Look Forward
Isaiah 9:1-9
Dr. Pierre Cannings, Ph.D.

(9:1) The laments of the doomsayers of 8:19–22 are interrupted by claims of hope. The speech denies that gloom and anguish are the inevitable results of the events. While recognizing the bitterness of the moment, it reminds them of a hope based on God's intervention. Election is viewed as a guarantee of his eventual redemption.

The speaker in 8:23 tries to change the mood of doom and gloom that dominated the previous response (8:19–22) to Isaiah's speeches. The anguish of God's people need not be forever. History belongs to God. He can turn things around. But the speakers carefully avoid being too specific about it. The perfect tenses in the passage give a timeless appearance. The speeches directly contradict the message of Isaiah in 6:11–21, 7:8, and 8:7. They turn against the announced plan of God in 2:6–9 and imply an easy grace for the apostasy spoken of in 1:2–8.

I. One Day v. 1, 8:22

a. No more gloom
   i. Gloom - Gloom – Darkness, no brightness
   ii. Her in Anguish – Distress
      1. God may distress his people in an attempt to bring about their repentance and salvation (Isa 29:2). The strongest curse of judgment that God brings against his disobedient people is the distress of siege and captivity. The distress will become so severe that they will even eat their children (Deut 28:53, 55, 57; Jer 19:9 [*māsôq*]). Isaiah declares that during such a time Israel will unfortunately fail to seek comfort in the Creator God, but will instead continue to fear the destroying oppressor (Isa 51:13). But fortunately God is able to bring relief to his people (Isa 51:14). The Day of the Lord is described as a day of great distress, anguish, and gloom (Zeph 1:15, *mĕṣûqâ*). It will be a time of thick darkness, but into that darkness will break the light that comes from God himself intervening in human history through his Messiah (Isa 8:22–9:2 [8:22–9:1
      2. 8:22 - Distress - **need, distress, anxiety** (the opposite of deliverance, salvation
      3. In Isa 9:1 the two lines are balanced in meter. They support the theme. The present times of trouble are presented by participles,

while hope is expressed in perfect verbs as in the first strophe. The contrast is now between "light" and "dark."

iii. Land of Zebulun and Nephtali

1. He Treated
    a. The "first time" could appropriately refer to a time beginning before the monarchy, or it could refer to Tiglath-Pileser's first attack. It is possible that this reference is simply figurative for the area of the northern kingdom that was occupied by Assyria in 732 B.C.E. The Assyrian campaign of 733 B.C.E. drove across the heart of its territory, attacked its major cities, and reduced it to a province under an Assyrian governor (2 Kgs 15:29). The same campaign subdued Gilead, and it, too, was made an Assyrian province (*Annals of Tiglath Pileser III*). Some of its leaders were taken into exile (1 Chr 5:6).
    b. Apart from the opening sentence (see last n.), this v. is a prose note explaining that the darkened land of the poetical fragment (8:21f.), to wit, the northern and north-eastern territory of Israel (cp. Zec 10:10; Mic 7:14) will be compensated for its former distress by a corresponding glory (9:1–6 (2–7)).
2. Apart from the opening sentence (see last n.), this v. is a prose note explaining that the darkened land of the poetical fragment (8:21f.), to wit, the northern and north-eastern territory of Israel (cp Zec 10:10; Mic 7:14) will be compensated for its former distress by a corresponding glory (9:1–6 (2–7)).
3. A time will come when **gloom** and darkness (8:22) will be a thing of **the past**. The gloom on the northern section of Israel came because of discipline. God **humbled … Zebulun and … Naphtali** for a while. Though Isaiah was probably using these two tribal names to represent the Northern Kingdom, it is striking that Jesus' upbringing and early ministry was mostly in that very area near the Sea of Galilee. His presence certainly "honored" that area. In 732 B.C. this northern portion of Israel became an Assyrian province under Tiglath-Pileser III, thus humbling the people there and putting them in gloom. Under Gentile domination, that area was called **Galilee of the Gentiles**.
4. **The way of the sea** describes a major international highway running through this region. This is the only place where the Bible used this phrase, but it appears often in Assyrian and Egyptian records. The invading Assyrian soldiers took that route when they invaded the Northern Kingdom. From that area the Messiah will arise and will wipe away the gloom and darkness brought on by Gentile domination.

II. In that Day v.6-7

a. Born
    i. Son given - He was to be born **a Child**. The implication, given in parallel style, is that this Child, **a Son**, was to be born into the nation of Israel (**to us**) as one of the covenant people.
b. Government
    i. Government – Domination
    ii. Rest on His Shoulders - will be on His shoulders
        1. He will rule over God's people (cf. Micah 5:2) and the world (Zech. 14:9). **The government will be on His shoulders** figuratively refers to the kingly robe to be worn by the Messiah. As King, He will be responsible to govern the nation. In Isaiah's day Judah's leaders were incompetent in governing the people. But the Messiah will govern properly.
c. His Name
    i. Wonderful Counselor
        1. Wonderful Counselor- one of the royal titles (throne names) of the Messiah פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ the one who plans a miracle, the miracle worker, who gave marvellous advice
        2. He will have four descriptive names that will reveal His character. He will be the nation's **Wonderful** (this could be trans "exceptional" or "distinguished") **Counselor**, and the people will gladly listen to Him as the authoritative One. In the kingdom many people will be anxious to hear the Messiah teach God's ways (2:3). He is also the **Mighty God** (cf. 10:21). Some have suggested that this simply means "a godlike person" or hero. But Isaiah meant more than that, for he had already spoken of the Messiah doing what no other person had been able to do (e.g., 9:2–5). Isaiah understood that the Messiah was to be God in some sense of the term.
    ii. Mighty God
    iii. Eternal Father
        1. Since God is One (even though He exists in three Persons), the Messiah is God. Second, the title "Everlasting Father" is an idiom used to describe the Messiah's relationship to time, not His relationship to the other Members of the Trinity. He is said to be everlasting, just as God (the Father) is called "the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7:9).
    iv. Prince of Peace
        1. Prince of Peace - in a comprehensive sense, meaning a good, healthy state, which is close to the sense of salvation or peace the official responsible for welfare

2. The Messiah is also called the **Prince of Peace**, the One who will bring in and maintain the time of millennial peace when the nation will be properly related to the Lord. Together, these four titles give a beautiful picture of the coming Messiah's character (Isa. 9:6 includes the first of Isaiah's 25 references to peace.

d. No End
    i. Government of Peace
        1. On the Throne of David
            i. The third is voiced by monarchists in the crowd who see in the prophecy of future light the restoration of power and glory to the House of David. The future of a new heir to the throne can be full of hope that all the promise of the age of the united kingdom when David and Solomon ruled can now be restored and fulfilled. This passage is one of the most beautiful and expressive passages in the OT, reflecting high monarchical tradition and ideology.
            ii. The Messiah, seated **on David's throne** (Luke 1:32–33), will have an eternal rule of **peace** and **justice**. His rule will have **no end;** it will go on **forever** (cf. Dan. 7:14, 27; Micah 4:7; Luke 1:33; Rev. 11:15). Following the kingdom on earth, He will rule for eternity. He will maintain **righteousness** (cf. Jer. 23:5), as His rule will conform to God's holy character and demands.
        b. Establish- to make firm and steady
        c. Uphold - to **support, sustain**, with regard to helping individuals in distress
            i. Justice
            ii. Righteousness
        2. Lord will Establish
            a. Zeal - activity against foreign (oppresive) peoples and in favour of the people of the covenant, God striving to achieve his goal
            b. This will all be accomplished by **the zeal of the LORD Almighty**. The coming of the millennial **kingdom** depends on God, not Israel. The Messiah will rule because God promised it and will zealously see that the kingdom comes. Without His sovereign intervention there would be no kingdom for Israel.
            c. Apparently Isaiah assumed that the messianic Child, Jesus Christ, would establish His reign in one Advent, that when the Child grew up He would rule in triumph. Like the other

prophets, Isaiah was not aware of the great time gap between Messiah's *two* Advents (cf. 1 Peter 1:10–12; and see comments on Isa. 61:1–2

Tree Branch
Isaiah 4:2-6 Is 11:1; 53:2; Jer 23:5; 33:15; Zech 3:8; 6:12

Word Studies

Distress - **need, distress, anxiety** (the opposite of deliverance, salvation[1]

Gloom – Darkness, no brightness

Anguish – Distress

> God may distress his people in an attempt to bring about their repentance and salvation (Isa 29:2). The strongest curse of judgment that God brings against his disobedient people is the distress of siege and captivity. The distress will become so severe that they will even eat their children (Deut 28:53, 55, 57; Jer 19:9 [*māsôq*]). Isaiah declares that during such a time Israel will unfortunately fail to seek comfort in the Creator God, but will instead continue to fear the destroying oppressor (Isa 51:13). But fortunately God is able to bring relief to his people (Isa 51:14). The Day of the Lord is described as a day of great distress, anguish, and gloom (Zeph 1:15, *mĕṣûqâ*). It will be a time of thick darkness, but into that darkness will break the light that comes from God himself intervening in human history through his Messiah (Isa 8:22–9:2 [8:22–9:1[2]

Government- domination

Rest- Be on His shoulders

Wonderful Counselor- one of the royal titles (throne names) of the Messiah פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ the one who plans a miracle, the miracle worker[3] who gave marvellous advice[4]

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[1] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1053.
[2] John E. Hartley, "צוּק 1895," in *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 760.
[3] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 928.
[4] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 403.

Government of Peace - in a comprehensive sense, meaning a good, healthy state, which is close to the sense of salvation or peace[5]the official responsible for welfare[6]

To Establish – to make firm and steady

Uphold - to **support, sustain**, with regard to helping individuals in distress[7]

Zeal- activity against foreign (oppresive) peoples and in favour of the people of the covenant, cf. :אֵל קַנָּא God striving to achieve his goal[8]

[5] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1509.
[6] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1509.
[7] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 761.
cf. *confer*, comparable with
[8] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1994–2000), 1111.

Form/Structure/Setting

The structure and unity of the passage are shown by its syntax and arrangement. It moves with freedom, no slave of metrical structures, shaping its own forms and meanings. It can suspend parallelism (v 5) for five single statements of two words each then resume parallelism with pairs of prepositional phrases. It is capable of putting three pairs of words opposite a single pair in 8:23 and 9:3.

The whole is dominated by the particle כִּי, which in 8:23 and 9:3, 4, 5 introduced the speeches. To understand its meaning and significance for the passage is to open the door to its treasures. The dominant position of perfect verbs (in vv 8:23; 9:1, 2, 3, 5*a*) is instructive—always in inverted order with substantives first. The strange appearance of a perfect with *vav* in v 4*c* breaks the pattern, as does the imperfect in v 2*c*, while the consecutive imperfects in v 5*b–c* are important. The passage closes with an imperfect.

What is one to do with all this? It is no ordinary prosaic, or even poetic, style. First, let us deal with the כִּי particles. They may be strong assertatives—either negative or positive. Apparently the first (v 23) is such and is rendered "nevertheless." The sentence is an objection to the previous one, negating it word for word—but with no verb. The next line softens the contradiction by ascribing them to two different "times" and uses inverted word order and perfect tenses to achieve the effect. The verbs are strong, but the syntax leaves them suspended and timeless, like the substantive statement that introduced them. The first strophe has halted the confused lament with the assertion that the future can be made good, just as the past has been bad. The contrast may be between "contempt" and "honor" but is more likely parallel: the first attack was light, the second, much heavier in its consequences.

In Isa 9:1 the two lines are balanced in meter. They support the theme. The present times of trouble are presented by participles, while hope is expressed in perfect verbs as in the first strophe. The contrast is now between "light" and "dark."

In Isa 9:2 the pattern is broken. Inverted order is abandoned, as are also the impersonal verbs. Second-person singular "you" is addressed. This is often taken to be God. It is more likely that the broken pattern indicates a different speaker, who addresses the one who has just spoken either in v 23 or v 1.

Isa 9:3 is the second of four passages beginning with כִּי, "nevertheless." In each the meaning is a contrast drawn to the "gloom" of 8:22. The statements do not contradict the previous line but rather state reasons to hope in a time of trouble. This one poses the issue of the presence of a powerful oppressor who has subjugated the land. If the speaker, like Gideon, can smash that power … The apodosis is understood but not uttered. The inverted order poses the threefold emphasis on that oppressor before the verb of deliverance.

The third כי, in 9:4, introduces a reminder of the forces of violence and chaos that stand in the way of a solution. These, too, must be destroyed. The verse is only half spoken: the first part has no verb—stopping abruptly—while the second has a perfect with *vav*, which normally requires an antecedent. It is as though the lines are to be stammered out, being distorted in

delivery. But the meaning is clear. Years of war cannot be put aside in a night. All the weapons and uniforms (not to mention psychic scars) must be eradicated.

The fourth כי, beginning 9:5, introduces a more direct suggestion. It is spoken in chorus and takes its "us" from those seeing the "great light" of v 1. They hear this as hope that a descendant of David may seize the chance apparent in the fall of Samaria to reunite the kingdoms and inaugurate a second era of peace and prosperity like that of David and Solomon. The idea, improbable as it is under the Assyrian (or Persian), evokes a nostalgic burst of patriotic fervor—a reminder of what enthronement hymns sound like. Then the section closes on the prayerful invocation of the Zeal of YHWH.

Comment

23 (9:1) The laments of the doomsayers of 8:19–22 are interrupted by claims of hope. The speech denies that gloom and anguish are the inevitable results of the events. While recognizing the bitterness of the moment, it reminds them of a hope based on God's intervention. Election is viewed as a guarantee of his eventual redemption.

