the captivity of prison by calm teaching and patient persuasion. He will not lift up his voice in the streets. The world will tremble at Cyrus, but it will wait for the servant's instruction. Blocher concludes his comparison by citing the fundamental difference:

The Servant is concerned about truth. Cyrus is primarily concerned not with truth but with military triumph. The Servant has a passion for truth. What is right by divine definition, which is 'according to truth',

must be established on earth in men's hearts and relationships.<sup>64</sup>

From the servant song in 42:1-9 Blocher concludes that the servant "will be the permanent bearer of God's presence, power and wisdom."<sup>65</sup> These three qualities are descriptive of what the gift of the Spirit implies. Since the Old Testament promises that the Holy Spirit will be given in the last days, Blocher concludes that the servant has been "singled out to play a decisive role in the salvation which will be manifest in the last days."<sup>66</sup>

Though the servant is portrayed as a teacher in 42:1-9, in 50:4-11 he is primarily portrayed as a disciple. He maintains a close relationship with Yahweh who is his teacher. Each morning he begins the day with the Lord Yahweh, implying time spent in meditation and prayer. He is given a tongue of disciples so that after he has listened to God, when he speaks it is as a disciple repeating and applying the words of his teacher.<sup>67</sup> "The Servant's relationship to his people is that of a teacher of truth; his relationship to God is that of the perfect learner."<sup>68</sup>

In 49:1-13 the servant's mouth has been made like a sharp sword. The sword is a symbol of the word of God which is able to penetrate the thoughts and intentions of the heart. Once again the servant's ministry is prophetic. He is seen "as the Prophet who brings and even

is God's Word."<sup>69</sup>

In this passage the servant acknowledges that Yahweh will reward him for his work (49:4). Here is an indication that Yahweh will glorify his servant.<sup>70</sup>

The final great characteristic of the servant is that he suffers. In chapter 49 he is "the despised one," "the one abhorred by the nation" (49:7). In chapter 50 he was not disobedient, but he set his face like a flint. He was beaten and spat upon. However, chapter 53 is the place where Isaiah fully developed the concept of the suffering servant. Once again he is described as "despised." He was pierced for man's transgressions, he was crushed for each person's iniquities (53:5). He refused to defend himself but was led like a lamb to the slaughter (53:7). Because he was crushed for each person's sins, Yahweh would prolong his days (53:10). He will see his offspring and justify the "many" (53:11).

The servant also is in a created relationship with Yahweh because Yahweh called him from the womb (49:1). Yahweh formed him from the womb to be his servant (49:5). While he was in the womb, Yahweh named him.

His life also has spiritual significance for mankind. In 50:10-11 Isaiah prophesied that the eternal fate of each person would be determined by their attitude toward the servant.<sup>71</sup> Those who fear Yahweh and obey the voice of the servant are called servants of Yahweh in the last thirteen chapters of the vision of

Isaiah. The servants of Yahweh are described as a spiritual Israel who would be taught by God (54:13) and whose heritage would include being established and protected (54:11-17). This spiritual Israel will include more than just ethnic Hebrews but everyone who observes Yahweh's covenant with man (56:6). The servants of Yahweh, known as the Church in the New Testament, will enjoy the new heavens and the new earth which Yahweh will create.

#### The New Heavens and the New Earth

Blocher perceives in 42:1-9 a glimpse of the new creation of God in the recalling of the creation of the original heaven and earth. He asks the question:

Why does the prophet recall the creation of heaven and earth if not to suggest that God is about to create new heavens and a new earth, a new order and a whole new humanity, as it were, as the Servant fulfills his mission?<sup>72</sup>

He considers this creation to be two-fold: physical and spiritual.

The complete and outward fulfillment of this hope is yet to come; but spiritually, as Paul says, 'if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come' (2 Cor. 5:17).<sup>73</sup>

In this comment Blocher brings together the two views of the new creation. It is both spiritual and physical. In 65:17-18 Yahweh declares, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, . . . and I create Jerusa-



lem." Yahweh is not only re-creating the dwelling place of his people but also the dwelling place of his name. According to Mauser, Isaiah used  $\text{חָיִי}$  in a daringly innovative way. Formerly, it had been "reserved for God's creative act,"<sup>74</sup> but now Isaiah used it to "describe a deed of God in history which would rejuvenate an old and dying world."<sup>75</sup>

Isaiah utilized several motifs which had been used in other parts of his prophecy in his description of this new world. The creation of a "new" ( $\text{עוֹלָם}$ ) world is in keeping with Yahweh's earlier declaration that now he is declaring new things (42:9).<sup>76</sup> The juncture of wild beasts with "the theme of the passing away of the former things and the emergence of a new thing (43:18-20)"<sup>77</sup> also is reflected in the conclusion of the newly created Jerusalem for both Yahweh and his people will rejoice. Consequently, there will not be any more weeping (65:18-19). This motif is similar to the description of those returning from exile (51:10) for "they will obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing will flee away." It also applies to those who walk in the Highway of Holiness (35:10). Also, the description of peace in the animal kingdom is found also in the kingdom of the root of Jesse (11:6-9).

The concept of a world in which peace reigns, in which death is limited, in which Jerusalem is rebuilt, and in which sorrow and evil disappears, is found else-

where throughout Isaiah. In these other passages these concepts are linked with events that are founded in history, such as the return from exile or the Messianic kingdom. In these passages "the rise of the new world is conditional . . . on historically identifiable events in which God creates anew."<sup>78</sup> However, in 65:17-25, "the historic medium of God's re-creation is no longer in view. The fact and condition of the new order of things alone are the subject of attention."<sup>79</sup> Consequently, because the historic agency of this re-creation of Yahweh has disappeared,<sup>80</sup> Isaiah gave the impression that this re-creation is a future event.

The use of  $\text{קָרַן}$  in the Genesis account of creation implies creation ex nihilo. However, Isaiah's use of  $\text{קָרַן}$  to indicate a new act of redemption on Yahweh's part does not force such an interpretation in 65:17-25. Neither is such an interpretation excluded. Lenski argues:

From Isa. 65:17 we gather that the new heaven and the new earth will involve a creative act of God. When some consider the flight, going away, passing away of the old as annihilation and the new a creation like that of Genesis one, ex nihilo, they come into conflict with Rom. 8:20-23 and with our present passage (Rev. 21:1-2). The newness of the heaven and of the earth shall be like our own. . . . Our newness begins with regeneration. Already this the Scriptures call a creation of God, Eph. 2:10; 4:24, so that we are  $\text{καὶ ἡ κτίσις}$ , "a new creation," II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15.<sup>81</sup>

The context of chapters 53-66 would suggest that

this "new" creation is, at least in part, a spiritual creation, for after the servant's redemptive death is described, the salvation of the whole world becomes the topic of discussion. In chapter 54 Yahweh promises that both the barren woman and the married woman would have spiritual children. These children are Yahweh's servants and, consequently, are the offspring of the servant. Throughout the following chapters Yahweh described the manner of his relationship with them. This passage, then, is the culmination of Yahweh's description of a world in which all men could engage in a "new" created relationship that would echo the original creation.

