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THE GREAT ISAIAH SCROLL (1QISA^A)— CATALOGUE OF TEXTUAL VARIANTS

Donald W. Parry

Abstract: *In this erudite survey of textual variants in the “Great Isaiah Scroll” from Qumran, Donald W. Parry lays out the major categories of these differences with illustrative examples. This significant description of the most significant book of Old Testament prophecy provides ample evidence of Parry’s conclusion that the “Great Isaiah Scroll” “sets forth such a wide diversity and assortment of textual variants that [it] is indeed a catalogue, as it were, for textual criticism.”*

[**Editor’s Note:** Part of our book chapter reprint series, this article is reprinted here as a service to the LDS community. Original pagination and page numbers have necessarily changed, otherwise the reprint has the same content as the original.]

See Donald W. Parry, “The Great Isaiah Scroll (1QISA^A)—Catalogue of Textual Variants,” in *“To Seek the Law of the Lord”: Essays in Honor of John W. Welch*, ed. Paul Y. Hoskisson and Daniel C. Peterson (Orem, UT: The Interpreter Foundation, 2017), 247–65. Further information at <https://interpreterfoundation.org/books/to-see-the-law-of-the-lord-essays-in-honor-of-john-w-welch-2/>.

The Qumran caves, located near the northwestern area of the Dead Sea, yielded twenty-one copies of the book of Isaiah—two from Cave 1, eighteen from Cave 4, and one from Cave 5. An additional copy (making a total of twenty-two copies) of Isaiah was discovered south of Qumran in a cave at Wadi Murabba’at. All twenty-two copies of Isaiah are written in Hebrew. Most of these scrolls are severely damaged and fragmented, owing to long-term exposure to the elements. Altogether,

the Isaiah scrolls represent about 10 percent of all biblical scrolls discovered at Qumran. This statistic alone indicates that Isaiah held a prominent place in the Qumran community, but other indications also reveal Isaiah's significance. Isaiah's book is treated as an authoritative work by the Qumran covenanters; in their sectarian writings, they cite, paraphrase, and allude to Isaiah more than any other prophet. These Isaiah quotations and allusions are located in legal, eschatological, and poetic contexts of the sectarian writings and reveal ideological and theological positions of the Qumran community. In addition to the twenty-two Isaiah scrolls themselves and the sectarian writings that include quotes and allusions to Isaiah, the Qumran discoveries included six Isaiah *pesharim* (commentaries).

The twenty-two copies of Isaiah represent significant archaeological finds. These Isaiah texts, discovered between the years 1947 and 1952, have impacted our understanding of the textual history of the Bible, and translators have utilized them for modern translations of the Bible.

The most significant of the twenty-two copies of Isaiah is called the Great Isaiah Scroll, or 1QIsa^a. This scroll is virtually complete, containing all sixty-six chapters. It is the only complete biblical scroll discovered in the eleven Qumran caves; as such, it presents a view of what biblical manuscripts looked like at the end of the Second Temple era, around the first century CE. Unlike the Masoretic Text (MT) with its consonantal and vocalization framework and system of notes, accents, and versification, 1QIsa^a features a handwritten manuscript without vocalization or accents. Additionally, 1QIsa^a contains interlinear or marginal corrections, scribal marks and notations, a different paragraphing system, and special morphological and orthographic features.

With regard to the topic of this present paper, 1QIsa^a contains such an assortment of textual variants versus the readings of MT, that this Qumran scroll may be considered a catalogue of textual variants. By *catalogue*, I refer to a "complete list of items." But unlike most catalogues, which generally present items in a systematic manner (such as alphabetical order), the textual variants of 1QIsa^a are not so systematized.

Scribal Activity in 1QIsa^a Produces Textual Variants

The scribe(s) who copied 1QIsa^a from a master copy had somewhat of a free approach to the text, characterized by exegetical or editorial pluses, morphological smoothing and updating, harmonizations, phonetic variants, and modernizations of terms. There is also evidence that a

well-intended scribe simplified the text for an audience that no longer understood certain classical Hebrew forms. His editorial tendencies resulted in a popularization of certain terms, some from Aramaic that reflected the language of Palestine in his time period. This free approach, together with errors that occurred during the transmission of the text (e.g., haplography, dittography, graphic similarity, misdivision of words, interchange of letters, transposition of texts), occasionally produced textual variants.

These textual variants may be divided into four categories:

- (1) inadvertent errors that have occurred during transmission of the text
- (2) intentional changes of the text on the part of the scribes and copyists of either MT Isaiah or 1QIsa^a
- (3) synonymous readings
- (4) scribes' stylistic approaches and conventions to the text

Not all variant readings, of course, fit neatly into one of these four categories; some readings are indeterminate.

It should be understood that examples of textual variants do not exist solely because of the scribal activity of one single witness or its ancestors, but because of the scribal activity of one or more of the major witnesses. Most of these scribal errors may easily be categorized according to the rules of textual criticism. A single type of reading does not dominate the deviations between MT Isaiah and 1QIsa^a. The following examples, which serve to illustrate the variety of such variant readings listed above, demonstrate that 1QIsa^a is indeed a catalogue of sorts of textual variants.

(1) Inadvertent Errors

Various publications that reveal the nature of textual criticism refer to mishaps that occur during the transmission of texts.¹ These include

It is a privilege to dedicate this article to my friend and colleague John Welch for his many contributions to studies of import to Latter-day Saints.