The perfect verbs begin a series that extends through the first line of 9:5. Note that they are used here both for "the first" as well as "the later" time. They are independent of a time context. We have tried to show this by translating with present time throughout (J. Wash Watts, *Survey of Syntax*, 46).

The ראשׁון, "first time," for the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali is not easy to identify. זבלון, "Zebulun," was located in south Galilee astride the valley east of Carmel that is drained by the river Kishon. But its significance as a tribe had been diminishing since the days of the Judges. Solomon's districts have the territory absorbed into that of Asher (1 Kgs 4:16). Whatever of its territory was not seized in Tiglath-Pileser's drive down the coast in 734 B.C.E. was taken the following year in the invasion of Naphtali. The province of Dor was established for the coastal region from Carmel south to Joppa (*MBA*, 148).

נפתלי, "Naphtali," was the northernmost territory of the kingdom of Israel, occupying the northwest of the lake of Galilee on up to the southern slopes of Mount Hermon. It had also not been significant since the period of the Judges, although Solomon did have a district named Naphtali. The "first time" could appropriately refer to a time beginning before the monarchy, or it could refer to Tiglath-Pileser's first attack. It is possible that this reference is simply figurative for the area of the northern kingdom that was occupied by Assyria in 732 B.C.E. The Assyrian campaign of 733 B.C.E. drove across the heart of its territory (*MBA*, 147), attacked its major cities, and reduced it to a province under an Assyrian governor (2 Kgs 15:29). The same campaign subdued Gilead, and it, too, was made an Assyrian province (*Annals of Tiglath Pileser III*). Some of its leaders were taken into exile (1 Chr 5:6).

A. Alt's ("Jesaja 8:23–9:6") suggestion to add a line listing parallel terms such as the Valley of Sharon and the Mountain of Gilead is appropriate as a comment on the geography even if it is judged unnecessary for the strophic structure of the passage.

MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.
MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.

Being "treated lightly" apparently refers to these invasions and the subsequent oppression under a foreign ruler. Both verbs in this verse lack an explicit subject. Two possibilities are likely. One is that YHWH is the subject. Some commentaries suggest that he should be put into the text. This would fit, especially if the second persons of the verbs in 9:3–4 also are addressed to him. Another possibility is that the subject is "the first time" and "the later" (Budde, *Jesaja's Erleben*, 99; Wildberger). We have chosen this second course. The emphasis is on the hope that a later time can bring a reversal of fortunes for the stricken area. But the subject's ambiguity is deliberate and is intended to let the hearer or reader make the choice.

The ,האחרון "later" (time), could refer to a subsequent campaign by Tiglath-Pileser. The דרך הים, "Way of the Sea," ,עבר הירדן "Transjordan," and ,גליל הגוים "Galilee of the Nations," appear to be Hebrew names for the districts the Assyrians called Dor, Megiddo, and Gilead (cf. *MBA*, 148). The fate of this region was separated from that of Samaria as early as the eighth century. Matthew quotes the verses to support the account of Jesus' ministry in that region (Matt 4:15–16).

In content the message is simply an appeal to hope that the future has got to be better, and that the future will rectify the bad times of the past. The announcement proclaims that the new political realities (i.e., redistricting and renaming territory) need not prevent a new period of glory and honor. (Note: the announcement is not given as a word from the Lord or supported in any way.)

9:1 (2) A pro-Israelite group in the crowd picks up the note just sounded. There is ,אוֹר "light," at the end of the tunnel for Israel.

2 (3) The second-person singular of the verbs at the beginning of v 2 (3) and the end of v 3 (4) have usually been understood to refer to God. But this need not be necessary if the passage has a dialogical character. They may refer to the previous speaker and the sudden shift of mood that his speech has made in the people. So it is a bystander who challenges the first speaker, asking what in his speech there is to be happy about. And he scornfully derides the gullible crowd who act as though a great victory has been won just by saying so.

3–6 (4–7) Three further characteristics of that great future salvation are each introduced with ,כִּי "nevertheless," which may have various meanings. See *Form/Structure/Setting*.

3 (4) The first characteristic emphasizes freedom from foreign domination. The speaker believes this is possible because God has led Israel to victory in impossible situations like the one Gideon successfully faced (Judg 7): "the day of Midian."

4 (5) The second portrays the end of holy war against the enemy when all the booty, including the war boots and military uniforms, had to be burned.

5–6 (6–7) The third is voiced by monarchists in the crowd who see in the prophecy of future light the restoration of power and glory to the House of David. The future of a new heir to the throne can be full of hope that all the promise of the age of the united kingdom when David and Solomon ruled can now be restored and fulfilled. This passage is one of the most beautiful and expressive passages in the DS, reflecting high monarchical tradition and ideology. The ideas and phrases may well echo those used in enthronement ceremonies. (Cf. *Excursus: Messiah, Son of David* below.) J. M. Roberts suggests that the "us" are members of the Divine Council and that "one may read Isa 9:5 as reflecting the joyous assent of the Divine Council to the new king,

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MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.

YHWH's son." However, since the brunt of the Vision's message weighs against such hopes, the speakers here, like those of the previous verses, should be viewed as opponents of Isaiah's message.

The episode ends with the murmured response of the crowd: "May the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts do this." This effectively represents the theologically inclusive faith that united the divergent elements in the crowd. Those who supported the position of northern Israel (8:22–23 [8:22–9:1]); those with a general faith that God would certainly make things right (9:1–2 [2–3]); the rebellious zealots (v 3 [4]); the holy-war enthusiasts, who said "Let God fight the battles" (v 4 [5]); and the monarchists, who saw hope in a revival of the house of David and the birth of a new David (vv 5–6 [6–7])—all these could intone the prayer for God's zeal to save them.

Explanation

This passage has often been understood as promise. Yet the analysis above does not support this for its original setting. It is not spoken by the prophet or in the name of God. It is an attempt to assemble from the resources of faith and doctrine words to bolster hope. Yet the chorus knows that only a miracle can bring the light, restore the joy, or reestablish the power and authority of David's reign. That is why they sigh, "May the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts do this!" Of course, nothing is impossible with God.

The speaker in 8:23 tries to change the mood of doom and gloom that dominated the previous response (8:19–22) to Isaiah's speeches. The anguish of God's people need not be forever. History belongs to God. He can turn things around. But the speakers carefully avoid being too specific about it. The perfect tenses in the passage give a timeless appearance. The speeches directly contradict the message of Isaiah in 6:11–21, 7:8, and 8:7. They turn against the announced plan of God in 2:6–9 and imply an easy grace for the apostasy spoken of in 1:2–8.

The theme is picked up in 9:1 (2) with an eagerness that reflects the great need of the people to believe. The dark moment will pass. There is hope. V 3 (4) is saying that any true change will need to destroy the oppressor in the land and that this would require a miraculous deliverance like that of Gideon. V 4 (5) continues the skeptical mood, noting that a total disarmament will be required to achieve this goal. But the crowd now breaks into a chant that proclaims the royal hopes for an heir to the throne of David in whom all of the promises to David will be fulfilled, as in 2 Sam 7:12–14 and royal psalms like Pss 2, 72, and 89. The destruction of the government in Samaria opens the door to such a dream, if the foreign oppressor can be dealt with.

The episode draws to a climax with the speeches toasting the idea of such a "messianic" hope and closes with the fervent prayer that the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts may do this. The invocation of the old battle name for God recognizes that this is only possible with the kind of miraculous intervention that brought Israel through the Reed Sea, brought down the walls of Jericho, and devastated the Midianite hosts before Gideon.

This hope is a legitimate part of Israel's heritage. It is not, however, a part of Isaiah's word for Israel or Judah in the eighth century or of the Vision of Isaiah for Jerusalem in the fifth century. The traditionalists opposed the prophet in those days, as they opposed Jesus and John the Baptist in their day. The issue is not that God is unable to fulfill his promises or that God is unfaithful to them. It *is* that the people of Israel were not aligned with God's agenda. He is now in the process of judging and cleansing so that his goals for his people can be achieved.

Two places in the Vision allow for the opposition to be heard: 8:19–9:6 (7); 10:3–12:6 and chaps. 60–64. The sharpest contrast to the Isaiah message is in 8:23–9:6 (7) and in 62:1–12 and 63:11*b*–64:11. These passages have many things in common, especially their presumption. They presume upon God's miraculous power and intervention (like Satan's temptations to Jesus, "tell these stones to become bread," "throw yourself down," in Matt 4:3, 6 NIV).

The responses may accurately reflect the popular elements of eighth-century Jerusalem. But they also found echoes in fifth-century Jerusalem. By then the oppressor was the Persian rather than the Assyrian. For both groups the thrust of Isaiah's message was equally obnoxious.

Traditional Christian interpreters have correctly noted that 9:5–6 (6–7) is part and parcel of royal liturgy and therefore used it as a messianic text, like the royal psalms. This is achieved by lifting the verses out of context and changing the genre of the larger work to match. Waschke (*ZAW* 110 [1998] 348–51) notes that some newer interpretations of the Psalter have found a redactional purpose in positioning royal psalms (2, 72, 89) in strategic places and suggests that the composers/redactors of Isaiah have done the same (see *Excursus: Messiah, Son of David*). This is legitimate. The Vision apparently quotes from other contexts. But it is important to keep in mind that the verses do not function as messianic predictions in this context.

The prophetic task lay in interpreting the fall and destruction of the kingdom and in preparing the people to live as God's people without king or royal dominion. The Vision follows in the path of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in this regard and will later reinterpret royal motifs to fit that situation. One should note that in order for Jesus to be understood to be the Messiah these motifs of kingship and dominion had to be radically reinterpreted to fit the crucified carpenter's son. In this, the NT follows the path laid out in the Vision of Isaiah. Christian interpretation has relegated the more royal aspects of messianic hope to Christ's second coming to reign in glory.[9]

(9:1). Apart from the opening sentence (see last n.), this v. is a prose note explaining that the darkened land of the poetical fragment (8:21f.), to wit, the northern and north-eastern territory of Israel (cp. Zec 10:10; Mic 7:14) will be compensated for its former distress by a corresponding glory (9:1–6 (2–7)). If either 8:21f. or 9:1–6 is not the work of Isaiah, neither is this note; if both are, this note *may* have been added by him when he combined two poems of different periods.

NIV New International Version

ZAW Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

[9] John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, Revised Edition., vol. 24, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc, 2005), 170–175.

cp. Compare.

In this case he looks back on the humiliation of *Naphtali*, which took place in 734 B.C. as long past; it belongs to the *former time.—The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali*] northern and north-eastern Palestine; cp. Ps 68:28 (27). Naphtali is explicitly mentioned in 2 K 15:29. The terms in the antithetical clause are all direct objects—*he hath made glorious the way of the sea, the land*

Light now shines on the people that have been (long) in darkness (v. 1), and they rejoice before Yahweh with great joy (v. 2). For (1) Yahweh has delivered the people from the yoke of a foreign oppressor (v. 3); (2) He has also made an end of war (v. 4a); moreover, (3) a child has been born, who, as a native ruler in contrast to the (foreign) oppressor of v. 3, will exercise dominion, and is marked out as exceptional by the name which he receives, v. 5. He will rule justly and righteously from the throne of David over a vast dominion undisturbed to its furthest bound by any breach of peace; this righteous government by the will and act of Yahweh is to be endless (v. 6).

Except in vv. 4, 6 the tenses used throughout the poem are perfects and imperfects with waw conversive, *i.e.* tenses naturally used in historical narrative. But the situation described in vv. 1–3, 5 in no way corresponds to any known circumstances, and the name in v. 5 has no appearance of being one borne by an actual person. It has therefore been widely and correctly held that the poem is, at least in part, prophetic.

It is, of course, *possible* that the perfects are in part prophetic, in part historical; if this were actually so, the question would arise, how much is prophetic, how much historical? Has the great deliverance from foreign oppression actually taken place? Has some birth awakened the poet's hopes, but the actual present not yet fulfilled them by bringing the child born to the throne of David? Many have held that the birth is historic, and that the poet refers in particular to the birth of Hezekiah; but this view is now generally and rightly abandoned.

It is more probable that the poem is prophetic throughout in all its direct statements—the light has not yet actually shone, the people have not yet actually rejoiced, the child has not yet actually been born; all these things are past, not in reality, but only in the hopeful vision of the poet. The circumstances under which the poem was written can only, but may probably, be detected in the implicit statements; from these we may infer two things: (1) the people were at the time in "darkness," *i.e.* distress; and (2) under a foreign yoke. On one interpretation of v. 5, if not also from v. 3, it would also follow that (3) the throne of David was at the time vacant; another interpretation would still admit, but no longer require, such a situation (see note on v. 5).

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of Assyria and paid tribute; but it also frequently recurred later, when the yoke of Babylon, Persia, the Ptolemies or the Seleucids rested on the Jews.