Throughout the Old Testament, especially among the prophets, the redemptive acts of God are reflected in the natural world.<sup>82</sup> This redemptive act is expressed as the creation of new heavens and a new earth. Muilenburg comments that

the sovereignty of God over nature, classically expressed in Genesis 1, is here applied to the new age. The time of salvation for the elect community is ushered in by a new creation. To a new age belong new heavens and a new earth. The meaning is not that the present world will be completely destroyed (cf. 51:6) and a new world created (cf. Rev. 21:1; II Peter 3:13), but rather that the present world will be completely transformed. . . . Creation provides the background for . . . the new history of the new age.<sup>83</sup>

This world would be characterized by peace. Isaiah illustrated this with a description of the animal world

in which

the wolf and the lamb shall graze together,  
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox,  
and dust shall be the serpent's food. They  
shall do no evil or harm in all My holy  
mountain (65:25).

This same description in an expanded form is descriptive of the nature of the "reign" of the root of Jesse (11:1-10). It will be characterized by the Spirit of Yahweh because wisdom, righteousness, justice and faithfulness will abound through his ministry. He will stand as a signal for the peoples. In the new creation Yahweh also will set a sign among the nations (66:19). In this passage, the nations will come to the root of Jesse. Similarly, in 66:19-20 all nations will come to Jerusalem bringing the brethren from all nations to Yahweh as a grain offering.

A similar passage in 2:2-4 would indicate that there will be peace from war as all nations flock to Jerusalem to be taught the ways of Yahweh.

They will hammer their swords into plowshares,  
and their spears into pruning hooks,  
Nation will not lift up sword against nation,  
And never again will they learn war (2:4).

The nature of the Messianic kingdom will be peace without end (9:7; 60:17; 66:12). The Messiah will be known as the Prince of Peace (9:6). It will also be a nation of righteousness as well as peace. Those who trust in Yahweh will be kept in perfect peace (26:3). Yahweh will establish peace on behalf of his people

(26:12).

The word for "peace" is  $\text{שָׁלוֹם}$ . It means more than absence of war. It means "completeness, wholeness, harmony, fulfillment."<sup>84</sup> It implies "unimpaired relationships with others and fulfillment in one's undertakings."<sup>85</sup>  $\text{שָׁלוֹם}$  is the result of Yahweh's covenant-making activity and the result of righteousness.<sup>86</sup> This is the sense of the word in 32:9-20. For those who humble themselves in repentance, the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon them. Justice and righteousness will characterize the transactions of the land. "The work of righteousness will be peace, and the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever" (32:17).

Peace is a result of Yahweh's activity because Yahweh creates peace (45:7).  $\text{שָׁלוֹם}$  "describes the state of fulfillment which is the result of God's presence."<sup>87</sup> This is indicated in the reference to the covenant of peace mentioned in 54:10.<sup>88</sup> While Yahweh's covenant of peace for those who are righteous will not be broken, there is no peace for the wicked (48:22; 57:21), because they do not know the way of peace (59:8).

In the time of the covenant of peace, the "well-being" of the sons of the obedient will be great (54:13) because the servant has borne the chastisement that brought their peace (53:5). This salvation will enable mankind to go out with joy and to be led forth with peace (55:12). When Yahweh heals mankind, the praise

that he creates upon the lips of men will be "'Peace, Peace' to him who is far and to him who is near" (57:19).

One of the connotations of Baal's kingship was that his kingship brought peace and order to the cosmos.<sup>89</sup> Isaiah declared that Yahweh creates peace and will create a new world that will be characterized by peace.

This concept of a world of peace incorporates a view of limited death. Isaiah 65 places the new heavens and the new earth within the reality of death. Death still occurs. The only change is that every person lives out his life to the full extent of his existence. Infant mortality disappears. The only exception to fulfillment in the new world is in the case of the unrepentant sinner. Otherwise, no old person dies without completing his task in life and no infant lives only a short time. However, death is still a reality.

For Isaiah, "fruition" is the key concept of the new world, not the lack of death, although in 25:8 and 26:19 he prophesied that Yahweh would swallow up death and raise the dead. Isaiah illustrated this concept with a list of tasks that would be successfully completed: 1) man will not only build, but he will inhabit what he has built; 2) he will not only plant, but he will also eat what he has planted; 3) he will wear out the work of his hands rather than dying before he can use it; 4) he will bear children and enjoy their lives, rather than losing them to death; and 5) he will

not labor in vain because he is an offspring of those blessed by Yahweh. Isaiah has definitely placed the new world within the context of the blessing of Yahweh rather than his curse. The new world will reverse the curse upon the world described in chapter 24.

This description of the new world concentrates largely upon the re-creating of Jerusalem. The above description of joy, peace and fulfillment belongs to the newly created Jerusalem. That Isaiah should move from a universal vision of re-creation to a nationalistic view coincides with his emphasis throughout his vision that Jerusalem is the

medium through which a universal benefit is secured (e.g., 2:2-4; 60:1-3). New heavens and a new earth can arise because Jerusalem in their midst is now so renewed that it is the sign and agent of the new age for the whole world.<sup>90</sup>

This juxtaposition of the new world with a new Jerusalem is "part of the characteristic placement of Isaiah 65 in the middle between ultimate hope within the real earth and the image of newness beyond historical contacts."<sup>91</sup>

The newly created Jerusalem is a place where the word of Yahweh is taught and all men come with eagerness to learn the way of Yahweh (2:2-3; 54:13). The light of Yahweh will guide mankind. It will be the only source of guidance in the new city (60:19-20). Nations and kings will come to his light (60:3). The wealth of

the nations will be brought to it so that its beauty will be glorious (54:11-12; 60:11-13).

Finally, Jerusalem will be a place where sorrow and evil do not exist. Yahweh will wipe away all tears from the faces of its inhabitants (25:8). The animals will no longer be carnivorous, but, instead, they will eat vegetation. The serpent will no longer harm anyone, but it will eat only dust. No harm or evil will occur in Jerusalem because of the animals. Also, no unclean thing or person will walk in the Highway of Holiness (35:8). Those who do that which is evil in Yahweh's sight will be slain (65:12,15). They will be put to shame (65:13; 66:5).

On the other hand, Yahweh will make those who are humble, contrite in spirit and fear his word his place of rest (66:1-2). They will be his house instead of the temple. Those who are obedient and help build in Jerusalem will be called priests of Yahweh and ministers of God (61:6; 66:21). Because they rejoice in Jerusalem, the hand of Yahweh will be made known to them. They will be comforted by their presence in Jerusalem (66:10-14). When the root of Jesse is set in their midst as a sign (11:10; 66:19), then they will go throughout the world and declare the glory of Yahweh to the nations. They will return bringing his people as a grain offering to Yahweh (66:20).