1 The most complete and up-to-date study of biblical Hebrew textual criticism is Emanuel Tov's *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992). See also Christian D. Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition of the Hebrew Bible* (London: Trinitarian Bible Society, 1897; reprinted with prolegomenon by Harry M. Orlinsky, New York: Ktav, 1966); J. Weingreen, *Introduction to the Critical Study of the Text of the Hebrew Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982). Compare also the more brief treatments of the subject by Julio T. Barrera, *The Jewish Bible and the Christian Bible*, trans. W. G. E. Watson (Brill: Leiden, 1998), 367–421 and Ernst

pluses (e.g., dittography, conflate readings), minuses (e.g., haplography, *homoioteleuton*,² *homoioarcton*), changes (e.g., misdivision of letters or words, ligatures, graphic similarity), and differences in sequence (interchange of letters or metathesis and transposition of words). All of these major categories of accidental errors are present in both of the Hebrew witnesses MT Isaiah and 1QIsa^a.

Pluses—Minor Readings

1:2 ארץ MT | הארץ 1QIsa^a •

Most pluses that exist in either MT Isaiah or 1QIsa^a consist of function words or common words, such as *and*, *the*, *all*, *one*, *to*, *for*, *in*, *like*, et cetera. In Isaiah 1:2, 1QIsa^a has the plus of the article on ארץ, thus reading הָאָרֶץ; but the article is lacking on MT Isaiah.

1:15 > MT 4QIsa^f | אצבעותיכם בעאון 1QIsa^a •

A well-known example of a plus in 1QIsa^a is located in Isaiah 1:15, בעאון אצבעותיכם (*your fingers with iniquity*). This plus is lacking in MT 4QIsa^f. מלאו אצבעותיכם בעאון serves to fill out the parallelism, thus, ידיכמה דמים (“your hands are full of blood, your fingers with iniquity”). It is possible that this plus is a primary reading, which dropped out of the proto-Masoretic text during its transmission history. Watts writes, “The addition [of 1QIsa^a] is parallel to the previous stich and would be a metrical improvement on MT.”³ So, too, Burrows states regarding 1QIsa^a’s plus that “a fourth stichos would undoubtedly improve the metrical structure.”⁴ Cohen provides a compelling argument in favor of the originality of the plus belonging to 1QIsa^a, presenting four reasons as to why the scroll is to be preferred. Not only does he produce Ugaritic parallels, but he points out that “the parallelism in the first two clauses makes the possibility of parallelism in the second half of the verse more likely.”⁵

Würthwein, *The Text of the Old Testament*, trans. Erroll F. Rhodes; Eerdmans (Grand Rapids, MI, 1995), 107–22.

2 Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition*, 171–82, features a methodical examination of minuses caused by homoioteleuton.

3 John D. W. Watts, “Isaiah 1–33,” in *Word Biblical Commentary*, Vol. 24, ed. David Hubbard and Glenn Barker (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 14.

4 M. Burrows, “Variant Readings in the Isaiah Manuscript,” *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research (BASOR)* 111 (Oct. 1948): 19.

5 Chaim Cohen, “A Philological Reevaluation of Some Significant DSS Variants of the MT in Isaiah 1–5,” in *Diggers at the Well: Proceedings of a Third International Symposium on the Hebrew of the Dead Sea Scrolls and Ben Sira*, ed. Takamitsu Muraoka

Or, as some textual critics maintain, 1QIsa^a features a harmonization, a word or phrase that has been drawn from a similar context or parallel passage, either from Isaiah itself or from another biblical book. This harmonization may have been created from the scribal school that produced 1QIsa^a or from its *Vorlage*. This particular plus, some critics claim, was adapted from 59:3, which reads כפיכמה ננאלו בדם ואצבעוהיכמה כִּי־א. For other passages where *blood* is paired with *iniquity*, see 26:21; Ezekiel 3:18. For examples of other harmonizations in the scroll, see also 34:4 (cf. Micah 1:4); 51:3 (cf. 35:10; 51:11; 51:6 (cf. 40:26); 52:12 (cf. 54:5); and 60:4 (cf. 66:12).⁶

Conflations

Some deviant readings between the witnesses are conflated readings. Although conflated readings are not always clear-cut, one or more textual critics have identified a conflated element in the deviations. In Isaiah 11:9, the reading of 1QIsa^a (תמלאה) is a hybrid verbal form, a conflation, possessing elements of a perfect feminine singular verb (= MT מלאה) and also the imperfect feminine prefix.⁷ See also the conflated/hybrid form in Isaiah 63:3 (אנאלהי). In Isaiah 14:2, MT reads אֶל־מְקוֹמָם, but 1QIsa^a has a plus, אל אדמתם ואל מקומם; from whence came אל אדמתם? The scroll's scribe was possibly impacted by the double manifestation of אדמה in the immediate context, first attested in verse 1 and then again later in verse 2. Or, 1QIsa^a's reading may be a conflation, based either on its *Vorlage* or another manuscript that read אל אדמתם.

Dittography

30:30 1QIsa^a השמייע השמייע | MT יהשמייע

יהשמייע—1QIsa^a's duplication of השמייע serves no rhetorical purpose; rather, it is a dittography.

and John F. Elwolde, *Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah (STDJ) 36* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 47.

6 For an additional discussion on harmonizations, see J. Koenig, *L'herméneutique analogique du judaïsme antique d'après les témoins textuels d'Isaïe*, *Vetus Testamentum*, Supplements 33 (Leiden: Brill, 1982).

7 See Shemaryahu Talmon, "Aspects of the Textual Transmission in the Light of Qumran Manuscripts," in *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. Frank Moore Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 248.