The determination of the date and authorship of the poem must therefore turn on other considerations; but these, too, are unfortunately less decisive than could be desired.[10]

[10] George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, I–XXXIX*, International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912), 165–166.

beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. These terms are more extensive than those in the previous clause, for they include the country East of Jordan (= Gilead, 2 K 15:29). Cp. *EBi.* 1629.—*The way of the sea*] according to Jer., Rashi, al., *the sea* meant is the Lake of Galilee (cp. Dt 33:23). More frequently הים means the Mediterranean; and so here *the way of* (*i.e.* leading to: cp. Gn 3:24) *the sea* probably is, like the 'Via Maris' of the Crusaders, the caravan route which ran from Damascus to the Mediterranean sea at Acre.—*The land beyond Jordan*] עבר הירדן, as frequently of the country E. of Jordan (BDB 719).—*The Galil of the nations*] cp. Jos 12:23, "the nations of the Galil," if as against ("of Gilgal") this reading of [B] be correct; also Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων, 1 Mac 5:15; elsewhere in OT the 'Galil,' הגליל (Jos 20:7; 21:32; 1 K 9:11; 1 Ch 6:61†) or 2) הגלילה K 15:29), is undefined. The term means *circuit*, but is always used specifically of a district in Northern Palestine; cp. the different specific reference of ,הככר "The Round" (Gn 19:17). But the district covered by the term was not always, nor need it be here, as extensive as the later Galilee: Ges. suggested that at one time it defined a relatively small district round Kedesh (Jos 20:7; 21:32 = 1 Ch 6:61; To 1:2; 1 Mac 11:63): in 2 K 15:29 it appears less extensive than Naphtali, which it subsequently included: see, further, *EBi.*, *s.v.* Galilee. The definition given here and in 1 Mac 5:15 (cp. Jos 12:23 [B]) reflects the mixed population which was at all periods more or less characteristic of this northern territory.

Cp. Compare.
EBi. Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, 1899–1903.
Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.
Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣhaḳi] (1040–1105).
Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*
al. *alii* (others).
cp. Compare.
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BDB *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament based on the Lexicon and Thesaurus of Gesenius*, by F. Brown, C. A. Briggs, and S. R. Driver, Oxford, 1906.
cp. Compare.
[B] Vatican codex.
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𝔊 Vatican codex.

Light now shines on the people that have been (long) in darkness (v. 1), and they rejoice before Yahweh with great joy (v. 2). For (1) Yahweh has delivered the people from the yoke of a foreign oppressor (v. 3); (2) He has also made an end of war (v. 4a); moreover, (3) a child has been born, who, as a native ruler in contrast to the (foreign) oppressor of v. 3, will exercise dominion, and is marked out as exceptional by the name which he receives, v. 5. He will rule justly and righteously from the throne of David over a vast dominion undisturbed to its furthest bound by any breach of peace; this righteous government by the will and act of Yahweh is to be endless (v. 6).

Except in vv. 4, 6 the tenses used throughout the poem are perfects and imperfects with waw conversive, *i.e.* tenses naturally used in historical narrative. But the situation described in vv. 1–3, 5 in no way corresponds to any known circumstances, and the name in v. 5 has no appearance of being one borne by an actual person. It has therefore been widely and correctly held that the poem is, at least in part, prophetic.

It is, of course, *possible* that the perfects are in part prophetic, in part historical; if this were actually so, the question would arise, how much is prophetic, how much historical? Has the great deliverance from foreign oppression actually taken place? Has some birth awakened the poet's hopes, but the actual present not yet fulfilled them by bringing the child born to the throne of David? Many have held that the birth is historic, and that the poet refers in particular to the birth of Hezekiah; but this view is now generally and rightly abandoned.

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If all we can infer are the two circumstances first mentioned, the historical situation presupposed is obviously one that occurred even in Isaiah's lifetime, for Judah felt the pressure of Assyria and paid tribute; but it also frequently recurred later, when the yoke of Babylon, Persia, the Ptolemies or the Seleucids rested on the Jews.

The determination of the date and authorship of the poem must therefore turn on other considerations; but these, too, are unfortunately less decisive than could be desired.

1. *Language.*—Cp. Cheyne, *Introd.* p. 44; Hackmann, p. 148. This is indecisive. On the one hand, the only occurrences of סֹבֶל (as distinct from סֵבֶל) are in v. 3; 10:27; 14:25, passages commonly, though not unanimously, attributed to Isaiah; on the other, עד, *perpetuity*, and צלמות, both frequent later, occur in no passage *certainly* as early as the 8th cent. (see phil. notes). It is the idea rather than the word קנאה that is significant. For the rest, the language is such that it might equally well, so far as we know, have been employed in the 8th century or much later, though סאון, if loaned from Aramaic rather than Assyrian (cp. v. 4 n.), would more easily be explained by a date later than the 8th century.

2. It is urged that no echo of the passage is found in Jer., Ezek., Is 40–66. This is correct, but inconclusive. It is, of course, at once explained if the passage was written later than these writers; but unless we place it as late as the 2nd cent. B.C. (Kennett), why does it also find no echo in still later writers, Zech., Hag., Mal., the Psalms? or should we possibly find echoes of it in Ps 72? The connection with Is 11 does indeed seem probable, and if that connection is due to unity of authorship, the exilic or post-exilic date to which that passage is probably to be referred is the date also of this.

3. *Ideas.*—The conception of Yahweh's "zeal" (v. 6) is probably enough that which is characteristic of Ezekiel and of subsequent writers, yet קנאה may be so interpreted as not to be absolutely incompatible with Isaiah's thought (see n. on v. 6). Several writers (see especially Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahwe-prophetie*, pp. 3 and 6ff.) treat the reference to the Messianic king as in itself conclusive proof of post-exilic origin; this is unsafe. At the same time two facts remain: (1) the Messianic king does figure in later writers; (2) we lack positive proof that the prophets of the 8th cent. were acquainted with the idea, or, *if acquainted with it, also made use of it.* Marti rather overstates the case when he says that the Messiah here is "throughout a political figure (Grösse) which has no direct significance for Religion"—at least the remark would equally apply to the judges and counsellors to whom Isaiah looks forward in 1:26. If Isaiah did look forward to a king in the future and had wished to describe him, he must have described him much as he is here described—righteous, just, mighty in defence of the weak (see notes on vv. 5, 6). The ideal certainly has its national limitations: the king will be a Jew and yet have a wide, a universal dominion, but no stress is laid on the servitude of the nations to Israel. Certainly, too, the ideal falls below that of the "servant of Yahweh"; but at the same time this ideal of the kingdom established in righteousness and of the peace-loving, justice-securing king is anything but ignoble.

The best complete vindication of Isaianic authorship would be to establish a clear connection with some period of the prophet's activity; but, unfortunately, those who agree in rejecting the view that the passage is post-Isaianic, differ as to the period of Isaiah's activity to which it belongs. It must suffice to refer to two or three theories of date.

Kit. argues that the passage fits into the range of ideas found in chs. 6–8 and other passages of the period to which these chapters belong. Isaiah then expected the conquest of the country and the city, and the overthrow of the monarchy (2:12ff; 3:1ff; 5:5ff.); but also that a remnant would survive (7:3; 6:13);

Cp. Compare.
Cheyne *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.
Introd. Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
Hackmann *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 1893.
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Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.
Kennett *The Composition of the Book of Isaiah*, 1910.
Kit. (1) *Der Prophet Jesaja*, a new edition (1898) of Di.;
(2) *Biblia Hebraica*, 1906.

from the remnant would arise a deliverer, Immanuel, representative of the new generation, who would grow up in affliction. Judah must drink the cup of affliction at the hand of Assyria (7:17ff; 8:3f, 5ff, 20ff.). Then the hope represented in Immanuel is realised, 8:16ff. It increases, 8:9f., and reaches its climax, 9:1ff.—Assyria must fall. The climax was not clearly perceived at first, but may have been so after 722, when the section 8–9:6 may have been written down. The sequence of thought and, perhaps, the original sequence of the sections is—8:12, 15 (20), 21f., Disaster; 8:16–18, 20, Hope; 8:9f; 9:1ff., Fulfilment. This elaborate construction rests on details, such as the identification of Immanuel and the prince of 9:4, which, according to the view taken in this commentary, are insecure, or definitely unsound. It certainly mitigates to some extent the difficulties attached to the view that 9:1–6 was the direct sequence of ch. 7, and written at the time of the Syro-Ephraimitish war. Would Isaiah have described the people as walking in darkness, because they were threatened, in his own phrase, by two fag-ends of smoked out fire-brands?

Du. holds that the "driver" of v. 3 must be Assyria, and the "soldier" of v. 4 Sennacherib's army.

The Isaianic authorship seems to have been first questioned by Stade, *Gesch*. i. 596, ii. 209f., *ZATW* vi. 161; then by H. Hackmann, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 130–136, 143ff.; Cheyne, *Introd.* pp. 44f.; Marti, *Comm.*; Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahweprophetie*, pp. 57–60; R. H. Kennett, *JThS* vii. (1906), 321–342. Sta., Che., Hack. suggest a post-exilic date not closely defined. Kennett, who treats the passage as *historical*, refers it to about 140 B.C., when "the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel" (1 Mac 13:41), and Simon held a rejoicing "because a great enemy was destroyed out of Israel" (1 Mac 13:51). In addition to the general objection to assuming a Maccabaean origin for any parts of the Book of Isaiah (see Introd. §§ 26f.), this theory rests on several very questionable assumptions: (1) that 8:23 (9:1) is part of the poem; (2) that the name given to the prince implies a warrior; (3) that the boots of v. 4 must be boots of Greek soldiery; (4) that the child of v. 5 is not a *child, as such*, but the offspring given to the nation, to wit, Simon. Marti with far more probability places the prophecy between 540 and 440 B.C., roughly about 500, not far remote in time from Haggai and Zechariah, both of whom expected a Messiah of the Davidic house.

On the whole, if the passage was not written by Isaiah, it may be best regarded as a lyrical counterpart of chs. 40–55, though the work of an author with different ideals, written towards the close of the Exile, when the people had long been walking in the darkness of captivity, long dwelling in the land of the shadow of death—Babylon. Like Ezekiel, the writer was convinced that the jealousy of Yahweh must bring about the restoration and exaltation of his people: like Haggai

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Du. *Das Buch Jesaia*, 1892 (ed. 2, 1902).
Stade *Lehrbuch der Hebräischen Grammatik*, 1879.
ZATW Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.
H. Hackmann *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 1893.
Cheyne *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
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Che. *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.

and Zechariah, he looked for a Davidic Messiah; unlike Ezekiel, he gives to his prince a supreme place in the restored community, though, like the Deutero-Isaiah, he expects the restoration itself to be the direct act of Yahweh without the mediation of the Messiah: this is a possible, even a probable, but at the same time not a certain theory of the origin of the poem. If it should be correct, we have three great ideals represented in the literature of the Exile—Ezekiel's, of the Holy Community devoted to ritual and sanctified by the presence of God in its midst; the Deutero-Isaiah's, of the Prophetic People preaching true religion to the nations; and this writer's, of the Righteous Kingdom with its king righteously ruling from Jerusalem over an unlimited empire.

1 (2). *The people*] the entire people of Israel, descendants of those who had constituted the kingdom of David (v. 6); the subject is not the same as in 8:23 (9:1), nor as in 8:21f. (note the consistent use of sing. there and pl. here); it is rather the new subject of an entirely independent poem.—*Darkness … light*] for these figures of calamities of various kinds and prosperity or deliverance from calamity respectively, cp. *e.g.* 58:8, 10; 59:9; 60:20; La 3:2; Job 15:22f. Darkness signifies, in particular, captivity. Cp., either for this last point or for the phrases used in this v., 42:7 (אסורים וו אשר בחשך), 49:9 ישבי בחשך, Mic 7:8f. (יוציאני לאור … לי אור יהוה בחשך כי אשב Ps 107:10, 14 ישבי חשך וצלמות אסירי) עני וברזל … יוציאם מחשך וצלמות ומוסרותיהם ינתק).—*The land of the shadow of death*] or, *of gloom* (see phil. n.); the phrase ארץ צלמות occurs here only; but cp. "the land of darkness and the shadow of death" (Job 10:21, cp. 38:17), *i.e.* Sheol: this meaning can scarcely be intended here; what is meant is either the land of Israel temporarily obscured by calamity, or Babylon, the land of captivity. avoids both these applications by paraphrase—"The people of the house of Israel who were walking in Egypt as in darkness came forth to see a great light; they that dwelt in the shadow of death, light hath shone upon them." **2 (3).** *Thou hast multiplied the rejoicing,* etc.] the translation rests on a very slight conjectural emendation; see phil. n. reads *thou hast multiplied the nation: thou hast not increased the joy*, which is obviously unsuitable; the Ḳ^{e}rê (RV) is probably an early conjectural emendation which restores sense at the expense of style and without restoring the parallelism (see phil. n.). The two figures which enforce the greatness of the joy both recur; see Ps 4:8; 126:6 (joy in harvest), Ps 119:162 (joy over spoil). It no more follows that the poet expected the new era to open after a victorious battle, than that he expected it to begin at the end of harvest.—**3 (4).** The great joy is on account of the end of Israel's servitude. The people referred to in the pl. in vv. 1f. are here collectively represented by singular suffixes; the change is occasioned by the introduction of a figure (cp. 1:5f. after 1:4). Israel is compared to an animal with a burdensome yoke resting on its neck and compelled to work by its driver, who uses his stick upon it. In the terms of the figure, Yahweh (not the Messiah) brings Israel's servitude to an end by breaking in pieces both the yoke and the

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cp. Compare.
Cp. Compare.
cp. Compare.
cp. Compare.
RV Revised Version.
𝔐 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.
𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).
cp. Compare.

driver's stick: burden and blows are alike done away. The figure of the yoke is a favourite one with Hebrew writers, and is used of the oppressive government of native rulers (1 K 12:4, 9ff.), of the hard treatment by foreigners (Assyrians, 14:25; 10:27; Jer 27:8, 11f.; cp. Dt 28:48) of Israel in its own land, or in a land not theirs (Lv 26:13).—*The yoke of his burden*] the yoke that is his burden, his burden some yoke: cp. 10:27; 14:25 where *yoke* and *burden* stand in synonymous parallelism. The *yoke* (עֹל) is specifically the heavy cross-beam that rested on the neck of the animal; through holes in this passed wooden pegs or *bars* (,(מֹטֹת which, being tied below, enclosed the animal's neck; see the illustration in *PEF Qu. St.*, 1891, p. 113, reproduced in *EBi.* 78. MT and probably (though cp. Nah 1:13) means *the rod* (מַטֵּה) *of his shoulder*, or *neck*, i.e. the rod with which his neck was beaten; but (1) this would anticipate the driver of the next distich, and (2) the neck protected by the yoke was not the special recipient of blows.—*The stick of his driver*] it is unnecessary to follow RV and introduce a new figure by rendering *of his taskmaster*: for *driver*, cp. Job 39:7. Nor, in view of the reference to *the stick* (שֵׁבֶט) for beating (cp. *e.g.* Ex 21:20; Pr 10:13), is the rendering *oppressor* (14:4 n.) suitable.—*As in the day of Midian*] an allusion to the ending of another foreign oppression (Jg 6–8). With the phrase *day of Midian*, cp. "day of Jezreel," Hos 2:2 (1:11); "day of Egypt," Ezk 30:9; "day of Jerusalem," Ps 137:7. Why does the poet refer in particular to the deliverance from Midian? Is it because the story told then, as it is read now (Jg 7:2), illustrated the prophetic doctrine that deliverance is wrought not by the size and equipment of human armies, but by Yahweh? In any case the poet does not say that the "light" will shine, the change of fortunes come, after a great battle.—**4 (5).** *For*] this v. does not give the reason for v. 3, but a further reason for the joy of v. 2; men will rejoice because the age of universal and unbroken peace (2:4) has begun. War is already abolished, and everything that pertains to it, typically illustrated by the soldier's dress, will be destroyed by fire. Cp. especially Ezk 39:9, also Is 2:4; Hos 2:20 (18), Zec 9:10; Ps 46:10 (9), 76:4 (3). It is curious that the writer

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cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

PEF Qu. St. Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.