The sign that was set among the nations was the



cross of Christ. His disciples were sent throughout the world to bring people as an offering to God. This new world is the setting for the "new birth" or the "new creation." The new name of this people is "Christian." "The stability and permanence of the new people of the new age are as sure as the new heavens and the new earth. Both are the creation of God."<sup>92</sup>

The final picture of the new world is the reward of the obedient and the punishment of the wicked. The spiritual offspring of the servant and his servants will endure just as the new heavens and the new earth endure (66:22). All men will worship Yahweh constantly, from sabbath to sabbath (66:23). The wicked, however, will become a symbol to all men of the result of disobedience, for their corpses will be reviewed by all men "for their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched" (66:24).<sup>93</sup>

This view of a new world is, for Isaiah, the culmination of the vision of redemption. Throughout history Yahweh has been working toward the redemption of all men since the fall of man when he polluted the original creation. He called one man, Abraham, and the nation that came from his descendants to proclaim Yahweh's name and acts to the world. Now that they have failed, Yahweh will redeem them by calling another servant who will proclaim justice to the nations. Through his redemptive death and prolonging of days, other servants

will become obedient to Yahweh. However, the redeeming activity of Yahweh will not be complete until the heavens and the earth have been re-created and Jerusalem, pure and peaceful, stands as the central focus of the whole world and all evil has been destroyed.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Genesis, A Commentary, trans., John H. Marks, The Old Testament Library, eds., Peter Ackroyd, et al (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), p. 152.

<sup>2</sup>In Ge. 6:1-4 the Genesis author mentions the "sons of God." This term is found also in Jb. 1:6; 2:1. One interpretation is that "sons of God" refers to angels.

<sup>3</sup>von Rad, Genesis, pp. 152-53.

<sup>4</sup>von Rad, Genesis, p. 152.

<sup>5</sup>von Rad, Genesis, p. 155.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace, A Psychological Study, trans., Arthur W. Heathcote (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 149.

<sup>8</sup>Andrew Bowling, "לָבַשׁ (lābēsh) dress, be clothed," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 469.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>cf. Is. 3:24; 22:12; 15:3; 32:11; 37:1,2; 36:22; 50:3. All of these references give the connotation of mourning or repentance. However, not all of them use לָבַשׁ. The other words are used at times to convey the same idea.

<sup>11</sup>cf. Is. 3:24; 15:3; 22:12; 32:11.

<sup>12</sup>R. Laird Harris, "כָּסָה (kāśā) I, cover, conceal, hide," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 449. In 60:6 כָּסָה is used to designate this meaning but not in connection with sin. Instead, the wealth of the nations of the South will overwhelm the Messiah. This foreshadows what happened at Jesus' birth (Mt. 2:11).

<sup>13</sup>Henry Sloane Coffin, "The Book of Isaiah: Exposition," The Interpreter's Bible, ed., George Arthur Buttrick, III (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 726. cf. Is. 21:11-12; 34:1-17; Ob. 1-21; Am. 1:11-12; Je. 49:7-22; Ezk. 25:12-14; Ml. 1:2-5; Jl. 4:19; Ps. 137:7; La. 4:21-22.

<sup>14</sup>Coffin, "Exposition," p. 727.

<sup>15</sup>James Muilenburg, "The Book of Isaiah: Exegesis," The Interpreter's Bible, ed., George Arthur Buttrick, III (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 727.

<sup>16</sup>cf. 61:2 for a juxtaposition of the day of vengeance and the favorable year of Yahweh. When Jesus used this quote, he did not quote this phrase about the day of vengeance; 63:1-6, although it has the appearance of a military and judgment emphasis, seems very much like a description of Christ after his crucifixion in which his spiritual garments were stained with the blood of the nations' sins and sin. In Jesus, the Son of God, Yahweh did stain his own garments when he stained Christ's garments. In wrath Yahweh placed all of the sins of the world upon his own servant, Jesus, his own Son. Spiritually, there seems to be too much similarity to let such an interpretation pass. However, it is clearly a passage filled with military terminology and will be fulfilled in "the day of vengeance of Yahweh."

<sup>17</sup>cf. Rv. 21:27; In John's revelation of New Jerusalem, no one who is unclean or practices abominations or lying will ever come into the city.

<sup>18</sup>cf. Is. 61:10; 52:1; Rv. 21:10-21 for other images of being adorned as a bride.

<sup>19</sup>cf. Rv. 3:7; In his letter to Philadelphia Jesus says that he holds these keys.

<sup>20</sup>Elmer B. Smick, "בְּרִית (berit) covenant," Theological wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce A. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 128.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid.

<sup>22</sup>Smick, "בְּרִית," p. 129.

<sup>23</sup>G. G. D. Kilpatrick, "The Book of Isaiah, 1-39: Exposition," The Interpreter's Bible, ed., George Arthur Buttrick, V (New York: Abingdon, 1956), p. 348. Kilpatrick indicates that the identity of this "destroyer" is unclear. However, in 10:7 Isaiah indicated that the purpose of Assyria was to destroy all nations; hence, the

title "destroyer" in 33:1. The terms for "destroyer" and "destroy" are different.

<sup>24</sup>Mark S. Smith, "BĒRĪT 'AM/BĒRĪT 'ÔLĀM: A New Proposal for the Crux of ISA 42:6," Journal of Biblical Literature, 100:2:241-46, 1981, hypothesizes a conscious similarity between bĒrĪt 'am found in 42:6 and bĒrĪt 'ôlām used in old royal theology. The similarity is intended to remind the reader of

the old dynastic promises in order to present the new picture of Israel's place before the nations. The obvious phonetic resemblance between bĒrĪt 'ôlām and bĒrĪt 'am suggests that Second Isaiah is playing on the memory of the Davidic covenant theology (p. 242).

Smith, consequently, considers the servant of Yahweh to be Israel.

<sup>25</sup>Henri Blocher, Songs of the Servant (London: Inter-Varsity Press, Richard Clay, Ltd., 1975), p. 30.

<sup>26</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 31.

<sup>27</sup>cf. Kv. 21:6; cf. also Smith, "42:6," p. 242 where Smith quotes Otto Eissfeldt: "The task which Israel has to perform for the world and the grateful recognition which awaits her in fulfillment (sic)." Smith concludes that Israel's covenant role is as the new king. cf. also Theodore M. Ludwig, "The Traditions of the Establishing of the Earth in Deutero-Isaiah," Journal of Biblical Literature, 92:3:345-57, 1973. He concurs with the view that Israel is the covenant when he writes: "Based on this cultic tradition about Yahweh's care for the cosmos and the family of man (am) upon it, the oracle proper (vss. 6-7) commissions Israel to fulfill Yahweh's purpose of covenant for that family of man (bĒrĪt 'am)" (p. 349).

<sup>28</sup>cf. note 24 for a different view.

<sup>29</sup>In chapter 55 the motif of his steadfast love is connected with the everlasting covenant mentioned in v. 3.

<sup>30</sup>David M. Gunn, "Deutero-Isaiah and the Flood," Journal of Biblical Literature, 94:4:504, 1975.

<sup>31</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 503.

<sup>32</sup>Gunn, "Flood," p. 506.

<sup>33</sup>cf. Is. 42:6; 45:4; 48:12; 49:1; 51:2; 54:6. In both 42:6 and 45:4 both אֲנִי and אֶתְּ appear.

<sup>34</sup>John N. Oswalt, "בָּחַר (bāḥar) to choose, elect, decide for," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, I (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 100.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid. cf. Is. 41:8-9; 43:10; 48:10.