Haplography

2:3 אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה MT 4QIsa^a (אל הרן יהוה) | > 1QIsa^a •

אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה—For an example of a haplography, see Isaiah 2:3 where 1QIsa^a omitted the expression אֶל־הַר־יְהוָה by means of haplography, triggered by the prepositions אל . . . אל.

6:2 שש כנפים MT | שש כנפים 1QIsa^a •

שש כנפים—The copyist of 1QIsa^a wrote down שש כנפים and then skipped the second שש כנפים, another example of haplography.

Homoioteleuton

4:5–6 וְעָשָׂן וְנָגַה אֵשׁ לְהִבָּה לְיֵלֶה כִּי עַל־כָּל־פְּכוּד חֲפָה: וְסִבָּה תְהִיָּה לְצַל־יּוֹמִים
MT 4QIsa^a ([וְנָגַה אֵשׁ לְהִבָּה לְיּוֹמִים] לְצַל יּוֹמִים) | > 1QIsa^a •

Verses 5b–6a dropped out of 1QIsa^a through *homoioteleuton*, when the scribe's eye went from יומם to יומם. The reading of MT is supported by both 4QIsa^a and other versions.

Confusion of Letters or Graphic Similarity⁸

Graphically similar readings account for a small number of the readings of 1QIsa^a, where either the copyists of MT or the Qumran scroll incorrectly copied the text by using graphically similar characters.

4:4 בער MT | סער 1QIsa^a •

בער—The variant of 1QIsa^a (סער, “and by the whirlwind”) has no contextual significance in this passage; it is likely that a copyist slipped by writing *samek* rather than *bet*, an error that pertains to the graphic similarity of the two characters. Or he was impacted by the expression רוח סערה (“whirlwind” or “stormy wind.”) in Ezekial 1:4; 13:11, 13; Psalms 107:25; 148:8. For support of MT's reading of בער, see also Jeremiah 21:12 which also collocates the words משפט and בער¹ in the context of the execution of judgment.

9:8[English v. 9] וידעו MT | וידעו 1QIsa^a •

וידעו—The variants between MT (וידעו) and 1QIsa^a (וידעו) most likely arose because of the confusion of the letters *dalet/resh* in the Assyrian square script. For other instances of the *dalet/resh* interchange in MT

8 See Weingreen, *Introduction to the Critical Study*, 38–45, for examples of graphically similar letters together with examples of variants in the HB.

and 1QIsa^a, see also Isaiah 16:14; 17:6, 12; 22:5; 23:10; 27:2; 33:8; 40:20; 41:19, and others. But it is also possible that the 1QIsa^a scribe (or his *Vorlage*) intentionally rendered the verb וירעו (via רעע√), thus reading, “And all the people will do evil (וירעו), even Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, who say in pride and arrogance of heart...” There is one additional possibility, set forth by Kutscher.⁹ He reminds us that the רעע√ (“to tremble”; see Isa. 15:4) may have been the scroll’s intended meaning.

22:5 קר ושוע MT | 1QIsa^a קדשו •

1QIsa^a reads קדשו. According to Weingreen, this is an example of graphic similarity: קדשו = קר ושוע. The *ayin* may have lost its guttural sound late in antiquity and a scribe read the *dalet* for the *resh*.¹⁰ Consequently, the same scribe or a subsequent copyist changed the preposition אל to על in order to make sense of the passage. Contrast Weingreen with Blenkinsopp,¹¹ who prefers the reading of 1QIsa^a. He writes that verse “5b [of MT] defies translation and has probably been seriously damaged in the transmission; the present translation depends on 1QIsa^a (*mqrqr qdšv lhr*), which makes better though by no means perfect sense and which MT (*mqrqr qr všv’ l hhr*) may represent a damaged version.” Blenkinsopp, therefore, translates verse 5b, “with crying out for help to his holy place on the mountain.”

Misdivision of Words

9:2[English v. 3] לא MT^{ket} 1QIsa^a (לוֹא) | MT^{qere} לו •

לוֹא — For other occasions where לוֹא reads “to him” (versus “no, not”), see Isaiah 3:11. Ginsburg proposes that the original reading was הנילא = הנילה (“the rejoicing”); this word experienced an improper misdivision of words and subsequently the *waw* was incorrectly added.¹² הנילה fits the context and also corresponds with השמחה in the parallelism: “You have increased the rejoicing, you have magnified the joy.”

9 E. Y. Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a)*, STDJ 6 (Leiden: Brill, 1974), 246.

10 Weingreen, *Introduction to the Critical Study*, 53.

11 Joseph Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, Vol. 19 of Anchor Bible (New York: Doubleday, 2000), 332.

12 Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition*, 161.

Interchange of Letters or Metathesis¹³

3:7 שלמה MT | שלמה 1QIsa^a •

שלמה—MT (שִׁמְלָה) and 1QIsa^a (שלמה) exhibit two different words for *garment* or *clothing*. In the Hebrew Bible, שִׁמְלָה (31 times) is attested approximately twice as often as שלמה (16 times). Both carry the same meaning. Kutscher produces a body of evidence “that שלמה is the original form and שִׁמְלָה of later vintage”; at some point through the transmission of the word, שלמה came about by means of metathesis.¹⁴ Based on the fact that the previous verse (3:6) is part of the same pericope and that verse attests שִׁמְלָה for both MT and 1QIsa^a, then שלמה in 1QIsa^a 3:7 signifies an error, an example of metathesis of the *mem* and *lamed*. Or, alternatively, the scribe’s *Vorlage* already contained the reading of שלמה. Compare also the variant of ושמלתנו and ושלמתנו in 4:1.

