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**“Dialect and Politics in Isaiah 24-27.”**

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## Dialect and Politics in Isaiah 24-27

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[Previous analyses of the so-called "Isaiah apocalypse" (Isaiah 24-27) have been based primarily on issues of imagery, style, genre, and address. This examination utilizes recent linguistic advances in ancient Hebrew dialectology and finds in these chapters numerous elements of the non-Judahite northern dialect of Hebrew, with most elements concentrated in chapter 26. The evidence points to a hitherto unrecognized literary sophistication in these chapters and bears ramifications for the unity of the Isaiah apocalypse. The author suggests that these chapters illustrate "style-switching", a literary device in which a speaker deliberately employs the dialect of the audience addressed. The author also discusses the abundant northern dialectal features in Isaiah 28, the prophecy against Ephraim, where style-switching also appears to be employed.]

Scholars who work on the book of Isaiah traditionally have seen chapter 26 as part of a larger unit comprising chapters 24-27.<sup>1</sup> This four-chapter division has been based primarily on stylistic, imagistic, and generic considerations, as well as the divergencies between the MT and the LXX. The concern for the future which these chapters share also has compelled many scholars to dub them the "Isaiah apocalypse". O. Kaiser summarizes:

As scholars became aware of the gradual growth of the book of Isaiah, they could not fail to realize that it was impossible for chs. 24-27 to have been composed by the eighth-century prophet. To mention only a few of the most obvious arguments which occur to a reader familiar with the history of Israel's faith, it is clear that the disaster to Jerusalem in the year 586 lies behind these chapters (cf. 27.3). Unlike the genuine sayings of Isaiah, they are concerned not with the judgement of Yahweh brought down upon Jerusalem by the people's disobedience, but with a future visitation on a world-wide scale...<sup>2</sup>

Yet, despite the similarity of chapter 26 to the rest of the unit, literary critics have questioned its integrity as well.<sup>3</sup> Typically, the scalpel carves out 26:1-6, which appears to exalt Jerusalem in the form of a "song of Judah", from the remainder of the chapter, which seems more a lament.<sup>4</sup> This apparent

1. For an excellent summary on this issue, see John Day, "A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation: The Dependence of Isaiah XXVI. 13-XXVII. 11 on Hosea XIII. 4-XIV. 10 (Eng. 9) and Its Relevance to Some Theories of the Redaction of the 'Isaiah Apocalypse'", *JTS* 31 (1980) 309-319, especially 317-318.

2. Otto Kaiser, *Isaiah 1-39* (Philadelphia, PA. 1974), p. 173. Though some have opted for the term "eschatological" rather than "apocalyptic". See, e.g., John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39* (The New International Critical Commentary on the Old Testament; Grand Rapids, MI. 1986), p. 440.

3. See, e.g., Ernst Liebmann, "Der Text zu Jesaja 24-27", *ZAW* 22 (1902) 1-56, 285-304; 23 (1903) 209-286; 24 (1904) 51-104; 25 (1905) 145-171.

4. George B. Gray, *Isaiah I: International Critical Commentary*, v. 1 (New York 1912), p. 437.

difficulty has obliged scholars to see in the city being destroyed (26:5-6) a symbolic metonym representing all nations. In G. Gray's words: "The other side to the exaltation of Jerusalem is the humiliation and destruction of the City now set on high, vv.5f., and of all Yahweh's adversaries, v.11e".<sup>5</sup> His inability to identify the "City" specifically, and his assumption that it cannot be Jerusalem, forces him to postulate separate sources for the material and impose a possible thematic development:

Either, then, an already existing poem was inserted on account of the suitability of the opening verses, or else the influence of the ideal situation with reference to which the opening verses were written weakens as the poem proceeds, and the writer expresses his hopes and reflections during the night (v.9) of sorrow through which he is passing rather than the triumphant joy in Yahweh's deliverance and the overthrow of "the city (now) set on high" (v.5) which he expects His people to experience when night has given place to morning.<sup>6</sup>

Nevertheless, there is little agreement as to where to place the knife, and indeed, such a wholesale removal of Isaiah 26:1-6 from the rest of the chapter has not gone unchallenged. Almost a century ago J. Skinner observed that

the verse-connection is as a rule very close, and just at those points where some critics have recognized a discontinuity of thought (e.g. after v.7 or v.10 or v.16) the phraseology presents indications of a studied transition. The poem, indeed, is remarkable for its *concatenated* structure: that is to say, a word or idea is taken up from one verse and suggests a new thought for the next.<sup>7</sup>

More recently, G. W. Anderson, H. Ringgren, W. Irwin, and J. Day have argued convincingly that chapter 26 shares a similar rhetorical strategy and syntax with the other three chapters, and therefore, should not be separated from them.<sup>8</sup> Summing up the lack of consensus over this issue, J. Oswalt notes an "incredible variety of opinions concerning the literary integrity of ch. 26" and suggests that we study the chapter in its present state and not according to reconstructions.<sup>9</sup>

While I agree with Oswalt, it seems to me that the criteria upon which previous scholars have based their analyses, e.g., imagery, style, genre, and address, have proven themselves too slippery to be reliable. Yet, few scholars have considered the available linguistic evidence.<sup>10</sup> While many commentators have noted the odd grammatical forms and rare lexemes in chapter 26,<sup>11</sup> they did not have before them more recent studies in ancient Hebrew dialectology.<sup>12</sup> In the last decade alone, scholars have been able to delineate both spoken and written dialects<sup>13</sup> and at least two regional dialects in the Hebrew Bible: a southern or "Judahite" dialect (JH), and a northern or "Israelian" dialect (IH).<sup>14</sup> IH incorporates all the territory north and east of Judah.<sup>15</sup> It is the contention of this study that an appli-

5. Gray, *Isaiah*, p. 437.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 437.

7. J. Skinner, *The Book of the Prophet Isaiah: Chapter I-XXXIX* (Cambridge 1897), p. 192.

8. G. W. Anderson, "Isaiah xxiv-xxvii Reconsidered", *SVT* 9 (1963) 118-126; H. Ringgren, "Some Observations on Style and Structure in the Isaiah Apocalypse", *ASTI* 9 (1974) 107-115; William H. Irwin, "Syntax and Style in Isaiah 26", *CBQ* 41 (1979) 240-261; John Day, "A Case of Inner Scriptural Interpretation", 309-319.

9. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah*, pp. 469-470.

10. To be sure, Edward Robertson, "Isaiah xxvii 2-6", *ZAW* 47 (1929) 197-206, applied his knowledge of Arabic to Isaiah 27 and found numerous parallels in form and usage. However, Robertson did not have before him the more recent linguistic advances.

11. Cf. the remark of Gray, *Isaiah*, p. 464: "At the same time, it is important to bear in mind certain dissimilarities between Is 24-27 and most late post-exilic writers".

12. See, e.g., C. Rabin, "The Emergence of Classical Hebrew", in *The Age of the Monarchies: Culture and Society*, A. Malamat, ed. (World History of the Jewish People 4/2: Jerusalem 1979), pp. 71-78, 293-295; Randall R. Garr, *Dialect Geography of Syria-Palestine, 1000-586 B.C.E.* (Philadelphia 1970); "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Hebrew", in *Linguistics and Biblical Hebrew*, Walter R. Bodin, ed. (Winona Lake, IN, 1992), pp. 65-88.

13. Gary A. Rendsburg, *Di-glossia in Ancient Hebrew* (American Oriental Society Series, 72; New Haven, CT, 1990).

14. As scholars working in the field of Hebrew dialectology have adopted the term "Israelian" found in H. L. Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism* (New York 1982), I too have followed suit.

15. Gary A. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence for the Northern Origin of Selected Psalms* (SBL Monograph Series, 43; Atlanta, GA, 1990), p. 4.

cation of these dialectical advances to chapters 24-27 will put to rest at least some of the questions regarding these chapters' unity and the relationship of chapter 26 to the apocalyptic pericope.