<sup>39</sup>cf. 41:8-9; 43:10-20; 44:1-2; 45:4; 48:10.

<sup>40</sup>cf. 14:1; 48:10.

<sup>41</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 25.

<sup>42</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 26.

<sup>43</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 25.

<sup>44</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 26.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid.

<sup>46</sup>cf. Is. 43:1,7; 43:15; 44:24; 49:1,5; 54:5.

<sup>47</sup>In the Near East "The River" is the Euphrates River.

<sup>48</sup>Concerning drying up the sea see chapter four, pp. 110-14.

<sup>49</sup>Graham S. Ogden, "Moses and Cyrus: Literary affinities between the Priestly Presentation of Moses in Exodus vi-viii and the Cyrus Song in Is. xlv 24-xlv 13," Vetus Testamentum, 28:2:195-203, 1978, says that "Cyrus can be viewed as having a relationship to the Return analogous to that of Moses to the Exodus" (p. 201).

<sup>50</sup>C. R. North, "The Servant of the Lord," IDB, IV (Nashville: Abingdon, 1962), p. 292.

<sup>51</sup>Isaiah did not actually call the Messiah "the Servant of Yahweh." However, he is identified by Yahweh as "my servant" and he speaks of himself as Yahweh's servant. cf. North, "Servant," p. 292.

<sup>52</sup>William M. Morton, "Joshua," Broadman's Bible Commentary, gen. ed., Clifton J. Allen, II (Nashville:

Broadman Press, 1970), p. 305.

<sup>53</sup>Adam Clarke, "Preface to the Book of Joshua," Clarke's Commentary, II (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, n.d.), p. 7.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>These passages are 41:8-10; 42:18-19; 43:9-10; 44:1-3, 21; 45:4; 48:20.

<sup>56</sup>These passages are 54:17; 56:6; 63:17; 65:8-9, 13-15; 66:14.

<sup>57</sup>Leland Edward Wilshire, "The Servant-City: a New Interpretation of the "Servant of the Lord" in the Servant Songs of Deutero-Isaiah," Journal of Biblical Literature, 94:3:356-367, 1975, presents arguments for a view that Jerusalem is the servant citing parallels from the literature from other cultures, the manner in which descriptions of Zion alternate from feminine to masculine throughout chapters 40-55, and the similarity of motifs inside and outside of the servant songs. For Wilshire "the servant is the city" (p. 358). He maintains that

within the servant songs themselves, the tasks of proclaiming God's judgment (1st song), of bringing the exiles home (2nd song), of offering itself in silence to its oppressors (3rd song), and of bearing the sins of the people (4th song) are fulfilled in the destruction and restoration of Zion-Jerusalem (p. 367).

<sup>58</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 39.

<sup>59</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 28.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 32.

<sup>63</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 28.

<sup>64</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 29.

<sup>65</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 27.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 47.

- 68 Ibid.
- 69 Blocher, Songs, p. 38.
- 70 Blocher, Songs, pp. 38-39.
- 71 Blocher, Songs, p. 46.
- 72 Blocher, Songs, pp. 30-31.
- 73 Ibid.
- 74 Ulrich Mauser, "Isaiah 65:17-25," Interpretation, 36:2:181, 1980.
- 75 Mauser, "65:17-25," p. 182.
- 76 The gender of וְיָ in these two places is different. In 65:17 the gender is masculine and in 42:9 the gender is feminine.
- 77 Mauser, "65:17-25," p. 181.
- 78 Mauser, "65:17-25," p. 182.
- 79 Ibid.
- 80 Ibid.
- 81 C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. John's Revelation (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1963), pp. 614-15. The parenthetical insertion is mine.
- 82 Muilenburg, "Exposition," p. 754.
- 83 Muilenburg, "Exposition," p. 755.
- 84 G. Lloyd Carr, "שָׁלוֹם (shālôm) peace," Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, eds., R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Bruce K. Waltke, II (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 931.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Ibid.
- 87 Ibid.
- 88 Ibid.
- 89 Loren Fisher, "Creation at Ugarit and in the Old Testament," Vetus Testamentum, 15:317-18, 1965.
- 90 Mauser, "65:17-25," p. 184.



<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Muilenburg, "Exposition," p. 772.

<sup>93</sup> cf. Mk. 9:44,46,48 and Rv. 20:14-15; 21:8.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### THE SIX CREATIONS

Throughout the preceding chapters the theme of creation according to Isaiah--relationship--has been discussed and analyzed in terms of individual motifs which were originally part of the Hebrew creation myth found in Genesis. Some of these motifs, e.g., the flood and the Noahic covenant, were a part of the Hebrew primeval history.

In justification of Isaiah's use of the creation terminology in connection with such events, past and future, as the exodus, the return from exile, the servant of Yahweh and the new heavens and the new earth, Gerhard von Rad's explanation of the primeval pattern of history--sin, judgment and grace--was presented. At that time this historical view was used only to demonstrate that such events could be considered a continuation of the primeval or creation history. However, in an attempt to codify Isaiah's use of the various creation motifs, this model of history will be considered in a different light which will result in a cohesion between these motifs. It will also provide the necessary background for Isaiah's innovative utilization of the creation motifs, especially,

87] and the exodus. Then, an application of Isaiah's use of the creation motifs to the modern discussion of creation-science with the hope of providing some light to the controversy will be attempted. Finally, a brief analysis of Isaiah's use of the creation story as myth will be presented.

### The Primeval Model of History

In the first eleven chapters of Genesis a pattern to the history of mankind develops--man sins, God judges man, but God also provides grace.<sup>1</sup> This model is seen in the lives of Adam and Eve, Cain and the world of Noah. Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command not to eat any fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; God cursed the ground and the childbearing process; and then God clothed them with skins to protect them. When Cain killed his brother Abel, God banished him to wander the earth without a home, but then gave him a mark on the forehead to protect him from murder. After the sons of God married the daughters of men, great evil filled the earth so that God decided to destroy the earth by water. However, he chose Noah to preserve the race from the destruction of the flood and then made a covenant with Noah that he would never again destroy the earth by water.

The primeval history ends with the sin of mankind in the building of the tower of Babel. Because mankind

attempted through its unity to become greater than God, God destroyed its linguistic unity by confusing the languages and he destroyed its territorial unity by dispersing the peoples throughout the world. The problem is that the primeval history apparently ends without God's grace being offered to mankind. The question arises: Is God's judgment of the nations final? Has God totally broken his relationship with the nations?<sup>2</sup>

The answer is "no" because the Genesis author provides an answer to this question in the call of God of one man, Abraham. Through Abraham's seed Yahweh would bless all the families of the earth (Ge. 12:1-3). Consequently, Yahweh's grace for the whole world came through the life of one man, Abraham, and his descendants, the Hebrew nation.

However, the story of God's grace does not end with the Hebrew nation because the Hebrews also sinned against Yahweh. Their sin was idolatry and failure to proclaim Yahweh to the nations. Because the Hebrews sinned so grievously against Yahweh, Yahweh sent other nations against them to carry them into exile--first the Assyrians, then the Babylonians.