Possible Ligature

20:6 נָסוּ MT | נָסַךְ 1QIsa^a •

נָסוּ—MT and 1QIsa^a produce two different verbal roots, נָסַךְ (“to flee”) and נָסַךְ (“to lean, support”) respectively. MT has the primary reading, because נָסַךְ is often collocated with שֵׁם (e.g., Gen. 19:20; Exod. 21:13; Num. 35:6), an adverbial particle that follows the verb in both MT and 1QIsa^a in the verse under discussion. נָסַךְ followed by שֵׁם (= 1QIsa^a) is unprecedented in the Bible and achieves an awkward reading. It is possible that the scroll’s scribe changed the verbal root to reflect his particular historical understanding regarding the pericope under discussion, the Conquest of Ethiopia and Egypt: Isaiah’s Dramatization (Isa. 20:1–6). Thus Pulikottil has written, “The scribe wanted to make it clear that the people of the coastland did not flee to Egypt for help, which never happened; they only relied on the military assistance of Egypt.”¹⁵ It is more probable, owing to the graphic similarities of נָסַךְ and נָסַךְ (both forms begin with *nun* and *samek*, plus a ligatured *nun* and *waw* share the appearance of a *mem*), that the scribe simply misread or miscopied the verb that was in his *Vorlage*.

13 For additional examples of metathesis in the Hebrew Bible, see H. Junker, “Konsonantenumstellung als Fehlerquelle und textkritisches Hilfsmittel im AT,” *Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft (BZAW)* 66 (1936): 162–74.

14 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 288.

15 Paulson Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll 1QIsa^a* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 132.

Word Order¹⁶

1:30 מים אין MT 4QIsa^f (מים אין) | מים אין 1QIsa^a •

מים אין—These terms are syntactically variegated (or transposed) in MT versus 1QIsa^a. Both מים אין (= MT and 4QIsa^f; see also Num. 20:5) and מים אין (= 1QIsa^a; see also Exod. 17:1; Num. 21:5; Deut. 8:15; Isa. 50:2; Jer. 38:6; Zech. 9:11) exist in the Bible, although מים אין is more common. Because of the multiple examples of such variations, Talmon has written that the “widely encountered textual phenomenon of inter-Version variations in the form of syntactical inversion cannot be judged to be merely an indication of ordinary scribal laxity.”¹⁷ Instead, Talmon sees many examples of such variations as “evidence for the existence of equally valid text-traditions which cannot be reduced to one common archetype, and/or scribal manifestations of stylistic conventions.”¹⁸ For other examples of syntactical variations between MT and 1QIsa^a, see Isaiah 23:9; 36:12; 37:1, 7, 32–33; 38:19; 43:3; 49:6, 25; 52:7; 55:13; 60:7; 61:7; 62:8; 63:9, 17. For syntactical variations between MT and for 1QIsa^b, see 52:13 and 62:8. And for an example of a syntactical variation between MT and 4QIsa^f, see 8:7.

36:12 העל ארניך ואליך MT 2 Kings 18:27 (העל ארניך ואליך) | ארניכמה ועל 1QIsa^a

העל ארניך ואליך—1QIsa^a (האליכמה ועל ארניכמה) presents a different word order than MT's. For a discussion of syntactical inversions or variations between MT and 1QIsa^a, see 1:30 above.

37:7 בל רוח MT 2 Kings 19:7 | רוח בוא 1QIsa^a •

בל רוח—MT and 1QIsa^a (רוח בוא) have a different word order for these two words. Note that the scribe often spelled בו with the *alep* (cf. also כיא = כי; לו = לוא).

(2) Intentional Changes

Scribes and copyists of either MT or 1QIsa^a intentionally made changes to the Isaiah text. These changes include exegetical pluses or late editorial

16 It is not always easy to determine if the category “Word Order” belongs to “Inadvertent Errors” or to “Intentional Changes.” Unless there is evidence to the contrary, I am placing “Word Order” in the grouping of “Inadvertent Errors.”

17 Shemaryahu Talmon, “Textual Study of the Bible—A New Outlook,” *Qumran and the History of the Biblical Text*, ed. Frank Moore Cross and Shemaryahu Talmon (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975) 370–71.

18 Ibid.

additions, harmonizations (when a scribe blends one reading with a second reading that is located in the immediate or greater context, or with a parallel text), morphological smoothing, morphological updating, updating the vocabulary, euphemistic changes, orthographic variants, and phonetic differences.

Exegetical Plus

44:3 קצא² MT | קצא² prec 1QIsa^a •

קצא²—The adverbial particle כן (*thus, so*) is an exegetical plus in 1QIsa^a that was inserted interlinearly, probably to assist in the flow of reading between two clauses in the verse.

Harmonizations

34:4 > MT | והעמקים יתבקעו 1QIsa^a •

והעמקים יתבקעו—This plus of 1QIsa^a, listed by scholars in verse 4, actually belongs to verse 3. Brownlee declares the plus of 1QIsa^a to be a harmonization, derived from Micah 1:4 (והעמקים יתבקעו). He further argues that the reading of MT (v. 3), minus the plus of 1QIsa^a, comprises a tristich as follows: “Their slain shall be flung out, and from their corpses their own stench shall rise—the mountains melting down with blood!” (translation by Brownlee). The third line of this tristich, writes Brownlee, serves as a “climax or conclusion” to the parallelistic structure, and that such a configuration is quite acceptable by modern scholars.¹⁹ While the reading of MT is acceptable, the following two bicolons that are attested in the Qumran scroll also comprise a satisfactory structure, with “the valleys will be split” filling out the second bicolon: “Their slain will be cast down, and the stench of their corpses will rise, mountains will melt with their blood, the valleys will be split.” The plus of the scroll may have been derived from Micah 1:4 (or vice versa) or from a source that is common to both the book of Micah and the Isaiah Scroll or its *Vorlage*.