Those unfamiliar with Hebrew dialectology will find three criteria used in determining a text's dialect: 1) The IH word or grammatical feature should have a more common JH counterpart. 2) The IH feature should be distributed in biblical texts which scholars have shown to possess numerous IH elements or to be IH compositions. In some cases this involves what some scholars have called the "foreign factor", or "addressee-switching", i.e., a shift in language which reflects the dialect of foreign speakers or the addressee.<sup>16</sup> Currently, the list of IH texts and passages includes: Genesis 49,<sup>17</sup> Numbers 22-24,<sup>18</sup> Deuteronomy 32-33,<sup>19</sup> 2 Sam 23:1-7,<sup>20</sup> sections of Judges, 1 Samuel, and 1-2 Kings (involving foreign kings or speakers),<sup>21</sup> Jeremiah 49,<sup>22</sup> Hosea, Amos,<sup>23</sup> numerous psalms,<sup>24</sup> Job,<sup>25</sup> Songs,<sup>26</sup> Qohelet,<sup>27</sup> Proverbs,<sup>28</sup> Nehemiah 9,<sup>29</sup> and certain exilic and post-exilic texts.<sup>30</sup> However, much

16. Stephen A. Kaufman, "A Classification of the North West Semitic Dialects of the Biblical Period and Some Implications Thereof", *Proceedings of the Ninth World Congress of Jewish Studies* (Panel Sessions: Hebrew and Aramaic Languages: Jerusalem 1988), pp. 41-57; J. C. Greenfield, "Aramaic Studies and the Bible", in *Congress Volume Vienna 1980*, J. A. Emerton, ed. (SVT 32: Leiden 1981), pp. 129-130; and more recently Gary A. Rendsburg, "Linguistic Variation and the 'Foreign' Factor in the Hebrew Bible", *IOS* (forthcoming). Rendsburg distinguishes between "addressee-switching", which refers to the representation of foreign dialects placed in the mouths of foreigners, and "addressee-switching", which refers to a shift in dialect aimed at the dialect of the audience. I have adopted these terms as well.

17. Stanley Gevirtz, "On Syntax and Style in the 'Late Biblical Hebrew'-'Old Canaanite' Connection", *JANES* 18 (1986) 28-29; "Asher in the Blessing of Jacob (Genesis xlix 20)", *VT* 37 (1987) 160; Gary A. Rendsburg, "Israelian Features in Genesis 49", *Maarav* 8 (1992) 161-170.

18. S. Morag, "עיונים לשוניים במשלי בלעם", *Tarbiz* 50 (1980-1981) 1-24.

19. E. Nielsen, "Historical Perspectives and Geographical Horizons: On the Question of North-Israelite Elements in Deuteronomy", *ASTI* 11 (1977-78) 82; S. Hidal, "Some Reflections on Deuteronomy 32", *ASTI* 11 (1977-78) 15-21; O. Eissfeldt, *Das Lied Moses Deuteronomium 32.1-43 und das Lehrgedicht Asaphs Psalm 78 samt einer Analyse der Umgebung des Moses-Liedes* (Berichte über die Verhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-historische Klasse, Band 104, Heft 5) (Berlin 1958), p. 42; Gevirtz, "Asher in the Blessing of Jacob", 159-160.

20. Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Northern Origin of 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23.1-7)", *Bib* 69 (1988) 113-121; "Additional Notes on 'The Last Words of David' (2 Sam 23.1-7)", *Bib* 70 (1989) 403-408.

21. C. F. Burney, *Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Book of Kings* (Oxford 1903), pp. 208-209; *The Book of Judges* (London 1918), pp. 171-176; M. Cogan and H. Tadmor, *II Kings* (AB 11; Garden City, NY, 1988), p. 9.

22. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 24.

23. C. Rabin, "לשונם של עמוס והושע", B. Z. Luria, ed. (Kiryath Sefer, 1981), pp. 117-136.

24. Psalms 9-10, 16, 29, 36, 42-50, 53, 58, 73-85, 87-88, 116, 132, 133, 140, 141, and possibly also 4, 78, 89, 103. See, Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*.

25. D. N. Freedman, "Orthographic Peculiarities in the Book of Job", *EI* 9 (W. F. Albright Volume) (1969) 35-44; Kaufman, "A Classification", p. 54.

26. S. R. Driver, *An Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament* (New York 1906), pp. 448-449; S. Morag, "On the Historical Validity of the Vocalization of the Hebrew Bible", *JAOS* 94 (1974) 308; A. Hurvitz, "ההסטרית והלשון העברית בחקירה הפרסית", *Jerusalem* 1983), pp. 217-218; M. H. Pope, *Song of Songs* (AB 7C; Garden City 1977), pp. 33-34, 362; Y. Avishur, "לוקה הסגנית בין שיר השירים וספרות אגדית", *BM* 59 (1974) 508-525; *Stylistic Studies of Word-Pairs in Biblical and Ancient Semitic Literatures* (AOAT 210; Neukirchen-Vluyn 1984), p. 440.

27. M. Dahood, "Canaanite-Phoenician Influence on Qohelet", *Bib* 33 (1952) 30-52; "The Language of Qoheleth", *CBQ* 14 (1952) 227-232; "The Phoenician Background of Qoheleth", *Bib* 47 (1966) 264-282; J. R. Davila, "Qoheleth and Northern Hebrew", in *Sopher Mahir: Northwest Semitic Studies Presented to Stanislaw Segert = Maarav* 5-6 (1990) 69-87. For a contrary view, see R. Gordis, "Was Koheleth a Phoenician?" *JBL* 74 (1955) 103-114.

28. W. F. Albright, "Some Canaanite-Phoenician Sources of Hebrew Wisdom", in *Wisdom in Israel and in the Ancient Near East*, M. Noth and D. W. Thomas, eds. (SVT 3; Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1960), pp. 1-15; Ginsburg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism*, p. 36; Avishur, *Stylistic Studies*, p. 440, n. 6.

29. Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Northern Origin of Nehemiah 9", *Bib* 72 (1991) 348-366.

30. The IH influence here comes from the reunion of the northern exiles in Babylonia in the 6th Century B.C.E. See, e.g., C. H. Gordon, "North Israelite Influence on Postexilic Hebrew", *IEJ* 5 (1955) 85-88; E. Y. Kutscher, *A History of the Hebrew Language* (Jerusalem 1977), p. 55.

work needs to be done in this area and it is probable that new pericopes will come to light when examined for their dialect. 3) Finally, the IH feature should have cognates with other ancient languages spoken to the north of Judah or in the transjordan. This entails an examination of Moabite, Ammonite, Deir 'Alla, Aramaic, Phoenician, Ugaritic, and Amarna materials, as well as Mishnaic Hebrew.<sup>31</sup> Thus, in the pages which follow, I will provide the linguistic evidence for northern dialectal features in Isaiah 24-27.

### Isaiah 24

1. 24:3 *niph'al* infinitive absolutes הַבוּז and הַבוּק; *niph'al* imperfects תְּבוּז and תְּבוּק representing the shift  $\bar{a} > \bar{o}$ .

In 24:3 we find the geminate *niph'al* infinitive absolute forms הַבוּק and הַבוּז where we would expect הַבֵּק and הַבֵּז. Though these forms are hapax legomena and thus, in themselves are not evidence of the IH dialect, they do appear to represent this dialect when seen in the light of analogous imperfect forms. In this very verse, for example, we find the *niph'al* imperfect forms תְּבוּז and תְּבוּק for the expected JH geminate forms תְּבוּז and תְּבוּק. While it is possible that both the infinitive and imperfect forms have been modeled by analogy with עָוַר verbs,<sup>32</sup> it is more likely that they represent an  $\bar{a} > \bar{o}$  shift.