Although the Hebrews were exiled, Yahweh did not forsake them (54:7). He brought them out of exile and back to their land. He also promised them a servant who would bear their sins and provide justification for them (53:5). Through this servant, salvation would

extend, not only to the Hebrews, but also to the whole world.

The continuing story of the Bible reveals that that servant was Jesus whose death on the cross provided salvation for all mankind; for, Jesus said, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to Myself" (Jn. 12:32). Those who became servants of God through salvation in Jesus Christ became known as the Church. Through the Church God has become known throughout the world.

John, in his Revelation of Jesus Christ, and Isaiah, in his vision, revealed that God intended to conclude the salvation history with a "new heaven and a new earth" (Rv. 21:1-22:5; Is. 65:17-25). Once again there would be no pain or death. At this time God would dwell among men. He would be the source of light for all men. The world would be made anew.

The vision of Isaiah demonstrates the use of the primeval model of history in two ways: 1) through its structure and 2) through its use of creation theology. The threefold pattern of primeval history--sin, judgment and grace--is found in the structure of Isaiah. In Isaiah there are three major sections. The first major section includes chapters one through twelve and considers the sin of Judah and Israel. The second major section is chapters thirteen through thirty-nine. This group of oracles deals with the judgment of the world.

The final section begins with chapter forty and concludes with chapter sixty-six. It deals primarily with the redemption of Israel and the world.

Although each of these sections deals primarily with sin or judgment or grace, each of these sections contains elements of each theme; e.g., in chapters 1-12 passages that deal with judgment are 3:1-26; 9:8-10:4, and passages that deal with redemption are 2:2-4; 4:2-6; 9:1-7 and 11:1-12:6.

Since the structure of the vision of Isaiah reveals the pattern of primeval history, the conclusion could be drawn that Isaiah intended to demonstrate Yahweh's creative nature through the motifs used within it. Since the structure of his book is a creation pattern, it is not unusual that so many creation motifs are found within the vision of Isaiah. This pattern also explains why Isaiah revealed Yahweh as still creating "new" events even now. If the intention of Yahweh is to draw the world back into a relationship with him, then Isaiah's visions reveal Yahweh's answers to Isaiah's questions about the failure of Israel, the promised exile and the grace of Yahweh.

For Isaiah creation did not stop with the first creation. Although the first creation was not the focus of his message, it was very important because it provided a factual support for the belief that Yahweh was creating now. This utilization of the first crea-

tion would substantiate the view of the Genesis account of creation as myth that was considered to be true. It was this acceptance of the primeval pattern of history that allowed Isaiah to use  $\text{סָדַק}$  in the innovative way that he did by applying it to Yahweh's present and future activity in the world.

Likewise, the second creation, the Hebrew nation, at the time of the exodus was intended to lend support to the faith of the people that although they would be exiled Yahweh would return them to their land. Isaiah used such concepts as "create," ( $\text{סָדַק}$ ), "make," ( $\text{הָפַק}$ ), "form," ( $\text{צָוֵר}$ ), "call," ( $\text{קָרָא}$ ), "name," ( $\text{שָׁם}$ ), and "chosen," ( $\text{בְּחָרָה}$ ) to show Yahweh's creative relationship with the nation Israel. Yahweh also formed Israel "from the womb" (44:2).<sup>3</sup> Another term which concerned Israel's relationship with Yahweh was "servant," ( $\text{עַבְד}$ ). Yahweh considered Israel his servant and messenger to the nations. However, they failed to fulfill their responsibility. Consequently, Yahweh looked upon Israel as a "deaf" and "blind" servant (42:18-19).

Because Israel failed as Yahweh's servant, Yahweh promised to create another servant. Every term which Yahweh applied to Israel as his servant, he applied to the servant who would fulfill his purpose regarding his relationship with the nations. The servant was formed "from the womb" (49:1,5), "called" (49:1), "named" (49:2) and "chosen" (42:1).

The New Testament authors identified Jesus as the servant. Matthew and Luke make this identification clear by applying two of the servant songs to Jesus.<sup>4</sup> The confusion of the identity of the servant in Isaiah becomes clear in the New Testament. Goldingay explains why the role of the servant was confused in Isaiah:

The role attributed to the servant in xlii 1-4 is one which Israel herself is in no position to fulfill. The servant is to establish mišpāt; but Israel has mišpāt problems of her own (xl 27). The servant will not break a bruised reed or snuff a fading wick, nor will he himself fade or bruise; but Israel is bruised and fading. It is, I think, because Israel cannot fulfill the servant role which is her responsibility, that the identity of the servant which was explicit in chapter xli is open in chapter xlii.<sup>5</sup>

Matthew connects Jesus with both the sign of Immanuel and the son who is given by appropriating Scripture from each passage to identify Jesus. According to Matthew the Immanuel prophecy was fulfilled by the unusual nature of Jesus' birth and the unusual manner in which Jesus was "incorporated into the royal-messianic line of descent through the obedience of Joseph."<sup>6</sup> This is shown by the "all this" in Matthew 1:22 where Matthew indicated that "all this took place that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled."<sup>7</sup> Matthew, consequently, quoted Isaiah 7:14 "to substantiate not only Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit within his virgin mother, but also his adoption into the Davidic



family through an obedient father."<sup>8</sup>

The names that Matthew attributed to Jesus also connect Jesus with the messianic servant. Tatum concludes:

within the birth story, however, the title "Emmanuel" (1:23a) is of foremost importance because of its reference back to Jesus' origin by the creative power of the Holy Spirit within his virgin mother. Together the genealogical names "Son of David" (1:20, by inference applied to Jesus) and "Emmanuel" (1:23a) epitomize the first Evangelist's concern for Jesus' genealogical origin. He presents Jesus as "Emmanuel" (1:23a) by conception and "Son of David" (1:20) by adoption.<sup>9</sup>

When Jesus moved to Capernaum Matthew used the first two verses of the "son is given" prophecy in Isaiah chapter 9 to justify this move. It also identified Jesus as the light who would dispel the darkness of Israel.

At Jesus' baptism the voice from heaven identified Jesus as the servant of Yahweh spoken of by Isaiah by using the words of Isaiah 42:1: "This is My beloved . . . in whom I am well-pleased" (Mt. 3:17).

This particular view of the servant of Yahweh described the ministry of the Servant as a preacher or a teacher. Jesus' ministry was one of preaching, as his sermon on the mount illustrated, and teaching, as exemplified by his parables. He chose twelve men to teach and to train in a special close relationship apart from his teaching of the masses.<sup>10</sup>

Not only was the servant to teach, but he was also to be a disciple of Yahweh who would begin each day with Yahweh (50:4). Jesus began each day with God (Mk. 1:35). The works that Jesus did were like what God did (Jn. 5:19). The words that he taught were the words of God (Jn. 7:16). In other words, Jesus learned from God and acted and taught according to what he learned.

Part of the ministry of the servant was to "learn the sin of many" (53:12) and "justify the many" (53:11). The concept of "many" is, according to Blocher, the "last Servant Song in a nutshell."<sup>11</sup> Jesus applied this concept of the "many" to his redemptive ministry when he was talking to his disciples about the meaning of servanthood: "Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mt. 20:28). Later, during the last supper with his disciples, Jesus said about the cup: "This is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many" (Mk. 14:24).