19 W. H. Brownlee, *The Meaning of the Qumran Scrolls for the Bible. With Special Attention to the Book of Isaiah* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 184–85.

Morphological Smoothing²⁰

לוא הנחומים לוא | (ואשלמה נחומים לו) MT 1QIsa^b ואשלים נחומים לו 57:18
 לוא 1QIsa^a ואשלם •

1QIsa^a doubles the dative pronoun (ואשלים לו) via conflation. With regard to the MT reading נחומים, 1QIsa^b and 1QIsa^a has הנחומים, which is the Mishnaic Hebrew form.²¹ This is direct evidence that the scroll's scribe has modernized this word.

The deviation between MT (לו "to him") and 1QIsa^a (לוא "to him") is not a variant reading, but an orthographic difference. Often the scroll writes "to him" with an *alep* (compare also כוא = כו; בוא = בו). For other examples of לוא ("to him"), see Isaiah 5:26; 9:2 (MT^{qere} = לו; MT^{ket} = לוא); 31:8; 36:22; 44:7; 57:18 (*bis* in the scroll); 59:16; 63:9.

62:1 אהרש MT | אהרש 1QIsa^a •

אהרש—Following the negative particle לא are variant verbal roots, אהרש in MT and אהרש in 1QIsa^a. These verbs are employed as synonymous readings in at least two parallelistic structures (see Isa. 42:14; Ps. 28:1), but here they are deviations in the first bicolon of verse 1. The reading of 1QIsa^a may have been assimilated from one of these two parallelisms (Isa. 42:14 or Ps. 28:1); or, according to Talmon, the Qumran scroll "presumably perpetuated an established reading."²² The theory held by Kutscher²³ that a scribe of 1QIsa^a modernized the reading from the relatively rare אהרש (16 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible) to the more popular אהרש (47 occurrences in the Hebrew Bible) may be questioned because אהרש was *not* modernized in other verses of 1QIsa^a, i.e., 42:14; 57:11; 62:6; 64:11, and 65:6.

20 Smoothing, together with archaizing and modernizing, are "three related skewing processes which are involved in text production and preservation." Bruce K. Waltke and M. O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 11. For examples of smoothing from the Samaritan Pentateuch, see 13. Morphological smoothing is a scribal activity that seeks to remove textual unevenness or inconsistencies through leveling out the text. Such inconsistencies may pertain to morphological, phonological, or syntactical structures.

21 Marcus Jastrow, *Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli, and the Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2005), 1681.

22 Shemaryahu Talmon, "Observations on Variant Readings in the Isaiah Scroll (1QIsa^a)," in *The World of Qumran from Within: Collected Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 128.

23 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 34, 239.

Morphological Updating

13:10 יהלֹו MT | יאִירוּ 1QIsa^a •

יהלֹו—MT יהלֹו (via √הלל, “to shine”) sets forth the difficult reading, because √הלל occurs only four times in the Bible (Isa. 13:10; Job 29:3; 31:26; 41:10) and this verb does not exist in Rabbinic Hebrew. The scribe of 1QIsa^a replaced the rare יהלֹו with the common יאִירוּ (via √אור), thus updating the text to a common biblical and Rabbinic Hebrew root.

37:13 וְעָהָהּ MT 2 Kings 19:9 | + וְשׁוֹמְרוֹן 1QIsa^a •

וְעָהָהּ—37:11–13 refers to nations, kingdoms, and city-states that Assyria had destroyed, including Gozen, Haran, Rezep, Telassar, Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah. At the end of the list of names of nations and city-states, 1QIsa^a adds “and Samaria” (וְשׁוֹמְרוֹן). Scholars generally agree that the invasion of Sennacherib into the kingdom of Judah (36:1–21) and Hezekiah’s reaction (36:22–37:20) occurred after Samaria’s destruction in 722 BCE. The 1QIsa^a scribe therefore added “and Samaria” to the text with the intent of updating the list of kingdoms and city-states. But this addition is unnecessary because the list of names in verses 11–13 was not meant to be comprehensive, but representative. *Samaria* was not listed simply because Hezekiah would have already been painfully aware of its destruction, for Samaria was his northern neighbor.

Updating the Vocabulary²⁴

33:7 צָעַקוּ MT | זָעַקוּ 1QIsa^a

צָעַקוּ—In the Bible, √זעק and √צעק have the same meaning (“to cry out”). In Isaiah 14:31; 15:4–5; 26:17; 30:19; 57:13, both MT and 1QIsa^a attest √זעק; in Isaiah 19:20, both MT and 1QIsa^a have √צעק. But in Isaiah 33:7; 42:2; 46:7; 65:14, these two witnesses have deviations—MT reads √צעק and the scroll has √זעק. In other words, of the eleven occurrences of √זעק/√צעק in Isaiah, the Qumran scroll has √זעק ten times, but uses √צעק only once. Inasmuch as the √זעק is used more often in later biblical books,²⁵ it appears that the scroll’s copyist updated the vocabulary from √צעק to √זעק in 33:7; 42:2; 46:7; 65:14. The versions cannot shed light on these readings.

24 Occasionally scribes from the Hebrew witnesses of Isaiah have updated the vocabulary, replacing archaic and outdated words with contemporary usage.