The fact that this shift occurs elsewhere in the IH dialect and also in Phoenician bolsters this view.<sup>33</sup> Moreover, this form is patently Aramaic as well (note the *dagesh forte* in the first radical and no strengthening in the second),<sup>34</sup> and therefore, it shares an isogloss with IH speakers in the north. Further support comes from the distribution of similar geminate forms in the Bible primarily in books and pericopes with numerous IH features. Compare, for example the geminate imperfect forms יִרְוֶעַ (Prov 11:15, 13:20), חֲרַמֵּי (Jer 48:2), and תִּרוּץ (Ezek 29:7). The IH dialect of Proverbs, has been discussed above. As for the Jeremiah passage, we note that it appears in a prophecy against Moab, and therefore, exhibits addressee-switching. We may explain the appearance of IH forms in Ezekiel by noting that it is exilic, and therefore, probably represents the influence of IH upon the exiles. Moreover, Ezekiel's oracle addresses Egypt, and thus, may be considered to possess Phoenicianisms. Thus, we begin our list of IH features with two infinitive absolute forms from geminate verbs, תְּבוּז and תְּבוּק.

### 2. 24:6 מַדְעַר "few".

The adjective מַדְעַר "few" appears in Isa 24:6 in place of the JH form צָעַר. Its distribution and cognates reveal it to be an IH form. Elsewhere it appears only in Isa 10:25, 16:14, 29:17, and in the Aramaic portion of Daniel (7:8). Isa 10:25 occurs in a prophecy against the Aramaic speaking Neo-Assyrians, 16:14 is poised against Moab, and Isaiah 29 against Ephraim.

Moreover, we find the cognate form זַעִיר in Isa 28:10, 28:13, and Job 36:2. Isaiah 28, like chapter 29 mentioned above, indicts Ephraim. As for Job, scholars see this work as containing numerous IH features. Accordingly, we may postulate that these pericopes utilize the addressee-switching technique.

31. For a justification of the use of these sources in determining dialect, see Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, pp. 5-8; "The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew", in *The Galilee in Late Antiquity*, Lee I. Levine, ed. (New York 1992), pp. 225-240.

32. See, e.g., E. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar* (Oxford 1938), p. 181.

33. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 105.; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook* (Analecta Orientalia, 38; Rome 1965), p. 79; J. Friedrich and W. Röllig, *Phönizische-punische Grammatik* (2nd ed.; Rome 1970), pp. 29-30, 106-107.

34. Kautzsch, *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*, p. 177; Stanislav Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik mit Bibliographie, Chrestomathie, und Glossar* (Leipzig 1975), p. 141.

In addition, the Aramaic and Syriac cognate root זער suggest that we are dealing with a dialect sharing an isogloss with northern locales,<sup>35</sup> hence IH.

3. 24:10 קריה "city".

קריה in 24:10 is a synonym for the JH עיר and a clear example of an IH lexeme. It is the only word in Phoenician for "city" and is attested in Ugaritic, Aramaic, and Mishnaic Hebrew (=MH).<sup>36</sup> Its isogloss with Phoenician coupled with the fact that it occurs almost always in connection with foreign cities (e.g., Moab)<sup>37</sup> suggests that it too is an IH feature. Elsewhere we find it in Deut 2:36, 3:4 (in reference to foreign cities near Gilead),<sup>38</sup> Num 21:28 (the city of the Amorite Sihon), 1 Kgs 1:41 and 1:45 (in reference to Jerusalem), Isa 1:21, 1:26 (used with Zion), 22:2 (in reference to a foreign invasion), 25:2, 25:3, 26:5 (on these see below), 29:1 (in reference to a foreign siege), 32:13 (city uncertain), 33:20 (used of Zion), Jer 49:25, Hos 6:8 (both of which possess numerous IH elements), Mic 4:10 (used of Zion), Hab 2:8, 2:12 (in reference to the Neo-Babylonian empire), Ps 48:3 (a northern Psalm of Korah), Prov 10:15, 11:10, 18:19, 29:8, Job 39:7 (all containing IH features), and Lam 2:11 (in reference to Zion). Of these, only 1 Kings 1, Isa 1:21, 1:26, 33:20, Mic 4:10, and Lam 2:11 require explanation. Though the passages in 1 Kings are admittedly Judahite, it is possible that alliteration determined the word choice, i.e., it occurs as קול הקריה. Similar poetic demands may be at work in Isaiah 1, where its usage bears an assonant stamp (קריה נאמנה). Note that in Isa 1:26 it parallels עיר. Isaiah 33 contains other IH elements, e.g., the negative particle בל suggesting that some style-switching might be at work. As for Lam 2:11, we note that the very next verse uses עיר, again suggesting the need for poetic variation.

Moreover, the by-form קרת obtains in Prov 8:3, 9:3, 9:14, 11:11, and Job 29:7, each of which utilize the IH dialect. Therefore, the distribution and isogloss of קריה place it among the known IH lexemes.

4. 24:12 יכת *hoph'al* with /a/ in second syllable.

The *hoph'al* יכת in 24:12 is not the expected JH form יכת and must be seen in line with Aramaic grammar where the first root letter is strengthened by *dagesh forte* and not the second.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the distribution of such *hoph'al* forms elsewhere is restricted to Jer 46:5, Mic 1:7, Job 4:20, 4:23, 19:23, and 24:24.

Jer 46:5 appears in a prophecy against Egypt and Mic 1:7 occurs in reference to the northern capital Samaria. Thus, both may be considered as style switching. Job, of course, has been discussed above for its numerous IH elements. The cognate feature in Aramaic and the distribution of the form both suggest that the *hoph'al* form יכת in 24:12 is IH.

5. 24:13 נקף "strike".

Outside of Isa 24:13, the appearance of נקף "strike off" is limited to Isa 10:34 (which also mentions

35. Michael Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic of the Byzantine Period* (Ramat-Gan 1990), p. 180; Klaus Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer* (Göttingen 1984), p. 570; J. Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary* (Oxford 1903), p. 188; Academy of the Hebrew Language, *Historical Dictionary of the Hebrew Language: Materials for the Dictionary, 200 B.C.E.- 300 C.E.* (Hereafter *HDHL*; Jerusalem 1990), Microfiche 40, Plate 8039.

36. R. S. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages* (SBLDS 32; Missoula, MT, 1978), p. 294; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 480; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, pp. 505-506; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 686; *HDHL*, Microfiche 80, Plate 16403.

37. Rashi held that chapter 26 is a prophecy against Moab, see his comments at 25:1, 25:10, 25:21.

38. Note that עיר occurs in these same verses.

39. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, p. 286.

Lebanon), Isa 17:6 (a pronouncement against Damascus), and Job 19:26. נקף also shares isoglosses with Aramaic and MH נקף.<sup>40</sup> Its occurrence here, therefore, must be seen as representative of IH.

6. 24:16 צבי "beauty, honor".

In the Bible צבי (PS *zby*) typically means "gazelle". In some instances, however, the same orthography reflects a different PS root *šby* meaning "beauty, honor". This occurs usually in IH passages. It appears in several judgements against northern nations (e.g., 13:19 [against Babylon], Isa 23:9 [against Tyre], Isa 28:1, 28:4, 28:5 [against Ephraim], Jer 3:19 [perhaps a Benjaminitic dialect], Ezek 20:6, 20:15 [against the northern tribes of Israel], Ezek 25:9, 26:20 [against Moab], in Dan 8:9, 11:16, 11:41, 11:45, an exilic work with numerous Aramaic features, and in 2 Sam 1:19, referring to Benjaminites slain at Gilboa). Only two occurrences, Isa 4:2, Ezek 7:20, are admittedly JH; though the Ezekiel passage may be explained as the IH influence on exilic Hebrew.

צבי "beauty, honor", is also cognate with the Aramaic, Syriac, and MH verb צבי "desire, wish".<sup>41</sup> Therefore, צבי "beauty, honor" is another IH feature in Isaiah 24.

7. 24:19 רעע "break" (ד > ע).