Concerning the identification of Israel, the servant of Yahweh, Blocher remarks:

Ultimately only one person remains after the sifting process, only one is truly Israel, in whom God is glorified, and he said so. He said quite clearly, "I am the true Israel." He used the Old Testament's most common symbol for Israel; the vine: "I am the true vine" (Jn. 15:1ff.; cf. Ps. 80:8-16; Is. 5:1-7; Je. 2:21; 6:9; Ho. 10:1; see also Mt. 21:33-43 and parallels.)<sup>12</sup>

As the servant of Yahweh, Jesus paved the way for

the redemption of individual people. This is the fourth creation presented by Isaiah. The invitation for spiritual satisfaction is extended to everyone in Isaiah chapter 55. Yahweh will establish a covenant with whoever comes to him for such satisfaction. The nature of this new life is joy and peace. MacRae concludes that in chapter 55 "there is a very specific personal application to all who put their faith in the Lord's Servant."<sup>13</sup> In 66:1-2, the person who responds in humility, repentance and faith will be the resting place for Yahweh.

In the New Testament the covenant God establishes with the believer is through the blood of Christ (Mk.14:24). Salvation is by faith (Ep.2:8-9). The result is that the individual believer becomes a creation in Christ (Ep.2:10). Paul calls him "a new creation" (2 Co.5:17).

In the same manner that Yahweh called Abraham to bless the world through his descendants (51:1-2), so through the descendants of his servant Yahweh will work to bring the world to him (66:14-21). A great nation of servants will result from the ministry of the suffering servant (54:1-3). MacRae believes that chapter 54 "describes the far-reaching effects of the Servant's work in general terms."<sup>14</sup> He continues to say that most of the material in chapters 54-56 "describes the future blessing of all the followers of the Lord's Servant

regardless of their racial or national background."<sup>15</sup> This prediction of a great number of believers throughout the world is considered by Isaiah to be fulfilled in a group which he called "my servants" and "the planting of Yahweh."<sup>16</sup> Isaiah said in 56:8 that along with gathering the dispersed of Israel, "Yet others will I gather to them, to those already gathered." Among the servants of Yahweh--all nations and tongues--Yahweh will set a sign. They will then declare Yahweh's glory to all the nations and will bring "brethren from all the nations as a grain offering to Yahweh" (66:20).

Concerning the fulfillment of these prophecies, MacRae says:

The prediction of the great spread of the knowledge of God among the Gentiles, so that those who were formerly barren would have even more spiritual sons than the married woman, was exactly fulfilled in the early days of the spread of Christianity. This was a development quite unexpected by the apostles when their ministry began, even though Christ had told them that they should be witnesses to Him, not only "in Jerusalem and in all Judea," but even "in Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).<sup>17</sup>

This vast number of people who believed in the Christ was called the Church. The individual members of the Church went throughout the world preaching that God through Jesus was redeeming the world. Therefore, Isaiah saw the fifth creation, the creation of the nation of Yahweh's servants, the Church.

The final creation which Isaiah described in his vision was the creation of a new heavens and a new earth. This new world which was described as being "created" in 65:1-66:24 was also described in several passages throughout the vision of Isaiah which revealed a renewing of the world or Jerusalem.<sup>18</sup>

This view of the sixth creation was picked up by the writers of the New Testament. Peter, in his second letter, wrote of the destruction of the present universe by fire (II Pe 3:10-13). John in his Revelation of Jesus Christ saw a "new heaven and a new earth" and a "new Jerusalem." (Re 21:1-22:5). It is clear that John believed that he saw the fulfillment of Isaiah's vision because of the close parallels between the Revelation of Jesus Christ and the vision of Isaiah.<sup>19</sup>

The depictions of these six creations which Isaiah presented throughout his vision alongside the use of the primeval pattern of history for the structure of his prophecy, as well as the extensive use of creation themes in his prophecy, reveal that Isaiah had formulated a complete theology centered around the concept of Yahweh's creative capacity. The creation was not just a one-time event, for Yahweh was active even now working to redeem his people and the world.

It is clear that Isaiah has provided the modern believer a great service with his formulation of a creation theology. The original creation of the universe

and the redemptive act of the exodus serve to lend support to the believer's faith that God is working now. The proclamation and identification of God as Yahweh served to show that God desired a close relationship with mankind. Consequently, the faith of the Christian is buttressed by the realities of the creations of Yahweh because he can trust in the present creative activity of God.

### Creation-Science

The treatment of creation in the vision of Isaiah reveals several principles which can be useful in the modern debate between creation and evolution. The most important principle Isaiah presented concerning the creation of the earth was the principle of creation by word. By the declaration of new things Yahweh created and still creates. When Yahweh speaks, that which he speaks occurs.

Although God by the word of command could intervene in a random process, which is the method involved in evolution and which a theistic evolutionist would claim, Isaiah indicated several times that Yahweh created with a plan in mind. This concept of plan would have no place for a random process although it could include a process. The planned process begun by the creative command is the methodology which Yahweh uses whenever he creates. On the other hand, the random process begun by

chance is a method of creation that is preferred by evolutionists because with chance as the motivator of the creative process man becomes the supreme creature. There is no need for a creator. This conflict between man's thoughts and God's thoughts is declared by Yahweh himself. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts. Neither are your ways My ways" (55:8).

This desire for supremacy is revealed in the motif of pride in which mankind glories in its achievements and beauty. Because God desires a relationship with mankind, he must humble mankind. When its creaturehood is recognized, then a relationship between Yahweh and mankind can be established. The recognition of who Yahweh is is the sole purpose of both the good and the evil which Yahweh creates. The evil is created to humble man in his punishment,<sup>20</sup> while redemptive acts (good) are predicted and created now to bring about a knowledge of Yahweh.

There is a difference between the evil which Yahweh creates and the evil which man creates. The evil which Yahweh creates involves the destructive forces of nature and human relationships. It is intended to bring a repentant response from man. For example, the armies of Assyrians and Babylonians were used by Yahweh to exile his people. It was a plan to bring his people to worship him only. On the other hand, the evil of man is not intended to establish relationship but to break it. It

is an evil that is directed against Yahweh himself. In man's rebellion against Yahweh and his attempt to make himself supreme, the human relationships are shattered as well. The difference between the two evils is that Yahweh creates evil out of love and a desire for relationship with mankind, while mankind creates evil out of rebellion and a desire not for relationship but for supremacy.

This desire for supremacy is inherent in the process hypothesized to be evolutionary because the primary thrust of evolution is the survival of the fittest. This theme could involve the theme of relationship in that individual animals band together in order to survive. However, primarily it is a theme that highlights the struggle between one creature and another for existence ultimately culminating in the elimination of one of the individual creatures. It is clear from the vision of Isaiah that Yahweh does not desire mankind to be struggling for survival with other creature because his creation of the new heavens and the new earth provide an environment where the life of man and other creatures are fulfilled. They enjoy their lives rather than always contending with others or with nature to maintain it. Isaiah prophesied that this struggle for survival between mankind and animal would no longer exist because Yahweh said, "They shall do no evil or harm in all My holy mountain" (65:25). Therefore, Yahweh's sympathies are not



in line with the major tenet of evolution, survival of the fittest.