25 See the discussion in Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 233.

Euphemistic Changes

Biblical scholars provide examples of indelicate words or anthropomorphisms that have been removed from the Hebrew Bible and replaced with euphemisms²⁶ or dysphemisms. Yeivin, for example, cites TB Megilla 25b, “Wherever the text is written indelicately, we read it delicately” and posits, “In 16 cases in the Bible, the *qere* form presents a euphemism.”²⁷ Ginsburg maintains that “authoritative redactors of the Sacred Scriptures”²⁸ removed indelicate words and anthropomorphisms.

36:12 תְּרֵאֵהֶם MT^{ket} 1QIsa^a (חריהמה) 2 Kings 18:27 | צוֹאֵהֶם MT^{qere} •
 שִׁינִיָּהֶם MT^{ket} 1QIsa^a (שיניהמה) 2 Kings 18:27 MT^{ket} | מִימֵי רַגְלֵיהֶם M^{qere}
 2 Kings 18:27^{qere} •

תְּרֵאֵהֶם—This word (cf. 2 Kings 18:27) belongs to the list of words in Megilla 25b that are considered to be indelicate expressions; צוֹאֵהֶם (“filth”) is to be its euphemistic substitution. Hence the MT^{ket}/ MT^{qere} reading here.

19:18 הַהָרִים MT | הָהָרִים 1QIsa^a 4QIsa^b | שֵׁם שֶׁמֶשׁ רַעַתִּירָא לְמַחֲרָב Tg •

הַהָרִים—MT reads “the city of destruction” and two Qumran scrolls attest “the city of the sun.” On the one hand, the variants between the Qumran scrolls and MT may be represented by a simple copyist error, writing *he* instead of *het*, or vice versa.²⁹ On the other hand, critics have argued that a redactor/editor of MT made a tendentious change to the text, or what McCarthy calls “a secondary dysphemism.”³⁰ This textual change came about, according to one theory, to protect the legitimacy of the Jerusalem temple against a Jewish temple that was believed to have existed in Heliopolis.³¹ HOTTP, Kutscher, and Wildberger support “City of the Sun” as the original reading.³²

26 On euphemisms in the Bible, see the study of Abraham Geiger, *Urschrift und Übersetzungen der Bibel in ihrer Abhängigkeit von der inneren Entwicklung des Judenthums* (Breslau: Hainauer, 1857; repr., Frankfurt: Mada, 1928), 267–68.

27 Israel Yeivin, *Introduction to the Tiberian Masorah*, trans. E. J. Revell (Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1980), 56.

28 Ginsburg, *Introduction to the Massoretico-Critical Edition*, 346–347; see also 347–404.

29 For other examples of *he/het* confusion, see Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 506.

30 Carmel McCarthy, *The Tiqqune Sopherim and Other Theological Corrections in the Masoretic Text of the Old Testament* (OBO, Freiburg and Göttingen, 1981), 239.

31 M. Delcor, “Le Temple d’Onias en Egypte,” *Revue Biblique (RB)* 75 (1968):188–205.

32 See Hebrew Old Testament Text Project (HOTTP) Vol. 4, 45; Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 116, and Hans Wildberger,

Phonetic Differences

40:11 טָלָאִים MT | טָלִים IQIsa^a •

טָלָאִים—IQIsa^a's טָלִים deviation of טָלָאִים is an orthographic deviation, based on phonetics.³³

16:1 מִסְלַע MT | מִסְלָה IQIsa^a •

מִסְלַע—*Sela* in this verse may refer to a proper name of a site in Moab, which some lexica suggest is Petra; or *Sela* may signify a cliff.³⁴ Elsewhere in the Bible, סֶלַע means “rock” or “cliff.” IQIsa^a's סֶלָה may be an alternate spelling found in the scribe's *Vorlage* or known to the scribe; or more likely, סֶלָה indicates a phonetic error.³⁵

(3) Synonymous Readings³⁶

A few of the textual variants in MT Isaiah and IQIsa^a consist of synonymous readings. According to Talmon, synonymous readings are characterized as follows:

- a) They result from the substitution of words and phrases by others which are used interchangeably and synonymously with them in the literature of the OT. b) They do not affect adversely the structure of the verse, nor do they disturb either its meaning or its rhythm. Hence they cannot be explained as scribal errors. c) No sign of systematic or tendentious emendation can be discovered in them. They are to be taken at face value...If, as far as we can tell, they are not the product of different chronologically or geographically distinct linguistic strata.”³⁷

Isaiah 13–27, Continental Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 727.

³³ For additional examples on variants based on phonetics, see G. R. Driver, “Hebrew Scrolls,” *Journal of Theological Studies* 2 (1951): 18.

³⁴ *The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (BDB), 701.

³⁵ See also M. Burrows, “Variant Readings in the Isaiah Manuscript.” *BASOR* 113 (1948): 25.

³⁶ See Shemaryahu Talmon, “Synonymous Readings in the Textual Traditions of the Old Testament,” *Scripta hierosolymitana* 8 (1961): 335–83. See also Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 260–61; and F. Díaz Esteban, *Sefer Okhlah we-Okhlah* (Madrid 1975), 193–94, on the interchange of synonymous expressions “and he spoke” versus “and he said” in the manuscripts.

³⁷ Talmon, “Synonymous Readings,” 336. Sanderson defines synonymous readings as “those variants for which no preferable reading can be determined even with probability. They are different legitimate ways of expressing the same idea.”

Representative examples of synonymous readings include the following.