The use of רעע "break" in Isa 24:19 is IH. JH uses the form רעץ for "break". רעע, therefore, represents the IH shift of ד > ע. The root רעע has this meaning also in Aramaic, Syriac, and MH again suggesting a foreign locale for its usage.<sup>42</sup> As for the distribution of this verb, it appears in Prov 25:19, Job 34:24, several times in oracles against foreign hosts (e.g., Jer 2:16 [with reference to Egyptian enclaves], 15:12 [against northern nations], and Mic 5:5 [against Assyria]). Only two instances are difficult to explain by way of the employment of addressee-switching, Jer 11:6 and Ps 2:9. Regarding the former we may note that it may have been chosen to play on רעה which occurs twice in the very next verse and on רענן in the same verse. Moreover, as discussed above, Jeremiah might reflect the dialect of the tribe of Benjamin. Though the latter is not an IH Psalm, it might have been chosen to deliver a pun. Note how רעע occurs with שבט "staff" and thus, the verse could mean also "shepherd with a staff of iron". The phonology of רעע "break" coupled with the distribution of this verb in the Bible, demand that we place it in the IH lexicon.

8. 24:23 לבנה "moon".

The so-called "poetic use" of לבנה "moon" in Isa 24:23 again bespeaks an IH dialect. Its JH counterpart is ירה. Elsewhere לבנה appears in Isa 30:26 and Song 6:10. Though the former rests in a Judahite context, it may have been necessitated because of its use with the IH lexeme חמה "sun" (see below). As for the Song of Songs, we have had occasion above to mention its numerous IH features.<sup>43</sup> Moreover, לבנה appears also in Talmudic and Late Aramaic (on an incantation amulet), as well as MH, suggesting that its use was known to the north of Israel.<sup>44</sup>

40. M. Jastrow, *A Dictionary of the Targumim, the Talmud Babli and Yerushalmi, and the Midrashic Literature* (New York 1967), p. 934; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, pp. 360-361; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 641; HDHL, Microfiche 6, Plates 13355-13361.

41. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 457; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 673; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 472; HDHL, Microfiche 77, Plates 15654-15655.

42. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 528; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 697; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, pp. 544-545; HDHL, Microfiche 84, Plate 17107.

43. See the discussion above.

44. Jastrow, p. 691; Joseph Naveh and Shaul Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls: Aramaic Incantations of Late Antiquity* (Jerusalem 1985), p. 56; HDHL, Microfiche 58, Plates 11749-11750.

## 9. 24:23 חמה "sun".

Like *לבנה* "moon", *חמה* "sun" appears in IH passages. In addition to Isa 30:26 and Song 6:10 above, *חמה* also appears in Job 30:28 and Ps 19:7. The former is full of IH features and the latter now appears to be at least partially IH.<sup>45</sup> Nevertheless, the distribution of *חמה* and its Talmudic, Late Aramaic, and MH cognates<sup>46</sup> suggest that aside from being a poetic "buzz-word", it also represents the IH dialect.

It will be recognized that Isaiah 24 contains a significant number of IH features. An examination of Isaiah 25, on the other hand, exhibits much fewer IH features.

*Isaiah 25*

## 1. 25:2, 25:3 קריה "city".

The IH lexeme *קריה* "city" has been discussed above. Its use twice in chapter 25, therefore, suggests a similar employment of the IH dialect.

## 2. 25:7 הלוט "envelope, cover".

In Isa 25:7 we find the middle weak masculine singular participle *הלוט* "envelope, cover", in poetic conjunction with the nominal form *הלוט*. Though the root of the lexeme does not appear to be IH, the form that it takes does. If the JH dialect were employed we would expect *הלט*. The form in Isa 25:7, therefore, represents an  $\bar{a} > \bar{o}$  shift. We have discussed this shift above in relation to Phoenician. In addition to the northern isogloss, two analogous masculine singular participle forms appear in texts in which the IH dialect is employed. The first is *קרמם* in 2 Kgs 16:7 [in Ahaz' words to Tiglath-Pileser], and the second is *בוסיס* in Zech 10:5, which can be explained by the northern dialectical influence on post-exilic Hebrew. Furthermore, note that the focus of Zechariah's speech is the "House of Joseph" (10:6), which suggests the presence of IH. Thus, we include *הלוט* among the IH features of Isaiah 25.

*Isaiah 26*

With Isaiah 26 we again find a marked increase in IH features.

## 1. 26:1 חל "rampart".

The use of *חל* to mean "rampart" instead of its more common meaning "strength" again constitutes an IH feature. We find it also in 2 Sam 20:15 (in reference to the northern city of 'Abel Beth-Ma'akah), 1 Kgs 21:23 (in Yahweh's words concerning Jezebel), Obad 20 (in conjunction with Phoe-

45. Gary A. Rendsburg (private communication, April 22, 1995) informs me that he now considers Psalm 19, or at least the first part thereof (vv. 2-7) to be Israelian in origin. He writes as follows: "Note the following IH features: a) the root *hwy* 'tell' in v. 3, attested otherwise only in Job (5X); b) the lexeme *millāh* 'word' in v. 5, attested elsewhere mainly in northern texts (especially Job); and c) the lexeme *hammāh* 'sun' in v. 7, used in Song 6:10 and common in MH. Closer inspection might reveal still other northern elements. But these three lexical items within six verses represent a sufficient concentration to allow the conclusion that Ps 19:2-7 originates in the northern part of the country. Numerous scholars have recognized that these verses are distinct from the following vv. 8-15 and have theorized that they are an Israelite adaptation of a Canaanite solar hymn. We now are in a position to bolster this conclusion with the above linguistic evidence, with the refinement that the solar hymn section of Psalm 19 stems from northern Canaan and not from Judah".

46. Jastrow, p. 476; Naveh and Shaked, *Amulets and Magic Bowls*, p. 56; HDHL, Microfiche 43, Plates 8630-8634.

nician possessions), Nah 3:8 (describing the Egyptian city of No), Zech 9:4 (with reference to Tyre), Ps 48:14 (a northern Korah psalm), 122:7, Lam 2:8, and Dan 11:7 (a post-exilic work). Of these, only Psalm 122 and Lamentations 2 appear purely JH. Moreover, the word  $\text{הָל}$  also appears in Talmudic Aramaic and MH placing it in a northern milieu.<sup>47</sup> Thus, the overwhelming distribution of this word in IH texts and contexts and its Aramaic isogloss places  $\text{הָל}$  "rampart" in the IH lexicon.

2. 26:4  $\text{עַד עַד}$  "forever and ever".

The compound adverbial expression  $\text{עַד עַד}$  "forever and ever", appears elsewhere primarily in northern texts and contexts: in two northern Psalms (Ps 83:18, 132:12, 132:14), a JH Psalm that makes mention of northern toponyms (Ps 92:8 [i.e., Lebanon]), and in the post-exilic Isa 65:18. Moreover, the expression  $\text{עַד עַד}$  has a more common JH counterparts,  $\text{עַד עוֹלָם וְעַד}$ , etc. (e.g., 1 Chron 14:12, 28:7).

If we take into consideration the expression  $\text{עַד}$  (i.e. without the following  $\text{עַד}$ ), we find that it too appears in Palestinian Aramaic, MH,<sup>48</sup> and in texts with numerous IH features: Num 24:20, 24:24, Ps 104:23, 147:6, Job 7:4, and 20:5. Of these, Numbers 24, Psalm 104 (though not considered northern it does contain three instances of the IH negative particle  $\text{בֹּל}$ ),<sup>49</sup> and Job, as discussed above, represent the IH dialect. Only Psalms 92 and 147 appear to be JH.

3. 26:5  $\text{קָרְיָה}$  "city".

The evidence for including  $\text{קָרְיָה}$  has been given above.

4. 26:6  $\text{פֶּעַם}$  "foot".

In 26:6 we find the word  $\text{פֶּעַם}$  meaning "foot". On the basis of its Phoenician, Ugaritic cognates,  $\text{פֶּעַן}$  and  $\text{פֶּעַן}$ , respectively,<sup>50</sup> the word has been established as an IH lexeme.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, it also appears in MH.<sup>52</sup> In reference to the appearance of  $\text{פֶּעַם}$  in Isa 26:6, G. Rendsburg posits:

Here one has to admit that this attestation of *pa'am* is in a Judahite context. However, we may note that it is parallel to *regel* in this poetic passage, so that perhaps the poet had no choice but to use *pa'am* as the B word for the A word *regel*.<sup>53</sup>

In light of the evidence offered here, there is no reason to assume that the necessity of a B word required the use of  $\text{פֶּעַם רֶגֶל}$  here is also a northernism. More on the presumed Judahite context of Isaiah 26 below.