EBi. Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, 1899–1903.

MT The Massoretic Text (*i.e.* the vocalised text of the Hebrew Bible). Variants in the Hebrew codices have been cited from De Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Vet. Test.*, vol. iii., or R. Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*.

𝔐 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.

cp. Compare.

RV Revised Version.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

Cp. Compare.

selects the soldier's dress rather than the implements of war for destruction; Che. (*SBOT* p. 89) reconstructs the text on the basis of the references just given, so that shields, bows, arrows, and quivers may be consumed by the flames instead.—*Every shoe worn in tumult* (*of battle*)] the last part of this translation in particular is uncertain; סאון† is not *battle* (AV), nor *armour* (RV), but foot-gear. It has been claimed that the word means in particular the heavy military boot; and Ges. referred to Josephus' description (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 1. 8) of the "shoes all full of thick and sharp nails" of the Roman soldiers in illustration of its character; but neither the Assyr. *šênu* nor the Aram. ,סינא ,ܣܗܪܐ from either of which Heb. may have borrowed the word, has any such specific sense; סינא is used, *e.g.*, in Ex 3:5; Dt 25:9; Jos 5:15, ܣܗܪܐ (for which the Peshiṭta prefers ܢܥܠܐ) in the Harklensian version of Mt 3:11; Lk 10:4; 15:22. Abimilki of Tyre in his letters to the king of Egypt describes himself as "the dust under the shoe (*šênu*) of my lord the king (Tell el-Amarna Tablets, 152:4, and elsewhere). Yet though the word סאון is not specifically a heavy military boot, the writer would probably have had such in mind if the following words really mean "of him that is heavily booted" (Kennett), or "of him that makes an earthquake as he treads" (cp. BDB under both words); but both these renderings are very questionable, the denominative vb. (סאן) should, as in Assyr. and Aram., mean no more than *to draw on, to wear a shoe.* If the text is right, which is doubtful, *worn in the tumult of battle* is the safest rendering of , which should be pointed סָאֵן not סאֵן (MT). This gives the best parallelism, adopts the most probable meaning of the denominative, and for the rendering of רעש by *tumult* (*of battle*) has the close, though not exact, parallel of Jer 10:22; cp. also Is 29:6. Elsewhere the noun רעש means *a*

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Introd=Introduction to the Book of Isaiah, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.
SBOT The Sacred Books of the Old Testament, ed. Paul Haupt. (Part 10, *The Book of Isaiah*, by T. K. Cheyne—Hebrew Text, 1899; English translation, 1898.)
† The sign, following a series of references, indicates that all examples of the phrase, word, or form in question, occurring in the OT, have been quoted.
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𝔊 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.
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cp. Compare.

trembling or *quaking*, an actual earthquake, or, by hyperbole, the shaking of the earth attributed to war-chariots (Jer 47:3; Nah 3:2). The poet then has no special type of boot in mind; it is the fact that shoe (סאון) and garment (,(שמלה of whatever nature, have been worn in battle, that condemns them to the flames. In the golden age of peace, war and all that pertains to war will be taboo, and must, as things unclean, be destroyed. Consequently that part of Kennett's ingenious argument* for the late date of the poem, which rests on the conclusion that סאון must refer to the heavy nailed boots which were characteristic of the Syro-Greek soldiery, falls to the ground. It remains noticeable, however, that in Is 5:27 *Isaiah* calls the foot-gear of the Assyrians ,נעל *sandals.—Stained with blood*] reading by conjecture ,מגוללה; מְגֹאָלָה , *rolled*, or *weltering, in blood*, seems to say too much; Amasa is fitly described as "weltering" (מחגלל) in his blood (2 S 20:12), but the garments to be consigned to the flames are scarcely limited to those which had "weltered" in blood; enough that they had met the usual fate of soldiers' garments, and had become blood-stained (cp. Is 63:3).—**5 (6).** The third cause of the people's joy is the birth of a prince of their own race (*to us*), who receives (at once) the dominion and power over them that had been exercised in the days of darkness (v. 1) by an alien ruler (v. 3), and who is (v. 6) to extend his dominion widely but peacefully. This child is Hezekiah according to mediaeval Jewish interpreters (Rashi, Ḳi., Ibn Ezra), Simon the Maccabee according to Kennett, the Messiah according to most (cp.). The ideal standpoint of the poet seems to be (shortly) after the birth of the prince, after he has been recognised as prince of Israel, but before the wide extension of his kingdom has begun.—*Child … son*] placed first in their respective sentences for emphasis; ילד is applicable to an infant as yet unweaned (Gn 21:8) as well as to older children.—*To us*] the poet who has hitherto spoken of his people in the 3rd pers. here associates himself with them.—*And the dominion is upon his shoulder*] is this fact mentioned between the birth and the naming because the name was given after the prince had grown up and earned it by his exploits (Du.)? or is the meaning that the name is given as usual a few days after birth, and that the child is "born in the purple" (Grotius), because, though the house of David survived (v. 6), it had at the time no reigning prince (Marti)? or is the position of the clause without significance? ,משרה *dominion*,

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* *Journal of Theol. Studies*, vii. 327–331f., 338: criticised by C. F. Burney, *ib.* xi. 438–441, to whom Kennett replies, *ib.* xii. 114f. My own note above stands as it was written before the appearance of Dr. Burney's note.

𝔊 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.

cp. Compare.

Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣhaḳi] (1040–1105).

Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ḳi. Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ibn Ezra Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

cp. Compare.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

Du. *Das Buch Jesaia*, 1892 (ed. 2, 1902).

Marti *Das Buch Jesaja*, 1900.

appears to mean here the royal dignity, in v. 6† the royal authority; the entire phrase here refers to entering on a reign rather than to the burden of governing; it may possibly have *originated* in a practice of wearing a royal robe *on the shoulder*: cp. 22:22.—*His name has been called*] cp. 1:26 n.—The eight words of the name fall into four clauses, each containing two words closely connected: less probable views are that the first four (Jer.), or the first two (EV, Ges.), words should be taken singly; some Jewish interpreters distribute the names among God and the child, *e.g.* "God who is marvellous in counsel, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, gave him the name Prince of Peace (Rashi, Ḳi.: cp.); but Ibn Ezra rightly insisted that the whole eight words belonged to the child's name. Luzzatto treated the names as a sentence, predicating (like Immanuel, 7:14 n.) something of God, and therefore implying nothing as to the child. Some of the names singly, and even more in combination, are as applied to men unparalleled in the OT, and on this account are regarded by Gressmann (p. 280ff.) as mythological and traditional: cp. also Rosenmüller's *Scholia*.—*Wonderful Counsellor*] Like God Himself (28:29; 25:1), the Messiah will give counsel that will be exceptional, exceeding what has hitherto been known or heard.—*Mighty God*] cp. 10:21; "the great (and) the mighty God," Dt 10:17; Neh 9:32; Jer 32:18. The ambiguous אלי גבורים of Ezk 32:21, the application of אל גוים to Nebuchadnezzar in Ezk 31:11, and the fact, if it be such, that in the remaining three clauses of the name here the words are cstr. and gen., scarcely justify a departure from the obvious rendering *mighty God* in favour of *god of a hero*, and still less a whittling down of the meaning of אל to *hero*, so that the clause means no more than *mighty hero.* The child is to be more than mighty (,תקיף Ibn Ezra), more than a mighty man (1 ,איש גבור S 14:52), more than a mighty king (,מלך גבור Dn 11:3): he is to be a mighty ,אל god. This attribution of divinity, implying that the Messiah is to be a kind of demi-god, is without clear analogy in the OT, for Ps 45:7 (6) is ambiguous. Not only אל but גבור has been differently interpreted: גבור is often used of warriors, and many understand it to refer here to the military success of the Messiah. But if the writer had wished to summon up the thought of one who gained renown in war before

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† The sign, following a series of references, indicates that all examples of the phrase, word, or form in question, occurring in the OT, have been quoted.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.

EV English Version.

Ges. *Der Prophet Jesaja*, 1821.

Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣhaḳi] (1040–1105).

Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ḳi. Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

cp. Compare.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

OT Old Testament.

Gressmann *Der Ursprung der israelitisch jüdischen Eschatologie*, 1905.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

Ibn Ezra Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

OT Old Testament.

he became prince of peace, he might better have chosen an unambiguous term, such, for example, as גבור מלחמה, *mighty in battle* (Ps 24:8). At all events גבור is also used of might manifested in other ways than those of war (cp. *e.g.* Gn 10:9). As the lion is mightiest of beasts because he quails before no other (Pr 30:30), so Yahweh is mighty as one who cannot be browbeaten or bribed into abandoning the defence and care of the helpless and the poor (Dt 10:17). In Jer 32:18 the idea of Yahweh's might, conveyed in the epithets "great, mighty," "terrible," is particularised in what follows as greatness in counsel (עצה) and action, in the signs wrought in Egypt, and in finding nothing beyond his power (.ממך יפלא) *Mighty* is to be taken here with this wider reference. Yahweh Himself will bring war to an end and so bring in the Messianic age of peace: the Messiah endued with the Spirit of God, "a spirit of counsel and might" (רוח עצה וגבורה), will like the mighty God Himself fearlessly defend the rights of the weak and poor, and, after judicial process, have the violent and guilty disturbers of civic peace slain (11:2–4).—*Father for ever*] the benevolent guardian of His people so long as He and they endure. For the cstr. and force of עד here, cp., on one view of the construction there, גברת עד, *a lady for ever*, 47:7, and the phrase with the synonymous עבד עולם, עולם, *a slave for ever*, Dt 15:17; 1 S 27:12; Job 40:28. For עד predicated of the (Messianic?) king, see, *e.g.*, Ps 21:5–7; in view of these and other references it is unnecessary to take the phrase as equivalent to *Eternal father* (cp. .אלהי עולם, 40:28) For *father* used figuratively of a protector or benefactor, see Job 29:16; Is 22:21. Two alternative interpretations, *Eternal One*, and *Father*, i.e. acquirer or distributor, *of booty*, are both open to the serious objection that they pre-suppose an Arabic use of אב, *father*, which has no parallel in Hebrew, not even as has sometimes been assumed in proper names like Abihud, Abihail; see *HPN* p. 77ff.—**6 (7).** The zeal of Yahweh will secure the endurance of the wide and peaceful dominion of the new Davidic dynasty, will secure also that it is both established and maintained in justice and righteousness.—*To support it in justice and righteousness*] cp. 16:5, and Pr 20:28 "his throne shall be supported in mercy (righteousness)."—*The jealousy of Yahweh of Hosts will do this*] the same phrase in 37:32. The term קנאה, used of passionate emotion in man (*e.g.* Ca 8:6), here refers to Yahweh's emotion: so, with other terms of emotion, in 63:15. This jealousy, or ardour, or passion, of Yahweh, which will not suffer Him to be deprived of His due, especially of the proper regard for His power and honour, is frequently referred to by Ezekiel and later writers; it led to the punishment by captivity of His people who had been disloyal to Him, but it subsequently necessitated the restoration of Israel, lest the nations should think Yahweh weak; cp. Ezk 39:25–29 also 5:13; 16:38; 23:25; 36:5ff.; Is 42:13; 59:17; Zec 1:14f; 8:2f.; Jl 2:18f.; Nah 1:2. The phrase and the idea expressed by it would be entirely in place if this prophecy is exilic or post-exilic; and

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cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

HPN Studies in Hebrew Proper Names, by G. Buchanan Gray, 1896.

cp. Compare.