24:1 הָאָרֶץ MT 4QIsa^c | האדמה 1QIsa^a •

הָאָרֶץ—MT and 4QIsa^c set forth הָאָרֶץ, versus 1QIsa^a's synonymous reading of האדמה. Two items support the reading of הארץ: the pericope, consisting of 24:1–12, features ארץ eight times (but never האדמה); and verse 3a (הבוק הבוק הארץ, “the earth is completely made empty”) rhetorically develops the reading of verse 1a (יהוה בוקק הארץ, “the LORD makes the earth empty”); that is, both expressions collocate ארץ with $\sqrt{\text{בקק}}$.³⁸

29:3 מְצָרָה MT | מצודות 1QIsa^a | מצור 4QIsa^f •

מְצָרָה—MT and 1QIsa^a attest readings that are graphically similar and that have synonymous meanings: MT has מְצָרָה (“fortresses”) and 1QIsa^a sets forth מצודות (“strongholds”). Inasmuch as both words work well in the context, it is not easy to settle on a primary reading. These two readings may point to a *vario lectio*, but it is more probable that a scribe of either Hebrew witness (or tradition, i.e., the proto-MT or 1QIsa^a) misread his *Vorlage* and wrote a *resh* in place of a *dalet*, or vice versa. See also the variants ומצרתה and ומצרתה in Isaiah 29:7. Another possibility, set forth by Kutscher, is that the words מצרה and מצודה “changed places” between verses 3 and 7.³⁹

35:9 בַּל MT 4QIsa^b | + לוא 1QIsa^a • לֹא² 4QIsa^b | ולוא 1QIsa^a •

בַּל—The double negative in 1QIsa^a (בל לוא), unknown in the Hebrew Bible, is probably the result of a error. The scribe first wrote בל, which is the primary reading, and then duplicated the לוא from verse 8, vertically located on the line above on the scroll (see col. xxviii, line 25). The vertical borrowing explains why MT and 4QIsa^b lack the double negative. Other possibilities, however, exist. לוא בל may be a conflated reading; or לוא may be the primary reading and בל a synonymous reading acquired from another text-type.⁴⁰

39:2 מְמַלְכָתוֹ MT 2 Kings 20:13 | ממלכתו 1QIsa^a •

מְמַלְכָתוֹ—The nouns מְמַלְכָתוֹ and ממלכתו are synonymous or near synonymous readings. Tov refers to synonymous readings as

J. E. Sanderson, *An Exodus Scroll from Qumran* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 41; see also 109–10.

38 For other examples of synonymous substitutions in 1QIsa^a, see Burrows, “Variant Readings in the Isaiah Manuscript,” *BASOR* 113 (1948): 27.

39 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 260.

40 Talmon, “Aspects of the Textual Transmission of the Bible,” 242–43.

“interchangeable words [that] entered the manuscript tradition at all stages of the transmission, both consciously and unconsciously.”⁴¹

(4) Scribes’ Stylistic Approaches and Conventions to the Text

The scribes’ stylistic choices, conventions, or idiosyncrasies account for a number of variant readings that exist in the Hebrew witnesses of Isaiah. Examples of scribal stylistic preferences include the following:

Changes to Proper Names

1:1 עֲתִידוֹ MT | עוֹיִה 1QIsa^a • יְהוֹזְקִיָּהוּ MT | חֹזְקִיָּה 1QIsa^a •

עֲתִידוֹ — During the Second Temple era, theophoric names customarily featured shorter forms, that is, יְהוֹזְקִיָּה and עוֹיִה 1QIsa^a generally employs the shorter forms throughout Isaiah, but with a few exceptions the longer form is used. In verse 1, for example, the scroll attests ישְׁעִידוֹ instead of ישְׁעִיָּה. See also the theophoric names listed in Isaiah 36:1, 14–16, 22; 37:1–3, 6, etc.⁴²

Division of Letters

66:1 אִי־נָה . . . אִי־נָה | אִי־נָה . . . אִי־נָה 1QIsa^a 1QIsa^b •

אִי־נָה . . . אִי־נָה — The deviations here are not textual variants, but stylistic differences.

Filling Out a Parallelism

35:6 > MT | יִלְכוּ 1QIsa^a •

יִלְכוּ — The plus of 1QIsa^a, having no support from other witnesses, may be an attempt to fill out the parallelism, with יִלְכוּ corresponding to נִבְקְעוּ. Tov attributes the plus of 1QIsa^a to a scribal contextual change, derived “from the copyist’s stylistic feelings”⁴³ and points out that all nouns in this verse, except for וְנַחֲלָיִים (“streams”), are “assigned specific verbs. The scroll sensed the lack of a verb in this last clause and supplied

41 Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 260; see also Talmon, “Synonymous Readings,” 335–83.

42 For a discussion of the forms of the name *Hezekiah* in 1QIsa^a, see Beegle, D. M. “Proper Names in the New Isaiah Scroll,” *BASOR* 123 (1951): 28–9.

43 Tov, *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 263. See also Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran*, 79.

it, thus filling a conceptual void.⁴⁴ But Blenkinsopp prefers this plus of 1QIsa^a, and thus translates the bicolon as “Yes, water will burst forth in the desert, wadis flow (ילכו) in the wilderness.”⁴⁵ MT, followed by the versions, has the primary reading.