5. 26:6 Double Plural Construction.

The phrase  $\text{פֶּעַמֵי רַגְלֵי}$  in 26:6 (which contrasts with the JH expression  $\text{רַגְלֵי עֵינִי}$  in the same verse) also preserves typical IH syntax in that both the *nomen regens* and the *nomen rectum* of the construct phrase appear in the plural. S. Gevitz noted this as a feature of IH, one that is shared by the Amarna letters and at Byblos.<sup>54</sup> The grammatical usage in Isa 26:6 is additional evidence of Isaiah's use of the northern dialect.

47. Jastrow, p. 455; HDHL, Microfiche 41, Plate 8283. This word probably relates to the Jewish Palestinian Aramaic  $\text{חַיַל}$  "valley" in Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 199.

48. DISO, p. 825. The expression is cognate with Akkadian *adi* (CAD A I, 112, s.v. *adi*) and Sabeian  $\text{עַרְי}$  all of which place us outside of ancient Judah.

49. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 104.

50. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, p. 269; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 469.

51. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, pp. 66, 106.

52. HDHL, Microfiche 74, Plate 15431.

53. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 67.

54. Gevitz, "On Syntax and Style in the 'Late Biblical Hebrew'-'Old Canaanite' Connection", 28-29; "Asher in the Blessing of Jacob (Genesis xlix 20)", 160.

## 6. 26:7 פלס "weigh, trample down".

Another lexeme of northern provenience is the root פלס, "weigh, trample down" in 26:7. The word occurs in Phoenician meaning "architect", MH, and also in Phoenician, Ugaritic, and Amorite personal names.<sup>55</sup> Moreover, the word occurs in Bible only in passages with northern affinities: Ps 58:3; 78:50; Prov 4:26, 5:6; 5:21.<sup>56</sup>

## 7. 26:9 שחר "seek early/search diligently".

Another verb which should be entered into the IH lexicon is שחר "seek early/search diligently" which appears in Isa 26:9. It occurs a number of times in Proverbs (1:28, 7:15, 8:17, 11:27, 13:24), Job (7:21, 8:5, 24:5), Hos 5:15, a northern psalm of Asaph (78:34), and in Isa 47:11 in a prophecy against the "Daughter of Babylon". In only one spot do we find שחר in a decidedly Judahite text, Ps 63:2. In addition, שחר also bears this meaning in Aramaic.<sup>57</sup> Thus, the overall distribution and cognate evidence suggest that we see the verb שחר as a northern lexeme.

## 8. 26:10 Negative Particle בל.

Five times in this chapter we find the negative particle בל, a particle common to Phoenician, Ugaritic, and MH (Isa 26:10, 11, 14, 18 [2X]).<sup>58</sup> In the Bible בל occurs a number of times in northern Psalms, Hosea, Proverbs, and one time in Job; all texts which display IH features.<sup>59</sup> Accordingly, we may again see its appearance here as evidence for the northern dialect of Isaiah 26.

## 9. 26:10 Doubled ה in יתן.

Rules of biblical Hebrew grammar dictate that the letter ה should not be doubled. However, in a few places we do in fact find the ה doubled, as permitted in Arabic. Such rare forms occur in Prov 21:10 (מתן) and Job 19:23 (מתקן) each of which is an IH composition. It also appears in Dan 4:24 (מתן), a post-exilic work full of Aramaic. Indeed, a similar "virtual doubling" is typical of Aramaic.<sup>60</sup> Isaiah's use of the doubled ה in יתן, therefore, should be seen as part of the IH dialect of this pericope.

10. 26:11 יחזיון Retention of *yod* in imperfect of IIIy verbs.

In verse 11 we find the phrase בל יחזיון "they will not see". The form is peculiar in that it retains the *yod* of the final radical in the root חזי. As G. Rendsburg has shown, the retention of a *yod* in a IIIy verb is characteristic of the IH dialect and appears overwhelmingly in northern compositions.<sup>61</sup> The feature also appears in Aramaic.<sup>62</sup> In addition, its appearance in Isa 26:11 alongside the JH form יחזו illustrates the composer of this text had both at his disposal. Thus, יחזיון is another IH feature in Isaiah 26.

55. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, pp. 264-265; HDHL, Microfiche 74, Plate 15222; F. L. Benz, *Personal Names in Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions* (Rome 1972), pp. 73, 97, 140-41, 176, 391; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 468; F. Grondahl, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit* (Rome 1967), pp. 172-73; H. B. Huffmon, *Amorite Personal Names in the Mari Texts* (Baltimore 1965), p. 255. Possibly also as "small cooper coin, forged", in Syriac. See Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 449.

56. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, pp. 63-64, 103.

57. Jastrow, p. 1551. E. S. Drower and R. Macuch, *Lord Mandaic Dictionary* (Oxford 1963), p. 541b.

58. Friedrich and Röllig, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik*, p. 125; Tomback, *Phoenician and Punic*, p. 46; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 372; J. Aistleitner, *Wörterbuch der ugaritischen Sprache* (Berlin 1963), p. 49. See also Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 24, nn. 29, 31; HDHL, Microfiche 29, Plates 5745-5749.

59. See Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, pp. 24-25.

60. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, p. 141, also cites מתן.

61. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 42; "Morphological Evidence for Regional Dialects in Ancient Hebrew", pp. 81-82. However, Rendsburg makes no mention of the feature in Isa 26:11.

62. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, p. 299.

11. 26:12 פעל "do, make, work".

The lexeme פעל "do, make, work" appears in 26:12. About this word G. Rendsburg remarks:

...while not all attestations of Hebrew *p'l* appear in non-Judahite texts, a significant proportion of them occurs in works such as the Balaam oracles, Hosea, Proverbs, and Job. I conclude, therefore, that the appearance of *p'l* in a biblical text is on its own not sufficient for positing northern origin. Yet, it was undoubtedly a feature of IH. Thus, when other IH characteristics are present in a particular composition, the use of *p'l* may be advanced to bolster the argument for a northern provenance.<sup>63</sup>

Such indeed is the case here. In addition, the root פעל is common in Ugaritic, Phoenician, Aramaic, Syriac, MH, and in the Deir 'Alla texts assuring a northern isogloss.<sup>64</sup> Thus, we may again aver that its appearance here is a sign of the IH dialect.

12. 26:14, 26:19 רפאים "shades".

Another lexical item of northern provenance is רפאים "shades", the denizens of the underworld, who appear again in 26:19. The word occurs in a number of northern passages: Prov 2:18; 9:18, 21:16, Job 26:5, a northern psalm of Korah (88:11, 88:13); and in Isa 14:9 where it is included in a harangue against the king of Babylon. As Isaiah 14 also mentions Lebanon (v. 8), we again may see in that chapter an element of addressee-switching. Moreover, the רפאים also appear in Ugaritic, Phoenician, and Aramaic texts from Qumran.<sup>65</sup> Even the ethnonym רפאים "Rephaim", the aboriginal inhabitants mentioned in Gen 14:5, Deut 3:11, Josh 17:15, etc., appear to be located in the northern area of Bashan (cf. Deut 3:11, 3:13). It seems likely, therefore, that the רפאים, whether taken as "shades" or as an ethnonym, have closer ties to northern Israel than to Judah.

13. 26:15 קצוי retention of *waw* in IIIy nouns in construct.