𝔊 The Greek (LXX) Version of the Old Testament (ed. Swete, Cambridge, 1887–1894). The readings of the codices are, when necessary, distinguished thus:—$\mathfrak{G}^{A}$ $\mathfrak{G}^{B}$ (Alexandrian, Vatican, etc.). For the cursives, reference has been made to *Vet. Test. Graece, cum variis lectionibus*, ed. Holmes, Oxon. 1798, which is cited as HP followed by a numeral.

cp. Compare.

it would be difficult to think it earlier, if the main thought is that the jealousy of Yahweh will restore the Jewish monarchy. But if the main thought is that Yahweh will establish and maintain a *righteous* government, it may be merely a more passionate expression of Isaiah's ideal in 1:26. The attribution of ,קנאה jealousy, to Yahweh would still remain unique so far as Isaiah's extant writings are concerned. Cp. Küchler, *Der Gedanke des Eifers Jahwes im AT*, in *ZATW*, 1908, pp. 42–52.[11]

The structure and unity of the passage are shown by its syntax and arrangement. It moves with freedom, no slave of metrical structures, shaping its own forms and meanings. It can suspend parallelism (v 5) for five single statements of two words each then resume parallelism with pairs of prepositional phrases. It is capable of putting three pairs of words opposite a single pair in 8:23 and 9:3.

The whole is dominated by the particle ,כִּי which in 8:23 and 9:3, 4, 5 introduced the speeches. To understand its meaning and significance for the passage is to open the door to its treasures. The dominant position of perfect verbs (in vv 8:23; 9:1, 2, 3, 5*a*) is instructive—always in inverted order with substantives first. The strange appearance of a perfect with *vav* in v 4*c* breaks the pattern, as does the imperfect in v 2*c*, while the consecutive imperfects in v 5*b–c* are important. The passage closes with an imperfect.

What is one to do with all this? It is no ordinary prosaic, or even poetic, style. First, let us deal with the כִּי particles. They may be strong assertatives—either negative or positive. Apparently the first (v 23) is such and is rendered "nevertheless." The sentence is an objection to the previous one, negating it word for word—but with no verb. The next line softens the contradiction by ascribing them to two different "times" and uses inverted word order and perfect tenses to achieve the effect. The verbs are strong, but the syntax leaves them suspended and timeless, like the substantive statement that introduced them. The first strophe has halted the confused lament with the assertion that the future can be made good, just as the past has been bad. The contrast may be between "contempt" and "honor" but is more likely parallel: the first attack was light, the second, much heavier in its consequences.

In Isa 9:1 the two lines are balanced in meter. They support the theme. The present times of trouble are presented by participles, while hope is expressed in perfect verbs as in the first strophe. The contrast is now between "light" and "dark."

In Isa 9:2 the pattern is broken. Inverted order is abandoned, as are also the impersonal verbs. Second-person singular "you" is addressed. This is often taken to be God. It is more likely that the broken pattern indicates a different speaker, who addresses the one who has just spoken either in v 23 or v 1.

Isa 9:3 is the second of four passages beginning with ,כִּי "nevertheless." In each the meaning is a contrast drawn to the "gloom" of 8:22. The statements do not contradict the previous line but rather state reasons to hope in a time of trouble. This one poses the issue of the presence of a powerful oppressor who has subjugated the land. If the speaker, like Gideon, can smash that

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Cp. Compare.

ZATW Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.

[11] George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, I–XXXIX*, International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912), 165–175.

power … The apodosis is understood but not uttered. The inverted order poses the threefold emphasis on that oppressor before the verb of deliverance.

The third כי, in 9:4, introduces a reminder of the forces of violence and chaos that stand in the way of a solution. These, too, must be destroyed. The verse is only half spoken: the first part has no verb—stopping abruptly—while the second has a perfect with *vav*, which normally requires an antecedent. It is as though the lines are to be stammered out, being distorted in delivery. But the meaning is clear. Years of war cannot be put aside in a night. All the weapons and uniforms (not to mention psychic scars) must be eradicated.

The fourth כי, beginning 9:5, introduces a more direct suggestion. It is spoken in chorus and takes its "us" from those seeing the "great light" of v 1. They hear this as hope that a descendant of David may seize the chance apparent in the fall of Samaria to reunite the kingdoms and inaugurate a second era of peace and prosperity like that of David and Solomon. The idea, improbable as it is under the Assyrian (or Persian), evokes a nostalgic burst of patriotic fervor—a reminder of what enthronement hymns sound like. Then the section closes on the prayerful invocation of the Zeal of YHWH.

Comment

23 (9:1) The laments of the doomsayers of 8:19–22 are interrupted by claims of hope. The speech denies that gloom and anguish are the inevitable results of the events. While recognizing the bitterness of the moment, it reminds them of a hope based on God's intervention. Election is viewed as a guarantee of his eventual redemption.

The perfect verbs begin a series that extends through the first line of 9:5. Note that they are used here both for "the first" as well as "the later" time. They are independent of a time context. We have tried to show this by translating with present time throughout (J. Wash Watts, *Survey of Syntax*, 46).

The ראשׁון, "first time," for the lands of Zebulun and Naphtali is not easy to identify. זבלון, "Zebulun," was located in south Galilee astride the valley east of Carmel that is drained by the river Kishon. But its significance as a tribe had been diminishing since the days of the Judges. Solomon's districts have the territory absorbed into that of Asher (1 Kgs 4:16). Whatever of its territory was not seized in Tiglath-Pileser's drive down the coast in 734 B.C.E. was taken the following year in the invasion of Naphtali. The province of Dor was established for the coastal region from Carmel south to Joppa (*MBA*, 148).

נפתלי, "Naphtali," was the northernmost territory of the kingdom of Israel, occupying the northwest of the lake of Galilee on up to the southern slopes of Mount Hermon. It had also not been significant since the period of the Judges, although Solomon did have a district named Naphtali. The "first time" could appropriately refer to a time beginning before the monarchy, or it could refer to Tiglath-Pileser's first attack. It is possible that this reference is simply figurative for the area of the northern kingdom that was occupied by Assyria in 732 B.C.E. The Assyrian campaign of 733 B.C.E. drove across the heart of its territory (*MBA*, 147), attacked its major cities, and reduced it to a province under an Assyrian governor (2 Kgs 15:29). The same campaign

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MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.
MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.

subdued Gilead, and it, too, was made an Assyrian province (*Annals of Tiglath Pileser III*). Some of its leaders were taken into exile (1 Chr 5:6).

A. Alt's ("Jesaja 8:23–9:6") suggestion to add a line listing parallel terms such as the Valley of Sharon and the Mountain of Gilead is appropriate as a comment on the geography even if it is judged unnecessary for the strophic structure of the passage.

Being "treated lightly" apparently refers to these invasions and the subsequent oppression under a foreign ruler. Both verbs in this verse lack an explicit subject. Two possibilities are likely. One is that YHWH is the subject. Some commentaries suggest that he should be put into the text. This would fit, especially if the second persons of the verbs in 9:3–4 also are addressed to him. Another possibility is that the subject is "the first time" and "the later" (Budde, *Jesaja's Erleben*, 99; Wildberger). We have chosen this second course. The emphasis is on the hope that a later time can bring a reversal of fortunes for the stricken area. But the subject's ambiguity is deliberate and is intended to let the hearer or reader make the choice.

The ,האחרון "later" (time), could refer to a subsequent campaign by Tiglath-Pileser. The דרך הים, "Way of the Sea," ,עבר הירדן "Transjordan," and ,גליל הגוים "Galilee of the Nations," appear to be Hebrew names for the districts the Assyrians called Dor, Megiddo, and Gilead (cf. *MBA*, 148). The fate of this region was separated from that of Samaria as early as the eighth century. Matthew quotes the verses to support the account of Jesus' ministry in that region (Matt 4:15–16).

In content the message is simply an appeal to hope that the future has got to be better, and that the future will rectify the bad times of the past. The announcement proclaims that the new political realities (i.e., redistricting and renaming territory) need not prevent a new period of glory and honor. (Note: the announcement is not given as a word from the Lord or supported in any way.)

9:1 (2) A pro-Israelite group in the crowd picks up the note just sounded. There is ,אוֹר "light," at the end of the tunnel for Israel.

2 (3) The second-person singular of the verbs at the beginning of v 2 (3) and the end of v 3 (4) have usually been understood to refer to God. But this need not be necessary if the passage has a dialogical character. They may refer to the previous speaker and the sudden shift of mood that his speech has made in the people. So it is a bystander who challenges the first speaker, asking what in his speech there is to be happy about. And he scornfully derides the gullible crowd who act as though a great victory has been won just by saying so.

3–6 (4–7) Three further characteristics of that great future salvation are each introduced with ,כִּי "nevertheless," which may have various meanings. See *Form/Structure/Setting*.

3 (4) The first characteristic emphasizes freedom from foreign domination. The speaker believes this is possible because God has led Israel to victory in impossible situations like the one Gideon successfully faced (Judg 7): "the day of Midian."

4 (5) The second portrays the end of holy war against the enemy when all the booty, including the war boots and military uniforms, had to be burned.

5–6 (6–7) The third is voiced by monarchists in the crowd who see in the prophecy of future light the restoration of power and glory to the House of David. The future of a new heir to the throne can be full of hope that all the promise of the age of the united kingdom when David and

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MBA Aharoni, Y., and M. Avi-Yonah. *Macmillan Bible Atlas.* 2d ed. New York, 1977.

Solomon ruled can now be restored and fulfilled. This passage is one of the most beautiful and expressive passages in the OT, reflecting high monarchical tradition and ideology. The ideas and phrases may well echo those used in enthronement ceremonies. (Cf. *Excursus: Messiah, Son of David* below.) J. M. Roberts suggests that the "us" are members of the Divine Council and that "one may read Isa 9:5 as reflecting the joyous assent of the Divine Council to the new king, YHWH's son." However, since the brunt of the Vision's message weighs against such hopes, the speakers here, like those of the previous verses, should be viewed as opponents of Isaiah's message.

The episode ends with the murmured response of the crowd: "May the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts do this." This effectively represents the theologically inclusive faith that united the divergent elements in the crowd. Those who supported the position of northern Israel (8:22–23 [8:22–9:1]); those with a general faith that God would certainly make things right (9:1–2 [2–3]); the rebellious zealots (v 3 [4]); the holy-war enthusiasts, who said "Let God fight the battles" (v 4 [5]); and the monarchists, who saw hope in a revival of the house of David and the birth of a new David (vv 5–6 [6–7])—all these could intone the prayer for God's zeal to save them.

Explanation

This passage has often been understood as promise. Yet the analysis above does not support this for its original setting. It is not spoken by the prophet or in the name of God. It is an attempt to assemble from the resources of faith and doctrine words to bolster hope. Yet the chorus knows that only a miracle can bring the light, restore the joy, or reestablish the power and authority of David's reign. That is why they sigh, "May the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts do this!" Of course, nothing is impossible with God.

The speaker in 8:23 tries to change the mood of doom and gloom that dominated the previous response (8:19–22) to Isaiah's speeches. The anguish of God's people need not be forever. History belongs to God. He can turn things around. But the speakers carefully avoid being too specific about it. The perfect tenses in the passage give a timeless appearance. The speeches directly contradict the message of Isaiah in 6:11–21, 7:8, and 8:7. They turn against the announced plan of God in 2:6–9 and imply an easy grace for the apostasy spoken of in 1:2–8.

The theme is picked up in 9:1 (2) with an eagerness that reflects the great need of the people to believe. The dark moment will pass. There is hope. V 3 (4) is saying that any true change will need to destroy the oppressor in the land and that this would require a miraculous deliverance like that of Gideon. V 4 (5) continues the skeptical mood, noting that a total disarmament will be required to achieve this goal. But the crowd now breaks into a chant that proclaims the royal hopes for an heir to the throne of David in whom all of the promises to David will be fulfilled, as in 2 Sam 7:12–14 and royal psalms like Pss 2, 72, and 89. The destruction of the government in Samaria opens the door to such a dream, if the foreign oppressor can be dealt with.

The episode draws to a climax with the speeches toasting the idea of such a "messianic" hope and closes with the fervent prayer that the Zeal of YHWH of Hosts may do this. The invocation of the old battle name for God recognizes that this is only possible with the kind of miraculous intervention that brought Israel through the Reed Sea, brought down the walls of Jericho, and devastated the Midianite hosts before Gideon.

This hope is a legitimate part of Israel's heritage. It is not, however, a part of Isaiah's word for Israel or Judah in the eighth century or of the Vision of Isaiah for Jerusalem in the fifth century. The traditionalists opposed the prophet in those days, as they opposed Jesus and John the Baptist in their day. The issue is not that God is unable to fulfill his promises or that God is unfaithful to them. It *is* that the people of Israel were not aligned with God's agenda. He is now in the process of judging and cleansing so that his goals for his people can be achieved.

Two places in the Vision allow for the opposition to be heard: 8:19–9:6 (7); 10:3–12:6 and chaps. 60–64. The sharpest contrast to the Isaiah message is in 8:23–9:6 (7) and in 62:1–12 and 63:11*b*–64:11. These passages have many things in common, especially their presumption. They presume upon God's miraculous power and intervention (like Satan's temptations to Jesus, "tell these stones to become bread," "throw yourself down," in Matt 4:3, 6 NIV).

The responses may accurately reflect the popular elements of eighth-century Jerusalem. But they also found echoes in fifth-century Jerusalem. By then the oppressor was the Persian rather than the Assyrian. For both groups the thrust of Isaiah's message was equally obnoxious.

Traditional Christian interpreters have correctly noted that 9:5–6 (6–7) is part and parcel of royal liturgy and therefore used it as a messianic text, like the royal psalms. This is achieved by lifting the verses out of context and changing the genre of the larger work to match. Waschke (*ZAW* 110 [1998] 348–51) notes that some newer interpretations of the Psalter have found a redactional purpose in positioning royal psalms (2, 72, 89) in strategic places and suggests that the composers/redactors of Isaiah have done the same (see *Excursus: Messiah, Son of David*). This is legitimate. The Vision apparently quotes from other contexts. But it is important to keep in mind that the verses do not function as messianic predictions in this context.