The struggle in which man and animals are involved was seen by Isaiah to be a result of the curse placed upon the world by Yahweh because of mankind's sin. As Isaiah said:

The earth is also polluted by its inhabitants, for they transgressed laws, violated statutes, broke the everlasting covenant. Therefore, a curse devours the earth, and those who live in it are held guilty (24:5-6).

This curse is not permanent. However, it does pervade all of life. Again Yahweh's desire is to reverse the curse which he placed upon the world as shown in chapters 24-26. As chapter 24 reveals, although there is a curse upon the world, Yahweh is still in control, for Isaiah said, "For Yahweh of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and His glory will be before His elders" (24:23).

Not only will man not be involved in a struggle for existence when the new world is created, but he will be at rest because Yahweh will make his resting place with the man who is humble, repentant and obedient to Yahweh. Once again, man will fulfill the task that Yahweh has for him as well as the relationship that Yahweh desires with him. Consequently, Isaiah has presented a sketch of a world, which is Yahweh's ultimate goal, in which Yahweh is moving toward a reestablishment of the world as it was

before man's sin and before the curse.

The testimony of evolution would contradict such a claim. In evolution there is no such thing as intervention in the process. The theistic evolutionist would claim that creation occurred by evolution with God intervening at special points. The evolutionist would claim that the process of life has always been the same. There is nothing to reverse. The theist would argue that only man's sin needs to be reversed. The prophecy of Isaiah, however, says that the curse devours the earth thus altering its original nature, its joy, its relationships. Not only will man's disobedience be reversed through the obedient suffering of the servant of Yahweh, but the curse upon the earth will be reversed because Yahweh will swallow up death for all time and will wipe away all tears from every face.

In the theistic scheme of evolution, Yahweh would not only be contending against the evil nature of man but also with the evil nature of evolution. Isaiah did not depict Yahweh fighting the evil of nature but, rather, the evil of man.<sup>21</sup> Those conflicts of creation that were used by Isaiah were illustrative, not of an eternal conflict which Yahweh won and, consequently, became the supreme God, but of Yahweh's supreme power over the evil nature of man which effects the redemption of his people.

In the evolutionary scheme of creation the process

of random evolution and matter are both eternal. Yahweh, through Isaiah, strongly objects to any object that attempts to usurp his glory. He says, "I will not give My glory to another" (42:8; 48:11). Yahweh alone is the everlasting God (41:28).

### Myth

Finally, whether Isaiah thought of the primeval stories as myth, his use of the motifs from these stories reflects the trans-historical and the pedagogical functions of myth. The trans-historical function of myth is demonstrated in two manners: 1) the belief in the verity of the Genesis accounts and 2) the reapplication of the principles of creation to the people of his own day. The manner in which Isaiah spoke of the original creation reveals that he believed that Yahweh actually did create the world. He believed that the Genesis account was true. Because Yahweh actually did create the world by the word of command, he could command new things to happen now for his own people. Isaiah thus made the doctrine of creation practical for his own day. He reapplied the principle of creation to the situations of his own people.

This reapplication of creation involves the pedagogical function of myth. In the process of reapplying the creation doctrine to the situations of his own day, Isaiah taught the people about the kind of God they had.

He showed them that he was a God who desired a relationship with them, that he was a God whose predictions could be trusted, and that he was a God who was determined to redeem his people and the world. Yahweh was a God who loved them. Whether or not Isaiah believed that the creation stories were myth, it is clear that he used two of the functions of myth as he presented his message of the creative, redeeming God, Yahweh.

## NOTES

<sup>1</sup>cf. Appendix, Table 8, The Primeval Model of History.

<sup>2</sup>Gerhard von Rad, Genesis, A Commentary, trans., John H. Marks, The Old Testament Library, eds., Peter Ackroyd, et al (rev. ed.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1974), pp. 152-55 provides a discussion of this model of history.

<sup>3</sup>cf. Is. 43:7; 43:1; 44:1,2.

<sup>4</sup>Mt. 12:18-21 quoted Is. 42:1-4 in application to Jesus and Luke quoted Is. 53:7-8 in Acts 8:32-33.

<sup>5</sup>John Goldingay, "The Arrangement of Isaiah XLI-XLV," Vetus Testamentum, 29:3:292, 1979.

<sup>6</sup>W. Barnes Tatum, "'The Origin of Jesus Messiah' (Matt 1:1,18a): Matthew's Use of the Infancy Traditions," Journal of Biblical Literature, 96:4:531, 1977.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

<sup>10</sup>A. B. Bruce, The Training of the Twelve (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1972), said:

In the intercessory prayer, e.g., He speaks of the training He had given these men as if it had been the principal part of His own earthly ministry and such, in a sense, it really was (p. 13).

<sup>11</sup>Henri Blocher, The Songs of the Servant (London: Inter-Varsity Press, Richard Clay, Ltd., 1975), p. 16.

<sup>12</sup>Blocher, Songs, p. 42.

<sup>13</sup>Alan A. MacRae, The Gospel of Isaiah (Chicago: Moody Press, 1977), p. 151.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

<sup>16</sup>cf. Is. 60:22; 61:3,6-11; 63:17; 65:1,8-15;  
66:8,14,19-21.

<sup>17</sup>MacRae, Gospel, p. 154.

<sup>18</sup>Such passages are 2:2-4; 9:1-7; 11:1-10; 25-27;  
35; 54:11-17; 60; 62:6-9.

<sup>19</sup>cf. Appendix, Table 9 for parallels between  
Isaiah's vision and John's vision.

<sup>20</sup>Paul Tournier, Guilt and Grace, A Psychological Study, trans., Arthur W. Heathcote (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), p. 149.

<sup>21</sup>Tournier, Guilt, says, "The God of the Bible is a God who enters history, who acts, speaks and strives. He wages a severe struggle with man, to deliver him from his Fall, with a view of his final salvation" (p. 143).

# APPENDIX

Table 1

## New Testament Use of Isaiah<sup>1</sup>

NT Passage	Words Used	Is.	Source
Mt. 3:3	the prophet Isaiah	40:3	2
8:17	Isaiah the prophet	53:4	2
12:17	Isaiah the prophet	42:1	2
13:14	the prophecy of Isaiah	6:9,10	1
15:7	Isaiah prophesied	29:13	1
Mk. 1:2	in Isaiah the prophet	40:3	2
7:6	Isaiah prophesied	29:13	1
Lk. 3:4	in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet	40:3-5	2
4:17	the book of the prophet Isaiah	61:1,2	3
Jn. 1:23	the prophet Isaiah	40:3	2
12:38	Isaiah the prophet	53:1	2
12:39	Isaiah said again	6:9,10	1
12:41	Isaiah said, saw, spoke	53:1	2
		6:9,10	1
Ac. 8:28	reading Isaiah the prophet		
8:30	reading the prophet Isaiah	53:7,8	2
8:32	the passage of the Scripture		
	--fulfills Isaiah 56:3-7--		
28:25	Well spoke the Holy Ghost through Isaiah the prophet	6:9,10	1
Ro. 9:27	Isaiah cries	10:22-23	1
9:29	As Isaiah said before	1:9	1
	9 and 10 allude to and echo Isaiah		
10:16	Isaiah says	53:1	2
10:20	Isaiah becomes bold and says	65:1	3

<sup>1</sup>Young, Isaiah?, p. 12.