We find in Isa 26:15 the expression קצוי ארץ "ends of the earth". If the dialect were JH one would expect קצות as in 1 Kgs 12:31, Isa 40:28, etc. The preservation of *waw* in the construct form of this word appears in the northern Ps 48:11, and in Psalm 65, which employs both forms of the expression (65:6, 65:9) perhaps for poetic variation. Analogous preservation of the *waw* in IIIy nouns in construct also suggests a northern provenance for the form. For example the construct form, חגרי "clefts of" from חגה appears in Song 2:14, Jer 49:16, and Obad 3. The first two are filled with IH features and the last is concerned with the crimes of Edom, and, thus, may be addressee-switching. Moreover, Aramaic possesses the form קציות which also preserves the consonantal *waw*.<sup>66</sup>

14. 26:16 צקון "they poured out".

The perfect verb צקון "they poured out" (from צוק) in 26:16 is also an IH feature, appearing elsewhere only in Job 28:2 and 29:6. The Hebrew root has a cognate in Aramaic and MH.<sup>67</sup>

In addition, the masculine plural verbal ending in -ן is appended to perfect forms elsewhere only in Deut 8:3 and 8:16. There it may serve to avoid the hiatus. Here, however, the fact that the next word (להש) begins with a consonant rules this out. One notes the same ending on perfects, however, in Ara-

63. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 55.

64. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 375; Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, pp. 267-268; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, pp. 441-442; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 669; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 453; HDHL, Microfiche 75, Plates 15420-15424; and J. A. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla* (HSM 31; Chico, CA, 1980), pp. 34-35, 39; Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 107, nn. 25-27.

65. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 485; Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, p. 306; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 697.

66. Jastrow, p. 1409.

67. Ibid., p. 1270; HDHL, Microfiche 77, Plate 15738.

maic.<sup>68</sup> The distribution, cognate evidence, and form of צִקְוֹן, therefore, suggest that it is an IH feature.

15. 26:17, 26:18 the word pair הוּלִילֵד “pang/bear”.

The word pair הוּלִילֵד appears twice in close proximity in Isaiah 26. Elsewhere in the Bible it is limited to Deut 32:18 (an IH pericope), Isa 45:10, 54:1, 66:8 (each of which is post-exilic), Ps 90:2, Job 15:7, and 39:1. Of these only Ps 90:2 is situated in a decidedly JH setting. However, its appearance there may be due to poetic demands, e.g., to avoid over-alliteration between הַרִים “mountains” and the possible synonym חַרְהָ “bear”, or inversely, to indulge in ל sounds. Note the repeated consonant ל in Ps 90:2: בְּטֶרֶם הַרִים יִלְדוּ וְתַחֲלוּל אֶרֶץ וְתִבְלֹם עַד עוֹלָם אֵתָהּ אֵל. Outside of the Bible, the word pair can be found in Phoenician, Ugaritic, and Akkadian,<sup>69</sup> suggesting to Y. Avishur that it evolved “from a common literary tradition intrinsic to the Semitic literatures”.<sup>70</sup> Isaiah’s employment of the pair in chapter 26, therefore, is further evidence for the IH dialect.

16. 26:19 אֹרֹת “herbs”.

Typically אֹר means “light”. However, in a few places we find it bearing the meaning “herbs”. As such it is the IH equivalent of the JH רֶשֶׁא. We find it, for example in the Samaritan Pentateuch of Gen 1:11, 1:12 where the MT has רֶשֶׁא. In the Bible it occurs elsewhere only in 2 Kgs 4:39 in the northern setting of Gilgal. אֹרֹת “herbs” also appears in MH, itself a northern variety of Hebrew.<sup>71</sup> Thus, we add אֹרֹת in Isa 26:19 to our list of IH lexemes.

### Isaiah 27

With Isaiah 27 we again find a sharp decrease in the number of IH features.<sup>72</sup> The only IH elements to be found therein appear below.

1. 27:1 לִוְיָתָן “Leviathan”.

The לִוְיָתָן “Leviathan, sea monster” is another lexeme at home in the north (cf. Ug *lm*).<sup>73</sup> It occurs primarily in northern works, e.g., Job 3:8, 40:25, Ps 74:14 and also in MH.<sup>74</sup> In addition, the root לוּה meaning “wreath” appears in Prov 1:9, 4:9. Its only appearance in a non-IH text is Ps 104:26, a Psalm which does, however, contain other IH features.<sup>75</sup> The characteristic Aramaic ending on לוּיָתָן also places us in a northern isogloss.<sup>76</sup> Is it possible that Judah did not accept the Leviathan mythologically? In any event, the word’s northern Ugaritic cognate and its distribution in the Bible make it an IH feature of Isaiah 27.

68. Segert, *Altaramäische Grammatik*, pp. 244, 263.

69. H. Donner and W. Röllig, *Kanaanäische und Aramäische Inschriften* (= *KAI*, Band II) (Wiesbaden 1968), p. 47; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 401; *CAD* A/1, 289.

70. Avishur, *Stylistic Studies of Word Pairs*, p. 599.

71. See, e.g., Rendsburg, “The Galilean Background of Mishnaic Hebrew”.

72. It is interesting to note that B. W. Anderson (“The Slaying of the Fleeing, Twisting Serpent: Isaiah 27:1 in Context”, in *Uncovering Ancient Stones: Essays in Memory of H. Neil Richardson*, Lewis M. Hopfe, ed. [Winona Lake, IN, 1994], pp. 3-15) groups Isa 27:1 with chapter 26. The linguistic evidence adduced here suggests that there is indeed a close tie between the two sections.

73. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 429.

74. *HDHL*, Microfiche 58, Plate 11784.

75. See, Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 104.

76. As noted by Gray, *Isaiah*, pp. 467-468.

## 2. 27:1 ברח "evil".

Typically the root ברח means "flee". In two instances in the Bible, however, it means "evil" and as such is cognate with the Ugaritic root *brh*.<sup>77</sup> In Ugaritic it is used of the Leviathan as it is here.<sup>78</sup> We find it in Job 26:13 and here in Isa 27:1. Consequently, the word's cognates and its textual distribution place it in a non-Judahite context.

## 3. 27:2 חמר "wine".

As G. Rendsburg has demonstrated, the word חמר "wine" is an IH lexeme.<sup>79</sup> It appears in place of the JH יין and has cognates in Ugaritic, Phoenician, Deir 'Alla, Aramaic, Syriac, and MH.<sup>80</sup> Three biblical passages contain חמר: Deut 32:14, Ps 75:9, and Isa 27:2. The first two are both IH compositions and the last is the passage under discussion. Regarding its appearance in Isa 27:2, G. Rendsburg remarks:

Isaiah 27 is presumably Judahite, but according to some scholars it is exilic or post-exilic, in which case the IH influence could have exerted itself over JH writers.

In the light of the other IH features in chapters 24-27, we need not appeal to the exilic date for an explanation. It is simply Isaiah's use of the IH dialect, a subject to which I shall return below.

## 4. 27:8 הגה "remove".

Usually הגה means "moan, utter" in Hebrew. Sometimes, however, it is used with the sense "remove". Where it does an IH influence may be detected. We find it with this meaning in Prov 24:5, 25:5, and in its by-form form יגה (in the *hiph'il*)<sup>81</sup> in connection with the removal of Amasa's body in 2 Sam 20:13, where addressee-switching may be at work. Its only cognate appears in the texts of Deir 'Alla which again offers us a foreign isogloss.<sup>82</sup>

## 5. 27:9 גר "chalk, limestone".

The word גר "chalk, limestone" in 27:9 has cognates in Aramaic, Syriac, and MH.<sup>83</sup> Though it is a hapax (save its appearance in the Aramaic Daniel 5:5), if we add its possible appearance in Job 28:4 to the available cognate evidence, we have additional support for considering it an IH feature. Moreover, it possesses a JH counterpart, namely שִׁיד (e.g., Deut 27:2).

## 6. 27:11 קציר "branch".

Usually קציר means "harvest". In Isa 27:11, Ps 80:12, Job 14:9, 18:16, and 29:19, however, it means "branch". Aside from the passage in question we note that each of the places in which the lexeme occurs is an IH composition (i.e., Psalm 80) or in a text with numerous IH features (i.e., Job). In addition, the use of this root for "joints, ribs", in Phoenician suggests a similar usage.<sup>84</sup>

77. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 376; Chaim Rabin, "Barāh", *JTS* (1946) 38-41.

78. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 376.

79. Gary A. Rendsburg, "The Dialect of the Deir 'Alla Inscription", *BiOr* 50 (1993) 319.

80. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 402; Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, p. 107; Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla*, p. 50; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 207; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 147; *HDHL*, Microfiche 43, Plate 8660.

81. The more usual meaning of יגה is "suffer".

82. Hackett, *The Balaam Text from Deir 'Alla*, p. 46. For the dialect of Deir 'Alla as IH see, Rendsburg, "The Dialect of the Deir 'Alla Inscription".

83. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 128; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 543; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 69; *HDHL*, Microfiche 31, Plate 6227.

84. Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, p. 292.

*Excursus on Isaiah 28*

Though scholars typically view Isaiah 28 as distinct from the unit Isaiah 24-27, it nonetheless contains a significant number of IH features. The prophecy aims at Ephraim, and perhaps this explains the use of the IH dialect.<sup>85</sup> In any event, I list below the IH features of Isaiah 28.

## 1. 28:1 הלם "strike".

G. Rendsburg has shown that the word הלם "strike" appears predominantly in IH compositions.<sup>86</sup> It has cognates in Ugaritic, Phoenician, and MH.<sup>87</sup> Thus, its appearance in the harangue against Ephraim suggests the employment of the IH dialect.

## 2. 28:2 כבירים "great, mighty".

The word כביר is found primarily in IH compositions.<sup>88</sup> Cognates appear in an Ugaritic personal name, and also in Aramaic, Syriac, and MH.<sup>89</sup> Its use in Isa 28:2, therefore, must be seen as an IH feature.

## 3. 28:2 קטב "cut off".

Hebrew has many words to suggest the meaning "cut off" (e.g., כרת, קצץ, etc.). The use of קטב, however, is rare, appearing elsewhere only in Deut 32:24, Hos 13:14, and Ps 91:6. Though the last of these does not appear to be an IH composition, it does contain at least two IH features,<sup>90</sup> suggesting that a fresh examination of this Psalm may turn up additional IH items.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, the verb קטב appears in Aramaic, Syriac, and MH<sup>92</sup> again providing a northern isogloss.

## 4. 28:7 שגה "go astray".

שגה "go astray" in 28:7 also is an IH feature appearing primarily in IH compositions for the usual JH word תעה "err". We find it elsewhere in Num 15:22, Lev 4:13, Deut 27:18, 1 Sam 26:21, Ezek 45:20, Ps 119:21, 119:118, Job 6:24, 12:6, 19:4, Prov 5:19, 5:20, 5:23, 19:27, 20:1, and 28:10. Though the passages in Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Psalm 119 appear to be Judahite, the predominance of northern settings and compositions in this list argues in favor of שגה as an IH lexeme. For example, 1 Sam 26:21 places the word in the mouth of the Benjaminite Saul, and the use of שגה in Ezekiel may be explained by the influence of IH on the returnees from exile or Aramaic influence. The books of Proverbs and Job, as discussed above, teem with IH features. Psalm 119 also may be considered exilic, and thus, the result of IH influence. Moreover, שגה occurs in Syriac and Aramaic, again pointing to a northern setting for this verb.<sup>93</sup>

85. As suggested by Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 70.

86. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 70.

87. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 390; Tomback, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon*, p. 81; HDHL, Microfiche 37, Plate 7465.

88. Gary Rendsburg, "Kabbîr in Biblical Hebrew: Evidence for Style-switching and Addressee-switching", *JAOS* 112 (1992) 649-651.

89. Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 417; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 602; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 203; HDHL, Microfiche 50, Plate 10123.

90. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 65.

91. The word may be cognate with Ugaritic *qzb*. See, Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 477.

92. Jastrow, p. 1346. Though in Syriac the verb means "pick a quarrel" (Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 500); HDHL, Microfiche 79, Plate 16149.

93. Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 558; Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 537; Jastrow, p. 1521; HDHL, Microfiche 85, Plate 17499.

## 5. 28:7 פִּיק "totter".

The verb פִּיק "totter" appears in Amos 2:13, Jer 10:4, and here in Isa 28:7. Amos contains an abundance of IH grammatical and lexical forms. The passage in Jeremiah occurs in a prophecy against the northern tribes of Israel and explicitly mentions their punishment from the north in 10:22. פִּיק might be Aramaic as well.<sup>94</sup> Moreover, in Arabic *fiq* means "outweigh, outbalance, wake up after a state of intoxication".<sup>95</sup> As Isaiah 28:7 likens the people to drunkards, we may see *piq* as cognate.

## 6. 28:9 עִתִּיק "old, advanced in years".

Isaiah employs the word עִתִּיק "old, advanced in years" in 28:9. This root is common in Aramaic and Syriac<sup>96</sup> and can be found also in 1 Chron 4:22 where it is believed to be an Aramaism. As such, we include it in the list of IH elements in Isaiah 28.

## 7. 28:14, 28:22 לִצְוֹן "scorn".

In 28:14 we find the noun לִצְוֹן "scorn". The root of this word (לִיִּץ) appears almost exclusively in IH works: Isa 29:20, Hos 7:5, Hab 2:6 (as "satire", i.e., מְלִיצָה), Ps 1:1, 119:51, Prov 1:6 (again as "satire", i.e., מְלִיצָה), 1:22, 3:34, 9:7, 9:8, 9:12, 13:1, 14:6, 14:9, 15:12, 19:25, 19:28, 19:29, 20:1, 21:11, 21:24, 22:10, 24:9, and 29:8.

A close examination of these passages reveals that they occur either in a foreign setting and context or in IH compositions. The scorn in Isaiah 29 is said to come from Lebanon (29:17). The remainder of the passages also appear in IH compositions. Even if we limit ourselves to the distribution of לִצְוֹן (Prov 1:22, 29:8), we still are in a northern text. Moreover, the root was also part of the Aramaic and MH vocabularies.<sup>97</sup> Thus we add the two-fold use of לִצְוֹן in Isaiah 28 to the list of IH features.

## 9. 28:24 שָׂרַד "harrow".

The use of שָׂרַד "harrow" in Isa 28:24 is another element of IH. Aside from its use here, שָׂרַד occurs in Hos 10:11 and Job 39:10, both works with IH affiliation. In addition, it is cognate with Akkadian *šadādu*, Ugaritic *šd<sup>II</sup>*, Talmudic Aramaic שָׂרַד and Syriac סַרְד,<sup>98</sup> suggesting a non-Judahite provenance for the word.

## 10. 28:25 שֹׂרָה .

Isaiah employs the noun שֹׂרָה in 28:25 for which two interpretations have been proposed. The first, sees it akin to the Arabic *sur* "rows". Typically, an Arabic *s* comes into Hebrew as a ש or ס. The preservation of the *s*, therefore, draws us closer to Arabic than to Hebrew.<sup>99</sup> Others see in the word the meaning "grain" which would be cognate with שֹׂרָה in the Zenjirli inscription.<sup>100</sup> The word also appears in Aramaic.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, either way one reads it, the lexeme appears to be non-Judahite.

94. The word is attested but its meaning is uncertain. See, Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 426.

95. Hans Wehr, *A Dictionary of Modern Written Arabic* (Ithaca, NY, 1976), pp. 732-733.

96. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 422; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 666; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 431. The root has the meaning "pass (away)" in Ugaritic. See, Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 462.

97. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 282; HDHL, Microfiche 58, Plates 11800-11801.

98. CAD S I, 20, s.v. *šadādu*; Gordon, *Ugaritic Textbook*, p. 488; Jastrow, p. 1524; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 361.

99. See, e.g., J. Blau, "'Weak' Phonetic Change and the Hebrew *Šin*". *HAR* 1 (1977) 67-119: "Some Ugaritic, Hebrew, and Arabic Parallels", *JNSL* 10 (1982) 9-10.