The prophetic task lay in interpreting the fall and destruction of the kingdom and in preparing the people to live as God's people without king or royal dominion. The Vision follows in the path of Jeremiah and Ezekiel in this regard and will later reinterpret royal motifs to fit that situation. One should note that in order for Jesus to be understood to be the Messiah these motifs of kingship and dominion had to be radically reinterpreted to fit the crucified carpenter's son. In this, the NT follows the path laid out in the Vision of Isaiah. Christian interpretation has relegated the more royal aspects of messianic hope to Christ's second coming to reign in glory.[12]

NIV New International Version

ZAW Zeitschrift fur die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft

[12] John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1–33*, Revised Edition., vol. 24, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc, 2005), 170–175.

(9:1). Apart from the opening sentence (see last n.), this v. is a prose note explaining that the darkened land of the poetical fragment (8:21f.), to wit, the northern and north-eastern territory of Israel (cp. Zec 10:10; Mic 7:14) will be compensated for its former distress by a corresponding glory (9:1–6 (2–7)). If either 8:21f. or 9:1–6 is not the work of Isaiah, neither is this note; if both are, this note *may* have been added by him when he combined two poems of different periods. In this case he looks back on the humiliation of *Naphtali*, which took place in 734 B.C. as long past; it belongs to the *former time.—The land of Zebulon and the land of Naphtali*] northern and north-eastern Palestine; cp. Ps 68:28 (27). Naphtali is explicitly mentioned in 2 K 15:29. The terms in the antithetical clause are all direct objects—*he hath made glorious the way of the sea, the land*

Light now shines on the people that have been (long) in darkness (v. 1), and they rejoice before Yahweh with great joy (v. 2). For (1) Yahweh has delivered the people from the yoke of a foreign oppressor (v. 3); (2) He has also made an end of war (v. 4a); moreover, (3) a child has been born, who, as a native ruler in contrast to the (foreign) oppressor of v. 3, will exercise dominion, and is marked out as exceptional by the name which he receives, v. 5. He will rule justly and righteously from the throne of David over a vast dominion undisturbed to its furthest bound by any breach of peace; this righteous government by the will and act of Yahweh is to be endless (v. 6).

Except in vv. 4, 6 the tenses used throughout the poem are perfects and imperfects with waw conversive, *i.e.* tenses naturally used in historical narrative. But the situation described in vv. 1–3, 5 in no way corresponds to any known circumstances, and the name in v. 5 has no appearance of being one borne by an actual person. It has therefore been widely and correctly held that the poem is, at least in part, prophetic.

It is, of course, *possible* that the perfects are in part prophetic, in part historical; if this were actually so, the question would arise, how much is prophetic, how much historical? Has the great deliverance from foreign oppression actually taken place? Has some birth awakened the poet's hopes, but the actual present not yet fulfilled them by bringing the child born to the throne of David? Many have held that the birth is historic, and that the poet refers in particular to the birth of Hezekiah; but this view is now generally and rightly abandoned.

It is more probable that the poem is prophetic throughout in all its direct statements—the light has not yet actually shone, the people have not yet actually rejoiced, the child has not yet actually been born; all these things are past, not in reality, but only in the hopeful vision of the poet. The circumstances under which the poem was written can only, but may probably, be detected in the implicit statements; from these we may infer two things: (1) the people were at

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cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

the time in "darkness," *i.e.* distress; and (2) under a foreign yoke. On one interpretation of v. 5, if not also from v. 3, it would also follow that (3) the throne of David was at the time vacant; another interpretation would still admit, but no longer require, such a situation (see note on v. 5).

If all we can infer are the two circumstances first mentioned, the historical situation presupposed is obviously one that occurred even in Isaiah's lifetime, for Judah felt the pressure of Assyria and paid tribute; but it also frequently recurred later, when the yoke of Babylon, Persia, the Ptolemies or the Seleucids rested on the Jews.

The determination of the date and authorship of the poem must therefore turn on other considerations; but these, too, are unfortunately less decisive than could be desired.[13]

beyond Jordan, Galilee of the nations. These terms are more extensive than those in the previous clause, for they include the country East of Jordan (= Gilead, 2 K 15:29). Cp. *EBi.* 1629.—*The way*

[13] George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, I–XXXIX*, International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912), 165–166.
Cp. Compare.
EBi. Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, 1899–1903.

of the sea] according to Jer., Rashi, al., *the sea* meant is the Lake of Galilee (cp. Dt 33:23). More frequently הים means the Mediterranean; and so here *the way of* (*i.e.* leading to: cp. Gn 3:24) *the sea* probably is, like the 'Via Maris' of the Crusaders, the caravan route which ran from Damascus to the Mediterranean sea at Acre.—*The land beyond Jordan*] ,עבר הירדן as frequently of the country E. of Jordan (BDB 719).—*The Galil of the nations*] cp. Jos 12:23, "the nations of the Galil," if as against ("of Gilgal") this reading of [B] be correct; also Γαλιλαία ἀλλοφύλων, 1 Mac 5:15; elsewhere in OT the 'Galil,' הגליל (Jos 20:7; 21:32; 1 K 9:11; 1 Ch 6:61†) or 2) הגלילה K 15:29), is undefined. The term means *circuit*, but is always used specifically of a district in Northern Palestine; cp. the different specific reference of ,הככר "The Round" (Gn 19:17). But the district covered by the term was not always, nor need it be here, as extensive as the later Galilee: Ges. suggested that at one time it defined a relatively small district round Kedesh (Jos 20:7; 21:32 = 1 Ch 6:61; To 1:2; 1 Mac 11:63): in 2 K 15:29 it appears less extensive than Naphtali, which it subsequently included: see, further, *EBi.*, *s.v.* Galilee. The definition given here and in 1 Mac 5:15 (cp. Jos 12:23 [B]) reflects the mixed population which was at all periods more or less characteristic of this northern territory.

Light now shines on the people that have been (long) in darkness (v. 1), and they rejoice before Yahweh with great joy (v. 2). For (1) Yahweh has delivered the people from the yoke of a foreign oppressor (v. 3); (2) He has also made an end of war (v. 4a); moreover, (3) a child has

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Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.
Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣḥaḳi] (1040–1105).
Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*
al. *alii* (others).
cp. Compare.
cp. Compare.
BDB *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament based on the Lexicon and Thesaurus of Gesenius*, by F. Brown, C. A. Briggs, and S. R. Driver, Oxford, 1906.
cp. Compare.
[B] Vatican codex.
𝔊 Vatican codex.
𝔐 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.
OT Old Testament.
† The sign, following a series of references, indicates that all examples of the phrase, word, or form in question, occurring in the OT, have been quoted.
cp. Compare.
Ges. *Der Prophet Jesaja*, 1821.
EBi. Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, 1899–1903.
cp. Compare.
𝔊 Vatican codex.

been born, who, as a native ruler in contrast to the (foreign) oppressor of v. 3, will exercise dominion, and is marked out as exceptional by the name which he receives, v. 5. He will rule justly and righteously from the throne of David over a vast dominion undisturbed to its furthest bound by any breach of peace; this righteous government by the will and act of Yahweh is to be endless (v. 6).

Except in vv. 4, 6 the tenses used throughout the poem are perfects and imperfects with waw conversive, *i.e.* tenses naturally used in historical narrative. But the situation described in vv. 1–3, 5 in no way corresponds to any known circumstances, and the name in v. 5 has no appearance of being one borne by an actual person. It has therefore been widely and correctly held that the poem is, at least in part, prophetic.

It is, of course, *possible* that the perfects are in part prophetic, in part historical; if this were actually so, the question would arise, how much is prophetic, how much historical? Has the great deliverance from foreign oppression actually taken place? Has some birth awakened the poet's hopes, but the actual present not yet fulfilled them by bringing the child born to the throne of David? Many have held that the birth is historic, and that the poet refers in particular to the birth of Hezekiah; but this view is now generally and rightly abandoned.

It is more probable that the poem is prophetic throughout in all its direct statements—the light has not yet actually shone, the people have not yet actually rejoiced, the child has not yet actually been born; all these things are past, not in reality, but only in the hopeful vision of the poet. The circumstances under which the poem was written can only, but may probably, be detected in the implicit statements; from these we may infer two things: (1) the people were at the time in "darkness," *i.e.* distress; and (2) under a foreign yoke. On one interpretation of v. 5, if not also from v. 3, it would also follow that (3) the throne of David was at the time vacant; another interpretation would still admit, but no longer require, such a situation (see note on v. 5).

If all we can infer are the two circumstances first mentioned, the historical situation presupposed is obviously one that occurred even in Isaiah's lifetime, for Judah felt the pressure of Assyria and paid tribute; but it also frequently recurred later, when the yoke of Babylon, Persia, the Ptolemies or the Seleucids rested on the Jews.

The determination of the date and authorship of the poem must therefore turn on other considerations; but these, too, are unfortunately less decisive than could be desired.

1. *Language.*—Cp. Cheyne, *Introd.* p. 44; Hackmann, p. 148. This is indecisive. On the one hand, the only occurrences of סֹבֶל (as distinct from סֵבֶל) are in v. 3; 10:27; 14:25, passages commonly, though not unanimously, attributed to Isaiah; on the other, עד *perpetuity*, and צלמות both frequent later, occur in no passage *certainly* as early as the 8th cent. (see phil. notes). It is the idea rather than the word קנאה that is significant. For the rest, the language is such that it might equally well, so far as we know, have been

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Cp. Compare.
Cheyne *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.
Introd. Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
Hackmann *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 1893.

employed in the 8th century or much later, though סאון, if loaned from Aramaic rather than Assyrian (cp. v. 4 n.), would more easily be explained by a date later than the 8th century.

2. It is urged that no echo of the passage is found in Jer., Ezek., Is 40–66. This is correct, but inconclusive. It is, of course, at once explained if the passage was written later than these writers; but unless we place it as late as the 2nd cent. B.C. (Kennett), why does it also find no echo in still later writers, Zech., Hag., Mal., the Psalms? or should we possibly find echoes of it in Ps 72? The connection with Is 11 does indeed seem probable, and if that connection is due to unity of authorship, the exilic or post-exilic date to which that passage is probably to be referred is the date also of this.

3. *Ideas.*—The conception of Yahweh's "zeal" (v. 6) is probably enough that which is characteristic of Ezekiel and of subsequent writers, yet קנאה may be so interpreted as not to be absolutely incompatible with Isaiah's thought (see n. on v. 6). Several writers (see especially Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahwe-prophetie*, pp. 3 and 6ff.) treat the reference to the Messianic king as in itself conclusive proof of post-exilic origin; this is unsafe. At the same time two facts remain: (1) the Messianic king does figure in later writers; (2) we lack positive proof that the prophets of the 8th cent. were acquainted with the idea, or, *if acquainted with it, also made use of it.* Marti rather overstates the case when he says that the Messiah here is "throughout a political figure (Grösse) which has no direct significance for Religion"—at least the remark would equally apply to the judges and counsellors to whom Isaiah looks forward in 1:26. If Isaiah did look forward to a king in the future and had wished to describe him, he must have described him much as he is here described—righteous, just, mighty in defence of the weak (see notes on vv. 5, 6). The ideal certainly has its national limitations: the king will be a Jew and yet have a wide, a universal dominion, but no stress is laid on the servitude of the nations to Israel. Certainly, too, the ideal falls below that of the "servant of Yahweh"; but at the same time this ideal of the kingdom established in righteousness and of the peace-loving, justice-securing king is anything but ignoble.

The best complete vindication of Isaianic authorship would be to establish a clear connection with some period of the prophet's activity; but, unfortunately, those who agree in rejecting the view that the passage is post-Isaianic, differ as to the period of Isaiah's activity to which it belongs. It must suffice to refer to two or three theories of date.

Kit. argues that the passage fits into the range of ideas found in chs. 6–8 and other passages of the period to which these chapters belong. Isaiah then expected the conquest of the country and the city, and the overthrow of the monarchy (2:12ff; 3:1ff; 5:5ff.); but also that a remnant would survive (7:3; 6:13); from the remnant would arise a deliverer, Immanuel, representative of the new generation, who would grow up in affliction. Judah must drink the cup of affliction at the hand of Assyria (7:17ff; 8:3f, 5ff, 20ff.). Then the hope represented in Immanuel is realised, 8:16ff. It increases, 8:9f., and reaches its climax, 9:1ff.—Assyria must fall. The climax was not clearly perceived at first, but may have been so after 722, when the section 8–9:6 may have been written down. The sequence of thought and, perhaps, the original sequence of the sections is—8:12, 15 (20), 21f., Disaster; 8:16–18, 20, Hope; 8:9f; 9:1ff., Fulfilment. This elaborate construction rests on details, such as the identification of Immanuel and the prince of 9:4, which, according to the view taken in this commentary, are insecure, or definitely unsound. It certainly mitigates to some extent the difficulties attached to the view that 9:1–6 was the direct sequence of ch. 7, and written at the time of the Syro-Ephraimitish war. Would Isaiah have described the people as walking in darkness, because they were threatened, in his own phrase, by two fag-ends of smoked out fire-brands?

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cp. Compare.

Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.

Kennett *The Composition of the Book of Isaiah*, 1910.

Kit. (1) *Der Prophet Jesaja*, a new edition (1898) of Di.;

(2) *Biblia Hebraica*, 1906.