Table 2

Evidence against Isaiah 40-66 being  
written in Babylon

Motif	Ref.	Words of the Passage
Spatial Perspective	43:14 41:9 46:11 52:11	I have sent <u>to Babylon</u> and will bring them all down as fugitives the ends of the earth calling a bird of prey from the east Go out <u>from there</u>
Trees of Palestine	44:14	cedars, cypress, oak, fir
Topography	40:4	Let every valley be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low.
Thought on Zion	40:2a 40:9 41:27 44:26 62:6a	Speak kindly to Jerusalem Get yourself on a high mountain, O Zion. Formerly I said to Zion, "Behold, here they are." It is I who says to Jerusalem, "she shall be inhabited." I have appointed watchmen
Walls of Zion	62:6a	still standing
Prediction of Exile	27:8	banished them

Table 3

The Relationship of First and Second Isaiah

First Isaiah	Subject of Parallel	Second Isaiah
28:5	crown of beauty	62:3
29:23	the work of my hands	60:21
33:24	forgiveness; justification	45:25
30:25	streams of water	44:4
22:11; 37:26	God planned history	theme of 40-66
11:6	animals at peace	65:25
34	Edom	63:1-6
39:7	eunuchs	56:4-5
29:18	the blind will see	42:7
30:26	the light of the sun	60:19



Table 4

Parallel Passages between Isaiah  
and the Pre-exilic Prophets

Isaiah	Similarity	Pre-exilic
14:4ff.	the taunt	Hb. 2:6ff.
13:3	consecrated ones	Zp. 1:7
13:7	all hands will fall limp	Ezk. 7:17
13-14	Babylon's destruction	Je. 50-51
58:1	make known Israel's sins	Mi. 3:8
60:22	the least one a mighty nation	Mi. 4:7
24:17,18	terror and pit and snare	Je. 48:43
2:1-4	Come to the mountain of Yahweh	Mi. 4:1-3
34:7	slaughtered bulls	Je. 50:27
34:6	slaughtered lambs	Je. 51:40
34:5-8	satiated sword	Je. 46:10
13:3	proud, exulting ones	Zp. 3:11
47:8,10	"I am and there is no one else"	Zp. 2:15
34:11	pelican and hedgehog	Zp. 2:14
66:16	Yahweh's sword	Zp. 2:12
18:1,7	beyond the rivers of	Zp. 3:10
66:20	Ethiopia	

Table 5

Parallels between Isaiah 43:1-6  
and Jeremiah 30:10ff.

- 1) Fear not
- 2) the appellation, Jacob. ("my servant" also appears in the Jeremiah passage and in Is. 44:21. Of the prophets "my servant" is applied to Jacob only by Isaiah and Jeremiah.)
- 3) I will bring your offspring from the land of captivity.
- 4) I am with you.
- 5) I will destroy other nations.

Table 6

## Parallels between Isaiah and Jeremiah

Jeremiah	Similarity	Isaiah
33:3	things you do not know	48:6
3:16	shall not remember or come to mind	65:17
4:13	chariots like the whirlwind	66:15
11:19	lamb led to the slaughter	53:7
13:18-26	take a lowly seat	47:1-3
48:18	sit on the ground	47:1
31:12	like a watered garden	58:11
31:13	mourning into joy	61:3
31:22	created something new	43:19
31:34	taught of God	54:13
13:16	hope for light but receive darkness	59:9-11
50:8	go forth from Babylon	48:20
51:45		
18:6	clay in potter's hand	64:8
17:1	sins written down within them	65:6
2:25	did not say (did say) "It is hopeless."	57:10

Table 7

Yahweh and his Servant's Destiny  
Isaiah 41:1-42:17<sup>2</sup>

41:1-20 (sequence A)      41:21-42:17 (sequence B)

1. The challenge Yahweh issues before Israel, which cannot be met; trial speech: Yahweh as the plaintiff vs. the nations; summons; Yahweh's case; opposition default; conclusion.

41:1-7

41:21-29

Who moves in history?

Who explains history?

The nations are asked

The nations' gods

They are helpless

are asked

They are useless

2. Yahweh's purpose for his servant.

41:8-16

42:1-9 (10-13)

Salvation oracles (preceded  
by installation oracles?)Installation oracles  
(with implications for  
Israel's salvation)

Table 7 (cont.)

41:8-16	42:1-9 (10-13)
The commitment Yahweh makes to his servant Israel	The commitment Yahweh expects of his servant
He will experience the defeat of his oppressors	He will bring deliverance to the oppressed
3. Yahweh's transforming power, to be acknowledged by men proclamation of salvation. (allusion to lament, God's response, his action, the object)	
41:17-20	42:14-17
He turns desert to garden	He turns garden to desert

<sup>2</sup>Goldingay, "Arrangement," p. 290.

Table 8

## The Primeval Model of History

People Involved	Sin	Judgment	Grace
Adam and eve	disobeyed God's command not to eat a certain fruit	death ground cursed woman's role changed, pain cast out of Eden	clothed by God
Cain	killed Abel	wander the earth without a home	the mark of God to protect his life
daughters of men sons of God	intermarried evil continually	the world-wide flood	Noah's ark rainbow covenant
whole earth	the tower of Babel	language confusion dispersion	Is God's judgment final?
Continuation of Historical Model			Abraham
Israel	idolatry	exiled	The servant Messiah Jesus Christ

Table 9

A Comparison of the New Heavens and  
New Earth Motif found in  
Isaiah and Revelation

Motif	vv.	Isaiah	vv.	Revelation
New hea- ven and earth	65:17 66:22	plural "heavens" "create" אָבַד "make" מָלַךְ	21:1 21:5	singular "heaven" "saw" ὤραον "making" ποιέω
former things	65:17	former things not remembered or come to mind	21:1 21:4	first hea- ven and earth passed away
Jerusa- lem	65:18	"created" אָבַד for rejoicing	21:2	"new" καινός coming out of heaven
bride	61:10 25:6- 10	adorning herself for husband wedding banquet	21:2 21:9	adorned for her husband wife of the Lamb
dwelling place of God	66:1- 2	humble, contrite in spirit, fears his word	21:3	tabernacle of God among men
voice	66:6	from the temple	21:3	from throne
weeping sorrow death	65:19 25:8 65:20 25:8 26:19	no more weeping God wipe away tears death with fulfill- ment death swallowed up the dead will live	21:4	no more pain, mourning, crying no tears no death
thirsty	55:1	Everyone who thirsts come to the waters buy without cost (ἐλευε τιμῆς)	21:6	from spring of water of life without cost (ὁ ὕδατος)
first and last	44:6 48:12	I am the first and I am the last	21:6	a name for Christ

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