100. With Donner and Röllig, *KAI*, p. 226 and contra Josef Tropper, *Die Inschriften von Zincirli* (Abhandlungen zur Literatur Alt.Syrien-Palästinas, Band 6; Münster 1993), p. 110.

101. Sokoloff, *A Dictionary of Jewish Palestinian Aramaic*, p. 542, offers שֹׂרָה "to walk in a straight line".

11. 28:25 נסמן "appointed place, marked place".

As Ibn Ezra notes, the hapax נסמן in Isa 28:25 should be seen as cognate with the Aramaic סימן "sign, mark".<sup>102</sup> Accordingly, we should translate the word "appointed place, marked place". Though we find the word only once in the Bible, it is quite common in Aramaic and MH, suggesting that we have here an isogloss with that language.<sup>103</sup>

12. Isa 28:28 ארש "silent".

The infinitive absolute ארש has caused exegetical problems for centuries. While many propose to read it as a by-form of the root רוש "thresh",<sup>104</sup> there is much evidence that the infinitive absolute construction is one of several that utilize two different roots: the infinitive absolute from ארש "silent" and the finite form from רוש "thresh".<sup>105</sup> As the root ארש appears elsewhere only in Aramaic and Syriac,<sup>106</sup> we have reason to include it with our list of IH features in Isaiah 28.

13. 28:29 תושיה "wisdom".

The word תושיה "wisdom" is the IH counterpart for the more commonly distributed חכמה (both IH and JH). It shares a primarily northern distribution in the Bible. We find it in Mic 6:9, Prov 2:7, 3:21, 8:14, 18:1, Job 5:12, 6:13, 11:6, 12:16, 26:3, and 30:22. According to H. L. Ginsberg,<sup>107</sup> Mic 6:9 also hails from the north, for it recalls the plight of the Israelites under the Moabite king Balak and the incident with the northern prophet Balaam son of Beor (6:5).

### Conclusion

The above linguistic evidence demonstrates that Isaiah 24-27 contains numerous IH grammatical, syntactical, and lexical features, with most of them grouped in chapter 26. Though chapter 28 also contains abundant IH elements, it is a distinct unit within the Isaian prophetic corpus and is a harangue directed at Ephraim, and therefore, it most likely reflects "addressee-switching". Yet, we do not find as many northernisms in the other chapters of the apocalyptic unit, with the possible exception of Isaiah 24. Therefore, we now must ask why so many northern features appear in chapter 26.

Unfortunately, a definitive answer is not possible from the data available. Though the IH features argue on behalf of the unity of Isaiah 24-27, the relative paucity of IH features in Isaiah 25, and perhaps also Isaiah 27 (especially if we group 27:1 with chapter 26), suggests a lack of persistence in the prophet's employment of this dialect.

However, if we may be allowed some latitude for speculation, one possible solution might lie in the poem's incipit: "On that day, this song will be sung in the land of Judah" (Isa 26:1). Typically, these words have persuaded scholars to label 26:1-6 "a song of Judah". However, this is not precisely what the line claims. In fact, the identity of the singers is concealed by the archaic passive *qal* form יושר "will be sung". So who will do the singing on this day and why is Isaiah so vague about these sin-

102. Ibid., p. 575; Beyer, *aramäischen Texte vom Toten Meer*, p. 647.

103. HDHL, Microfiche 67, Plates 13705-13709.

104. Frederick E. Greenspahn, *Hapax Legomena in Biblical Hebrew: A Study of the Phenomenon and Its Treatment Since Antiquity with Special Reference to Verbal Forms* (SBL Dissertation Series, 74; Chico, CA, 1984), p. 201.

105. See, e.g., Scott B. Noegel, "A Slip of the Reader and Not the Reed: Infinitive Absolutes with Divergent Finite Forms, (forthcoming).

106. E.g., Sanhedrin 7a: טובים לרשמע ואריש "Happy is the man who hears himself (abused) and is silent" (CF. also Qiddushin I, 61b). Jacob Levy, *Neuhebräisches und Chaldäisches Wörterbuch über die Talmudim und Midraschim*, Vol. 1 (Leipzig 1876), p. 34; Abraham Ibn Shoshan, המלון החדש, Vol. 1 (Jerusalem 1966), p. 29; Payne-Smith, *A Compendious Syriac Dictionary*, p. 4.

107. Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism*, pp. 25-31.

gers? If Isaiah speaks in the persona of these singers with a northern dialect, they must be considered non-Judahites, or "northerners". In this view, the prophet places the words of the song into their mouths and speaks as they do, flavoring his message with features culled from their dialect: the addresser-switching device discussed above.<sup>108</sup> His so-called "victory song", therefore, would celebrate a victory for Israel and not for Judah, whose security Yahweh promises to humble to the ground and trample under foot (26:5). Hence, the vagueness. Thus, 26:7-21 would follow smoothly from 26:1-6 and would represent a single shout for northern victory. This also would fit perfectly with the expression in 26:1, *עיר עז לנו ישועה ישית חומותיה*, which F. Delitzsch rightly renders: "a city of powerful offence and defence belongs to us",<sup>109</sup> the "us" being northerners. Therefore, the dialectical analysis offers a possible solution to the seeming discrepancy between the subject of the song (26:1-6), which is assumed to be Jerusalem, and the subject of the lament (26:7-21), which also seems to be Jerusalem. That both sections of the chapter contain IH elements argues in favor of the integrity of Isaiah 26.

If this hypothesis is correct, the purpose of Isaiah's switch in dialect would appear to be overtly political.<sup>110</sup> P. Machinist has examined the prophecies of the first Isaiah and has found the prophet to possess a remarkable flare for Neo-Assyrian rhetoric, especially in those prophecies which are aimed at Assyria.<sup>111</sup> The shift in dialect in Isaiah 26, like that of chapter 28 which targets Ephraim, should be seen as a linguistic extension of this. By spicing his prophecy with IH dialectical features, Isaiah is able to appeal to northern sensitivities and, hence, convey a sense of solidarity. This also explains Isaiah's positive address to the northern tribes of Israel in 27:12: "And in that day, Yahweh will beat out (the peoples like grain) from the channel of the Euphrates to the Wadi of Egypt; and you shall be picked up one by one, O children of Israel!" At the same time, Judahite ears would not fail to catch the rhetorical power of the switch, and upon hearing in the song a scathing indictment, the people of Jerusalem would be forced into a defensive posture and roused to action. To summarize the use of dialect in Isaiah 24-27 I appeal to the words of G. Rendsburg:

It is my contention that these addresses [prophetic addresses to foreign nations] very often are couched in the dialects of the addressee nations. Some work on the rhetoric of the prophets in this regard has already been done. I would merely extend the discussion to include linguistic evidence as well.<sup>112</sup>

I hope that I have made some steps toward achieving this goal by providing the linguistic evidence for the IH dialect in Isaiah 24-28. Regardless how future scholars will evaluate the significance of the data enumerated above, (and I sincerely hope that others attempt to do so), it is clear from the heavy concentration of IH elements within only a few chapters that the Isaiah apocalypse was recorded not in the JH dialect of Jerusalem and its environs, but in the IH tongue of its northern neighbors.

108. See, e.g., Kaufman, "A Classification", pp. 41-57; Rendsburg, "Linguistic Variation and the 'Foreign' Factor", *IOS* (forthcoming).

109. Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah* (Clark's Foreign Theological Library, 42; Edinburgh 1890), p. 438.

110. In this regard it is interesting to note the astute remark of B. Levine, "Book Review of H. L. Ginsberg, *The Israelian Heritage of Judaism*", *AJS* 12 (1987) 154: "In fact, a good case could be made for concluding that Isaiah of Jerusalem spoke somewhat like a northerner when his subject was the religious disloyalty of northern Israelite society". Though Levine did not have the linguistic evidence in mind, his remark is still apposite.

111. Peter Machinist, "Assyria and Its Image in the First Isaiah", *JAOS* 103 (1983) 719-737.

112. Rendsburg, *Linguistic Evidence*, p. 13.