Particles אֵיךְ and אֵיכָּה

1:21 אֵיכָּה MT | אֵיכָּה 1QIsa^a •

אֵיכָּה—The particles אֵיךְ (61x in MT), אֵיכָּה (17x in MT), אֵיכָּה (4x in MT), and הֵיךְ (2x in MT) are exclamatory interrogatives meaning “how.” In the verse under discussion, 1QIsa^a’s unique reading אֵיכָּה is a derivation of הֵיךְ, which appears only in late BH texts (Dan. 10:17, 1 Chron. 13:12). 1QIsa^a’s אֵיכָּה may have been influenced by Aramaic⁴⁶ or it is a hybrid of אֵיכָּה and הֵיךְ.⁴⁷ See also Isaiah 14:12, where the scroll reads אֵיכָּה, versus MT’s אֵיךְ. Elsewhere in Isaiah, MT has אֵיךְ where 1QIsa^a reads אֵיכָּה (Isa. 14:4; 36:9 [MT = 2 Kings 18:24]; 48:11 [MT = 4QIsa^d]). Only twice does MT and the scroll have the equivalent reading of the particle אֵיךְ (Isa. 19:11; 20:6).

Orthographic Variants

15:3 יְהִילֵל MT | יְהִילֵל 1QIsa^a •

יְהִילֵל—The deviation between MT (= יְהִילֵל) and 1QIsa^a (= יְהִילֵל) is orthographic. The root letters are ילל for both words and both have the same translational values. Note that in Isaiah 52:5, MT sets forth יְהִילֵל with the infixed *he*, as it is found in 1QIsa^a in the verse under discussion. For two textual variants of ילל that exist between these two Hebrew witnesses, see 23:1 and 52:5.

Presentative Exclamations

20:6 הֵן MT 1QIsa^a | הֵן 4QIsa^a •

הֵן—The הֵן and הֵן are presentative exclamations that serve to give emphasis to “the immediacy, the here-and-now-ness, of the situation.”⁴⁸

44 Paulson Pulikottil, *Transmission of Biblical Texts in Qumran: The Case of the Large Isaiah Scroll 1QIsa^a* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 79.

45 Blenkinsopp, *Isaiah 1–39*, 455.

46 See Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic of the Talmudic and Geonic Periods* (Ramat-Gan, Israel: Bar Ilan University Press, 2002), 377.

47 Kutscher, *The Language and Linguistic Background of the Isaiah Scroll*, 390.

48 T. O. Lambdin, *Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (New York: Scribner, 1971), 168.

In the Bible, הנה is ten times more common than הן (approximately 1,060 occurrences of הנה versus 100 attestations of הן), with הן found most often in the books of Job (32 times) and Isaiah (27 times). There is no difference in meaning or use between the two representatives.⁴⁹ MT and 1QIsa^a deviate with הן and הנה in the following verses: 23:13; 32:1; 38:17; 41:24, 29; 42:1; 44:11; 49:16, 21; 50:1–2, 9 bis, 11; 54:15–16 (MT^{here} הנה); 55:4–5; 56:3; 58:4; 59:1; 64:4, 8. With the exception of 38:17, MT reads הן versus 1QIsa^a, which has הנה. In 38:17, MT attests הנה and 1QIsa^a reads הן. These deviations (a) indicate a different scribal school; (b) that the *Vorlage* of the scroll read הנה; or (c) the 1QIsa^a scribe had a tendency to popularize הן to read הנה.

Abbreviated Form מני

22:4 MT מני | 1QIsa^a ממני •

מני is a common form in the Bible, occurring approximately one hundred eighty times. Contrast ממני with the abbreviated מני (vocalized as מְנִי), which is found only in Isaiah 22:4; 30:1; 38:12; Psalms 18:23; 65:4; 139:19; Job 16:6; 21:16; 22:18; and 30:10. For MT's three occurrences of מני in Isaiah, 1QIsa^a reads ממני in 22:4 and 30:1, but equals MT with its reading of מני in Isaiah 38:12. The translational value of מני and ממני are the same, as indicated by Ibn Ezra in his commentary to Isaiah 30:1.

Prepositions עדי and ער

26:5 MT ער . . . ער | 1QIsa^a ערי . . . ערי (ער) [ער] •

ער — For this preposition that is attested in MT and 4QIsa^c, 1QIsa^a has the older form ערי.⁵⁰ The translational value is the same for both ער and ערי, although suffixed forms (עָרִיךָ, עָרִיךְ, etc.) of the preposition were built upon ערי. For the reading ערי ארץ in 1QIsa^a 26:5, compare Psalms 147:6 (עָרִי אֶרֶץ).

Morphological Forms בעורנה and בעורנה

28:4 MT בעורנה | 1QIsa^a בעורנה •

בעורנה — Both MT (= בעורנה) and 1QIsa^a (= בעורנה with an unetymological letter *nun*) are legitimate morphological forms, with both having the same translational value. Watts remarks that בעורנה is “a seemingly

49 See C. J. Labuschagne, “The Particles הן and הנה,” *Oudtestamentische Studiën* 18 (1973): 1–14.

50 See Waltke and O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax*, 215.

meaningless *nun* epenthetic before the suffix.”⁵¹ For the form בעודנה, see also 1 Kings 1:22.

Conclusion

1QIsa^a contains a great number of textual variants, which may be categorized as follows: (1) accidental errors; (2) intentional changes; (3) synonymous readings; and (4) scribes’ stylistic approaches. These four categories include multiple examples of haplography, homoioteleuton, dittography, confusion of letters (graphic similarity), conflation, pluses, minuses, misdivision of words, interchange of letters (metathesis), transposition of word order, possible ligature, exegetical or editorial pluses, synonymous readings, changes to proper names, improper division of letters, filling out a poetic parallelism, morphological smoothing and updating, euphemistic changes, harmonizations, phonetic variants, peculiar orthographic variants, and modernizations of terms. The textual variants of 1QIsa^a sets forth such a wide diversity and assortment of textual variants that this scroll is indeed a catalogue, as it were, for textual criticism.

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51 Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, 360.