Du. holds that the "driver" of v. 3 must be Assyria, and the "soldier" of v. 4 Sennacherib's army.

The Isaianic authorship seems to have been first questioned by Stade, *Gesch*. i. 596, ii. 209f., *ZATW* vi. 161; then by H. Hackmann, *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 130–136, 143ff.; Cheyne, *Introd.* pp. 44f.; Marti, *Comm.*; Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahweprophetie*, pp. 57–60; R. H. Kennett, *JThS* vii. (1906), 321–342. Sta., Che., Hack. suggest a post-exilic date not closely defined. Kennett, who treats the passage as *historical*, refers it to about 140 B.C., when "the yoke of the heathen was taken away from Israel" (1 Mac 13:41), and Simon held a rejoicing "because a great enemy was destroyed out of Israel" (1 Mac 13:51). In addition to the general objection to assuming a Maccabaean origin for any parts of the Book of Isaiah (see Introd. §§ 26f.), this theory rests on several very questionable assumptions: (1) that 8:23 (9:1) is part of the poem; (2) that the name given to the prince implies a warrior; (3) that the boots of v. 4 must be boots of Greek soldiery; (4) that the child of v. 5 is not a *child, as such*, but the offspring given to the nation, to wit, Simon. Marti with far more probability places the prophecy between 540 and 440 B.C., roughly about 500, not far remote in time from Haggai and Zechariah, both of whom expected a Messiah of the Davidic house.

On the whole, if the passage was not written by Isaiah, it may be best regarded as a lyrical counterpart of chs. 40–55, though the work of an author with different ideals, written towards the close of the Exile, when the people had long been walking in the darkness of captivity, long dwelling in the land of the shadow of death—Babylon. Like Ezekiel, the writer was convinced that the jealousy of Yahweh must bring about the restoration and exaltation of his people: like Haggai and Zechariah, he looked for a Davidic Messiah; unlike Ezekiel, he gives to his prince a supreme place in the restored community, though, like the Deutero-Isaiah, he expects the restoration itself to be the direct act of Yahweh without the mediation of the Messiah: this is a possible, even a probable, but at the same time not a certain theory of the origin of the poem. If it should be correct, we have three great ideals represented in the literature of the Exile—Ezekiel's, of the Holy Community devoted to ritual and sanctified by the presence of God in its midst; the Deutero-Isaiah's, of the Prophetic People preaching true religion to the nations; and this writer's, of the Righteous Kingdom with its king righteously ruling from Jerusalem over an unlimited empire.

1 (2). *The people*] the entire people of Israel, descendants of those who had constituted the kingdom of David (v. 6); the subject is not the same as in 8:23 (9:1), nor as in 8:21f. (note the

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Du. *Das Buch Jesaia*, 1892 (ed. 2, 1902).
Stade *Lehrbuch der Hebräischen Grammatik*, 1879.
ZATW Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.
H. Hackmann *Die Zukunftserwartung des Jesaia*, 1893.
Cheyne *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.
Introd. Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
Marti *Das Buch Jesaja*, 1900.
JThS Journal of Theological Studies.
Sta. *Lehrbuch der Hebräischen Grammatik*, 1879.
Che. *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.

consistent use of sing. there and pl. here); it is rather the new subject of an entirely independent poem.—*Darkness … light*] for these figures of calamities of various kinds and prosperity or deliverance from calamity respectively, cp. *e.g.* 58:8, 10; 59:9; 60:20; La 3:2; Job 15:22f. Darkness signifies, in particular, captivity. Cp., either for this last point or for the phrases used in this v., 42:7 (אסורים וו אשר בחשך), 49:9 ישבי בחשך, Mic 7:8f. (יוציאני לאור … כי אשב בחשך יהוה אור לי Ps 107:10, 14 ישבי חשך וצלמות אסירי) עני וברזל … יוציאם מחשך וצלמות ומוסרותיהם ינתק).—*The land of the shadow of death*] or, *of gloom* (see phil. n.); the phrase ארץ צלמות occurs here only; but cp. "the land of darkness and the shadow of death" (Job 10:21, cp. 38:17), *i.e.* Sheol: this meaning can scarcely be intended here; what is meant is either the land of Israel temporarily obscured by calamity, or Babylon, the land of captivity. avoids both these applications by paraphrase—"The people of the house of Israel who were walking in Egypt as in darkness came forth to see a great light; they that dwelt in the shadow of death, light hath shone upon them." **2 (3).** *Thou hast multiplied the rejoicing,* etc.] the translation rests on a very slight conjectural emendation; see phil. n. reads *thou hast multiplied the nation: thou hast not increased the joy*, which is obviously unsuitable; the Ḳ^{e}rê (RV) is probably an early conjectural emendation which restores sense at the expense of style and without restoring the parallelism (see phil. n.). The two figures which enforce the greatness of the joy both recur; see Ps 4:8; 126:6 (joy in harvest), Ps 119:162 (joy over spoil). It no more follows that the poet expected the new era to open after a victorious battle, than that he expected it to begin at the end of harvest.—**3 (4).** The great joy is on account of the end of Israel's servitude. The people referred to in the pl. in vv. 1f. are here collectively represented by singular suffixes; the change is occasioned by the introduction of a figure (cp. 1:5f. after 1:4). Israel is compared to an animal with a burdensome yoke resting on its neck and compelled to work by its driver, who uses his stick upon it. In the terms of the figure, Yahweh (not the Messiah) brings Israel's servitude to an end by breaking in pieces both the yoke and the driver's stick: burden and blows are alike done away. The figure of the yoke is a favourite one with Hebrew writers, and is used of the oppressive government of native rulers (1 K 12:4, 9ff.), of the hard treatment by foreigners (Assyrians, 14:25; 10:27; Jer 27:8, 11f.; cp. Dt 28:48) of Israel in its own land, or in a land not theirs (Lv 26:13).—*The yoke of his burden*] the yoke that is his burden, his burden some yoke: cp. 10:27; 14:25 where *yoke* and *burden* stand in synonymous parallelism. The *yoke* (על) is specifically the heavy cross-beam that rested on the neck of the animal; through holes in this passed wooden pegs or *bars* (מטת), which, being tied below,

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cp. Compare.

Cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

RV Revised Version.

𝔐 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

enclosed the animal's neck; see the illustration in *PEF Qu. St.*, 1891, p. 113, reproduced in *EBi.* 78. MT and probably (though cp. Nah 1:13) means *the rod* (מַטֵּה) *of his shoulder*, or *neck*, i.e. the rod with which his neck was beaten; but (1) this would anticipate the driver of the next distich, and (2) the neck protected by the yoke was not the special recipient of blows.—*The stick of his driver*] it is unnecessary to follow RV and introduce a new figure by rendering *of his taskmaster*: for *driver*, cp. Job 39:7. Nor, in view of the reference to *the stick* (שבט) for beating (cp. *e.g.* Ex 21:20; Pr 10:13), is the rendering *oppressor* (14:4 n.) suitable.—*As in the day of Midian*] an allusion to the ending of another foreign oppression (Jg 6–8). With the phrase *day of Midian*, cp. "day of Jezreel," Hos 2:2 (1:11); "day of Egypt," Ezk 30:9; "day of Jerusalem," Ps 137:7. Why does the poet refer in particular to the deliverance from Midian? Is it because the story told then, as it is read now (Jg 7:2), illustrated the prophetic doctrine that deliverance is wrought not by the size and equipment of human armies, but by Yahweh? In any case the poet does not say that the "light" will shine, the change of fortunes come, after a great battle.—**4 (5).** *For*] this v. does not give the reason for v. 3, but a further reason for the joy of v. 2; men will rejoice because the age of universal and unbroken peace (2:4) has begun. War is already abolished, and everything that pertains to it, typically illustrated by the soldier's dress, will be destroyed by fire. Cp. especially Ezk 39:9, also Is 2:4; Hos 2:20 (18), Zec 9:10; Ps 46:10 (9), 76:4 (3). It is curious that the writer selects the soldier's dress rather than the implements of war for destruction; Che. (*SBOT* p. 89) reconstructs the text on the basis of the references just given, so that shields, bows, arrows, and quivers may be consumed by the flames instead.—*Every shoe worn in tumult* (*of battle*)] the last part of this translation in particular is uncertain; סאון† is not *battle* (AV), nor *armour* (RV), but

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PEF Qu. St. Palestine Exploration Fund Quarterly Statement.
EBi. Encyclopaedia Biblica, edited by T. K. Cheyne and J. S. Black, 1899–1903.
MT The Massoretic Text (*i.e.* the vocalised text of the Hebrew Bible). Variants in the Hebrew codices have been cited from De Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Vet. Test.*, vol. iii., or R. Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*.
𝔊 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.
cp. Compare.
RV Revised Version.
cp. Compare.
cp. Compare.
cp. Compare.
Cp. Compare.
Che. *PI* = *The Prophecies of Isaiah*, ed. 5, 1889;
Introd=*Introduction to the Book of Isaiah*, 1895;
SBOT, see *SBOT* below.
SBOT The Sacred Books of the Old Testament, ed. Paul Haupt. (Part 10, *The Book of Isaiah*, by T. K. Cheyne—Hebrew Text, 1899; English translation, 1898.)
† The sign, following a series of references, indicates that all examples of the phrase, word, or form in question, occurring in the OT, have been quoted.
AV Authorised Version.
RV Revised Version.

foot-gear. It has been claimed that the word means in particular the heavy military boot; and Ges. referred to Josephus' description (*Bell. Jud.* vi. 1. 8) of the "shoes all full of thick and sharp nails" of the Roman soldiers in illustration of its character; but neither the Assyr. *šênu* nor the Aram. ,ܣܝܢܐ ,סינא from either of which Heb. may have borrowed the word, has any such specific sense; סינא is used, *e.g.*, in Ex 3:5; Dt 25:9; Jos 5:15, ܣܝܢܐ (for which the Peshiṭta prefers ܢܥܠܐ) in the Harklensian version of Mt 3:11; Lk 10:4; 15:22. Abimilki of Tyre in his letters to the king of Egypt describes himself as "the dust under the shoe (*šênu*) of my lord the king (Tell el-Amarna Tablets, 152:4, and elsewhere). Yet though the word סאון is not specifically a heavy military boot, the writer would probably have had such in mind if the following words really mean "of him that is heavily booted" (Kennett), or "of him that makes an earthquake as he treads" (cp. BDB under both words); but both these renderings are very questionable, the denominative vb. (סאן) should, as in Assyr. and Aram., mean no more than *to draw on, to wear a shoe.* If the text is right, which is doubtful, *worn in the tumult of battle* is the safest rendering of , which should be pointed סָאֵן not סַאֵן (MT). This gives the best parallelism, adopts the most probable meaning of the denominative, and for the rendering of רעש by *tumult* (*of battle*) has the close, though not exact, parallel of Jer 10:22; cp. also Is 29:6. Elsewhere the noun רעש means *a trembling* or *quaking*, an actual earthquake, or, by hyperbole, the shaking of the earth attributed to war-chariots (Jer 47:3; Nah 3:2). The poet then has no special type of boot in mind; it is the fact that shoe (סאון) and garment (,(שמלה of whatever nature, have been worn in battle, that condemns them to the flames. In the golden age of peace, war and all that pertains to war will be taboo, and must, as things unclean, be destroyed. Consequently that part of Kennett's ingenious argument* for the late date of the poem, which rests on the conclusion that סאון must refer to the heavy nailed boots which were characteristic of the Syro-Greek soldiery, falls to the ground. It remains noticeable, however, that in Is 5:27 *Isaiah* calls the foot-gear of the Assyrians

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Ges. *Der Prophet Jesaja*, 1821.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

Kennett *The Composition of the Book of Isaiah*, 1910.

cp. Compare.

BDB *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament based on the Lexicon and Thesaurus of Gesenius*, by F. Brown, C. A. Briggs, and S. R. Driver, Oxford, 1906.

𝔖 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.

MT The Massoretic Text (*i.e.* the vocalised text of the Hebrew Bible). Variants in the Hebrew codices have been cited from De Rossi, *Variae Lectiones Vet. Test.*, vol. iii., or R. Kittel, *Biblia Hebraica*.

cp. Compare.

* *Journal of Theol. Studies*, vii. 327–331f., 338: criticised by C. F. Burney, *ib.* xi. 438–441, to whom Kennett replies, *ib.* xii. 114f. My own note above stands as it was written before the appearance of Dr. Burney's note.

נעל, *sandals.—Stained with blood*] reading by conjecture מְגֹאָלָה, מגוללה; , *rolled*, or *weltering, in blood*, seems to say too much; Amasa is fitly described as "weltering" (מחגלל) in his blood (2 S 20:12), but the garments to be consigned to the flames are scarcely limited to those which had "weltered" in blood; enough that they had met the usual fate of soldiers' garments, and had become blood-stained (cp. Is 63:3).—**5 (6).** The third cause of the people's joy is the birth of a prince of their own race (*to us*), who receives (at once) the dominion and power over them that had been exercised in the days of darkness (v. 1) by an alien ruler (v. 3), and who is (v. 6) to extend his dominion widely but peacefully. This child is Hezekiah according to mediaeval Jewish interpreters (Rashi, Ḳi., Ibn Ezra), Simon the Maccabee according to Kennett, the Messiah according to most (cp.). The ideal standpoint of the poet seems to be (shortly) after the birth of the prince, after he has been recognised as prince of Israel, but before the wide extension of his kingdom has begun.—*Child … son*] placed first in their respective sentences for emphasis; ילד is applicable to an infant as yet unweaned (Gn 21:8) as well as to older children.—*To us*] the poet who has hitherto spoken of his people in the 3rd pers. here associates himself with them.—*And the dominion is upon his shoulder*] is this fact mentioned between the birth and the naming because the name was given after the prince had grown up and earned it by his exploits (Du.)? or is the meaning that the name is given as usual a few days after birth, and that the child is "born in the purple" (Grotius), because, though the house of David survived (v. 6), it had at the time no reigning prince (Marti)? or is the position of the clause without significance? משרה, *dominion*, appears to mean here the royal dignity, in v. 6† the royal authority; the entire phrase here refers to entering on a reign rather than to the burden of governing; it may possibly have *originated* in a practice of wearing a royal robe *on the shoulder*: cp. 22:22.—*His name has been called*] cp. 1:26 n.—The eight words of the name fall into four clauses, each containing two words closely connected: less probable views are that the first four (Jer.), or the first two (EV, Ges.), words should be taken singly; some Jewish interpreters distribute the names among God and the child,

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𝔐 Jewish recension of the Hebrew (unvocalised) text, *i.e.* the consonants of the ordinary Hebrew MSS and printed Bibles.

cp. Compare.

Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣḥaḳi] (1040–1105).

Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ḳi. Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ibn Ezra Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf's *Biblia Rabbinica.*

cp. Compare.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

Du. *Das Buch Jesaia*, 1892 (ed. 2, 1902).

Marti *Das Buch Jesaja*, 1900.

† The sign, following a series of references, indicates that all examples of the phrase, word, or form in question, occurring in the OT, have been quoted.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

Jer. *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri octo et decem*, in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 24.

EV English Version.

Ges. *Der Prophet Jesaja*, 1821.

e.g. “God who is marvellous in counsel, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, gave him the name Prince of Peace (Rashi, Ḳi.: cp.); but Ibn Ezra rightly insisted that the whole eight words belonged to the child’s name. Luzzatto treated the names as a sentence, predicating (like Immanuel, 7:14 n.) something of God, and therefore implying nothing as to the child. Some of the names singly, and even more in combination, are as applied to men unparalleled in the OT, and on this account are regarded by Gressmann (p. 280ff.) as mythological and traditional: cp. also Rosenmüller’s *Scholia*.—*Wonderful Counsellor*] Like God Himself (28:29; 25:1), the Messiah will give counsel that will be exceptional, exceeding what has hitherto been known or heard.—*Mighty God*] cp. 10:21; “the great (and) the mighty God,” Dt 10:17; Neh 9:32; Jer 32:18. The ambiguous אלי גבורים of Ezk 32:21, the application of אל גוים to Nebuchadnezzar in Ezk 31:11, and the fact, if it be such, that in the remaining three clauses of the name here the words are cstr. and gen., scarcely justify a departure from the obvious rendering *mighty God* in favour of *god of a hero*, and still less a whittling down of the meaning of אל to *hero*, so that the clause means no more than *mighty hero.* The child is to be more than mighty (,תקיף Ibn Ezra), more than a mighty man (1 ,איש גבור S 14:52), more than a mighty king (,מלך גבור Dn 11:3): he is to be a mighty ,אל god. This attribution of divinity, implying that the Messiah is to be a kind of demi-god, is without clear analogy in the OT, for Ps 45:7 (6) is ambiguous. Not only אל but גבור has been differently interpreted: גבור is often used of warriors, and many understand it to refer here to the military success of the Messiah. But if the writer had wished to summon up the thought of one who gained renown in war before he became prince of peace, he might better have chosen an unambiguous term, such, for example, as ,גבור מלחמה *mighty in battle* (Ps 24:8). At all events גבור is also used of might manifested in other ways than those of war (cp. *e.g.* Gn 10:9). As the lion is mightiest of beasts because he quails before no other (Pr 30:30), so Yahweh is mighty as one who cannot be browbeaten or bribed into abandoning the defence and care of the helpless and the poor (Dt 10:17). In Jer 32:18 the idea of Yahweh’s might, conveyed in the epithets “great, mighty,” “terrible,” is particularised in what follows as greatness in counsel (עצה) and action, in the signs wrought in Egypt, and in finding nothing beyond his power (.ממך יפלא *Mighty* is to be taken here with this wider reference. Yahweh Himself will bring war to an end and so bring in the Messianic age of peace: the Messiah endued with the Spirit of God, “a spirit of counsel and might” (רוח עצה ,(וגבורה will like the mighty God Himself fearlessly defend the rights of the weak and poor, and, after judicial process, have the violent and guilty disturbers of civic peace slain (11:2–4).—*Father*

Rashi R[abboni] Sh[elomoh] Y[iṣhaḳi] (1040–1105).

Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf’s *Biblia Rabbinica.*

Ḳi. Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf’s *Biblia Rabbinica.*

cp. Compare.

𝔗 The Jewish Aramaic Version or Targum (p. xxvi).

OT Old Testament.

Gressmann *Der Ursprung der israelitisch jüdischen Eschatologie*, 1905.

cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

Ibn Ezra Hebrew Commentary on Isaiah in Buxtorf’s *Biblia Rabbinica.*

OT Old Testament.

cp. Compare.

for ever] the benevolent guardian of His people so long as He and they endure. For the cstr. and force of עד here, cp., on one view of the construction there, גברת עד *a lady for ever*, 47:7, and the phrase with the synonymous עבד עולם, עולם *a slave for ever*, Dt 15:17; 1 S 27:12; Job 40:28. For עד predicated of the (Messianic?) king, see, *e.g.*, Ps 21:5–7; in view of these and other references it is unnecessary to take the phrase as equivalent to *Eternal father* (cp. אלהי עולם, 40:28). For *father* used figuratively of a protector or benefactor, see Job 29:16; Is 22:21. Two alternative interpretations, *Eternal One*, and *Father*, i.e. acquirer or distributor, *of booty*, are both open to the serious objection that they pre-suppose an Arabic use of אב, *father*, which has no parallel in Hebrew, not even as has sometimes been assumed in proper names like Abihud, Abihail; see *HPN* p. 77ff.—**6 (7).** The zeal of Yahweh will secure the endurance of the wide and peaceful dominion of the new Davidic dynasty, will secure also that it is both established and maintained in justice and righteousness.—*To support it in justice and righteousness*] cp. 16:5, and Pr 20:28 "his throne shall be supported in mercy (righteousness)."—*The jealousy of Yahweh of Hosts will do this*] the same phrase in 37:32. The term קנאה, used of passionate emotion in man (*e.g.* Ca 8:6), here refers to Yahweh's emotion: so, with other terms of emotion, in 63:15. This jealousy, or ardour, or passion, of Yahweh, which will not suffer Him to be deprived of His due, especially of the proper regard for His power and honour, is frequently referred to by Ezekiel and later writers; it led to the punishment by captivity of His people who had been disloyal to Him, but it subsequently necessitated the restoration of Israel, lest the nations should think Yahweh weak; cp. Ezk 39:25–29 also 5:13; 16:38; 23:25; 36:5ff.; Is 42:13; 59:17; Zec 1:14f; 8:2f.; Jl 2:18f.; Nah 1:2. The phrase and the idea expressed by it would be entirely in place if this prophecy is exilic or post-exilic; and it would be difficult to think it earlier, if the main thought is that the jealousy of Yahweh will restore the Jewish monarchy. But if the main thought is that Yahweh will establish and maintain a *righteous* government, it may be merely a more passionate expression of Isaiah's ideal in 1:26. The attribution of קנאה, jealousy, to Yahweh would still remain unique so far as Isaiah's extant writings are concerned. Cp. Küchler, *Der Gedanke des Eifers Jahwes im AT*, in *ZATW*, 1908, pp. 42–52.[14]

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cp. Compare.

cp. Compare.

HPN Studies in Hebrew Proper Names, by G. Buchanan Gray, 1896.

cp. Compare.

𝔊 The Greek (LXX) Version of the Old Testament (ed. Swete, Cambridge, 1887–1894). The readings of the codices are, when necessary, distinguished thus:—$\mathfrak{G}^{A}$ $\mathfrak{G}^{B}$ (Alexandrian, Vatican, etc.). For the cursives, reference has been made to *Vet. Test. Graece, cum variis lectionibus*, ed. Holmes, Oxon. 1798, which is cited as HP followed by a numeral.

cp. Compare.

Cp. Compare.

ZATW Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft.

[14] George Buchanan Gray, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Book of Isaiah, I–XXXIX*, International Critical Commentary (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1912), 165–175.

9:1. A time will come when **gloom** and darkness (8:22) will be a thing of **the past**. The gloom on the northern section of Israel came because of discipline. God **humbled … Zebulun and … Naphtali** for a while. Though Isaiah was probably using these two tribal names to represent the Northern Kingdom, it is striking that Jesus' upbringing and early ministry was mostly in that very area near the Sea of Galilee. His presence certainly "honored" that area. In 732 B.C. this northern portion of Israel became an Assyrian province under Tiglath-Pileser III, thus humbling the people there and putting them in gloom. Under Gentile domination, that area was called **Galilee of the Gentiles**.

The way of the sea describes a major international highway running through this region. This is the only place where the Bible used this phrase, but it appears often in Assyrian and Egyptian records. The invading Assyrian soldiers took that route when they invaded the Northern Kingdom. From that area the Messiah will arise and will wipe away the gloom and darkness brought on by Gentile domination.

9:2. With typical Hebrew parallelism the prophet described the effect of the Messiah on this northern part of Israel. **The people** were **in darkness** (cf. 8:22) and in **the shadow of death**. Then they saw **a great light** and **light … dawned** on them. Matthew applied this passage to Jesus, who began His preaching and healing ministry in that region (Matt. 4:15–16).

9:3–5. **You** probably refers to God the Father, who will lead the people from spiritual darkness into light (v. 2) by sending the Child (v. 6), the Messiah. The light will increase **their joy** like the joy at harvesttime or the joy of winning a battle and **dividing the plunder**. "Joy" is another emphasis of Isaiah's, mentioned more than two dozen times in the book. This will be a supernatural work of God much like the nation's deliverance when Gideon defeated Midian (Jud. 7:1–24; Isa. 10:26). It will be like taking a burden off one's back (9:4). At that time, after the Child-Messiah will come, the implements of warfare will be destroyed (v. 5) because in His reign of universal peace implements of war will not be needed (cf. 2:4).

9:6–7. Here Isaiah recorded five things about the coming Messiah.

1. He was to be born **a Child**. The implication, given in parallel style, is that this Child, **a Son**, was to be born into the nation of Israel (**to us**) as one of the covenant people.

2. He will rule over God's people (cf. Micah 5:2) and the world (Zech. 14:9). **The government will be on His shoulders** figuratively refers to the kingly robe to be worn by the Messiah. As King, He will be responsible to govern the nation. In Isaiah's day Judah's leaders were incompetent in governing the people. But the Messiah will govern properly.

3. He will have four descriptive names that will reveal His character. He will be the nation's **Wonderful** (this could be trans. "exceptional" or "distinguished") **Counselor**, and the people will gladly listen to Him as the authoritative One. In the kingdom many people will be anxious to hear the Messiah teach God's ways (2:3). He is also the **Mighty God** (cf. 10:21). Some have suggested that this simply means "a godlike person" or hero. But Isaiah meant more than that, for he had already spoken of the Messiah doing what no other person had been able to do (e.g., 9:2–5). Isaiah understood that the Messiah was to be God in some sense of the term.

This Deliverer will also be called the **Everlasting Father**. Many people are puzzled by this title because the Messiah, God's Son, is distinguished in the Trinity from God the Father. How can the Son be the Father? Several things must be noted in this regard. First, the Messiah, being the second Person of the Trinity, is in His essence, God. Therefore He has all the attributes of God including eternality. Since God is One (even though He exists in three Persons), the Messiah is God. Second, the title "Everlasting Father" is an idiom used to describe the Messiah's relationship to time, not His relationship to the other Members of the Trinity. He is said to be everlasting, just as God (the Father) is called "the Ancient of Days" (Dan. 7:9). The Messiah will be a "fatherly" Ruler. Third, perhaps Isaiah had in mind the promise to David (2 Sam. 7:16) about the "foreverness" of the kingdom which God promised would come through David's line. The Messiah, a Descendant of David, will fulfill this promise for which the nation had been waiting.

The Messiah is also called the **Prince of Peace**, the One who will bring in and maintain the time of millennial peace when the nation will be properly related to the Lord. Together, these four titles give a beautiful picture of the coming Messiah's character (Isa. 9:6 includes the first of Isaiah's 25 references to peace.)

4. The Messiah, seated **on David's throne** (Luke 1:32–33), will have an eternal rule of **peace** and **justice**. His rule will have **no end;** it will go on **forever** (cf. Dan. 7:14, 27; Micah 4:7; Luke 1:33; Rev. 11:15). Following the kingdom on earth, He will rule for eternity. He will maintain **righteousness** (cf. Jer. 23:5), as His rule will conform to God's holy character and demands.

5. This will all be accomplished by **the zeal of the LORD Almighty**. The coming of the millennial **kingdom** depends on God, not Israel. The Messiah will rule because God promised it and will zealously see that the kingdom comes. Without His sovereign intervention there would be no kingdom for Israel.

Apparently Isaiah assumed that the messianic Child, Jesus Christ, would establish His reign in one Advent, that when the Child grew up He would rule in triumph. Like the other prophets, Isaiah was not aware of the great time gap between Messiah's *two* Advents (cf. 1 Peter 1:10–12; and see comments on Isa. 61:1–2[15]

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trans. translation, translator, translated

[15] John A. Martin, "Isaiah," in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures*, ed. J. F. Walvoord and R. B. Zuck, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1985), 1052–1054.